DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Not Just the Usual Suspects

Designing a new method for public consultation

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Not just the usual suspects

Designing a new method for

public consultation

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requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

'Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.'

Rwy'n cadarnhau fy mod yn cyflwyno'r gwaith gyda chytundeb fy Ngrichwyliwr (Goruchwylwyr)'

'I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.'

I confirm that I am submitting the work with the agreement of my Supervisor(s)'

Abstract

This thesis addresses two possibly interdependent and intractable problems in Wales. Since 1983, successive policies have promised people with learning disabilities ordinary lives. While much has changed, most people with learning disabilities are still waiting and fighting for an ordinary life. Throughout this period, Welsh Government policy has been to involve citizens. Although a few people get involved, there is widespread public non-involvement. The thesis explores possible reasons for both problems. It then focuses on one potentially strategic lever, namely changing the approach to public consultation to an approach congruent with a complex adaptive systems approach to social care.

This research builds on the work of Barod Community Interest Company, the company partner in this KESS doctoral research, who brought their understanding of the problem of social care policies not delivering and the inadequacy of public involvement, together with the start of a possible response – coffee shop conversations'.

The research promotes epistemic justice (Fricker, 2007; Byskov, 2021) by valuing the different knowledges people have, the different ways in which people make sense of the social world, and the different ways in which they use their knowledge. As part of this commitment, the thesis adapts a parallel page format commonly used in Wales for bilingual documents to provide an 'alongsider thesis': one document combining both Everyday and Academic texts.

The research approach is transdisciplinary (Laasch et al., 2020), collaborative (Chang et al., 2013) and design-orientated (Design Council, 2007), an approach chosen as appropriate for addressing a real-life challenge that intersects the worlds of policy-making, academia and lived experience. The research draws together literatures on policy-making and complexity (Cairney, 2012; Lowe et al., 2020), mental models (Jones et al., 2011), social interaction as a performance (Goffman, 1990a (1956)) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) to conceptualise how and why people make sense of the social world.

The first part of the research investigates how social care policy is made, including public (non)involvement in its making, and examines the claim that policy is not working. This comprises a transdisciplinary knowledge review followed by qualitative policy-making

research. The second part of the research uses collaborative research to transform Barod's 'coffee shop conversations' into CSC21, a consultation method with potential to increase the quantity, diversity and quality of public involvement. This comprises collaborative autoethnographic work followed by collaborative field testing with Barod.

CSC21 is novel in using an intersectional purposive sampling grid to select participants, having no researcher involvement in the self-facilitated conversations, and relying for data on notes made by the participants themselves during their conversation. All three features are informed by the theoretical work on how people make sense of the social world. Each conversation is a social occasion involving only people who know each other, with freedom to talk on the pre-agreed topic as they wish while being paid for their time. In field testing, the method proved popular with people who would never usually have taken part in a public consultation. The field tests gave clients access to strategic insights that they reported they could not otherwise have accessed.

This thesis makes contributions to the research and practice of public involvement. Additional methodological contributions include strengthening the argument for transdisciplinary social research, pushing the methodological boundaries of qualitative data analysis and the use of collaborative autoethnography, and problematising accepted research practices that arguably reproduce systemic epistemic injustice. A possibly unique contribution in this regard is the production of the 'alongsider' thesis.

Keywords

policy-making, public consultation, epistemic justice, collaborative autoethnography, mental models, transdisciplinary, purposive sampling, learning disability, Welsh Government, social care policy, conversation.

Foreword

To Alan Armstrong. Pioneer. Working class man who made good. Risk taker. Actor. Game to try anything.

Those baseball caps! Such a practical way for us to remember which role I was in - quite literally, which hat I was wearing as we got used to me being part-student, part-Barod.
The resilience.
The quiet strength.
The solid, thoughtful man.
The steadying, grounding quiet support and encouragement.
The sideways look which I knew meant you had seen something I hadn't.
The silence unless you knew I'd listen, but then the wisdom when you did speak.
The mad-cap workshop ideas. Alan and the party blowers, charades and jargon busters.
The willingness to put parts of your life in the public domain while keeping a private self.
Your patience when I talked over you. My growing respect for your intellectual ability.

Alan the PhD supervisor. It was you who suggested asking how people feel when consulted. In the university, we hadn't thought of that. Alan the co-author.
Alan the idea co-generator and co-presenter
Alan the trainer of doctoral students and early career researchers
Alan who went from outsider to rubbing shoulders comfortably with professors and students alike.

