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TITLE OF THESIS

**Sustainable social (enterprise) entrepreneurship.
An organisational and individual identity perspective.**

by

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Thesis submitted

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Abstract

Purpose - to investigate the phenomenon of sustainable social (enterprise) entrepreneurship from both organisational and individual/personal identity perspectives. Two research questions ask: (RQ1) *what are the key organisational identity (OI) and governance issues associated with sustainable social enterprises (SEs) and social entrepreneurship?*, and; (RQ2) *who are the social enterprise (SE) leaders/entrepreneurs (and why are they important from an identity perspective)?*

Design/methodology/approach – A *stage 1* interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) employed 30 semi-structured interviews of social entrepreneurs in the (UK) South East; a macro-level conceptualisation of social enterprise (organisational) identity, sustainability and governance issues being the key deliverable. This was followed by a *stage 2* social constructionist and social entrepreneurial identity study; whereby, 16 in-depth interviews, with 3 case study social enterprise leaders were conducted over a period of three years. *Stage 3* involved 2 employee and volunteer focus groups to help triangulate data from the previous stages. Finally, *stage 4* follow-up interviews with 4 selected informants helped evaluate the impact of the Brexit vote on my thesis arguments. Various third sector and government policy documents were consulted throughout the study.

Findings – Firstly, I argue that understanding *who organisations are*, as well as, *what they do*, are important for understanding the sustainability of social enterprises, and the third sector. A new conceptual social enterprise grid (SEG) is developed to distinguish *who social enterprises are*; relative to other third and public-sector organisations. Secondly, a Ricoeurian narrative analysis helps demonstrate the agentic role of social entrepreneurs; how social enterprise sustainability is motivated by personal beliefs, social values and an *idem* (i.e. almost permanent) sense of identity. Similarly, results demonstrate how social enterprise sustainability could be at least part-attributed, to the lifetime agentic function of social entrepreneurs.

Originality/value – This PhD thesis addresses fundamental definitional and theory gaps in the social enterprise and third sector identity literatures. It contributes by offering fresh perspectives on the complex and inter-related issues of (organisational and socio-entrepreneurial) identity, governance and sustainability.

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Thank you all for your love, support and faith, that I am capable of achieving this.

Declaration

CERTIFICATE ON SUBMISSION OF THESIS

I certify:

1. That I have read the University Degree Regulations under which this submission is made.
2. That in so far as the thesis involves any collaborative research, the extent of this collaboration has been clearly indicated; and that any material which has been previously presented and accepted for the award of an academic qualification at this University or elsewhere has also been clearly identified in the thesis.

Signed: Date:

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List of Abbreviations:

BAM	–	The British Academy of Management
CE	–	Commercial Entrepreneurship
CIC	–	Community Interest Company
CIO	–	Charitable Incorporated Organisation

DTI	–	Department of Trade and Industry
ESRC	–	European Social Research Council
IPA	–	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
ISBE	–	Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship
NFP	–	Not for Profit (Organisation)
NGO	–	Non-governmental organisation
NPM	–	New Public Management
OECD	–	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OI	–	Organisational Identity
OS	–	Organisational Sustainability
PCT	–	Primary Care Trust
PS	–	Public Sector
PSLG	–	Public Sector and Local Government
PSO	–	Public Sector Organisation
RN	–	Ricoeurian Narrative
SCT	–	Social Cognitive Theory
SE	–	Social Enterprise
SEC	–	Social Enterprise Coalition
SEE	–	Social Enterprise Entrepreneur
SEG	–	Social Enterprise Governance (Grid)
SEM	–	Social Enterprise Mark
SEP	–	Social Enterprise Plan
SVA	–	Social Value Act
TS	–	Third Sector
TBL	–	Triple Bottom Line
TSE	–	Trading Social Enterprise
TSO	–	Third Sector Organisation
VCO	–	Voluntary and Community Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale and motivation for my study

In terms of a theoretical rationale for my PhD study, terms such as ‘*social enterprise*’ and ‘*social entrepreneurship*’ are often considered pre-paradigmatic and ill-defined (Haugh, 2005; Nicholls, 2006; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Bridge *et al.*, 2009; 2010; Mason, 2012; Conway Dato-on and Kalakay, 2016). This presents a clear conceptual motivation for undertaking a qualitative social science PhD, i.e. one that contributes to a deeper understanding of the organisational identity and governance characteristics of social enterprises, as part of the UK third sector. I am also interested in investigating *who* and *what* makes (UK) social enterprises ‘*sustainable*’ in uncertain economic times.

Put simply, there are multiple and conflicting definitions of what constitutes as a sustainable ‘*social firm*’, ‘*social enterprise*’, ‘*social entrepreneurship*’, ‘*social entrepreneur*’, and so on (Nicholls, 2010; Mason, 2012). There are also definitional ambiguities at a more philosophical level – for example, what constitutes the terms ‘*social value*’ and ‘*social value creation*’ in relation to the growth of social enterprise(s) and the (UK) third sector (Lautermann, 2013). Ontologically, there have been recent calls for deconstructing idealised views of social enterprise, some of which suggest social value is only sustainable if organisations are, or become more commercial (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2003; Thompson and Doherty, 2010; Dey and Steyaert, 2012; Doherty *et al.*, 2014). Determining how the traditional values of altruism, charity, volunteering, societal well-being etc, fit within a social entrepreneurial identity discourse still remain under-researched (Jones *et al.*, 2008; Maclean *et al.*, 2015).

More recent critical research deconstructs (idealised) social enterprise narratives, and approaches to creating social value from a government policy perspective (Dey and Teasdale, 2013); thus, helping to better understand what constitutes social enterprise and social entrepreneurship from a lived practitioner perspective (Choi and Majumdar, 2014; Grant, 2014). Nevertheless, as the scholarly social enterprise and social entrepreneurship literature matures, there is still little emerging consensus about ‘*who or what*’ sustainable social enterprise and entrepreneurship involves, i.e. from an *organisational and/or*

personal identity perspective. Therefore, for scaffolding purposes, I draw on other entrepreneurial scholarly studies throughout my thesis; that investigate the roles of personality, governance and context, through the lens of entrepreneurial identity (see Young, 2001; Rae, 2005; Hamilton, 2006; Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2006; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012; Seanor *et al.*, 2013).

Please note, this PhD study is not a thesis about the individual elements of *identity*, *sustainability*, or *governance* per se; nor, does it begin with ‘*a priori*’ definitions of the term ‘*sustainability*’, which would detract from the organisational and person-centred complexities of the work. Instead, many of the theoretical elements will be interwoven and discussed throughout, such as the role of the triple bottom line, organisational identity, legitimacy and the personal identity/agentive qualities of social enterprise entrepreneurs (Chapters 5–7). The rather cautious note above is important to highlight, as it reflects a thesis design borne of critical feedback over the myriad of (definitional) sustainability issues from international (BAM and ISBE¹) conferences and European Social Research Council (ESRC) meetings. These suggested that both methodologically and critically, conceptions and propositions of ‘*sustainable social enterprise*’ are best developed after well-rounded analysis, discussion and reflection upon findings.

According to Low (2006), the third sector requires further basic research into aspects of organisational governance and sustainability, including structures and processes (Abzug and Galaskiewicz, 2001), member composition (Iecovich, 2005), and the operation of management boards (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009), all of which can be perceived as attributes of governance. Exploring social enterprise governance issues help us to understand the complex structural and legal forms in the UK third sector and to interpret social enterprise entrepreneurship from institutional theory, legitimacy and stewardship perspectives. Recent guidance and changes in government policy affect how third sector organisations structure their everyday activities and address longer-term strategy developments (Darby and Jenkins, 2006; Gibbon and Affleck, 2008; Spear *et al.*, 2009). The changing contexts of both the (UK) third sector and public sector must also be taken into account. Social enterprises and the third sector are (in general) facing a high

¹ BAM- British Academy of Management
ISBE – Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship

degree of uncertainty, due to on-going funding cuts and the added dimension of the post-Brexit-vote, which I will touch upon later in the discussion.

The understanding of what makes a ‘*sustainable*’ social enterprise has been at the centre of a number of previous scholarly investigations (Mason *et al.*, 2007; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Martin and Thompson, 2010). I build upon this prior research through a theoretical discussion, in terms of what constitutes sustainable social enterprise, and the social entrepreneurship phenomenon. After I investigate the organisational identity and governance aspects of (sustainable) social enterprises in the (UK) South East, I examine the personal/ individual identities of selected ‘*social enterprise entrepreneurs*’ (SEEs). I will investigate *who SEEs are*, what motivates them, how their drive, vision and ambition helps shape their organisations. In addition, I interpret how they deal with their sustainability challenges within a turbulent (UK) third sector (Dart, 2004a; Low, 2006; Mason *et al.*, 2007; Rotheroe and Miller, 2008; Martin and Thompson, 2010; Thompson, 2011). Policy issues are also important within this thesis, with implications and recommendations being highlighted during Chapter’s 5, 7 and 8.

1.2 Research aim and questions

The aim of this PhD is ***to investigate the phenomenon of sustainable social (enterprise) entrepreneurship from organisational and individual identity perspectives.***

In order to carry out the above research aim, two (overarching) guiding research questions have been developed to scaffold my study, namely:

RQ1. What are the key organisational identity (OI) and governance issues associated with sustainable social enterprises (SEs) and social entrepreneurship?

Within the literature review (Chapters 2 and 3), definitions of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship are examined more fully. In my first empirical Chapter 5, I develop two organisational sustainability propositions² and, given the uncertainty within the (UK) third

² **Proposition 1:** Organisations in the third sector should be able to properly identify with *who they are in* order to survive.

sector, I interpret what a ‘*sustainable social enterprise*’ might look like from a combined identity and governance perspective. Based on literature arguments, a conceptual ‘*social enterprise grid*’ (SEG), i.e. as an organisational identity/governance framework, is developed based on results from semi-structured interviews with 30 social enterprise leaders (see Chapter 5).

The social enterprise grid (SEG) helps the reader to understand the interplay between the theoretical issues taken from the social entrepreneurship literature and how they relate to common forms of social enterprise governance and organisational identity. More importantly, it helps the reader conceptualise the theoretical characteristics of sustainable social enterprise, and how these might impact upon (UK) third sector policy and decision-makers. This leads onto my second research question (RQ2), namely, *who is responsible for making sustainability happen?*

RQ2. *Who are the social enterprise (SE) leaders/entrepreneurs (and why are they important from an identity perspective)?*

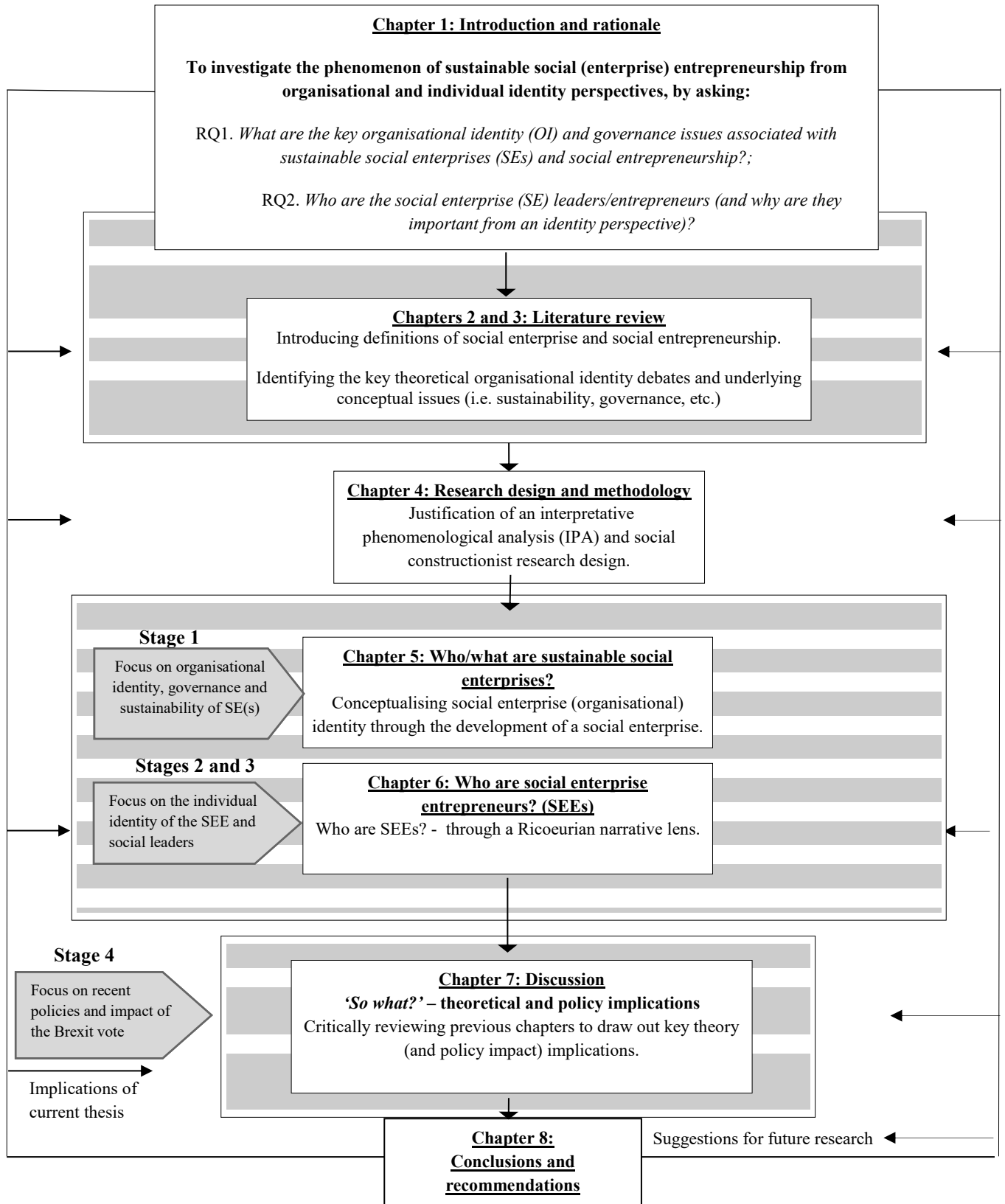
A social constructionist analysis of *who social entrepreneurs are*, is also developed using storytelling and personal narrative analysis. The approach employed is similar to other recent mainstream entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship studies (see Johansson, 2004; Hytti, 2005; Hamilton, 2006; Jones *et al.*, 2008). In particular, I employ a Ricoeurian narrative approach, similar to Hamilton (2006) and Mallet and Wapshott (2011), to help understand the relationship between *who social-entrepreneurial leaders are, and what they do*. It is important to examine the agentising and bricolage effects (Baker and Nelson, 2005) of social enterprise entrepreneurs (see Chapter 3) - as part of a sustainability thesis. In this regard, I make two further propositions³, namely, the extent to which SEs are sustainable should be considered as a part-consequence of *who social entrepreneurs (SEEs) are, what they do, and how they interact with stakeholders*.

Proposition 2: Social (enterprise) sustainability is an identity function of *who social organisations are*, as well as, *who they aspire to be*.

³ **Proposition 3:** Social leaders/entrepreneurs continually seek new social enterprise opportunities because they are fundamentally motivated by their personal beliefs, social values and sense of identity.

Proposition 4: Social (enterprise) sustainability is a lifetime function of *who social leaders were, who they are, and who they aspire to be (adapted from a Ricoeurian perspective)*.

1.3 Research map



1.4 Research map (explanation)

This section will explain and summarise the role of each chapter in my thesis.

Chapter 1 – Introduction to the thesis

This chapter offers an introduction, rationale and overview for the study. I outline my primary aim and two guiding research questions. Furthermore, in order to guide the reader, a research map has been developed to act as a signpost to various chapters and points of interest.

Chapters 2 and 3 – Literature review

The literature review is presented as two separate chapters.

Chapter 2 offers a useful theory background to the study of (sustainable) social enterprise (SE) and social entrepreneurship. This involves understanding the origins and definitions of SE, getting to grips with what constitutes SE and third sector organisational (TSO) sustainability. There is also an integrated discussion concerning organisational identity and governance, which is necessary for setting the scene, as part of investigating RQ1.

Chapter 3 explores the existing definitions of social entrepreneurship, further setting the scene for a social enterprise entrepreneurial (SEE) investigation, as part of RQ2. In chapter 3, I also draw on key literatures for understanding the various process theories (i.e. institutional, stewardship and stakeholder) commonly associated with SEs. These three theory elements are also necessary for underpinning further investigation and discussion of social enterprise entrepreneurship, from organisational and personal identity perspectives.

Chapter 4 – Research Design and methodology

Chapter 4 justifies my research design and methodology. It offers a clear rationale for combining interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) with a social constructionist approach. The research design is supported by Spear *et al.* (2009), who suggest that, given the complexity of current policy challenges concerning third sector governance, it is important to develop more research based upon the actual experiences of stakeholders.

The *four-stages of my empirical study* can be summarised as follows:

- **Stage 1** represented an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of 30 social enterprise leaders in the South East of England. The wide variety of cases involved (as organisational units of analysis) are useful for comparison purposes. The development of a social enterprise grid (SEG) is a key deliverable/outcome at the end of Stage 1, to help the reader understand what a sustainable social enterprise *may, or may not look like* from an identity and governance perspective (see Chapter 5).
- **Stage 2** involved between 4 and 7 follow-up in-depth interviews each of the three selected social enterprise leaders identified during Stage 1. These in-depth, personal case interviews (16 in all) were useful for gathering longitudinal data about *who social (enterprise) leaders are*. These were used to develop a Ricoeurian narrative analysis (see Chapter 6).
- **Stage 3** used 2 employee/ volunteer focus groups (with 4 and 7 participants respectively). This follow-up fieldwork allowed me an opportunity to verify and internally validate initial findings, offering an alternative perspective to the social enterprise leaders already interviewed.
- **Stage 4** involved 4 further interviews with social leaders (from Stage 1) in response to a changing (UK) socio-economic landscape, i.e. after the Brexit vote. I felt this was necessary, as Brexit is likely to have a major impact on the socio-economic landscape of the (UK) third sector.

It also afforded me an opportunity to revisit some organisations after the initial Stage 1 study. However, the main purpose of this stage was to gather the most recent participant views about Brexit, and ascertain possible implications for organisational sustainability.

Chapter 5 – What is a sustainable social enterprise?

This chapter conceptualises social enterprise (organisational) identity through the development of a *social enterprise grid* (SEG) framework. Understanding *who third sector organisations are now*, and *who they aspire to be* in the future is an important part of RQ1, and any organisational identity analysis. The SEG combines the socially philanthropic elements of organisational identity with more recent calls for third sector organisations to be more commercially focused, and thus financially sustainable (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). Social enterprise as a distinct organisational identity is thus perceived by many as central to the idea of third sector sustainability. Using the SEG, I interpret various quadrant positions, and theorise possible organisational identity and sustainability implications for future social enterprises (and other third sector organisations).

Chapter 6 – Who are social enterprise entrepreneurs/leaders?

This chapter employs a Ricoeurian narrative approach, to help make sense of who three very different individual social enterprise entrepreneurs (SEEs) are, and what they do (RQ2). I investigate their rather unique identities and life histories over their respective lifetimes – from a social (sustainable) enterprise perspective. This micro-level, and person-centred identity analysis, complements the macro-level organisational identity and governance investigation of the previous chapter 5. We can see how individuals (with very different personal backgrounds) can make a real difference, and possibly impact upon the future sustainability of their organisations, and the broader third sector.

Chapter 7 – Discussion

I discuss the theoretical implications of addressing my two research questions (and four thesis propositions) in relation to both findings chapters 5 and 6, including the most recent scholarly literature. Firstly, I examine the implications of key findings associated with RQ1, i.e. governance, sustainability and organisational identity. Secondly, I discuss the implications for the individual identity analysis of three social enterprise entrepreneurs (SEEs) – i.e. in relation to RQ2. I also provide a review of recent policy impact(s), and possible implications of Brexit on the future sustainability of TSOs. Finally, I consider the limitations of the study and my role as a researcher.

Chapter 8 – Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter highlights key aspects of my thesis, and offers a range of recommendations for future researchers and policy-makers.

1.5 Chapter 1 summary

The social economy is undergoing inevitable structural and conceptual changes, which are largely attributable to increasing budget cuts and continued lack of understanding of overlapping third sector OIs. The survival of many TSOs and local authorities is at stake as they are overstretched and underfunded. An increasing number of charities and community organisations are facing bankruptcy, as they find themselves unable to meet staffing costs, as well as increasing demand for social care and support. Meanwhile, local authorities are also struggling to meet financial ends due to increasing budget cuts, and with insufficient resources at their disposal (Butler, 2017), the gap in social service provision is widening. As a result, traditional third sector organisational logics are shifting away from grant dependency towards more integrated approaches which focus on securing socio-commercial independence. This is evident from the increasing number of TSOs adopting operational objectives to fulfil their social goals, with SEs driving the trend. However, the existing lack of commercial knowledge in the third sector, coupled with increasing uncertainties surrounding organisational futures (i.e. fuelled by the effects of the Brexit vote), only serve to deepen existential anxieties in a sector already overloaded by growing demands for more inclusive service provision.

This introductory chapter sets the scene for my thesis and presents a research map (see Section 1.3) to help guide the reader through the subsequent chapters by providing an overview of their content. It offers a clear rationale and motivation for this PhD study, and justifies the need for a more in-depth investigation of sustainable social enterprise entrepreneurship from identity and governance perspectives. This need is supported by a corresponding lack of consensus as to what actually constitutes (SE) sustainability (in terms of organisational forms, legal status and identification among stakeholders) (Mason *et al.*, 2007; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Martin and Thompson, 2010). Furthermore, this chapter emphasises the absence of common, agreed definitions (of ‘social enterprise’, ‘social entrepreneur’ and ‘social entrepreneurship’), as well as inadequate conceptual representations of interacting organisational forms that constitute the third sector.

This chapter also sets out the overall aim of the study, i.e., to investigate the phenomenon of sustainable social (enterprise) entrepreneurship from both organisational and individual identity perspectives. Along with my aim and thesis rationale, my core research questions are set in response to the existing literature and recent calls for research (see for example Chandra, 2016). My first research question (RQ1) is intended to investigate the ‘hard’ governance characteristics of SE, focusing on the key OI and governance issues associated with sustainability in SEs. My second research question (RQ2) is intended to establish the role of ‘who’ in the third sector, by investigating the identity of social leaders and their role in TSO development and sustainability.

This study, which takes an integrated (organisational and personal) approach and focusses on the narrow geographical region of the South East, offers a novel contribution to existing socio-entrepreneurial literature, as well as a robust framework for practitioners.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

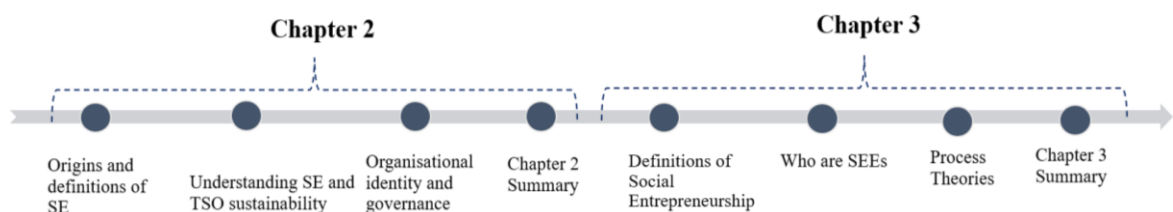
Background to (sustainable) social enterprise (SE) and social entrepreneurship

2.1 Introduction

The literature review will be arranged over two chapters (see Figure 1). In the first, I will seek to unpick the background elements of SE, based upon foundational Organisational Identity (OI) literature. In Chapter 2, I set the scene for this study and provide a definition of what, from an OI perspective, constitutes a ‘*Social Enterprise*’ (SE). Through investigation of existing socio-entrepreneurial literature, I offer a comprehensive overview of the origins of SE; debates surrounding not-for-profit (altruistic) versus more-than-profit drivers; and social versus commercial orientations, in association with the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) and sustainability, organisational identity and governance.

In the next Chapter 3, I then review the definitions and major (process) theories associated with the agentising effects of social entrepreneurship, such as stakeholder theory and stewardship, institutional logics, legitimation and human agency. Both literature review chapters are necessary to underpin my RQ1 and RQ2 investigations, (i.e. during chapters 5 and 6).

Figure 1: Overview of the literature review



2.2 Origins and traditional definitions of SE

The policy origins of the term ‘*social enterprise*’ stretch back to the 1980s and are associated principally with social movements in Italy. Historically, it was used at the wider, European level in the 1990s, having been popularised by the European Research Network (EMES⁴) (Defourny and Nyssens, 2008). In 1986, the Italian social cooperative movement encouraged EMES practitioners to focus upon the migration of non-profit organisations towards operationalisation of services (which in turn led to the emergence of SEs) (Doherty *et al.*, 2009). The EU quickly followed suit with the establishment of the Social Economy Unit⁵ in 1989, to monitor the development of new Third Sector Organisations (TSOs), which in themselves were a response to demand for new forms of service provision for socially excluded groups (Amin *et al.*, 2002). The original rationale of supporting EMES’ development in the 1990s was based on the structural and strategic transition of voluntary and community organisations (potential SEs), suggesting they stood at the crossroads between ‘*market, public policies and civil society*’ (Defourny and Nyssens, 2008; Doherty *et al.*, 2009). There was an expectation that the competitive success of SEs would be achieved via increased democratic values and an enhanced sense of empowerment for community stakeholders (EMES, 2004; Defourny and Nyssens, 2006; Bull, 2008). Indeed, the global significance of SE has been recognised on two separate occasions by Nobel committees⁶ (Haugh, 2012) as the way forward for social and third sector service provision.

Many academics attempt to define the SE concept in a more thematic way, believing that suggested government descriptions and policy definitions are too vague (Defourny and Nyssens, 2006). For example, Alter (2007), having reviewed a number of existing definitions of SE, favours a more traditional interpretation of the term from the US perspective. This focuses upon the operationalisation of key services in the not-for-

⁴ European Research Network (EMES) is a network of researchers and university research centres who overlook theoretical and empirical knowledge about social enterprise, social entrepreneurship, social economy, solidarity economy and social innovation (EMES, 2016).

⁵ Social Economy Unit was established in 1991 by the Regional Policy Directorate of the European Commission (Molloy *et al.*, 1999) focusing on emergence of new service provision organisations.

⁶ Haugh (2012) refers to peace prize awarded to M. Yunus for social microfinance in reducing poverty (2006) and economic sciences prize awarded to E. Ostrom for work on the role of communities and social economies (2009).

profit sector, with the forces of ‘*innovation and determination*’ identified as values associated with private sector influence on SE. He stresses:

“A social enterprise is any business venture created for a social purpose – mitigating/reducing a social problem or a market failure – and to generate social value while operating with the financial discipline, innovation and determination of a private business sector business” (Alter, 2007, cited in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009, p 64).

One of the least contentious facets of traditional SE definitions concerns the necessary conceptual compromise between ‘*social*’ and ‘*enterprise*’, which suggests a sense of hybrid identity embedded within the SE organisational structure (Nyssens, 2006; Bridge *et al.*, 2009). This notion of organisational hybridity is further discussed in the latter part of this chapter, from both commercial and social perspectives.

The plethora of governance forms and legal requirements for SEs around the world has complicated the idea of a universal (global) policy definition for social enterprise (OECD, 1999; Haugh, 2012). Defining global SEs involves a wide variety of organisations, classified through organisational identity/governance subtypes, as well as a blend of social and commercial activities (Dees, 1998; Dees, *et al.*, 2010). For the purposes of this study (as part of Appendix 1), I summarise some of the key differences between the UK, European and US social enterprises (Alter, 2007; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). However, I concentrate more on the definitional ambiguities associated with (UK) SEs.

It is worth noting that the global growth of SEs during the last 30 years has promoted a general sense of organisational social responsibility⁷ (Kuratko *et al.*, 2005). It is also worth noting there has been a global decline in access to traditional not-for-profit funding sources (Pearce, 2003; Bull, 2008), with less governmental financial support for societal services (Mulgan, 2006). There has also been increased competition for these dwindling funds, for example, UK policy development has “*increasingly elided social*

⁷ One of the earliest views of social responsibility was offered by McGuire in 1963, pointing that all organisations and businesses have responsibilities to society beyond the economic and legal obligations. The most traditional definition, proposed by Carroll (1999) see social responsibility as embedded in the organisational fabric, encompassing: “*economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations*” (*ibid*, p. 500) of the society (in which the organisation operates).

enterprise and social entrepreneurship with social organisations that compete for contracts to deliver welfare provision” (Seanor et al., 2013, p.2).

It may be argued that this shift in social economy inevitably began to push the UK third sector towards more enterprise-oriented activities (Bull, 2008) with a clearer focus on making key public and third sector services more efficient (Pearce, 2003; Nicholls, 2006; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Bull, 2008; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). SEs (and their protagonists) are thus arguably catalysts for OI transition in the third sector, through the blending traditional societal values with more business-focused practices. SEs have also emerged as the primary vehicles for crossing boundaries between not-for-profit and for-profit organisations (Dart, 2004a; Bull, 2008).

2.3 Modern views and definitions of SE (in the UK)

Notwithstanding my previous comments (see Appendix 1) about what constitutes SEs from countries around the globe, there remains a lack of consensus regarding SE from a UK perspective. In the UK, the most common policy definition used to identify SEs was originally published by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in its July 2002 paper *‘Social Enterprise: A Strategy for Success’*. It defines SE as 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”* (DTI, 2002).

This definition perhaps hints at the potential rifts between profit-making and the social orientations of SEs (Seanor, 2006; Bull, 2008; Coelho, 2008), which will be considered throughout this study. Many scholars duly linked the DTI’s definition to the emergence and popularisation of a new third sector organisational form in the UK, namely - the *‘Community Interest Company’* (CIC) - which embraced the socio-entrepreneurial label (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). There was a suggestion that the DTI intended an open interpretation of the term in order to allow traditional third sector organisations (TSOs), such as football supporters’ clubs, housing associations, trusts, etc to join this new SE bandwagon (Smallbone and Lyon, 2005; Lyon and Sepulveda, 2009). This was borne out by key reports, such as the Social Enterprise Action Plan (2006), which identified a push towards the development of new organisational hybrid forms, loosely grouped under the banner of SE.

The (UK) DTI definition accords with that of EMES (2001), in which SE is viewed from both social and economic perspectives. EMES' definition claims to be based upon evidence of greater "*autonomy and entrepreneurial risk taking, combined with social and economic participation*" (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009, p. 62). Furthermore, when comparing the DTI definition with the EMES view, many of the same criteria, such as community benefit or business activity, can be found in both.

Ridley-Duff and Southcombe (2012) identify the use of the term SE in the UK as early as the 1970s, following a social audit initiative⁸ within a Leeds cooperative (in Yorkshire). The authors (*ibid.*) cited Spreckley's (1981, p.3) original, inclusive UK definition:

"An enterprise that is owned by those who work in it and/or reside in a given locality, is governed by registered social as well as commercial aims and objectives and run co-operatively may be termed a social enterprise. Traditionally 'capital hires labour' with overriding emphasis on making a profit over and above any benefit either to the business itself or the workforce. Contrasted to this the social enterprise is where 'labour hires capital' with the emphasis on social, environmental and financial benefit."

Spreckley's (1981) definition highlights a preference for capital over labour, whereby residual profits (if any) are distributed for community welfare (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). Modern SE discourse builds on the multi-faceted characteristics and dimensions derived from early definitions of SE (Ridley-Duff and Southcombe, 2012). The key common elements include "*worker and/or community ownership of the enterprise (social ownership); social and commercial aims (multi-purpose); co-operative management (workplace democracy); social, environmental and financial benefit (triple-bottom line); the hiring of capital by labour (anti-capitalist orientation)*". These elements extend above and beyond the traditional co-operative focus, recognising both the economic benefits and the development of determined social engagement. Ridley-Duff (2012) claims the recent focus of SE has been on '*social purpose*' of the movement, as opposed to '*socialisation*' of an enterprise. More recent social purpose discourses (including those relating to social entrepreneurship) are associated with public and

⁸ This is also referred to as a Social Audit Toolkit (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009).

community benefits and the impact of SE on the third sector, while later ‘socialisation’ literature captures the more agentic elements of SE governance (i.e. leadership or, human resources) and focuses on co-operative values and participatory democracy as being key elements of SE sustainability. A number of authors have noted the inconsistency between the definition of social purpose (especially within the operational definitions of SE in the UK) and the earlier, more balanced definitions incorporating the values of cooperative (or ‘communitarian’) socialisation (Smith and Teasdale, 2012; Ridley-Duff, 2012).

In the early 2000s, a growing interest in the concept of SE attracted both governmental support and regional planning attention. This led to the establishment of such support agencies as the Social Enterprise Coalition⁹ (2002) and RISE¹⁰ (South West), as attempts were made to promote the sectoral and regional growth of SEs by emphasising the significance of social welfare. More recent government policy definitions and initiatives, such as the Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012) and the Social Enterprise Mark (2010), define UK SEs from a hybrid perspective, remaining heavily oriented towards social purpose SE (based on RISE, p.1, cited Ridley-Duff, 2012):

“In order to be eligible for the Social Enterprise Mark, applicants must demonstrate that they are a social enterprise whose key driver is trading and that they operate for wider social/environmental benefit. Applicants will need to provide evidence in two key areas:

- 1. Show through their constitution that a sufficient proportion of the profit made by the business is spent on socially beneficial purposes, and that, on dissolution of the business, all residual assets are distributed for socially beneficial purposes.*
- 2. Show by their activities and their accounts that trading is a key driver and that profit generated is used for social or community benefit – whether by the social enterprise itself or by another agency.”*

⁹ Social Enterprise Coalition (SEC) was established in London in 2002 with four simplified objectives: 1) promotion of SE economy (values and principles), 2) promotion of innovative SE solutions, 3) promotion of SE discourse and, 4) promotion of the open access to regional resources (adapted from Ridley-Duff and Southcombe, 2012).

¹⁰ Research Initiative on Social Entrepreneurship (RISE) was registered in 2003 in South West with the single aim of supporting promotion of SE developments.

(See Appendix 2 for the more in-depth conceptual dimensions of (SEM) criteria, and Appendix 3 for the legal expectations of an SE based on OECD 2016).

Some recent scholars highlighted the rise of social entrepreneurship, and the influences of the US model when considering social purpose/economic objectives (Smith and Teasdale, 2012; Ridley-Duff, 2012). The more home-grown use of the term ‘SE’ captures the dual interests of the UK government and the general public, starting with the historical work of (social) co-operatives in the North East (Ellerman, 1984, 1990; Brown, 2003; Teasdale *et al.*, 2011). Critics would argue that modern (UK) SEs have grown primarily as a result of initial funding failures by the State, along government revisionism of interventionist policies and less socio-economic support for disadvantaged UK regional communities (Blackburn and Ram, 2006; Teasdale *et al.*, 2011).

2.3.1 SEs emerging from a ‘not-for-profit’ background

Pearce (2003) offered one of the first broader definitions of the SE, aimed at deepening practitioner knowledge, rather than the surrounding academic theory. Pearce (2003) viewed SEs as collective, yet institutionally independent organisations (Policy Action Team 3, 1999), aimed at providing a tangible benefit for the community (Community Business Scotland, 1991). It may (quite persuasively) be argued that this approach pioneered in portraying SEs mostly as ‘not-for profit’ ventures within the TSO field (Ridley-Duff, 2007). Furthermore, early SE studies focus on four policy areas including: (a) *local development*; (b) *working for the State*; (c) *community services* and; (d) *market driven ventures* (Ridley-Duff, 2007; Bridge *et al.*, 2009) as prominent in understanding the distinctive features of an SE. Generally speaking, not-for-profit-oriented SE definitions were regarded as a “*philosophical commitment to privilege the collective over other individuals*” (Bull, 2008; p.294), whereby the beneficial ‘surplus’ can be maximised collectively within the organisation, or utilised as a regeneration vehicle for the benefit of the wider community.

2.3.2 ‘More-than profit’ definitions and TBL of social purpose SE

In contrast to the above, some scholars favour the ‘more-than profit’ definition of SEs (Bull, 2008; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009), whereby the emphasis lies upon both the flexibility and the embeddedness of the social mission in terms of engendering

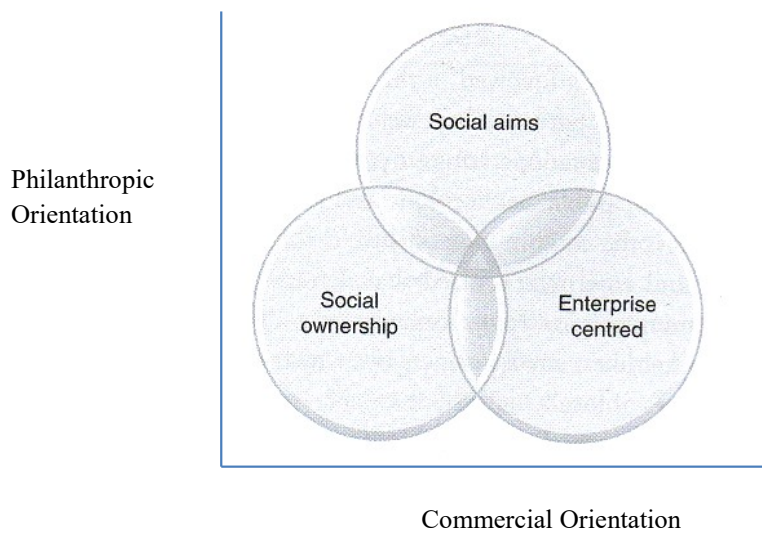
entrepreneurial behaviour as a sustaining mechanism. This behavioural view is reflected in the Social Enterprise Coalition (2004) philosophy of action, which states that:

“A social enterprise is not defined by its legal status but by its nature: its social aims and outcomes; the basis on which its social mission is embedded in its structure and governance; and the way it uses the profits it generates through trading activities” (SEC, 2004, p.8).

Ostensibly, regarding TSOs in terms of ‘social’ and ‘enterprise’, i.e., as having a combined outcome, may generate confusion (Martin and Thompson, 2010). Meanwhile, it has been suggested that regarding SEs as having a ‘more-than-commercial’ profit motive – the so-called TBL (see Figure 1) – helps distinguish SEs from private sector companies. Moreover, it provides a useful mechanism for the researcher to investigate the social purpose of SE organisational identity and sustainability during exploratory research (Stages 1 and 2) in Chapters 5 and 6.

Figure 2: The Triple Bottom Line (TBL)

(Adapted from: Martin and Thomson, 2010, p.9)



Understanding the social purpose and socialisation/communitarian motivations of SEs is important, not least because of the core ideas of participation and social community (Rotheroe and Miller, 2008; Ridley-Duff, 2012). The concept of social ownership reinforces the idea of profits being invested in order to benefit the community served, while realising social aims in the long term (Martin and Thompson, 2010). Combining

TBL and SE governance highlights the importance of sustainability through long-term community commitment and integration. Sustainability can be demonstrated by the strength and flexibility of governance, stakeholder participation and a variety of decision-making mechanisms (see Section 2.3 for a more in-depth examination of SE and TSO sustainability). For example, key stakeholders have a strong role in the organisational structure and decision-making process, while remaining legally autonomous from the governance structure (Mason *et al.*, 2007; Doherty *et al.*, 2009). The TBL approach emphasises re-investment, in contrast to commercial enterprises where profits are normally distributed to individual stakeholders. Finally, TBL highlights the importance of being ‘*enterprise centred*’ (Figure 1); essentially a movement towards the commercialisation of key services. Consequently, SEs must be commercially feasible whilst also fulfilling their social aims: they must conduct business and entrepreneurial activities for social profit, which in turn should be reinvested to ensure sustained existence, and to supplement reduced funding streams from existing governmental and other charitable sources (Mawson, 2010; Thompson, 2011).

The *raison d’être* for many SEs has been the realisation of social aims by engaging in economic, trading and strategic planning activities whilst remaining a not-for-profit organisation (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). In addition, profits arising from trading activities are not normally distributed to individual shareholders and acquired assets are usually held within the trust for the benefit of the community (Pearce, 2003). Furthermore, members and stakeholders usually share similar values and frequently participate in the leadership and decision-making process within their organisation (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). Many SEs rely on volunteers for fundraising and leadership projects, while others employ only paid staff (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). Another core identity facet of SE is said to be that of self-governance and accountability of the staff to their social community (Pearce, 2003; Ridley-Duff, 2010).

2.4 Understanding SE and TSO sustainability

One of the earlier policy definitions, recognises concept of organisational sustainability as a development “*that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, cited in Seelos and Mair, 2005). Simply put, sustainability – deriving from the Latin ‘*sustinērei*’; ‘*tinēre*’ (to hold) and ‘*sus*’ (up) – is associated with the long-

term maintenance of organisational responsibilities. Nevertheless, modern dictionaries provide a wide range of synonyms to express the very practical meaning of the verb sustain, highlighting comparability to ‘*maintain*’, ‘*support*’, and ‘*endure*’ (Whetten, 2006).

Traditionally, environmental issues have been considered the archetypal driving force of sustainability development (Dyllick and Hockerts 1999; Davies, 2009). Those usually focus on protection of natural capital (*ibid.*) through green schemes such as recycling and waste management. However, more recent definitions of the concept focus on illustrating sustainability from a macro perspective (in line with the TBL), as a complex notion emphasising interactions between economic, social and environmental issues (Tilley, 2007; Davies, 2008).

‘*Sustainability*’ is often associated with long-termism and the triple bottom line (TBL) in various scholarly and policy social enterprise literatures (Wallace, 2005). For example, the DTI (2006) associates sustainable development with organisational growth, environmental protection and social issues, thus offering a multidimensional, yet longer term perspective. In similar vein, Sharir *et al.* (2009) attempted to define sustainability in the context of the third sector:

“[...] the long-term sustainability of social ventures depends on their ability to gain resources and legitimacy, create co-operation between institutions and develop internal managerial and organisational capabilities” (Sharir et al., 2009, p. 90).

As the concept of TSO sustainability gains wider attention among scholars, policy makers and practitioners (Crews, 2010), it is important to note that sustainability can convey a variety of meanings to different stakeholders (Zhang and Swanson, 2014). Zhang and Swanson (2014) suggest that: *“to some, sustainability means having a real commitment to green practices [...]. to others, being a sustainable business only means survival”*.

Indeed, some scholars question TSO sustainability on legitimacy grounds, asking for example, how can TSOs remain true to their community stakeholders, social values and organisational mission, if they have morphed and become business-like, profit-oriented and/ or commercially driven. Rotheroe and Richards (2007, p.33) also stress that

“in order to achieve institutional sustainability there must be an embedded commitment towards full transparency and accountability. [...] Therefore societal approval is acquired for the continued existence of the organisation”.

In Table 1, I have summarised some of the key categories/themes pertaining to sustainability with implications for the investigation of TSOs and SEs.

Table 1: A synopsis of key SE and TSO sustainability themes identified from literature

Issues related to sustainability:	Attributes/themes	Thematic discourses	Associated Literature [key themes]
Economy/ Business	Shareholders and stakeholders	Stakeholder led (i.e. social leaders, employees, volunteer's etc.) operational development should be economically efficient and competitive allowing stable organisational growth (Rannikko, 1999).	Carrol (1991) – Corporate social responsibility; Donaldson and Preston (1995) Stakeholder theory; Mason <i>et al.</i> (2007) – Governance theory in SE; Low (2009) – Governance in SE; Ridley-Duff (2007) – Communitarian views of SE.
	Legitimacy	In order to be sustainable, organisations need to recognise importance of maintaining legitimacy among various groups of stakeholders who may be characterised by different expectations those are stakeholders interested in creating economic value, and those who are interested in social value. (Moizer and Tracey, 2010). Moreover, it is significant to note that “ <i>legitimacy is intertwined with competitiveness as a key component of organisational sustainability</i> ” (<i>ibid.</i> , p. 254).	Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) – organisational legitimacy; Suchman (1995) – managing legitimacy; Dart (2004a) and Nicholls (2010) – Legitimacy in SE.
	Profitability	Economic sustainability traditionally focuses on the achievement of financial goals (Hynes, 2009). From a financial perspective, it is aimed at ensuring long-term profitability as well as maintaining the capital and added value (Penzenstadler <i>et al.</i> , 2013).	Alter (2007) – SE typology and characteristics; Ridley-Duff (2008) – SE as socially rational businesses; Penzenstadler <i>et al.</i> (2013) – economic sustainability.
	Business Capabilities	“ <i>Organisational capabilities refer to the embedded, non-transferable assets that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of resources</i> ” (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000 in Jenner, 2016, p.45). SEs are expected to be	Bull (2007) – Balance of performance in SE; Bull and Crompton (2006) – Business approaches in SE; Moizer and Tracy (2010) – Strategy making in SEs;

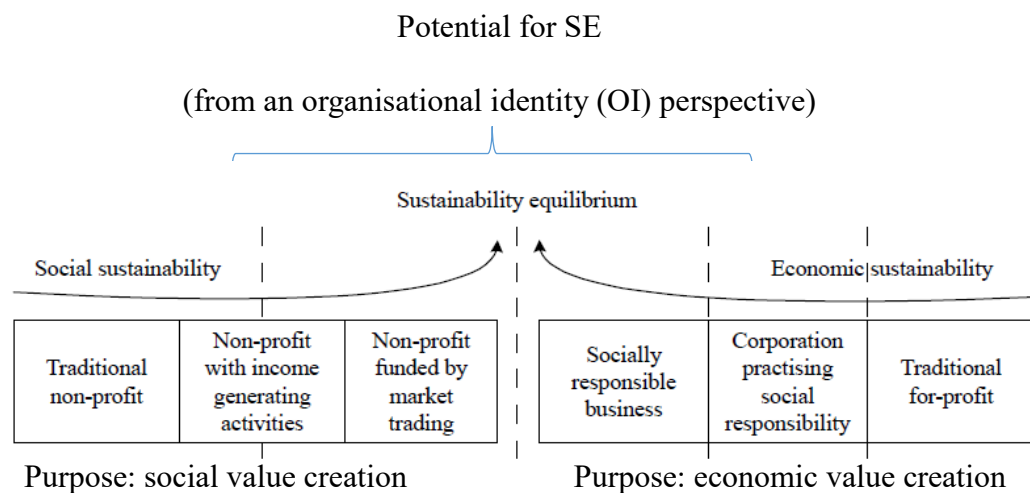
		characterised with knowledge and capabilities associated with business activities in order to pursue the social goals in an effective and sustainable way.	Smith <i>et al.</i> (2013) – Social business tensions in SEs.
	Orientation (commercial)	Scholars suggest that the effective management of commercial activities for social purposes is a key feature of sustainability of TSOs (Cornelius <i>et al.</i> , 2008). The financial profits are acceptable and, in fact, desirable if aimed at social value creation (Wilson and Post, 2013).	Evers (2001) – Multiple goals in SE; Austin <i>et al.</i> (2006) – Social and Commercial in Se; Cornelius <i>et al.</i> (2008) – Social purpose; Wilson and Post (2013) – commercial identity in SE.
Environmental	Consumption and environment	Environmental sustainability is based on resource management and emphasises the view that depreciation of natural capital cannot continue indefinitely (Dyllick and Hockerts, 1999).	Goodland (1995) – Environmental Sustainability; Dyllick and Hockerts (1999) – Corporate sustainability; Dean and McMullen (2007) – sustainable entrepreneurship.
	Resourcing	“ <i>Organisational resources refer to the valuable assets and competencies under an organisation’s control that may be strategically marshalled to create competitive advantage</i> ” Jenner (2016, p. 44).	Royce (2007) – Human resource management in SE; Jenner (2016) – Sustainability in SE.
Society	Engagement and empowerment	Social sustainability draws on the social capital concept based traditionally on networks, norms, values and rules. It emphasises the importance of social relationships in alignment with civic engagement and social cohesion. (Putnam, 2000; Wallace, 2005).	Chell (2007) – SE and entrepreneurial processes; Defourny and Nyssens (2008) – SE in Europe, trends and development; Magis (2010) – Indicators of social sustainability; Moizer and Tracey (2010) strategy making in SEs; Jenner (2016) – Sustainability in SE.
	Socially Added value	Gladwin <i>et al.</i> (1995) suggest that in order to be socially sustainable, an organisation should focus at adding value to the communities it operates in.	Austin <i>et al.</i> (2006) social entrepreneurship, social vs commercial; Mair and Marti (2006) - Social

			entrepreneurship research: a source of explanation; Chell (2007) – Se and entrepreneurial processes; Bull (2007) – Balance of performance in SE; Defourny and Nyssens (2008) – SE in Europe, trends and development; Ridley-Duff (2008) – SE as socially rational businesses.
	Networking	Network of relations with other organisations and social leaders is critical to a successful growth and may impact the long-term performance, and secure survival. (Shaw, 1998; Conway and Jones, 2012).	Shaw (2004) – Marketing in SE; Ridley-Duff (2008) – SE as socially rational businesses; Bridge <i>et al.</i> (2009) SE theory and practice.

2.4.1 Hybridity of OI in the SE context

The notion of hybridity (of OI) within a socio-entrepreneurial context derives from early work proposed by Dees (1998), in which he differentiates the combined nature of SEs by capturing characteristics of both the private and public sector (Dees, 1998; Peattie and Morley, 2008). This approach blends ‘*not-for profit*’ (social) and ‘*for-profit*’ (commercial) orientations creating new organisational dimensions with multiple characteristics, exploiting the advantages from both perspectives (Bacq and Janssen, 2011). Differentiation between conflicting approaches in philanthropic and commercial SE orientations has been further reflected by Alter (2007), through development of the sustainability spectrum (see Figure 2), designed for conceptualising the operationalisation of SEs. Correspondingly, Rotheroe and Richards (2007, p. 33) proposed the existence of “*similarities between the interpretation of sustainability and the raison d’être of social enterprises, such as applying business acumen for the achievement of primarily social objectives*”.

Figure 3: Identifying a sustainability spectrum: purpose-based view.



Source: Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009 based on Alters’ (2007) sustainability model.

In the Alters’ ‘*sustainability spectrum*’, stakeholder expectations progress towards operationalisation in order to meet the challenges of supplementing reduced government funding (Thompson, 2011) Therefore, the marketisation and operationalisation of services, although taking SEs closer to the private sector, shifts the fundamental issue of funding to a level based on maximisation of resources and self-actualisation of the organisation, rather than grant (or governmental) reliance. Nicholls (2006) described the

process of combining social interests with a business operation model as the hallmark of social entrepreneurship. This '*more-than-profit*' view tends to acknowledge an equilibrium between social and economic benefits (Ridley-Duff, 2007), allowing for the emergence of new socio-institutional logics and the creation of new streams of funding for social reinvestment (Pache and Santos, 2012; Pache and Santos, 2013). In the same vein, Hynes (2009) proposed that in order to become sustainable, SEs must adopt business oriented growth models enabling long term survival. Consequently, scholars suggest that perceptions of SE sustainability differ between those who favour '*not-for-profit*' and those who prefer '*more-than-profit*' (hybrid) approaches (Allen, 2005; Haugh, 2005, 2009; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Bacq and Janssen, 2011) as discussed in Section 2.3.

Ridley-Duff (2008) (further explained in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009) attempted to combine governance forms (based on profit-making) to form a typology of SEs comprising four distinct types of SEs within the sector (Table 2). This approach combines Alters' (2007) sustainability spectrum with other theories relating to the diversity of SEs. In his work, along with other scholars (e.g. Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Mazzei, 2017), the cross-sectoral aspect of SE is fundamental in stressing the diversity of the organisational logics and the dynamic identity of those ventures.

Table 2: SE Typology: laying the foundation for understanding SE identity and governance theories

<p>Non-profit model</p> <p>Lies within the boundaries between the public and third sectors. Shares a ‘<i>public interest</i>’ outlook and hostility to private sector ownership and equity finance.</p>	<p>SE as a ‘<i>non-profit</i>’ organisation: obtains grants and/or contracts form public sector bodies and other third sector organisations; structured to prevent profit and asset transfers except to other non-profit organisations.</p>
<p>Corporate social responsibility model</p> <p>Lies within the boundaries between the public and private sectors. Suspicious of the third sector as a viable partner in public service delivery and economic development.</p>	<p>SE as a corporate social responsibility project: environmental, ethical or fair-trade businesses; ‘<i>for profit</i>’ employee-owned businesses; public/private joint venture or partnerships with social aims.</p>
<p>More than profit model</p> <p>Lies within the boundaries between the private and third sectors. Antipathy to the State (central government) as a vehicle for meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups, and realistic about the State’s capacity to oppress minorities.</p>	<p>SE as a ‘<i>more-than-profit</i>’ organisation: single or dual stakeholder cooperatives, charity trading arms, membership societies or associations, or trusts that generate surpluses from trading to increase social investment.</p>
<p>Multi-stakeholder model (ideal type)</p> <p>Overlaps all sectors. Replaces public, private and third sector competition with a democratic multi-stakeholder model. All interests in a supply chain are acknowledged to break down barriers to social change.</p>	<p>SE as a multi-stakeholder enterprise: new cooperatives, charities, voluntary organisations or co-owned businesses using direct and representative democracy to achieve equitable distribution of social and economic benefit.</p>

Source: Ridley-Duff and Bull (2009, p. 76)

2.5 SE and TSO: Organisational identity and governance

OI is usually defined according to Whetten (2006, p.220), who proposed the concept “*as the central and enduring attributes of an organisation that distinguish it from other organisations*” (*ibid.*). It is important to note, too, the dynamics of OI¹¹, a concept that comprises two interweaving meanings (Albert and Whetten, 1985). The first recognises OI as *scientific*, and specifically questions the nature of the organisation, defining the organisational habitual characteristics from an external (community) perspective. The second identifies the characteristics of an organisation through *self-reflection* and internal sense-making of the question: ‘*who we are as an organisation*’ (He and Baruch, 2009), focusing on internal perceptions of key actors and stakeholders (characteristics of SE and other TSOs will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 5).

For many years, scholars drew on these dual meanings in conjunction with Albert and Whetten’s (1985) definitional dimensions of *centrality*, *distinctiveness* and *continuity* (Young, 2001). The notion of *centrality* recognises OI as integral and essential for organisational existence; *distinctiveness* describes OI characteristics in comparison to other organisations (the competition); and *continuity* of OI refers to desired stability over time, critical to assist leaders in guiding organisational development. It is then suggested that if these three components are present, there exists a greater chance of achieving long-term sustainability, and stability over time (He and Baruch, 2009).

When considered alongside the concept of individual identity, the notion of OI is often seen as relatively recent (van Tonder, 2011); both, however, have comparable interpretation mechanisms of behaviour, function and performance from an organisational perspective. The most significant difference between the individual and OI is psychological (*ibid.*). Individual identity is often understood as ‘*one’s quality*’ (i.e. being caring, compassionate, trustworthy etc.) as opposed an *attribute*. Identity regarded as an attribute¹² appeared in the literature in the mid-1950s through the broadly-recognised

¹¹ Erikson (1968) was among one of the first scholars to emphasise OI as dynamic (Van Tonder, 2011).

¹² Recognition of OI as an attribute refers to the organisation as a whole, suggesting unity throughout the entity (van Tonder, 2011).

concept of corporate identity. It was addressed principally in conjunction with marketing activities and communications, emphasising the visual manifestations of the corporate self (van Tonder, 2011) through elements such as logos, colours and symbols; which are now referred to as brand attributes. Corporate identity is commonly perceived as a natural source of competitive advantage and a positioning tool (He and Balmer, 2008; Kantanen, 2012). Hatch and Shultz (1997) suggest that “*corporate identity differs from organisational identity in the degree to which it is conceptualized as a function of leadership and by its focus on the visual*” (p. 357). It is important to distinguish that the core objective of corporate identity is to facilitate brand recognition, while emphasising the ways in which a particular brand differs from others (van Tonder, 2011).

It can be then suggested that OI is influenced by external environments and often based on individual perceptions of identity (Hatch and Shultz, 1997). This can be compared to modern views of OI, where the focus shifts towards the concept of organisational personality (van Tonder, 2011) and its unique character. This view builds upon the proposition of Dutton and Dukerich (1991) – which recognises a distinction between (organisational) image and OI – and offers a sense of clarification in differentiating the internal organisational views regarding the external perception of the venture versus members’ overall perception (Young, 2001). OI is most frequently employed, then, as a central organisational feature, as its distinctive nature (van Tonder, 2011) is deemed essential for successful divergence.

2.5.1 The duality of Organisational Identity for SEs

Argyris (1956) was among the first scholars to observe the duality of OI, identifying and emphasising both the universal and unique features of the concept (Martin *et al.*, 1983, cited in van Tonder, 2011). Organisational *universal* features act as the overarching governing indicators, while the *unique* features emphasise the OI character (van Tonder, 2011). The latter articulate the organisational character through adaptation to adequate structural forms, processes, strategy and vision, accounting for “*the unique in the universal*” (*ibid.*, 2010, p.633).

It may be suggested, then, that the main purpose of OI in the SE context is *differential* (van Tonder, 2011), and it is shaped (and therefore held) collectively by social leaders, employees and other stakeholders. OI can be understood “*as patterned self-referential meaning structures that are tacitly shared by employees and cultivated in social collectives*” (*ibid.*, p. 639), emphasised by its uniqueness, differentiating organisational (self-defined) background with specific patterns and actions. Key actors (i.e. social leaders) associated with the venture (as well as major stakeholders) have the ability to alter the collective OI perceptions reflected in the organisational mission statement (Whetten, 2006). From this perspective, the OI notion assumes an existence of “*categorical imperatives*” (*ibid.*) indicating a set of best practices for collective identity understanding (Whetten, 2006). It has been further suggested by scholars (Whetten and Mackey, 2002; Whetten, 2006) that there is a clear acknowledgment of the association of OI with “*more than social*” collectives. This reflects the fact that individual actors with analogous powers, namely social entrepreneurs, are at the core of understanding OI in TSOs. There is a clear distinction between organisational collective and individual identity, highlighting the role of “*important functional and structural parallels*” (Czarniawska, 1997). As a result, OI can be associated with an individual sense of uniqueness, reflected in self-actualisation and self-governance notions (Whetten, 2006).

2.5.2 ‘Sustainability’ as part of SE and TSO organisational identity

The concept of “*who we are*” in the social setting is essential for successful performance management (Young, 2001). OI is recognised as being entwined with the organisational function and governance structure, allowing clarification of its purpose (Young, 2001). OI can be referred to in the context of wider understanding of the (social) sector, or the network in which the individual organisation is comparable to a social actor (Whetten and Mackey, 2002; He and Baruch, 2009). It is important to acknowledge that in the third sector, OI has an impact upon how relationships and network alliances are formed (Kohtamaki *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, OI can be recognised as crucial in terms of sustaining organisational performance through shaping and morphing stakeholders’ perceptions and behaviours (Clark *et al.*, 2010; Kohtamaki *et al.*, 2016).

OI in the multiple identity context (i.e. SE), (popularised in the social sector by the emergence of new institutional logics), is seen as a complex notion (MacLean and Webber, 2015). The majority of the literature focuses on OI from a singular perspective, wherein the lone identity type is central to the organisational existence (*ibid.*). However, there is a clear shift of attention emphasising the changing socio-economic scene when understanding OI in multiple identity organisations associated with TS, that are believed to result from overlaps between (blurred) sectoral boundaries (MacLean and Webber, 2015). As a result, the most recent changes in the social sector focus on the emergence of new organisational forms successfully combining social and operational orientations (Grimes, 2010), thus furthering confusions and misinterpretations (*ibid.*, Gioia *et al.*, 2000) in understanding OI in the context of the third sector. For example, Albert and Whetten (1985) were among the first scholars who observed the sustainability struggles among organisations faced with a multiplicity of identity (Young, 2001), due to conflicting pressures (for example based on social or environmental expectations).

In a similar vein, MacLean and Webber (2015) recognise multiple and complex difficulties in understanding OI in emerging social organisations (referring to them as hybrids¹³). In fact, there are many guidelines for best-practice management of multiple OIs (see SEM or OECD dimensions in Appendices 2 and 3 for examples), focusing mainly on achieving a balance of forces (for instance, divergence vs convergence, or from an SE perspective, social vs commercial). Establishing OI is essential in performing fundamental organisational actions such as initial formation (supporting the vision and building on the *raison d'être*), management of change (such as mergers or acquisitions), and sustaining organisational stability.

Social leaders are often believed to impose their own individual identities on the organisational structure (Bolluk and Mottial, 2014). This enhances development of multiple OIs, which are formed and morphed accordingly (MacLean and Webber, 2015). Organisational leaders act as contributors to OI, shaping hybrid logics while overcoming

¹³ Billis (2010) was among the first scholars in entrepreneurship literature who referred to hybrid organisations as ubiquitous, stressing their cross-sectoral characteristics.

tensions of sectoral reality and social expectations (Billis, 2010). This already complex perspective is further complicated when attempting to sustain those (integrated) identities in order to achieve long-term stability (MacLean and Webber, 2015) enabling survival. Consequently, it creates a multitude of implications for social leaders and stakeholders (*ibid.*).

Many social organisations struggle with self-identification (Young, 2001) due largely to the (fear of) operationalisation of services (Rahdari *et al.*, 2016). In the SE context, this is usually caused by limited knowledge on behalf of stakeholders associated with the sectoral innovativeness of hybrid approaches as opposed to grant reliance, traditionally embedded in the fabric of the third sector. However, internal OI conflicts also have the potential to create growth and performance opportunities (Weick, 1979; Corner and Cho, 2010) for TSOs, for example in developing innovative solutions and modelling more successful approaches to pursuing social goals. Those usually fall in line with socio-economic and environmental expectations, and respond to TSO governance requirements. It can be suggested that performance difficulties tend to be most perceptible (Sugreen, 2010) in organisations adopting a traditional, single identity approach. The ‘*identity centric approach*’ (MacLean and Webber, 2015) can impact organisational competitiveness and market position within the sector, prompting collective solidarity among organisational stakeholders (van Tonder, 2011).

OI uniqueness is aimed at providing differentiation among competition; organisational capabilities are therefore manifested through legitimacy, notionally enhancing the position of an organisation within the sector. While a sense of uniqueness is desirable, it also raises the threat of imitations aimed at replicating successfully identified social niches (van Tonder, 2011). Strong OI acts as a catalyst for change or transition, and therefore forms a key part of the organisational process (being pronounced strongly during the growth phase and something which, if ignored, could lead to a deceleration of activities) (*ibid.*).

In summary, OI can be perceived as socially constructed (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006; He and Baruch, 2009), and may be compared to an anchor holding an organisation

together and enabling a sustainable growth. In some circumstances (i.e. structural changes, growth), OI change is inevitable, but the fact that there exists very little consensus about how OI changes (He and Baruch, 2009), there is a need for further research. Analysing SE identity from an organisational perspective is complex, and it remains a vastly under-researched area of study. Hopefully, my PhD study will act, at least to some degree, as a seminal contribution in respect of the study of OI and TSOs.

2.5.3 A ‘governance’ perspective on SE and TSO identity

Organisational governance can be perceived as a relationship between actors (i.e. social leaders, employees, volunteers and other stakeholders) who are engaged in the decision-making processes within organisations (Monks and Minow, 2008). The most common elements of governance across various disciplines and sectors include “*emphasis on rules and qualities of systems, co-operation to enhance legitimacy and effectiveness and the attention for new processes and public-private arrangements*” (Kooiman, 1999, p. 67)”.

OECD (2004) offers one of the most commonly used definitions of governance as a concept focused on the “*set of relationships between a company’s management, its board ... and other stakeholders* (OECD, 2004, p.11)”, that can be applied to various types of ventures across all sectors. It emphasises the notion of relationship management between actors in order to achieve organisational collective objectives (Doherty *et al.*, 2009), including, for instance, organisational leaders, management, stakeholders and the board of trustees and/or directors.

The most common form of governance observed in TSOs is based on (collective) membership (Billis, 2010). Mason (2010) indicates the centrality of social objectives as having a legitimising effect on organisational structures and performance (See Table 3). This also involves the existence of a close alignment between stakeholder and management interests, enabling greater transparency across an SE board and more effective governance (Mason, 2010). This SE perspective of governance helps with operational management and guidance in realising organisational objectives (Schmidt and Brauer, 2006).

SE and TSO governance has been debated by many authors (Turnbull, 2002; Dart, 2004a; Low, 2006; Mason *et al.*, 2007; Ridley-Duff, 2008; Doherty *et al.*, 2009; Mason, 2010; Diochon, 2010; Billis, 2010; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011; Bennet and Bennett, 2016). Some authors still highlight contradictions based on the central drivers, e.g. *not-for profit* versus *profit* (Ridley-Duff, 2007). This in turn offers various opportunities for new empirical and conceptual studies (Mason *et al.*, 2007), as the concept of governance in SE in particular remains problematic and under-researched – and will represent a core contribution of my research (see Chapter 5). The duality of social versus corporate (commercial) governance was noted in the late 1990s by Alexander *et al.* (1998), who attempted to provide comparisons of both commercial and socially oriented approaches (See Table 3) adequate to my SE study.

Table 3: Differentiating characteristics of social and corporate governance models

Social Model	Corporate Model
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large board size • Wide range of perspectives/backgrounds • Small number of internal directors • Separation of management and governance • Informal management accountability to the board • No limit to consecutive terms for board members • No compensation for board service • Emphasis on asset and mission preservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small board size • Narrow, more focused perspectives/backgrounds • Large number of internal directors • Active management participation across the board • Formal management accountability to the board • Limit to consecutive terms of board members • Compensation for board service • Emphasis on strategic and entrepreneurial activity

Source: Alexander et al. (1988, cited in Alexander et al. 1998, p. 225)

The socially-oriented model of governance in Table 3, provides guidance for voluntary, charitable and community-based organisations. At first glance, it seems that the Alexander *et al.* (1998) simply opposes basic organisational characteristics such as size, board-related issues and assets. However, the literature suggests that defining governance frequently involves the use of key terms such as networks, rules, steering, order, control, new, good, corporate governance, governing, and authority (Robichau, 2011). Attributes of “*good governance*” linked with organisational stability are often perceived as a prerequisite of establishing an appropriate business environment (Klapper *et al.*, 2006; Fereidouni and Masron, 2012). Therefore, it can be suggested that the main purpose of SE governance falls in line with Lynn’s (2010) definition focused on the “*manner of governing – that is, of directing, guiding, or regulating individuals, organisations, or nations in conduct or actions (ibid., p. 671)*” and can be compared to the safeguarding of the organisational purpose (Cornforth and Spear, 2010).

2.5.4 Changing SE and TSO identity and governance: the realities of an evolving UK third sector

Increasingly, SEs may operate by law under a number of governance arrangements for economic and financial reasons, for example: trading charities; trusts; CICs; companies limited by guarantee and by shares; community benefit societies; industrial and provident societies; and unincorporated associations (Doherty *et al.*, 2009; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). SEs come in various shapes and sizes and govern using a combination of paid staff, volunteers and community stakeholders. There is a growing interest in cooperative governance arrangements generally across the private, public and third sectors (Spear *et al.*, 2009). This is in response to the increased need to share public and community resources, create efficiencies and understand the changing socio-economic dynamics of the public and third sectors. It also leads to a greater need for third sector co-operation and partnership (Cornforth and Spear, 2010). Sharma (2004, p. 9) explains that:

“[cooperative] governance involves interaction between the formal institutions and those in civil society. Governance refers to a process whereby elements in society wield power, authority and influence and enact policies and decisions concerning public life and social upliftment.”

SEs have been described as having a dynamic organisational identity because of their continuous adaptation, and structural/governance changes (Doherty *et al.*, 2009). Some authors perceive SEs as fully engrained in the third sector fabric (Defourny, 2001; Pearce, 2003), whilst others view SEs as interweaving between the public and private sectors (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). Furthermore, more recent streams of thought construe modern SEs as hybridised organisational forms, which aggressively use private sector methods in the voluntary sector, maximising achievements of social profit objectives (Defourny and Nyssens, 2006; Peattie and Morley, 2008). Again, from an OI perspective, operational processes of SE change remain unclear (Grimes, 2010), causing confusion for leading TSO practitioners, in turn heightening criticisms of the ever-evolving third sector.

Given the prolific growth of SEs in recent years, the original organisational identities of many (smaller) UK third sector voluntary organisations remain unclear. For example, many organisations are now claiming legal SE status, but one can legitimately ask: were they originally set up as charities; community interest groups; or, were they a blend of profit and non-profit concerns to start with? In addition, when examining the governance structures, nature of boards, number of paid employees versus volunteers etc, it is important to establish whether or not there are common patterns of SE identification, i.e. surviving, and/or thriving over the mid-to-long term (see Chapters 5 and 6).

There is a multiplicity of SE perspectives in terms of organisational origins, migration routes and future destinations (see Chapter 5 for core arguments and propositions). Some critics argue that whilst newer SEs now deliberately operate in a hybrid mode (Billis, 2010), exhibiting business-like cultural mind-sets, they are often in natural opposition to the core foundational values of the voluntary sector (Phillips, 2006). Others argue that with the explosive growth of SEs in the third sector and increased competition for funding, there must be a question mark over how to fund so many organisations. It is also important to probe and question the role of private sector companies and intermediaries, and challenge the dominant narrative assumptions that organisations calling themselves SEs to obtain funding are morally '*bad*'.

2.6 Chapter 2 summary

This is the first of two literature review chapters, and discusses the existing conceptual definitions and debates relating to SE, OI and TSO sustainability. It offers a rich understanding of the origins and traditional definitions of SE. Furthermore, it examines how these definitions have evolved over the years in response to changing socio-economics, the push towards operationalisation and diminishing State funding. It also highlights a growing importance of hybridity of OI in the wider TSO context, by placing social entrepreneurs at the heart of organisations and thereby revealing their integrity from a more agentic perspective.

Furthermore, this chapter discusses the concept of sustainability as an integral part of the evolving SE; and TSO organisational identity as entwined with the organisational structure. Numerous approaches associated with the concept of sustainability are discussed across the chapter, such as not-for-profit, more-than-profit, TBL etc. Nevertheless, despite the ongoing academic debate, the ‘more-than-profit’ motive associated with TBL remains the most favourable choice for SEs. It emphasises the flexibility and embeddedness of the organisational social mission, which, in turn, supports my research questions (RQ1 and RQ2) and research propositions (P1-P4).

The duality of the SE OI is believed to result from the blurring and overlapping of public, private and third sectoral boundaries (MacLean and Webber, 2015). Therefore, TSOs are inherently struggling to recognise who they are or what their long-term objectives should be. With conflicting characterisations of SE (and hybridity in general), as well as wide-ranging ambiguities associated with the changing socio-economic landscape, many TSOs are wary about their future. By highlighting these discrepancies and bringing clarity to what constitutes a modern-day SE, Chapter 2 forms an essential underpinning for the rest of the thesis (see Chapters 3 and 5 in particular).

The theoretical analyses of the commercial and philanthropic motives of organisations are used to conceptually inform the SEG in Chapter 5. These motives play a significant role in distinguishing SEs from other organisations, further demonstrating

the discrepancies among existing theoretical arguments as to what constitutes ‘social enterprise’, as well as the dialectic basis for establishing OI. Examining SE and TSO sustainability from a modern, macro perspective also helps to highlight these discrepancies. As a result, this chapter contributes to existing literature by highlighting the complex interplay between social, environmental and economic factors in the third sector, i.e., importance of legitimacy, business capabilities, resourcing, engagement etc.

Many of the views associated with the turbulent third sector reality – which are discussed in this chapter – suggest that a large number of TSOs continue to struggle with organisational self-identification. These findings form the theoretical underpinnings of this chapter, which are necessary for setting the overall scene for the study, and in particular, the development of RQ1 and associated research propositions (P1-P2). They also identify the existing overlaps between sectoral boundaries as a result of the emergence of new institutional forms, such as SEs, and successfully conceptualise the operationalisation of SEs based on the growing trend of hybridity, i.e. encompassing a variety of OI characteristics from social, public and private sectors. In turn, this hybridity allows for the formation of ventures with multiple identity characteristics, which is fully portrayed in the Chapter 5 SEG analysis.

This chapter also forms a theoretical backdrop to the wider study of OI and governance (e.g. Whetten, 2006) relevant to RQ1 and the development of the SEG framework. It introduces the significance of Whetten’s CED attributes, which form the conceptual backbone of the Chapter 5 analysis. For example, recognition of OI as an organisational attribute suggests unity (of purpose), reflected throughout the venture and influenced by both the external environment and the individual objectives of stakeholders (van Tonder, 2010). Furthermore, this chapter proposes that OI purpose is in fact differential (for example in terms of organisational legitimacy) and can be perceived as a catalyst for change, which is especially important given the shifting third sector dynamics, and prolific growth of SEs.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

The role of social entrepreneurship, personal identity and underpinning theories

3.1 Introduction

In this second literature review chapter, I begin by exploring some background to the social entrepreneurial discourse (over and above chapter 2). I then draw briefly on some of the process theories associated with the sustainable SE, including: stewardship and agency; the stakeholder approach; and institutional theory; organisational identity and governance. Finally, I examine generic definitions of the *social entrepreneur*, and make a special case for identifying more closely with the *social enterprise entrepreneur (SEE)*.

Having established a review of relevant background literature within this chapter, I develop some of these ideas further during Chapters 5 and 6, in conjunction with both findings and the literature.

3.2 Social entrepreneurship: a background

Social entrepreneurship is an innovative and dynamic concept involving a high degree of interaction between the private, public and social sectors (Nicholls, 2006; Nicholls, 2010; Diochan and Ghore, 2016). As a social science phenomenon, it is no longer perceived as novel (Dees, 1998), although the associated socio-entrepreneurial language continues to evolve, largely as a result of the lack of consensus regarding terminology (Neck *et al.*, 2009). Social entrepreneurship literatures consider both definitional and structural issues (see for example Mair and Marti, 2006; Peredo and McLean, 2006; Conway Dato-on and Kalakay, 2016), furthering confusion among scholars and practitioners, thus resulting in theoretical imprecision (Dacin *et al.*, 2011). It can be argued, that because social entrepreneurship lacks any established underlying, or unifying framework, it remains

somewhat nascent, as an academic discipline (Choi and Majumdar, 2014). In the following section(s), I shall consider some of the more *contested subjects*¹⁴ of the recent scholarly debate regarding social entrepreneurship, in order to gain a broader understanding of its complex dynamics.

3.2.1 Definitions and ambiguities

Several scholars address the disparities that exist between socio-entrepreneurial concepts by scrutinising their definitional dichotomy. The social entrepreneurship discourses often converge around “*the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline, innovation, and determination*” (Dees, 1998, p.1). In the modern social economy, social entrepreneurship is often perceived as the process “*by which citizens build or transform institutions to advance solutions to social problems*” (Bornstein and Davis, 2010, p. 1). Given the emergence of abundant SE literature in recent years (Luke and Chu, 2013), there is an increasing conflict between comparison studies (see for example Austin *et al.*, 2006), which focus either on the contrast between social entrepreneurship in commercial approaches, or concentrate primarily on socially-focused tactics (see, for example, Choi, 2013 or Lautermann, 2013). Although the social entrepreneurship concept lacks a unifying theoretical definition (Mort *et al.*, 2003; Mair and Marti, 2006; Conway Dato-on and Kalakay 2016), growing support from the government has resulted in the creation of increasing numbers of entrepreneurially oriented (community) centres and research organisations (Choi, 2013; Choi and Majumdar, 2014). Historically, voluntary and charitable organisations shared broadly comparable identities and performance characteristics (Bornstein and Davis, 2010). As a result, the modern social economy has encouraged a more active participation by the State in the development of ‘*newer*’ and more diversified organisational frameworks (Choi, 2013). In the UK, research studies associate origins of (British) social entrepreneurship with social community movements, traditional church activities and the evolution of the not-for-profit sector¹⁵ (Shaw and

¹⁴ The idea of contested subject or contested concept was proposed in 1956 by Walter Bryce Gallie, suggesting the existence of specific concept groups “*which inevitably leads to endless disputes about the proper meanings of these concepts*” (Choi and Majumdar, 2014, p. 363).

¹⁵ On the contrary, some scholars suggest that origins of social entrepreneurship in the UK reach as far as the popularised social movements in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century,

Carter, 2007). However, pre-established not-for-profit voluntary expectations create an additional layer of difficulty in shaping modern socio-entrepreneurial jargon.

Those who regard social entrepreneurship as naturally integrated and embedded in the social economy (Choi, 2013) highlight the characteristics of traditional not-for-profit ventures. This perspective enriches growing efforts in achieving financial (funding) strategies through business-oriented activities (*ibid.*), despite (traditionally) minimal operational knowledge. As a consequence, social entrepreneurship can be portrayed as an innovative social movement aimed at problem-solving activities, irrespective of operational objectives (Dees, 1998; Choi, 2013). This view enhances the significance of social business acumen in community development (Mair and Marti, 2006) in response to public policy changes. Those scholars who propound the pre-eminence of the social stance tend to identify social entrepreneurship as a channel for solving social problems (Fowler, 2000) through the provision of innovative solutions (Mair and Marti, 2006), as well as accentuating the integrity of the social entrepreneur (Zahra *et al.*, 2009).

There is a transparent trend among scholars focus mainly on the contextual dichotomy of the term (i.e. altruistic, or social philanthropic *versus* commercial, or business orientations) – which I will discuss later. However, the wider SE literature (see Table 4) also examines: the degree of benefit provision (Fowler, 2000; Hibbert *et al.*, 2002); extent of innovation in the third and public sectors (Dees, 1998, 2001; Johnson, 2000; Alvord *et al.*, 2002; Mort *et al.*, 2003); social value creation for the organisation and the sector (Austin *et al.*, 2006; Mair and Marti, 2006; Quandt *et al.*, 2017), and; a search for (sustainable) balance between the social and commercial aspects social entrepreneurship (Johnson, 2000; Hibbert *et al.*, 2002; Haugh, 2007; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Chell *et al.*, 2016).

especially when industrialists focused on improvements in employees' welfare and impact it had on the social lives (Shaw and Carter, 2007).

Table 4: Definitions of social entrepreneurship – field examples

Author	Key terms	Definition of Social Entrepreneurship
Skloot, (1987)	Activity, Income generation	An activity allowing the emergence and formation of new organisations, as well as encouraging income generation for the social venture.
Dees (1998)	Passion, Innovation, Business-like discipline	<i>“The passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline, innovation, and determination”</i> (Dees, 1998, p. 1).
Fowler (2000)	Creation process, Social benefit	The <i>“creation of viable socioeconomic structures, relations, institutions, organisations and practices that yield and sustain social benefits”</i> (Fowler, 2000 p. 649).
Johnson (2000)	Innovative solution, Social needs	<i>“Social entrepreneurship is emerging as an innovative approach for dealing with complex social needs”</i> (Johnson, 2000, p. 1).
Alvord <i>et al.</i> (2004)	Innovation, Resource mobilisation	Solving social problems through creation of innovative solutions and mobilisation of resources and social ideas (Alvord <i>et al.</i> , 2004).
Mort <i>et al.</i> (2003)	Social mission, Social value, Innovation, Decision-making	A <i>“multidimensional construct involving the expression of entrepreneurially virtuous behaviour to achieve the social mission, a coherent unit of purpose and action in the face of moral complexity, the ability to recognise social value creating opportunities and key decision-making characteristics of innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk taking”</i> (Mort <i>et al.</i> , 2003).

Hibbert <i>et al.</i> (2002)	Benefit provision, Business objectives	A vehicle of social benefit provision through entrepreneurial behaviour as opposed to focusing on the business objectives.
Austin <i>et al.</i> (2006)	Activity, Innovation, Social value	An activity which can occur across sectors focusing on innovation and social value creation.
Mair and Marti (2006)	Opportunity, Innovation, Resources, Social needs, Sustainability	A notion focusing on exploration and exploitation of opportunities and innovative resources in order to meet social needs in a sustainable way.
Haugh (2007)	Not-for-profit, Social objectives, Reinvestment	A vehicle for not-for profit ventures with primarily social objectives; involving reinvesting surpluses to the community rather than maximising the benefit of shareholders (in line with the DTI's characterisation of SE).

With the variety of definitional elements in Table 4, it has been suggested that the concept of social entrepreneurship remains somewhat nebulous (Nicholls, 2006); which Choi and Majumdar (2014) proclaim as unfortunate, “*since social entrepreneurship has proven to be a promising and important global phenomenon which certainly deserves rigorous academic attention*” (p.2). Given the above, and despite growing academic research (e.g. Leadbeater, 1997; Dees, 1998; Dees *et al.*, 2001; Thompson, 2002; Mort *et al.*, 2003; Austin *et al.*, 2006; Bornstein and Davis, 2010; Conway Dato-on and Kalakay 2016 etc), I suggest that utilising a single/unitary definition for social entrepreneurship would be counterproductive. Instead, during the following sections, I explore a number of issues that are generally recognised as part of the wider discourse.

3.2.2 Social entrepreneurship: a dimensional perspective

Social entrepreneurship is a fascinating scholarly phenomenon (Dacin *et al.*, 2011) and is frequently contrasted with the more traditional, private sector-led entrepreneurship literature¹⁶ (Austin *et al.*, 2006). This contrast typically highlights the *social* (mission-driven) versus the *operational* (profit-driven) dichotomy (Lautermann, 2013). The emergence of new, hybrid organisational forms¹⁷ is integral to the concept of social entrepreneurship and adds complexity to its definition (Choi and Majumdar, 2014; Doherty *et al.*, 2014). Scholars (see, for example, Alter, 2007; Lautermann, 2013 or Doherty *et al.*, 2014) propound the view that a sense of *organisational hybridity* can be established through an investigation of interacting (dimensional) relationships between: (a) *social action* and; (b) *operational focus* (Lautermann, 2013). I suggest both of these socio-entrepreneurial dimensions are useful for conceptualising changing organisational identities, governance and behaviour(s) across otherwise blurred sectoral boundaries (Anderson and Dees, 2001, cited in Nicholls, 2006).

From an organisational mission/ motivation perspective, Mair and Marti (2006) draw attention to the ambiguity, in the term ‘*social*’. From a normative perspective, organisations that are governed and function as SEs, are often perceived as more social, and philanthropic by stakeholders (Seelos and Mair, 2005; Nicholls and Cho, 2006). This

¹⁶ Entrepreneurship as a standardised concept relates to the economic growth and organisational performance (Wiguna and Manzilati, 2014).

¹⁷ Hybrid organisations are often defined as ventures that span sectoral boundaries, allowing blend of artefacts, values and visions from multiple organisational categories (Doherty *et al.*, 2014).

'social' element of an organisational mission, is usually regarded as a desirable moral outcome (Lautermann, 2013); motivated by philanthropically-oriented values, and traditionally associated with TSOs. Nevertheless, private and public-sector organisations are increasingly *socially responsible*, in line with environmental awareness and sustainability concerns (Goyal and Sergi, 2015), as well as a changing stakeholder landscape (Austin *et al.*, 2006).

Lautermann (2013) stresses the importance of *social innovation* and *social value creation* (or creation of value through innovation, see Alvord *et al.*, 2004; Quandt *et al.*, 2017), as key drivers of social entrepreneurship. *Social value creation* is defined as a process whereby society benefits via cost reductions and continuous efforts to address social problems and needs (Phills *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, Lautermann (2013, p. 188) stresses "*there is no such thing as pure financial and pure social value, but all values are inseparable blends*". However, the role of *social innovation* as a means of inducing social change has also been strongly emphasised in the literature. For example, it refers to shifting social values (e.g. Dees, 1998; Peredo and McLean, 2006; Austin *et al.*, 2006; Chell *et al.*, 2016; Waddock and Steckler, 2016) or service provision to the poor (Seelos and Mair, 2005), while acting independently of commercial activities (Dees, 1998; Nicholls, 2010). The majority of studies focus on the social perspective as either: the pursuit of a social mission (Dees, 1998; Lasprogata and Cotton, 2003; Mort *et al.*, 2003; Seelos and Mair, 2005; Nicholls, 2008; Wiguna and Manzilati, 2014); a mechanism for pressing social needs (Seelos and Mair, 2005; Mair and Martí, 2006), or; as a means of maximising social wealth (Zahra *et al.*, 2009).

3.3 Background theories commonly associated with social entrepreneurship

As outlined in the previous section, the social entrepreneurship literature tends to focus on a blend of social and philanthropic activities, in conjunction with the search for entrepreneurial opportunities (Corner and Cho, 2010), as a way to survive within an increasingly uncertain social economy (Thompson, 2011). TSO stakeholder expectations are now geared towards adapting to more commercial approaches (Chasserio *et al.*, 2014), to better face the challenges associated with supplementing reduced government funding (*ibid.*). Nicholls (2006) stresses that the ability to combine social interests with a business

approach is the hallmark of social entrepreneurship. From a practical perspective, there are those who favour ‘*not-for-profit*’ and those who prefer ‘*more-than-profit*’ governance approaches, as seen in Section 2.2 (Allen, 2005; Haugh, 2005; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Bennet and Bennett, 2016). Nicholls (2006) suggests that combining both ends of the spectrum leads to the creation of organisations that are stronger, more innovative, more robust and self-reliant, while remaining distinctly entrepreneurial. A more-than-profit orientation tends to result in an equilibrium of social and economic benefits (Ridley-Duff, 2007). Ridley-Duff (2007, p.294) suggested “*profit is good, because it funds social re-investment*”. The social mission can be established and achieved through well-managed business and trading activities which can lead to creation of a ‘*sustainable social enterprise*’. On the other hand, not-for-profit organisations concentrate on social needs, are not diverted from their organisational mission in their delivery of positive social outcomes for the community, and are supported by volunteers, stakeholder involvement, sponsorship, and charity (Nicholls, 2006; Ridley-Duff, 2010).

I will now consider the major (process) theories pertaining to the above that have been widely discussed in the social entrepreneurship literature.

3.3.1 Stewardship and agency

Arguably, one of the most important facets of governance in SE is the stewardship approach (Muth and Donaldson, 1998; Low, 2006). This concept emphasises the ability to efficiently balance individual interests of actors (at a management level) to achieve a sense of long-term, organisational sustainability (Clarke, 2004). For example, in commercial entrepreneurship, operational orientation is manifested through the structure of contracts, power relationships (between senior actors), and the return on investment for shareholders (Sahlman 1996; Austin, 2006; Bacq and Eddleston, 2016). It might be argued that, in the SE context, stewardship approaches align with power, culture and the individual structure of the SE form, involving the concept of social (as opposed to commercial) stakeholders (Mason *et al.*, 2007).

From a corporate governance perspective, the stewardship agency model is often perceived as one of most dominant paradigms for understanding SEs (Muth and Donaldson, 1988; Low, 2006). Clarke (2005, p. 604) defines the stewardship approach as “*the capacity and willingness of managers to balance different interests in the*

professional pursuit of company strategy". According to the private sector model, financial maximisation of shareholder wealth is often prioritised as a primary interest (Low, 2006); boards are expected to fulfil the interests of owners (Iecovich, 2005), with stewards tasked to act as agents of organisational performance for the benefit of shareholder groups (Donaldson and Davis, 1991). The classic stewardship approach (in the purest form) in the context of the third sector assumes no latent conflict between stewards and organisational shareholders (Muth and Donaldson, 1998). From this perspective, adoption of the stewardship model emphasises the leveraging of agent expertise, networking facilities, embedded structures and the social, as well as financial, capital and resources for maximisation of (social) returns. SE stewards (in this context, usually managers and community owners) remain strongly motivated by *more-than-profit* interests (Davis *et al.*, 2000).

As a consequence, opportunistic behaviour is limited, and thus are the classic agency and moral hazard problems diminished. Therefore, it can be suggested that stewardship in SEs (theoretically speaking) favour acting for the benefit of the whole organisation and its community stakeholders (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2006), thus enabling SE growth and sustainable development. Reverting to Mason *et al.*'s. (2007) governance study, the stewardship approach can be referred to as the '*social institution*' perspective, focusing on the importance of the wider audience in decision-making processes and collective performance driving the venture to success. However, the question remains: is this still the case, now that a greater commercial mindset, operationalisation, managerialism and change management (for example in governance) are being introduced among SEs? Some suggest an entrepreneurial stewardship approach (within a social venture) increases overall capabilities, and the ability to attract government support (Bacq and Eddleston, 2016). Many of these issues will be discussed further during Chapter 5, in conjunction with an applied analysis of the SEG.

3.3.2 Stakeholder approach

Central to the above debate is of course the concept of '*stakeholder*' rather than '*shareholder*'. According to Freeman and Reed (1983, p. 91), stakeholders are defined as "*any identifiable group or individual who can affect the achievement of an organisation's objectives*". This short definition is the key to understanding stakeholder theory, when linked to SE governance. SEs prioritise the relationship with their stakeholders (Mason *et*

al., 2007) in order to achieve individual and organisational goals, and enable sustainable development. Stakeholder involvement in organisational strategy development is crucial, because it allows a degree of control in the decision-making processes (Owen *et al.*, 2001).

Stakeholder theory requires systematic attention (Brown, 2002) and management (Mason *et al.*, 2007) for the collective interest of all individuals and groups involved. In terms of classic agency theory, problems of maximisation of individual self-interest, moral hazard and information asymmetry are often moderated by socially inclusive governance structures. In the realm of SE, management boards frequently change, suggesting potential accountability problems in the decision-making process within many smaller TSOs. However, this comes at the price of organisational complexity, as critics (see for example Jensen, 2001) of stakeholder governance theory note organisational difficulties in managing multi-stakeholder relations (Mason *et al.*, 2007). It has been suggested by some scholars that an organisational mission ought not to solely concentrate on shareholders' interests and wealth maximisation, but should also focus on the integration of joint interest deriving from the expectations of stakeholder groups (Friedman and Miles, 2006; Johansen and Nielsen, 2011). However, as observed in (SE) practical approaches, governance arrangements aimed at mobilisation of human and social capital can prove difficult and inefficient.

3.3.3 Institutional theory, SE logics and governance

Institutionalisation as part of the structure-agency debate can also be scrutinised from a value perspective, reality creation, class of elements and social spheres (Scott, 1992). Selznick (1949) digressed from the traditional organisation with defined structure (Mason *et al.*, 2007) and moved towards the institutional view, which enhances the role of adjustable social systems (ideal for examining the morphing of TSOs, SEs and other hybrids). There are limitations for understanding SEs from a traditional, organisational structure perspective (those can be based on institutional theory alone), suggesting that authority and power perspectives do not adequately reflect the complex understanding, or social construction, of a modern SE (Mason *et al.*, 2007; Mason and Doherty, 2016). Modern institutional theory perceives the organisation as a system shaped by the norms, routines, values and symbols of the organisational culture, as well as the inherent structure.

From a social entrepreneurial perspective, a leading argument for sustainability is that core SE values and organisational routines should signify the long-term protection of assets for serving communities (Pearce, 2003; Ridley-Duff, 2007). Indeed, it could be argued that sustainability is protected through modern identity perspectives and shifting forms of institutional governance. These also reflect and embody newer community social values through a process of recognition and legitimation at a local level. From an institutional perspective, social entrepreneurial legitimacy is also sustained through continual social opportunity recognition, defined by social norms, organisational practices and the culture of the SE (Scott, 1992).

Institutional theory portrays an organisation as a system, shaped by norms, values and symbols. This view offers a unique lens for legitimacy claims (Ahlstrom and Bruton, 2001). Legitimacy as a concept is often associated with Suchman's (1995) work, implying the right to perform in a certain (correct) way, and is defined as "*a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions*" (Suchman, 1995, p.574).

Institutional theory gives power to key actors (such as SEEs), which is regulated by constraints of the governance and organisational structure (Weber, 1947; Dart, 2004a). Therefore, legitimation, as seen from this dual perspective, tends to follow in the direction of recent environmental cues for opportunity search on the one hand, while remaining constrained by representative views of community stakeholders: it is stabilised within social expectations of the general habitus (Nicholls, 2010). As a result, I will analyse the key institutional logics of SEs in this study, and offer a comparative macro- and micro-analysis of key narratives. If, as suggested, the sustainability of an SE is as much about the capability of human and social capital as suggested in literature, this study will attempt to critically investigate the evidence in Chapters 5-7.

3.4 Key debates on SE governance and organisational identity (OI)

Stakeholder theory, combined with the stewardship model and an increasing need for more business-focused operations, provides a basis for development of the SEG framework (see Chapter 5) from structuration, stewardship and institutional theoretical perspectives. Effective governance involves management board leadership and successful management of vested interests (Doherty *et al.*, 2009). In this case, interests are affected by financial and non-financial claims made on the organisation.

Following Doherty *et al.*'s (2009) inquiry, SEs must transparently represent divergent stakeholder interests, as well as successfully integrate them into the decision-making process within the organisation. In the same vein, governance for SEs is defined as: “*Strategic and operational board-level leadership, enabling service users, trustees and other defined stakeholders to create and maximise social benefit.* (Doherty *et al.*, 2009, p.216)”.

The relationships – between the board, staff and other groups – which influence the organisation in terms of achieving social aims, are a significant challenge in understanding the SE. Doherty *et al.* (2009) indicated the importance of issues such as strategic leadership, staff empowerment, democratic accountability and transparency. That said, the challenges of overcoming management weaknesses, the putative lack of technical expertise, and all-round stakeholder inclusion, remain important issues for many SEs.

3.4.1 Paradox of embedded agency for SEs and other TSOs

The global economic downturn in 2008, had a tangible impact on thousands of businesses and organisations (Hossain *et al.*, 2011). This was widely observed in the UK with the third sector struggling to meet the increased demand for service provision (*ibid.*). In turn, the unsettling circumstances created new opportunities and therefore - a new demands for emerging ventures. Those demands have now increased further in the light of recent economic shifts caused by the Brexit vote. The institutional changes in response to the turbulent economic situation have brought to light the ‘paradox of embedded agency’, emphasising the agency versus structure debate. Early institutional studies tended to account for agency and endogenous change (Selznick, 1949, cited in Green and Li, 2011),

while later studies were more sceptical of agency issues and concentrated instead on producing homogeneity and construction of social action (Phillips *et al.*, 2004, Battilana *et al.*, 2009). It is closely related to the reflexivity of human nature and human action. The paradox of embedded agency “*comes from the fact that neo-institutional theorists have barely tackled the issue of human agency*” (Battilana, 2006, p.4).

One facet of the debate suggests that institutional behaviour is shaped by patterns and norms rather than instrumental calculations (Battilana, 2006); individual action is affected by the natural need to assimilate. The controversy of this paradox lies in the nature of the actors involved, who are supposed to be institutionally embedded. As a consequence, they tacitly agree to take structure for granted (*ibid.*). The ability of actors to change and morph an organisational structure is therefore determined by pressures and pre-existed beliefs. This theoretical paradox leads to the assumption of a dialectic between the human agency and institutions (Seo and Creed, 2002). “*Institutions do not merely constrain human agency; they are first and foremost the product of human agency*” (Di Maggio and Powell, 1991 in Battilana, 2006, p.654). The nature of institutional entrepreneurship implies that actors can, by reshaping the social context, create new meaning (Leca *et al.*, 2008). The nature of human behaviour assumes that structures (and therefore institutions) pre-exist. In the institutional setting, entrepreneurs take structure for granted, and therefore remain restricted by the institution. This assumption links with the core Heideggerian (1962) view that the “*world is already there*”.

Institutional theory shifts attention towards rules and norms, influencing actors’ behaviours (Bruton *et al.*, 2010) and decision-making processes. It can be suggested that institutional norms are affected by players (actors) in a self-reflexive way (Phillips *et al.*, 2004; Mutch, 2007): this is perceived as an effective way of reshaping (reconstructing) social practices (Giddens, 1991; Mutch, 2007). As a result, institutional entrepreneurs are at once perceived as creators, with the ability to reshape the organisational reality and create new meaning; and destroyers, who act as self-reflexive strategic agents (Weik, 2011). The embeddedness of entrepreneurs lies in the concept of “*always acting in context*” (Leca *et al.*, 2008, p.19).

It might be argued that, in the context of SE, the paradox of embedded agency reflects a broader view emphasising the role of the question: how can the structure be changed, if it is taken for granted? As a consequence of this paradox, structuration is

perceived as “*accounting for the dualism of human agency*” (Lock and Strong, 2010, p.215) which, through reproducing and transforming cultural and social behaviours, creates a new type of socially constructed reality. Consequently, actors such as SEEs, are able to influence the institutional structures of organisations they are building, in order to create new meanings of the term ‘*social reality*’.

3.5 Who are social entrepreneurs? - social enterprise entrepreneurs (SEEs)?

Once again, there exists very little consensus among researchers on what precisely is meant by the term social entrepreneur (see for example: Roper and Cheney, 2005; Defourny and Nyssens, 2006; Zahra *et al.*, 2009; Abu-Saifan, 2012). From a traditional (commercial) perspective, entrepreneurs are characterised as “*people who, often habitually, create and innovate to build something of recognised value around perceived opportunities*” (Bolton and Thompson, 2000, cited in Thompson, 2002, p. 413). Scholars frequently proffer the view that social entrepreneurs share characteristics comparable to commercial business leaders (Leadbeater, 1997). Although provisional conceptualisations have been covered in the literature (see for example Thompson, 2002; Mort *et al.*, 2003; Roper and Cheney, 2005), and there has been a significant attention paid to individual, social-entrepreneurial motives (Kašperová and Kitching, 2014) and personality characteristics (Austin, 2006; Zahra *et al.*, 2009; Mauksch *et al.*, 2017), there are still many unanswered questions in relation to identity, including: is the social entrepreneur primarily altruistic, or commercial, or might he or she be a blend of both?

The term SEE has evolved through the emergence of various scholarly definitions over the years (see Table 5). Most frequently, the social entrepreneur is defined as an individual associated with TSOs, addressing altruistic aims and missions, while remaining focused on reinvestment of the social value (Williams and Nadin, 2011). This view suggests that the social value is the major existential drive for social entrepreneurs (Austin *et al.*, 2006; Defourny and Nyssens, 2010). More contested views emphasise the individual’s ability to develop a multiplicity of organisational objectives, merging operational techniques with social provision (Hynes, 2009). This hybrid approach reflects current trends in the social economy in response to (social) policy legislation, and the deterioration of central third sector funding (Thompson, 2011). In response to the

changing socio-economic landscape, social entrepreneurs have attempted to blend approaches in managing social and profit-oriented motives, to create social value with maximised opportunity exploitation, as well as a sense of financial sustainability. Consequently, in response to the changing climate, social entrepreneurs can be thought of as innovative social value opportunists and social change creators (Germaine, 2008; Hynes, 2009); while supporting discourses emphasise their role as social resource enablers (Doherty *et al.*, 2009), or third sector opportunity exploiters (Certo and Miller, 2008).

3.5.1 Who are social entrepreneurs?: an historical perspective

From an etymological perspective, '*entrepreneur*' originates from the French verb '*entreprendre*', the literal translation of which is '*one who takes between*' (Deakins and Freel, 2003) although the more modern translation – '*one who manages*' – may be preferred. The notion of the entrepreneur as the key institutional actor is consistent with creation of new ventures, risk-taking approaches and opportunity exploitation. Nevertheless, it can be seen that the term '*entrepreneur*' has a rich history of origins and a diverse meaning in contemporary literature.

The term first appeared in late 17th century France, used to describe the person undertaking a given project (Dees, 1998), and in so doing, providing innovative solutions to existing problems. This view is associated with French physiocrat, Jean Baptiste Say (1803), who conceptualised the entrepreneur as a resource exploiter. Say (1803) advocated the concept of the entrepreneur as a pivot of economy, driving change (the enabler), and able to shift resources, offering further economic development. Conversely, the Austrian school of thought, with Schumpeter (1934, 1951) at the head, focused on innovative characteristics of entrepreneurial identity. The Schumpeterian entrepreneur veers from the original, physiocratic definitions towards the complexity of technological processes and products (Deakins and Freel, 2003), where an entrepreneur is portrayed as a performer of innovation (Bruyat and Julien, 2001). Economists associating the entrepreneurial terminology with Schumpeter describe entrepreneurs as vehicles, driving capitalism through innovation associated with revolutionising patterns of production, through the exploitation of new opportunities and technological innovation (Dees, 1998). It could be argued that Schumpeterian entrepreneurs act as agents of change, re-morphing

existing commodities and shifting the economy forward; and that these agents are the real catalysts in the evolution of social entrepreneurship (Choi and Majumdar, 2014)

Contemporary literature provides a wide range of theories and definitions (see Table 5 for a selection of definitions) of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurship (Peredo and McLean, 2006), although leading streams remain true to the core origins of the term, offering only slight variations to early understandings. For example, modern social theorist Peter Drucker supports Say's (1803) original definition, while adding an additional layer to social understanding by including the concept of opportunity exploitation. Drucker (1970) proposes that entrepreneurs are not the change agents; rather, they are reactive, exploiting the range of opportunities that change creates for them (Dees, 1998). In his rationale, entrepreneurship does not require a profit motive, but instead "*the entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity*" (Drucker 1970, cited in Dees, 1998, p. 2). Drucker's notion of opportunity exploitation is central to many modern definitions of an entrepreneur perceived as an enabler of value creation (Dees, 1998). However, if it is accepted that the "*political, social and economic meaning of entrepreneurship is culturally embedded*" (Fuller 2006, p. 3), and that modern society is not morally absolute, it is possible that not everyone seeking to be an entrepreneur subscribes to a liberal interpretation of its meaning. In other words, modern perspectives of entrepreneurship are not limited to its associations with economic growth or profit-making, but remain open to new institutional values.

Table 5: Evolution of social (enterprise) entrepreneur (SEE) concept

Name	Key words	Definition
Say (1803)	The resource exploiter	<i>“The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield”</i> (cited in Dees, 1998, p. 2).
Kirzner (1978)	The middleman (reactive to opportunities)	<i>“The entrepreneur recognizes and acts upon market opportunities. The entrepreneur is essentially an arbitrageur”</i> (cited in Abu-Saifan, 2012, p. 23).
Schumpeter 1934	The opportunity exploiter, innovator and the change agent	<i>“The entrepreneur is the innovator who implements change within markets through the carrying out of new combinations”</i> (Schumpeter, 1934, p.68).
Knight (1942)	The risk taker	<i>“He is the responsible controller or manager of the business in relation to market conditions, regardless of whomever he may consult or whatever functions he may delegate to others on whatever terms”</i> (Knight, 1942, p. 126).
Drucker (1970)	The resource and opportunity exploiter.	<i>“The entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity”</i> (cited in Dees, 1998).
Blair, 1997 (victory speech)	Exploiter	<i>“Those people who bring to social problems the same enterprise and imagination that business entrepreneurs bring to wealth creation”</i> (cited in Ziegler et al., 2014, p. 8).

Thake and Zadek (1997)	Connector and Enhancer	<i>“Social entrepreneurs are driven by a desire for social justice. They seek a direct link between their actions and an improvement in the quality of life for the people with whom they work and those that they seek to serve. They aim to produce solutions which are sustainable financially, organisationally, socially and environmentally”</i> (cited in Zahra et al., 2009).
Leadbeater 1997	The adopter of business skills, focusing on social value.	Someone who uses <i>“entrepreneurial behaviour for social ends rather than for profit objectives, or alternatively, that the profits generated from market activities are used for the benefit of a specific disadvantaged group”</i> (cited in Zahra et al., 2009).
Dees (1998)	Connector	Someone who <i>“combines the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline, innovation, and determination”</i> (cited in Dees et al., 2001, p. 1).
Prahbu (1999)	Leader, Creator	<i>“Persons who create and manage innovative entrepreneurial organisations [...] whose primary mission is the social change and development of their client group”</i> (cited in Seelos and Mair, 2004, p. 2).
Reis (1999)	The social value creator	<i>“Social entrepreneurs create social value through innovation and leveraging financial resources...for social, economic and community development”</i> (cited in Zahra et al., 2009, p. 521).
Drayton (2002)	Change agent	<i>“A major change agent, one whose core values centre on identifying, addressing and solving societal problems”</i> (cited in Salamzadeh et al., 2013, p. 23).

Harding (2004)	The motivator and creator	<i>“Entrepreneurs motivated by social objectives to instigate some form of new activity or venture”</i> (cited in Zahra <i>et al.</i> , 2009, p. 521).
Alford <i>et al.</i> (2004)	The innovative creator Transformer	Someone who <i>“creates innovative solutions to immediate social problems and mobilizes the ideas, capacities, resources and social arrangements required for...social transformations”</i> (cited in Zahra <i>et al.</i> , 2009, p.521).
Peredo and McLean (2006)	Social value creators	<i>“Some person or a group aims either exclusively or in some prominent way to create social value of some kind”</i> (Peredo and McLean, 2006, p. 64).
Martin and Osberg (2015)	Drivers of transformation	<i>“Drivers of transformation in society and...the group that target unjust and unsustainable systems and transform them into entirely new sustainable systems”</i> (cited in Rahdari <i>et al.</i> , 2016, p. 348).
Estrin <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Social Value Creators	<i>“Social entrepreneurs create value, [...] they provide goods and services that are neither supplied on the market nor addressed by the government. In so doing, they create social welfare while the financial viability of their venture is their key constraint”</i> (Estrin <i>et al.</i> , 2016, p. 449).

3.5.2 SEEs: social, commercial or both?

SEEs can be described through a combination of definitions, as;

“those people who bring to social problems the same enterprise and imagination that business entrepreneurs bring to wealth creation” (Blair, 1997; Welfare to Work, June 1997),

“individuals who initiate social innovation and change” (Leadbeater, 1999, cited in Levie and Hart, 2011, p. 205) and, at the same time,

“individuals who are motivated by the opportunity to adopt an innovative approach and creative use of resources and contacts to satisfy needs, that the State welfare system cannot or will not meet” (Shaw and Carter, 2007, p. 421).

It may be argued that, while social and business entrepreneurs share similar basic characteristics, the two are distinct in a number of important ways. Firstly, the ethical principles that guide SEEs help ensure that public money is well-spent; ideas are not corrupted by vested interests, and the informants are fully committed to the work of the enterprise (Ashoka, 2001). By contrast, while business entrepreneurs may seek to adopt an ethical approach to the management of their business, there is no evidence within entrepreneurship literature to suggest that business entrepreneurs can be identified by strong ethical values. Secondly, there are objectives and organisational missions that prominently distinguish SEEs (Leadbeater, 1997; Community Action Network, 2001). For instance, while business entrepreneurs may pursue profit or shareholder value, SEEs are instead driven by a clear desire to meet pre-defined, philanthropic, social objectives through innovative solutions.

As a consequence, many researchers view innovation as a key characteristic of social entrepreneurs, with Leadbeater (1997, p. 8) arguing that while it is possible to be a successful entrepreneur without being innovative, social entrepreneurs almost always use innovative methods, identify under-utilised resources – individuals, buildings, equipment – and utilise them to satisfy unmet social needs. While there are many commonalities between social and business enterprises, and between SEEs and business entrepreneurs, there are also points of divergence. The discussion presented thus far suggests that much of what is understood about entrepreneurship may not be relevant to the conceptual

understanding of social entrepreneurship in particular (Shaw and Carter, 2007; Choi, and Majumdar, 2014). I will now consider the notion of SEE from an identity (and human agency) perspective, rather than one focused on definitional unfolding.

3.5.3 Entrepreneurial identity of SEEs

From an OI perspective (based, for example, on Cerulo's 1997 identity theory), social entrepreneurs can be perceived primarily as social activists. Fletcher (2003) emphasised the construction of entrepreneurial identity as a fifth movement in entrepreneurship research. This view builds on the social constructionist idea of creating knowledge in the form of interactions of various understandings and meanings, that can be perceived as socially constructed (Fletcher, 2003). The nature of the SEE's identity is associated with the organisational cycle; therefore, it can be identified as dynamic (Foss, 2004), evolving over the lifetime of the individual. As a result, the processes of self-reflection and reflexivity are distinguished as crucial in characterising the social construction of the SEE identity (Jones *et al.*, 2008; Nicholls, 2010).

In addition, the role of human agency and the nature of the SEE (who they are, as well as what they do), are inextricably intertwined. Social world creation rejects the simplistic duality, and conflation, between human agency and social structures, as individuals (as contributors) help to shape the reality of social systems (Bandura, 2006). It discerns the development of social reality based on constant interpretation and re-interpretation of the concept (Crotty, 1998), whereby human action is perceived as the means by which social reality is realised (Giddens, 1986).

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and the notion of self-efficacy are often portrayed as primary lenses of social construction. Those concepts are based on the human agency perspective, whereby humans, via cycles of mutual interaction and reciprocal exchange, become agents of change (Bandura, 1986, 2001). Individuals are self-reflexive by nature, which is mirrored in their social behaviour through sustained creativity and innovation. Innovative ideas created by SEEs are perceived as the stimulus for opportunity-seeking, which in turn engenders self-determination in pursuit of desirable social and economic objectives (Anderson *et al.*, 2006).

As a consequence, the identity of SEEs is important from a human agency perspective, and the extent to which organisational structure and human agency are

interrelated is also important (Chasserio *et al.*, 2014; Busentiz *et al.*, 2016). If social entrepreneurs believe in the social nature and fabric of others in the organisation, then, they can work together through shared social norms and ambitions, developing a sense of collective efficacy.

3.6 Chapter 3 summary

This second literature review chapter presents carefully selected social entrepreneurship definitions and organisational drivers, as well as some of the general background information necessary for navigating a clear path through the myriad of existing SE literature. Some of the underpinning process theories are introduced and briefly reviewed here (i.e. stewardship and agency, stakeholder theory, institutional theory, OI), and will be further scrutinised as part of a more detailed and integrated IPA analysis during Chapter 5.

The literature unfolding in this chapter brings to light a wider perspective on the concept of ‘social entrepreneurship’ by highlighting the apparent dichotomy of the term. For instance, the social versus operational approach indicates that social value creation and social innovation can be perceived as the key drivers of social entrepreneurship (Lautermann, 2013), often established through the integration of social action and operational focus (*ibid.*). This offers a more dimensional perspective on organisational orientations, necessary for the development of the SEG in Chapter 5.

Previously, comparative studies have tended to focus mostly on commercial approaches, or indeed social approaches, highlighting the conflict between the two organisational orientations. In this chapter, it becomes apparent that scholars and practitioners are beginning to account for the inevitable evolution of the not-for-profit sector. There is a growing shift in focus, and those who traditionally adopted a more social perspective towards social entrepreneurship are growing more acceptant of commercial operationalisation (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Bridge *et al.*, 2009). In this way, many scholars (see for example Ridley-Duff, 2010, Lautermann, 2013, or Goyal and Sergi, 2015) are beginning to perceive social entrepreneurship as an integrated movement in the

social economy – one that enhances and enriches the innovativeness of third sector solutions and drives operationalisation trends forward.

In order to form a well-rounded study, it is deemed necessary to identify and conceptualise the major process theories associated with social entrepreneurship. The conceptualisations of stakeholder theory and the stewardship approach in this chapter provide a theoretical background for understanding governance characteristics associated with the SEG (in Chapter 5), informing the IPA analysis. From examining such process theories, it is apparent that effective governance can be viewed as a key to organisational long-termism. Therefore, in line with RQ1, it can be suggested that in order to be successful, SEs must transparently represent divergent stakeholder interests and integrate them into the organisational culture and decision-making processes.

This chapter also provides a basis for understanding the agency versus structure debate, indicating a close interplay between human agency and third sector institutions. The existing debates around TSO governance structures conclude that the third sector is continually struggling to meet the increasing demand for service provision (Hossain *et al.*, 2011), and that the (agency) problems faced by small and medium TSOs are often driven by an integral fear of change (Battilana *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, recognition of SEEs as embedded actors (i.e. institutionally embedded, yet able to morph the structure) reflects RQ2, in which I identify the role of SEEs as agentic (in line with P3 and P4), and as such, able to influence the organisational development of a venture. From this perspective, the importance of SEEs is integral to the concept of organisational sustainability (RQ2), highlighting the need for further conceptualisations of the individual identity of social leaders. Consequently, the second part of this chapter examines the origins of the social entrepreneur, along with the various personal identity issues they face in their role as a social leader. Again, there are definitional ambiguities relating to the term ‘SEE’. Thus, for the purposes of this study, an SEE is considered as an individual who works in, and dedicates their career to SEs (as opposed to other forms of social, or commercial venture).

In summary, the literature review reveals very little consensus over the term ‘social entrepreneur’. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to build on the historical perspective of the term to form a more robust conceptual underpinning of the social/entrepreneurial identity characteristics of SEEs. This chapter portrays an SEE as both social and commercial, representing the fifth movement in entrepreneurship research

(Fletcher, 2003). The literature suggests that these combined socio-commercial objectives prominently distinguish SEEs from other social leaders (Leadbeater, 1997; Community Action Network, 2001). Furthermore, the identity characteristics of SEEs are often associated with the organisational cycle, evolving over the lifetime of the organisation (Foss, 2004). From this perspective, SEEs are often described as embedded agents of change, fully committed to their philanthropic work. This conceptual underpinning supports RQ2, and associated research propositions (P3 and P4), suggesting that socio-entrepreneurial actions are, in fact, intertwined with ‘who they are’ (in the context of the third sector/SE collectively), forming a sound theoretical basis for the Chapter 6 analysis.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the rationale for adopting a multi-paradigm research design. Firstly, my PhD utilises an *interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA)* approach for investigating matters pertaining to RQ1, i.e. organisational identity, sustainability and Social Enterprise Governance (SEG) (see Chapter 5). Secondly, as part of RQ2, I adopt a *social constructionist* approach (see Chapter 6) for a more intimate analysis of socio-entrepreneurial (personal) identity. Both approaches employ qualitative research methods through a combination of semi-structured and in-depth interviews, background questionnaires and socio-entrepreneurial stakeholder focus groups.

My research design and methodology chapter is presented in five parts. To begin with, I discuss my rationale for utilising a multi-paradigm research design. This is followed by an outline of *why* I applied an IPA approach (specifically for Chapter 5), and a social constructionist approach for Chapter 6. Secondly, I present the ‘*how*’ of my methodology for Chapter 5, by discussing: (a) the data collection methods used; (b) the sampling strategy employed; (c) an interview protocol, and finally; (d) the data analysis protocol (e.g. in relation to the Social Enterprise Grid (SEG)).

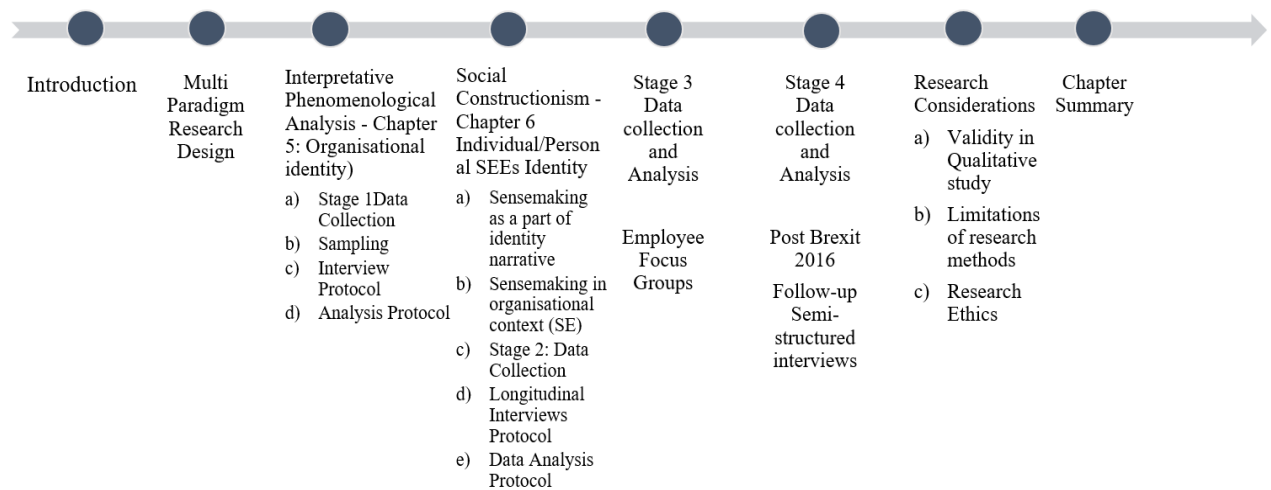
Thirdly, I discuss *how* research methods were employed for Chapter 6 (from a social constructionist perspective). To be specific, I outline the following: (a) how *sense-making* (Weick, 1995; Weick *et al.*, 2005; Helms-Mills *et al.*, 2010) techniques can be useful, and applied as part of identity narrative analysis; (b) how *sensemaking* can be applied as part of socio-entrepreneurial identity analysis, and the organisational environment; (c) data collection techniques (e.g. how personal cases have been selected); (d) the longitudinal interview protocol of social entrepreneurs (e.g. types of questions asked, structure of interviews, time intervals etc); (e) data analysis protocol (how socio-entrepreneurial identities are analysed); (f) a follow-up focus group protocol among third sector employees.

Fourthly, given the prospect of tumultuous socio-economic changes to the third sector after the recent *Brexit vote*, I deemed it prudent to introduce a further stage of data

collection and analysis. Specifically, I revisited key informants and organisations (from Chapter 5), to establish if any the interpreted views and positions had changed in relation to RQ1.

Finally, in the fifth part, I discuss range of important research considerations: a) issues related to validity in qualitative research; b) the limitations of the research methods; and c) research ethics.

Figure 4: Chapter 4 outline



4.2 Rationale for a multi-paradigm research design

The multi-method design is often referred to as a third methodological movement (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2009). The term ‘mixed-method’ alludes to the use of two (or more) research methods in a single study. Hall (2012) categorises the possible ‘mixes’ into three approaches: 1) *paradigmatic*, the most standard approach; 2) *multi-paradigm*, combining alternative paradigms in one compatible study; and 3) *single-paradigm*, simply focused on mixing qualitative and quantitative methods within one research.

A multi-paradigm research design has been used to conceptualise, interpret and understand ‘*what*’ the macro level issues are for the changing third/public sector, in terms of organisational identity, sustainability and governance relationships. These are

conceptualised and interpreted in the form of a new SEG (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, personal narrative and social constructionist analyses are incorporated from the perspective of social entrepreneurs (see Chapter 6), in order to draw out a more in-depth micro-level (personal identity) analysis of *who* Social Enterprise Entrepreneurs (SEEs) are, and to understand what motivates them.

The multi-paradigm research design adopted in my thesis offers an opportunity for a robust and well-rounded study (Crotty, 1998) enriching our understanding of the complexity of third sector reality. Both of the chosen paradigms – IPA and social constructionist – are human-centred in design, providing compatibility between the qualitative methods involved (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2009).

4.3 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (see Chapter 5)

Interpretive methods and techniques are based on the connection between a researcher and the informants (McNabb, 2008). This is underpinned by the belief that reality is not objective; rather it is shaped by the interpretation of subjective perceptions of a non-fixed, or relative, social reality (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Social reality is often construed as a subjective phenomenon; therefore, it should be interpreted through a range of ontological lenses, enhancing knowledge discovery (Walliman, 2006; Denscombe, 2007).

Interpretive research can be used to cultivate a better understanding of the subject and the selected context (Holloway, 2004; Hinchey, 2008). I decided to adopt an interpretive stance in order to garner richer, more in-depth data for analysis (Bryman, 2001). Interpretive approaches are popular in entrepreneurship research due to their “*capacity to provide situated insights, rich details and thick descriptions*” (Cope, 2011, p. 608). In my study – which focuses on social entrepreneurship among SEs in the South East of England, adopting an interpretive approach helps enriches the investigative context, i.e. relating to organisational governance, identity and sustainability. Moreover, it enables me to form a greater understanding of the key conceptual meanings associated with socio-entrepreneurial terminology.