I think Oxford was the turning point. You saw yourself through other eyes, and you saw what others had. And you wanted it. You quietly and doggedly worked for it. Your next career move was to be blazing a trail into academia.

We should have been sitting together today, taking a deep breath then hitting 'submit'. We always planned that I'd go first and wedge doors open as I went through them. Together, we would take on the world. We were stronger together, and I feel the loss of my academic partner-in-crime deeply.

Now I will be wedging doors open for others. As we forge ahead, we know we will be standing on your giant shoulders. Your academic contributions will not be forgotten.

Acknowledgements

Although a thesis must be the work of an individual, it takes a community to produce it.

Thank you to Barod Community Interest Company for releasing me to carry out this doctoral research at considerable cost to the company. Their only absolute requirement of me was 'Don't break!'. [Sorry for breaking twice and thank you for helping piece me back together].

Thank you to Capel Seion, Waunarlwydd, for praying, encouraging, and supporting me practically through the second half of this thesis.

Thank you to Dr Anne Krayer and Professor Catherine Robinson for starting me on the journey and giving me a solid foundation in your academic discipline.

Thank you to Dr R. S. Slack and Dr Sara Louise Wheeler for giving me the space to follow my sociological imagination when it became clear that although my topic was social policy, my research was approach was not. Thank you for the freedom to wander and grow intellectually and academically without a fixed designation when you were my supervisors. My deep thanks for walking with me even after the university made you redundant.

Thank you to Dr Gideon Calder and Dr Clair Doloriert for taking on the unenviable task of helping me corral an unwieldy accumulation of learning, fieldwork, and ideas into a thesis.

Thank you to Jonathan, Steve and Katie, and Rebekah, for never (publicly) questioning my sanity for taking on doctoral studies, and handling with grace the times I was not there for them.

Thank you to my husband, for all your academic, intellectual, spiritual, practical, and never-ending emotional support and advice.

Finally, thank you to my friends and research collaborators, Ellie, Helen, Rachel, and Diane, without whom there would have been little laughter and not so much learning along the way.

New knowledge always builds on existing knowledge. I have followed academic convention for acknowledging existing knowledge by citing documents that are then listed in References.

But what of the many more sources of knowledge that influenced, informed, and shaped this thesis? Traditionally, these are invisible. Naturally, Barod, my supervisors, and my collaborators had a key role in shaping my thinking. In addition, the following people have had significant roles over the years in shaping my thinking:

- Chris Bolton of the Good Practice Exchange, Audit Wales.
- Gov Camp Cymru and Gov Camp UK, and, in particular, Esko Reinikainen.
- The ongoing conversations with people on Twitter.
- Self-advocate researchers from across the UK.
- The academic wing of the inclusive research community, and in particular Professor Melanie Nind, Professor Jan Walmsley, and Dr Andy Powers.

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Abbreviations and glossary

Abbreviations

SSWA   Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

WFGA   Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

NPM   New Public Management

NCCPE   National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement

EBPM   Evidence based policy making

CAE   Collaborative autoethnography

Glossary

This section explains words and phrases that are important in the thesis if they are unfamiliar, there is risk of confusion, or the terms have been created for this thesis.

'Alongsiders'

This means people identifying as working alongside each other despite being traditionally assigned separate and often asymmetric roles in relation to each other. As per Chalachanová et al. (2020).

Barod thinks…

As a workers cooperative that values epistemic justice, each worker-member of Barod has their own unique voice. As a cooperative, regular 'Barod Think' sessions take place where a corporate approach is agreed to any topics of significance to Barod and new knowledge-based workshops and other products/services are developed. Therefore, where a phrase is used that implies Barod is a unity or an entity with its own voice, it is on the basis of decisions made using 'Barod Think'.

'Coffee shop conversations'

- This is Barod's original name for the method. It is used up to and including the videoed conversation as part of the collaborative autoethnography (CAE).

Related terms are:

- **CSC16** and **CSC21** which refer to specific iterations from 2016 and 2021.
- **CSC** is used to refer to the method in general.
- '**A CSC conversation**' is used to refer to a single conversation rather than the method as a whole.

Epistemic justice and social justice

- Epistemic justice is used to mean everyone has opportunities to access knowledge, everyone's knowledge is valued, and everyone is valued for how they make sense of information. This use is possibly closer to Byskov (2021) than Fricker (2007).
- A socially just society is one in which everyone is accorded similar opportunities and there is not a huge gap between the richest and poorest people (as per Rawles, 1972). Additionally, social justice in this thesis includes the absence of discrimination as per the Equality Act 2010.
- Epistemic justice and social justice are two sides of the same coin (as per Byskov, 2021).