IPA was adopted in my study to investigate the experiences, understandings and views of individual social leaders in relation to organisational identity, governance and sustainability (in line with my RQ1). The IPA approach assumes that a social action can

be understood only by rigorous extraction and interpretation of individuals' meaning-makings and motives (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). In terms of further explanation, the fundamental principle of IPA emphasises a humans' ability to self-reflect, therefore embracing the subjective understanding of social reality (the phenomenological approach). This is achieved by examining the meaning-making of individual (or collective) lived experiences (Biggerstaff and Thompson, 2008) and relationships between human actions and thinking (Smith and Osborn, 2007).

I decided to implement this approach – supported by Smith and Osborn's (2007) recommendations for IPA – as an appropriate framework for analysing complex or novel aspects of my research (Smith and Osborn, 2007). As the concepts of SE and SEEs are perceived as pre-paradigmatic (see Chapters 1 and 2 for details), IPA offered greater flexibility in dealing with the under-researched issues. The benefits of using IPA in my study accommodate the elasticity of multiple interpretations, allowing for a flexible and robust approach to data analysis (Eatough and Smith, 2006; Cope, 2011).

The uniqueness of IPA emphasises the active role of researcher as an advocate of data analysis. IPA acknowledges the engagement between the researcher and the informants, which involves a two-stage interpretation process, often referred to as the *double-hermeneutic* (double interpretation) approach. The first stage involves informants creating meaning from their social reality, and the second involves the researcher '*decoding*' or making sense of the interpreted data (Smith and Osborn, 2007) in meaningful way.

4.4 Social constructionism (a rationale for Chapter 6 – a personal identity analysis)

Berger and Luckmann (1966) define the social constructionism as an epistemological approach, where reality is shaped through rationalisation of experiences. This definition allows meanings to be generated as the products of social interactions and social influences (*ibid.*), where "*people always have the potential to re-construct their identities, their capabilities and their lives*" (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009, p. 36).

The definition of social constructionism has been broadened in recent years to accommodate multiple possibilities for meaning, suggesting that knowledge is socially created and not discovered (see examples: Gergen, 1999; Gergen and Gergen 2003; Steyaert and Hjorth, 2003; Johansson, 2004; Downing, 2005; Mills and Pawson, 2006, or Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009). Put simply, it concentrates on humans creating and defining their own realities by making sense of individual real-life experiences, while valuing the sense of subjectivity and multiple truths (Richardson, 2012).

In practice, the social constructionist approach places the emphasis on relationships and interactions between individuals and/or groups and their ways of creating social reality. Socio-entrepreneurial studies that employ a social constructionist approach (for example Johansson, 2004; Downing, 2005; Mills and Pawson, 2006; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009), suggest that reality is shaped, and then reshaped, through on-going social interactions that naturally occur between (third sector) social agents and their environment. This emphasises the need for closer investigation of social and personal interpretations of ontological realities (Chell, 2000; Fletcher, 2003; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009).

For my study, as part of RQ2, my aim is to gain a deeper understanding of lived personal experiences from selected third sector informants. I am also seeking to interpret how such lived personal experiences influence self-referent identity perceptions of being, or not being, a social entrepreneur. To achieve this, I will endeavour to socially construct and compare various Ricoeurian identity narratives (see Chapter 6.2 for greater detail) as part of my sensemaking case-based analysis: *who informants were, who they are now, and who they might become (as socio-entrepreneurs) in the future*. I base my social constructionist analysis on the Ricoeurian narrative studies (1988; 1991a; 1991b; 1992) of personal identity (and their current adaptations: for example, Cunliffe *et al.*, 2004; Mallet and Wapshott, 2011, 2012; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012).

This approach fits well with the Lindgren and Packendorff (2009) notion that: *“from a social constructionist perspective, people always have the potential to re-construct their identities, their capabilities and their lives – which means that it should be uncontroversial to acknowledge entrepreneurship as a future possibility for anybody”* (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009, p.36).

Table 6: Prior studies in social entrepreneurship as social construction: basic assumptions and consequences

Social entrepreneurship as social construction	
Ontological position (view of reality)	Entrepreneurship is inter-subjectively interpreted and constructed in social interactions between people.
Epistemological position (view of knowledge)	Entrepreneurship research aims to create understandings of how and why actors interpret and construct entrepreneurial processes. Knowledge on entrepreneurship represented as narrative, discursive and textual data.
Ideological position (view of what legitimises research)	Researcher participates in construction of theory and practice. Awareness and responsibility required of researchers.

(adapted from Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009, p.33).

One of the most important arguments for supporting the use of a social constructionist approach (applying Ricoeurian narrative) is to capture the richness of the social phenomena being observed: the background, experiences, behaviours and activities of social entrepreneurs/leaders and those working in the third sector. I justify a social constructionist approach based on scholarly examples from the mainstream entrepreneurship literature. For example, Downing (2005) adopted a social constructionist approach for investigating the interaction between entrepreneurial processes and individual(s), as well as entrepreneurial narratives in the co-production of organisational and personal identity. Furthermore, Lindgren and Packendorff (2009) also support the use of social constructionist analysis in longitudinal entrepreneurial studies (i.e. similar to my own).

Despite these arguments, there has been a dearth of recent entrepreneurial studies adopting the social constructionist approach (Downing, 2005; Hamilton, 2006; Fletcher, 2006; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009, Aldrich and Martinez, 2010), which has led to

calls for further social constructionist analysis, concerning *how* and *why* organisations refer to themselves as SEs (e.g. Grant and Dart, 2013). Social constructionism allows the examination of fundamental identity narratives, such as: *why are SEs and their agents considered 'social'? Are SEs really driven long term by market need, or by more personally agentic factors? What does the term 'entrepreneurial' mean (in terms of social bricolage) for those who profess to be socially entrepreneurial?* These issues are addressed in propositional form in Chapter 6, and I return to them during Chapter 7 - as part of the discussion chapter.

Whilst the above paragraphs examine the rationale for a multi-paradigm research design, i.e. IPA, in Chapter 5, and social constructionism using Ricoeurian narrative and sensemaking in Chapter 6, the remainder of the chapters explore the methodological aspects of each in greater detail.

4.5 Stage 1: Sampling and data collection (*i.e. for Chapter 5*)

The IPA paradigm generally involves small, homogenous samples (Smith and Osborn, 2007). A purposive sampling strategy¹⁸ was developed in conjunction with key senior SE leaders in the South East. Identifying a diverse range of third sector organisations (adequate to the study) was necessary in order to develop a fresh and rich researchable context. Furthermore, it offered a sound basis for cross-case comparison within a single regional area. It is worth bearing in mind that most social entrepreneurship research in the UK to date has been based in the North and North East (ESRC seminar, 2013). Conducting a new study in the South East offers a novel contribution, and a useful basis for a comparative regional study (see Chapter 7).

There is an absence of literature (concerning SEs and third sector research) in the arguably *more prosperous* South East, albeit areas such as East Kent face many of the

¹⁸ Purposive sampling is a non-probability, strategic approach enabling the researcher to select a representative sample based on his or her own judgement. There are various approaches to purposive sampling, for example: convenience, snowball and theoretical. *Convenience* sampling refers to the sample groups easily accessible to the researcher; *snowball* sampling is commonly used in research lacking a sampling frame, where the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of informants relevant to the research and uses this as a basis for further contact with others (Bryman, 2004); the *theoretical* sampling involves interviewing a set number of informants until the research forms an initial theoretical focus, before selecting further interviewees based on the emerging categories (Bryman, 2004).

demographic, social and economic issues evident in the North East. From an initial six cases, a snowballing approach¹⁹ was then employed, with the purposive criteria, namely, that organisations must have at least a third sector focus, and sometimes a public-sector background with a view to becoming a *bone fide* ‘social enterprise’. See Table 7 for a breakdown of the background characteristics of the initial sample. The unit of analysis was at the leader level (during Stage 1) for the organisations studied, again to provide a useful macro analysis of the sector as a whole, in the South East.

The first stage of data collection included 30 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with organisational stakeholders, leading entrepreneurs (see Appendix 21 for full timeline of all interviews), CEOs and directors (see Appendix 4 for individual profiles). Informants selected were all based in the not-for-profit (third) sector in the South East. Initially, 68 third sector organisations in Kent and East Sussex were identified for possible investigation. Of these, some were no longer in operation/trading. In total, 61 organisations were emailed between 2011 and 2013. Of those who agreed to take part in semi-structured interviews, 22 claimed to be third sector (only) and 8 public-sector (see Table 7).

Out of 30 informants/organisations interviewed, five were conducted as semi-structured telephone interviews, due to a lack of time availability on the part of informants, and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. All face-to-face interviews were recorded, using a digital recording device, with the duration of interviews varying from one to two hours. Notes from telephone interviews were taken manually (but not recorded/transcribed), which has been noted as a limitation for the first stage of data collection. Semi-structured telephone interviews were para-transcribed based on my own notes, memos and discussions with my supervisor; direct quotations were also captured at key points during telephone conversations. Furthermore, memos were developed after each interview to help with sense and meaning-making, informing the development of key themes as part of an open coding procedure. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were transcribed using *Express Scribe* software and manually coded according to selected categories, identified from both the conversations and literature (e.g. Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The

¹⁹ Snowballing is a “*technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on*” (Vogt, 1999, cited in Atkinson and Flint, 2001, p.2).

categorisation of transcripts enabled a more in-depth axial coding system and the creation of sub-categories necessary for further thematic analysis (see Table 8).

Table 7: Overview of the purposive sampling profile

No	Name	Organisational Structure	No employees	No volunteers	In which sector, it operates	Approx. turnover	Position
I1	John Peterson	Registered Charity with Company Status + Company limited by guarantee	2	10	Public and Voluntary	20,000	CEO
I2	Samantha Colleman	Charity + Company limited by guarantee	65	35	Mostly Voluntary	2.5m	CEO
I3	Amanda Murray	Community Mutual	49	25	Mostly Public	845,000	Director
I4	Peter Smith	CIC - limited by guarantee	3	3	Mostly Voluntary	n/a	CEO
I5	Rebecca Castle	Company limited by guarantee	2	29	Mostly Voluntary	110,000	CEO
I6	Sarah White	CIC - limited by guarantee	14	3	Mostly Voluntary	101,000	Director
I7	Andrew Jones	CIC - limited by guarantee	2	75	All	n/a	CEO
I8	Karen Wood	CIC - limited by guarantee	Varies	Varies	Mostly Public	50,000	Co-ordinator
I9	Dan Green	CIC - limited by shares	21	12	Mostly Voluntary	n/a	CEO
I10	Elizabeth Walker	CIC - limited by guarantee	12	0	Mostly public	n/a	CEO
I11	Mel Taylor	Registered Charity without company status + Company limited by shares	30	50	2/3 Public 1/3 Private	1.3m	Director
I12	Jennifer Brown	Registered Charity with Company Status + Company limited by guarantee	10	7	Mostly Voluntary	250,000	CEO
I13	Sophie Robinson	Registered Charity with Company Status + Company limited by guarantee	87	25	Mostly Voluntary	500,000	CEO
I14	Sue Green	CIC - limited by guarantee	0	Varies	Mostly Voluntary	30,000	Director
I15	Jack Williams	CIC - limited by shares	1250	200	Mostly Public	n/a	CEO
I16	James Brown	Industrial and Provident Society	1700	100	Mostly Public	n/a	Service Development Manager
I17	Louise Davidson	Registered Charity without company status	8	34	Mostly Voluntary	n/a	Manager

I18	Philip Clarke	Registered Charity with Company Status + Company limited by guarantee	30	40	Public and Voluntary	1.2m	Deputy CEO
I19	Stephanie Jackson	Company limited by guarantee	0	24	Mostly Voluntary	33,000	Chairman
I20	Emma Stewart	Registered Charity with Company Status + Company limited by guarantee	55	101	Mostly Voluntary	1.2m	
I21	Barbara King	Company limited by guarantee	0	varies	Mostly Voluntary	n/a	Director
I22	Mary Walters	CIC limited by guarantee	0	35	All	n/a	Director
I23	Anthony Hill	Registered Charity with Company Status	35	10	Mostly Voluntary	475,000	Social Enterprise Development Officer
I24	Carol Price	Charity and CIC	350	40	Mostly Public	5m	Director
I25	Laura Morgan	CIC - limited by guarantee	0	0	Varies	n/a	Director
I26	Jane Owen	CIC limited by guarantee	33	4	Mostly Voluntary	540,000	CEO
I27	Richard Thompson	Registered Charity with Company Status	12	10	Mostly Voluntary	700,000	CEO
I28	Diane Bell	CIC - limited by shares	75	7	Mostly Public	700,000	Chairman
I29	Mark Evans	Registered Charity without company status	30	6	All	650,000	Chairman
I30	Paul Roberts	CIC- limited by guarantee	Varies	Varies	Mostly Voluntary	n/a	CEO

4.5.1 Structure of the semi-structured interviews (Stage 1 – Chapter 5)

Informants were asked to participate in the study via an introductory telephone conversation and/or e-mail (see Appendix 5), which contained an attachment of the full participant information sheet (see Appendix 6), as well as, of course, the interview schedule for Stage 1 (see Appendix 7).

The interview schedule consisted of a list of topics and questions (Dawson, 2007) key to organisational identity, sustainability and governance. The interview schedule was organised in overarching sections, directly related to *a priori* areas of investigation that were particularly relevant for RQ1 (i.e. Chapter 5). Some data from these section headings were anticipated to provide useful preparation for Chapter 6, as well as help inform my final discussion (i.e. Chapter 7).

The interview schedule

The interview schedule (see Appendix 7) consisted of five key sections, divided into pre-selected themes. Those themes emerged from existing literature associated primarily with shifts in understanding (SE) institutional logics (in the public and third sectors) and new policy developments.

Section A of the interview schedule was intended to capture background information, focusing on characteristics of the organisational identity, organisational mission, main activities and (governance/legal) structure.

Section B sought to investigate the characteristics of organisational identity in further detail, focusing on what constitutes being a social SE from the informant's perspective. Additionally, it questioned the (potential) challenges of operating as a SE (or a hybrid organisation) from the social entrepreneur's perspective. This was the most important part of the interview schedule as it contributed to the development and conceptualisation of the SEG framework, depicting identity, governance and sustainability characteristics based on practical, operational examples. Furthermore, Section B addressed the most noteworthy, conceptual questions deriving from SE literature, such as, '*what/who is an SE?*', and '*what are the characteristics of your organisation, that makes it an SE?*' Finally, it assessed challenges associated with SE identification, aimed at revealing underlying issues from a critical analysis perspective.

Section C related to ideas concerning both organisational and individual identity, in an attempt to discover the traits of SE leaders/entrepreneurs. As a consequence, data were also analysed to help prepare me for the second stage of data collection. Some of the findings from this section were incorporated in Chapter 6, as a means to understand the question: ‘*who are social leaders/entrepreneurs?*’ Questions asked during this part were the most intense, in terms of provoking self-reflection and offering richness of in-depth responses from informants. Finally, the closing question focused on a personal view regarding organisational challenges, highlighting the challenges for the SE leaders/entrepreneurs as social agents.

Section D touched briefly on the importance of socio-entrepreneurial identity and leaders’ views concerning the concept of organisational change (driven by altruistic vs profit motives). Section D importantly asks questions about human resources e.g. management of volunteering and potential structural challenges faced. Furthermore, it asks questions about economic and social policy proposed by government (e.g. New Public Management (NPM), the *Big Society* agenda and localisation initiatives). These questions are important to ask, because they indirectly impact upon matters of organisational governance, identity and sustainability.

Section E consists of two questions about possible *organisational futures*. Due to recent changes in the Government’s agenda for third sector organisations, it was important to include future oriented questions, not least because of the cuts to funding, and new ways of accessing funds. In harsh economic times, it is important to establish informant viewpoints about organisational sustainability and long-term survival.

Interpreting organisational identity: mapping on the SEG.

Each semi-structured interview concluded by asking informants to place their organisation on the conceptual SEG (see Appendix 8) and explain their reasoning. Notes and transcripts from this *mapping activity* were also coded in accordance with responses to this particular method of focalising. Informants were able to contextualise narratives and their subsequent quadrant choice.

‘*Self-mapping*’ offered an additional opportunity for informants to reflect upon a range of issues and themes highlighted during interviews. This involved high level of informant interaction with the researcher, as the concepts and dimensions were explained

(and discussed) by the researcher. This form of mutual interpretation in some cases was particularly revealing, in that the SEG allowed comprehensive analytical assessments of current organisational situations and projected futures for the next generation of SEs (i.e. 2015 onwards). Self-mapping on the SEG also became a key touchstone for discussing and justifying interpretations of *organisational identity and sustainability*, and what that meant for each informant.

4.5.2 Background questionnaires (see Chapter 5)

Based on the idea of triangulation – validating data through the application of multiple research methods (Bryman, 2001) – I used background questionnaires at the end of each semi-structured interview to systematically gather personal details from informants, including background information pertaining to each organisation, to further support and enrich my study (Collis and Hussey, 2009). This data was cross-referenced with the interviews, informing the IPA in Chapter 5.

The background questionnaires employed in my study comprised a mixture of *open-ended* and *closed-ended* questions; the full structure is outlined in Appendix 9. The use of open-ended questions offered greater flexibility in expressing the informants' views, allowing for unusual (or complex) responses (Bryman, 2001; Reader, 2003; Collis and Hussey, 2009); for example, asking informants to provide short descriptions of organisational key activities or their organisational mission. The closed-ended questions²⁰ focused on clarifying information related to the organisational background, such as: legal structure, or sectoral identification (i.e. *in which sector do you operate?*). Those were especially useful in my research for validation of responses gathered through semi-structured interviews and assisted in focalisation of organisational identity and governance characteristics.

²⁰ Closed questions can be organised in various ways such as dichotomous, where the respondent has only two choices or offering spectrum of choices inviting respondent to choose an option of the best suitability (Bryman, 2001; Reader, 2003; Denscombe, 2007)

4.6 Stage 1: Data analysis (Chapter 5)

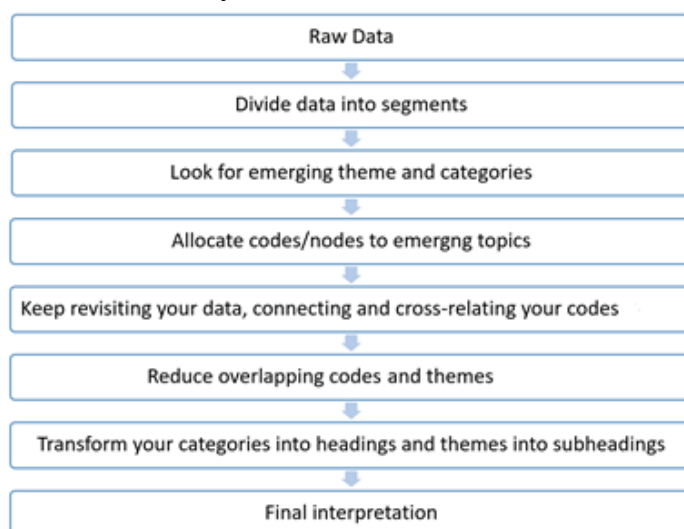
The primary purpose of IPA analysis is to elicit rich, in-depth, first-person accounts related to the research questions (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012). In the following section, I describe the structure of my analysis protocol for Stage 1 and the process of data analysis.

4.6.1 Applying an IPA protocol

The applied IPA protocol for Stage 1 (Chapter 5) was based on guidelines adapted from Smith's approaches (2004; Smith and Osborn, 2007; Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012). Drawing on Denscombe (2007), I developed my IPA protocol based on the following premises: (1) analysis should be rooted in the data; 2) the explanation of the data should emerge from careful reading; 3) the researcher should carefully avoid any input of personal conceptions into the data and finally; 4) the analysis should be based on a development process that constantly fluctuates in terms of comparing data to key themes, codes and trends within the literature (*ibid.*).

I have combined the above with the practical guides regarding IPA data analysis and interpretation (see for example Smith, 2004; Smith and Osborn, 2007; Cope, 2011 or Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012). A more robust approach for IPA protocol is illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Data analysis protocol: IPA stage 1 (Chapter 5) organisational identity and sustainability.



Adapted from Denscombe (2007)

IPA design cultivates the process of multiple reading as a key part of data preparation (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012), facilitating categorisation of data in accordance with the emerging themes. In terms of developing *a priori* themes and category headings for initial investigation, naturally I was influenced by the literature on TSO identity and governance. Categories for investigation and data analysis were based on the four main *section headings* from my interview schedule and informed by RQ1. So, for example, (based on my interview schedule – see Appendix 7), Section A aimed to establish background information, Section B asked about the *nature (i.e. organisational identity) and characteristics of social enterprise* – which became a category. Similarly, Section C asked about third sector governance and organisational structure. Finally, Section D asked about sector sustainability and possible organisational future(s).

After a process of *iterative analysis* (i.e. a key feature of IPA), open codes were used to identify emergent themes in each of the three main category areas: i.e. (a) organisational characteristics and identity, (b) third sector/organisational governance and (c) organisational sustainability. The process of *iteration* in my case (for my PhD), refers to immersing myself in the data (i.e. from transcripts, memos, and listening to recorded data), and uncovering key themes within cases, and across cases (see similar IPA analysis advice from Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012). This process involved the multiple reviewing of data, with a sensitivity towards verbal repetition and metaphorical meanings (*ibid.*). Naturally, as time went on, I began to notice overarching themes that emerged on a cross-case basis. I also cross-checked these findings/themes with the literature and developed and ‘*open → axial coding table*’ (see Table 8) for a systematic interpretation of my findings for Chapter 5.

As part of the iteration process, I discussed emerging themes (especially the early interviews/third sector cases with my supervisor). Where necessary, I added prompts to my interview schedule to explore emerging themes in greater detail. In terms of my own reflection, IPA was useful, because it allowed me to get close to the data, whilst maintaining a sense of personal distance from the informants and their personal life stories. My focus was very much on interpretation of key organisational themes in light of the literature, to better conceptualise key third sector issues from a macro-perspective. I attempted to interweave the literature and the data, for a useful interpreted analysis of the current state of affairs in the UK third sector. I feel that I have succeeded in this

respect, and there are no overarching conceptual frameworks, such as the SEG, of which I am aware.

It is important to note that during the initial phase of the data analysis, I used NVivo data analysis software, with the aim of easing the process of data organisation. However, after completing the interviewing process, and discussions with my supervisor, it was decided that thematic (and therefore intimate) in-depth analyses would increase my personal engagement with the data and improve the richness of my findings.

The next section (referring to Chapter 6 and RQ2) offers a much more in-depth, and personal account of the lived experiences of three third sector leaders and their careers to date. An in-depth personal narrative investigation necessarily involves data collection and analysis methods more commonly found within the social constructionist and ethnographical research paradigms.

Table 8: Synopsis of thematic analysis

Categories	Overarching Themes	Selected Quotes	Selected Literature
Nature of SE	SE Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisational drivers (Social vs Commercial) - Trading - Challenges for SE 	<p><i>“The SE main characteristic is that any money it makes, goes to continue to grow the organisation. It will go back into funds and the various [name] projects we’re building.”</i> I8</p> <p><i>“Well we don’t run the business to make a profit or take any money out of the business. We run it to be sustainable and successful. When we do make a profit, we reinvest in into more work in the areas that we’re passionate about.”</i> I11</p> <p><i>“Of course, the biggest challenge here is for the community to understand [...] And obviously, it’s about money too. But if you dwell so much on the money, you won’t do anything. So, it’s about time and commitment.”</i> I1</p> <p><i>“The biggest challenge is unreliable funding. [...] So, we continually have to work really hard in our other service wings to make sure that we can keep going”.</i> I3</p>	<p>Social enterprises are seen as vehicles of social value provision (Peredo and McLean, 2006)</p> <p>Alter (2007) suggests that SE can be classified as <i>“any business venture created for a social purpose – mitigating/reducing a social problem or a market failure – and to generate social value while operating with the financial discipline, innovation and determination of a private business sector business”</i>.</p> <p>SE are characterised by integration of the social and economic trading activities allowing (Bridge <i>et al.</i>, 2009)</p> <p>SEs are faced with existing third sector challenges to supplement reduced government funding (Thompson, 2011).</p>
	SEE identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-reflection - Challenges for SEEs 	<p><i>“It’s having an ability that is going to expand someone’s opportunities and life chances. understand working in the kind of business like way but the outcome is motivated by the social outcomes and it’s going to increase people’s</i></p>	<p>TSO leaders have a strong impact on the organisational identity while remaining legally autonomous from the structure (Mason <i>et al.</i>, 2007)</p>

		<p><i>opportunities or improve people’s quality of life so again the mission purpose and the values that underpin that work.” I8</i></p> <p><i>“They [SEEs] should be enthusiastic, committed have a good sense of strong belief in what they do, good with people. I think also good at, highly motivated, a bit opportunistic. [...] I meet all of those criteria” I9</i></p> <p><i>“It’s someone who recognises a need or social issue and tries to address or change it. If it means seeing opportunities where others see problems or stepping stones instead of stumbling blocks then yes I am a social entrepreneur.” I18</i></p>	<p>Social entrepreneurs are characterised with an ability to develop a multiplicity of organisational objectives, merging operational techniques with social provision (Hynes, 2009).</p> <p>Social entrepreneurs are the “<i>drivers of transformation [...] that target unjust and unsustainable systems and transform them into entirely new sustainable systems.</i>” Martin and Osberg, 2015; Rahdari <i>et al.</i>, 2016, p. 348)</p>
Governance and Organisational Structure	Legal Forms	<p><i>“We are a charitable organisation and all the trading we do, the small amount of trading we actually do is as a charity, we haven’t got any separate trading arms with any different legal identities, it is just a charity” I23</i></p> <p><i>“We are a Community Interest Company and we also call ourselves a social enterprise” I26</i></p>	<p>SEs are influenced by the changes in government policy development affecting how third sector organisations structure their governance and shape the ways to address long term strategy developments (Darby and Jenkins, 2006; Gibbon and Affleck, 2008; Spear <i>et al.</i>, 2009).</p> <p>The social economy is now characterised by the changing focus towards pro-business activities, new governance structures, and legal forms, that becomes more commonplace (Cornforth and Spear, 2010).</p>

			TSOs grow more commercially recognised, whilst retaining their philanthropic values (Dees <i>et al.</i> , 2001; Dart, 2004b; Seanor <i>et al.</i> , 2007).
	Change Management	<p><i>“When you keep changing people’s roles, you give them different things to do it makes them "all-rounders" and it makes them feel involved in the process, decision making, project developing, in the creative process. And brings the best out of people, brings the creativity and also loyalty”</i>. I5</p> <p><i>“I think the biggest challenge of change is to link people’s roles back to this culture, because actually we want them to be innovative, we want them to come forward with ideas, we want them to challenge.”</i> I15</p>	<p>The shift in organisational logic forces organisational changes. It takes place when there is a discontinuity in the meaning of existing practices (Thornton <i>et al.</i>, 2005, Bjerregaard and Lauring, 2012).</p> <p>The shifts towards pro-business activities often affects the organisational systems and pre-existing structures (Chen and Lyon, 2012).</p>
Future and Sustainability	Future of TS Organisational Future Sustainability	<p><i>“I think that the third sector its growing because people are becoming more used to it [the SE concept]. Some organisations will be sustainable, those who are going with social concept it will. But for those who go in for the sake of making money, will not survive, that’s my view”</i>. I2</p> <p><i>“We’re going to run like a business. We’re going to be profit driven, knowing very well our sales are the profits or going back to the community”</i> I6</p>	<p>The organisational sustainability became an integral aspect in defining organisational identity of social enterprises (Birch and Whittam, 2006)</p> <p>There is a growing view among the scholars that <i>“in order to achieve institutional sustainability there must be an embedded commitment towards full transparency and accountability”</i> (Rotheroe and Richards, 2007, p. 33).</p>

		<p><i>“Yes, in terms of range of what we’re doing and how well we’re doing it. You know as long as we maintain that. It will certainly be more than sustainable.” I17</i></p> <p><i>“We’re sustainable in the near future [...] we’ve learned a lot of lessons from failed trading activities and actually that’s really valuable and now it’s about putting it into practice and operating some successful trading activities.” I19</i></p>	<p>DTI (2006) associates sustainable development of TSOs with organisational growth, environmental protection and social issues.</p> <p>The future of the third sector is affected by growing identity tension, associated with emergence of hybrid forms and the increased cross-sectoral competitiveness (Peattie and Morley, 2008).</p>
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4.7 Stage 2: Identity construction, sensemaking and data collection (*i.e.* Chapter 6)

Weick (1995) was among one of first scholars to popularise the term ‘sensemaking’ to describe “*the process of social construction that occurs when discrepant cues interrupt individuals’ ongoing activity, and involves the retrospective development of plausible meanings that rationalise what people are doing*” (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010). Put simply, sensemaking can be defined as a knowledge-building process focused on understanding how meanings are created, and explaining how those meanings relate to human behaviours and actions (Weick, 1995; Choo, 1996; Weick, 2005).

Weick²¹ (1995) characterises the sensemaking process as having seven distinctive properties: 1) being *grounded* in identity construction, 2) *retrospective*, 3) *enactive* (of sensible environments), 4) *social*, 5) *ongoing*, 6) *focused* on and by extracted cues, and 7) *driven* by plausibility rather than accuracy. In terms of application to my study, those properties provide a set of guidelines for understanding what sensemaking is and how it is applied in the social constructionist approach adopted in Chapter 6.

The retrospective property of sensemaking in my study refers to meaningfulness of past experiences (Weick, 1995), *i.e.* the critical turning points of SEEs. Put simply, it discusses the interpretation of former experiences allowing anticipation of the present and the future (in my research this is achieved for example through the application of Ricoeurian mimesis). The *enactive* property reflects an embeddedness in the environmental context (Weick, 1995), meaning sensemaking takes place within the informants’ closest environment (Helms-Mills *et al.*, 2010). Following Helms-Mills *et al.*’s. (2010, p. 185) sensemaking applications, I adopt the view that “*the environment that has been created by the sense-maker reinforces his or her sense of credibility*” (*ibid.*, 2010, p. 185).

Furthermore, in my Chapter 6 analysis, ‘*social*’ and ‘*ongoing*’ characteristics of sensemaking can be understood literally; *social* refers to the SEEs’ expectations, routines,

²¹ Weick (1995) in his famous title, “*Sensemaking for Organisations*”, embarks on a theoretical journey through operational processes of organisations, and how they shape, develop and influence members.

language, symbols etc. that could impact their social identity; while the *ongoing* characteristics relate to perpetual processes, characterised by a constant flow (Weick *et al.*, 2005; Helms-Mills *et al.*, 2010), i.e. the lifetime function of sustainability. The property of being *focused* relates to the ability to select the appropriate elements (i.e. themes and/or patterns) to optimise the process of narrative interpretation (Helms-Mills *et al.*, 2010). Finally, *plausibility* simply refers to focus rather than accuracy, as individuals tend to relate to their own sense of credibility (which I believe is socially created). In my study, plausibility assumes that individual determination is based on subjective understanding of social reality. From this perspective, sensemaking is not focused on revealing truth; instead it is a continuous redrafting, reshaping, re-organising and re-understanding of situations and past experiences (Helms-Mills *et al.*, 2010), as well as a means of predicting the ‘*meaning*’ of future events (Reissner, 2010).

Based on the above properties, sensemaking can be successfully applied to narratives and storytelling (Weick 1995, Brown 2000, Reissner, 2010), enriching the understanding (Sommer *et al.*, 1998, Reissner, 2010) of SE phenomena. In a socio-entrepreneurial context, this means that storytelling lies at the centre of organisational existence (Rhodes and Brown, 2005, Maclean *et al.*, 2012), allowing a crystallisation of meaning (Weick, 1995). This solidifies the use of narratives as part of the sensemaking approach in my study, as extracting understanding of changes through meaning-making based on informants’ interactions, experiences and relations. Put simply, the in-depth, life-history interviews permit creation of connections (Maclean, *et al.*, 2012) between events, that in turn encourages the emergence of creative subjectivity (De Certeau, 1984, cited in Maclean *et al.* 2012) and the reflective self, enriching the process of interpretation.

4.7.1 Stage 2: Sampling and data collection (Chapter 6)

In-depth personal case studies are useful for collecting longitudinal data about key individuals, their careers and their socio-organisational identity (Mallet and Wapshott, 2011)²². The data collected in Chapter 6 comprises the accounts of three social entrepreneurial leaders as they share their personal journey, including recollections of past

²² For example: Bryman (2004) gives an example of Stanley’s study (originally carried by Shaw, 1930) as characterised by using life stories and biographies of respondents to inform his social research.

life experiences, critical incidents and turning points, personal values, and future career aspirations.

The responses collected during Stage 1 of the data collection were re-visited and re-investigated in order to focus on the individual/personal identity factors of SE leaders. I initially selected four respondents (see Table 9) on the basis that they appeared to represent contrasting orientations of the socio-entrepreneurial dichotomy (commercially-oriented, profit-driven individuals versus socially-oriented, altruistically-driven individuals), which was evident from my Chapter 5 (SEG) analysis.

Table 9: Stage 2 data collection: description of the cases

	Position	Reason for selection
Case 1 Jane Owen	CEO	Jane represents purely philanthropic orientation, claiming to be a social activist. She is very purpose-driven, running few social enterprises in the local area, promoting issues associated with environmentalism and the sustainable living.
Case 2 Louise Davidson	Manager	Louise is a self-confirmed social connector working in a large charity. She claims to be socially oriented; however, she wants to incorporate a more commercial approach due to struggles with financial sustainability of the venture.
Case 3 Jack Williams	CEO	Jack is a CEO of one of the largest and most successful social enterprises in the South East. He claims to be commercially driven, yet calls himself a successful social entrepreneur by putting emphasis on the socially driven mission through the commercial service provision.
Case 4 Diane Bell (did not participate)	CEO	Diane refers to herself as both a commercially- and socially-driven individual. She is involved in various socio-entrepreneurial ventures and social projects with a strong emphasis on financial sustainability and community empowerment.

Per Stage 1 of the data collection, SE leaders were invited to participate via e-mail (see Appendix 5). Three out of four organisational leaders approached, agreed to take part in the longitudinal case study; the fourth has not responded to repeated e-mail invitations and phone calls. These organisational leaders received a participant information sheet (see Appendix 6) and a brief overview of the interview schedule (see Appendix 7), consisting of a list of topics and themes (Dawson, 2007) considered essential to the investigation of an SEE's individual/personal identity.

I will now provide a synopsis of the Stage 2 semi-structured interviews schedule used for my personal/individual narrative analysis in Chapter 6.

4.7.2 Stage 2: Interview schedule for Chapter 6

The interview schedule for Stage 2 (see Appendix 10) consisted of four overarching sections, divided into pre-selected themes, particularly relevant for RQ2 (i.e. Chapter 6). Pre-selected themes used for the data collection instrument were organised chronologically from past events, to notions of intent and aspiration: *1) background, scene-setting information; 2) life journey (past and present); 3) critical turning points (present); 4) prospective self-identity (possible futures and the process of 'becoming' an SEE).*

There were some minor variations between the personalised semi-structured interview schedules, as a result of previously gathered responses and organisational characteristics. Nevertheless, all of the questions were designed in an 'open-ended' manner, thereby giving informants a sense of greater self-reflexivity in re-telling their own stories and formulating their views (Bryman, 2004). There were two types of open-ended questions asked during Stage 2 of the data collection: (a) *factual*, focusing for example on past experiences, critical turning points, significant memories or occupational/professional characteristics; and; (b) *social constructionist* investigating personal attitudes, emotions, values and influences throughout each informant's life journey.

Structure of the personal/longitudinal interviews

All semi-structured, longitudinal interviews opened with a request for written consent to collect data and conduct voice recording. One of the informants, Louise Davidson, withheld permission to record, for personal reasons. In this case, in order to limit levels of potential stress and make the respondent feel at ease (Bryman, 2004, Denscombe, 2007), manual notes and memos were instead taken throughout. This was recognised as one of the limitations for the second stage of data collection (see Section 4.10).

The *first part* of the interview schedule sought information regarding any major changes (in both individual and organisational contexts) that occurred since the last meeting, followed by scene-setting questions (comprising a mixture of both factual and behavioural) which served to clarify the respondents' current position on his/her self-identity. Prompts used in this part were calculated to provoke an in-depth investigation of the individual's emotions and feelings, shaping their socio-entrepreneurial identity.

The *second part* was a retrospective investigation of past events, considering each informant's life journey – from their earliest childhood memories, experiences and significant behaviours, to the present day.

The *third part* focused on issues related to the present, for example, the informant's current career, and their reflections on the most significant and critical turning points affecting their life choices (to date). This section involved considering how critical turning points served to determine the '*who*' aspect of RQ2, by focusing on who they (SEEs) are now, and how they came to be that person.

The *fourth part* of the longitudinal interviews concentrated on the future intentions and aspirations and the individual: questions in this section were kept open-ended and quite '*general*', thereby inviting informants to express their dreams and aspirations in an unstructured way. The interviews were concluded by giving the subjects an opportunity to change any information that had been proffered, and/or to share any supplementary information relevant to their personal life journey. In closing, the researcher thanked the interviewees for their participation in the study, and reiterated that the information regarding data analysis processes would remain confidential, in order to validate the ethical approach of the research.

4.8 Stage 2: Data analysis (Chapter 6) – individual identity

Semi-structured interviews were manually transcribed within a week of the recording, thereby ensuring continued immersion in the collected data. To increase the efficiency of the transcription process, I used *Express Scribe* software during the Stage 1 process; this was demonstrably effective and less time-consuming. In line with scholars who have adopted similar social construction research approaches (see for example Kempster and Cope, 2010; Cope, 2011 or McLean, 2012), I used a five-stage analysis process, outlined in Table 10.

Table 10: Plan of data analysis for Stage 2

(adapted from Kempster and Cope, 2010; and Cope, 2011)

Process	Level	Description
Familiarisation	Reading data	Reading process of the transcripts to familiarise with data
Examination	Diagnosis	Presentation of the cases and informants. Identifying number of stories, common elements (Cardon <i>et al.</i> , 2011) and reconciliation of discrepancies (Maclean <i>et al.</i> , 2012).
Identification and sense making	Categorisation	Process of sense making identities – identifying the retrospective stories within the Ricoeurian narratives, categorisation in three sense making processes: retrospective location (past/pre-configuration), meaning (present/configuration) and becoming (future/re-configuration).
Identity Interpreting (from a social construction perspective)	Self-legitimacy claims.	Re-examination of the personal narratives scrutinising the self-legitimacy claims.

Writing-up	Vignettes	Individual/collective, common clusters of meaning; locating future; legitimising discourses; identity attributions; social causative outcome
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The *familiarisation* stage involved multiple readings of the data, ensuring the accuracy of transcripts (Cope, 2011). During this stage, the transcriptions of audio recordings were considered in tandem with notes and memos made during the interviews, which documented changes in informants' attitudes and/or body language. The familiarisation process formed the primary set of raw data, leading to the next, exploratory stage of analysis process.

During the *examination* phase, the number of stories was calculated for each respondent. This was followed by the preliminary identification of common themes, patterns and elements (Cardon *et al.*, 2011) emerging from the data. Following Maclean *et al.*'s (2012) use of the social constructionist approach in storytelling, I allowed a multiplicity of narratives occurring within each story (Maclean *et al.*, 2012), which enriched my use of Ricoeurian analysis (see Chapter 6 for details), offering a more robust perspective of the SEEs' identity characteristics.

Furthermore, the examination stage accommodated the descriptive presentation of cases (from an organisational leadership perspective) and gathered the biographical information of each informant. These were presented in the form of timeline synopses (see Figures 7, 8 and 9 in Chapter 6), highlighting issues such as critical turning points and significant past experiences. The use of timelines prepared the researcher for the in-depth process of identification, delineating the number of stories, common patterns and/or elements (Cardon *et al.*, 2011), and the reconciliation of any discrepancies within the data (Maclean *et al.*, 2012).

Next came the *categorisation* stage, aimed at identifying the (initial) emergence of sensemaking passages for full identification of themes developed in the categorisation stage). In terms of establishing identity narratives, this was performed in line with Ricoeurian studies focusing on the mimesis categories (prefiguration, configuration and refiguration; see detailed explanation in Chapter 6). The categorisation stage offered a well-rounded analysis of different socio-entrepreneurial identities, as well as

commonalities of social leaders through established mimetic themes and time-lapses (past/retrospective location; present/meaning, and future/becoming). In the *prefiguration* category, I focused on the emotional discourse of informants via a thorough investigation of the social values, emotions and recursive nature of the incidents they described. Similarly, the analysis of the *configurative present* focused on such individual identity characteristics (in line with RQ2) as social embeddedness, portrayed as an integral part of SEE identity. Subsequent analysis of the *future* (becoming), focused on self-reflections related to the intentions and prospective actions of SEEs, by analysing the refigurative reflections of these social leaders.

The next stage of data analysis, the *interpreting identity* stage, examined the self-legitimacy claims observed within the personal narratives. I investigated *how respondents presented themselves as social/commercial leaders and what impacts their self-reflection*. Simply put, it focused on the identification of the critical incidents (turning points), relational analysis (i.e. informants' relationships with others as clusters of meaning), and the learning of lessons in relation to different positions of SEE identity. For example, the *lessons-learned* interpretations were portrayed as the self-legitimising discourse aimed at focalisation of the 'who': i.e. *could the informants always make sense of who they are?*

Following the above stages of data analysis, I was ready to begin the writing-up, using the vignette style (the vignettes used and change in language style are explored further in Section 6.5). The accounts essentially comprise first-person, individual descriptions of experiences, to chart the individual life journeys of the SEEs (Cope, 2011).

The Stage 2 data analysis fostered the idea of identifying the sensemaking approaches (Maclean *et al.*, 2012) emerging from the storytelling (from past events to the present moment and beyond). It was felt that the unique nature of my approach placed SEEs in time, space and context (Maclean *et al.*, 2012, p. 25), offering a major contribution to the existing socio-entrepreneurial and leadership literature. A detailed version of the analysis protocol can be found in Appendix 11.

4.9 Stage 3: Employee focus groups

After Stage 1 and 2 of the data analysis, and following discussions with my supervisor, I decided to conduct two additional *employee and volunteer* (as opposed to SE leader) focus groups (with 4 and 7 participants respectively). This additional data collection and analysis complemented the 30 interviews (from Stage 1) and three in-depth cases (in Stage 2). Focus groups proved useful as they enabled a more rounded view of organisational identity (Chapter 5), and helped confirm results about the SEEs/SE leaders (Chapter 6).

4.9.1 Focus group overview

Focus groups were particularly valuable to my study because they allowed employees and volunteers who worked in the same organisation to talk about organisational experiences (see Appendix 12 for participant profiles), and reflect upon the role (and efficacy) of their respective leaders (Smithson, 2000). This triangulation of source data is important for (organisational and individual) identity interpretation, and helped validate and confirm my initial findings (i.e. from Stages 1 and 2).

The focus group process

To select the organisations most suitable for participation in the focus groups, the analysis from all 30 initial cases was revisited. However, after discussions with my supervisor it appeared most appropriate to purposively select Jack's (I15) and Jane's (I26) organisations (from Stage 2) because they represented contrasting orientations (commercially-driven individuals vs altruistically-driven individuals) on the SEG (P15). Furthermore, this selection increased the credibility of Stage 2 data analysis by offering a new, collective perspective on issues associated with RQ2.

Jack's organisation (CHU) was very large, with over 1,200 employees, whereas Jane's organisation (Urban Hat) comprised four volunteers. The CHU focus group consisted of seven informants (in a discussion lasting nearly two hours), all of whom were eager to share their opinions about Jack's leadership and the organisation itself. In contrast, four informants took part in the Urban Hat focus group discussion (lasting 1.5 hours). Again, all Urban Hat informants were keen to discuss issues relating to organisational governance, effectiveness and leader identity.

As with the Stage 1 and 2 interviews – and in line with my research ethics – consent for participation and recording was obtained from each of the informants at the beginning of the focus group discussion. This was augmented by handwritten notes and memos documenting non-verbal behaviours i.e. nodding in agreement, or shaking head in disagreement with others. Each focus group opened by welcoming informants, and was followed by an informative introduction, explaining the purpose of the study. Informants were encouraged to bring up such issues as they saw fit in relation to discussed topics or themes individually perceived as relevant or significant. The role of the researcher was to guide the focus group conversations by suggesting topics in line with the interview schedule, prompting informants for answers only when necessary. The overall tone of conversation remained informal throughout, with some level of digression permitted.

4.9.2 Focus Group Schedule and analysis

Focus group guides were arranged in five overarching sections (see Appendix 13 for full schedule). The sections used related to themes that had emerged from previous stages of data analysis, taking into consideration organisational characteristics i.e. identity orientation and overall demographic information (number of employees, turnover, main activities).

Section A was aimed at establishing background information related to the informants' profiles and basic attributes of the organisational identity. It helped confirm data gathered and analysed during Stage 1. Section A helped identify core organisational characteristics i.e. organisational mission, governance and current activities.

Section B focused on the individual identity characteristics of SEEs from a broader, stakeholder perspective (in line with RQ2). Topics discussed during this part examined the social leaders' capabilities in the SE context, and identified their importance in the development and sustainability of the organisation.

Section C focused on the issues associated with the governance and sustainability from both an organisational and an individual perspective. The aim of this section was to investigate the collective understanding of organisational well-being, and the role of the leader in enabling long-term survival.

Section D scrutinised the importance of the organisational challenges from a broader stakeholder-centred perspective, considering issues concerning SE identity implications at an organisational level, as well as the challenges faced by social leaders (SEEs) running a hybrid venue.

Finally, *Section E* focused on organisational futures from a broad, sectoral perspective, in relation to emerging social policies and government contributions.

At the end of each section, a short verbal summary was produced by the moderator aimed at synthesising (and confirming) the issues emerging during the discussion. The meetings were closed with information pertaining to how the gathered data would be processed, with an emphasis on the importance of anonymity and confidentiality.

4.9.3 Stage 3: focus group analyses

The findings were organised according to five pre-defined themes based on the discussion schedule categories: 1) background information; 2) SEE identity; 3) organisational and personal sustainability; 4) organisational challenges; 5) future implications. Put simply, the use of a thematic analysis facilitated categorisation of the responses. The data set created was then cross-analysed/compared with corresponding themes and sections identified in the Stage 1 and 2 data analyses. Stage 3 focus group findings and quotation analyses are used throughout Chapters 5 and 6 as they helped complement and triangulate other field evidence/data (where appropriate).

4.10 Stage 4: ‘Follow-up’ (post-Brexit vote) semi-structured interviews

The socio-economic changes to the third sector after the recent *Brexit vote* and the long time frames between the third stage of data collection and completion date made it prudent to introduce an additional stage of data collection and analysis. For a more well-rounded study, I decided to revisit four social leaders from stage 1, to establish if any of the interpreted views and positions had changed in relation to RQ1 and RQ2.

The fourth stage of data collection was essentially supplementary, and again followed a semi-structured interview approach. Three follow-up interviews were

conducted with informants from Stage 1. The main purpose was to gather the most current views related to organisational performance, and personal feelings concerning the Brexit vote. In total, I have conducted four fairly informal semi-structured interviews, two were conducted as a face-to-face and two were proceeded by telephone.

The SEEs were invited for the follow-up conversation through an e-mail invitation (see Appendix 14), consisting of the purpose of the interview, the topics to be discussed, and the assurance of confidentiality. Of the initial 30 informants, invitations were sent to 10 selected cases; and four agreed to take part. With the informants' permission, the conversations were recorded using telephone/recording software. The full interview schedule was based on four overarching sections: i.e. a) background information and recollection of organisational and individual changes; b) organisational orientation, governance and sustainability; c) the Brexit vote; d) implications for the future (see full interview schedule in Appendix 15).

The answers were again transcribed using *Express Scribe* software and, due to the limited volume of data, the coding process was manual; responses were divided into one of four categories based on pre-defined themes highlighted above. The findings were then used to inform the discussion chapter, by offering a fresh perspective on research concepts and underpinning the development of the conceptual characteristics of identity at both a personal (SEE) and an organisational level.

4.11 Ensuring validity in qualitative research

Validity in research relates to the accuracy and truthfulness of findings (Le Compte and Goetz 1982; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bryman, 2004; Shenton, 2004; Holliday, 2007; Grix, 2010; Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). Maxwell (1996) moved beyond the traditional (positivist) perspectives and offered a definition of the validity in qualitative research as “*the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account (p. 122)*”. In a similar approach, I follow the four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to evaluate the soundness of my research: 1) *credibility* (as opposed to positivist internal validity); 2) *transferability* (as opposed to positivist external validity); 3) *dependability* (as opposed to positivist reliability); 4) *confirmability* (as

opposed to positivist objectivity). I will now define each of those criteria in greater detail and explain how they relate to my particular research techniques.

4.11.1 Credibility in qualitative research

Credibility is often defined as the “*confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings* (Anney, 2014, p. 276)”. Put simply, it refers to the plausibility of the information (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) from the perspective of the informant. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested various techniques for establishing credibility in qualitative research that I also employed in my study: a) *prolonged engagement*; b) *persistent observation*; c) *triangulation*; d) *peer debriefing*; e) *deviant case analysis*, f) *thick description*; g) *referential adequacy*, h) *member checks*.

Prolonged engagement refers to the length and richness of the relationship between researcher and informant(s) (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In my study, this was ensured through the longevity of research. For example, in the longitudinal part (Stage 2) of my data collection I met with the informants on more than one occasion. These additional meetings strengthened the relationship and enabled both the researcher and the informant(s) to build a sense of trust (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014).

Persistent observation refers to identification of the significant characteristics (organisational or individual) that can be tapped into to drive a greater level of engagement with the informants and enhance the richness of gathered data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). In my research, this was established by creating background notes of the organisational settings in conjunction with desk research, and writing memos during (and after) the conversations, concentrating on both verbal and non-verbal behaviours and environmental characteristics.

Data *triangulation* is a popular approach used in qualitative studies and is aimed at creating diversity of data and adopting multi-perspective views rather than simply accepting the consensus (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). I sought to enhance the credibility of my research by use of cross-analysis with supplementary research methods i.e. background questionnaires (for Chapter 5), focus groups (for Chapters 5 and 6), and post-Brexit follow-up interviews (for Chapter 7). The process of data triangulation enriched the researched concepts, and a priori constructs from the literature, offering more robust and in-depth data analysis.

Peer debriefing is defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as “*the process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytical session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer’s mind* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308)”. Put simply, this technique allows the researcher to become aware of any biases and helps in establishing one’s own research posture towards data (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). In my study, this was established by participating in doctoral research groups as well as attending research conferences and seminars where I had a chance to talk about my research with other scholars and doctoral students.

Deviant case analysis refers to cross-checking data that may not initially support the findings or identified patterns. This technique ensures the robustness of the research allowing creation of sensemaking passages between the themes and categories. I have used this approach during all stages of data analysis which facilitated the expansion (and confirmation) of the emerging themes and patterns.

Thick description is defined as a technique focused on increasing richness of research findings (Shenton, 2004). This can be ensured through the iterative data analysis, the intense process of re-reading data and through creating detailed descriptions of cases. In my research, it was evident through Stage 2 data analysis, by using the micro-narratives and detailed case descriptions. This approach allowed for the complexity and specificity of issues regarding personal identity of SEEs.

Referential adequacy refers to the process of data selection that appears as irrelevant to the study. I have used this technique throughout my data analysis, omitting (archiving) content from the interviews that digressed from the core topics. After completing the four-stage analysis process, I have re-visited the archived data to ensure the validity of the findings.

Member checks are often defined as the most important provision that strengthens credibility of the research (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). It allows for the interpretation of one’s own responses, which increases plausibility of collected data. In my research, member checks were conducted through reading the summaries of interviews back to the informants and repeating any particularly important and/or ambiguous sections to make sure that the correct information was obtained. The summary technique was used as

opposed to sending full transcripts after interviewing, due to the lengths of the transcripts and large number of participants.

4.11.2 Transferability in qualitative research

Transferability is often defined as the qualitative method of ensuring the external validity of research by overlooking the generalisability of findings to the wider context (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). In simple terms, it focuses on the field experiences allowing evaluation of research value and potential to be employed in different contexts.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the process of *thick description* can increase the transferability of research. It allows for a detailed description of a research phenomenon that justifies the use of complex research paradigms, methods and specificity of gathered data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). My research, as a qualitative, interpretivist study, has a relatively small scope due to the number of informants. Therefore, it was aimed purely at understanding – rather than generalising – the findings. As a result, the findings of my study can be transferred only to other, comparable (SE) contexts,

4.11.3 Dependability and the consistency of findings

Bitsch (2005), defines dependability as the “*stability of findings over time*” (p. 86). It is used to address the reliability of research by ensuring the appropriate selection of candidates, as well the use of adequate research methods (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that an *inquiry audit (or external audit)* can be used as a technique to ensure the dependability of the research as it involves external researchers or scholars examining the research process and techniques. I have ensured the dependability of my study by attending two official panel meetings, where my work was challenged and evaluated to ensure the appropriateness of the research design and techniques accounting for the changing SE context. I have also adopted the ‘overlapping methods’ technique (Shenton, 2004) using supplementary data collected through background questionnaires in Stage 1, focus groups in Stage 3 and the supplementary semi-structured interviews during Stage 4 of the data collection, that ensured the stability and longevity of my findings.

4.11.4 Achieving a sense of confirmability – providing neutrality in a qualitative research

Confirmability in qualitative research is often compared by scholars to the positivistic criteria of objectivity (Shenton, 2004). It focuses on evaluating the findings without bias or partiality, rather than allowing the researcher's perspective to affect the results (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It was never an aim of my study to achieve confirmability of findings. Instead, this neutrality approach allows for recognition of researchers' predispositions and reflexivity (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Shenton, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested four techniques for researchers to provide a sense of confirmability in a qualitative research: a) *audit trials*; b) *confirmability audit*; c) *triangulation*; d) *reflexivity*.

Audit trials refer to the detailed records and description of the research process (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). In my study, the research records (i.e. raw data, process notes, memos, consent forms, diaries) were kept in chronological order, enhancing the integrity of the research and easing the process of reporting findings.

A *confirmability audit* focuses on the external examination of the research process to evaluate the appropriate research progress (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In a similar way to the dependability aspect, this was ensured through supervision meetings which examined the records from my audit trials and the external panel meetings that evaluated the robustness of my research design and research methods.

Triangulation, of data (similar to the technique used to ensure credibility) was used to ensure confirmability through enhancing the richness and robustness of the study and to reduce the research bias. Cross-referencing data sets facilitate a richer understanding and therefore generate more in-depth findings. In my research, it refers to the multi-paradigm design and the use of complementary approaches in Chapters 5 and 6, which I deliberately employed to produce a range of overlapping truth claims.

Finally, the researcher *reflexivity* is often perceived as a key for establishing confirmability (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). It involves the researcher's ontological position and systematic attitude to the research context and data gathered (Berger, 2015). I have fostered reflection and reflexivity in my research by keeping a journal – in the form

of a research diary combining my own ideas, emerging interests, field notes and research values – throughout the research process. The journal enhanced the transparency of my research, allowed development of critical reflections and increased my engagement in the research process. More detailed information on the role of the researcher can be found in Section 7.5.2 in my discussion (Chapter 7).

4.12 Limitations of the methods employed

There is a wide spectrum of limitations associated with qualitative research methods, all of which were taken into consideration during this study (see Appendix 16 for an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of all adopted research methods). Furthermore, I have also acknowledged the positionality of the researcher as an additional research limitation associated with the methods employed, recognising the possibility of ‘*researcher bias*’ during the sensemaking process.

During Stage 1, the assembly of a macro-narrative effectively limited the input of the researcher to verification and triangulation. This meant relying on establishing institutional facts whilst maintaining a certain sense of distance and objectivity in terms of interpretation of the meaning-making process. However, with regard to the more in-depth, longitudinal research and critical approach necessary in Stages 2 and 3, it must be acknowledged that the social construction of meaning becomes more closely connected with the research setting and the social environment of the informants. This also forms a justification for the adoption of a social constructionist design, in the sense that the meaning-making and narratives developed in the study do inevitably become intertwined with the informants’ SEE identity.

The following sections refer to the practical limitations of the research methods employed in this study, namely semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and focus groups.

4.12.1 Limitations of semi-structured interviews

Primary data collection was a crucial element of my study. The semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of my data collection. This technique can be described as a two-way discussion with informants

(Kvale, 2007), which was carried out either face to face or through a telephone conversation (see Appendix 21 for interview timeline). Semi-structured interviews offer a greater sense of flexibility (Bryman, 2004) for the researcher than more structured approaches.

I have recognised a range of limitations associated with the semi-structured interviewing technique. During the preparation stage, the first limitation came from the careful wording of the interview schedules, in order to avoid leading questions and sensitive topics (Kvale, 2007). The next limitation came from the difficulty in arranging the meetings at a place and time appropriate for the informants, which often resulted in costly and lengthy journeys for the researcher. Furthermore, during the semi-structured interviews, because the researcher was not immersed in the everyday social setting of the informants, and due to the presence of an audio-recorder, a disruption of normal organisational flow was acknowledged (Opdenakker, 2006). The limitations associated with recording primarily concerned the Stage 1 telephone interviews, where notes were taken manually due to a lack of an appropriate telephone recording device/software. Furthermore, during the Stage 2 data collection, one of the informants did not grant permission for the voice recording of the semi-structured, face-to face interviews. In this case, notes were taken manually throughout the interview process.

The quality of gathered data is also limited with regard to social cues (Opdenakker, 2006), such as body language or voice intonation, which I also considered in the latter transcripts. It has to be acknowledged that semi-structured interviewing generated vast amounts of lengthy data that was difficult to transcribe. The transcription difficulties came from the external disturbances and background noise captured during the recordings, in addition to inaudible parts where informants were speaking too quietly (Kvale, 2007). This was recognised in the transcripts and supported by the manual notes taken throughout the meetings. Moreover, I have acknowledged that the richness of data gathered created additional complexity during data analysis, due to the great volume involved, making it initially difficult to define themes, patterns and similarities.

At the same time, the semi-structured interviews via telephone brought an additional range of limitations to this method. Most importantly, in Stage 1 of the data collection, I did not use a telephone recording device, and therefore all notes were taken

manually. This was difficult in some cases, due to background disturbances or poor line connections with the informants; in those cases, the connection was repeated until a satisfactory level of understanding was gathered. The telephone interviews were considerably shorter when compared with the face-to-face approach; however, they generated data with a similar quality of response. The additional limitation associated with telephone interviewing is the lack of opportunity to note social cues, other than voice intonation, which is sometimes perceived as limiting the validity of responses (Opdenakker, 2006).

4.12.2 Limitations of background questionnaires

The background questionnaires were used as a complementary source of data, supporting the Stage 1 responses gathered through semi-structured interviews. The use of questionnaires often brings with it a range of limitations associated with difficulties in identifying the complexity of the researched issues. Nevertheless, in my study they were not used as a primary method, and therefore the richness of responses was not the anticipated aim.

The responses from the background questionnaires were cross-referenced as per the triangulation method, in order to minimise the extent of limitations (such as the limited scope of questions and/or an inability to probe the answers). Consequently, the limitations of the triangulation method also needed to be considered. Some scholars (see, for example, Coxon, 2005; Denscombe, 2007) suggest the use of mixed methods as being ineffective, in terms of both time and cost, and potentially leading to oversimplification. The difficulties in gathering data were addressed by the researcher's previous vast experience with both types of data (qualitative and quantitative), minimising the need for learning additional skills (Denscombe, 2007). The findings gathered from the background questionnaires complemented the semi-structured interviews, limiting any misinterpretations of the data and analysis errors (Grix, 2010).

4.12.3 Limitations of focus groups

As with any research method, the researcher took into consideration those limitations often associated with establishing focus groups. For example, focus groups are notoriously difficult to organise; it is difficult to control the setting or assimilate the normal social environment of the informant(s); and there are very often digressions from

the core topics (Bryman, 2004) in the course of the natural conversational flow (despite attempts by the convenor to keep the conversation ‘on-topic’). Additionally, focus groups generate ‘*difficult data*’ in terms of transcription, as people are disposed to talking over each other. The transcription of the focus groups was a very long and time-consuming process (Bryman, 2004). Some of the voices in the recordings were difficult to distinguish, while additional audio complexities included the respondents talking over each other (*ibid.*) and the unavoidable background noise. Attempts by the researcher to limit transcription difficulties included careful and comprehensive note-taking during the interviews and statement confirmation during the recordings. The researcher had to take into consideration the ‘*group effect*’ that could impact upon data-gathering; that aside, the focus group informants knew each other well enough to be able to share their opinions (especially opposing ones) with great confidence and openness.

4.13 Overview of the research ethics

This section refers to the researcher’s awareness of the ethical issues and principles necessary to adopt in social research. An ethical approach is crucial in any piece of research in order to ensure the validity of the study. The importance of research ethics was considered throughout the process, from the design stage – ensuring the security of personal data and acknowledging anonymity and confidentiality issues – to the final write-up stage (Kvale, 2007). The overall approach to research was conducted in accordance with the *University Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participation*. Following the University requirements, the University Ethic Review Checklist (see Appendix 17) was completed in accordance with *Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants* from the University Research Governance Handbook.

The details of my ethical approach will now be demonstrated in more depth, organised within five overarching categories: a) *informed consent*; b) *confidentiality and anonymity*; c) *harm and risk*; d) *data processing*; and e) *quality and integrity*. I will begin with the fundamental issue for all social research; namely, informed consent for individual participation.

a) Informed consent

The template for the research consent (see Appendix 18) was obtained from the University Ethic Checklist Review form and personalised in accordance with my research. It was signed by each of the informants participating in the study. As a part of my debriefing process, all informants received the participant information that was sent electronically prior to the interviews, with details related to the research aim and methods and a brief overview of the research process (Smith, 2007; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2009). This provided background information to the research, supported by a list of topics that I was interested in discussing. Moreover, it included detailed contact information for my supervisor for verification purposes.

On each interview day, I ensured the comprehension of the information provided in the previously sent forms, along with points of contact (i.e. telephone conversations and/or e-mails). It was my priority to ensure that each informant was given sufficient information regarding the purpose of the study and the methods employed, ensuring voluntary participation and the opportunity to withdraw at any time without giving a reason (in line with Holliday, 2007; Walliman, 2015). Furthermore, privacy and confidentiality issues were discussed and anonymity was ensured. The information was presented and organised in a clear and understandable way, limiting the possibility for misinterpretations. It was made clear that informants had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the research design and research process at any time. The debriefing of the consent form included a verbal agreement to analyse the gathered data in an appropriate manner, ensuring that it can be used in any further publications resulting from this study.

b) Confidentiality and anonymity

Protecting informants' privacy was set at the heart of my ethical considerations. I considered confidentiality and anonymity issues throughout each stage of my research process. Any forms of identification, such as informants' names, titles, names of places, organisations and references to other people, were removed or replaced with pseudonyms after each interview transcription. This approach was aimed at protecting informants' anonymity, making sure that research informants are non-identifiable to readers and strengthening the security of personal data (Walliman, 2006, 2015; Bryman and Bell,

2015). On an additional note, I have ensured that, in order to maximise data security, only two people have had access to the full transcripts – myself and my supervisor.

Furthermore, to ensure the issue of confidentiality, I created a master identification file that links pseudonyms to the transcript numbers. This was to prevent missing or contradicting information during the analysis process and to allow future corrections. It was stored in a separate, password-protected file to which only I had access.

c) Harm and risk

In line with the University ethics policy, and following the best-practice approaches suggested by research literature (Holliday, 2007; Smith, 2007; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2015; Walliman, 2015), it can be summarised that my research caused no harm to the informants and/or their organisations. Furthermore, it is important to state that my research did not create any form of financial gain for myself or any institution. Moreover, informants participating in the study were not rewarded in any way for participation; instead, verbal appreciation was made clear after each interview.

According to the University Ethics Review Checklist, my research was classified as a low-risk project, as it did not involve any vulnerable individuals or children. The informants were treated in a respectful and ethical manner. Interview questions and prompts were also formulated in a respectful way, not referring to any sensitive or controversial issues. My role as a researcher was recognised throughout the process (see Chapter 7, Section 7.5.1), ensuring no over-involvement.

d) Data processing

The ethical issues regarding data processing were considered at each stage of the research process, focusing on consent, storage and security of collected data. Data was recorded after obtaining verbal consent for recording prior to interview. In cases when permission for recording was not granted (i.e. Louise in Stage 2), manual notes were taken. During the first stage of data collection, notes were taken manually from all of the telephone interviews, due to the lack of appropriate software for recording. Furthermore, as mentioned in the confidentiality section, all data was kept anonymous, ensuring the absence of informant identification (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

I have also recognised the ethical considerations regarding the storing and transmitting of research data. The adopted storage system was kept safe and only available to the researcher at all times. Paper-based documentation, including, for example, informed consent, transcripts and background questionnaires, was secured away in a lockable cupboard. Moreover, to ensure data security, all documents related to this thesis that were held on the computer were protected by a password.

e) Quality and integrity of research

In my ethical approach to this research I have considered the issues of the quality and integrity of the research design as well as the appropriateness of the adopted research methods (Bryman, 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2015). I have ensured that throughout each stage of data collection there was a clear research aim corresponding to my research questions. To ensure the appropriateness of my research design and research methods, I sought justification in past studies in the field of entrepreneurship and identity, adopting similar techniques in comparable contexts.

Moreover, I have successfully recognised my research strengths and limitations (see Chapter 7), thus strengthening my ethical approach to this research. I have ensured appropriate methods of acknowledging the work of others, by offering a thorough literature review of the existing studies related to my research purpose, supported by using clear, direct quotation (following the Harvard referencing style) and avoiding plagiarism.

4.14 Chapter 4 summary

The research design and methodology chapter provides the rationale for using a multi-paradigm research method in the study, which enables me to build upon the existing understanding of the complex characteristics of the third sector. Applying a multi-paradigm research design, incorporating both IPA and the social constructionist approach, offers an opportunity for a more comprehensive study. It allows for the investigation of identity from both an organisational perspective (using IPA to investigate the governance, OI, sustainability and characteristics of SE), and a more personal, individual perspective (using social construction and sensemaking approaches to analyse past experiences, relationships and intentions at a micro level).

The IPA approach in this study is used to conceptualise, interpret and understand ‘*what*’ the macro level issues are in relation to the changing third sector reality. It focuses on OI, sustainability and governance (in line with RQ1), offering elasticity of data interpretations (Eatough and Smith, 2006). Many believe that IPA provides an appropriate framework for analysing under-researched or complex issues, which is evident from recent recommendations for use in the field of social entrepreneurship. This follows similar studies within the third sector (see, for example, Smith and Osborn, 2007; Cope, 2011) that emphasise the engagement between the researcher and informants by accounting for the self-reflexivity of views.

Meanwhile, the social constructionist approach (in line with Downing, 2005; Mills and Pawson, 2006; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009) examines the importance of SEEs’ relationships and interactions (in line with RQ2). In this study, it is successfully applied to provide clarification of how past experiences can influence the characteristics of the socio-entrepreneurial identity of a (TSO) leader. By socially constructing Ricoeurian identity narratives, i.e. observing the nature and characteristics of SEE realities and their social interactions, it is possible to harness the richness of longitudinal data (Reissner, 2010). For a more intimate analysis, I apply the sensemaking approach (following Weick, 1995) as a ‘knowledge-building process’, allowing the crystallisation of revealed meanings (*ibid.*). This affirms the use of personal (SEE) narratives and storytelling, by extracting an understanding of organisational and personal changes based on informants’ interactions, relationships and experiences, which in turn enriches the process of data interpretation. Based on the above, it can be concluded that the use of a multi-paradigm research design in this study offers a novel contribution to the existing identity literature within the field of SE.

Furthermore, this chapter discusses the research methods employed to investigate the complexity of SE and SEEs and shows how these differ between the analyses in Chapters 5 and 6 (for IPA and the social constructionist approach). Each stage of the data collection is deliberated, highlighting in-depth characteristics of the adopted approaches and procedures, including sampling strategies (i.e. snowball sampling), methods of data collection (i.e. semi-structured interviews, background questionnaires and focus groups), interview protocols (for each stage of data collection) and a synopsis of the data analysis.

The first stage of data collection (using the IPA approach) involves 30 in-depth semi structured interviews (supported by the background questionnaires) with social leaders, organisational stakeholders, CEOs or directors across Kent and East Sussex. The (Stage 1) interview schedule consists of five overarching sections, supported by themes emerging from the literature review. This stage of data analysis focuses on the aspect of ‘what’ (RQ1), examining characteristics of OI, governance and sustainability.

The second stage of data collection, aligned with RQ2, focuses on the ‘who’. It utilises the sensemaking processes applied to Ricoeurian narratives and storytelling to form an enriched understanding of SEE realities. During this stage of data collection, the in-depth personal case studies are used to analyse the personal journeys of three social-entrepreneurial leaders. The investigation of SEE identities is conducted through the (Stage 2) interview schedule consisting of four overarching chronological sections depicting data related to the life journeys, critical points and prospective self-identities of social leaders.

The third stage of data collection complements the previous stages by gathering information from the employees and volunteers of each organisation. This approach increases the reliability of findings by enabling the triangulation of responses with the Stage 2 data.

Finally, the fourth stage of data collection, which occurs following the Brexit vote, serves as a confirmative follow-up study. It focuses on revisiting four social leaders from Stage 1 for supplementary comments relating to the organisational performance, as well as personal feelings, associated with the turbulent social economy and the Brexit vote.

Throughout this chapter I strongly highlight the importance of iterative analysis, which I achieve by immersing myself in the data and uncovering key themes within (and across) the case studies, supported by a process of multi-reviewing data. I also discuss the research considerations related to validity in qualitative research (following Lincoln and Guba, 1985), by emphasising the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and achieving a sense of confirmability (or neutrality) in social research. These criteria are discussed in relation to the various actions and techniques used in the study i.e. prolonged engagement, triangulation, thick description etc. As a result, I am able to successfully evaluate the plausibility, and therefore the research potential, of the data.

Furthermore, this chapter identifies and discusses the limitations of the research methods employed, as well as acknowledging the positionality of the researcher in the research process. A discussion of the limitations of semi-structured interviews highlights the difficulties associated with gathering data, the use of recording devices, and building a sense of trust with informants. In addition, a review of the background questionnaires used to gather supplementary data demonstrates limited responses due to the time constraints and structure. Meanwhile, the limitations of focus groups included the group pressure effect and difficulties in organising and analysing the meetings to fit participants' work schedules.

Finally, the research ethics of the study are considered, in line with the *University Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participation*. Recognising the issues associated with informed consent when collecting personal information from each of the informants, I ensure data confidentiality and anonymity by using pseudonyms and changing the names of organisations and places. Furthermore, I maintain the security of informant data by adopting a best-practice approach to data processing (i.e. through the safe and secure storage of data), enhancing the overall quality and integrity of the research.

Chapter 5: What is a sustainable SE? An organisational identity and governance perspective

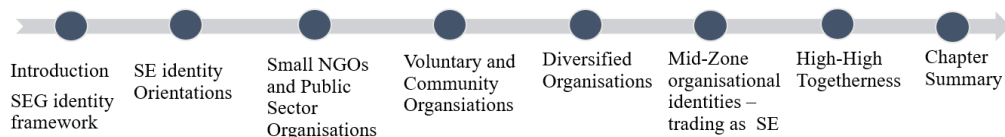
5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I shall revisit third sector, as well as SE legal, governance and sustainability issues, from a collective OI perspective (see Figure 6). In particular, I will consider:

RQ1: What are the key organisational identity issues associated with sustainable SEs and social entrepreneurship?

Drawing on the work of several key authors, I suggest that various OI literatures can be used to investigate such questions as; ‘*who are we as an organisation?*’, and ‘*what distinguishes us from others?*’, from the perspective of organisational insiders (i.e. SE informants) such as CEOs, employees, and volunteers (see Corley, 2004, p.1146).

Figure 6: Chapter 5 outline



In response to definitional criticisms of their seminal work – i.e. Albert and Whetten, 1985 – Whetten (2006, p.220) further defines the study of OI as:

“...the central and enduring attributes of an organisation that distinguish it from other organisations. I refer to these as organisational identity claims, or referents, signifying an organisation’s self-determined (and “self”-defining) unique social space and reflected in its unique pattern of binding commitments.”

Whetten (2006) states that the study of *Central, Enduring and Distinctive* (CED) attributes of OI (from the perspective of informants, or member-agents) is particularly

useful for those organisations grappling with ‘*fork-in-the-road*’ choices about self-determined futures. Ultimately, understanding *who organisations aspire to be* is as important as understanding *who they are now*; and necessarily involves dealing with multiple cultural and organisational legacy issues, including major narrative shifts in terms of *who they once were* (Corley, 2004; Backer, 2008). Of course, what makes the combined study of SE *identity* particularly alluring, is that it draws on modern societal assumptions that treat organisational collectives in the same way as individual actors. In other words, the ‘*collective actor*’ is frequently referred to, and imbued with the same agentic powers as, the individual actor within an organisation (see Whetten, 2006, p.221).

It is for this reason, then, that I shall investigate self-referential perceptions of SE informants as ‘*collective actors*’ in Chapter 5; before in Chapter 6, considering the agentic role of *individual-actor* SEEs, as well as personal identity narratives. By adopting this macro-micro level approach, a contribution to SE identity literature is made; thus, defining and conceptualising comparative organisational narratives in Chapter 5, followed by biographical lines of inquiry about individual social leaders in Chapter 6. In effect, both chapters deal with the agentic and social possibilities for causative action, but from different perspectives – the former, agency/structure; and the latter, agency/individual. Whetten (2006) has suggested that this type of cross-level theorisation is a useful way of examining self-view identity characteristics of both organisations, and those individuals involved with governance and self-determination.

In terms of an analytic strategy for Chapter 5, I shall remain mindful of Whetten’s (2006) advice, by first identifying *distinguishing organisational features* in the form of the SEG (Figure 5). This allows referents (or informants) to specify the degree to which their respective organisations, as collective actors, are similar to – or indeed different from – each other, in terms of legal commitments, governance forms, company structure, roles, and/or organisational purpose. King *et al.* (2010, p.294) suggest this type of identity analysis is important for understanding organisational, and particularly socially agentic, responsibilities:

“...a social entity responsible for the consequences of its actions implies a widespread belief that the entity has agentic capabilities; that is, it has the capacity for self-governance.”

I have developed the following two OI propositions for Chapter 5:

Proposition 1: Organisations in the third sector should be able to properly identify with *who they are in order to survive*.

Proposition 2: Social (enterprise) sustainability is an identity function of *who social organisations are, as well as, who they aspire to be*.

The comparative SEG necessarily involves conceptual and phenomenological domain arguments (see quadrant descriptors and their explanations presented in the latter part of this chapter) to examine issues of *identity tension* and *strategic balance* between the various organisational actors in my study (see Deephouse, 1999; Brewer, 2003; Whetten, 2006; Mazzei, 2017). This supports Whetten's (2006) notion of '*identity-referencing discourses*' (e.g. voluntary organisations versus SEs) which become a key part of this study's comparative SEG '*interpretative analysis*' quadrant.

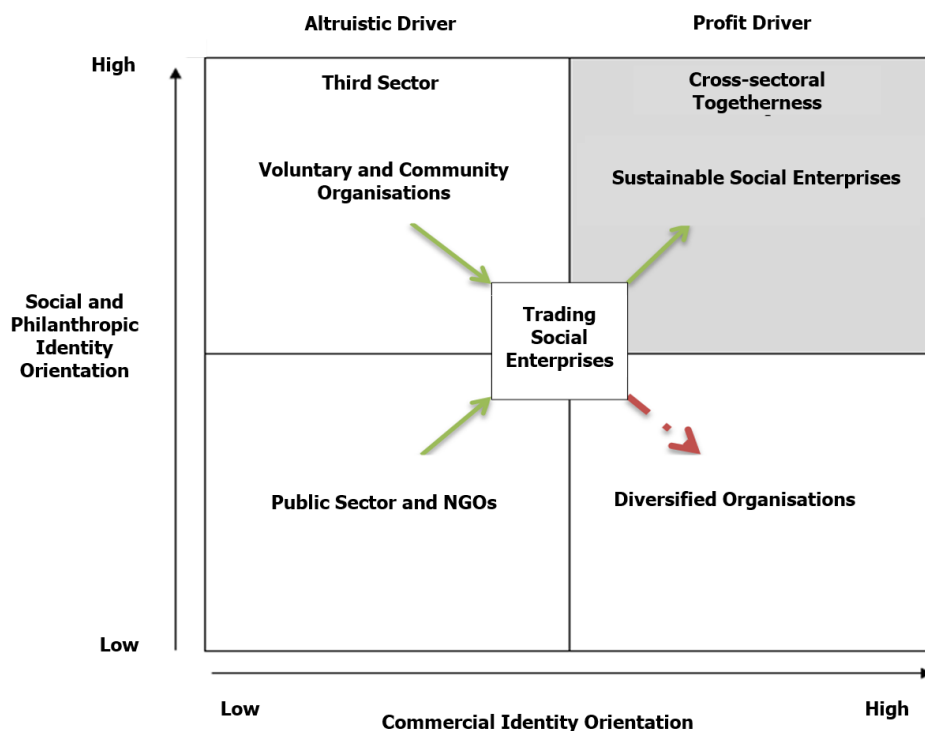
Mapping out the *central* and *enduring* features of each organisational form and quadrant positioning is a key feature of legitimising self-referent identity discourses. These depict what Whetten (2006) refers to as '*categorical imperatives*' (e.g. defining oneself as a community support organisation as opposed to an SE); thus, deriving social legitimacy from claims of social purpose and community accountability. Self-referential claims combined with the legal status of SE organisations are, of course, a basis for current and future self-determined organisational action; and, as we shall see, some collective actors in the third sector view their mandate for action as part of an enduring social mission for a better society. Socially-oriented organisational actors are expected to behave '*in-character*' (Douglas, 1987), and these comparative frames of reference are often normatively biased, i.e. characterised by strong '*ought-to-be*' behaviours consistent with the values of the (third) sector. Self-determined organisational action may also be affected by historical frames of reference (e.g. Backer, 2008). For example, an organisation may take the view that "*this is the way we have always done things in the charity; asking for money and becoming more commercial is definitely not who we are!*". Such aspects will be discussed in greater detail as part of my comparative inter-quadrant SEG analysis.

Whetten (2006) suggests that enduring organisational attributes (including *myths and stories*) are readily recognised by both internal and external stakeholders, and are

therefore important for establishing identity perceptions. They often encapsulate *who the organisation is*, as well as *the values for which it stands*, among stakeholders. Myths and stories can also (re)kindle strategic tensions as historical third sector narratives change at the behest of the *triple-bottom-line* pressures (see Chapter 3). Again, it is useful to consider the role of competing organisational stories and narratives in Chapter 5, but also to re-examine the social and agentic role of key individuals, in Chapter 6.

The SEG (see Figure 5) essentially pits a socially philanthropic identity against more recent commercial (and entrepreneurial) orientations; many of the issues with which were originally outlined in Chapter 2. This is the most appropriate framework for my study, as although there exist other more basic alignment grids – e.g. the practitioner Social Enterprise Compass (SEC) and the SEM grid (see Appendix 2) (Ridley-Duff and Southcombe, 2012) – none of these explores or investigates third sector and SE activity from an OI perspective. Throughout the remainder of the chapter, then, I will use the SEG to interpret and discuss the identity of SE, as well as its common governance structures, and issues of sustainability.

Figure 7: The conceptual SEG



5.2 SE identity orientations

Understanding of the third sector OI in Proposition 1 (P1) is encapsulated in those CED attributes (Whetten, 2006) identified in the literature review; namely, that of ‘*commercial versus social orientation*’ (Chell, 2007; Liu *et al.*, 2012; Mazzei, 2017). In terms of understanding SE identity tensions and strategic balance (Deephouse, 1999; Mazzei, 2017), these CED attributes (for some scholars) are not incommensurable (see Liu *et al.*, 2012, p.6):

“Although SE’s ultimate objective is to pursue a social mission, this does not necessarily mean that there are contradictions prior to the creation of social and economic value. To provide social services continuously and incorporate entrepreneurialism into their endeavours, an SE must adopt survival strategies entailing economic value creation that are premised on self-sustainment.”

For others, though, this is not the case, and in relation to P1, individuals have sought to place identity orientation tensions at the heart of their understanding of SE and what constitutes the third sector (Nicholls, 2010; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). In this chapter, I examine some of the similarities and differences of TSOs – presented in the SEG – starting with the social and philanthropic orientation (i.e. left-hand side of the grid).

5.2.1 Importance of social and philanthropic orientation as a part of the social purpose [SEG]

Philanthropy²³ is often recognised as a natural human impulse (Capek and Mead, 2006) and – according to many scholars – is closely associated with the concept with humanitarianism. Both are distinguished by the idea of respect, understanding and goodwill for other people. Philanthropy, understood from a social perspective, tackles issues identified by the actors of an organisation (Hockerts, 2006). It might therefore be suggested that social philanthropy is an effortless process, whereby individuals “*give or*

²³ The etymological source of philanthropy originates from Greek, which literally translates to ‘*love for mankind*’ (Bremner, 1996)

spend money; but to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right motive, and in the right way...” (Aristotle, cited in Osberg, 2006, p.310).

Philanthropic ventures are characterised by a sense of altruistic payback rather than financial benefit (Hockerts, 2006), with voluntary and community organisations often identified collectively as socially philanthropic. Voluntary organisations (such as charities or foundations) are commonly associated with the rhetoric of ‘giving’ (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Ridge *et al.*, 2009) and, specifically, involve the “*financial giving (of donations) to a group of people who are regarded as sufficiently responsible to administer funds and ensure they are used for charitable purposes (trustees)*” (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009, p.22), thus following a *not-for-profit* model and representing a philanthropic identity.

Some scholars (see Daly, 2011; or Jung and Harrow, 2015) suggest that the concept of volunteering represents an *enduring* and *recognisable* identity value (Whetten, 2006) associated with all third sector organisations. For decades, volunteerism has been recognised as a key force in enabling social and organisational survival. It implies the ability of a group, or an individual, to undertake work for a social purpose, and without monetary benefit. Merrill (2006, p.10) defines volunteerism as: “*...active involvement. The act of volunteering involves active participation or contributions of time, energies or talents; it is never seen as the giving of financial or material resources as a donor/sponsor.*” In the modern social economy²⁴, volunteerism remains closely associated with philanthropically-oriented ventures, as well as local initiatives.

One of the informants, Karen Wood, emphasised altruism as a core organisational value:

“Altruism, we wouldn’t do it otherwise, what’s the point then? You know; what’s the point of having the money but not believing in what you doing? Not much point I guess. We are not driven by money.” Karen Wood (I8)

²⁴ Modern social economy as a concept, in this thesis, refers to policy developments and progression of social activities in the 21st century.

It suggests that there is a clear distinction between “*charity as form of human behaviour and charity as a particular institutional form*” (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009, p.26). As a result, organisations that evolve from voluntary or community sectors are more likely to be driven by altruistic motives enshrined in management and governance procedures.

5.2.2 ‘*Becoming*’ more commercial as a new identity orientation

In terms of new and emerging OIs (Backer, 2008), some scholars suggest that more commercially-oriented narratives among voluntary and community organisations are now becoming the norm (Ridley-Duff, 2010). A changing focus in terms of business activities, new governance structures, and legal forms is also becoming more commonplace (Cornforth and Spear, 2010), with many third sector organisations ‘*becoming*’ more commercially recognised, whilst retaining their philanthropic values (Dees *et al.*, 2001; Dart, 2004a; Seanor *et al.*, 2007).

Tuckman (1998) identifies four factors leading to the commercialisation of the third sector. Firstly, the *not-for-profit* organisation must identify a need for additional revenue, and believe that some form of commercial activity will allow it to realise key strategic goals. Secondly, the governing board must decide that any commercial activity is consistent with, or is at least not deleterious to, the core social mission of the organisation (*ibid.*). Thirdly, the organisation must have products ‘*suitable for sale*’ in the market; and finally, there must be consumer demand for the products on offer. Without meeting these conditions, ‘*for-profit activity*’ cannot be sustained (McBrearty, 2007). This SE narrative was echoed by some informants:

“We are a social enterprise. We do have a social value. However, we’re also a commercial organisation. If we don’t sustain a profit or make a surplus, then we cannot deliver what we need to deliver. So, we are commercially focused, we have a commercial strategy, we’re looking at our service lines all the time to expand.”

Jack Williams (I15)

Promoting ‘*commercially-driven*’ orientation in the third sector can cause tensions among organisational stakeholders, and management in particular. However, they are often justified by management as a part of *evolutionary adaptation* (Backer, 2008) necessary for Propositions 1 and 2; that is, organisation survival and longer-term

sustainability (Ridley-Duff, 2008). Voluntary and community organisations may face ongoing cultural transition and identity tensions (Deephouse, 1999; Whetten, 2006) as they attempt to balance commercial trading activities with their social aims. Nevertheless, Philip Clarke (I18) recognised the process of commercialisation as an agentic enabler of identity transition in becoming a *‘trading social enterprise’*:

“We’re commercial because what we’re driven by is self-reliance actually. To be independent and self-reliant you have to make a profit. Because, if not, then you are dependent on others. Because we trade, it is a different universe. We are a business and we’re really aware of the commercial realities of that.”

Philip Clarke (I18)

Similarly, Anthony Hill (I23) remarked on the pressing need for a more business-like approach:

“The culture embedded in the organisation is [that of] a traditional charity, [with a] grant funded mentality. To break out of that mould, without losing that culture because that culture is important to deliver our charitable services, but to be able to be self-sustainable, we need to take a more business-like approach...” Anthony Hill (I23)

Hill (I23)

Cultural differences between the traditional charitable organisation and the enterprising social venture (Doherty *et al.*, 2009) are significant. Charitable organisations habitually strive for collaboration and partnership, rather than direct competition, in order to achieve their social aims (*ibid.*) which, again, is reflected in the traditionally philanthropic ethos of the third sector.

5.2.3 Working towards a more sustainable identity: the hybrid commercial-philanthropic organisation

Socio-entrepreneurial literature (see Pearce, 2003; Nicholls, 2006; Bull, 2008), suggests that new economic imperatives and changing inter-organisational relationships are helping to reshape UK third sector identity. This involves moving away from a traditional culture of grant dependency, to one of competitive contract bidding (Bull, 2008). Mel

Taylor (I11) highlighted a myriad of new objectives in line with ‘*triple bottom line*’ (sustainability) expectations:

“It’s about having multiple objectives. So, unlike an ordinary commercial limited company or organisation, which is there primarily to make money for the shareholders, we are here primarily to achieve our mission and purpose, and we are constantly balancing economic social and environmental objectives – the triple bottom line really.” Mel Taylor (I11)

A range of third sector (profit and non-profit) drivers affect perceptions of OI (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). Albert and Whetten (1985) were among the first scholars to recognise a multiplicity of OIs (for example, within a single organisation, there may be multiple identities expressed in, and through, different departments). It is suggested that in terms of Proposition 2, a dual, albeit non-contradictory identity approach can help foster a collective perceptual understanding of *who an organisation is*, as well as *who it aspires to become* (Whetten, 2006; Backer, 2008). However, fractured identities can destabilise stakeholder perceptions of the organisation, along with the value of its overall mission and its future survival (Corley, 2004). This dualism of identity is articulated by Mel Taylor (I11):

“The profit we need, so we’re motivated by it... to be altruistic. So, to be able to offer courses; free courses and workshops, we need to make a profit. So, we’re driven by both. Obviously, we’re driven by profit because all of us have rent to pay, mortgages to pay, sadly; day to day things. But we want to be able to offer courses and things to groups who don’t have the funding to do it.” Mel Taylor (I11)

However, as Mel further noted, there is also confusion within the wider third sector – which she recognises in her own organisation. There can be a high degree of identity overlap, and many organisations find it difficult to work out precisely *who they are* and *what they are meant to be doing*:

“It’s not third sector because, you know, if you take a public sector, the voluntary sector and the private sector – I suppose I see them all as being very much

overlapping and I think we actually have elements of everything.” Mel Taylor (I11)

This overlap was also noted by Laura Morgan (I25):

“Social enterprises are the organisations which want to explore and develop the trading potential to [the] community and for community benefit. It could be that they are voluntary community sector organisations or it could be that they are public sector offices ... Really it’s all about social impact.” Laura Morgan (I25)

It is suggested, then, that the SEG can help to better conceptualise overlapping identities, as well as possible migration routes to a more sustainable future (i.e. P2). An interpretative analysis begins at the bottom left-hand quadrant of the SEG, as we discuss the normative characteristics, as well as self-referring informant perceptions, that will be used to determine where organisations ‘*fit on the SEG*’ (see Appendix 8).

5.3 Small NGOs and Public Sector Organisations (PSOs): low-low

The OIs traditionally associated with the public sector have ingrained boundaries, suggesting an integral compulsion to act within the expected parameters (Whetten, 2006) necessary for Propositions 1 and 2. In the SEG, PSOs and smaller NGOs remain low in regards to philanthropic and commercial identity orientation, with an ability to show the existence of both, maintained on a relatively minimal level. Generally, PSOs are recognised essentially as vehicles of public goods provision, aimed at fulfilling a civic function for social purposes (see for example Dart, 2004a). The idea of public services encompasses such diverse activities as healthcare, police services, education, armed forces, and local government (Corby and White, 1999). HM Treasury defines public services as “*wholly or partly funded . . . from the public purse, including national, regional and local government and statutory agencies at all levels*” (HM Treasury, 2003, cited in Harris, 2010).

Public services have, over the years, formed a natural backbone for local communities (Bland, 2009). It can be posited that in response to P1, OI arguments proposed by PSOs align with common categorical standards (Whetten, 2006). Their

purpose is simply to protect and promote the best interest of society, although often influenced by the multi-dimensional power of political forces²⁵. Traditionally, public services were constructed in a hierarchical manner, with a ‘*top to bottom*’ management approach in which edicts were passed from senior managers directly to delivery units (Rees *et al.*, 2012). Over the last few decades, however, this paradigm has shifted, with operating service arms enjoying greater autonomy, increased power (on an independent level), and control over their own budgets (*ibid.*) in the expectation of improving organisational sustainability (P2). This movement has been recognised as the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm (Bevir, 2008; Rees *et al.*, 2012), distinguishing the potential of service provision units and clarification of their functions. There are, traditionally, two frames of reference for determining organisational actions: *historical* and *comparative* (Whetten, 2006). The historical frame, manifested via PSOs, refers to traditional (social) organisational behaviour as well as an organisational history of events, highlighting the interface between integrity (of behaviour and culture) and identity²⁶ (Whetten, 2006). Conversely, the comparative frame is associated with organisational accountability (Czarniawska, 1997; Whetten, 2006) and legitimacy expectations (see for example Suchman, 1995).

The NPM movement informs the SEG by reflecting practical and/or interpreted characteristics of the low-low quadrant. In addition to Propositions 1 and 2, TSOs are characterised with enhancing the process of discovering a sense of duality (or even multi-dimensionality) of an OI. The NPM movement can be also associated with aspirations of identity transitions, allowing sustainable success (P2), and promoting changes to the pre-established organisational life-cycle (Whetten, 2006), i.e. new forms and governance structures in the context of SE.

Retrospectively, the NPM movement seemed to improve third sector dynamics by influencing the shape of traditional, socially-oriented services (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; Rees *et al.*, 2012). In turn, there was a notable increase in the creation of cross-sectoral relationships, enhancing collaborative operations between organisations and

²⁵ Historically, public services to the disadvantaged were provided by religious or voluntary bodies (Chaston, 2011), such as voluntary hospitals on behalf of, and in conjunction with the State, decades before WWII (*ibid.*)

²⁶ This can be referred to as stewardship theory (Donaldson and Davies, 1991), see Chapter 3 for details.

(consequently) maximising their effectiveness. As a result, governmental pressures to develop existing procurement and commissioning models broadened diversity of service provision. From a historical perspective (Whetten, 2006), there have always been multi-dimensional interactions between the State and voluntary sector in relation to welfare provision (for example, partnerships in healthcare (as in Powell, 2007)). Tony Blair's 'New Labour' government (post 1997) famously embraced the notion of the 'third way' in their policy developments (Giddens, 1998; Billis, 2010), enabling the creation of complex organisational forms (Harris, 2010) and inviting (or even provoking) multi-dimensional interactions across all sectors²⁷.

5.3.1 Interpreted examples of low-low oriented organisations

It may be argued that some SEs emerged during the NPM era to influence social change through operationalisation or hybridisation processes (necessary for P2), permitting an intertwined identity approach in response to increasing market overlap (Chew and Lyon, 2012). Blended organisational forms in the public sector (such as NHS spin-offs) shift the emphasis towards earned income (Chew and Lyon, 2012), while stressing the significance of self-sustainability issues as an agentic identity function (P2) – supported for example by the Localisation Act – as an alternative to reliance upon State funding. This view is shared by James Brown (I16), highlighting the importance of business acumen in creating social value:

“And it’s about having a viable business product which ideally supports the communities of which the enterprises are a part, but also, in tandem with that, creation of employment opportunities, supporting the employment pathway of people who are disadvantaged.” James Brown (I16)

The SEG allows for the inclusion of various socio-economic components. The low-low quadrant is characterised by a low-level, hybrid approach manifest through an OI blend, and embraced by many public and third sector organisations (see Jenner, 2016). In most cases featured in this quadrant, the enduring element of Whetten's (2006) CED attributes, necessary for P1, refers to those organisational characteristics that have long

²⁷ PSLG (Procurement Strategy for Local Government) is an example of a policy recognising new organisational models (such as “social enterprise” or “for-benefit organisation”) as advantageous to the State.

been associated with the venture (the historical imperative). For example, the significant growth of worker cooperatives and associations over the years indicates a phenomenon in service delivery (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011), represented by mixed identity approaches. Consequently, it can be suggested that the process of placing an organisation's identity in the low-low quadrant can be characterised as one where the venture becomes known as a particular type of 'social actor' (Whetten, 2006).

5.3.2 Housing associations, cooperatives and other NGOs

The diversity of organisational forms emerging in the public sector has led to a shift in pre-existing perceptions regarding already-established structures (Mullins and Pawson, 2010). For example, housing providers are no longer affiliated with a single sector approach. The housing association movement was the result of a marked rise in homelessness in the 1960s (Bridge *et al.*, 2009), and despite its emergence being associated with public sector dependency (since the 1988 Housing Act), housing associations grew reliant on private sector borrowings and business activities such as development, training and care (*ibid.*).

Nowadays, public sector housing, such as council housing, remains largely dependent upon the State. Nevertheless, there is a growing focus on the idea of social housing, which is often provided by modern housing associations. Housing associations (particularly the large ones) evolved towards hybridised forms in order to serve growing public demand for accommodation and ensure organisational sustainability, in line with P2. Their distinctiveness is unique to the public-sector approach (bringing them closer to the voluntary sector), due to variations in legal forms and governance structures, yet advocated by board members and volunteers (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). As a result, the majority of modern housing associations aim to reinvest (potential) surpluses into further housing and accommodation initiatives (in parallel with SE characteristics), and their unincorporated status indicates an enduring ability (Whetten, 2006) to leverage mixed funding opportunities (*ibid.*).

“Housing associations are major deliverers of public services. They are innovative, not-for-profit, social businesses [...] Housing associations, compared with many other organisations in the third sector, are so large that they are often not considered to be third-sector organisations at all but in fact agents of government policy, more like a hospital trust, a school or a university body” (Titherington, 2009, p.14).

The new shape of the housing sector favours the idea of community empowerment (Mullins and Pawson, 2010; Billis, 2010), emphasising the increasing impact (and collaborative activities) of local community-based TSOs. In order to survive (P1), many housing associations are expected to clarify their identity characteristics, often resulting in a shift towards a (commercialised) private sector approach, combined with third sector social responsibility strategies (*ibid.*) and/or participation in various (SE) collaborations.

Among the other NGOs featured in the low-low SEG quadrant are cooperative organisations²⁸, which are historically associated with innovative solutions in (public) service delivery. Literature often distinguishes between two common types of cooperatives: ‘*consumer*’, associated principally with retail, and ‘*producer*’, serving factory workers or agricultural producers, for example (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). Their core idea of membership participation forms one of the most unequivocal distinctions from standardised, charitable models (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). On the contrary, modern cooperative models expect active contribution from members in organisational operations, in exchange for the share of a generated economic surplus (*ibid.*). Traditionally, members involved with cooperative organisations (such as grocery stores) are discouraged from volunteering; they instead receive a form of dividend in proportion to their participation (*ibid.*). This type of governance structure contrasts with traditional, public and voluntary sector models, stressing the growing trend towards employee ownership, although it corresponds with historical characteristics of organisational (governance) actions (Whetten, 2006) within the public sector, reflecting the interface between the organisational integrity and identity across the years (see Chapter 3 for detailed reference to the stewardship approach). Community co-operatives act as multi-functional businesses operated for the benefit of local members, and directly owned and controlled by the local community (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). The idea of community empowerment, in line with the Localisation Act, the ‘*Big Society*’ movement – and now Theresa May’s so-called ‘*shared society*’²⁹, allows for greater staff and volunteer involvement by shifting the governing mechanism towards the workforce. This process

²⁸ Cooperative organisations in the UK are often associated with Robert Owen, founder of the Cooperative movement, through his famous report presented to House of Commons in 1817. He criticised capitalist production, arguing for “*the cooperative ethic based on community ownership of property*” (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p. 26)

²⁹ In Ravenscroft (2017): *Facing forward: How small and medium-sized charities can adapt to survive*).

assumes a collective responsibility for organisational assets (such as equipment or properties) and liabilities (payments, legal issues). Democratic models of ownership (such as cooperatives or mutual organisations) are being advanced in line with socio-economic developments and public sector transformations³⁰.

The changing face of the cooperative movements, and the development of NPM, offer new perspectives of service delivery by adopting various socio-economic models for quasi-markets³¹ (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). Consequently, scholars (such as Ridley Duff and Bull, 2011) raise definitional questions, asking whether democratically-owned ventures such as cooperatives can realistically be termed SE, and supporting this argument with cross-sectoral transformations.

5.3.3 Public sector services and emerging hybridity

Public services (such as healthcare providers) are affected by institutional changes prompted by increasing governmental pressures (as discussed in Chapter 3). Czarniawska (1997) suggests that although organisational characteristics may change over time, this is only acceptable if an organisation properly defines who they are (P1) and fully accepts the new organisational discourse. Unequivocal attempts to convert parts of public sector services into socio-entrepreneurial (or comparable, hybrid) forms provoke further policy developments in an attempt to regulate the changes. For example, there is a notable growth of SEs emerging as a part of the health sector (commonly referred to as *spin-offs*), ranging from small GP practices to holistic (and multi-serviced) healthcare providers lacking clear guidance and/or boundaries (Addicott, 2011). As a consequence, there is a growing trend of subcontracting public sector services to social organisations (Bridge *et al.*, 2009) in attempt to enhance their organisational image³² in line with current economic trends.

³⁰ For example, credit unions, although classified as unincorporated (under current legislation), are owned and governed by their members, and formed essentially in the financial services sectors which consequently makes them comparable to mutual organisations or cooperatives. On the other hand, from a historical perspective, mutual organisations were traditionally aimed at improving the wellbeing of the poorest community members in the absence of social and State protection (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011).

³¹ The term quasi-market denotes a public structure allowing maintenance of State funding for public services (LeGrand ad Barlett, 1993). The form of quasi-market differs by introducing a multiplicity of independent providers rather than reliance on State monopoly (*ibid.*) in order to improve effectiveness of services.

³² According to Whetten's (2006, p. 228) rationale, organisational image usually refers to "*shared cognitive representations of views of an organisation*". Sometimes these can occur within the

The change in public service provision and the shift towards hybridised identity approaches is also recognised by practitioners, accentuating decreasing opportunities for forming traditional partnerships. One of the informants, Stephanie Jackson, explained:

“We’ve had a lot of strategic partnerships... and they were mostly public sector, but [the] community was involved and engaged with it. And then suddenly [the] public sector stopped doing partnerships, withdrew their offices, withdrew their funding and now we [are] standing there with the flag on our own saying: ‘Hello; can’t we work in partnership?’ And they go: ‘No, go away, we’re busy’.”
Stephanie Jackson (I19)

The increasing shortage in sectoral collaborations is associated with re-morphing institutional processes, which affects the shape and structure of NPM. Alliances formed among homogeneous organisations become questionable and progress only when formed through mutual participation (for example where both organisations enter into mutual contract bidding). Transitions from the public sector towards a hybridised, socially-focused organisation strongly affect organisational legitimacy, governance and operational processes. Whetten (2006) proposes that changes in organisational self-defining classification lead to changes in OI as a whole. In turn, that creates difficulties, for both Propositions 1 and 2, in terms of social value creation, due to a (more philosophical) shift of focus from target (profit) to community (altruistic values), not traditionally exercised within this context. An example of this issue was highlighted by Jack Williams (I15):

“I think, coming from the public sector, it’s the frustration... that [it] is very target driven. And you can see it! I mean targets are required, but there’s very much... that doesn’t make sense. Then actually you can achieve it [the long-term goal] and it has no benefit whatsoever... And that’s the reason for establishing [SEs].”

concept of OI, yet sometimes they are external (depending on the context and organisational circumstances). There is a clear distinction between OI and culture, especially when used to claim legitimacy (or express organisational differentiation) (*ibid.*) Consequently, it can be suggested that OI should not be simply equated with the concept of organisational image, but instead with CAD attributes (Whetten, 2006).

The notion of public sector openness, manifested through NPM, simplifies the public sector agenda and therefore allows for further innovation (Addicott, 2011). This emerging approach indicates an interplay between various service providers (regardless of their sector affiliation), allowing prosperous diversity with shared risks and cost reductions (*ibid.*). I will now develop an understanding of the next quadrant of the SEG (top-left), focused on ‘high philanthropic’ and ‘low commercial’ orientation, accommodating the majority of organisations traditionally associated with the third sector.

5.4 Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs): high philanthropic-low commercial

In the SEG, voluntary organisations are represented by a high philanthropic orientation, reflected through their culture, legal structure, activities and social aims. From an entrepreneurial perspective, it can be proposed that charitable organisations seek growth opportunities through the manifestation of vision and philanthropic characteristics. Nevertheless, the commercial orientation in this quadrant remains relatively low (in comparison to other quadrants), as traditionally, commercial trading (until now) has never been perceived as a primary source for social funding. Therefore, I suggest that charitable organisations are most likely to transition towards a (more) market-oriented (operational) approach, in response to diminishing funding and marginalisation of central government assistance, in the hope of ensuring the survival of their (philanthropic) cause (P1).

Traditional perspectives on voluntary and charitable organisations³³ identify a spectrum of services geared towards public benefit. Conversely, the modern approach distinguishes Voluntary Sector Organisations (VSOs)³⁴ as “*formal organisations [...], independent of government and self-governing [or] not-for-profit [that] operate with a*

³³ Some scholars associate the concept of voluntary organisations with traditional “*secular organisations*”³³ with religious origins (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). The shift of societal and moral values (i.e. from the Victorian era) led to humanist secular organisations being autonomous from both the Church and State (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009), whilst maintaining altruistic motives and social values. This leads to a wider debate for broadening the definition of voluntary organisations to include cooperatives, associations and clubs which are not currently able to gain legal charitable status (*ibid.*).

³⁴ The 1601 Charity Law can be used as an indicator that philanthropically-oriented charitable institutions have played a role in UK welfare for at least four centuries (Taylor, 1992, cited in Milligan and Fyfe, 2004, p. 77).

meaningful degree of volunteer involvement” (Pavlikova, 2012, p. 10). An interesting, definitional perspective was forwarded by Ellerman (1997), distinguishing social institutions from private organisations based on the perception of (institutional) rights. In his work, association with a private venture is based on non-governmental status and property rights (in contrast to Whetten’s original 2006 perspective). On the contrary, the social organisation remains based on personal rights (Ellerman, 1997). This distinction offers a singular, differentiating perspective proposing that a social OI somewhat rejects property rights (Ellerman, 1997; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). As a consequence, the voluntary sector promotes local initiatives and community developments (Williams, 2002) that complement (rather than substitute) public and private sector service provision (Ho, 1999). This approach is aimed at filling the ‘*welfare gap*’ (Williams, 2002, p. 248), forming a unique perspective on the prospect of a mixed economy (Giddens 1998).

In the same vein, Thompson (2002) offers an interesting interpretation of voluntary and charitable organisations, supporting P1, by emphasising the ‘*social*’ aspect as an indicator for lack of ownership by identifiable shareholders, where profit is not classified as the core organisational objective. As a result, socially-oriented ventures cannot be simply classified as private or public, meaning that they ‘*belong*’ to society, rather than the State³⁵. It emphasises the idea of community empowerment (Nicholls and Cho, 2006 p. 38) as a central OI attribute of a VSO (according to Whetten, 2006), and is reflected as such in the SEG.

5.4.1 Practical examples of high philanthropic-low commercial organisations

The identity of charitable organisations (as defined by the Charities Act, 2006), is characterised by the provision of services for civic benefit. Their *raison d’être* includes a variety of causes, for example: prevention of poverty, advancements in education, or community developments that are conducted for the public good (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). Nevertheless, from a legal perspective, charities are often classified as voluntary organisations. Interestingly, not all voluntary organisations are able to carry charitable

³⁵ Although non-profit organisations remain separate from the Government (Salamon and Anheier, 1996) in the ownership sense, their financial independence or embeddedness of limitations at board level remains. From a structural perspective, not-for-profit organisations are self-governing, embodying the concept of volunteering (*ibid.*)

status, even though they may be acting in the public interest (Morgan, 2008). Charities can take the form of one of various regulated legal structures, such as unincorporated organisations, charitable trusts, companies limited by guarantee, or Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) (Nicholls, 2006). The diversity of possible organisational forms is interwoven in the fabric of social community and the third sector. As a result, the ‘*high philanthropy*’ and ‘*low commercial*’ SEG quadrant is affected by economic, political and environmental cues present within the third sector, influenced (in particular) by the recent State changes to funding systems, reducing the overall number of available grants, and therefore arguably putting even more pressure on solemnly philanthropically-driven TSOs.

In comparison to other organisational structures, charities are traditionally characterised by distinctive, unique ownership and governance features. The organisational uniqueness (or distinctiveness) is usually portrayed through self-referrals or self-reflections on governance, showing a casual attribution of individual (or collective) behaviours and actions (Whetten, 2006). Put simply, it means that the distinctiveness of the (charitable) OI can be determined through analysis of the agentic role of the key actors (see Chapter 6) and their patterns of commitment (*ibid.*). For practitioners, it means that the OI is defined according to CED attributes³⁶, especially when the key actors or other stakeholders speak on the behalf of the organisation (as a whole), due to being already invoked in the organisational discourse (Whetten, 2006, p 220).

Concepts of operationalisation, marketisation and professionalisation of the third sector (Chew, 2008) misshapes the traditional sense of (philanthropically-driven) distinctiveness by forming new, socio-entrepreneurial characteristics (*ibid.*). Attempts to characterise the SE identity (in response to P1), popularised in the third sector, affect the collective understanding of the organisation (Whetten, 2006). Therefore, identity claims (for example focused on distinctiveness of charitable forms), made on behalf of stakeholders, are represented by ‘*categorical imperatives*’ (*ibid.*), characterising activities and actions practiced to avoid acting out of the assigned character. The emergence of community-focused legal forms such as CICs and CIOs morphs traditional associations

³⁶ It is important to remember that the view of identity from a CED attribute perspective is subjective, and is based on retrospective explanations of past actions and critical turning points for re-told organisational stories (Whetten, 2006)

with (imperative categorisations and) characteristics of voluntary organisations, accommodating (more) commercially-focused organisations across the VCO/third sector landscape (Chew, 2008). This trend re-models existing sectoral opinion that the implementation of business-oriented activities (Austin *et al.*, 2006) is the only course of action, necessary for P2, enabling growth and stability.

Community ventures form a vital part of the social economy in the UK, due to close involvement in employment opportunities on a ‘*local*’ level (Pearce, 2003). Under the ‘*community business*’ scheme (first popularised in Scotland), community ventures are owned and run by locals, and remain financially independent from the State (Amin *et al.*, 2002, cited in Bridge *et al.*, 2009). The local community acts as a powerful force shaping organisational, existential philosophy while at the same time reflecting localisation trends promoted by the State. Community organisations are usually small in size, which also makes them limited in scope due to their geographical reach (Pearce, 2003). “*Community enterprises are a specific category of social enterprise that involve local people with local knowledge in the creation and management of sustainable, non-profit enterprises that are accountable to their local community*” (Haugh, 2006 p. 184). From a legal perspective, ventures aimed at the community include CICs, unincorporated organisations, limited (by shares or by guarantee) companies, community mutual organisations, and industrial and provident societies³⁷.

Many third sector organisations derive from traditionally established charitable structures (Leadbeater, 1997). However, the changing socio-economic landscape calls for alternative solutions and as a result, many practitioners associate CICs (the most commonly employed community-oriented form), with having the most adequate legal structure, able to successfully respond to economic trends and community needs in an attempt to achieve sustainability (P2). A CIC can take one of three forms: private company limited by shares; private company limited by guarantee; or public limited company (Haugh, 2006). Due to its (habitually) hybrid nature, a CIC does not carry charitable status

³⁷ Another interesting emerging community organisation comes in the form of a non-monetary community trading scheme aimed at exchanging goods and services based on the ‘local currency’, including for example labour time (‘time banking’ is a community trading scheme generating community self-help and promoting social inclusion in deprived areas by converting unpaid time into commodity through activities such as mutual volunteering) (Bridge *et al.*, 2009)

but can be associated with the parent charity, for example as a trading subsidiary³⁸. CICs are often characterised as more distinctive than charities. In comparison to PSOs, CICs place greater emphasis on operational issues, such as ‘*asset lock*’, or the limit on payable dividends, while using available assets (as well as generated revenue) for social purposes (based on DTI 2004).

It can be suggested that, in line with P1, emphasising the need for clarification of TSO identity, the trend of ‘*socialisation*’ (related to both the aim and activities of PSOs) (Seddon, 2007), as well as the emergence of new operational forms (such as CICs), further muddies the understanding of the voluntary and charitable sector (NCVO 2006, cited in Chew, 2008). In the thesis, then, I propound Chew’s (2008) suggestion that “*the boundaries between the voluntary, public and private sectors will continue to blur as more charitable organisations with diverse origins embark on social enterprise activities and adopt hybrid organisational forms, such as the CIC and CIO*” (Chew, 2008, p. 23).

5.4.2 OI issues in high philanthropic-low commercial quadrant

The SEG views voluntary and charitable organisations as significantly philanthropically-oriented – reflected across organisational behaviour, culture and (pro-social) mission statements. Chew (2008, p.4) stresses that: “*tension is thus emerging in charities between the need to maintain a strong strategic position anchored in their charitable purposes, preserving their core values and traditions, and being able to respond effectively to the transient demands of their external environment.*”

The embeddedness of the mission in organisational activities was cited by research informants as the most significant aspect of identity characterisation (P1), responding to RQ1 focused on the governance’ aspect of “*what*” constitutes their organisations. The majority of informants were in agreement that it is the altruistic drivers that are *central* and *enduring* (Whetten, 2006) in shaping the OI, and used to distinguish the organisation from other forms (*ibid.*). For example, Anthony Hill, when asked to characterise the OI, stressed:

³⁸ See Section 5.6 for more details on trading subsidiaries in the third sector.

“... definitely altruistic. We constantly talk about our mission, and our vision. In fact, having more sustainable income coming in has meant that we can work closer to our mission.” Anthony Hill (I23)

It appears that not-for-profit, voluntary organisations are often framed as integral to the pro-social movement. Therefore, for SEG purposes and in line with P1, I elect to apply the label ‘voluntary organisations’ (including charitable organisations), not only to organisations carrying a charitable status, but to all ventures characterised with high social and philanthropic motives (regardless of adopted legal structure). Lack of clarity around which ventures can be classified as voluntary TSOs was evident in the first stage of data analysis, shedding light on nascent, charitable identity tensions. Emma Steward (I20) noted:

“... not all charities are the same. And lots of charities, for example [cites a large charity], you know, or [cites a charity] aren’t a bit charitable. And very large organisations only have paid staff, you know. And they use their charitable status for the wrong purposes, that’s just my view. So, in that way, maybe calling us a social enterprise is better. It defines us better, but it wouldn’t be if somebody said what we are; we’re a registered charity. We’re a company limited by guarantee . . . and, for the purposes of some funds, we’re a social enterprise.” Emma Steward (I20)

Emma’s view on the complexity of VSO identities highlights the most important tension inclusive to social economy. Moreover, it adds to Propositions 1 and 2 of this study, as highlighting the lack of consensus among practitioners in understanding what does it actually mean to be an SE, underlining hidden public credibility pressures for many voluntary ventures caused by misunderstandings of employed structures.

5.4.3 Community organisations and SEs

Under the guise of social economy development, community organisations possess a natural ability to transform, and therefore migrate towards new hybrid organisational forms (such as an SE). One of the informants, Anthony Hill, represents a venture characterised by a dual identity (registered as both a charity and a CIC), and offers a self-reflecting response to sectoral trends, focused on re-shaping traditional directions of VSO strategies:

“I think we are an aspiring social enterprise . . . We’re still reliant on grant funding so in that respect we’re not a fully functioning social enterprise yet because we’re still quite heavily reliant on grant funding. We are aspiring to become a social enterprise; it’s kind of a rigorous transition.” Anthony Hill (I23)

For Anthony, the transition towards a hybrid, socio-entrepreneurial OI, was a long and complex process, requiring a detailed assessment of current and trending institutional logics (P1) and the potential impact upon existing social integrity and culture. This example demonstrates an emerging trend (within the modern-day third sector), whereby voluntary or charitable organisations, in order to increase accountability and legitimacy requirements, manifest innovative abilities to blur boundaries between identity characteristics of private and public sectors (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). The SEG encompasses socio-economic trends in dual (or even multi-faceted) identities, enabling community organisations to adopt other structural perspectives (such as describing themselves as an ‘*aspiring*’ SE), and thereby bringing themselves a step closer to achieving organisational sustainability (P2).

The high-low quadrant in the SEG, then, identifies the integrative role of stakeholders (see the process theories in Chapter 3), who are becoming increasingly involved in the local community. It permits an openness in shaping organisational governance structure and planning long-term operations (associated with the ‘*who they aspire to be*’ aspect of P2). Interestingly, a growing sense of community empowerment offers greater control over the process of identity operationalisation and service provision, provoking actors to directly identify themselves with certain social goals, as well as their original organisational mission. It draws on Czarniawska’s (1997) thoughts on the existence of a parallel between the identity of individual actors and the identity of organisational actors, suggesting a clear distinction between the identity of collective actors, (e.g. a group of employees in the same organisation) and the identity of a collection of actors (such as a local community) (Whetten, 2006).

The collective community effect is manifested through the response to local developments, opportunities for training, and a variety of other activities. As a result, philanthropically-driven VCOs are focused on satisfying collective community stakeholder needs, and maintaining a well-managed relationship with the community at large. To offer a contrasting perspective on the matter, I shall now consider the most

distinctive part of the SEG – the ‘low philanthropy-high commercial’ oriented organisations – which experience identity tensions and therefore diversify away from their initial social objectives, towards fully-operational management.

5.5 Diversified organisations: high commercial-low philanthropic domain

The SEG characterises diversified organisations with a high commercial and low philanthropic identity orientation. The majority of organisations associated with this quadrant claim pro-social classification despite strongly identifying with for-profit drivers. From an OI perspective, this corresponds with P1, as organisations featured in the high commercial-low philanthropic quadrant show a strong ability to adapt and respond to socio-economic changes, as well as market conditions and trends. This is often implemented by diversification of the organisational mission, by shifting the focus of pre-established organisational aims towards service operationalisation. Diversified organisations tend to migrate towards a profit-oriented approach to ensure their survival, regardless of their previous affiliations with the social sector. In terms of my P1, this trend suggests that understanding OI characteristics is essential to ensuring long-term survival, even if this requires some form of diversification (Czarniawska, 1997). This is not to suggest, however, that the diversification away from traditional organisational forms will necessarily meet with immediate social acceptance (Brueckner *et al.*, 2010).

Informants representing this quadrant, such as Rebecca Castle (I5), often stressed the importance of profit generation as necessary for survival, reflecting recent social-economic changes:

“There is no third sector anymore. We’re all for profit. We’ve been driven to become [profit-oriented]; even charities have become...multinational, global like “Save the Children”. I find that disgraceful actually.” Rebecca Castle (I5)

Rebecca exhibits a noteworthy sense of (wider) market orientation, characterised by emerging organisational forms (such as SEs) in the UK (Nicholls and Cho, 2006). This process of diversification away from pre-established structures towards combined identity approaches often creates legitimacy tensions in service delivery (*ibid.*). As a consequence,

there is a significant danger that once the organisation achieves financial self-sufficiency, it will undermine the very social purposes originally associated with the venture.

5.5.1 Cross-sectoral (public/private) competitiveness and practical examples of high commercial-low philanthropic identity

Public sector organisations (PSOs) and private businesses are first and foremost enterprises established to achieve a set of pre-defined financial objectives. From an ownership perspective, private ventures are owned by individuals (or groups) rather than the State, and are aimed at generating profits for personal benefit. Ventures associated with the private sector may vary in shape, scope and goals, but all have the ability to pursue multiple objectives, are subject to capitalist restrictions (Bridge *et al.*, 2009), and occupied with allocating resources based on market demands.

Trading and profitability within the private sector is often seen as an operational means rather than a way of enhancing social value creation, in response to evolving cross-sectoral logics. The position of private enterprises as social service (or social purpose) providers is increasing in line with institutional changes in the social economy (Seanor, *et al.*, 2007). Many scholars and practitioners still associate ‘*private enterprises*’ with a purely commercial – and therefore profit-driven – identity orientation. Moreover, the tenets of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are becoming increasingly visible within a variety of ventures, from family businesses to rural enterprises (Bridge *et al.*, 2009), bringing them ideologically closer to hybrid TSOs.

Due to shifting institutional boundaries, the distinction between existing organisational structures (and traditional perspectives of different sectors) is becoming increasingly obscured (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). The public sector is under increasing pressure to deliver, seeking alternative opportunities and service provision solutions through the NPM approach. At the same time, PSOs have increasingly been imbued with a sense of competitiveness that has led to an upsurge in profit-driven activities. Consequently, positive identity statements associated with TSOs are no longer sufficient for creating long-term impact on organisational stakeholders. As a result, leaders are required to include a wider range of individual/personal perceptions offered by other employees and

members, to create a collectively understood (and shared) sense of OI (Becker, 2008), adding an interesting perspective to P1.

5.5.2 Organisational identity transitions: high commercial-low philanthropic dimension

Private organisations often identify the emergence of SEs as an *unfair* source of competition (Bridge *et al.*, 2009), exacerbating cross-sectoral tensions. In the same vein, the public sector tends to observe changes to the socio-economic landscape as a direct threat to their own established modes of service delivery, as a result of the increased adaptation of multi-objectives by organisations in the civil/social sector (*ibid.*), as well as being driven by operationalised market forces (Billis, 2010), that in turn can result in (re-)morphing OI orientations. Whetten (2006) suggests that life-cycle transitions in the SE context refer to the transition towards new OI forms, which can both present strategic challenges and provide potential opportunities. In any case, altering the organisational focus can make legitimacy claims difficult, due to the distinctiveness of organisational features and attributes (*ibid.*).

The growth of trading TSOs prompts a shift in the collective understanding of complex governance arrangements (Cornforth and Spear, 2010), where profit is a necessity. Retrospectively, from a more traditional perspective, not-for profit organisations were associated with competing for community support or local funding aimed at service provision for locals in need (Fletcher, 2003). Modified economic expectations and the diversification of organisational logics encourage an interplay between profit-driven SEs (see the SEG) and their local economy (Amin *et al.*, 2002). As a result, emerging SE hybrids and social businesses (adapting various legal frameworks) are well placed to respond to trends in policy developments, often focusing on areas in which the public sector is either unwilling or unable to provide support or opportunities for development (Bridge, 2009).

The clarification of organisational orientation as an identity function (P1) was distinguished by Stephanie Jackson (I19):

“We’re not a charitable organisation; our purpose is not to do charitable good. We are a business.” Stephanie Jackson (I19)

Stephanie offered an interesting perspective on the duality of organisational characterisation, strongly emphasising the commercial focus, yet classifying her organisation³⁹ (in the latter parts of the interview) as belonging in the voluntary, third sector. This example adds to P1 and P2, confirming a growing need for clear identification of multifaceted organisational characteristics. It also suggests that the operationalisation of ‘social’ ventures may lead to identity tensions and cause difficulties in maintaining focus on the original mission (supporting the case for diversification). As a result, competitive (operational/profit) pressures increase difficulties for smaller, less recognisable ventures. This trend was observed by Dan Green (I9), who admitted struggling to sustain an operational income stream:

“I mean, we applied for lots and lots of different funding, we had really good projects that we wanted funding, and each time we’ve been knocked back and...did not receive [funding].” Dan Green (I9)

In this case, failure to secure funding forced Dan’s organisation towards diversification as the only means of survival. The process – which was initially prompted by difficulties in obtaining a grant – began very gradually. However, in the long term, diversification became increasingly challenging due to a lack of collaborative effort and opportunities to network with other, similar organisations operating in the region, which would eventually affect their wider market knowledge and position. The threat of closure necessitated a shift in OI orientation towards more commercial approaches, promising stakeholders a tangible chance of survival.

The diversification of identity caused by the uncertainties surrounding available funding was frequently mentioned during interviews, with Mel Taylor (I11), for example, stressing that:

³⁹ Stephanie characterises her venture as community driven, acting for the benefit of local area regeneration with a particular emphasis on individuals suffering from economic, social or environmental deprivation.

“...you must be financially viable so you have to have enough money to do what you need to do and to plough [it] back in to keep improving, but you can only make that money if you...[are] consistent...with your other objectives; otherwise you become a different organisation.” Mel Taylor (I11)

Mel’s statement offers an interesting rationale for strategic diversification as a means of supporting the unequivocal changes in management practices. The external environment forces smaller organisations – especially those struggling to achieve recognition – to re-adjust their pre-existing organisational logics. Emerging literature (as mentioned in Chapter 3), as well as practitioners’ experiences examined in this section, suggest that OI diversification is usually triggered by future uncertainties across the sector (that could be further affected by consequences of the Brexit process). Anthony Hill (I23) adds:

“Obviously, the environment at the moment is really difficult for charities...so we shifted more towards profit motivations to make money to survive...we’ve gone to the profit side because we were worrying about surviving in a difficult environment, but it should balance out and somewhere in the middle, eventually, will be ideal.” Anthony Hill (I23)

Consequently, diversification and multi-faceted, cross-sectoral competitiveness causes difficulties for TSOs unwilling to embrace (and respond to) shifting external expectations and the development of new trends. SE literature (see for example Haugh, 2005; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Bridge *et al.*, 2009; Ridley-Duff and Southcombe, 2012) supports this view, perceiving funding as the greatest challenge, only less influential for those voluntary organisations and SEs with established endowments (Bridge *et al.*, 2009) and therefore able to maintain a balance of financial and social sustainability⁴⁰ (see P2). As a result, organisations experiencing difficulties in maintaining a clear OI will be

⁴⁰ Social sustainability draws on the concept of social capital, which is based on networks, norms, values, trust, rules and relationships, and its close alignment with social cohesion and civic engagement means that it as an essential ingredient for community development (Putnam, 2000; Wallace, 2005).

continuously forced to adapt more self-sustainable solutions leading to further cross-sectoral diversification.

In response to growing diversification trends, I will now examine the mid-zone of the SEG, providing an overview of the trading organisations that are able to combine profit- and altruism-driven activities in a way that corresponds to economic changes and social expectations.

5.6 Mid-zone OIs – trading as SEs

The SEG's mid-zone focuses on various TSOs (mainly SEs) adopting dual (or multi-) identity perspectives, causing the blurring of boundaries between social, public and private sectors. One of the core characteristics of organisations affiliated with the mid-zone is that the notions of '*social*' and '*enterprise*' are mutually-inclusive (Arthur *et al.*, 2006; Bull, 2008). From this perspective, the actively trading organisations, such as SEs, can be characterised by inter-twined/dual orientation (Williams and Nadin, 2011), collectively understood by both leaders and employees (see P1) and manifested to wider stakeholder groups. I therefore characterise ventures occupying the SEG mid-zone with both philanthropically and commercially-oriented attributes that are central to their OI (Whetten, 2006).

The idea of VSOs trading is not new, with the concept first emerging in the mid-1800s, and evolving over the centuries (Chew, 2008), driven by organisational forms such as community enterprises and social cooperatives (which, retrospectively, can be compared to modern SEs). Following third sector trends, it can be concluded that "*those voluntary organisations which trade in order to raise funds remain essentially voluntary organisations, while those for whom engaging in trade is the way in which they achieve their social purpose may redefine themselves as social enterprises*" (Pearce 2003).

Subsequently, the concept of trading VSOs can be associated with charities that often engage in commercial activities to safeguard their philanthropic mission (Cornforth and Spear, 2010). Scholars often distinguish three types of trading that can be associated with charitable/voluntary organisations (*ibid.*). The first is *primary purpose* trading, an

element of the organisation which enhances and furthers the organisational mission; the second is *ancillary trading*, an element which is indirect to the core mission (for example, a café that runs within a charitable museum); and the third is *non-primary purpose trading*, an activity unrelated to the mission and focused primarily on fundraising for the benefit of the charity (*ibid.*). TSOs often set up subsidiaries to generate funds for charitable benefit while protecting the own legal structure (or charitable status) and assets (Cornforth and Spear, 2010). Consequently, in subsidiaries the OI is encompassed by the attributes associated with the parent venture, meaning that core characteristics (both positive and negative) often remain shared (Whetten, 2006).

Subsidiary trends were observed through interpretative analysis of the organisational narratives, which portrayed trading subsidiaries (often labelled as SEs) as success enablers:

“It’s a charity but with the social enterprise trading subsidiary and also social enterprise activities within the charity...I think the social enterprise means to...self-deliver some community benefits. So, it’s not just the trading subsidiary that makes profit. It should be delivering some social outcomes through its trading activities.” Philip Clarke (I18)

Philip was among a number of informants to cite the advantages that derive from the concept of duality – or multi-dimensionality – as a competitive asset of OI orientation. Many organisations in favour of blended identity orientation explicitly identify themselves as ‘SEs’ (that correspond with P1) and attempt to adjust governance structures in a way that reflects a hybrid status. This was observed during the study, whereby Carol Price (I24), identified the nature of organisational duality as integral to both the OI and the organisational structure:

“With regards to the organisational structure, it’s a mixture of both, I think. As I explained before...we are driven by profit motives, but we will not do something just because it makes money. It has to fit in with our objectives about trying to help the local community, trying to promote training and work opportunities for people and doing it in a way that’s not driving other people out of business.” Carol Price (I24)

Richard Thompson (I27) labelled his organisation – which is legally classified as a community mutual – as an SE. He stressed the transition of governance as the most significant step towards duality (in the context of OI), suggesting that services driven by public benefit should be chargeable, in order to maintain financial sustainability (P2), and facilitate the pursuit of social purpose:

“I think we need a bit of both. Because in order to deliver the altruistic side, we need to finance. So, I think primarily, in terms of values if you like, we’re altruistic in terms of social outcomes and delivering those social benefits we talked about for public benefit, and benefitting.../...developing the voluntary sector and supporting communities...I think that’s the driving force, so that’s altruistic, but in order to do that we do need to be sustainable so some services we’re sort of charging for.” Richard Thompson (I27)

The emerging perspectives on blended philanthropic and commercial identities in the third sector reflect the dialectic of the SEG orientation. The examination of the ventures associated with the mid-zone helps to redefine the traditional perspectives of organisational purpose, creating a definitional challenge for understanding SE characterisation (P1). Scholars (for example, Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009) believe that trading/operational activities cannot solely define SE, which is rationalised by pre-existing cross-sectoral differences, distinguishing organisational types according to legal form and governance structure. Nevertheless, in response to P1, the question remains: if an organisation possesses a certain mindset through entrepreneurial behaviour towards social innovation and aims for increasing social impact, could it legitimately claim to be a SE?

5.6.1 Organisational identity change – becoming a trading SE

The emergence of the social enterprise framework is perceived as one of the most significant institutional changes (and consequently institutional challenge) of the modern social economy (Dart, 2004a), deriving from the conceptually diversified not-for-profit/community/voluntary sector. Applying the structuration theory to provide a perspective on institutional change processes (emphasising the duality of action) allows actors to contribute to the development of an organisation (Barley and Tolbert, 1997; Koene, 2006). Mechanisms that trigger the institutional change (regardless of adopted

structure or form) can be influenced by human action, and therefore viewed as aimed at directly at shaping (or re-shaping) the organisational structure (Koene, 2006).

According to P1 and P2, and in line with Whetten's (2006) rationale, I suggest that there are conflicting views for explaining the multiplicity of identity claims in hybrid organisations, which often lead to tensions in understanding the organisational attributes. As a consequence, SEs are on the verge of facing an identity crisis due to a growing sense of identity disorientation. Jennifer Brown (I12) confirmed this assumption, highlighting the vital role of actors as an integral part of management processes:

“Everyone in this organisation is a part of the process...and that's the analogy that I use: we're all in that rowing boat and we've got a choice; we row in the same direction and we may stay afloat, or we row in eight different directions so we crack the boat and sink. And that's what we've done.” Jennifer Brown (I12)

Jennifer's metaphorical perspective on organisational change management highlights inevitable transitions as a consequence of human (either individual or collective) action. In line with the literature related to organisational change in SE (see for example Thornton *et al.*, 2005, Bjerregaard and Luring, 2012 or Chen and Lyon, 2012), it can be suggested that identity transitions can be affected by range of influences: the social environment, reflexivity of actions or individual power. Consequently, isomorphic tendencies, or pressures in the socio-entrepreneurial context can affect progression of the social economy, and pre-existing expectations within the field.

All respondents related to experiences associated with organisational transitions, caused by diverse (multi-dimensional) changes, such as restructuring, shift of focus or a need to adapt to external environment trends and expectations (or social requirements). The majority were in agreement that the concept of change forms an integral part of SE identity, enabling a sustained existence. As a result, the analysis distinguished change as facilitator of P2, focusing on longevity of growth, enabling further organisational development. In cases where organisations went through identity transition from voluntary (philanthropic) to operational (commercial) frameworks, institutional change was described as enabler (or a vehicle), facilitating achievement of organisational self-sustainability (P2). Antony Hill (I23) explained:

“It’s been vitally important; change management has been key to the work that I’m doing...people’s job roles have changed and their roles have been designed around a more business-like model. So yeah, it’s been vital. The new [social enterprise] organisational structure is what we need [to aim] for going forward. People have had to change, roles have had to change and there’s no way that we could develop into a self-sustainable organisation without getting people into those new roles.” Anthony Hill (I23)

This perspective highlights change as embedded in the socio-entrepreneurial culture, seen as a developmental and adjustable means of organisational improvement. However, from a theoretical institutional perspective, a shift in logics takes place when there is a discontinuity in the meaning of existing (organisational) logics (Thornton *et al.*, 2005, Bjerregaard and Luring, 2012).

Institutional logics, in the context of SE, are used as ‘*toolkits*’ (Swidler, 1986; Bjerregaard and Luring, 2012) for implementing organisational processes, useful for P1, and often refer to the attributes of an organisational culture (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Bjerregaard and Luring, 2012). The analysis of organisational narratives identified change in organisational culture as an unavoidable necessity allowing progression. For example, Amanda Murray (I3) indicated that managers and leaders naturally act as change facilitators:

“So, what you’re doing is changing the culture within which people work, so they absorb it. You’re changing their behaviour, and at the same time, well, in parallel, you need to have a very robust training and development programme...So, your role – if you like, the organisation’s role – is to provide [a] good platform for training and development of staff in the widest sense.” Amanda Murray (I3)

Few interviewees associated organisational changes with shifts – in roles or attitudes – at an individual, workforce level (i.e. managers, volunteers and employees). Institutional changes, for example in human resources management, often improve the innovativeness of the organisation, empowering actors and enhancing their roles in the process. In the third sector, even minor changes made at the individual (actor) level can enrich organisational creativity or community involvement, through creation of new opportunities. Rebecca Castle (I5) explained:

“When you keep changing people’s roles; you give them different things to do – it makes them ‘all-rounders’ and it makes them feel involved in the process: decision-making, project developing, [part of] the creative process. And [it] brings the best out of people, brings the creativity and also...if we’re working for the community, and we’re going to empower the community, we need to do the project, start the project, give it to them and leave.” Rebecca Castle (I5)

This view suggests that effective management of change in OI (particularly in the context of SE) is essential in allowing a more complete understanding of socio-entrepreneurial characteristics (P1). Over time, the OI changes become embedded in the organisational culture in response to sectoral triggers including external factors (i.e. new policy developments) or internally, via alterations of stakeholders’ needs. As a result, this provides a fresh, practical perspective to the dialectic between human action and the organisational structure on the ground.

5.6.2 Mid-zone trading challenges: competitiveness and funding tensions

Activities that generate profit are often recognised as an essence of sustainable growth, ensuring preservation of organisational existence. Over the last decade, State funding has diminished and is due further cuts in line with current political activities (for example those caused by the Brexit vote). Consequently, funding issues are predicted to negatively impact the growth of the social economy (Bridge *et al.*, 2009), potentially forcing TSOs to rethink their strategies and management structures in response to increased cross-sectoral competition.

Third sector funding is traditionally associated with community donations (Birch and Whittam, 2008) and governmental grants. Although the funding arrangements are gradually changing, many TSOs are still operating as grant-reliant units. This is usually a case for those organisations who struggle under environmental pressures to implement the skills and resources necessary to “*access and manage non-grant finance income*” (Bridge *et al.*, 2009, p.173). From an accountability perspective, SE donations are difficult to obtain due to a limited external understanding of socio-entrepreneurial characteristics. Informant Rebecca Castle (I5) demonstrated the impact of identity pressures (as per P1) as a barrier for achieving new streams of funding:

“Funding [is a challenge] because people don’t understand what we are...Social enterprise is something that’s...I mean, everyone is talking about it but nobody really understands what it is...it’s a constant battle to make people understand what is it that we do.” Rebecca Castle (I5)

The UK Government has made a commitment to provide help in developing fresh and innovative third sector forms (Doherty *et al.*, 2009). Sadly, this promise of support appears to the majority of informants to be so small as to be negligible. Informants representing smaller organisations appear to be largely unaware of the finer details of such social policy developments and their potential implications; there was instead a noticeable emphasis among informants on growing sectoral innovativeness. Andrew Jones (I7), demonstrated that service provision within a social market is a barrier restricting accessibility to available grants and support:

“I think we can obviously do this faster if we were funded. But it’s virtually impossible to fund something that is so innovative.” Andrew Jones (I7)

Current market trends drive commercial entrepreneurship towards becoming more innovative and socially-oriented (Williams and Nadin, 2011), by focusing on social value creation and social responsibility issues. There is a quarrel between academics distinguishing the difference between emerging hybrid organisations such as SEs and socially rational ventures (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). This approach highlights the dichotomy of entrepreneurial activities, which, as a result, creates new opportunities to enhance economic growth and organisational sustainability (P2). For example, Jane Owen (I26), who runs a range of socially-focused organisations that can be classified as trading SEs, remains clear that despite State funding, there is only one way to ensure future sustainability, and that is by acting as a viable, trading business:

“Well, we do use grant...public-type...and government funding for trying to start things up; starting up new projects and... when you want to expand something or extend it, or do it differently...You have to have something that is a business, a viable business.” Jane Owen (I26)

It can be concluded that in light of diminishing funding, institutional pressures emerging within the social economy steer voluntary and charitable organisations (as well

as emerging SEs) away from grant dependency. As a consequence, entrepreneurial concepts of trading and service operationalisation can be defined as enablers of SE sustainability and successful financial autonomy (Doherty *et al.*, 2009). This corresponds with my P2, showing social (enterprise) sustainability as an identity function, placing trading SEs within the mid-zone of the SEG, and demonstrating a new form of institutional logics emerging in the hybridised third sector.

5.6.3 Competitive pressures in the mid-zone (TSE)

Scholars (see for example Bridge *et al.*, 2009; or Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011) and practitioners recognise that single-sector competitiveness is diminishing. As a result, the modern social economy is instead influenced by cross-sectoral competition, which affects resource generation, funding and public acceptance. OI is often perceived as a tool representing an internal manifestation of actors' perceptions of what distinguishes their venture from their competitors (Corley, 2004). Watson (1995) offers the 'distinctiveness' approach to identity claims by looking at complications that can arise at an individual level, associated with uniqueness and assimilation. In the context of the third sector, it refers to an already muddled public understanding of merging institutional forms (such as SEs) and their characteristics (P1). Following Deephouse (1999), it can be suggested that TSOs should aim to differentiate as much as legitimately possible to increase their competitive advantage and therefore strengthen their route towards sustainability (Barney, 1991; Barney and Stewart, 2000), adding an interesting perspective to my P2. However, the differentiation techniques involved in the 'distinctiveness' approach may in turn lead to identity diversification, as the organisation is driven away from its initial organisational objectives. The social sector division caused by the '*distinctiveness*' of the SE approach was widely demonstrated among research informants:

"I think the sector has already split into those who do it one way and those who do it another. It's a social enterprise versus voluntary sector." Andrew Jones (I7)

Andrew's rationale suggests that increasing competitive pressures will continue to influence the shape and characteristics of many small SEs aspiring to become independent from the State and therefore fully sustainable in future (P2). Consequently, the diversification away from traditional, social sector attributes decreases cross-sectoral

trust, weakening existing opportunities for '*growing together*'. Therefore, the competitiveness of such a diversified market (Peattie and Morley, 2008) remains one of the key implications for SE, often causing identity tensions. Louise Davidson (I17) summarises SE competitiveness as a major skill embedded in the organisational philosophy.

"[We are] competing in the open, commercial market against traditional businesses whose bottom line is a financial achievement. But, our bottom line is also about social cohesion and social capital building." Louise Davidson (I17)

In summary, it can be suggested that local communities, accustomed to pre-established, sectoral divisions, often view new approaches as threats, creating difficulties in identity transitions. This relates to ingrained third sector perceptions associated with the social economy, which place an emphasis on clear classification of organisational roles and structures. It becomes clear that through adopting a cross-sectoral philosophy, TSEs manifest organisational distinctiveness through a blend of actions, thereby increasing the likelihood of public acceptance.

I will now move to the top-right quadrant of the SEG, which focuses on SSEs as a vehicle of the 'togetherness' movement, allowing future sustainability of the social sector through innovative approaches.

5.7 High-high: 'togetherness' as the new identity landscape for sustainability

In the SEG, the sustainable social enterprise quadrant reflects the potential for collective action in line with the '*togetherness approach*'. It relates to P2, highlighting SE sustainability as an identity function, characterised (for the purposes of the SEG) by effective managerial practices and social involvement. Sustainability, in successful SEs, is established from within, reflected through mission statements and incorporated through decision-making processes. The SSE quadrant respectively validates Alter's (2007) views of SE as the hallmark of (social) entrepreneurship, defining it as the ability to successfully combine social interests with business acumen, enabling social change. The successful synergy between social and commercial identity orientations helps to facilitate

organisational development and sustainability, and therefore generates greater social impact by reinforcing an equilibrium between social and economic benefits (Ridley-Duff, 2007).

A multitude of changes affecting the British social economy and the pursuit of new policy developments enforce the idea of cross-sectoral *togetherness* (see Chapter 7.4). For the purpose of this thesis, I recognise the concept of togetherness as having developed organically, fostering a blend of traditional OIs and “*recognising the complementary roles played by government and the voluntary sector in the development and delivery of public policy and services*” (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004, p. 74). The establishment of inclusive, organisational models (such as *SEs* or ‘*for benefit*’ organisations) is often recognised as a response to policy developments, fashioned in line with evolving socio-economic trends. Put simply, it corresponds with third sector operationalisation trends and the convergence towards a new social, institutional landscape (Sabeti, 2011).

Traditionally, the third sector is characterised by a range of diverse organisational entities forming a ‘*coherent whole*’ (Corry, 2010). However, new organisational logics promoted by the State, as well as innovative approaches towards social value creation, can be acknowledged as a part of the extended social sector. Some scholars recognise this as ‘*the fourth sector*’, building on Giddens’ (1998) ‘*third way*’ proposition, by embracing concepts of identity hybridity as the ‘*fourth way*’. The fourth sector movement (and therefore the togetherness approach) brings implications to all sectors and disciplines associated with the social economy, ranging from local institutions to international enterprises (Sabeti, 2011). It is usually manifested through the inclusive approach of multi-identity orientations reflected in the organisational ethos. Brueckner *et al.* (2010, p.155) defines the fourth sector as “*made up of an array of organisational models which borrow from, but fall outside, the traditional three sectors*”. Recent social policy developments⁴¹ promote community-led activities and advancement of innovation in reshaping the face of TSOs (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004). Consequently, organisations that

⁴¹ The most popularised policy developments in recent years are the ‘*Big Society*’ and the ‘*Third Way*’. These are comparable to the post-Fordist American workfare, associated with localisation initiatives by shifting responsibility for social welfare to local communities and voluntary organisations (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004).

would not traditionally be affiliated with the third sector (such as SEs, social institutions, civil enterprises and social economy enterprises) are often perceived as belonging to the ‘*fourth sector*’ (Sabeti, 2011).

The emergence of organisations characterised by hybrid identities, as observed for example in the SEG mid-zone (from a trading SE perspective), encourages TSO adaptation towards new organisational structures and therefore enables more successful, social wealth creation through combining cross-sectoral identity attributes (following Whetten’s 2006 central and enduring classification). SEs compound philanthropic and commercial drivers in a way that allows for organisational sustainability (P2), achieved from a macro perspective (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4). This corresponds with the convergence towards a new socio-economic landscape, broadening cross-sectoral understanding of integrative strategic methods (Sabeti, 2011), and re-morphing existing organisational forms. As a consequence, and in response to P2, new institutional models (with SEs leading the way), can be seen as sustainability-driven enablers (Haigh and Hoffman, 2011) – overcoming standardised patterns and structural challenges.

5.7.1 Cross-sectoral togetherness: a sustainable reality or a short-term fad?

The togetherness approach, evident in the high-high quadrant of the SEG, advances the innovativeness of OI strategies, by influencing the (social) opportunity creation and knowledge exchange between public, private and third sector bodies, securing (improved) access to large contracts and available income streams. As a result, partnerships, collaborations and cross-sectoral relationships become integral in providing a competitive edge to the new socio-economic landscape. There is a growing sense of trustworthiness that originates from the embedded nature of shared values and beliefs within TSOs (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009). Reciprocal elements of management, collective threats of diversity and growing identity tensions caused by the instability of social policy developments (heightened by the Brexit vote), provoke formation of (or evolution of existing) organisational relationships in a more sustained manner, brought together by fear of the unknown.

To enrich understanding of their own OI characteristics and attributes (P1), hybrid organisations must actively engage in networking opportunities (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). This rationale was alluded to by Richard Thompson (I27):

“I think long-term, [the focus] could be around more income generation, more delivery of services and more kind of innovative partnerships working in collaboration. Possibly closer alignment with the private sector, whether in terms of knowledgeable members from private sector organisations on our board, for example, sort of getting more of those skills coming into the organisation.”

Richard Thompson (I27)

Based both on the literature and Richard’s view, networking can be used to improve organisational intelligence by broadening existing (business) knowledge related to diversifying market characteristics. Respondent Carol Price (I24) noted:

“Our aim is to work in partnership with other bodies, other charities, other small businesses; we try to support other local small businesses where we can, so we are probably not as competitive in that sense as we don’t want to push other people out of the market. We want to work together with them!” Carol Price (I24)

Consequently, the socio-entrepreneurial literature supports Carol’s and Richard’s views that relationships and collaborative action (among SEs) are vital in value creation and the establishment of a stable position within the social economy (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). The need to ‘act together’ was transparent in the gathered data, underlining the value of resource complementation, knowledge and skills progression. For example, Anthony Hill (I23), stressed mixed feelings associated with cross-sectoral togetherness:

“To be effective and to be attractive, we’ve got to work together. And there are a lot of charities and voluntary sector organisations...still holding onto their piece of the pie and not letting go.” Anthony Hill (I23)

Therefore, based on the literature and the analysis of organisational narratives, I suggest that SEs can be perceived as (promising) vehicles of sectoral togetherness, generating social impact through community empowerment and joint creation of economies of scale, driven by altruism/philanthropy of action. Hidden identity tensions existing within the social sector are often related to pre-existing sectoral divisions and are heightened by fear of the unknown, caused by environmental and economic changes affecting processes of successful relationship creation.

Consequently, the togetherness approach can be viewed as a realistic suggestion for the social economy. A collaborative approach (see Jenner, 2016) to social value creation secures a route towards organisational sustainability and can be perceived as a solution to increasing identity tensions (P1 and P2) among traditional TSOs. The SEG offers a framework for those ventures that aspire to become independent, in line with the trend towards collaborative action and the fourth sector movement (Corry, 2010).

I will now attempt to scrutinise the role of government contribution in social economy, and its impact upon SE independence.

5.7.2 Governmental contribution and togetherness/sustainability

The UK Government plays an active part in social policy development by driving the overall shape of sectoral trends and expectations. As a result, the last decade has often been characterised by a growing interest among scholars and policy makers in third sector progression, for example, through responses to Giddens' (1998) descriptive notion of "*the third way*", used as a tool for emphasising governmental action within policy development (Ridley-Duff and Bull 2009). Consequently, the evolution of social policies (See Appendix 19) for a historical timeline of social policy developments) accentuates the governmental vision of "*dynamic and sustainable social enterprises, contributing to a stronger economy and a fairer society*" (OTS, 2006), underlining its inclusive role in social economy developments.

The first policy aimed directly at SEs, "*Social Enterprise: A Strategy for Success*"⁴², set the scene for social economy developments, and proposed a best-practice approach for emerging organisations. It highlighted the political vision of what should constitute an SE (this assists in the delineation of P1) as well as their growing role in the UK (Mason, 2012). Retrospectively, it can be proposed that this approach had a moderate impact on emerging institutional frameworks adaptable to the socio-entrepreneurial notion. Generally, the State's intervention in the development of the social economy was aimed at addressing market failures and promoting innovative solutions to tackle social problems (Bridge *et al.*, 2009). In response to growing interest in the social economy, a second SE governmental policy – "*Social Enterprise Action Plan: Scaling New Heights*" (OTS,

⁴² "*Social Enterprise: A Strategy for Success*" was published by Department of Trade and Industry in 2002

2006) – was developed. It focused on removing the ambiguity surrounding the concept of social entrepreneurship, ensuring SEs became central to the development of future public policies (Mason, 2012). Furthermore, it emphasised the State’s position in shaping the socio-economic landscape, implementing the view that “*social enterprise has a key role to play in achieving many of its goals, including overcoming social injustice and exclusion. At the heart of social enterprise is a strong commitment to achieving a better society.*” (OTS, 2006, cited in Mason, 2012, p.135).

In terms of the Government’s role in developing SEs, there was no sense of innovation, or real urgency. A common view held by informants was that Government frequently re-visited (pre)existing schemes. The majority of ‘new’ solutions (such as localisation initiatives) have been practised in the social economy for years. Among the most sceptical informants was Carol Price (I24), who openly doubted the ‘*uniqueness*’ of SE policy developments:

“So, none of the ideas that we’ve seen from [the] Government we believe are new. I think we’ve always felt that we want to work for the benefit of our local community...that’s already been there. I think it’s nice that it’s getting some recognition but I don’t think really, so far, the Government has put any money behind its mouth; in fact, it’s probably damaged a lot of the infrastructure of organisations, that would have supported some of the charities on the ground.”

Carol Price (I24)

There was a growing scepticism of socio-entrepreneurial policies among Stage 1 study informants; namely, State contributions being viewed as a masking approach, aimed at drawing attention away from issues such as consolidation of funding for the sector. Furthermore, it was felt by some at the time (i.e. 2012-14) that the wording of social policy could be misleading; attempting to portray a heightened sense of optimism surrounding social economy changes. The most controversial scheme introduced by the Government coincided with the launch of the so-called ‘*Big Society*’⁴³ agenda. The aim of this initiative was to bring a greater sense of control and power to voluntary organisations and local communities (Jordan, 2012), bring innovative improvements to TSOs and extend the

⁴³ The Big Society as a concept was first introduced by David Cameron in 2009 in the context of transition “*from Big Government to Big Society*” during one of his lectures (Evans, 2011).

concept of collective responsibility among stakeholders. In practical terms, the aim of the initiative was ultimately to enhance community engagement, as noted by research informants:

“I think that the Big Society [and] the localism agenda have both meant that decision-making can come down to a lower level. I don’t see that’s happening all the time. Big Society and Localism [are] about empowering smaller organisations to work with their communities, because they know them best.” Anthony Hill (I23)

In line with above interpretations, scholars often define government contribution to the social economy as healthy (see for example Pattie and Johnston, 2001), enabling opportunity creation; thereby, strengthening SEs, charities and voluntary organisations, by prompting more efficient growth. As a result, the concept of ‘*Big Society*’ rapidly gathered momentum across sectors at the time, stimulating political and academic discussion.

Conversely, the Big Society agenda lacked clear governance guidance for practitioners, provoking further misconceptions of the State’s contribution to the concept of SE. Respondents also often alluded to a lack of consensus over social policy pillars; for example, Jane Owen (I26) recognised the governmental message as confusing, giving a negative impression, and creating further institutional tensions that limit TSO abilities in adapting to new logics:

“Well, in my view it’s difficult because...no one actually seems to be clear in Government what they mean by the term [Big Society]; it’s so many different things. On one hand, some ministers are saying it’s about volunteers and volunteering; on the other hand, it’s much more about civil society and social enterprises, and community enterprises, and people just working together locally.” Jane Owen (I26)

Amanda Murray (I3) emphasised confusion in establishing the meaning of SE agendas and their intended outcomes:

“I don’t really understand what it means. I’ve never really seen it properly articulated ...at first it was seen to be [a] Government initiative, but apparently

now it isn't... if the Big Society can mean that there are constructive ways of actually helping people in becoming more socially responsible and seeing that as a positive and...good thing, then, yes – it will work.” Amanda Murray (13)

It quickly became evident that social policy developments, in the context of SE, demanded greater transparency and clarity due to increasing confusion around the terminology used, most noticeably among the practitioners participating in my research.

From a broader socio-economic perspective, the State contribution (at the time) did steer societal action towards more collaborative behaviours, providing socio-entrepreneurial opportunities for new organisational forms. This helped shift the focus for social value creation to a more local level. As a result, SE policy development provoked public and scholarly quarrels that in turn, provided much needed SE publicity, making the new SE concepts/ ideas more widely recognisable – and a matter for more public debate. The government “*play[s] a unifying and supportive role in SE discourse, given its propensity for control through policy and popular media*” (Teasdale, 2012, cited in Mason, 2012, p. 137).

5.8 Chapter 5 summary

Based on analysis of the SEG and the literature, it can be seen that the key to understanding the OI of a given SE (or other TSO) lies in the proper classification of its characteristics (Whetten, 2006) (in line with P1 and P2). The SEG offers a dualistic characterisation of TSOs, relative to their philanthropic versus commercial orientations. It considers the impact of (altruistic and profit) identity drivers, in line with Whetten’s (2006) idea of the ‘*categorical imperatives*’. The SEG scrutinises SEs from an OI perspective, demonstrating their cross-sectoral nature, influenced as they are by a diverse range of legal forms, governance structures and organisational activities.

The organisational analysis reveals that the concept of SE sustainability is associated with increasing pressures for independence from State funding and external grants; thus, fostering the concept of strategic balance (Deephouse, 1999). State funding deficits affect some of the more traditional elements of TSOs, prompting a shift towards

hybridisation, i.e., cultivating a togetherness approach. This leads to ‘*cross-fertilisation*’ of social and entrepreneurial ideas (Nicholls, 2006), escalating the development of innovative, institutional structures, i.e. ventures that are both socially and commercially sustainable to a comparable extent.

As a consequence, the traditional (often idealised) characteristics of voluntary and charitable organisations are no longer valid (Brandson *et al.*, 2005; Chew, 2008). The changes affecting TSOs are identified in line with the emergence of new organisational forms and logics (see for example Chew, 2008 and Aiken, 2006), caused by isomorphic pressures on OIs, and allowing adaptations to trends or (public or government) expectations depending on core purpose and available resources (Chew, 2008). This is evident on examination of identity referencing discourses in the SEG mid-zone, which focus on trading SEs. In this research, TSOs are associated with a pro-business, yet fundamentally social movement (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009), with enriched institutional opportunities encouraging sectoral togetherness by altering public perceptions and reshaping traditionally-accepted organisational models.

Conversely, throughout the low-low quadrant analysis, I identify the threat of identity diversification, aimed mainly at ventures that “*succeed financially but fail socially*” (Backman and Smith, 2000, cited in Anderson and Dees, 2001, p.150). In response to increasing identity tensions, TSOs have been forced to clarify their identity attributes to avoid acting out of associated character and therefore ensure longevity (Whetten, 2006). Thus, it can be posited that the process of identity hybridisation in TSOs creates a new paradigm for SE research, emphasising the strength of innovative institutional forces embodied across sectors.

Backer (2008, p. 34) compares OI to the ‘*sole evolving unit*’, able to adapt to external pressures. The preponderance of traditional social and organisational theories acknowledges the tendency of actors to adapt to existing structures (Giddens, 1984, 1999; Czarniawska, 1997; Backer, 2008). During the course of this research, I conclude that the structure-actor debate is essentially co-evolving; where the actor, through micro processes, advances the taken-for-granted structure in a reflexive manner (Backer, 2008). Czarniawska (1997) offers a definition of OI as “*a continuous process of narration, where both the narrator and the audience are involved in formulating, editing, applauding, and refusing various elements of the ever-produced narrative*” (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 49).

This rationale rejects the homogeneous view of OI, and offers a multiple perspective, with audiences acting as reflexive narrators (Backer, 2008). This is considered further during the analysis in Chapter 6.

From a theoretical perspective, this rationale proffers a categorical argument for P1, stipulating that OI has a practical meaning, whereby individuals must effectively share a collective understanding of OI attributes (Whetten, 2006). This understanding will in turn shape a collectively-accepted definition, encompassing the socio-cultural expectations in terms of organisational traits, competencies and attributes (*ibid.*).

I have also discovered that the characteristics of an organisation can, over time, adapt in response to the changing external environment (e.g. new policy developments); this may be tolerated, however, only when actors accept this is a change to organisational discourse (Czarniawska 1997), rather than a diversification away from original objectives. Czarniawska (1997; 1998) argues that proper identification is critical to the survival of an organisation; *viz.*, if something is not considered to be central to, or enduring in, an organisation (see Whetten's CED attributes in Section 5.1), it cannot be said to be an organisational feature, or associated with the categorical characterisations of SE. In line with P1 and P2, I suggest that SEs become capable of planning or signalling their prospective intentions by committing to the new organisational form or new OI facet (Whetten, 2006). Moreover, the social and operational commitments made by organisations are intended to be irrevocable and irreversible (Selznick, 1957) and are therefore central (Whetten, 2006) to the associated OI policies, practices and procedures. Adopted forms and categories represent the highest level of visualising the centrality of SE organisational attributes demonstrating their versatility and increased focus.

In summary, it can be seen that various attempts to describe or characterise OI in fact alter the collective understanding of what constitutes an SE: identity claims made on behalf of organisational actors (SEEs) can be represented by '*categorical imperatives*' (Whetten, 2006), identifying activities and actions that the organisation must employ in order to avoid acting out of assigned character (in line with P1). This follows Czarniawska's (1997) line of thought, which suggests a parallel between the identity of individual and organisational actors. It suggests a distinction between collective and individual perspectives on OI, which in turn suggests a distinction between the identity

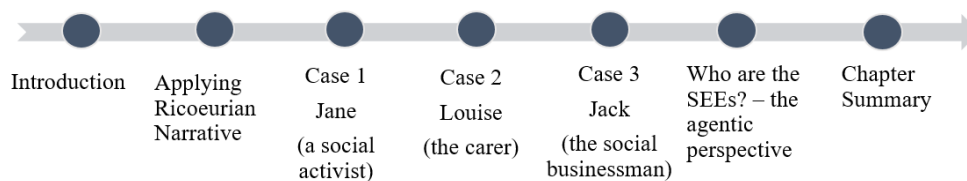
of collective actors, and a collection of actors (Whetten 2006). Based upon examination of the OI discourses in the SEG and encouraged by Czarniawska's (1997) rationale – as well as Whetten's (2006) cross-level, individual, and organisational theorising – I now move onto the next analysis chapter, in which I concentrate on the individual characteristics of key SEEs by re-examining both the social and agentic role of organisational leaders.

Chapter 6: Who are the SEEs and social enterprise leaders? An individual identity perspective.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter employs a sensemaking narratology based on three SEE person-centred case studies. I draw specifically on the writings of Paul Ricoeur (1988; 1991a; 1991b; 1992), and more recent adaptations of his ideas on narrative and personal identity (e.g. Cunliffe *et al.*, 2004; Mallett and Wapshott, 2011a, 2011b; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012). Chapter 6 considers the self-reflective journey of each SEE informant; that is, from childhood or teenage years (through a process of recollecting past thoughts, feelings and interactions), to a mental space that is considered ‘*now*’ and ‘*in the present*’. I also explore thoughts and feelings about the SEE self and others, as well as, their ideas about (future) socio-entrepreneurial intent and personal aspiration.

Figure 8: Chapter 6 outline



Overarching narratives/plots are examined, along with stories that form each informant’s personal journey; as they reflect on experiences of matching a sense of who they are, or were, with what they have experienced and achieved in terms of their ventures thus far (see Johansson, 2004). From an investigative perspective, I deal specifically with:

RQ2: Who are the social enterprise leaders/entrepreneurs (and why are they important from an identity perspective?)

My inspiration is based upon theories of human action, drawn from Ricoeur (1992) and others (e.g. Van Den Hengel, 1994), for whom it is imperative is to consider the ‘*who*’ of action (RQ2) as opposed to the ‘*what, why and how*’ (RQ1). In so doing, we continue to

operate within an action theory paradigm; yet, are able to examine past, present, and future possibilities, based upon the will and capacity of the SEE - as a human agent. This marks a fundamental shift from the epistemology of 'events'; more commonly understood through structures and governance (including cause and effect relationships), to one of the 'person'; via, analysis of personal narratives (Van Den Hengel, 1994). In my Ricoeurian narrative analysis, I endeavour to focus upon the 'who' of personal values, beliefs and SEE behaviours; examining the impression these might make upon social sustainability, and the personal commitment to social entrepreneurship, over the course of one's lifetime. My Chapter 6 analysis will therefore include key reflections of critical moments during an SEE's lifetime, e.g. childhood, teenage years, marriage, death, birth of children, or organisational endeavours such as the launch of a new charity, or SE initiative.

A more pragmatic reason for including an investigation of socio-entrepreneurial identity is to complement findings from the previous organisational governance chapter, and thus complement the findings from RQ1. This integrated approach is becoming increasingly popular in entrepreneurial and leadership PhD studies, by examining firstly *what* constitutes a sustainable organisational identity, and secondly, *who* precisely are socio-entrepreneurial leaders, as well as what drives and motivates them.

Therefore, I have developed two human agentic propositions for Chapter 6:

Proposition 3: Social leaders/entrepreneurs continually seek new social enterprise opportunities because they are fundamentally motivated by their personal beliefs, social values and sense of identity.

Proposition 4: Social (enterprise) sustainability is a lifetime function of *who social leaders were, who they are, and who they aspire to be (adapted from a Ricoeurian perspective).*

In this chapter, I argue that SEs should not be considered sustainable – from, for example, a triple bottom line perspective – solely as a function of effective governance (as in the previous chapter). Rather, the extent to which SEs are sustainable is the result of *who the leaders are as individuals, and how they, over their course of their life, connect with, and influence, local communities*. I shall seek to gain a richer personal insight (compared with

Chapter 5) by probing public and hidden social interactions, as well as the social/altruistic versus commercial tensions that affect all SEEs.

For this reason, I suggest that the research design of Chapter 6 necessarily follows a more (social) constructionist approach compared with the IPA style of the previous chapter. There are also clear and notable differences in the style of write-up compared with the previous chapter. The unit of analysis deliberately shifts from IPA at an organisational level, to an embodied emotional and micro-level person analysis, which is reflected in the use of the critical personal narrative (from the perspective of the researcher), as well as a greater emphasis on drawing socially constructed meanings and symbolic references from the data. To reiterate, I have included detailed sections on the advantages and challenges of sensemaking narratives (and identity analysis in Chapter 4).

6.2 Applying a Ricoeurian narrative

Whilst the Ricoeurian narrative has previously been considered in a wider organisational sense (e.g. Sparrowe, 2005; Coupland, 2007), until now there has been limited application within an entrepreneurship context (e.g. Hamilton, 2006). This suggests a knowledge gap in the literature, and therefore a major contribution of my work is to apply Ricoeurian ideas within a social entrepreneurship setting (in relation to RQ2). This serves, too, as a response to scholarly calls for the wider application of the Ricoeurian narrative in order to gain a better understanding of self-identity (in relation to others) within fresh organisational contexts (see Mallett and Wapshott, 2011a).

It is important that the '*artefacts*' of self-identity – namely, stories, plots and critical incidents – be separated from the '*process*' of narrative interpretation (similar to Hamilton, 2006; Brown *et al.*, 2008; Mallett and Wapshott 2011a, 2011b). In other words, Ricoeurian narratives are composed by gathering, interpreting, and ultimately organising each individual's events into stories and plots, to better make sense of one's life journey (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011a) and the socially causative propositions that contribute to the interaction of self-identity and social entrepreneurship (P1 and P2).

An advantage of applying Ricoeur's interpretive theory (1992, p.2-3) is that he juxtaposes notions of a changing '*self*' (*ipse*) identity, with an underlying sense of remaining the '*same*' (*idem*) throughout one's life journey. This is perhaps put most succinctly by Mallett and Wapshott (2011, p.274):

“‘*Who I am*’ changes with time, the ways in which I act, perceive and interpret may alter from moment to moment (*ipse* identity). However, I remain the same person throughout my life, the lone protagonist of my autobiography and, in this respect, there is a sense of sameness and unity to experience, memory and expectation (*idem* identity).”

Ricoeur (1992, p.2) uses *ipse* identity to conceptualise inner ideas of selfhood, but makes no assertion of an unchanging personality. '*Iipse*' also addresses fundamental '*Who am I?*' questions in relation to periods of time, influences, life experiences and key events. *Iipse* identities are highly mutable; they can be used to understand who someone was in relation to a specific event, or their views and behaviours at a particular time. On the other hand, '*idem*' refers to an external and more permanent understanding of identity sameness, whereby there are identified and enduring '*distinctive marks*' for understanding self-identity (Ricoeur, 1992, p.119). For Ricoeur (1992, p.119), *idem* identity is of the highest importance as – whilst we may experience changes throughout our life – it is still possible to distinguish and make sense of identity sameness over time (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011a, 2012). I have analysed '*idem*', in relation to SEEs in the study, following a similar approach to that adopted by Hamilton (2006), which will be presented in the latter part of this chapter.

It is important to note that, as concepts, both '*ipse*' and '*idem*' can be characterised as a splitting of sameness, and as a consequence, they overlap and relate to each other in a reflexive way (which will be discussed as part of the narrative process below). Based on Ricoeur (1992), and others (e.g. Cunliffe *et al.*, 2004), it is possible to address the hermeneutic of how changes to who a person thinks they are can be extrapolated to the wider picture of life changes, and shifting personal/work identity. Ricoeur (1992) recognised that '*ipse*' and '*idem*' (whilst irreducible) should necessarily interact, while perceptions of sameness (*idem*) can change based on time and narrative. Hamilton (2006) notes this as the particular advantage of Ricoeurian narrative; *viz.*, the ability to identify relationships between identity, life and time. I will develop and argue this approach in the research framework below.

6.2.1 Time and narrative

Ricoeurian ‘*human time*’ involves the juxtaposition of cosmological time (flowing from the past, to present and future) and phenomenological time, recounted from a human perspective. Human time can be used to meaningfully narrate one’s major life events and courses of action in conjunction with real (cosmological) time. Ricoeurian narrative is fascinating in this respect because it offers something more than factual representations (Cartesian view); it allows a greater understanding of ourselves based on semiotics, or textual discourses alone (Pucci, 1992; Ezzy, 1998). For example, the bringing together of phenomenological ideas such as ‘*before*’ and ‘*after*’ in storytelling, in conjunction with dates and cosmological time, creates a necessary composite framework for understanding the hermeneutic circle of lived experience, human actions, reflections and future intention.

In terms of delineating epistemological and ontological aspects of my research approach to the current chapter, I remain cognisant of Cunliffe *et al.* (2004, p.272) who suggest: “*A central notion of narrative knowledge is meaningful time; that narratives are stories of our experiences in time, grounded in events or episodes which can be linked together in a temporal way, can be recounted because of plot, coherence over time, and memory – a diachronic approach*”. I am interested principally in the (mimetic) content-driven aspects and representation of storylines and characters, in tandem with the functions of time and narrative. Meanwhile, I am less concerned with the diegetic form of the narrative (Ryan, 1992), the performativity of the story, or multiple interpretations of life stories, as I have concluded that these are markedly less relevant to my approach.

For analytical purposes, ‘*prefiguration*’, ‘*configuration*’ and ‘*refiguration*’ (discussed in Sections 6.2.3 and 6.2.4) may be likened to St Augustine’s depiction of time⁴⁴, combined with an Aristotelian⁴⁵ perspective on mimesis (or imitation and representation of cultural knowledge). Human action can thus be recounted, narrated and interpreted through the process of *emplotment*, whereby lived experiences are synthesised into a narrative form. Ezzy (1998), for example, suggests that multiple internal and

⁴⁴ St Augustine (1961) in his *Confessions* recognised three aspects of memory in relation to presence in time: 1) *memory* (of past events); (2) *attention* (paid to (the fluidity) of passing time – emphasising the changing context from future to past – providing a sense of present time); and (3) *expectation* – i.e. experience-driven predictions of future events.

⁴⁵ This can be further explored in his work *Poetics* where he presents concept of *muthos* (emplotment) and its dynamic relationship between story and the plot (Hamilton, 2006)

external events, agents, and interactions, which may at first blush appear discordant, do in fact form sequential episodes within one unified story as it unfolds. These individual episodes also become imbued with meaning-making, and structured as plotlines or themes. Over time, personal narratives emerge through a process of configuration and refiguration, i.e. as events and plot structures move back and forth, and informants tell stories and relive noteworthy experiences in their lives. Throughout the narrative there is scope for re-(con)figurations and for informants to develop new plotline possibilities based on more recent, or alternative interpretations, all of which have hermeneutic implications in the narrative understanding of personal identity. I will explore this dynamic in particular in relation to the case studies of my chosen three social entrepreneurs.

For many scholars (see for example Ezzy, 1998; Mallett and Wapshott, 2011), the process of prefiguration, configuration, refiguration enables quasi-fictional depictions based on ‘*originary notions*’ of lived experience, as well as the ability to capture both a real and fictive past (Ricoeur, 1984, p.78). As Ezzy (1998, p.243) interprets Ricoeur (1988), the place of fiction in Ricoeurian narrative is to build possibilities for understanding the past, present and future, as well as the ability to symbolically represent and interpret events as, for example, ‘*tragic*’, or ‘*comic*’. In my study, I attempt to construct personal, narrative-based accounts, by asking informants to reflect and consider their past lived experiences, family backgrounds, and critical moments, before both configuring, and refiguring, how these events might shape identity journeys, particularly from an *idem* perspective. This is a similar approach to that adopted by Hamilton (2006).

6.2.2 Analytic strategy: social altruism versus commercialism – two competing SE narratives

The subsequent analysis elaborates on the Ricoeurian composite framework and necessarily borrows from *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur, 1984, 1988, 1991, 1992, as well as considering how researchers (e.g. Hamilton, 2006; Mallett and Wapshott, 2011, 2012) have recently interpreted and applied Ricoeurian narrative ideas within their own research.

The twin socio-entrepreneurial tensions identified (i.e. altruistic versus commercial) represent fault-lines that are well-known to most individuals in the third sector, many of whom have established default positions. It is fair to say, then, that each

of the three case studies comes with a different default position: Jane (in the first case) is heavily influenced by altruistic/social values; Louise (in the second case), though not dissimilar, has a more transient perspective on life and goals; while Jack (in the third and final case) demonstrates a social stance, in terms of his values and background – he was as a younger man, and remains, very commercially driven, and perceives increased commercialisation as playing an important role within a sustainable third sector. For a brief background description of the cases, see Appendix 4 (I17 – Louise, I18 – Jack and I26 for Jane). For a full debrief on why and how each of the three cases were chosen and examined through a social constructionist lens, see Chapter 4, Section 4.7.1. In each of the three contrasting cases, I will examine *prefiguration*, *configuration* and *refiguration* narratives to help shed light on the different identities and shared commonalities of each social leader. In turn, this will help address RQ2, and ascertain the sustainability value of identity in P3 and P4. I have also included timeline synopses later in the chapter for *Jane*, *Louise* and *Jack* (see Figures 7, 8 and 9), which should prove helpful for the reader in interpreting their varying degrees of socio-entrepreneurial identity.

It is worth noting that having reflected (and discussed with my supervisor), I could perhaps have organised the chapter rather differently; i.e. by ‘bundling’ associated narratives and stories under the three mimesis categories (prefiguration, configuration and refiguration). However, upon reflection, my feeling is that the richness of the storylines and life histories of each informant would have become diminished. I have, therefore, interpreted each person-centred case in turn, allowing the qualitative data to speak for itself in conjunction with Ricoeurian ideas and appropriate literature. The *raison d’être* for this type of sensemaking analytic strategy is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

6.2.3 Prefiguration

Prefiguration of human action, or ‘*mimesis I*’, refers to the structural, symbolic, and temporal aspects of cultural representations and expectations, enabling one to effortlessly interpret the signs of one’s own society (Ricoeur, 1991a; Anderson, 2010; Dowling, 2011). In terms of establishing an identity narrative, prefiguration “*is grounded in a pre-understanding of the word of action, its meaningful structures, its symbolic resources, and its temporal character*” (TN I, p.54).

Prefiguration through pre-narrative structures (in Ricoeur's sixth study) helps us contextualise the complexities of action and interaction with practice (through self and others, as agents of action):

“Such then, are some of the complexities of action brought to our attention, by the narrative operation, by the very fact that it remains in a mimetic relation in respect to action” (Ricoeur, 1992, p.157).

He also notes that it is the constitutive high organisation of (pre)narrative structures that is key to narrating the semantics of action, or as Anderson (2010, p 209) describes, the semantics of societal norms, and experiences of history. Mallett and Wapshott (2011, p.278) offer useful examples, suggesting it is possible to identify pre-narrative traditional questions such as *‘what a police career looks like’*, *‘the form it will take’*, symbols and artefacts that might represent that prefigured identity, and the type of actions that would be expected by such an agent (i.e. policeman). Alternatively, the authors (*ibid.*) also compare a prefigured and symbolic understanding of what constitutes a *‘criminal identity’*. By adopting pre-conceived ideas, or *mythos*, involving wide-ranging symbolic interpretations of the semantics of action, it is possible to prefigure plotlines according to normative rules, conventions and societal stereotypes. Establishment of traditional cues, symbolic representation and normative rhetoric can all serve as constituent elements of prefiguration and expectation of personal identity. For Mallett and Wapshott (2011), mimesis1 (prefiguration) represents *“the knowledge arrived at through prior experience that provides a pre-narrative understanding”*.

In this study, we see clear examples of prefiguration: for all informants, there are expectations of both self and others, especially in early childhood events, in which semantic knowledge can be represented. However, Ricoeur (1991, 1992) warns us that, whilst some new experiences and narratives can be prefigured in this way, not all new experiences will follow the same rules.

6.2.4 Configuration and refiguration

Configuration (through the process of *‘emplotment’*) involves the imaginative coming together of agents (as social informants) and their *“goals, means, interactions, circumstances and results”* as intended and unintended consequences. Ezzy (1998, p.245) interprets the role of Ricoeur's emplotment and configuration, rather simply, as *“the*

process that synthesizes a narrative". Sometimes, this involves the informant switching back and forth between historical action events and plotlines until there is a meaningful understanding of episodes that make up an interpreted plotline (Ezzy, 1998). Configuration allows an interweaving of events and historical action into coherent and meaningful plots or storylines, building upon any previous prefigurative (symbolic) structures (*ibid.*). Ricoeur (1991, p. 68) refers to configuration as '*grasping together*', which permits connections between (presupposed) understanding, and (impromptu) intuition. In my study, configuration therefore represents a key stage in building a hermeneutic circle⁴⁶, mapping a meaningful sense of social reality against temporal experience for informants through a wider narrative process (Kaplan, 2012). Individual or critical events can be configured as part of lived experience into storylines with specific plots and themes. The moving back and forth between historical events and lived experience for informants should also be subject to re-figuration. In other words, "*narrative provides coherence and meaning to the flux of events, but is never fixed in that it is itself always open to interpretation or re-configuring*" (Hamilton, 2014, p. 9). Ricoeur (1984) refers to the '*concordant-discordance*' of arranging different actions, events and other factors into a unified storyline.

Refiguration (or reconfiguration) is the last phase of the Ricoeurian hermeneutical circle of mimesis emphasising the sensemaking of experiences. It can be recognised as an interpretative vehicle of the threefold mimesis model⁴⁷, unifying the behaviour and experiences of the subject. By developing an understanding of the narrative processes from a Ricoeurian (1984) threefold perspective (assuming that the starting point lies in the past), we are enabling creation of mimetic progression. This approach encapsulates the movement between subjects' life points across past and present (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011), allowing a fuller interpretative understanding of identity. Those processes provide

⁴⁶ Hermeneutic process can be defined as a way to create an interpretative understanding (Boell and Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2010). It is characterised by the constant re-interpretation allowing more comprehensive understanding of the researched phenomena. The movement between interpreting the individual parts and how they relate to the larger whole is referred to as the hermeneutic circle (*ibid.*). In this thesis, hermeneutic circle is used in the context of interpreting individual identity of SEEs.

⁴⁷ It can be perceived as interpretative because it offers a sense of closure to the circle of mimesis through interpretative and re-interpretative processes allowing to make the meaning. The circle of mimesis happens in the moment of narration where the subjective and objective time is combined and the meaning making is approached in the conscious way (Cunliffe *et al.*, 2004).

a stable fundament for plurality of meaning, allowing further experimentation with interpretations.

Ricoeur (1991) refers to mimesis³ as the circle of self-interpretation or the ‘*reading ourselves*’ moment. This part of narration helps to achieve a sense of uniqueness when considering configurative challenges. Moreover, it is expedient in demonstrating the paradoxical nature of disparate narratives and sensemaking processes:

“*Configuring and re-configuring makes sense of experience, provides alternative courses of possible or probable action, or is used as a form of communication, to make sense for others.*” (Hamilton, 2006, p. 537).

Ricoeurian studies (1984, 1991, 1994) suggest that configuration (in order to achieve full completion) requires a complementary stage (Ricoeur, 1984 p. 70). Re-(con)figuration is sometimes described as ‘*unifying process*’ as it allows for multiplicity within sensemaking and a shifting of previously-recognised social and environmental influences and opportunities throughout the life-span cycle. Refining configurative understanding enables the emergence of new understandings about oneself, as well as the development of an informative process that facilitates future pre-narrative understanding (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011). However, the Ricoeurian approach to understanding identity has been described as a “*conflict ridden process in search of stability*” (*ibid.*, p. 284). As individuals, our response to personal, and even conflicting, identities formulate our sense of understanding, focusing on who we are, and allowing comprehension of the emplotment gap.

I now turn to each of these case interpretations in turn, commencing with *Jane*, then *Louise* and *Jack*.

6.3 Case 1 – ‘Jane’ (a social activist narrative)

In summary, Jane has over 25 years’ experience within the social sector as a facilitator, environmentalist and social activist. Her academic background is in social anthropology, education and political science, with human rights, social justice and environmental

sustainability her particular areas of interest. Jane works as a freelance consultant in the fields of social education, support and social care, and is a co-founder of Hostweb, an organisation aimed at service provision for individuals with learning difficulties and disabilities. Her most recent start-ups include: Urban Hat, an SE promoting sustainable urban living; Vegetable Patch, which promotes green living; and the Movement Scheme, which promotes sustainable transport. Jane is an active member of Green party. For her full background and biography, see Figure 6.1.

6.3.1 Jane and prefiguration – the early years

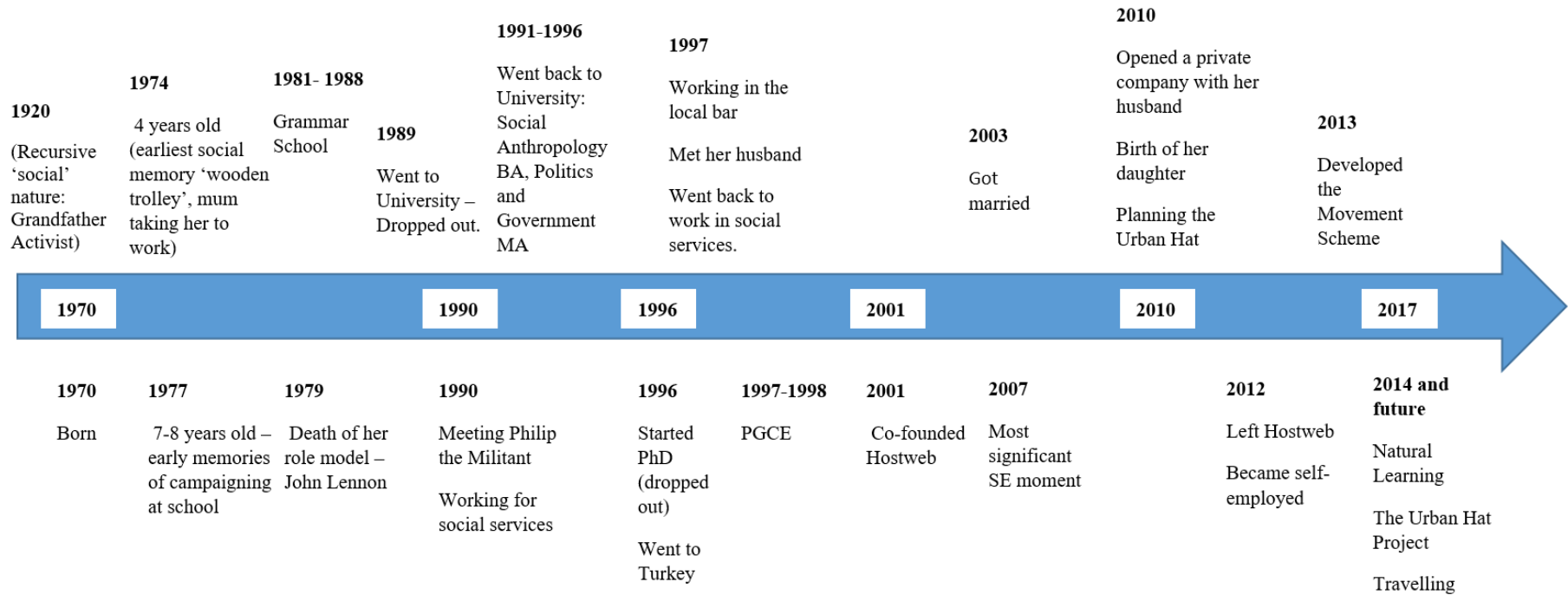
With Jane, we can see an affiliation with social concern from a very young age (see Figure 7). Jane feels as though she has been very strongly influenced by her early childhood experiences, witnessing her mother's involvement with social and community issues:

“I met people with learning disabilities at a very young age, probably three to four years old, really young [...] And [my mother] worked with them all the time, so that was in sight already.”

Jane's mother was a social worker, working with excluded communities, and individuals with disabilities and learning difficulties; at the same time, she acted as a dynamic community activist, setting up 'play hubs' in churches and village halls in order to fill the gap in childcare provision at the time. Jane's father was, for many years, employed in the pharmaceutical sector, and Jane remembers him as an individual with strong personal values, who placed a great emphasis on fairness and respect for others.

Jane was of the view that her mother was a powerful influence; social work was deeply grounded in her upbringing, and affected her early perceptions of her mother's social actions. Jane also remembers garnering an early understanding of societal differences, discrimination and sense of social exclusion, from her mother's activism, as well as from household discourse. Clearly, Jane's enthusiasm for social welfare endorsement was instilled in her at a very young age, and helped define who she is today.

Figure 9: Jane’s timeline of (major) life events



“I used to set up clubs and things when I was quite young... probably six, seven or eight, and I tried to get my friends to join and there would be clubs about campaigning about things, writing letters to the paper about animal cruelty.”

As Jane talked, she clearly identified altruistic behaviour⁴⁸ as a unifying part of her early life journey (i.e. supporting P3 and P4). She recounts a personal journey that has been fuelled by various attempts at social action, whether it be campaigning, or travelling:

“I always wanted to see things better, I’ve always wanted to ... I’ve always try to make good, positive changes.”

Keen for her voice to be heard, she became involved with various political activities which brought her into contact with like-minded individuals:

“...all the way in school I was quite an activist really, animal rights [...]. And then gradually I developed, as a teenager I got more involved with action [...] politics, social politics, and the environmental, green politics.”

Jane’s nascent altruistic behaviours can be represented as “*passion in search of a narrative*” (Ricoeur, 1991, p 29), with the events of her early, lived experience emerging as a “*narrative imagination*” imbued with pre-figurative structure and symbolic meaning (Ezzy, 1998, p.244). There is a distinguishable altruistic continuity in her biographical narrative that can be seen to have affected her life choices: Jane appears to construct social reality around pre-existing core values and beliefs, transferring her semantic knowledge to organisational settings, structures, hubs and platforms:

“[It begins] from being something smaller I suppose... your parents and how you behave with other people. How important community is and how

⁴⁸ Altruistic behaviour has many facets (Dhesi, 2010, p. 707) and is believed to emerge spontaneously (Fehr, 2003), being attributed to various causes. Generally speaking, the majority of ‘non-instrumental actions’ (Dhesi, 2010) that act for the benefit of others are perceived to be altruistic. In Jane’s case, altruistic behaviour is strongly embedded and clearly reflected through her actions. Altruism and concern for the environment affects every aspect of Jane’s life from choosing locally-sourced food and spices to wearing organic clothing from manufacturers within fair trade associations, and driving a hybrid vehicle.

important it is to work together; how important it is to treat other people in a right way. All of those kinds of things like all the world's religions teach."

Jane considers the inheritance of social values as a fundamental part of creating the moral ethos that she discerns as the core element of her sustainable existence: she is a passionate, motivated human connector, bridging and brokering new agentic relationships between individuals with similar values.

6.3.2 Configuration and formative life events

When young Jane started to voice her (sometimes distinctive or controversial) opinions, demonstrating her strong feelings towards social injustice, she very often perceived a lack of moral support from her peers and close relatives. This lack of understanding significantly affected the majority of her life choices, as she came to ineluctably associate her personal agency and voice⁴⁹, with social rejection. One of the most interesting events to occur as a result of her activist initiatives was meeting Militant representative, Philip. He opened the door of '*social acceptance*', allowing her to express who she was by joining their anti-poll tax campaign and taking an active role in its endeavours. This opportunity saw her gain confidence and reach a sense of self-acceptance:

"I met Phillip, the Militant activist in Ramsgate; he was selling papers. I bumped into him and I was wearing an anti-poll tax campaign sticker. And he just said: 'Oh, do you want to know more about our campaign?'. Because I just knew it was wrong but I hadn't heard it properly criticised until then. So, he quickly signed me up then and I just thought, this sounds just perfect for me and I want to join [...] So, I got involved quite heavily with Militant, I was at the meetings all the time [...] this was like a weight had been lifted from my shoulders because I met people who felt the same as me ..."

Almost before she had realised it, Jane was fully engaged in the campaign (thus supporting P3), quickly becoming a coordinator and running associated activities from her parents' house. For the first time, she experienced a sense of belonging in a social context that allowed her to grow, while her anger (as it related to social injustice)

⁴⁹ Voice here refers to Jane's beliefs and values that she perceived as different to her peers.

progressively decreased, and her sense of social exclusion diminished. This contrived to give her a new understanding of her ‘*innovative*’ self. Now, Jane is able to recognise the intensity of her ‘*conflicting-self*’ and its consequences and, when she talks about her activities related to the ‘*anti-poll tax*’ campaign movement, and her behaviour around that time, she is full of disbelief:

“You can imagine my dad’s reaction, using their landline number on all of the posters – can you imagine? He voted for something else...”

Her *ipse identity* recalls as rebellious, acting against her parents and negating pre-existing norms and belief, make Jane proud of her ‘teenage bravery’ and how it allowed her to pursue a change within herself. Wetherell (1996, p. 278) suggests that “*militancy [is] associated with unreasonableness*”, and here it reveals a supplementary facet to Jane’s character, useful for understanding her identity and career choices in later life. Interestingly, years later, Jane discovered that, far from the antipathy that she had she imagined so many years previously, her father had in fact taken a positive view of her actions; she felt relief and was finally able largely to reconcile what had been a complex father-daughter relationship. She now appreciates that her behaviour as a young person (despite being perceived as rebellious at times) was in fact always supported by her family, even when she felt rejected and lonely. This is in stark contrast to her previous feelings of always being excluded.

Jane went through a stage of experimentation (an additional characteristic of Ricoeur’s configuration) while travelling through Turkey. She unhesitatingly admits to having made a regrettable mistake by undertaking a doctoral degree as a way of leveraging her education, rather than it being an intentional part of her journey. Taking time off from writing her thesis, she went for a holiday with a friend, and spontaneously decided to extend her initial trip to nearly a year. She suggests this decision was an unexpected twist in her life, impacting greatly on her future choices:

“I went [to Turkey] first in 1996, I originally just went for holiday, I had just started my PhD. I started my PhD I was doing ... well, I continued with my MA which was a big mistake for me. I didn’t finish! That’s the whole point [...] It

wasn't really good [...] I was getting more and more frustrated, so I went to Turkey for a holiday ..."

In this example, we see a visible shift in pre-existing norms, pushing Jane towards the adoption of a new sense of *idem self* (a distinctive characteristic of Ricoeurian 1992 rationale). Jane's interpretation of her story and self-recognition is important: she spoke of experiences associated with her travels with passion and commitment, as well as the agentising role of travel in her later life and career choices (P3). Upon her return to the UK, she settled down, remaining actively involved with environmental initiatives and campaigning. In further search of "*local*"⁵⁰ belonging, she became a co-founder of a socially-oriented voluntary organisation, helping disadvantaged and excluded groups. In the configurative '*kingdom*' of '*as ifs*' (Ricoeur, 1992), Jane reached an important moment of self-realisation, while working for Hostweb. Jane expressed feelings of inner fulfilment of her social (but also entrepreneurial) potential, by freeing herself from pre-existing organisational norms and social boundaries:

"I was gradually introducing more environmental issues into what we were doing there. And I suppose, I gradually realised that eventually I wanted to do something separate because I couldn't turn [Hostweb] into an organisation that was completely about environmental issues. That's not what it was set up to do and that wouldn't be fair to everyone else."

At this point in her life (she was already a committed vegan, married, and caring for her new-born daughter) she began to search anew for fresh environmental and social ideas. This led to a slow shaping of initial drafts for a new venture. She highlights the unexpectedness of key decisions made (i.e. to create a new venture), as she had never envisaged herself in the guise of organisational leader:

"I wasn't expecting anything, because I wasn't expecting to be in that situation really. I was always probably expecting that I was either to be much more involved

⁵⁰ For Jane, this was an important part of her 'settling down phase' allowing recognition of local groups and organisations that may have represented comparable views to her own. An open search for 'belonging' represents her detachment from earlier experiences of being unable to fit into her peer groups, and she is taking charge by maximising the ability to pursue her social beliefs through wider channels.

in campaigning or research and not setting up organisations [...] I've never expected to get involved in social business."

6.3.3 Jane's unified (refigured) self – an inner drive for sustainability

Jane's refigurative narrative reveals a Ricoeurian unified sense of self (in line with my P4), in which she remains true to her personal values. She claims to be constantly searching for new opportunities that promote sustainable living and social justice, and that she feels strongly about her local community, is clearly evident. A heavy emphasis is placed on empowerment and strong social/altruistic values; Jane suggests it is her *raison d'être*, her lifelong mission:

"I think that's kind of my cycle, it's in my core, it comes [from] like I said earlier about childhood, when I was setting up clubs and things [example of the refigurative moment] I always had to be doing and organising and trying to.... it's about the social movement or environmental movement, how things are constantly moving forward and getting better. And I struggle to be on the edge of that. And I'd like to be doing it, making it happen and moving it forward. When I can't at the time, for whatever reason, that's when I feel frustrated."

The above excerpt also demonstrates an interesting example of *mimetic circle closure* (Ricoeur, 1992). Through this excerpt, Jane demonstrates a reflexive understanding of her past and the agentic power of major turning points in her life, with significant memories of childhood social activism. As we talked, she moved swiftly forward to reconcile these memories with a sense of *idem* present and future expectations. Throughout her story, Jane frequently suggested her personal and organisational life was heavily influenced by earlier experiences in life. Her recent realisation of an '*altruistic self*' serves as a unifying storyline, helping her understand her activist and community oriented choices. Moreover, her sensemaking led to recognition of the role of family history, suggesting social activism being practiced for generations:

"I probably fairly recently discovered maybe that kind of activist bent if you like, it came from my mother's side, my maternal grandfather was a coal miner in South Wales, looking for jewels. And he was involved in hunger marches in the 1920s and early 30s and he knew many people who became involved in politics later on."

He had that kind of connection there with the working class ... and activism really. I suppose it's probably somewhere in the genes."

Developing a 'self-constancy'⁵¹ (based on her family history) enabled an inner acceptance of inherited working-class community values (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011) and they now represent an integral part of her *idem identity*. Jane believes that social activism is also an integral part of her heritage, fostering greater expectations of her future self, and activities that help communities on a social level.

Jane's academic background in politics, social anthropology and education also impacted on her career choices. Currently, Jane is actively involved in politics and is an influential board member of various civil society organisations. She is perceived by many as a woman with many faces: a mother; an ecopreneur; a consultant; but also, a successful leader; and one of the most prolific social activists in her community. Her multifaceted work personas can sometimes emerge as competing narratives (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011):

"Someone said last night ... 'This is Jane', and everyone really stared at me and [he] said 'Oh, I don't know how you want to be introduced' [laugh] 'However you want to introduce me.' So, I was kind of stumped – so he said: 'Troublemaker?' 'No, I'm not a troublemaker!' I don't really consider myself a trouble maker. I think he was joking; I hope he was. You never know, there must be something to make him say it out loud."

She considers her narrative and *idem identity* as a lifelong social activist, with stories and plotlines based very much on her past social and political experiences. This indicates that social activism is truly at the heart of her ideological nature; a fundamental part of her existence – and suggests it always will be (see Reissner, 2010). In this respect, Jane is an exemplary model of Ricoeurian (1981, 1984) '*sameness*' with a sense of continuity and unity throughout her life story (adding to both P3 and P4):

"You know the mission is your mission ... It's your life mission."

⁵¹ According to Mallett and Wapshott, (2011) self-constancy refers to ability of 'keeping word'. It has a dialectical relationship with notion of character (from a temporal view) related to individual self-perception (*ibid.*)

From a sustainability perspective, her ‘*unity of action*’ (Ricoeur, 1992) draws on a spatial and temporal connection between her environment and social empowerment, as well as a discourse of inner growth. She seemingly tries to align personal values with her daily activities (where possible), and pays close attention to things that she buys (or produces), food she eats and the places she visits. Jane effortlessly mobilises her personal values in a tireless search for new and innovative socially-enabling opportunities:

“It’s not even work anyway, it’s a way you live. To me, running a social enterprise is in line with the way you live and your personal values [...] so it’s like a natural extension of personal values [...] I still do feel as I could do more, have more to do ...”

Jane’s ‘*uniqueness*’ (Ricoeur, 1992) is based on her ability to align new venture opportunities with her socially active persona. Her new ventures are catalysed by an inner, subconscious striving and recognition of the need for social change. Her agentic capability and fervour for doing more is spurred on by an aspiration to achieve, and not to stand still:

“I hope I don’t stagnate... I think as long, you know, that there is more to learn and then more questions to ask and other people know more, you can learn from them. And you’ll never stay the same really.”

The idea of stagnation represents fear of personal failure, and for most entrepreneurs (social or otherwise), the threat of new venture failure represents an ever-present danger (Cope, 2011). Jane also distinctly refers to the process of learning from and being with others, as her recipe for future (sustained) success.

Next, I will examine Louise’s background and narratives, noting the similarities to, and differences from, that of Jane.

6.4 Case 2 – ‘Louise’ (the carer)

Louise is a qualified social worker, traveller and social connector. She has been involved in the social sector since her teens, working with both adults and children who have to manage learning difficulties and disabilities, against a backdrop of homelessness (i.e. for such organisations as Barnardo’s), and was actively involved in a wide range of community projects and volunteering actions throughout her career. Her academic background is in social policy, further supported by managerial training and various business diplomas. Her experience amounts to over 36 years in social care in the UK and abroad, in countries including the USA, China, Zambia and Pakistan. Over the last 15 years she has been involved in the Redevelopment Neighbourhood Unit (RNU), holding the role of chief executive. Louise successfully transformed a deprived local community into a mutually supportive neighbourhood area, helping socially excluded groups of adults, teenagers and children. For her full background and biography, see Figure 6.2.

6.4.1 Case 2 - Louise’s pre-figurative narrative

Louise’s father (a former marine), was a colliery blacksmith, a mine worker intent upon sustaining the wellbeing of the family, whilst simultaneously caring for Louise’s mother – a woman suffering from chronic mental health issues. Louise’s emotional upbringing resulted in an inner acceptance of her fledgling identity as ‘a carer’. This realisation affected her future career choices⁵², invoking a life-long sense of commitment and caring for others (similar examples cited in Mallett and Wapshott 2011):

“Since I can remember, I was involved in the social sector; I was very young when I realised that I was a young carer. My mother, she had mental problems and in the beginning, I didn’t realise [...] You think that it’s just in like other kids’ homes. There were ‘good mummy’ days and ‘bad mummy’ days and I had to work out which day it was and act accordingly. And I suppose it must come from that really ...”

Louise wanted to care for individuals from a young age, and this affected both her view of life and her business activities (see Figure 6.2). Wealth creation wasn’t important

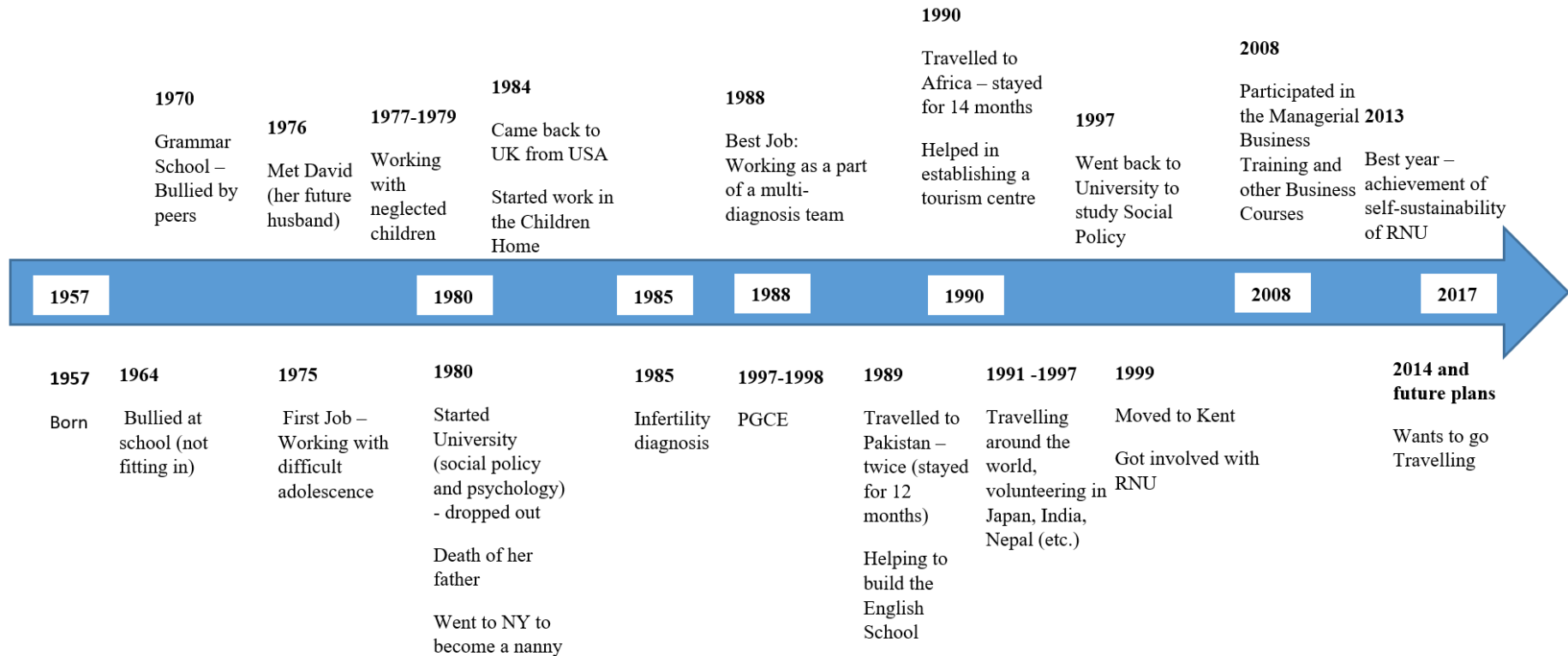
⁵² Psychological literature (see for example Stevens, 1996 or Wetherell, 1996) show that self-confirmative tendencies (such as Louise’s recognition as a young career) in the early years can strongly affect one’s sense of self, enabling achievement of full personal potential.

for Louise, whereas compassion and care for others were. Growing up, Louise didn't have much money, and her family often lived close to the 'bread-line', frequently having to scrimp and save to make ends meet:

“We didn't have much. Someone in the street had a TV, someone had a phone, and people would share. My first passport had in the application my friend's telephone number because we didn't have a phone, so that kind of life. We grew vegetables in the garden, we didn't go anywhere ...”

When Louise was young, neighbours frequently shared resources, and shared community living was necessary in order to get by in tough economic times. Louise realised the social and economic benefits of cooperatives from an early age. Neighbours and cooperatives would have been involved in community projects, from garden allotments to credit unions, and it is this early recognition of social resourcefulness, enabled through community action, that has impacted strongly on Louise. Her life choices were grounded in childhood experiences, and she reflected and believed that she always had an inner duty to help others. It is of little surprise, then, that her first job involved working in an assessment unit for vulnerable youngsters and individuals with learning difficulties.

Figure 10: Louise’s major life events timeline



Louise's own education was characterised by constant interruptions in order to care for her mother, which inevitably compromised her choices in terms of higher education. Many years later, after she finally succeeded in enrolling on her long-dreamed-of Social Policy and Psychology honours degree course, she had to abandon her plans when her father unexpectedly died. From an emotional perspective, her grief engendered a sense of personal fear and inner insecurity (Stevens, 1999). As she reflected, she believed the experience also generated strong sense of vulnerability in terms of her future action-making capabilities. However, a reflection upon the finite nature of life prompted a fresh start, marked by the beginning of a new career, fuelled by a continued dedication to help others:

“I have worked for 36 years in social care in this country and abroad (e.g. China, Pakistan, Zambia). I love people and I love my job more than anything in the world. Watching people grow and develop is such a wonderful thing.”

Interestingly, Louise was never professionally involved in any business other than the voluntary sector. She has been actively involved in helping socially excluded groups, vulnerable adults, individuals with learning difficulties and the homeless, working mostly in care centres, and with large charities (such as Barnardo's).

6.4.2 Louise's configuration and refiguration narratives

Louise's configuration narrative may not seem as diversified as Jane's, certainly in her early years. One of her initial remarks was based on her school-day experiences:

“... I remember [clothes-wise], I was being bullied at school, especially later on in grammar school in the 70s, because I didn't have nice clothes. And this made me suffer.”

Experiencing social exclusion engendered an unwelcome awareness of societal differences: it had a discernible effect on personal and professional decisions made throughout her life, and affected her inner sense of security. It affected daily routines and activities, as well as relationship-building and self-confidence. As a child, she never acknowledged social exclusion based on differences in social class or family income;

now, she admits it had an impact on her self-esteem and adulthood choices. Her pessimistic perceptions of self-appearance and low self-esteem agencise a negative totality⁵³ (Verhesschen, 2003). Today, she perceives herself as follows:

“I am not really very comfortable about me ... I am not very good with the ‘me’ thing ...”

Lack of self-confidence predominates in Louise’s stories and acts as a major factor impacting on her decision-making and self-acceptance, which suggests that her early experiences made it difficult to explore new identity meanings. Louise remained stuck in particular *frames of meaning* (Brown and Starke, 2000; Reissner, 2010) during her early career stages. Geographically, she moved around a great deal, searching for something new, never settling for long periods of time. From a configurative perspective (Ricoeur, 1992), the search for continuous change became her permanent action:

“I never wanted it to be like that. I don’t think that people should stay around too long [...] Because I think you always need fresh eyes, fresh breath, as everything is moving forward ...”

One of Louise’s most important personal self-realisation moments came when she received an unexpected infertility diagnosis. This had a huge impact on her life, further affecting her levels of self-esteem:

“It [work] was always around children. I found out by then [...] that I couldn’t have children biologically. And in those days, they couldn’t do anything about it, so... I got really, really upset... I always imagined myself being a mother one day, and that was taken away from me.”

Dramatic events can heavily impact personal life (Hamilton, 2006) but, in this case, they also affected Louise’s career development. Interestingly, when an individual is

⁵³ Negative totality reflects Louise’s holistic view of her identity; however, it does not reflect the high self-efficacy levels in performing tasks related to organisational progression.

struggling to make sense of an unexpected change, unintended behaviours can follow (Brown, 1997, Reissner, 2010). Louise notes:

“Gradually, as the time passed, I accepted the situation. And having always worked with the kids it seemed natural; I had none of my own but worked with thousands of them. But, you know, it’s all connected in life.”

Once she reached an acceptance of her diagnosis, she made a spontaneous decision to travel around the world (which might be perceived as a means of escaping reality). Of the many countries, she visited during that time, she talks most openly about the journey to Pakistan as the core source of her ‘*transformation*’. Louise was faced with unexpected and very transparent cultural differences, which re-invoked her childhood fears, and impacted once again upon her sense of social belonging. According to Louise’s interpretation of the story, her position in this new environment (as the only white female) carried many implications in the life of locals, which made her feel unsettled, unable to fit in, and at times, invoked a sense of guilt about who she was. When reflecting on these anxieties, many years later, Louise has recognised her behaviour as irrational and ironic, which shows the effects of an inner growth:

“There were some funny situations. I couldn’t get used to the food in the beginning, so the whole neighbourhood used to wait for the hen to lay an egg so the white lady can have something to eat at 7am in the morning. It made me feel really guilty and I adjusted ...”

Louise became a keen traveller, always relocating to avoid stagnation. And, while she moved from location to location, she continued in her quest to bring some form of change, maximising the social impact on the local communities. In hindsight, it seems that she was struggling with her personal avoidance issues; never ready to settle down, and therefore continuously looking for short-term goals. This allowed Louise to escape from her own emotions and personal difficulties, rather than making any serious attempts to overcome them. Louise admits to having learned significant lessons from travelling, allowing a self-confirmation of her true self (P3). She now interprets her past travels as a major (Ricoeurian’s configurative) aspect of her identity:

“... people there were amazing: many of them had absolutely nothing, but if they caught the fish, they would share with you. I learned a lot from them ... sense of belonging, sense of community really. It all comes together. The only way to understand the local people is to live their way, get to know the culture, and experience it.”

6.4.3 Louise’s reflections and coming to terms with life

Interestingly (and not unlike Jane’s view of herself) Louise never thought of herself as a leader, nor saw herself in any type of structured, managerial role. She perceived herself as a person lacking in leadership skills and having low self-efficacy levels with regards to a leadership role (Bandura 2008). Louise stresses that it was not hunger for career development, but rather a love of the job, that brought her to Kent:

“The reason I came here, to Kent, was for love ... I finished off my dissertation which was on [the topic of] the mutual involvement of people. Finished that off, a job came up for a manager of community centre ... there was nothing here, no carpets, no tables, no chairs, just an empty shell.”

Once Louise settled in Kent, she developed a wide range of social and professional relationships within the RNU, and derived a greater stability from an increased acceptance of who she was becoming, as well as the move itself:

“And I think partially that is why I am now still here. It was never a plan but now it’s my family.”

She nevertheless retained a zeal for travel, and always felt that she could at any time. This is a configurative tension that forms a key part of Ricoeurian (1992) analysis; as life changes, being able to move and travel for Louise is an option, but not one she feels she must act on immediately.

6.4.4 Refigurative narrative and Louise’s unity of experiences

Louise’s refigurative narratives emphasise her caring predisposition, unified through a stream of social activities, life journeys and various social enterprise efforts. She

recognises the interplay between her past, present and future sense of life's journey; the so-called hermeneutic cycle of mimesis (Ricoeur, 1992):

“All the travelling that I have done, various social jobs I had, it all comes together. So, when you get to 50 you know who you are by then, you know what you want and what you expect.”

Louise's self-awareness impacts the re-figurative (or re-conceptualisation) processes enabling self-interpretation from a widened perspective (adding to my P3). As suggested by Cottle and Klineberg (1974) and Cunliffe *et al.* (2004) the way in which the individual experiences a sense of temporality is largely dependent upon age and the ability to self-reflect. Louise (in her late 50s) clearly identifies with a relationship-oriented (or people-oriented) management style, as she reflects upon her achievements as a leader. She stresses:

“I am a natural bridge builder. Contractor. Connecting people, a connector. So, my management style is based on relationships.”

Nevertheless, Louise has rarely remained in one place for a long period of time, and instead yearned for new life experiences. Constantly making strong, tangible impacts on disadvantaged social groups wherever she went was the manifestation of a strong *unity of purpose*, irrespective of her geographical location (Ricoeur, 1991). She reflects:

“I just pottered around. When the new door has opened, I just jumped through it. There was never any plan. You have to have an open mind and open heart; you've got to trust yourself with your decisions. If it goes wrong – there's another lesson learned. I like learning from my mistakes. Had I not taken some of those opportunities, I probably would not be doing what I am doing now. You never know what is waiting on the next corner. What I brought to my life was that kind of experience, those different things I've done in my life.”

Louise associates her life choices with the unexpectedness of opportunities, in tandem with autonomy of choice. This demonstrates clear similarities with facets of an

entrepreneurial personality, and invites the notion of intentionality of action, making Louise fully accountable for her behaviour. Her journey towards independence was evidently shaped by presuppositions with regard to social values and beliefs: however, upon the cessation of her frequent travels, and having secured, in her relationship with her husband, a new sense of stability, she achieved a sense of consistency in her behaviour, and new organisational success. Although admitting to a lack of an initial plan, all her career choices were positioned within the social sector. Hungry for change, she moved between various social community settings, feeling powerfully positioned by virtue of her experiences, and able to extend her practical knowledge to others:

“I think the only style I’ve got is: do as you would be done by. Which is my whole religion, and it’s right really.”

She retrospectively admits to having limited business knowledge, and has continuously relied upon other like-minded people to help her run the organisations, while actively participating in knowledge-exchange schemes to achieve further personal growth:

“It may sound a bit irresponsible really, but I don’t know how to do all of the business things. And I admit to my lack of knowledge, looking for other ways [...] I don’t need to be the best in everything. I don’t need to be a good invoice person, and that is what happens here really.”

By accepting and recognising her limitations, Louise is able to concentrate on ways to achieve maximum social impact. She relates features of the organisation to her personal attributes and emotions, and sees legal structures as broadly comparable to her place in the family (where she plays a parental, leading role). Retaining close relationships with employees (or followers) and service users has placed Louise firmly within the organisational culture, and she is perceived by peers and associates as the core pillar of the organisation’s existence, without which the venture would not survive. Louise’s story reflects a multiplicity of changes to her identity in order to understand herself: she can now relax and even laugh about fearing rejection based on who she is; her theoretical feeling of reaching peace with herself is her ‘*sensemaking outcome*’ (Reissner, 2010). She suspects her future will see potential conflict between education and further travel, and is

cognisant of the fact that she will one day need to retire and hand over to a newer generation; a prospect she finds unsettling (or even threatening) in relation to the organisational and community well-being:

“In terms of the future, this is difficult for me, because this is my family. I can’t leave them.”

In summary, then, there exists in this case study some evidence for P3 and P4, albeit to a lesser degree than was evident with Jane. In the final case study, we consider a subject who is admittedly more commercially-minded than the others (and who, of course, is male).

6.5 Case 3 – ‘Jack’, founder/managing director (the businessman)

In terms of a background synopsis, Jack has been involved in the health sector for over 20 years. He joined the NHS in 1995, working as a service developer in various PCTs (Primary Care Trusts) in the area. His academic background evolved from a degree in sport and physiology, and he undertook a postgraduate diploma in health education, supported by further education in health and business management. Feeling the pressure of the target-driven structure, he left the NHS in 2010 and took responsibility for one of the most transparent community-driven NHS spin-offs in the county, employing over 1,000 people (making them the largest non-public employer in the area). His interests cover wide areas of sustainable development and health service provision on an international level.

6.5.1 Prefiguration: simply a hard-headed businessman – or does he have social values too?

A self-proclaimed commercially-oriented businessman at heart, Jack comes from a strong commercial and manufacturing background (reflected throughout his early childhood memories). The values of hard work, fairness and personal enterprise are an important part of his childhood recollection:

“When I think about it now, my parents were not philanthropic at all. Neither of them. They had a strong manufacturing background and were very commercially-oriented – probably more my father – but they were both very value-driven at the same time. And that’s probably where my values come from, the fairness approach.”

Interestingly, Jack self-refers as an average young man lacking in any particularly noteworthy characteristics:

“I was born in Essex ... Normal kid, nothing really special about my upbringing.”

However, it is evident that Jack’s sense of individuality evolved according to his early social experiences and family expectations:

“Me and my sister were always treated in the same way, same expectations. I’ve been learning about justice constantly while growing up. But then, there was sort of a nature and nurture driving me, while also realising things along the way.”

The dualism of the business/commercial focus, combined with notions of fairness⁵⁴ and social justice, is a reoccurring theme in Jack’s reflections of his life stories. It is emphasised in all aspects of his life – family, work, hobbies and health:

“[...] I’d say I always have been commercially focused, like my parents, but the values must have been quite strong; always there. Because, ethically, and this fits quite well, it allows me to make money, but it goes to the greater cause rather than individual.”

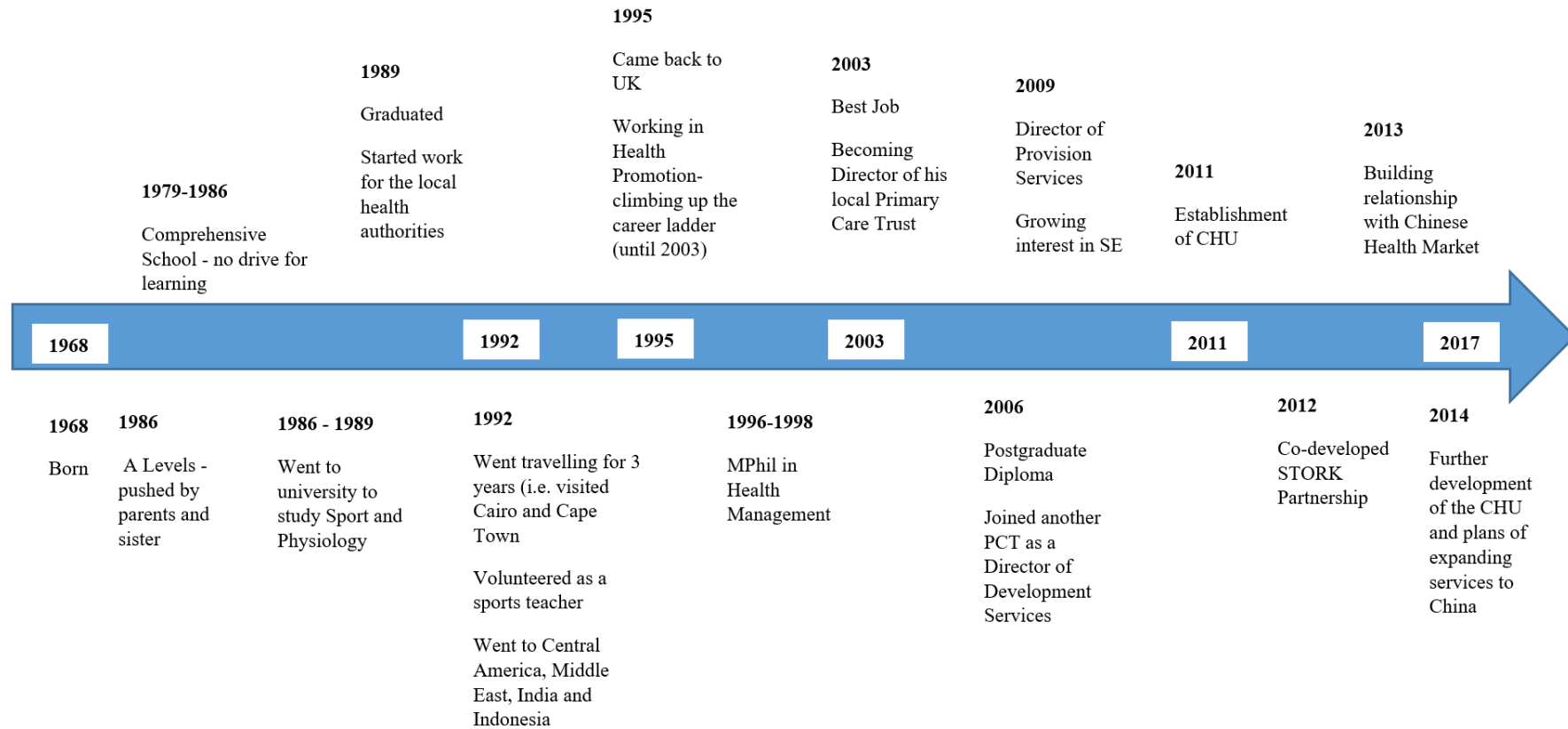
Inherited values had a tangible impact on Jack’s life choices throughout his education and his career in the healthcare sector. Individuals often develop a longer-term

⁵⁴ Fairness (from an economical perspective) is usually defined as ‘following the rules’. Philips (1997) offers a more explicit definition: *“Whenever persons or groups of persons voluntarily accept the benefits of a mutually beneficial scheme of co-operation requiring sacrifice or contribution on the parts of the participants and there exists the possibility of freeriding, obligations of fairness are created among the participants in the co-operative scheme in proportion to the benefits accepted.”* (Philips, 1997, p. 57)

professional identity, based upon a combination of archetypal values in the workplace such as fairness, honesty, directness (Ibarra, 1999). Despite self-referring as a commercially-oriented person, Jack also emphasised the importance of fairness and equality as an enduring part of his ‘*idem*’ identity:

“I have strong value in fairness and in equality, always have had. It doesn’t mean that things have to be equal but there needs to be some fairness in how the distribution occurs.”

Figure 11: Jack's major life events timeline



6.5.2 Businessman versus a socio-preneurial configuration

Jack's configuration story differs significantly from the previous cases. As a commercially-driven person, his configurative identity develops as his career progressed in the public sector. In Jack's storytelling, his first configurative reflections are associated with feelings of annoyance at the closure of his comprehensive school:

“I went to [an] enormous comprehensive school [...] which was quite rough. It wasn't educationally-minded at all, which bothered me. [...] It was huge, it soon closed down because it just never met the criteria. It was one of the first schools that closed in Essex for educational reasons.”

The lack of educational attainment for himself and his peers negatively affected Jack's career path and aspirations:

“I think in my year, when we'd finished 'O' levels maybe four or five of us were doing 'A' levels. Out of the whole 200 [...] That's when I realised that there was no career; there was no educational drive for me. The reality was daunting. Universities were never even spoken about at my school.”

Jack made a self-confessed minimal effort towards learning, which manifested an institutional disobedience – an unusual shift of behaviour given his family background. This shows the magnitude of peer pressure, as well as the effects of the shared lack of ambition among pupils at school. Jack's parents took pains to address his aversion to education, and asked that he at least consider a stable path of career development. Family interactions created a base for a kaleidoscope of social patterns (Wetherell, 1996) which affected his future educational journey. The social conventions (in regards to educational expectations) within his family required Jack to apply to university, regardless of his own plans:

“So eventually I have done my 'A' levels, pushed by my parents and my older sister. I wasn't very convinced but I applied to (Canterbury) university.”

Admitting that higher education was at the bottom of his personal priorities at the time, Jack was faced with various types of undergraduate degrees available and was therefore feeling unable to make a decision that would satisfy both him and his parents. He confesses to choosing an easy and safe option⁵⁵ in the hope of gaining parental approval. At this stage, he encountered first major internal conflict in relation to his prospective future, which had an impact on the subsequent creation of his narrative. He stresses a relationship between his initial inability to reach inner satisfaction, with the choices that he felt compelled to make:

“And I went do my degree and I was sort of torn between doing economics or sports. I chose the easier option and I’ve done sports.”

After completing his degree, Jack made the decision to travel, which resulted in an unexpected twist to his presupposed life journey. Jack views this choice as the beginning of his newly-discovered independent self, having previously had trouble defining who he was within confining social frames. He faced once again the perplexity of his choices, reflected by an internal struggle and the suppression of his inner emotions. This is a very common scenario in the configuration phase, where the subject is experiencing new senses of ‘self’ through the development of new stories (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011). For the first time, Jack was fully accountable for his own decisions rather than relying on collective peer pressure to influence his choices in accordance with social expectations:

“I went travelling for a good two to three years. I needed a break. I started with a single, one-way ticket to get to Cairo, and travelled around Africa to get to Cape Town. So, that took just over a year. It was a fascinating journey, I think it opens your eyes to different cultures, different ways of doing normal things. I’ve learned a lot about relations with people, I’ve seen traumas, poverty, but also willingness to survive. I became independent very quickly. Because I had to.”

⁵⁵ Jack believed that a degree in sports would be a means of reaching a compromise with his family. He always enjoyed being active, and therefore believed that it would be an easy way of completing a degree, making it a safe option for career development.

Indisputably, travel has impacted upon Jack's sense of stability, shaping a fundamental layer of his professional development. Experimentation with different social settings (or structures) allows reconciliation of challenges shaping one's character (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011). Throughout his journey, Jack has acquired a range of transferable skills valuable to his personal development and to his growing hunger for success (to the satisfaction of his anticipating parents). Swiftly, he became an independent adult with vast practical experience in the pursuit of social justice and fairness, reflecting his early upbringing. Jack highlights his travels as a critical point during his life journey, allowing him to become responsive to innovation, gaining abilities and achieving goals in non-traditional ways. Currently, he utilises those skills on a daily basis while running his social venture, creating a platform for innovative solutions, based on relationships of acceptance and trust between his employees and other stakeholders.

Jack's most recognisable self-realisation (configuration) moment came when he encountered a need to achieve better efficiency in terms of running the public health organisations. Despite numerous ambiguities with his plan, he decided to take an enormous risk and drive one of the largest socio-entrepreneurial transitions in the area, which transpired to be one of his most significant successes (P3). However, when he talks about the transitional journey (which he perceives as the most demanding initiative in his lifetime), there is a slight trace of feeling undervalued. These inconsistent feelings could be triggered by Jack's problematic attitude to success which has stemmed from early childhood. Therefore, he feels more secure when attributing achievements to collaborative action of peers rather than his own, despite being the main driver of success:

"I started to look up some options, because obviously, policies came through the roof for different organisations, back with the Conservatives. So, we had to learn to split the provider and the commissioning function. And then I had some decisions to make which made it a bit of both [...] and that's where I really started to understand the SE model. Until then I was pretty naive and there was the term I heard, but not given too much attention or looked into."

From a semantic perspective, the transition between expressions of 'I' and 'we' shows Jack's vulnerable attitude to success – which is an important factor of his

configurative processes – as he portrays himself as unworthy of taking any substantial credit for mutual achievements. His initial positive expectations became overshadowed by a pre-existing fear of failure, which takes the hermeneutics of his narrative (in a circular motion) back to his educational problems in childhood.

6.5.3 Refigurative wholeness of Jack’s (business) actions

Jack, as a successful businessman, consultant and social entrepreneur, made a perceptible difference in his local area. He defines himself as a natural leader and enabler, which reflects his ‘achiever’ attributes emanating from childhood. As a founder of the largest (and most successful public spin-off) social enterprise in Kent (employing over 1,200 staff), Jack gives the impression of being extremely confident in his management style; he possesses vast, detailed knowledge (based on his experience) of not only his own organisation, but the social sector as a whole. His desire for continuity in business succession widens his areas of interest by active involvement in various healthcare organisations and social ventures as an expert advisor, board member or partner. Jack supports the growth of befriended (smaller) organisations through collaborative projects and an operational knowledge exchange. He understands the weight of his impact on, and level of involvement in social activities, allowing himself a partially retrospective reflection on his succession journey and its drive:

“I think I’ve always had in me the drive to try and succeed. So, it’s that and I think it goes back to values is that this organisation, if it fails, it’s not just letting down a small group of people ...”

Devotion to his work, and detailed professional knowledge associated with sectoral changes (and uniqueness of diversified employee needs in the emerging forms of hybrid organisations), have made Jack a recognisable and trusted figure in healthcare. Employees perceive him primarily as businessman: a strong and natural leader⁵⁶ with a

⁵⁶ Early definition of the leader (as suggested in LR) comes from Rice (1965, p. 20) stressing the importance of attracting followers and making decisions on their behalf, but also inspiring them (Khaleelee and Woolf, 1996). Leading others involves an individual being able to conceptualise the vision (*ibid.*) and become a mediator of this vision, able to communicate his ideas to others (and realise them real through providing a sense of authority). As a successor in the organisational transition, Jack attracts others to follow.

visible sense of dominance, striving for the organisational change and rapid growth that corresponds to his self-awareness. During the spin-off and the transition from public to voluntary sector, the vast majority of employees championed Jack's decisions, remaining loyal to him as a leader, which resulted in their employment within the newly-formed organisational framework. Interestingly, the success of this transition in the eyes of those associated with the venture is articulated in terms of Jack's leadership skills, shaping his public image as an integral part of the organisation. However, Jack seems reluctant to implement such structured leadership plans for the future which would be traditionally expected within the field:

“I don't really have a plan. I will see the opportunities and look at things as they arise. There are still things that I want to do here. I want to get CHU into quite a strong sustainable position. I am on the way to that but want to make it even stronger before I do anything.”

Jack is extremely work-oriented. His attitude is based on existing predispositions to act, think, and make decisions with regard to his status, current role and organisational position (Watson, 1995 in Wetherell, 1996, p. 263). Although he claims to be socially-minded, with a focus on social values (especially the fairness approach), he admits to a shift in identity focus, allowing dedication towards operationalisation (as a means of social success):

“My focus changed; it's gone much more to the business side.”

This shift can be observed throughout Jack's lifespan. Once he achieved the early social objectives of his hybrid venture (set during the foundation stage), his social identity transformed, allowing further hunger (or drive) for success in contexts other than social. Jack became an integral component of the venture (or, if preferred, the venture became an integral part of Jack's being), adding to my P4. It could be assumed that his credibility is associated with a personal search for accomplishment. Jack appears to possess great knowledge and expertise within the field. This allows him to make swift transitions from personal questions to wider generalisations by drawing parallels with the business world. He appears to be adept at talking about finance, marketing strategies and operational

management associated (traditionally) with his private ventures, while avoiding personal remarks on his achievements – which inevitably makes it challenging for others to establish a real knowledge of his character.

Jack's persistence in maintaining a commercial approach to socially-oriented ventures allowed the start-up to reach financial sustainability, which has been one of its greatest achievements. Jack, as a candid businessman, values working in relationships and collaborations with other individuals and businesses, believing that success in social enterprise is akin to success in fully-functioning commercial ventures. The simplicity of his self-identification reinforces his narrative as fundamentally a businessman, with corresponding social values:

“I am not an activist ... I'm a business man.”

Although his career went through a stage of rapid acceleration, he remains modest, advancing a belief that this was due to luck, and perhaps the exploitation of opportunities, rather than self-involvement and hard work:

“I shaped my career through pretty accelerated learning and being in the deep end. But again, I've been given opportunities to be appointed.”

His expectations of prospective narrative are associated with growth potential and expanding the service provision to new markets. However, when asked for alternative future perspectives, he turns again to his time spent travelling, the sense of values in his 'pastness', and associated difficulties in his initial career choices:

“If I wasn't part of the sector I would go to work for a limited company, but it would have to be one with a strong social purpose. It couldn't be at one where external stakeholders control what's being done. I'd travel probably.”

This retrospective understanding associated with an alternative future closes the virtuous circle of Ricoeurian 'hermeneutic discovery' (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011) and

suggests that fundamental identity attributes are associated with critical events, allowing re-interpretation of action and understanding significant for future identity references.

6.6 Who are the SEEs in Chapter 6? – an agentic perspective

The Ricoeurian mimetic enables informant self-reflection and provokes a self-reflexive understanding of a '*truer social self*'. From the above analysis, I now consider the human agentic qualities associated with P3 and P4. Among the SEE definitions (already explored in Chapter 2), Dees' (1998) rationale is perhaps the one most appropriate in taking this section forward:

“Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value: this is the core of what distinguishes social entrepreneurs from business entrepreneurs even from socially responsible businesses. For a social entrepreneur, the social mission is fundamental” (Dees, 1998, p. 5).

From the case studies, it is evident that social entrepreneurs are individuals fulfilling their life missions (like Jane and Louise) and are driven by either (conscious and intentional) choices (e.g. Bornstein and Davies, 2010), or by intuition. Their behaviour is influenced by strong social values embedded in their upbringing and fuelled by need to seek more innovative solutions to social problems (like Jack) by mobilising their community and resources (e.g. Dhese, 2010). In the following sections, I interpret P3 and P4, as well as agentic qualities of the case subjects, from the informants' own perspective and from those who are closest to them.

6.6.1 Jane: the 'contributor' social entrepreneur

Jane is a devoted mother, raising her daughter in an environmentally-friendly manner reflecting her own vegan choice of lifestyle. Friends and relatives refer to her as the key actor in the local vegan community, who manifests her views through an expansive range of local initiatives. She remains actively involved in promoting local wellbeing schemes, focusing on pursuits of green developments. Her '*who I am*' moment (observed in Section 6.3.5) allowed the re-interpretation and re-creation of her inner understanding of self-

demonstrating openness in characterising her identity attributes, while remaining faithful to her own beliefs:

“I wouldn't say I'm not a social entrepreneur but I'm more ... I think it's more of the campaigning side for me now really [...] I think the campaigner, social and environmental activist, community activist, a community connector. Trying to get the others just to see, come around ...”

Jane focuses on social actions leading to changing peoples' lives. Her business thinking leans towards searching for creative solutions, enabling the pursuit of long-term intentions and social goals. As a successful SEE, she relies greatly on her business-savvy husband, who provides the support necessary to maintain a sense of business stability:

“He [husband] comes from the business [background]; he still understands stuff much better than I do, he is so clear with figures and things. You know, taxes, insurances [...] Whereas, I naturally get stuff to write, write it down or make a report ...”

Her husband's complementary set of business skills counteracts Jane's lack of interest in business and marketing *per se*. She continually focuses on social value creation:

“I don't go away. I'm quite persistent. [...] I think the way to achieve something is through social action when you want to do something, make something happen in a physical way, like a project ...”

Jane strongly manifests her sense of belonging within the social sector through determinism, which is reflected in the continuity of her activist behaviour. Throughout her life story, she represents primarily philanthropic identity characteristics that serve as natural drivers of her agentic role as an SE leader. She is perceived (by peers and co-workers) as a hardworking, enthusiastic and dynamic individual with a clear vision of fulfilling her (self-aspired) social duty:

Eve: “*Dictating but friendly.*”

James: “*Yes, very dictating but very focused. Sometimes irritating [...] She is enthusiastic, manages to well motivate people, certainly she has managed to motivate me when I was doubting how to get the project started. She is very dynamic.*”

James: “*Yes, very hardworking, totally committed and in general a really nice person which always helps.*”

Mark: “*She’s got a traceable record of success and that’s important [...] she is very committed to her beliefs and when she believes strongly in something, that’s a bonus, not really for her own benefit either, but for the whole.*”

Eve: “*She is the one with the mission, she lives the mission.*”

These collective perceptions of Jane’s identity characteristics correspond with her own reflections of ‘*self*’. When asked about her role in managing the organisation, other informants were unanimous in relation to her unequivocal embeddedness in the social projects: moreover, they stressed Jane’s openness towards collaborative approaches to running the organisation as cardinal in providing a traceable record of success.

6.6.2 Louise: a social entrepreneurial hybrid

Louise has a predisposition to care. She has worked in the voluntary sector for over 36 years, always driven by altruistic attitudes which have propelled her work towards social change. She is known currently for her work in revolutionising one of the most deprived areas in the county. For nearly 15 years she has been facilitating change within the local area through the development of innovative solutions for the local community centre, achieving tangible results in terms of crime reductions and improvements of well-being in local communities. She made a transition from a social worker to a socially-driven, altruistic business-woman with a hunger for self-actualisation in the operational sphere. Her desire to connect individuals – and connect *with* individuals – formed an essential part of her narrative. In the interviews, she strongly self-identified as a natural bridge-builder, a conduit for change:

“I am a natural bridge-builder. Contractor. Connecting people, a connector. So, my management style is based on relationships. [...] I’m a bridge between individuals’ skills and organisations, and between organisations and people. Between different kinds of people of all ages.”

Louise was markedly reluctant to choose a single label to express herself (through the process of self-applying an identity status). Initially, she portrayed herself as lacking confidence (which is in line with her early life journey experiences); however, as the life story builds, she starts to portray herself as a powerful and confident driving force. She uses multiple nouns to maximise the intensity of her intended meaning and, via the bridge-builder analogy, endorses the importance of synergic attributes (linking social and commercial) to her leadership style:

“It may sound a bit irresponsible really, but I don’t know how to do all of the business things. And I admit to my lack of knowledge, looking for other ways ...”

Louise highlights social network reliance as the cardinal method by which she has achieved success, while admitting to an initial lack of fundamental business skills (expected in such a shifting industry). Louise explicitly emphasises the value of collaborations within a social network that includes her employees, members of the public, friends and family. She dedicates herself to attracting collaborators outside of her ‘comfort zone’, enabling further resource exploitation vital for the venture’s wellbeing. Interestingly, now a ventures manager, she still does not self-identify, nor refer to herself, as a businesswoman:

“I’ve never been in business in my life and I’ve been working for 38 years now.”

The only business associations she made were in relation to leadership courses, which enabled her to gain a greater knowledge of operational management, and made her feel more comfortable running the organisation.

6.6.3 Jack: public sector socio-preneur

Jack is a successful businessman, consultant and socially-oriented entrepreneur, who has made a perceptible difference to public service delivery in the South East. His venture is run on behalf of the local community by a team of staff, and trades for the social benefit of the area. He perceives himself as a natural leader and enabler. Jack identifies a lack of common knowledge with regard to understanding the ‘appropriate’ (in his opinion) characteristics of the social entrepreneur. He promotes a need for a wider association of SEE identity with business acumen. However, when asked to position himself against socio-entrepreneurial terminology he had difficulty in self-identification. A natural sense of fear regarding rhetorical self-classification using pre-paradigmatic terminology provoked the emergence of re-configurative processes allowing self-reflection:

“I am not an activist ... I think with social entrepreneurship, the problem with the term is that is quite soft. So, if you say that someone is a social entrepreneur, I think it’s gaining credence, but I know some people involved in social enterprises and it’s like we have no business acumen or we’ve got no contractual, legal knowledge whatsoever. So, I still describe myself as some of that, but I’m a businessman, really, just running a company – but my values are different to private organisations.”

Jack joined the NHS in 1995, and worked for over 15 years as a service developer for PCTs in various regions of the South East. He successfully climbed the career ladder, securing various managerial positions in front-line service provision and commissioning. However, feeling the pressure of such a target-driven structure, he decided to leave, and took the helm of one of the most transparent NHS and community-driven spin-offs in the county, which itself became a significant employer.

Boyett (1996) suggests that environmental uncertainty leads to entrepreneurial activity (in relation to the public sector) as it is accompanied by a forceful shift from a monopoly in service provision towards a quasi-market system allowing multiplicity in contracting. Jack has throughout his career experienced dynamic changes to the healthcare sector, which have made him more sensitive to new opportunities. In the meantime, he has continuously upgraded his qualifications, undertaking various training sessions in

business and health education, as well as achieving a range of diplomas within the health industry. This has enhanced his expertise and his understanding of the sector, which in turn has ensured enhanced competence, and consistency in terms of career development. He is a career-driven individual, strongly focused on work, with a particular interest in economics and finances corresponding with commercial identity attributes:

“I do a lot of leading from the front; coming up with ideas and driving them through in the early stage, before I can hand them over.”

Devotion to work and detailed knowledge, associated with the sectoral changes and uniqueness of employee needs within the hybrid organisation, made Jack a recognisable and trusted figure in healthcare. Employees perceive him foremost as a businessman: a strong and natural leader with an appreciable sense of dominance, striving for organisational change and rapid growth. During the spin-off and the transition from the public to the voluntary sector, the majority of employees decided to remain within the newly-formed organisational framework, and follow Jack’s lead, through turbulent changes. There is a clear parallel in terms of Jack’s identity characteristics, between the views articulated by his peers, and his own rationale:

Mary: *“He’s very much for the teams and their needs. He is giving us the voice.”*

Jane: *“He is the main drive. I would hope it’s mutual, but probably he is the one who drives the whole thing ... he has a lot of the business knowledge, taking us to the other areas. I don’t think that a lot of other directors have the same knowledge as he does. He’s in his own band.”*

Sarah: *“I’d say I find that he is very knowledgeable about strategic business; he’s working hard to get more business.”*

Kay: *“I think he is much more innovative than normal NHS chief execs, if you like. So, he has more flexibility.”*

Jack's commercial approach to running the social venture allowed him to realise organisational financial sustainability as a truthful businessman, who valued relationships and collaborations with other individuals and businesses, and believed that a truly successful social venture is a fully functioning commercial business.

Boyett (1996) proposed a definition of the public-sector entrepreneur with the emphasis placed very much on a desire for self-satisfaction (this has been widely observed throughout Jack's narrative). The public-sector entrepreneur is therefore perceived as a hard-working individual, hungry for a sense of independence and autonomy (*ibid.*). Although Jack does not use terminology related to public entrepreneurship, his self-identification excerpt indicates the duality of his personal agency as a businessman, with added strong social values:

“So, we're working on a purely commercial basis, but again it generates money back into [the organisation] which then we use for philanthropic purposes. [...] I'm a businessman, really just running a company, but my values are different to private organisations. [...] I am quite involved [in the local area] but on a very social basis, supporting some of the causes there, the social activities.”

Jack (typical of the commercially-oriented individual), separates his work activities from his personal life (applying only the same value set to each). He refers to his innovative techniques in operating synergic social business as 'somewhat risky', but evolutionary in terms of maintaining the growth and stability of the venture: something many of his employees express as tied to his individual entrepreneurial abilities (and predispositions).

6.7 Chapter 6 summary

In this chapter, I analyse and compare three very different SEE narratives (Jane's, Louise's and Jack's) from a Ricoeurian (1984) perspective. I investigate how the individual's identity relates to social norms, structures and forms (Creed et al., 2002; *ibid.*), and is shaped by social interaction between the individual and his/her surrounding social environment (e.g. social groups, culture, society) (Down and Warren, 2008). Of

course, personal identity can also be linked to an individual's unique system of thinking, future intent and career-related behavioural patterns (Hamilton, 2006; Millis, 2006). Nevertheless, establishing an individual's socio-entrepreneurial identity remains problematic due to the complex interweave of their life stories, personal values, beliefs and overall career ambitions. The use of Ricoeurian narratives contributes to existing socio-entrepreneurial literature by offering an enhanced socially constructed, and interpretative understanding of socio-entrepreneurial identity; a necessary fundament for exploring the (social and commercial) plurality of meaning – from the individual perspective of each SEE.

The process of understanding SEE narratives in this study follows the Ricoeurian notion of “temporal unity (understood) as a whole, unifying actions, circumstances, interactions, and all intended as well as the unintended consequences” (Ricoeur, 1984, p. 9). Mimetic processes in SEE, as demonstrated in this chapter, offer a spatiotemporal perspective on narrative meanings (Ricoeur, 1991a; Cunliffe, 2011). This creates a consistency in meaning across narratives that can be read, understood and then interpreted in various (organisational and personal) contexts at various times (*ibid.*). This approach supports the reflexivity of the three SEEs (Jane, Louise and Jack), accounting for their temporal actions. It dictates that sensemaking processes should take into consideration both subjective and objective experiences (Cunliffe, 2011) related to both personal and professional life. Therefore, the Ricoeurian (spatiotemporal) element of the research process – through the use of personal timelines – permits a multiplicity of narrative interpretations (*ibid.*), significantly enriching the existing understanding of SEE characteristics.

This use of Ricoeurian mimetic processes provides a robust framework for understanding the dichotomy of SEE identity orientations, i.e. social/altruistic and commercial/operational, adding to the scope of the SEG in Chapter 5. It also creates novel interpretations through mediation between the three aspects of analysis, i.e. prefigurative, configurative and refigurative (Ricoeur, 1984). This is in response to RQ2, demonstrating how the individual narratives of Jane, Louise and Jack contribute to the dynamics of SEE identity (Foss, 2004). This approach considers the question of ‘who’, by examining how their life journeys have contributed to a sense of personal mission, and also, to the organisational purpose of the venture.

Firstly, I employ the prefiguration approach in relation to the SEEs' 'world of action' (Nankov, 2014), based on pre-narrative beliefs, actions and resources, where pre(con)figurative knowledge is reconciled with previous experiences (Ricoeur, 1984). This process focuses upon pre-existing philanthropic/altruistic or commercial predispositions, social participation, and the relationships and meaning-making associated with past social experiences. Jane's case, for example, demonstrates a nascent, altruistic behaviour, reflective of part of her early life journey, and consistent throughout her biographical narrative. The examples of her prefigurative narrative are mostly evident from early childhood memories of her philanthropic mother, and quasi-inherited drive to support social causes, demonstrating Ricoeurian 'semantics' of societal norms, expectations and experiences.

The next stage of analysis – known as configuration (Ricoeur, 1984) – focuses on the 'present' being of the SEEs, manifested through a reflexive understanding of poignant life events, namely the critical turning points (i.e. travels, new jobs, changes in life circumstances) and its meaning in relation to 'self' (P4). Analysis of each case during the configuration stage brings to light a number of contradictions of opposing narratives, which in fact alters pre-existing understanding. For example, in Louise's case, her travels, which prove to be the main source of her inner transformation, ultimately push her out of her former 'frames of meaning'. These antagonistic views are associated with the unexpectedness of life events, particularly when a dogged adherence to pre-established values (and beliefs) is verified by life events (i.e. her trip to New York following her father's death, or later on in life, her trip to Pakistan). The analysis in the chapter demonstrates configuration as focused on reformative (Ezzy, 1998), polyphonic (rather than linear) processes, shaping the multiplicity of narrative understanding, and allowing interplay between actors and situations. In Louise's case, configuration played a vital role as it synthesised her narrative (Ricoeur, 1991). Consequently, it can be suggested that configuration creates new meaning, while drawing on both shared and individual experiences (Cunliffe, 2011), bringing meaningfulness to lived stories based on self-interpretations. In summary, this chapter represents a key stage in the mapping of social realities of SEEs and demonstrates real connections between their social understandings and the entrepreneurial intuition of which they are a part.

The ‘who I am’ moment – often described as a unifying process, closing the circle of self-interpretation – arises in all three cases during refigurative analysis. This is often understood as the ‘reading ourselves’ moment, allowing sensemaking of experiences (ibid.). In Jack’s narrative, for example, this is evident through the self-realisation that his business attitude is in fact an intrinsic part of ‘who he is’, and therefore, ever-present throughout his life journey. In line with P3, this self-realisation enables the multiplicity of sensemaking – through a retrospective understanding of self in the present and the future – and the re-signification of reality with new possibilities and SE opportunities (Gregor, 2005). Based on configurative analysis of each of the three case studies, it becomes clear that the ‘who I am’ analysis assists in establishing a sense of uniqueness in relation to configurative organisational challenges. Furthermore, it demonstrates the fluid (yet paradoxical) nature of disparate personal narratives depicting a fresh understanding of the SEEs’ behaviours (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011), offering a novel contribution to existing identity literature in the socio-entrepreneurial field.

The third and final stage of Ricoeurian mimesis is the refigurative analysis (Ricoeur, 1984) of SEEs. This approach enables re-interpretation and re-creation of self-understanding, with continual references to the past, where ‘representations of SEEs’ pastness’ are linked to present social actions (Tonkin 1992; Hamilton, 2006), allowing closure of the mimetic circle. This is most transparent in Jane’s narratives, where her unified self remains true to the personal values and acts as an inner driver of sustainability. In fact, her values prove to be the driving force for her lifelong activism mission, portraying not only mimetic closure, but also her agentic powers. In line with P4, then, I suggest that sustainability is indeed a lifetime function of SEEs, enhanced by an interplay between both the ‘changing’ self (ipse) identity, and the constant, ‘same’ self (idem) throughout their life journeys. As a result, the ‘ipse-idem’ plotment discussed in this chapter allows exploration of the sense of time and self, informing future SEE pre-narratives (Mallett and Wapshott, 2011). Put simply, it has an impact upon the prospective choices, and identification of arising SE opportunities, relevant to SEEs’ values and characteristics.

In summary, it is evident from these mimetic analyses that the agentic action of SEEs influences their (social and institutional) environments (Bandura, 2001). Therefore, the consistency of SEE behaviours and their patterns of actions – especially Jane’s – demonstrate sustainability as a lifetime function of SE leaders (P4). The ability to adopt

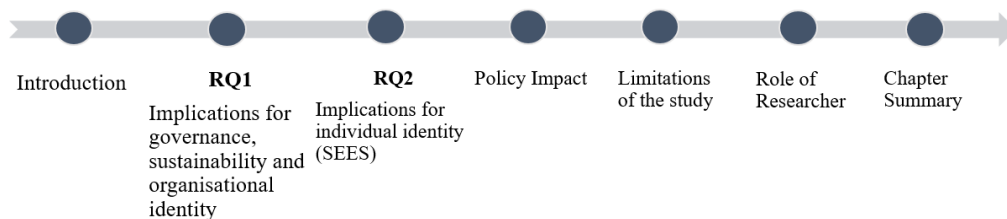
multiple roles as required for each life situation – whether personal or professional – helps to broaden the understanding of one’s truthfulness to core values and therefore helps to build upon an individual’s self-legitimising processes. In addition, it can be seen that self-reflective SEE characteristics discussed in this chapter are often embedded in the SE structure, with the ‘agentic self’ commonly emerging from personal past experiences. Through the chapter analysis it becomes clear that the process of learning from past events (especially critical points such as setbacks and mistakes) is effectively the only way for SEEs to learn how to operate a successful SE (Birdthistle, 2006, p. 554). Therefore, the conceptualisation of SEE identity in this chapter is based on human action, public and personal social interactions, and sectoral tensions.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The role of my discussion chapter is firstly to highlight key findings from Chapters 5 and 6, in terms of implications for *theory and policy-making*. Secondly, I underline and explain the major *contributions of my thesis* for the social enterprise, socio-entrepreneurial and wider identity literatures. Therefore, in my discussion chapter, I will focus on the ‘*so what*’ elements of my research findings, by highlighting the main theoretical and policy implications, and their contributions.

Figure 12: Chapter 7 Outline



I will begin by examining both RQ1 and RQ2 – as well as associated propositions (P1-P4) – from a theoretical perspective. I will then develop a broader policy discussion section to help frame the policy contributions of my work, in order to demonstrate, practically, how my research can impact third sector stakeholders and (quasi-) governmental bodies.

Theoretical implications of findings pertaining to RQ1 and RQ2

Firstly, in relation to Chapter 5, I discuss the implications of RQ1, focusing on the more recent social enterprise (SE) literatures, and the new insights gained from my PhD in terms of organisational identity (OI), sustainability and governance. I will discuss key findings, in terms of the inherent (altruistic/commercial) OI tensions associated with P1, and the importance of organisational positioning on the social enterprise grid (SEG). I will also discuss P2, and its implications for SE sustainable identity and governance. Secondly, in

relation to Chapter 6 (and RQ2), I discuss the P3 and P4 impacts of individual/personal identity on social enterprise entrepreneurs (SEEs) and the human agentic qualities required for third sector sustainability.

Policy implications

In this section, I investigate the impact of socio-economic changes to the third sector in the wake of recent economic turbulences, such as the *Brexit vote*, focusing on the wider implications for policymakers and managerial practitioners. I will take a closer look at broader policy implications for the third sector, pin-pointing potential socio-economic difficulties that may arise in the future.

Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research

Lastly, I discuss the broader limitations of my study. I examine theoretical implications of my multi-paradigm research design from both an IPA and social constructionist approach. Finally, I discuss my own role as a researcher, and justify my decision to adopt an active, reflexive role in the research process. I also offer an explanation of how my role as a researcher (and writer) changed between Chapters 5 and 6, as a necessary part of multi-method research design adopted.

7.2 Theory implications for RQ1

My first research question was set to investigate: “*What are the key organisational identity (OI) and governance issues associated with sustainable social enterprises (SEs) and social entrepreneurship?*”. In my Chapter 5 analysis, I have successfully identified characteristics of SEs and what distinguishes them from other types of TSO. In order to address my RQ1, I have conducted an in-depth analysis of SE identity tensions and implications for the strategic balance of organisational purpose.

My findings have demonstrated that in the context of SE, the question of ‘*who organisations are now*’ is, in fact, as important as ‘*who they aspire to become*’ in future. This was established through analysis of *central, enduring and distinctive* (CED) organisational attributes (Whetten, 2006), by depicting issues related to organisational

governance, sustainability and legitimacy in the form of the SEG. I will now discuss my findings in relation to RQ1 and Chapter 5 propositions in greater detail.

In my investigations, I followed Whetten's (2006) approach when interpreting OI, and have applied his knowledge specifically to TSOs in the South East of England. By applying Whetten's (2006) ideas (see also Welter, 2011; Whetten *et al.*, 2014), I was able to distinguish clearly between key TSO identity and governance characteristics in the form of the SEG (see Fig. 5.1 for details). As a result of the diagnostic SEG quadrant analysis in Chapter 5, one is also able to identify those organisations that are grappling with '*fork-in-the-road*' choices regarding their possible identity and governance futures.

Proposition 1 (P1) suggests that organisations *should be able to properly identify with who they are in order to survive*. This is theoretically underpinned by Whetten's (2006) centrally enduring attributes, primarily by stressing the interplay of '*commercial versus social orientation*' (also supported by scholars such as Chell, 2007, or Liu *et al.*, 2012). The social enterprise grid (SEG) findings suggest there is a high degree of organisational identity overlap among modern TSOs. My Chapter 5 findings and IPA also suggest that organisations are facing complex identity tensions relating to *who they are*, and *who they want to be*, in order to be successful/sustainable in uncertain economic times.

Through my SEG analysis, *I contribute to the SE literature* by conceptualising what constitutes a successful/sustainable SE identity, and other organisations who are facing a more precarious future. Through the application of Whetten's (2006) ideas, I have argued that SE identity characteristics are, in fact, linked with third/public sector organisational identity orientation, social structure, and function, as well as the positionality of the leader and organisational culture.

7.2.1 Identity orientation – central interplay of the SEG

In my study, the central interplay of OI relate to *identity orientations* (i.e. philanthropic versus commercial). This view is also widely supported by various scholars (see for example Nicholls, 2010; Ridley-Duff, 2011) who emphasise the duality of organisational orientation in modern third sector organisations (TSO's). It became evident, as my research progressed that socially-oriented, philanthropic organisations (i.e. voluntary

quadrant of the SEG) are often expected to behave ‘*in-character*’, and in some cases, the associated stakeholder tensions can hinder the pace of organisational change. My findings, as we shall see, suggest that understanding the role of traditional ‘*ought-be*’, altruistic values and behaviours are particularly important for SE scholars interested in the changing identity and governance of (UK) TSO’s. For example, voluntary sector organisations (VSOs) in the low-high SEG quadrant must have highly socialized, not-for-profit structures, embody community values, volunteering and stakeholder empowerment. These central attributes (usually referred to by Whetten (2006) as the ones that impacted organisational history) are necessary in order to be recognised as legitimate and identifiable VSOs. A change in strategic direction here has ‘*loss of identity*’ consequences, and many organisations in this quadrant actively resist becoming more commercial (i.e. a trading social enterprise TSE).

However, the opposite is the case for Trading Social Enterprises (TSEs) – in the mid-zone of the SEG. On the contrary, these organisations are recognised by their ‘*hybrid*’ identity (see Doherty *et al.*, 2014; Jenner 2016), often formed in response to a shrinking public sector, increased multi-agency responsibilities and availing of new opportunities. Nevertheless, my research has also demonstrated that expectations for integrating a ‘*commercial*’ orientation as part of the third sector remains problematic for more traditional practitioners. Informants in the mid-zone (SEG) suggest a pro-business/commercial mantra, as being necessarily realistic in the face of dwindling resources and grant assistance. There is little doubt that cuts in State funding are leading to major attitudinal changes in the fundraising goals and activities of many modern (UK) VSOs. It remains to be seen what the full extent of these change drivers will mean for organisations in the low-high quadrant (i.e. will they succumb and become TSE’s, as depicted by the directional arrow in the SEG).

So, it is clear that commercially-oriented narratives are becoming ‘*the new*’ norm within the third sector (Ridley-Duff, 2010). In fact, many TSOs explicitly aim to ‘*become*’ more commercially recognised, whilst retaining their central philanthropic attributes and values (see; Dees *et al.*, 2001; Dart, 2005; Seanor *et al.*, 2007). From an OI perspective, my findings also highlight that *organisational hybridity* is important for understanding SE sustainability. In line with P1, this means that understanding the altruistic/ commercial

organisational orientation within any (UK) TSO, is important for understanding who it is, what it does, and who/what it wants to become in the future.

In the next subsections, I discuss some of these facets in greater detail, along with implications for organisational identity theory (in relation to Chapter 5).

7.2.2 Enduring attributes of SE's

Whetten (2006) suggests that enduring attributes (those ingrained in the organisational fabric, such as: mission, vision or social values) are easily recognised by both internal and external stakeholders. I have demonstrated in my SEG analysis that enduring elements of OI usually refer to those principles that remain stable over longer periods of time. My rationale follows Whetten (2006), associating enduring features with organisational (and often historical) imperatives. Put simply, enduring attributes of SE, as they unfold, encapsulate *who the organisation was in the past*, and therefore how this identity influences *who the organisation is now*, as well as *the values for which it stands*.

In my Chapter 5 findings, informants often referred to *morals and values* integrated in the fabric of the organisation. These were often viewed as attributes embedded in mission and activities, which can be also associated with Whetten's (2006) enduring identity claims. This demonstrates the importance of recognising the embeddedness of an '*biographical [organisational] account*', while defining OI characteristics of innovative TSOs, such as an SE. By identifying defining moments throughout the organisational history, SEs are able to shape their sense of identity in their story-telling. The majority of informants in Chapter 5 demonstrated that the existence of enduring elements was integral to their organisational narratives. Usually, the historical imperatives related to organisational characteristics are embedded in culture and mission, and are often associated with the venture over many years. This view was most prominent in claims such as "*This the way we have always done it in the charity*"; "*We're not a charitable organisation; [...] We are a business*".

However, it also became clear that the continuity of SE OI is often driven by the integrated *role of SEEs, as social leaders*. My research suggests (see P3 and P4) that individuals responsible for executing innovative social ventures incorporate their own

values within their organisations, as they are unable to detach what they do, from who they are (based on Whetten, 1985; Czarniawska, 1998; and Young, 2001). This view is further discussed in the latter part of this Chapter in relation to RQ2, which focuses on the agentic role of SEEs.

7.2.3 Distinctiveness of SE's

I have been able to analyse the distinctiveness (through the distinctive, or distinguishing attributes, that separate the organisation from others based on differentiating characteristics such as uniqueness of organisational mission or unusual use of resources) of SE according to Whetten's (2006) '*categorical imperatives*'. For example, I have managed to successfully determine what constitutes a successful SE through analysing the self-referent features that differentiate SEs from other common organisational forms: "*We are a social enterprise; we do have a social value. However, we're also a commercial organisation (I15)*"; we are a community mutual as opposed to an SE). As a result, I have been able to broaden the existing understanding of social legitimacy (see Suchman, 1995; Ahlstrom and Bruton, 2001; Nicholls, 2006; 2010) in SE based on practical claims of social purpose and community accountability.

My findings are consistent with the Whetten (2006) thesis, which stresses that difficulties in legitimacy claims can exist in any organisational context. My SEG analyses demonstrated that SE governance and organisational legitimacy claims (Suchman, 1995; Ahlstrom and Bruton, 2001; Nicholls, 2010), in fact, play a pivotal role in shaping both individual and collective (organisational) forms of OI. These ideas are based on analysing informant narratives, while discussing organisational legitimacy and the problems associated with the process of claiming legitimacy (i.e. organisation identity transition or diversification from traditional practices – see the SEG in Chapter 5). The majority of social leaders (i.e. 23/30 from Stage 1) from my study indicated that difficulties associated with defining OI are often the result of changing organisational attributes, values, practices and culture.

My analysis in Chapter 5 suggests that disputed TSO legitimacy claims can lead to the destabilisation of key organisational identity components (i.e. governance

structures, values and culture). Many informants referred to the socio-economic impact of recent governmental decisions, as contributing to the growth of the *diversified organisations quadrant* (see SEG), stressing the importance of remaining true to historical imperatives, ‘*otherwise you become a different organisation*’ (Mel Taylor, I11)

7.2.4 Social enterprise sustainability - as an (organisational) identity function

From Chapter 2.3, we know there are multiple definitions of what constitutes ‘*social enterprise sustainability*’ in the scholarly literature. For example, to date, there has been no one single definition, rather researchers highlight key components, such as; commercial versus social activity (Chell, 2007; Moizer and Tracey, 2010), organisational legitimacy (Nicholls, 2010); the triple bottom line (see Martin and Thompson, 2010); resources, cooperation and organisational capabilities for survivability (Sharir *et al.*, 2009); sustainability spectrum (Alter, 2007); symbiotic relationships in local communities (Seelos *et al.*, 2011). These more recent entrepreneurship and organisational literatures tend to focus on sustainable organisational development as being a desirable, and often shared institutional goal/ objective (e.g. Wyness *et al.*, 2015). Sustainability is often associated with aspirations of organisational growth, environmental protection and significance of social issues (DTI, 2006; Martin and Thompson, 2010).

In my thesis, *I contribute to the above SE literatures*, by suggesting that social enterprise sustainability can also be investigated as an identity function of ***who organisations currently are***, and ***who they want to be***. Through my SEG analyses, I have investigated relationships between organisational identity in relation to the triple bottom line, e.g. social, economic and environmental benefits (see Goyal and Sergi, 2015). Many of the SEG arguments take on board directional qualities in the organisational identity literature, such as; ***who we are now?, how can we be socially legitimate?, how can we survive in uncertain economic times?***

Furthermore, my research falls in line with emerging literature suggesting that SEs are, in fact, ‘*sustainable by design*’ (Zhang and Swanson, 2014, p. 176). For example, Goyal and Sergi (2015) suggests that the hybrid setup of organisational governance and identity orientations fosters delivery of more successful economic returns. In other words, SE organisations are, in fact, able to maintain economic viability through innovativeness of social solutions (Zhang and Swanson, 2014). I suggest this can be achieved through

increased sharing of resources in the high-high quadrant, and that collaborative innovations are critical for promoting cross-sectoral togetherness and sustainable growth (Goyal and Sergi, 2015).

7.2.5 Cross-sectoral togetherness - for a sustainable future?

My SEG findings (see for example the high-high quadrant) suggest that the concept of cross-sectoral togetherness emerges as a result of the new landscape of sustainable SE development. It enables a collective action of TSOs to facilitate the ‘*cross-fertilisation*’ of altruistic (social) and commercial (entrepreneurial) ideas (in line with Nicholls, 2006). This seems to be consistent with views offered by SEA (2017), recognising new attributes changing the shape of the SE context: “*the social enterprise sector today includes both new typologies of organisations and traditional third sector organisations re-fashioned by a new entrepreneurial dynamic*”.

My research contributes by building on traditional, theoretical perspectives of the third sector, offering a fresh view on the diversity of third sector organisational entities. The findings suggest that the concept of togetherness has been developed organically, in line with emerging socio-economic changes. Put simply, over the years, a blend of traditional OIs, with new inclusive models, i.e. SEs and other hybrid organisations, has emerged (Doherty *et al.*, 2014). Informants often recognised the convergence towards a new socio-economic landscape as a response to government policy developments (i.e. the Big Society, localisation initiatives, the Brexit vote), following growing trends towards pro-business/commercial (and cooperative governance) solutions. Those findings are also consistent with earlier studies, which highlight complementary governmental roles in a *collective* attempt to change the face of public and social service delivery (see Milligan and Fyfe, 2004 or Sabeti, 2011).

Elements of *cross-sector togetherness* are also arguably in line with Brueckner *et al.*'s. (2010) ‘*fourth sector*’ movement, which called for further discussion about how we define organisations who straddle traditional public and third sector boundaries. Through my SEG analyses (see Section 5.7), I suggested that new social policy developments must be collaborative, community oriented, dealing with a combination of: (a) short-term funding and crisis issues, as well as; (b) promoting longer-term organisational interdependence, and sectoral survival (see Nicholls, 2010; Conway and Jones, 2012).

7.3 Theory Implications for RQ2

In my Chapter 6 analysis, I applied the ideas of Paul Ricoeur (1988; 1991a; 1991b; 1992) to examine the personal narratives of social leaders participating in my study. I considered the ‘*who*’ (RQ2) of personal identity, as opposed to the ‘*what, why and how*’ of OI (RQ1) and the previous Chapter 5. As part of my Ricoeurian analyses, I explored the feelings, thoughts and aspirations of different SEEs, as they reflected on their personal experiences and lifetime achievements. In Chapter 6, I deal specifically with my second research question (RQ2), namely: ***Who are the social enterprise (SE) leaders/entrepreneurs (and why are they important from an identity perspective?)***

To address RQ2, I used the Ricoeurian concept of *mimesis*, focusing on the interpretations of SEE storylines and encapsulating integral roles of time and narrative. I used the Ricoeurian threefold model (see Chapter 6, section 6.2.2) based on *prefiguration*, *configuration* and *refiguration* to demonstrate self-reflexive journeys of selected SEEs. These included SEE recollections of earlier life experiences, as well as their current views, and ideas about the future. In order to achieve a more in-depth analysis (during Chapter 6), I focused my inquiry around the key socio-entrepreneurial/ organisational orientations, namely, *philanthropic (altruistic) and commercial*. Based on the interplay of these socio-entrepreneurial/ organisational tensions, I was able to establish SEE ‘*faultlines*’ (in line with Ricoeur, 1991), and identify the personal default positions (*social activist, social carer and social businessman*) for social leaders participating in the second stage of my data collection. Moreover, based on my Chapter 6 analysis, which is also supported by emerging literature (e.g. Chasserio *et al.*, 2014; Murnieks *et al.*, 2014; Kašperová and Kitching, 2014; Wry and York, 2017) relating to individual/personal identities in the social economy, I was able to identify and discuss broader, agentic functions of social leaders as SEEs in the third sector.

7.3.1 The role of SE leader narrative(s)

Until now, identity scholars have paid little attention to individuals, or leaders associated with hybrid TSOs, such as SEs (Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Goyal and Sergi, 2015). As such, the socio-entrepreneurial and third sector literatures offer limited attempts to theorise the behavioural approach of their social leaders (see for example Baierl *et al.*, 2014, or Jarvis, 2016). Existing socio-entrepreneurial studies (e.g. Downing, 2005; Mills and Pawson,

2006; Mair and Martí, 2006; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Bridge *et al.*, 2009; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009; McLean *et al.*, 2011; Haugh, 2012; Teasdale, 2013; Wry and York, 2017 etc.) focus mainly on a wide range of entrepreneurial intentions, as well as, the aspirations of philanthropically-oriented individuals. However, they do not offer any in-depth investigation, nor analysis of the personal identity characteristics of SE leaders.

My findings suggest that SEEs engage with organisational practices and that their thinking evolves along with the organisation (in line with Mauksch *et al.*, 2017). My findings *contribute to the socio-entrepreneurial literature* by supporting the recognition of social entrepreneurs as *embedded agents*, within contemporary third sector literature (e.g. Grimes *et al.*, 2013). My findings emphasise social leaders as emboldened individuals who think and act within their social context, for both social and personal reasons (Leca *et al.*, 2006; Urban and Kujinga, 2017). Furthermore, I attempted to *sense-make* (Weick, 2005; Mallet and Wapshott, 2011) during Chapter 6, by seeking a retrospective understanding of the SEE self, both in the present, and as part of possible future(s). In this way, I propose and *contribute to a well-rounded view of who the SEE is* (and might be), and how their sense of personal identity is linked to their actions and potential future SE opportunities (See P3).

7.3.2 SE sustainability as a lifetime function and agentic role of social leaders

In my Ricoeurian analysis (Chapter 6), I argue that the embedded personal values, skills and experiences of social entrepreneurs are essential for developing sustainable social enterprise(s). I argued that SEE's, through their *socially embedded experiences* (Rigg and O'Dwyer, 2012, p. 324), tend to continually seek and exploit new social enterprise opportunities throughout their lifetime (P3). Therefore, socio-entrepreneurial actions can be construed, as an agentic moral function of an SEE's internal belief and personal value system (Waddock and Steckler, 2016; Chell 2016). Furthermore, my findings in conjunction with the literature (see Section 2.3 for literature arguments), suggest that SEEs have a (agentic) social bricolage (e.g. Di Domenico *et al.*, 2010) role in realising third sector sustainability. These ideas together with the application of a Ricoeurian narrative are the basis for my P4 assertion that essentially, *social (enterprise)*

sustainability is a lifetime function of who social leaders were, who they are now, and who they aspire to be.

Based on P1 and P2 (see Chapter 5), I suggest that social enterprise sustainability can be partly understood through an organisational identity analysis that involves an integrated investigation of structure and governance. However, I also suggest that a more in-depth socio-situated Ricoeurian identity analysis (P3 and P4) might involve the agentic function and role of social leaders within their lifetime. The wider social entrepreneurship literature helps confirm this view, suggesting that social leaders should ensure good governance for their organisation, and its external stakeholders (Goyal and Sergi, 2015).

My P3 and P4 arguments for sustainability as an agentic lifetime function of the SEE mirrors much of the SE literature, which suggests that core organisational values and (organisational) routines can signify the long-term protection of (social) assets (Pearce, 2003; Ridley-Duff, 2007). I argue that an investigation of ‘*who*’ the SEE is, helps reveal how life journeys can contribute to a sense of personal mission and social organisational purpose. My SEE identity analyses of configurative and re-configurative processes (Ricoeur, 1992; Hamilton, 2006) suggest that learning from life’s events and critical turning points can affect the SEE agentic role and function. My Ricoeurian analysis also demonstrates that the agentic role of SEEs arises from the sense of power that they hold within their organisation (also supported by Yavuz *et al.*, 2014).

7.4 Policy impacts

My Chapter 5 and 6 findings suggest that the socio-political landscape affects the successful functioning of TSOs. From additional interviews in late 2016 and early 2017 (see Section 4.8), I found the current political and socio-economic climate (e.g. the Brexit vote, and latest UK General Election) led a high degree of uncertainty. My Chapter 5 findings suggest, that as a result of several years of funding cuts, the long-term survival of many traditional TSOs and even hybrid organisations remain in doubt (see also Rwigema *et al.*, 2010). Meanwhile, the Government and public service organisations are becoming overloaded with a growing demand for broader social provision (Busenitz *et al.*, 2016). This turbulent socio-political environment has provoked reaction among

scholars who criticise what they see as the policy-led commercialisation and marketisation of the ‘*social*’ elements of our civil society (see Doherty *et al.*, 2014).

Nevertheless, with the advent of Brexit, I argue that becoming more commercially savvy is now a necessity – i.e. if TSOs want to survive and become sustainable over the longer term. In the following (sub)sections, I analyse some of the very latest policy documentation, which I believe is useful in the wider context of my thesis arguments – and social enterprise/ TSO sustainability in particular.

7.4.1 Policy implications for cross-sectoral TSO development

According to the Social Enterprise UK Report (2015), Britain is considered to have the most developed social investment market in the world. Nevertheless, austerity Britain has heralded a lot of change in the public and third sectors over the last 7-10 years. The most recent Government reports⁵⁷ recognise the current challenges faced by the social economy, in terms of governance, funding and organisational sustainability. I will touch upon some of these issues and outline a range of implications for the future of third sector.

According to The Select Committee on Charities Report (2016-2017), there are currently 167,000 (registered) charities in England and Wales; and in line with Cabinet Office (2016) data on market trends of the social economy, there are currently about 195,000 social enterprise employers. The recent economic uncertainties pose new challenges for TSOs, that “*may result in high-profile failures, and lead to greater scrutiny of the sector than ever*” (The Select Committee on Charities Report (2016-17, p. 3). As a result, smaller TSOs and SEs are facing real difficulties, i.e. caused by lack of operational skills or limited resources (see Jenner, 2016); making it difficult for them to bid for large scale public sector contracts. In fact, the Civil Society Almanac Report (Almanac, 2016), stated that one-third of existing small and medium TSOs currently operate with no financial reserves. These organisations are in arguably greater need of State support, as they form the ‘*lifeblood*’ of the third sector, often characterised with the highest capacity for innovative solutions in service delivery (*ibid.*).

⁵⁷ “*Social Enterprise: Market Trends*”, published by Cabinet Office (2016)

In the same vein, many of these TSOs are still highly reliant on various forms of grant funding/ contracting, and as a consequence, struggle to cover their operating costs. Public-sector and State funding was traditionally perceived as a core income source for TSOs. The latest official figures suggest that 81% of income comes from government contracts and only 19% from grants (Almanac, 2017). Almanac (2017) suggests further that the “*income from central government is higher than from local government*”, as the overall amount of grant funding has more than halved over the last decade. Consequently, local authorities are dealing with 40% cuts (since 2010) to core funding and as a result, many now stand at the breaking point (Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017; Civil Society Futures, 2017).

A number of small and medium TSOs are now faced with work on ‘*reduced income*’ and as a result, need to review their current situation and seek alternative sources of funding. For example, the strategy for social investment (following the Social Value Act⁵⁸), has been widely promoted by the State, focusing on diversification of income within the social sector. It is viewed by many as a force for social change⁵⁹. However, according to NCVO (2016) “*smaller organisations may experience difficulty in accessing social investment, due to the higher cost of borrowing smaller amounts*”. Furthermore, the SE UK (2017) suggests that social enterprises are significantly more likely to experience difficulties accessing finance than other TS employers. This is caused by limited recognition of ‘*hybrid*’ structures among many traditional financing bodies.

NCVO (2017) warns, that cost cutting will be particularly noticeable at the local level, especially for those TSOs involved in social care. The increasing pressures on alternative sources of funding (such as fundraising and donations), impacts sectoral stability. Furthermore, the transition from grants to contracts increases the gap between small and large TSOs, and as a result creates a more complex operating environment. Currently, over 85% of TSOs (approx. 166,000) are classified as small (Almanac, 2017),

⁵⁸ In fact, the Social Value Act has been “*considered favourable to charities and social enterprises on the basis that they are established for the public benefit and so can deliver additional social value as part of their mission*”. It encouraged the (public-sector) commissioners to account for the additional social value (i.e. by supporting employment on a local level).

⁵⁹ In line with “*Social investment: a force for social change 2016 strategy*”, published by Cabinet Office (2016).

with 97% of charities reporting a turnover below £1m (Lloyds, 2017). These numbers are significant when considering the availability of contracts for TSOs, that often include larger scale projects with a wide geographical reach (The Select Committee on Charities Report, 2016-17). The commissioning process is often perceived as very complex, time consuming and in some cases expensive, making it exclusive for TSOs with secure financial support. Furthermore, the New Local Government Network (2016) suggests that “*budget cuts have resulted in fewer, larger, aggregated contracts and VCS organisations bid against each other for these contracts*”, that in turn, increases further the cross-sectoral competitiveness. As a result, the recent reduction of available funding aggregates the smaller public-service contracts to a much larger scale, whilst decreasing the level of inclusiveness for smaller TSOs; in effect, ‘*squeezing out*’ the potential for small-scale innovative solutions in local service delivery.

The Lloyds Bank Foundation (2017) is among many bodies highlighting the extent of the problems associated with contracting practices. The challenges include a range of factors such as: poor understanding of need by commissioners and disproportionate requirements excluding many TSOs. In the longer term, this could mean that smaller SEs and TSOs will need to,

‘fight hard to have a seat at the table and be involved in discussions about the future of local services if those they serve are not to be left behind’ (ibid., p. 4).

Support for TSOs among the local Councils for Voluntary Services (CVSs) has also arguably diminished, as those organisations were also affected by core funding cuts. The Select Committee on Charities Report (2016-17, p. 62) suggests that CVSs and other support bodies,

“should explore collaborative service models to raise awareness among charities of the support available, and improve the accessibility and coherence of this support”.

Therefore, in line with my Chapter 5 findings (and range of recent Official publications i.e. Select Committee on Charities Report, 2016-2017; Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017; and Carnegie UK Trust, 2017), it can be suggested that in order to promote the growth of *cross-sectoral togetherness* and support the growth of the smaller TSOs, the State should encourage development of TSO partnerships (i.e. in the form of

consortia). This would enable smaller and medium TSOs to actively engage in commissioner demands for achieving greater economies of scale. Furthermore, there is an increased need for Government support aimed at local authorities, providing more resources for small TSOs and SEs, underpinning their resilience and independence⁶⁰ (i.e. by implementing new ways for mobilising society and local businesses to get involved in the TS).

In fact, my analysis of SEG (in Chapter 5) demonstrated that a change in the public sector is inevitable. Recent reports (i.e. Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017 and The Select Committee on Charities Report (2016-17)) suggest that to avoid *public service systemic failure*, the Government, local authorities and social leaders need to work in a more collaborative way to develop more robust approaches towards service delivery; accounting for the needs of the public on the local level, *supporting my views of cross-sectoral togetherness* (see Section 5.7). Additionally, the Government could offer further support for the more *innovative investment models* (such as the Arts Impact Fund and the Dementia Discovery Fund); thus, enabling greater cross-sectoral collaboration. In terms of the sectoral future, there is a clear need for identifying different options for funding routes; for example, recognising the growing support from independent trusts and foundations (not usually available to private or larger providers). In fact, those alternative forms tend to be valued by many smaller TSOs as ‘*less bureaucratic*’ and more supportive of organisational values and the *social/ altruistic mission* (Social Civil Futures, 2017).

In line with my research findings, these increasing funding difficulties call for improvements in supporting modern forms of TSO governance – for sectoral sustainability purposes. There is a cross-sectoral need for the development of more robust structures, processes and cultural behaviours that lead to better, and more effective service delivery. This brings additional implications for social leaders; to make their organisations “*more accountable and transparent*”⁶¹, thus ensuring that their organisations are, in fact, ‘*fit-for-purpose*’. Furthermore, in line with my RQ2 propositions, (P3-P4), this will allow the third sector to move towards a more inclusive and diverse social leadership approach. The Select Committee on Charities Report (2016-

⁶⁰ This follows the State promises, previously made in official publications, such as ‘*Supporting Stronger Society*’ (2010).

⁶¹ In line with The Select Committee on Charities Report, 2016-17

17) encourages social leaders to seek new ways of approaching social problems (i.e. through recognising the power of innovative and creative solutions). Increased funding pressures should encourage socio-entrepreneurial leaders to adopt a more innovative approach towards their trading activities. As a result, there is also increased scrutiny for TS leaders and individuals - they are expected to operate ethically; offer greater levels of public accountability and transparency. In the wake of recent controversy over organisations such as ‘Kids Company’, (Camila Batmanghelidjh), it is fair to state that SEE’s, board members and trustees have to account more for their personal/organisational activities and future long-term objectives (Grierson, 2017). Leaders of established TSOs (such as large charities) need to pay more attention to changing their organisational governance arrangements (The Select Committee on Charities Report, 2016-2017). It is also necessary to create more innovative ways for supporting TSO training, skills support programmes and providing human resources through volunteering programmes (Fearon *et al.*, 2017).

My thesis also recognises a high degree of *organisational identity overlap*, or blurring across the public, private, and third sectors. This overlap has implications for understanding the organisational identity characteristics of modern (hybrid) TSOs (in line with my P1). Almanac (2017) also supports this *idea of blurriness*, suggesting that TSOs are increasingly becoming more entrepreneurial, in order to adapt to the new funding landscape and socio-economic expectations. However, the existing guidance for TSOs (especially on a local authority level) remains insufficient⁶², and there is still a lack of emerging policy regarding TSO diversity, and multi-identity approaches⁶³.

7.4.2 Implications of Brexit on the sustainability of TSO’s

There is a specific need to recognise the impact of the Brexit vote on future government policy-making and TSOs in general (Price, 2016). The uncertainty surrounding the UK government’s Brexit strategy (to-date) has heightened informant/ participant fears for

⁶² i.e. “Facing Forward. How Small and Medium-sized Charities can adapt to survive”, published by Lloyds Bank Foundation (2017); “Civil Society Futures. The independent inquiry”, published by Carnegie UK Trust; or the “Impact Report”, published by Social Enterprise UK (2017).

⁶³ This is also supported by European Commission report “Social enterprises and the social economy going forward”, published in October, 2016.

sustainability of the third sector. There were two major implications from my Stage 4 thesis findings (i.e. 4 additional/follow-up interviews with a smaller sample of informants from Stage 1). The first implication related to *fears about funding*, and the second, related to *fears about recruitment*. Price (2016) suggests that it is still too early to predict the longer-term impact of Brexit, on the voluntary sector. However, even the larger charities are worried about finding suitable staff post-Brexit:

“Well, we will be affected [by the Brexit vote] because we employ nurses, care assistants, PTO [paid-time off] assistance [...] it’s difficult to recruit and if we have less people in that pool, the recruitment is going to be difficult.” Samantha Colleman, I2

Three out of four informants were concerned about the potential impact on multiculturalism within the public and third sectors, and the lack ethnic diversity of individuals employed within their organisations. For many EU citizens, the fear of potential border restrictions is beginning to affect long-term plans for living and working in the UK. In June, 2017, Prime Minister Theresa May made an attempt to assure non-British citizens who legally work and reside in the country of their rights to remain and work in the UK. However, her speech only served to provoke doubt – rather than inspire confidence – among EU citizens.

As policy-making is expected to fully ‘return’ from the EU at some point, there will be increased pressure on the State to offer increased levels of clarity, regarding public and third sector policy options, and their likely funding impacts (Lloyd Bank Foundation, 2017). There may be considerable slowdown in policymaking until the official ‘exit’ actually happens, as the Government is more likely to be focused on negotiating free trade deals, and implementing their ongoing political strategies as part of a transition period (i.e. Modern Industrial Strategy, Immigration Control, etc.). According to the Lloyds Bank Foundation report (2017, p. 3);

“some charities will experience direct impact, such as loss of EU funding streams or difficulty retaining EU staff. Others are likely to be affected by changes to UK regulation and economic consequences”.

Currently EU grants and contracts are worth approximately £300m per year, and are used by approximately 3,000 TSOs (Almanac, 2017); however, this funding is

guaranteed only until 2020. In fact, it is unclear whether the UK will receive any further funding following the ‘*Leave*’ negotiations and to what degree this missing funding will be replaced, or substituted with direct government support. The latest publications (i.e. Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017; and The Select Committee on Charities Report, 2016-17) suggest that public-sector austerity could increase existing pressures on reduced sectoral funding; and thus, many TSOs might be forced to adapt their long-term vision and limited capacity to access to State funding (Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017). A key implication for TSO sustainability (in a post Brexit climate), is that resilience can only really be achieved through: (a) increasing levels of TSO partnerships and innovation; (b) developing stronger organisational capabilities; (c) being flexible in terms of work practices, and; (d) becoming more adaptable in the face of environmental change(s) (e.g. Jenner, 2016; Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017).

Consequently (as supported by my Stage 4 thesis findings), there are increased calls for an official audit - see for example, The Select Committee on Charities Report (2016-17). This would examine the likely impacts of Brexit (i.e. in relation to diminished funding streams); in order to clarify potential issues and scenarios for the (UK) third sector future - over the mid to longer term. In terms of my SEG framework (Chapter 5) thesis, the uncertain socio-economic landscape has clear implications for TSO sustainability. It creates an additional risk, of becoming associated with the ‘*diversification quadrant*’ (in line with my Chapter 5 findings), especially, for smaller TSOs, already struggling with funding issues and their ‘*independent*’ organisational identity. Despite the recent proposals by the Prime Minister to shape Britain into a ‘*shared society*’, the budget plans for 2017 lack any development strategies for social enterprises, or plans for improvements regarding social investment. Holbrook⁶⁴ (2017) commented that this absence of SE inclusion “*is a worrying sign that the government may have completely lost sight of the value of the social economy*” (cited in Weakley, 2017). Therefore, to improve the development of new social policies the Government should consider all voices across the third sector, including those of smaller and unconventional TSOs.

⁶⁴ Peter Holbrook is the Chief Executive of Social Enterprise UK.

7.5 Limitations of the study

There are a number of more general limitations regarding qualitative research, some of which are discussed in Section 4.10. In addition, I want to highlight and discuss some specific limitations.

Sample size - Sample size is one of the most well-known limitations associated with interpretative methods (Marshall, 1996). However, my decision for using a small sample size is built on ideas proposed by Guest *et al.*'s (2006), who suggested that up to twelve interviews are enough for reaching theoretical saturation (see Section 4.10 for further discussion). Moreover, the modern IPA trends popularise the use of smaller samples (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012), for a rich in-depth design. As there are a range of identity, sustainability and governance issues in the UK third sector, I felt that there needed to be a wider range of organisations in my Stage 1 sample (than the 10-12 organisations typically recommended by the literature). Therefore, I developed a purposive sampling strategy, and undertook 30 semi-structured interviews as part of Stage 1. On reflection, this was a sufficient and adequate sample size for the IPA method employed to analyse and discuss the findings relating to Chapter 5 (Smith and Osborn, 2007).

In contrast, my Stage 2 (in-depth) repeated personal interviews, involved only 3 informants. On reflection, I could have interviewed more participants. However, after discussion with my supervisor, I decided to concentrate on the social construction and life histories of the three participants/informants involved. In this way, I was able to dedicate space in my write-up and cross compare the very different life experiences and views of the SEE's involved.

Research design - There are limitations associated with a multi-paradigm design, usually concerning incompatibility of methods, or the tendency to prioritise one paradigm over the other (Creswell *et al.*, 2003). I have acknowledged that the use of a multi-paradigm design is generally more complex and time-consuming, generating a vast amount of data. Nevertheless, in the context of my particular study, the multi-paradigm (IPA and social constructionist) perspectives used provided a rich insight to the combined issues of SE governance, sustainability and organisational/personal identity. I don't think

it would have been possible to develop such a well-rounded analysis, if I used an IPA approach alone.

During the initial phases of my research, I considered the use of other research paradigms such as discourse analysis, or ethnography (but not quantitative methods). However, based on my research objectives, motivations and several conversations with my supervisory team, I made a conscious decision to adopt a (qualitative) multi-paradigm research design based on combining IPA (for Chapter 5) and a social constructionist approach (for Chapter 6).

7.5.1 Social constructionism and the narrative approach

Social constructionist studies are growing in popularity among entrepreneurship and leadership scholars (see for example Khoury *et al.*, 2013; Chell, 2015; Case *et al.*, 2015; Endres and Weibler, 2017). In my study, a socially constructed narrative analysis allowed me to get to know the participants better (compared with traditional IPA) – to better narrate and interpret their life stories (see McLean *et al.*, 2011 for similar). The narrative approach is also well suited to (qualitative) personal identity studies (Mitchel and Egudo, 2003). In addition, applying Ricoeurian narrative was particularly well suited to capturing the feelings, values and behaviours of SEEs, within a *temporal context*. Nevertheless, critiques of the narrative approach suggest that storytelling can affect the objectivity of the data collection and analyses processes. I justify the use of SEE storytelling because it allowed participants to narrate their own accounts as social leaders; *viz.*, enabling them to reflect upon, and legitimise their own tales of socio-entrepreneurial success.

With that stated, I have been particularly careful to operate as professionally as possible (as a PhD researcher). See Chapter 4, for details of the overall research design, data collection and analysis – see also next section for further reflections.

7.5.2 My own role as a researcher

It is important to clarify my reflexive role, and personal interests in social enterprise and social entrepreneurship research (Finefter-Rosenbluh, 2017). Research reflexivity can be defined as a continual dialogue (*ibid.*, Pillow, 2003) between me as a researcher, and the

informants within the study. Explicating my role within this study also help readers understand my interpretations, and reasons for some research design choices made.

My research interests in social enterprise and social entrepreneurship developed as part of my taught Master's degree, and the course in general provided an impetus for pursuing further study. With that in mind, I had some pre-existing knowledge and ideas, which helped guide and scaffold my initial research proposal for this PhD thesis. Moreover, I have a personal interest in working with charitable organisations, and I have been involved with a number of voluntary activities over the years. During the initial data collection phases, I became slightly concerned that being a non-British national, might affect how participants react and share information with me. However, that initial inner anxiety proved to be completely unfounded. On the contrary, I found that the majority of participants discussed their views and opinions very freely and openly with me.

Having interviewed some participants numerous times over the years, regarding personal issues, and intimate life stories, I naturally built up a degree of trust, rapport and personal friendship. In reality, it is difficult not too, especially when dealing so intimately with someone else's life history. As some participants reflected during interviews, and made sense of their own identity and social realities, it could become quite emotional. In such cases, I gave participant(s) the option to stop for a while, or to come back to a particularly emotive issue later on, or even leave the interview/matter altogether.

In terms of maintaining rigor during the data collection phases, I was incredibly careful to set aside clear times, and spaces, and to provide all participants with the relevant interview questions beforehand, with consent forms etc. (see timeline for interviews in Appendix 21). I made it clear that the interviews were about collecting data for my PhD, and not simply casual conversation. I also asked and probed all angles regarding controversial issues, and attempted to remain as objective as possible (as a PhD researcher). My role was to listen and interpret participant stories, not to agree nor disagree with what was being said, and I made that point clear on a number of occasions.

I realised the value of IPA, during the first stage of my work (chapter 5), enabling me to clearly distance myself from what participants were saying, and feeling. Similarly, for the more intimate accounts (Chapter 6), the social constructions of personal identity, were admittedly much more involved, but there was still a degree of distance between me

and the research subjects. With that stated, the Ricoeurian narrative used in Chapter 6 is commonly associated with the process of re-framing the traditional understanding of a researcher's role (Cunliffe, 2011). Narrative enables the co-construction of meaning-making in a reflexive manner, prompting the researcher to take a closer look at his, or her role in the research process (Cunliffe *et al.*, 2004). The reflexive approach in both chapters allows the recognition of various (informant/ participant) voices to emerge from the data, which in turn facilitated a rich meaning-making process. As a result, I became obliged to accept my own voice, as one of narration among many, allowing a sense of heterogeneity in interpretation of the data (Cunliffe *et al.*, 2004).

In order to support the wider writing-up process, (as mentioned in Chapter 4), I also made observational notes after each interview, followed by more in-depth memos and reflections. Some of my notes were adequately descriptive with little need for additional interpretation, while memos tended to be more inclusive and thorough, with initial identification of patterns, and connections to literature, as well as accounts of other informants. I also acknowledge that my early interpretations were not at all fixed. In fact, I changed certain views, and my thesis direction several times. During the early stages especially, I went through several periods of research iteration, after discussions with informants, my supervisory team, and of course, feedback from BAM, and other conferences and research seminars. In fact, it is fair to say, that I continually reassessed my ideas and interpretations throughout most of the writing-up process (see Carpenter, 2009).

In summary, and after careful reflection, I do not believe that my research suffered from any major self-serving researcher bias, based on my own values or behaviours. Following Berger's (2015) advice, I have assessed my own beliefs against the analysis process throughout and attempted to be conscious, and remove any sources of personal feeling or bias.

7.6 Chapter 7 summary

In this chapter, I discuss the wider theoretical implications of the research findings (from Chapters 5 and 6) and associated research propositions (P1-4). In summary, the mainstay of the discussion chapter is to critically consider the '*so what?*' and '*who cares?*' aspects

of both RQ1 and RQ2, and the contributions thereof to the literature. I also discuss the impact of some of the more recent social-economic and governmental policies, in light of austerity, and in particular, the Brexit vote (2016), upon the core thesis (sustainability) arguments. In particular, I scrutinise policy implications for cross-sectoral togetherness, and postulate how the future may look for TSOs (i.e. post-Brexit), in terms of exploiting new opportunities, securing funding, and developing more transparent and accountable forms of governance.

The most important implication, associated with RQ1 and discussed in this chapter, is that *who* the organisation is now, remains as important as *who* it aspires to be. By using the SEG as a diagnostic tool, it is possible to distinguish between key TSO and governance characteristics. I discuss complexities associated with the identity overlap, identifying the multi-layered OI pressures related to sustainable organisational development. Based on the findings, organisational sustainability is demonstrated as an identity function associated with long-termism and organisational growth (P1-P2). As a result, through thorough SEG analysis, I contribute to SE literature by conceptualising the identity characteristics of a successful SE.

Moreover, I successfully investigate the existing relationships between OI and TBL by applying Whetten's CED attributes, placing identity orientation at the core of the SEG. The discussion chapter suggests that SE governance and legitimacy are found to play a pivotal role in shaping individual and collective forms of OI (Whetten, 2006). Socio-economics are changing (i.e. funding cuts, Brexit) and as a result, a shift in OI across the third sector is also deemed inevitable (Lloyds Bank Foundation, 2017). Therefore, as the discussion suggests, it is important to account for the enduring organisational attributes (i.e. those that remain stable over long periods), by remaining true to the historical imperatives (Whetten, 2006) of the organisation. This is supported by the findings that this sense of long-term continuity of SE OI is, in fact, driven by the integrated role of SEEs, who are unable to detach themselves from who they are (as demonstrated in Chapter 6). I have successfully cultivated this view throughout the research and emphasised the agentic role of social leaders.

The discussion of the findings, in line with prominent SE literature, suggests that SEs are, in fact, sustainable by design, characterised by the distinctiveness of modern OI structures. This contributes to existing SE literature by identifying SE sustainability as an

identity function, emphasising the hybrid organisational set-up and fostering successful returns through distinctiveness and innovativeness. Modern approaches to OI are also discussed, recognising the convergence towards a new, socio-economic landscape that facilitates the concept of cross-sectoral togetherness. As a result, pro-business methods are recognised to be supported by government policy developments with a focus on collaborative/collective TSO action.

The RQ2 implications are also discussed in this chapter, focused on the role and characteristics of SE/TSO leaders. By applying the Ricoeurian narratives, I am able to successfully establish SEE fault lines, and identify and discuss their agentic impact on TSOs. These leaders are identified and characterised as embedded agents (contributing to existing SE literature), continuously engaging and evolving with organisational practices; able to think and act within a social context, by linking their personal identity and socially embedded experiences to potential (future) opportunities (in line with P3). Consequently, in line with the literature, I suggest that the social bricolage (agentic) role of SEEs is essential for developing long-termism (P4), recognising sustainability as a lifetime function of SEEs.

Furthermore, the policy implications discussed in this chapter suggest a growing need for more collective attempts to improve the third sector as a force for social change through the adoption of collaborative service models. There are growing calls for increased government support, as well as and the introduction of more innovative models (of governance), to avoid a systemic failure. It is predicted (in line with NCVO, 2017) that there will be increased pressures on sources of funding for TSOs, and many organisations will continue to struggle to cover their operational costs. I also discuss other, important challenges of modern TSOs, such as forms of governance, sustainability and identity overlap often poorly recognised by other practitioners and commissioners. This brings additional implications for third sector leaders yet supports the RQ1 and RQ2 propositions. As a result, in light of the growing sectoral uncertainty (i.e. associated with the Brexit vote), organisations need to ensure that their OI ‘fits’ the current socio-economic landscape, and that they look towards taking a more inclusive and diverse leadership approach.

Finally, I examine some of the key limitations of the research study, mostly from a personally reflective perspective, i.e. subsequent to writing up the research. Therefore,

this section reflects a far more personal perspective than Chapter 4 – Research Design and Methodology. It is also important to consider my role as a researcher (especially within a qualitative study), and as such, I outline some of my thinking, and my own positionality as embedded throughout the entire research process.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, I conclude by summarising the research aim of the thesis, as well the two core research questions and associated research propositions. I re-iterate the rationale for each and describe the ways in which they are analysed throughout the various chapters. In order to make the study accessible as a business and management resource, I will make clear and focused recommendations for future researchers, policymakers and social leaders alike.

8.2 Thesis summary

The rationale and motivation for the study, as outlined during Chapter 1, is prompted by a number of interconnected problems: firstly, a lack of common agreed definition(s) of ‘social enterprise’; secondly, weak conceptual representations of interacting organisational forms that constitute the wider (UK) third sector; and thirdly, the widely acknowledged pre-paradigmatic understanding, rather than theoretical understanding, of ‘*social enterprise*’ in conjunction with ‘*social entrepreneurship*’ (Haugh, 2005; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009; Bridge *et al.*, 2009; Nicholls, 2006; 2010; Mason, 2012).

In addition, I felt the need to investigate *who* and *what* makes SEs (and the wider (UK) third sector) ‘*sustainable*’, particularly given the current tumultuous socio-economic climate, following the 2008 financial crisis and subsequent Brexit vote in 2016. As the field of social (enterprise) entrepreneurship matures, there is a corresponding lack of consensus as to what *sustainability* actually constitutes in terms of (aspiring) SE legal status, organisational identification among stakeholders, or indeed, appropriate sectoral strategies required for future organisational survival. In light of recent scholarly calls for further research (see for example Chandra, 2016), the aim of this study is to contribute to the field by attempting to: ***investigate the phenomenon of sustainable social (enterprise)***

entrepreneurship and identity, from the perspective of UK social enterprise and third sector leaders.

In order to structure the research in line with the aim outlined above and provide a robust framework for investigation, two interweaving research questions (RQ1 and RQ2) have been developed. The first focuses on ascertaining “*the key organisational identity (OI) and governance issues associated with sustainable social enterprises (SEs) and social entrepreneurship*” and is further supported by two corresponding research propositions (P1 and P2). During the course of the study, I successfully establish that firstly, organisations in the third sector should be able to properly identify with *who they are* in order to survive, and secondly, that social (enterprise) sustainability is an identity function of *who social organisations are*, as well as *who they aspire to be*. These propositions are investigated through the development of the SEG, a tool for establishing TSO identity. It enables successful evaluation of the social and commercial orientations of organisations and their inclusiveness towards the third sector, which is an integral part of the evolving social economy. The RQ1 investigations recognise changing institutional logics within the third sector (prompted by diminishing funding and fear of post-Brexit socio-economic uncertainty) and suggest that becoming more commercial is integral to the socio-entrepreneurial agenda. As a result, the research suggests that the emergence of new (hybrid) identity orientations, embracing both social and commercial approaches, allows TSOs to evolve in line with economic trends, enabling more diverse routes towards a sustainable future.

The second research question has a more intimate focus and investigates characteristics of the personal ‘*who*’ as opposed to the organisational ‘*what*’. It concentrates on ascertaining “*who the social enterprise (SE) leaders/entrepreneurs are (and why they are important from an identity perspective)*”. These investigations are successfully supported by the corresponding research propositions (P3 and P4) suggesting that: social leaders/entrepreneurs, in fact, continually seek new SE opportunities because they are fundamentally motivated by their personal beliefs, social values and sense of identity; and secondly, that social (enterprise) sustainability is a lifetime function of *who social leaders were, who they are, and who they aspire to be* (adapted from a Ricoeurian perspective). RQ2 investigations are crucial in portraying a more robust picture of organisational and personal identity characteristics in an increasingly diversified third

sector. The shift of focus from ‘*what*’ towards ‘*who*’ allows me to successfully investigate and evaluate the impact of personal values, beliefs and SEE behaviour upon social sustainability. In fact, in Chapter 6, I establish that SE sustainability can be perceived as a lifetime function of social leaders. This is supported by the embeddedness of SEEs’ personal values, skills and experiences essential for developing stronger (and sustainable) organisations.

Through the development of the above research questions, which consider agentic and social possibilities for causative action from both an organisational (structural) perspective (RQ1) and a personal identity perspective (RQ2), this study offers a range of valuable contributions to SE identity literature, acknowledged in Chapter 7. Furthermore, as a new study conducted in the South East region, it offers a significant contribution, not only to the existing literature enfolding, but also to local practitioners and other social leaders (see Section 8.3.3 for more details).

8.2.1 Summary of the literature enfolding

The literature review has been organised in two separate parts (Chapters 2 and 3), in order to form a more robust understanding of the concepts and theories associated with the research questions. This offers an opportunity for a more in-depth, theoretical investigation into sustainable social (enterprise) entrepreneurship, deemed necessary by the micro-macro approach adopted in this study.

Therefore, Chapter 2 examines some of the definitional, and background arguments supporting SE, beginning with European definitions from the 1980s. The remaining arguments are summarised in Appendix 1. Dwindling funds and resources (e.g. Seanor, 2013) has been the main reason cited for the encroachment of commercial activities within the third sector (over the last 30 years). I have established that the DTI’s (2002) original definition, which states that an SE’s main purpose is social, but that profits should be re-invested in the community, still holds true today and should be recognised as such. Traditionally, this described the nature of a CIC, but with many UK SEs encountering identity difficulties due to financial pressures post-2008, modern TSO definitions have become increasingly blurred. Moreover, the Government’s own criteria for defining SEs have also evolved towards greater inclusion of TSOs that traditionally

would not be able to jump on a SE bandwagon, by putting greater emphasis on profit generation, and reinvestment. As a result, this has left many SEs and TSOs somewhat bewildered as to what now constitutes a socially-driven *versus* commercial identity.

The Chapter 2 literature review also touches upon some theoretical concepts and arguments associated with third sector governance, OI and sustainability. I outline various facets of the background SE literature, including for example, the TBL approach (Martin and Thompson, 2010); but more importantly, I begin to link the core research arguments with the need for adopting a more inclusive research perspective, to include some form of OI analysis (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Whetten, 2006; van Tonder, 2011).

The literature suggests that the main purpose of OI, in the context of the third sector, remains differential (van Tonder, 2011). This view falls in line with Whetten's (2006) CED attributes (as categorical imperatives), that I have successfully used to distinguish SEs from other TSOs in the Chapter 5 analysis. It is important to recognise that OI is shaped by social leaders, but it is also entwined with the organisational function and adopted governance structures (Young, 2001). A strong OI can be compared to an anchor, holding the organisation together, and equally, serving as a catalyst for a social change. This chapter also differentiates individual identity from that of an organisation, associating the former with one's 'qualities' as opposed to 'attributes'. In fact, modern SE literature portrays OI in the context of the third sector as very dynamic (i.e. He and Baruch, 2009), continuously influenced by the external environment (van Tonder, 2011).

Despite increasing academic and public attention, organisational sustainability in the third sector is still perceived as a concept of a pre-paradigmatic nature (Doherty *et al.*, 2009). The literary investigations revealed a growing association of the organisational sustainability concept as an integral part of OI. It can be then suggested that '*who we are*' as an organisation is, in fact, essential for successful performance. Therefore, through the literature review I am able to present a more robust understanding of organisational sustainability from a macro perspective, accounting for social, economic and environmental factors (in line with the TBL). Effectively, these investigations demonstrate that the concept of sustainability brings a variety of meanings to different TSO stakeholders, which means there is a growing need to adopt a multidimensional approach to organisational development and long-termism in the current, unstable socio-economic climate.

The second part of the literature review, Chapter 3, delves one step further into the investigation of sustainability and recognises the commercialisation of the third sector as a fundamental part of *social entrepreneurship*, often said to be driven by social innovation and social value creation. Exploring underpinning definitions of social entrepreneurship in Chapter 3 also sets the backdrop for the wider investigation of what might constitute *SE sustainability* (e.g. Alter's 2007 sustainability spectrum). As a result, Chapter 3 is used to highlight important focal elements (or process theories), that help explain the interplay of organisational characteristics and third sector behaviours in the modern social economy. In particular, I focus on aspects of institutional theory, stewardship and stakeholder theory as key drivers for understanding governance, and (re)shaping of the sector in light of the socio-economic changes.

For example, I identify that TSOs, and in particular, SEs, often prioritise relationships with their stakeholders in order to achieve organisational goals and, therefore, enable more sustainable development (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2006). In fact, the influence of stakeholders on organisational development is still deemed by many scholars as crucial, as it offers a greater sense of control (for example in the decision-making process). This chapter successfully establishes the growing popularity of the concept of social stakeholders (often aligned with the stewardship approach) in SEs (Mason et al., 2007). Their role (as stewards and agents) is usually aligned with power, culture and the individual structure of the organisational form (*ibid.*). From this perspective, stakeholders (as stewards) are strongly motivated by the dual, more-than-profit opportunities (Chasserio et al., 2014) afforded by new, hybrid organisation models (popularised by the State and third sector legal bodies). It is also evident that more and more social leaders are recognising the contradictions of central institutional drivers (Whetten, 2006), e.g. *not-for-profit* versus *profit* (Ridley-Duff, 2007), and that centrality of social objectives (in hybrid organisations) can have a legitimising effect on organisational forms and structures. This view is supported by the emergence of the New Charity Governance Code (2017) that promotes recognition and development of new governance forms in the third sector and encourages leaders to become more familiar with the changes, as well as the impact these changes have on various duties.

Having established the above, I am mindful not to labour the process theories during Chapter 3; opting instead for a more applied and in-depth analysis during the findings and discussion chapters (i.e. Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the literature review also sets the scene for the personal identity analysis (in Chapter 6), by discussing the concept of ‘social entrepreneur’. It considers the origins of the term and its evolution over the years, affected by economic changes and shifting expectations of the third sector. It establishes the differences between the social and entrepreneurial facets (in line with the SEG’s social and commercial OI orientations) and their relevance to the term ‘social enterprise entrepreneur’. Supported by literature unfolding, this chapter portrays the identity of the SEE as often associated with social activism, as well as aligned with the organisational cycle. In fact, it highlights the view of many authors that in the third sector, the identity of leaders evolves over time (i.e. Fletcher, 2003; Bandura, 2006), making SEEs agents of change, working collaboratively towards a more successful future.

8.2.2 Review of the research design and methods applied

The research design and methodology approach is outlined and discussed in Chapter 4. I propose a combination of interpretivism and social constructionism, providing a more holistic, multi-method approach towards investigating the case study findings. This dualistic approach enables a macro-level analysis of the OI of TSOs in the South East of the UK, which is then combined with a micro-level (personal identity) analysis of selected social leaders/entrepreneurs in the region. The primary objective of the research design is to enable a well-rounded investigation of the main identity, governance and sustainability issues associated with SEs and social entrepreneurs. In the main, I believe the two research approaches complement each other, and enable a thorough investigation of both RQ1 and RQ2. I give full account for methods employed (see Chapter 4) and offer my own reflections on the research process during Chapter 7.

The IPA approach is successfully adopted to investigate the experiences, understandings and views of social leaders in relation to governance, OI and sustainability, in line with RQ1. As a flexible, human-centred approach, it produces a vast amount of rich data, enhancing the quality of the research and enabling meaning-making

of lived experiences (Cope, 2011). However, it remains focused on interpretation of the key organisational themes (background information, OI, individual identity, governance and structure, and future operations).

Meanwhile, the social constructionist approach concentrates on SEEs, namely social leaders (RQ2), creating their own realities as it recognises a sense of individual subjectivity (Richardson, 2012). Using in-depth, personal case studies to capture the responses from three social entrepreneurial leaders, this approach places great emphasis on personal relationships and interactions (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009), investigating self-referent identity perceptions of being (or not being) a social entrepreneur. Personal accounts include recollections of the past, critical incidents, personal values and future aspirations. It is important to note that both approaches (IPA and social constructionism) aim to ensure the validity of findings, which are evaluated using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria (see Section 4.11 for more details).

8.2.3 Data analysis and discussion

As part of the RQ1 investigation, the characteristics of SE are examined through the theoretical lenses of OI, sustainability and governance (see Chapter 5). The development of an SEG is the key contribution to this process, as it helps to build a picture of how a sustainable SE *may (or may not) look* from an OI and governance perspective.

Furthermore, through the SEG analysis, I am able to identify the distinctive attributes of SE as a part of an emerging cross-sectoral development of the third sector. I am also able to interpret how SEs and other TSOs deal with sustainability challenges in such a turbulent socio-economic landscape (Martin and Thompson, 2010; Thompson, 2011). There are several key implications of the SEG framework. Most importantly, using the SEG can help to better conceptualise overlapping TSO identities, as well as possible migration routes, enabling a more sustainable organisational future. I am able to specify the degree to which TSOs (as collective actors) are similar to, or indeed different from each other. Put simply, the SEG enables a conceptual and phenomenological analysis of the issue of identity tension and strategic balance. By conceptualising Whetten's (2006) CED attributes, this study successfully contributes to OI literature by portraying what constitutes a sustainable SE. The data analysis supports Whetten's (2006) notion of

‘identity-referencing discourses’ (for example characterising voluntary organisations versus SEs), which form a key part of the interpretative quadrant analysis.

In summary, the data analysis in Chapter 5 contributes to a growing academic recognition of social and philanthropic orientations as an integral part of the social purpose in the third sector. Meanwhile, the trend of ‘becoming’ more commercial has emerged as a new identity orientation in itself and is emphasised by the more-than-profit approaches. The process of developing the SEG brings to light challenges associated with a changing socio-economic landscape and promotes working towards more sustainable identities, such as hybrid organisations, facilitated by the togetherness approach.

Similar to other scholarly research, it is also useful to consider the lived experiences of social (enterprise) entrepreneurs as part of RQ2 (see for example, Johansson, 2004; Hytti, 2005; Hamilton, 2006; Jones *et al.*, 2008). Through a Ricoeurian personal narrative analysis (see Chapter 6), I examine the personal backgrounds of three selected SEEs. I recount each individual’s life story, and examine their personal values, overarching beliefs, and changing career motivations in an attempt to make sense and interpret: *who they were; who they are now; and who they are likely to be (as social leader(s) in the future)*. These micro-level identity analyses (see Chapter 6) help demonstrate how a lifetime of being and becoming a social entrepreneurial/third sector leader might affect the on-going sustainable development of the sector.

The Chapter 6 data analysis offers another significant contribution deriving from the personal narrative approach: it highlights the role of sustainability as an identity function of social leaders. It recognises SEEs as agents, ingrained in the organisational fabric, and unable to detach themselves from who they are. This study portrays them as change enablers who engage and evolve with an organisation, and the application of the sensemaking narratology deepens the existing understanding of personal experiences, helping to reveal how life journeys contribute to a sense of personal mission. Therefore, as a result of this macro-micro perspective, the study offers a well-rounded interpretation of ‘*who*’ SEEs are. Furthermore, the use of Ricoeurian narratives also contributes to the existing identity and entrepreneurship literature, responding to recent scholarly calls for more applied studies using narrative and storytelling (Hamilton, 2006).

Both of the data analysis chapters are brought together in the discussion (Sections 7.2; 7.3; 7.4), which helps draw out of the ‘*so what?*’ elements of the study and pinpoints specific contributions to corresponding literature. In particular, I draw attention to the research propositions (P1-P4) which I believe help to explicate a case for SE sustainability – based on matters of identity. Issues such as developing cross-sector togetherness and understanding who organisations want to be in the future (in the sector) are incredibly important. TSOs need to be innovative (Zheng and Swanson, 2014), they need to be more collaborative (Jenner, 2016), and they especially need to recognise the importance of being entrepreneurial (SEA, 2017). Similarly, it is important to recognise the role of social leaders – they must understand who they are (in terms of P3 and P4) and determine how they can best contribute to the life of the third sector. I identify three archetypal *default positions* in line with Ricoeur’s (1991) identities, namely: *social activist*; *social carer* and *social businessman*. I suggest these roles correspond with Ricoeur’s (*ibid.*) theory of human action, and that many social leaders have a lifelong agentic function, embedded in who they are, and what they do (see P3-P4).

In the discussion chapter, I also examine the most recent policy impacts (via key 2016-17 public reports and documents), especially in light of the recent Brexit vote; which as a socio-economic bombshell, has created a high degree of uncertainty for a number of TSOs. I touch briefly on the fears of third sector study informants, i.e. from Stage 4 of the research. I also highlight the need for policymakers to be aware of those TSO stakeholder fears that concern an uncertain future. In addition, I recognise the study’s inherent weaknesses; the most important limitations that I have discovered in the research are associated with the qualitative methods employed (see Appendix 16). However, from a broader, research design perspective, I also acknowledge issues associated with the small sample size and the difficulties associated with the multi-paradigm research design, and finally, my own reflections and potential biases, as a PhD researcher.

Given the current socio-economic landscape, which brings fear and uncertainty for many organisations as mentioned, it is important to provide a relevant and up-to-date frame of reference for practitioners, policymakers and social leaders alike. Therefore, in this final section of the study, based on the data, I will offer recommendations for future research and policy developments, as well as remarks for TSO leaders.

8.3 Future research recommendations

As the research progresses, I recognise some gaps in both the data collection and analysis that could potentially benefit from further investigation. Therefore, based on a review of the findings, together with the existing social entrepreneurship literature within the realm of the third sector, future research in the area of SE and identity could be focused on the four following areas:

1. *Personal identity research (from a sustainability perspective)*

Studying personal identities from a sustainability perspective could offer an additional lens for understanding characteristics of SEEs. More importantly, it could offer a fresh perspective on the roles of other SE stakeholders; namely, employees and volunteers. With the Government agenda promoting the idea of the '*shared society*', the role of employees and volunteers will become increasingly important in terms of social service delivery. Volunteers are traditionally recognised as a core workforce of the social economy (Doherty et al, 2009), fuelling the not-for-profit resource engine of the sector. However, many scholars (see for example Lee and Brudney, 2009 or Tang *et al.*, 2009) have recognised a continued lack of volunteer resource available to many organisations, with some needing to improve their efforts to attract and recruit the right kind of volunteers. Furthermore, an additional volunteer 'profile' could be investigated prior to recruitment, by evaluating the concept of voluntarism across the board, that directly impacts the OI, governance and sustainability of the organisation. Therefore, further research in this area should consider the personal motives behind an individual's decision to join the third sector, setting research questions such as: why do they do what they do? (*e.g. for very little financial rewards* – see Waikayi *et al.*, 2012).

2. *Extended national study*

This study focuses on subjects and organisations within the narrow geographical area of the South East of the UK. Therefore, it would be useful to test the same propositions (P1-P4) as part of an extended national study. This approach could generate a vast amount of data, which would provide an opportunity to shape and enrich a more comprehensive understanding of the third sector (as a whole), taking into consideration regional differences. For example, it would be interesting to see how social policy implementation varies between regions and whether there are any significant patterns emerging in the context of organisational (and personal SEE) identity, sustainability and governance.

3. Ethnographic study examining the concept of OI (in the face of Brexit)

Ethnographic studies are becoming increasingly important for understanding person-centred lived experiences. As such, this approach is becoming more widely adopted in the context of social entrepreneurship (see for example: Houtbeckers, 2017; Mauksch *et al*, 2017 or O'Connor and Baker, 2017). A case study approach could be used to examine issues of OI during the course of Brexit. It is a particularly uncertain time, and an ethnography could provide an insight into what this means for third sector stakeholders, and their case organisations (similar to Mauksch *et al*, 2017). Using an ethnographic approach in the context of SE could give voice to 'silent narratives' (*ibid.*) that may have been missed through the IPA and social constructionist approaches. Furthermore, researcher participation (as both an outsider and insider) in daily experiences could offer new insights into organisational challenges and motivations associated with a changing economic landscape. The ethnographic approach could focus on the matter of 'how', as opposed to the already investigated 'what' (organisational perspective) and 'who' (personal perspective), allowing the researcher to experience the organisational and individual identities from within.

4. Local authority perspective on the OI of modern TSOs

It would be interesting to investigate the OI of modern TSOs from the perspective of local authorities. Future research could investigate new governance forms, distribution of financial support, commissioning and contracting, local TSO guidance and processes for creating networking opportunities. This would offer an additional perspective to the issues already investigated in the context of post-Brexit-vote policy challenges.

8.4 Policy recommendations

SE policy evolution accentuates the Government's vision of an increasing number of dynamic and sustainable organisations being able to contribute to a stronger social economy (Cabinet Office, 2006). These policy recommendations are partly based on findings and interpretations from Chapters 5 and 6; and more recently, from the '*policy impacts*' and issues highlighted during the discussion chapter (see Chapter 7.4), such as: *long-term access to funding; skills; resources; governance arrangements; and the role of*

*government*⁶⁵. They recognise the changing focus of the social economy and account for the additional complexities of the Brexit vote, furthering uncertainties regarding sectoral growth. This increased pressure on the State is predicted to result in a slowdown in policymaking as Brexit is predicted to monopolise the attention of the authorities and policymakers.

As a result, the focus of new policies associated with the third sector and civil society, as a whole, needs to shift towards the ‘power of community’ and towards new, innovative ways of harnessing the opportunities it brings (Weakley, 2017). Based on the literature review and the research considerations, I offer seven recommendations to third sector policy makers:

1. SEs should work more closely with decision-makers and commissioners to co-create the design and delivery of local community services. This approach should be based on two-way communication, with the aim of improving capacity building, and as a result, building a better infrastructure to improve sectoral effectiveness.
2. From an OI perspective (in line with the SEG framework), the third sector is diverse. As a result, the value of hybrid TSO structures, which adopt multi-dimensional identity approaches, must be recognised. A 2013/14 NCVO report highlighted that charities with an income greater than £1m accounted for only 3% of the sector. Smaller charities are finding it difficult to survive. Therefore, there is a need for the Government, as well as commissioners, to promote ‘*cross sectoral togetherness*’. There should be a greater recognition of sectoral diversity, increased partnership approaches and an action plan to discourage those such as public commissioners and funders from favouring larger, well-established charities over small local organisations.

⁶⁵ This advice also supports recommendations from recent policy reports (e.g. The Select Committee on Charities Report, 2016-17); Lloyds Bank Foundation (2017): *Facing forward: How small and medium-sized charities can adapt to survive*).

3. The Government should support the development of the cross-sectoral landscape in terms of service provision, by offering more resources (both financial and non-financial), providing guidance for consistency in cross-sector partnerships and recognising innovative and creative solutions. As a result, the Government needs to recognise its own role in third sector development as a partner (in line with the PM's idea of the 'shared society'). As suggested by Weakley (2017), this is particularly important to small TSOs (in 2016, over 166,000 UK TSOs were classified as small⁶⁶) lacking support in the area of service delivery.
4. It is important to ensure organisational sustainability across the third sector. If TSOs are commissioned to deliver public services, charities and smaller SEs need to ensure they have the skills to manage their cash-flows. There should be more support and training available for those organisations that still struggle with financial management in terms maintaining books and other records in an accountable and transparent way. The available resources, and financial and commercial training for social leaders (i.e. provided by the Directory of Social Change and NCVO), should be provided in way that demonstrates practical application, rather than purely offering technical guidance that might not be fully understood by those social leaders who have not yet gained sufficient financial and business knowledge to put principles into practice.
5. TSOs should be have access to commercially-oriented opportunities – and bodies such as the Foundation for Social Investment – as well as social impact bonds and forms of tax relief.
6. Policy developers should adopt a more coherent framework; one that is more focused on social impact and innovation, supporting the emergence of new hybrid organisational governance models. For example, the recent change to the new Charity Governance Code highlights a more inclusive emphasis on multi-identity governance. The new sectoral landscape brings with it

⁶⁶ This information is provided by the Civil Society Almanac report (2016)

expectations for a greater focus on organisational accountability, recognising the implications of cross-sectoral logics. The role of hybrid TSOs, such as SEs, should be integral to the long-term economic strategy.

7. SEs need to find alternative forms of finance – an income strategy which largely relies upon grant funding is not sustainable. This is supported by The Civil Society Almanac Report (2016), which highlights that the overall amount of grant funding has more than halved over the last decade; 81% of income comes from government contracts and only 19% from grants. As a result, the continuous cost-cutting will be noticeable particularly at a local level. However, this financial squeeze could, in fact, drive more innovativeness and creativeness, subject to more investment, utilising the resources that the Government has already made available.

8.5 Implications and recommendations for TSO leaders

The research shows that SEs have a greater understanding of local communities and their needs than large charities with established brand names. This knowledge could be used as an advantage for promoting inclusive identity models for building greater recognition of hybrid governance forms. As a result, social leaders associated with modern governance forms are faced with challenges related to increasing public expectations for more comprehensive service delivery. SEs are expected to adapt to new accountability requirements, yet without compromising on quality.

The focus of leadership in the third sector has moved towards survival and resilience (Hodges and Howieson, 2017). There is a pressing need for further development of social leadership, with an emphasis on SEs and small TSOs, which, in light of the financial squeeze, are expected to ‘do more with less’. The Chapter 6 analysis demonstrates SEEs as having an agentic role and influencing the development of TSOs. The recommendations for social leaders are based on the literature analysis (from Chapters 2 and 3) and supported by the research findings.

1. TSO leaders need to recognise and learn how to support modern forms of governance that facilitate the identity overlap. This is especially important for those organisations with traditional philanthropic identity roots, as they still lack

diversity among organisational stakeholders (mainly the board trustees), limiting the presence of ‘more-than-profit’ knowledge and expertise. This supports Hodges and Howieson (2017), who associate social leadership with one of the most significant skill gaps existing in VSOs.

2. Leaders need to put a greater focus on organisational accountability and transparency, making sure that their organisation is in fact ‘fit for purpose’, and embracing a more inclusive and diverse approach to leadership. It is important to maintain the core organisational purpose, while also accepting the need to evolve in line with socio-economic expectations.
3. Leaders also need to seek new ways of approaching social problems, especially by recognising the growing power of innovation and its impact of problem solving. SEEs need to encourage new funding streams brought about by the diversification of new technologies, which offers vast opportunities for new (i.e. digital) methods of ‘giving’.
4. In line with the idea of cross-sectoral development, SEEs should actively participate in knowledge exchange and skill-supporting programmes to improve their organisational capabilities. As the concept of ‘*becoming more commercial*’ becomes the norm within the third sector, there is an expectation that SEEs will develop skillsets enabling them to successfully manage the operationalisation of services.

Appendices

Appendix 1: European and US perspectives of SE

EU style social enterprise	US style social enterprise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collective action - Labour movement or government responses to social issues - Incremental building of social capital and assets - Solidarity and mutuality - Accommodation of stakeholders - Democracy (bottom-up governance) - Social economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual action - Entrepreneurial (market) responses to social issues - Fast effective achievement of social outcomes - Champions and change agents - Adherence to a 'vision' - Philanthropy (top-down governance) - Any sector

Source: Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2009 p. 60

Appendix 2: The Conceptual Dimensions of the Social Enterprise Mark

Based on 2008 Pilot Project	Based on Voice 2010 Launch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an eligible legal form (not a sole trader, not a partnership or traditional profit-distributing company, probably not a co-owned [employee-owned] company or limited liability partnership). • Adhere to shareholder restrictions (only have shareholders that “constitute a community benefit” or apply the dividend cap set out in the Community Interest Company legislation). • Have own constitution and governing body • Profit predominately used / distributed for social / environmental purposes (including residual assets). • Have 50% or more income from trading, and have traded for at least one year. • Evidence that social / environmental objects are being achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and environmental objects can be evidenced in constitutional documents. • Must be an “independent business”, legally constituted, with autonomous governance. • Must earn 50% or more from trading, evidenced using “standard accounting practices” • Devote 50% or more of the organisation’s profits to “social/environmental purposes” • Ensure that all residual assets are distributed for ‘social/environmental purposes” (if dissolved). • Can demonstrate that social/environmental objects are being achieved.

Source: Ridley-Duff, 2012

Appendix 3: Social Enterprise Criteria by OECD

Economic Criteria	Social Criteria
<p>Unlike traditional non-profit organisations, social enterprises are directly engaged in the production and/or sale of goods and services (rather than predominantly advisory or grant-giving functions).</p>	<p>Social enterprises are the result of an initiative by citizens involving people belonging to a community or to a group that shares a certain need or aim. They must maintain this dimension in one form or another.</p>
<p>Social enterprises are voluntarily created and managed by groups of citizens. As a result, while they may receive grants and donations from public authorities or private companies, social enterprises enjoy a high degree of autonomy and shareholders have the right to participate ('voice') and to leave the organisation ('exit').</p>	<p>Decision making rights are shared by stakeholders, generally through the principle of 'one member, one vote'. Although capital owners in social enterprises play an important role, decision-making power is not based on capital ownership.</p>
<p>The financial viability of social enterprises depends on the efforts of their members, who are responsible for ensuring adequate financial resources, unlike most public institutions. Social enterprises therefore involve a significant level of economic risk.</p>	<p>Social enterprises are participatory in nature, insofar as those affected by the activities (the users of social enterprises' services) are represented and participate in the management of activities. In many cases one of the objectives is to strengthen democracy at local level through economic activity.</p>
<p>Activities carried out by social enterprises require a minimum number of paid workers, even if they may combine voluntary and paid workers.</p>	<p>Social enterprises include organisations that totally prohibit the distribution of profits and organisations such as co-operatives, which may distribute their profit only to a limited degree. Social enterprises therefore avoid profit maximising behaviour, as they involve a limited distribution of profit.</p>
	<p>Social enterprises pursue an explicit aim to benefit the community or a specific group of people. By doing so, they directly and indirectly promote a sense of social responsibility at local level.</p>

Source: OECD (2016)

Appendix 4: Stage 1 participants' profiles

Name and type of organisation	Background information
John Peterson (I1)	Having lengthy experience in strategy and policy advice within the criminology department motivated John to set up his own social venture. As a self-proclaimed philanthropist and social entrepreneur, he supports vulnerable young people who are at risk of offending, by providing them with guidance, adequate training and homing services.
Samantha Coleman (I2)	Samantha is an experienced nurse and health visitor. She used to work for the NHS as a public health representative, commissioner and service provider for over 30 years. Samantha always felt the need to support disadvantaged people and as a result took the position of CEO in one of the most recognisable trusts in Kent. Her Christian ethos of work, personal values and beliefs perfectly matched the organisational mission, giving her greater ability to create local strategic partnerships aimed at the provision of recovery services for people who have serious drug and alcohol addiction, aiming to transform people's lives and allowing them to reach their full potential.
Amanda Murray (I3)	As a former primary school teacher (with nearly 20 years' experience), Amanda always felt a connection with the youngest members of the public. Dedicated to her local community, she aims to create an educationally stimulating and safe environment for children from the most excluded groups in society. Moreover, she successfully promotes healthy eating among the youngsters by running a community nursery and a café.
Peter Smith (I4)	Peter was made redundant after over a decade working for KCC youth services. As a result, he decided to follow his heart and opened one of the first social enterprises in Kent. Pushed by his personal drive (himself having a child with a disability and learning difficulties), Peter wants to improve the chances of young adults with learning disabilities of finding paid employment, to be socially equal. Claiming to be a jack of all trades, he is successfully growing his organisation while acting as an owner, manager, volunteer and father.
Rebecca Castle (I5)	KCC-award-winning, determined, young entrepreneur Rebecca started her journey as a Spanish teacher. She evolved as an entrepreneur through her business and management post-graduate education. She woke up one morning finding out she had cancer, and decided to never give up. Rebecca claims to be very frustrated that she cannot change the world on her own (however, she keeps trying!). She is a successful business advisor and performance coach, changing the lives of the youngest entrepreneurs in the Kent county.
Sarah White (I6)	Having spent 25 years in the public sector working for the benefit of minority groups, Sarah has established an understanding of increasing social exclusion due to vast immigration statistics within the county. After experiencing 'traumatic reorganisation' of the organisational

	structure, she felt empowered to provide the same services to minority groups independently in 2006. Since then, Sarah has learned four Eastern European languages and is successfully growing her services, offering not only psychological support but also educational support for minority ethnic communities, including English courses and training.
Andrew Jones (I7)	Coming from a health and social care background, Andrew can be described as a jack of all trades. He has vast experience working as a strategist in the building industry and as a lecturer in the leading London universities. He calls himself a social and environmental entrepreneur. Over the years, Andrew has established significant connections with KCC and the surrounding district councils, building what he calls a ‘network of opportunities’. This has allowed him to create an innovative organisation, characterised by a recognisable name among many social organisations in Kent. His aim is to support other innovative, environmental and sustainable actions in the local area, changing the shape of the coast.
Karen Wood (I8)	Karen had over 30 years’ experience with people suffering from learning difficulties. She was involved in diverse aspects of care, schooling and training, motivated by the gradual changes in people’s behaviour and well-being. Karen worked closely with KCC in supporting the parental side of care, which naturally evolved into becoming involved in Kent parents’ action group, where she made an impact on increasing levels of help provision. Unfortunately, Karen passed away in 2013, fulfilled by achieving her social goals.
Dan Green (I9)	Dan’s career spans the public, private and voluntary sectors. He has had experience working at high managerial levels for the past 15 years within many global logistics and IT businesses. His vast portfolio includes leading names in the global courier and transportation industry. Dan has been an active volunteer in community groups since childhood and an active trustee of several charities in Kent over the last decade. He joined the current organisation in 2011, with the aim of using his knowledge in logistics management to help the poor in other, less developed countries.
Elizabeth Walker (I10)	Growing up in liberal 1960s London, Elizabeth was heavily influenced by her parents (artist and architect). She inherited their creative genes and became an active social activist in her teens, rebelling against the lack of unconventional methods of education. Without any previous experience, and fuelled by her artistic roots, she successfully secured the role of an Arts Development Officer in her local council. In 2008, she established one of the most creative educational organisations in Kent, transforming it through successful social enterprise in 2011.
Mel Taylor (I11)	After completing a degree in economics, Mel found herself working in a diversified range of trades: the food industry, retail, human resources and banking. In her mid-twenties, she successfully established a chain of shops and restaurants in the City. Just before her 30th birthday, she left the UK and went abroad to the Scandinavian countries, with the aim of setting up a trading crafts and agricultural centre. Pushed by the visible difficulties in foreign economies, Mel turned towards the not-for-profit sector, establishing a vocational training

	centre instead. When she came back to England, she worked with disabled people for a few years before securing a leading position in one of the most sustainable farms in Kent.
Jennifer Brown (I12)	After spending over 15 years in the civil service, Jennifer wanted to give something back to the community. In early 2000, she moved career paths towards the voluntary sector, working in various areas such as social security, unemployment and the fraud offices. As a result, her social experience motivated her further to become a support mechanism for those working in the volunteering and community sector, providing advice and information.
Sophie Robinson (I13)	Sophie has been involved with the NHS for over 30 years as a clinical psychologist and therapist. In 2007, she joined a board of trustees in one of Kent's charities, assisting people with mental and physical health problems, where she was given the opportunity to become a Chief Executive. With no previous management experience, Sophie decided to take the challenge of rebuilding the organisation by creating a recognisable (social and) medical centre in the South East.
Sue Green (I14)	Sue spent the majority of her life working for KCC. She was involved in various areas of expertise, ranging from estates and community management and business advice to regional development management. After leaving KCC, she decided to move to the voluntary sector and started working for an organisation offering community support, business advice and training.
Jack Williams (I15)	Jack joined the NHS in 1995, where he worked for over 15 years as a service developer. Feeling the pressure of a target-driven structure, he decided to leave in 2010 and took responsibility and lead for one of the most transparent NHS and community-driven spin-offs in the county, making them the largest non-public employer in the area. In the meantime, Jack undertook health education training, achieving a range of health diplomas and enhancing his expertise and understanding of the sector.
James Stone (I16)	Having worked in the retail industry for around 25 years, James wanted to give something back to his community. He applied for a managerial position in one of the leading charities in Kent, which was unsuccessful. Finally, he found a position as a service development manager, aiming to further the growth of the social enterprise part of the venture, securing long-term financial sustainability.
Louise Davidson (I17)	Louise has been actively volunteering since her teens. Her experience adds up to a total of 36 years in social care in Europe, Asia and Africa. She has finally settled down in Kent and become involved with a community centre aiming at helping socially excluded groups of adults and teenagers in the area.
Philip Clarke (I18)	Philip has been a community activist since his teenage years. He always actively volunteered in various charitable activities, trying to create a local change. After graduating from law school, he worked his way up in one of the charities, becoming an operational manager with the aim of making a difference.

Stephanie Jackson (I19)	Consultant, trainer and now a stay-at-home mum, Stephanie was given the opportunity to get involved in a local community project in 1999. Over the years, she developed the goal of creating an innovative community centre. She achieved her dream in 2011. Stephanie perceives herself as a 'glass half full' person, making a great impact on the local residents and small businesses through her innovative approaches to traditional community development.
Emma Stewart (I20)	Having experienced a range of difficulties with her elderly mother, Emma took a job offer in one of the local charities, aiming to make a difference in the service provision and social care for older people. With over 23 years of experience as a carer, she understands the changing needs of patients and aims to transform her organisation into a successfully functioning care centre and high-quality nursing home for local residents in need.
Barbara King (I21)	In the late 1990s, Barbara became involved with the leading telecommunication network in the UK, climbing up the career ladder as an innovation strategist on a managerial level. In the meantime, she always actively helped local charities in their development, supporting residential groups and social activities. Since 2000, she has become involved in searching for innovative solutions for web-based companies, becoming one of the most recognisable leaders in graphic design and web development in her field. In 2009, she established an organisation aiming to financially support local social businesses and charities, acting as a business coach and facilitator.
Mary Walters (I22)	Mary has been involved in the voluntary sector for many years, volunteering in care charities since her teenage years. Her experience is in care and individual well-being, but she has also always supported green living and environmental causes. As a result, she very quickly became involved with a local project aimed at developing a centre for sustainable urban living.
Mark Phillips (I23)	Mark has vast experience in business and event management, specialising in not-for-profit and creative arts. He is an award-winning social entrepreneur with over 16 years' experience of music production, promotion and performance. His areas of expertise also include retail, HR and working as a chef. He decided to become involved with the third sector to share his knowledge with others and improve the well-being of those in need.
Carol Price (I24)	For years, Carol worked as an accountant, slowly climbing the career ladder. She has over 10 years' experience in senior finance management on a national level as a global planner. However, her job was not bringing her enough joy and she decided to transfer her financial knowledge to the voluntary sector. She is now involved with a social venture aimed at helping to educate other local organisations and small businesses, offering financial advice and support.
Laura Morgan (I25)	Laura defines herself as a consultant, trainer and coach, working with individuals and businesses. She has been actively involved in the voluntary sector for years. Her main interests are in helping hard-to-reach socially excluded groups and small charities. She is a successful social leader and business adviser, wanting to make a tangible difference in the local community.

Jane Owen (I26)	Jane is a social activist, consultant and facilitator, with the aim of protecting human rights. Since childhood, she has been actively involved in volunteering and campaigning for environmental rights. She has always been involved in third sector organisations, trying to make a difference.
Richard Thompson (I27)	After completing his degree in leisure and tourism, Richard became involved with hostel management. However, pushed by his social values and beliefs, he decided to move into the voluntary and community sector, where he has been working for over 20 years. He is currently involved with an organisation providing funding advice and support to other social initiatives, supporting the development of social enterprises and a wide range of social projects.
Diane Bell (I28)	Diane has experience in education as a business tutor at secondary and college levels. She decided to get involved with social enterprises due to her hatred of processed food. Her aim is to provide healthy and nutritional school meals to children, using fresh local produce, high-quality ingredients and local suppliers. Recently her social business has grown, through offering innovative approaches to cooking, providing lessons to adults and teenagers.
Mark Evans (I29)	Mark is an active environmentalist with vast experience in the construction industry. He has been involved with green, sustainable buildings for over a decade. He decided to utilise his construction experience through establishing a social enterprise aimed at educating people about practical sustainable living, by offering educational support and training.
Paul Roberts (I30)	Paul has been involved with marketing for over 15 years. He claims to have become bored of commuting, and decided to slow down and contribute to the local community, partially due to poor health issues. Over the years, he has been involved in various charitable organisations as a volunteer and trustee. He is now running a charity aimed at helping the disadvantaged groups in his local community.

Appendix 5: Introductory telephone and/or e-mail information letter

Dear [insert name]

Following our telephone conversation, I am attaching the participant information related to my current research. As a PhD student in the Department of Business and Management at the Canterbury Christ Church University, I am conducting research under the supervision of [insert name] on migration routes towards sustainable social enterprise and the social entrepreneur's identity.

The full information regarding the research can be found in the document attached, which includes details about the purpose of the research, participant information and the interview schedule.

Your participation would be very much appreciated.

I am looking forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

[insert signature]

Appendix 6: Participant information (All stages)



To whom it may concern,

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in an exciting new research study.

As a PhD student in the Faculty of Business and Management at the Canterbury Christ Church University, I am currently conducting research under the supervision of [insert name] on understanding sustainable social enterprise and social entrepreneur's identity.

The purpose of the research is to develop and test a new Social Enterprise and Governance (SEG) framework that conceptualises governance mechanisms and transformation routes towards sustainable social enterprise. It depicts migration routes for various organisations as they transform their operational focus through the commercialisation of key activities. This research will help us understand better the changing nature of social enterprise in light of new government priorities and a more challenging economic environment. The research will consider important issues for organisations going forward and explore how to achieve a sense of sustainability in difficult times ahead. Moreover, this research concentrates on exploring the social entrepreneur's identity that can impact the organisational behaviour.

Procedures

As a key participant, you will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview that consists of approximately 15 questions (see overleaf, p.2) related to your organisation followed by a short background questionnaire (see overleaf, p.3). The interview will last approximately 30 to 40 minutes and would be arranged at a time convenient for you. Participation in the interview is entirely **voluntary** and there are no risks for participating in this study. Your name and organisation will remain strictly **confidential** in all publications. However, we would ask your permission to record interviews in order to help analyse data which will be transcribed after the interview. You may decline to answer any of the questions if you do not wish to answer.

Results

The results will be submitted only to leading academic journals or conferences in the context of the above research. After the data has been analysed, you will receive a copy of the executive summary. If requested, copies of our publications will be emailed to you.

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation, do not hesitate to contact me on [insert e-mail] for more information.

Thank you for your support and participation with my research.

Yours sincerely,

[insert signature]

Appendix 7: Stage 1 – Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule (Stage 1)

Section A – Background Information

1. Could you please tell me about your organisation? What is your organisational mission, purpose and key activities?
2. How would you describe your organisational structure? (How many employees or volunteers are involved and what are they roles?)

Section B – Social Enterprise Nature

3. Do you view your organisation as a ‘social enterprise’?
4. What are the characteristics of your organisation as a social enterprise?
5. What are the most significant challenges that your organisation faces as a social enterprise?

Section C – Social entrepreneur identity

6. What are the characteristics of a social entrepreneur? Do you view yourself as a social entrepreneur?
7. What motivated you to get involved with social activities?
8. How does your entrepreneurial identity influence the organisational development?
9. What are the challenges that social entrepreneurs face in the light of the economic crisis?

Section D – Governance and Organisational Structure

10. Do you believe your organisation is currently being driven by altruistic or profit motives?
11. How important is volunteerism in your organisation? – How do you attract, motivate and retain volunteers and staff?
12. What is your view of the new term ‘Big Society’? - Has it impacted your organisation in any way?
13. How important has changing people roles and formal structures been within your organisation?

Section E – Organisational Future and SEG Framework

14. What is your view of ‘the third sector’ in the future? – Is it sustainable?
15. How will your organisation face the future, given recent changes to the public sector and overall economic outlook? What is the long term future for your organisation? Will it be sustainable?

Looking at the SEG conceptual framework (provided and discussed by the researcher) - **where would you currently place your organisation?*

Appendix 8: Interpreting organisational identity: mapping on the SEG

Place on the SE Grid	Informant	
Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCO)	I2 I3 I4 I8 I12 I14 I17 I21 I23 I26 I27 I30	
Public Sector and NGO's (PSN)	I7 I10 I24 I25	
Diversified Organisations (DO)	I28	
Trading Social Enterprise (TSE)	Originating from VCO I5 I6 I9 I13 I18 I19 I20	Originating from PSN I7 I10 I24 I25
Sustainable Social Enterprise (SSE)	I1 I11 (originating from PSN) I15 (originating from PSN) I16 (originating from PSN) I22 I29	

Appendix 9: Stage 1 Background Questionnaire

Background Questionnaire

1. Name of organisation.....

2. Participant Name: 3. Position.....

4. Please provide a short description of your organisation's key activities

.....
.....

5. What sector does your organisation operate in?

Mostly public Mostly private

Mostly voluntary

Comments.....

6. How many employees and volunteers does your organisation have?

Paid Employees: Volunteers:

7. What is your organisations legal structure?

Company limited by guarantee Community Interest Company – limited by guarantee

Community Interest Company – limited by share Registered Charity with Company status

Registered charity without company status Industrial and Provident society

Other (please state)

8. Your approximate turnover last financial year? (if appropriate).....

Appendix 10: Stage 2 Interview Schedules

Interview Schedule for JANE

PRESENT – Setting the scene (IDEM)

- Who is Jane now? How would you describe yourself?
- Who are you as a social entrepreneur? How do you feel about it? How do you behave?
- What are your fundamental values/beliefs?
 - **PROMPTS: feelings**
 - Researcher to sum up - repeat to the subject for confirmation.

PAST – The life journey

- Let's go back to the beginning – tell me about your childhood.
 - Tell me a story about your mother, I remember you said she was a social worker, tell me more about that time?
 - How did it make you feel? How did you behave? Most remembered memories?
- Tell me more about your family?
 - **PROMPTS:** Husband (also environmentalist), daughter
- Tell me about your educational journey? - **space and time**
- Tell me about your social activist actions as a teenager?
 - **PROMPTS:** feelings/behaviour/environmentalism/animal rights

PRESENT – Critical turning Points (IPSE)

- Were you always philanthropic, or have you changed over the time?
 - When have you developed (time and space) altruistic ideas?
 - **PROMPTS:** mentors, values
- Tell me about your Career as a social entrepreneur? What was your first major role you consider important (tell me the story about it)?
 - How did you feel about your local community? Who are you as a local citizen?
- Tell me more about your career transitions (**ask for dates and places**)
 - Why did you decide to get involved with [name of org]? (Where were you in terms of time and space?)
 - What were your expectations then and how they changed over the time?
 - What were your early experiences running a not-for-profit venture?
- What were your most remembered critical turning points in your socio-entrepreneurial journey? Where were you in terms of space and time?
 - How did you feel? How did you behave?
- Tell me about your typical day.
 - What motivates/drives you?
 - Tell me about your daily tensions as a social entrepreneur (ask for examples situated in time and space)?
 - How does your behaviour influence the organisational development? How does it make you feel?

FUTURE – Prospectus self-identity

- Where do you see yourself in future?
- How does your SE future make you feel?
- How are you going to behave in future?

Interview Schedule for LOUISE

PRESENT – Setting the scene (IDEM)

- Who is Louise now? How would you describe yourself?
- Who are you as a social entrepreneur? How do you feel about it? How do you behave?
- What are your fundamental values/beliefs?
 - **PROMPTS: feelings**
 - Researcher to sum up - repeat to the subject for confirmation.

PAST – The life journey

- Let's go back to the beginning – tell me about your childhood.
 - How did it make you feel? How did you behave? Most remembered memories?
- Tell me more about your family?
 - **PROMPTS: Parents, Husband**
- Tell me about your educational journey? - **space and time**
- Tell me about your social activist actions as a teenager?
 - **PROMPTS: feelings/behaviour/career as a carer**

PRESENT – Critical turning Points (IPSE)

- Were you always philanthropic, or have you changed over the time?
 - When have you developed (time and space) altruistic ideas?
 - **PROMPTS: travels, mentors, values**
- Tell me about your Career as a social entrepreneur? What was your first major role you consider important (tell me the story about it)?
 - How did you feel about your local community? Who are you as a local citizen?
- Tell me more about your career transitions (**ask for dates and places**)
 - Why did you decide to get involved with [name of org]? (Where were you in terms of time and space?)
 - What were your expectations then and how they changed over the time?
 - What were your early experiences running a not-for-profit venture?
- What were your most remembered critical turning points in your socio-entrepreneurial journey? Where were you in terms of space and time?
 - How did you feel? How did you behave?
- Tell me about your typical day.
 - What motivates/drives you?
 - Tell me about your daily tensions as a social entrepreneur (ask for examples situated in time and space)?
 - How does your behaviour influence the organisational development? How does it make you feel?

FUTURE – Prospectus self-identity

- Where do you see yourself in future?
- How does your SE future make you feel?
- How are you going to behave in future?

Interview Schedule for JACK

PRESENT – Setting the scene (IDEM)

- Who is Jack now? How would you describe yourself?
- Who are you as a social entrepreneur?
 - What is your socio-entrepreneurial story?
 - How do you feel about it? How do you behave?
- What are your fundamental values/beliefs?
 - Researcher to sum up - repeat to the subject for confirmation.

PAST – The life journey

- Let's go back to the beginning – tell me about your childhood.
 - Tell me a story about your parents? (feeling, behaviour)
 - What are your most remembered memories?
- Tell me about your educational journey?
 - **PROMPTS: medical certificates - - space and time**
- Tell me about your volunteering experience.

PRESENT – Critical turning Points (IPSE)

- Would you describe yourself as altruistic or commercial?
 - Have you changed over the time? (When and Why?)
 - When have you developed (time and space) altruistic ideas?
PROMPTS: mentors, values
- Tell me about your career as a social entrepreneur? What was your first major role you consider important (tell me the story about it)?
 - How do you feel about your local community? Who are you as a local citizen?
- Tell me more about your career transitions (**ask for dates and places**)
 - Why did you decide to get involved with [name of org]? (Where were you in terms of time and space?)
 - What were your expectations then and how they changed over the time?
 - What were your early experiences running a not-for-profit venture? How did that transition made you feel?
- What were your most remembered critical turning points in your socio-entrepreneurial journey? Where were you in terms of space and time?
 - How did you feel? How did you behave?
- Tell me about your typical day.
 - What motivates/drives you?
 - Tell me about your daily tensions as a social entrepreneur (**ask for examples situated in time and space**)?
 - How does your behaviour influence the organisational development? How does it make you feel?

FUTURE – Prospectus self-identity

- Where do you see yourself in future?
- How does your SE future make you feel?
- How are you going to behave in future?

Appendix 11: Stage 2 Analysis protocol

(adapted from Cope, 2011)

Process	Level	Jane	Louise	Jack
1. Familiarisation	Reading data	Reading the transcripts to familiarise myself with the data, stories and narratives for each of the cases		
2. Examination	Diagnosis <i>Presentation of key identity narratives</i>	Jane's narratives (examples): Identity as a: - mother - community connector - activist/ environmentalist	Louise's narratives (examples): Identity as a: - daughter/child - career - community bridge/connector	Jack's narratives(examples): Identity as a: - student - leader/businessman - traveller
		Identifying personal accounts stories and narratives for 'prefiguration' (Ricoeur, 1984; 1991)		
		Jane's prefiguration stories - Ethics, environmentalism, veganism - Retrospective location of her childhood identity (mother socially active, father scientist) - Lack of commercial entrepreneur characteristics	Louise's prefiguration stories - Since remember was involved in caring in the social sector - Retrospective location of her childhood identity as a carer for her mentally disabled mother - Lack of commercial entrepreneur characteristics - Being always community driven	Jack's prefiguration stories - Being always commercially driven - Retrospective location of the childhood characterises with a lack of the push for education - Social values inherited from parents – fairness and equity
		Emotions		
		- Transposition of her emotion and anger	- Transposition of her frustration aimed at the social structures - Hope for change, change enabler	- Bothered by poor education available (daunted by reality) - Frustration over the structures
		Recursive nature of things		

		- Activism from grandfather, and social work from mother	- Caring for disadvantaged children from age 18 - Always involved in the community settings	- Involvement in health and sport since graduation
	<i>Embeddedness as a part of identity (for all cases)</i>			
	- Embeddedness of values - Embeddedness of what he/she does - everything that he/she does or says must connect with his social values			
	IDENTITY BECOMING: <i>Future self-identity</i>			
		- As a mother and community activist - As a traveller	- As a part of the RNU family - As a traveller	- as a leader - as a traveller
Interpreting	Self-legitimization processes	Cognitive processes (things that come to mind when he/she makes decisions) - Mental schema - Cognitive decisions - Linkage with Ricoeurian ipse and idem		
		IPSE – “The Self” - The tensions of running SE? The tensions of being commercial? Critical Incidents, future. [Who am I changes over the time (Ricoeur, 1992)]		
		Re-configuration stories		
		- The effect on Hostweb – morphing/re-configuring traditional charitable organisational nature to match with [her] values	- The effect on RNU employees, making a transparent change to the community as a whole and individuals	- The effect on CHU employees, change to organisational culture matched to his vision and values
		<i>Partnerships and dynamic capabilities (with other people)</i>		
	- Husband (as a collaborative shared value partner) - Relational with other social activists (defines local community	- Relational with other community leaders – valuing collaborative work and value exchange	- Relational with other community leaders – valuing collaborative work and value exchange	

		as those sharing her beliefs in social activism)		- Working in partnership with other ventures
		<i>Critical turning points (chronologically):</i>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travelling to Turkey (in the search for independence) - Political involvement with militant activists - Getting involved with Hostweb Group - Birth of her daughter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Death of her father, followed by trip to NY - Best job – in the multi-diagnosis team - Trip to Africa - Achievement of self-sustainability for RNU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School – pushed for A levels - University - Traveling in the search for independence - First job in PCT - Development of CHU - Securing long-term contracts in China
Writing-up	Vignettes	Individual/collective, common clusters of meaning – locating future – legitimising discourses - identity attributions = social causative outcome		

Appendix 12: Stage 3 Focus groups – participant profile information

Organisation: Urban Hut (associated with Jane)

Mark	Mark is an environmentalist, admitting to getting involved in the project by accident. He has a wide background in biological recording and lives close by to the organisational site, which he keeps an eye on. His involvement derives from the need for protecting nature and promoting sustainable living.
Eve	Eve is a student, involved in the project in alignment with her sustainability course. She is vegan (like Jane) and responsible for the market research and community involvement in the project. She has never supported any third sector organisations in past. Eve wants to give something back to the community and her main goal is to promote veganism among community members.
James	James has been involved in all sectors for 25 years with a main background in IT. He is a supporter of various charities on various levels (from voluntary to managerial). He has known Jane for 15 years and worked with her in previous organisations. His main interests are in community empowerment and sustainability.
Steve	Steve is involved with Urban Hut on the part-time basis. He has a stable job in the private sector but wants to give something back to the community. His interests are in sustainable solutions and green living.

Organisation: CHU (associated with Jack)

Jane	Jane was involved with the CHU before the change, in the form of the original PCT. She has worked up the career ladder for the past ten years, from a community nurse to a managerial level in the current setting (responsible for staff management).
Sarah	Sarah worked in healthcare before joining CHU, and has been involved in other trusts and charitable organisations in past. She

	came into [name] as she was interested in the new structure that was offered, responding to her core values and beliefs. As one of the newest members, she is still adjusting to the system.
Mary	Mary started her journey in healthcare as a district nurse. She became involved with the PCT by accident and is now responsible for nursing training programmes and district management.
Paula	With a wide background in healthcare in various positions, Paula enjoys working for CHU as a nurse and is training to be a health practitioner in the future.
Anne	Anne has been involved in the health sector since the beginning of her career (not on behalf of the NHS but through other settings). She has worked in various PCTs in the past, but never been involved in any social work. Anne worked with the management team through the transition to a social enterprise, enabling ease of communication with the staff.
Kay	As an NHS born-and-bred member, Kay joined the team as a health practitioner, bringing a fresh outlook on the current services offered by CHU. She has never been involved in any voluntary activities, but now is an active member of the fundraising team.
Maggie	A volunteer, involved in the fundraising part of the organisation. She is a student, training to become a nurse. Maggie wanted to get involved in CHU, hoping to work there after graduation.

Appendix 13: Stage 3: Focus Group Schedule

Focus Group Schedule

Part A Background

1. What is [name of org]?
2. How would you describe the organisational mission?
3. What are the most significant activities/projects carried at the moment?
4. Why did you get involved with [name of org]?

Part B Identity

1. Who is your leader?
2. What kind of leader is she/he?
3. What are his/her strengths and weaknesses (if any)?
4. How does she/he influence the organisational development?
5. Could you give me few examples of the most successful/significant activities initiated by [name of the leader]?
6. How important is the leader in driving the organisation?
7. Would it work without?

Part C Sustainability

1. What do you think is meant by organisational sustainability?
2. In which ways sustainability can be achieved in [name of org]?
3. In your opinion – is the [name of org] sustainable now? Explain.
4. How important is the role of the leader in achieving organisational sustainability? Do you need a leader?

Part D Challenges

1. What are the challenges for [name of org] as a SE?
2. What are the challenges for the leader? How does he deal with emergency situations?
3. What are the challenges for third sector development?

Part E Future

1. How do you perceive the future of [name of org]?
2. How do perceive the future of the third sector?
3. Will it be sustainable? [org]
4. Will it be sustainable? [third sector]

Appendix 14: Stage 4 follow-up invitation e-mail

Dear [name]

I hope that you still remember me and that all is going well!

I interviewed you for my PhD about three years ago and I am thankful for your participation in my research. I am hoping that once again you will be willing to help out and share your current views with me. I would like to ask you the favour of sharing your current views with me through a short **telephone conversation** (it won't be any longer than 10–15 mins), scheduled within the next two weeks. I would like to ask you only a few follow-up questions, regarding changes in your organisation and the recent Brexit vote.

With your permission, the conversation will be recorded for transcription purposes and will be kept confidential (please see the reminder of my procedures attached at the end of the e-mail).

I will adjust to **any** date and time most suitable for you.

I do hope that you will be able to help me!

Reminder of the procedures that I follow:

Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary and there are no risks in participating in this study. Your name and organisation will remain strictly confidential in all publications. However, I would ask your permission to record interviews in order to help analyse data, which will be transcribed after the interview. You may decline to answer any of the questions if you do not wish to answer.

The results will be submitted only to leading academic journals or conferences in the context of the above research. If requested, copies of our publications will be emailed to you.

I am looking forward to hearing from you!

Yours sincerely,

[insert signature]

Appendix 15: Stage 4 Interview Schedule

Post Brexit vote – Interview Schedule

1. What has changed in your organisation since we spoke last time (over last couple of years? (Any major changes in structure or organisational identity? Maybe new activities?))
2. What is the current structure of your organisation? Has that changed?
3. Do you believe your organisation is still being driven by altruistic/ profit motives? Has that changed?
4. What were the most significant challenges that your organisation faced over the last year? What are your challenges for the future?
5. Has your organisation been affected by any government initiatives in the last year? Has Brexit impacted your organisation in any way? (Or do you think that it might in future?)
6. How do you perceive the future of your organisation in the current economic climate?
7. What is the future of the third sector? (Is there still a third sector or has it morphed into something else?)

Appendix 16: Advantages and disadvantages of employed research methods

Type of research method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Semi-structured interviews	<p>Adds richness to the study</p> <p>Allows probing to gather in-depth information</p> <p>Allows the retrospective reflections of past events and their implications for the present/future</p> <p>Gives freedom to express own views in a fairly unstructured way</p> <p>Flexibility – the researcher can move between the topics and explore additional emerging themes during the conversation</p>	<p>Pre-defined themes</p> <p>Wording of the questions has to be careful, avoiding researcher bias</p> <p>Long and therefore time-consuming to transcribe and analyse</p> <p>Due to the small sample size, the results cannot be generalised to the wider population</p> <p>The uniqueness of informants can create analysis complexities in defining patterns and similarities</p>
Background questionnaires	<p>Easy to structure, code analyse and then interpret</p> <p>When used as a supplementary method, enriches the analysis from other methods</p> <p>In my study, increases the reliability of responses, enhancing the validity of the research</p> <p>No influence of researcher</p>	<p>Pre-defined questions and topics may limit the richness of responses</p> <p>If using the closed-ended questions, it makes it difficult to identify and examine complex issues and topics</p>
Focus groups	<p>Useful to establish collective perceptions, opinions and feelings</p> <p>Provides more comprehensive level of information</p> <p>Offers a safe space for expressing controversial and/or sensitive views</p> <p>Allows early identification of emerging themes and patterns</p> <p>Offers opportunity for clarification</p> <p>Used as a supplementary method, can increase the reliability and validity of previously gathered responses</p>	<p>Time-consuming</p> <p>Difficult to organise</p> <p>Can have a group-pressure effect on informants</p> <p>Fear of monopolisation by one of the informants, affecting the whole group</p>

Appendix 17: University Ethics checklist



For Office Use
Checklist No:
Date
Received:

Section B: Research Ethics Checklist

Please answer each question by marking (X) in the appropriate box:

		Yes	No
1.	Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities, your own students)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to vulnerable groups or individuals to be recruited (e.g. students at school, members of self-help group, residents of nursing home)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.	Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.	Does the study involve invasive or intrusive procedures such as blood taking or muscle biopsy from participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Is physiological stress, pain, or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harmful consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9.	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.	Will the study involve recruitment of participants (including staff) from other Faculties at Canterbury Christ Church University?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12.	Will the study involve recruitment of participants (including staff) through a Local Authority (e.g. Kent County Council) Department of Social Services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 19: Selected Social Policies and Government Publications

Year	Policy name
1989	European Commission, Social Economy unit
1994	MAP
1998	The Compact
1999	National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal
	Policy Action Team Report
2000	Directorate Renewal for Enterprise and Industry (EU)
2001	Social Enterprise Unit
2002	DTI SE: a strategy for success
2006	DTI SE Action Plan SE: Scaling New Heights
2007	Final Report by Cabinet Office
2010	Social Value Act
	Supporting Stronger Society
	Social Business Initiative (EU)
	Civil Society Red Tape Task Force
	Big Society programme
	Big Society Building
2011	The Compact (third version)
	Business Support for SE
2011	Unshackling Good Neighbours
2012	Big Lottery Fund - Advice Services Transition Fund
	The Transition Fund – making it easier
	Civil Society Red Tape Challenge
	Charitable Incorporated Organisation: secondary legislation before parliament

	The Public Services (Social Value) Act
2013	Big Sector- FAQs
2014	Making it easier for civil society to work with the government: Progress Update
	Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012: 1 year on (Update)
2015	2010 to 2015 government policy: social enterprise
2016	Charities Act 2016 – Implementation
	Social investment: a force for social change – UK Strategy 2016
	Social Enterprise: Market Trends
	BREXIT vote

Appendix 20: Stage 1 participating organisations

No.	Sector	
I1	Public and voluntary	Organisation aimed at supporting vulnerable young people at risk of offending after coming out of prison, aged 16 or over.
I2	Voluntary	Organisation that provides recovery services for people who have serious drug and alcohol addiction and preventative and early intervention services. Additionally, it offers support to young homeless people in the area.
I3	Public	Organisation providing variety of services to the local community, including a holiday club, after-school club and nursery. It supports community well-being and engages local people in community projects.
I4	Voluntary	Organisation helping to improve the chances of young adults with learning disabilities to find paid employment. It aims to become a small manufacturing company, training adults with learning difficulties and disabilities.
I5	Voluntary	Organisation providing teaching skills and giving the tools for people to start their own business within their communities.
I6	Voluntary	Organisation providing educational services to people from minority ethnic communities, migrant workers and others.
I7	All	Organisation aimed at supporting innovation around health, well-being, education, employment and environment. It provides services to support the sector and SMEs by delivery of strategic advice to the government and local government offices.
I8	Public	Self-advocacy organisation led by people with learning difficulties, aimed at supporting others with disabilities and learning difficulties in the area.
I9	Voluntary	IT organisation collecting and refurbishing electrical IT equipment (mainly computers), which is then sent to schools and other community-related projects in Africa.
I10	Public	Organisation supporting children, teachers and other educational professionals in schools and other educational settings to develop their own creative, entrepreneurial and innovative skills and creative thinking, by the provision of various educational services, training and activities.
I11	Public and private	Organisation aimed towards sustainable development and justice, running a farm and additional buildings as conference and study centres, carrying educational programmes and training.
I12	Voluntary	Organisation serving communities and acting as a support mechanism for those working in volunteering and the community and social enterprise sectors by providing various services, including advice and necessary information.

I13	Voluntary	Organisation assisting people with ongoing mental and physical health problems, through the provision of therapies, care and volunteer and work placements.
I14	Voluntary	Organisation aiming to provide business support and mentoring to community organisations.
I15	Public	Organisation that provides community health services within the area, recognising social care and social welfare as a key element of health services. Their key activities at the moment involve community health services, ranging from hospice to traditional nursing, health visiting, GP practice, dental services, GP out of hours, child development centre and an elderly and mentally ill centre.
I16	Public	Organisation aimed at supporting people with mental health issues, learning difficulties and autism, providing community engagement services, support and employment services to businesses and SEs.
I17	Voluntary	Organisation providing support and services to people living in the area, developing community facilities and addressing recreational, educational and health needs
I18	Public and voluntary	Organisation providing facilities in which other people can run their businesses, involved in reducing health inequalities through community development activities. Its main activities relate to a recording studio, cafe, catering business, community radio station, health and social care contracts.
I19	Voluntary	Organisation carrying out regeneration within its local area, with a particular emphasis on people suffering from economic, social or environmental deprivation.
I20	Voluntary	Organisation offering the provision of services to older people, to help them remain independent at home.
I21	Voluntary	Organisation aiming to support growth and raise funding for other not-for-profit organisations, through the provision of advice and public consultation.
I22	All	Organisation aiming to develop a centre for sustainable urban living, focused on education (educating people about sustainable living, increasing renewable energies and green issues).
I23	Voluntary	Organisation acting for the benefit of children and young people, through the delivery of services and solutions that enhance the life experiences of those in need of help.
I24	Public	Organisation trying to create training and work opportunities for people in the local community. It acts as a care organisation and training business, which helps to educate other local organisations and small businesses, offering advice and support.

I25	Varies	Organisation aimed at raising awareness and bringing support to other organisations that are developing into becoming social enterprises, offering networking, consulting and professional qualified help.
I26	Voluntary	Organisation that supports people with or without learning difficulties and disabilities, providing a platform to work together in communities to make differences on various levels.
I27	Voluntary	Organisation aimed at leading, facilitating and enabling the development of the thriving voluntary and community sector, providing funding advice and supporting the development of a wide range of projects.
I28	Public	Organisation providing school meals to children, using fresh local produce, high-quality ingredients and local suppliers. It is starting to offer cooking lessons to adults and teenagers.
I29	All	Organisation aimed at providing a wide range of opportunities for people to both experience and learn about practical sustainable living. It offers educational support and training.
I30	Voluntary	Organisation offering provision of support services to people in need (e.g. homeless and those with learning difficulties and disabilities) within the local community.

Appendix 21: Interviews Timeline

			First Stage	Second stage		Third Stage	Fourth Stage
	Name	Initial contact and first interviews	Semi-structured interviews and background questionnaires	Semi-structured longitudinal interviews	Additional Contact	Focus Groups	Post Brexit vote semi-structured interviews
I1	John Peterson	March 2012	19 April 2012		22 November 2016		
I2	Samantha Coleman	March 2012	16 April 2012				28 November 2016
I3	Amanda Murray	August 2011	17 November 2011				
I4	Peter Smith	February 2012	16 March 2012		22 November 2016		
I5	Rebecca Castle	March 2012	17 April 2012				
I6	Sarah White	March 2012	04 May 2012				
I7	Andrew Jones	March 2012	24 April 2012		01 June 2012		
I8	Karen Wood	February 2012	17 April 2012				
I9	Dan Green	February 2012	30 March 2012				

I10	Elizabeth Walker	April 2012	15 May 2012				
I11	Mel Taylor	April 2012	08 June 2012				
I12	Jennifer Brown	April 2012	02 July 2012				
I13	Sophie Robinson	May 2012	04 July 2012				
I14	Sue Green	February 2012	29 March 2012				
I15	Jack Williams	March 2012	16 July 2012	16 May 2014 And 3 more times during June 2015	22 November 2016	01 July 2014	
I16	James Brown	April 2012	29 May 2012				
I17	Louise Davidson	February 2012	22 March 2012	09 April 2014 And 3 more times during Summer 2014 and one time in June 2015	17 May 2012		
I18	Philip Clarke	March 2012	17 July 2012				
I19	Stephanie Jackson	May 2012	25 June 2012				
I20	Emma Stewart	April 2012	06 July 2012				
I21	Barbara King	February 2012	23 March 2012				

I22	Mary Walters	April 2012	28 June 2012		04 April 2014		
I23	Anthony Hill	23 August 2011	15 June 2012				
I24	Carol Price	13 September 2011	30 March 2012				
I25	Laura Morgan	01 September 2011	12 June 2012				
I26	Jane Owen	31 August 2011	28 June 2012	26 March 2014 And 5 times throughout summer 2014 and twice in June 2015	12 April 2014	08 August 2014	25 November 2016
I27	Richard Thompson	07 September 2011	26 October 2012		16 October 2012		
I28	Diane Bell	24 August 2011	03 July 2012				29 November 2016
I29	Mark Evans	April 2012	30 July 2012				
I30	Paul Roberts	March 2012	29 May 2012				

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