Involve and INVOLVE

- Until April 2021, there were two organisations sharing a name. One provided the public involvement function for the National Institute for Health Research for which INVOLVE is used in this thesis. The other is a public participation charity for which Involve is used in this thesis.

Learning disabilities

- Categorising people and then labelling the categories is fraught. The term 'learning disabilities' is one example. The All Wales People First 2021 Senedd Manifesto demands "the right to choose how we identify ourselves" (All Wales People First, 2021, p.5). *People with learning disabilities* is the term voted for by their members, and therefore the term used in this thesis.

Ordinary citizen

- 'Ordinary' means anyone without active involvement in policy-making. 'Citizen' refers to anyone who *could* legitimately become involved even if they never do. As per Exley (2020).

Public involvement

- In this thesis this means any interactions between those in the role of ordinary citizen and public/academic bodies seeking to involve them. As per Health and Care Research Wales (2020, p.2).

Related terms are:

- Consultation which means asking an opinion.
- Formal public consultation which means the legally required publishing of a draft policy document to invite public comment.

Transdisciplinarity

Activities, particularly research, involving multiple sectors as well as multiple academic disciplines. As per Laasch et al. (2020).

Opening Chapters

Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1   Introduction

This chapter introduces why this research matters, the approach taken to the research, and the structure of this thesis.

The chapter opens by highlighting the real-life significance of this research and how it addresses an urgent and intractable problem, namely that people with learning disabilities have been promised an ordinary life since 1983 and most are still waiting (1.2.1). As the overview of the research (1.2.2) makes clear, this research seeks to understand and address a real-life problem rather than adopting a particular disciplinary approach from which the problem is merely observed.

The chapter then introduces a key concept for this thesis, epistemic (in)justice, positioning it as a site of enactment of social (in)justice (1.3). The chapter introduces what it means to describe the research approach as design-orientated, transdisciplinary and collaborative (1.4).

Having introduced the research, the chapter moves on to explain the format and structure of the thesis itself (1.5 and 1.6).

The chapter concludes with a re-statement of the key points from this chapter and orientation towards the content of Chapter 2 (1.7).

1.2   Why this research matters

1.2.1   People's lives matter

Social care policy in Wales has been promising people with learning disabilities an ordinary life since the 1983 All Wales Strategy for the Development of Services for the Mentally Handicapped (Welsh Office, 1983). Its three principles are: a right to normal patterns of life within the community; a right to be treated as individuals; and additional help from their community and professional services to develop their maximum potential as individuals. Such an ordinary life was described as including being enabled to become

respected members of your communities, not being devalued because of your learning disability, and equal access to any services available to the general public.

The same themes are repeated in policy from 1983 to 2021. Indeed, the 1983 policy included a statement that it was required because "progress has been much slower than that envisaged" in achieving change via the 1971 Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped. It does not seem unreasonable to infer that 50 years of successive policies have yet to properly deliver something that sounds very reasonable – an ordinary life for people with learning disabilities. This argument and the underpinning evidence are unpacked in Chapter 2 (2.4, Learning Disability Context) and Chapter 4 (4.6, Welsh political context).

People with learning disabilities and their families have had some level of involvement in the making of policy since 1983. Welsh Government has underlined time and again in social care policy and legislation the importance of public involvement. It is there in the 1983 All Wales Strategy (Welsh Office, 1983, p.i) and still there in the general principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (para.6-7), whether in relation to personal use of services as 'voice and control' or the services themselves through "citizens and professionals sharing power and working together as equal partners" (Care Council for Wales, 2017). Indeed, public involvement is the central pillar of mainstream Welsh Government policy (see 4.8), not just learning disability or social care policy. However, there seems to be some disconnect between policy and practice, with the Welsh Government's intentions not appearing to translate into ordinary citizens getting involved in policy-making (see 4.7 and 5.4 to 5.8). In relation to the involvement of people with learning disabilities, a 2018 report noted that "challenges were also identified…to ensure the voices of people with a learning disability and their families and carers are listened to and acted upon across public services" (Welsh Government, 2018a, p.4).

The impetus for this research was a disquiet with current public involvement practices and widespread public non-involvement. This disquiet was articulated by Barod Community Interest Company (Barod[1]) who approached Bangor University with a need for research to develop better methods and approaches to public involvement.

This thesis begins, therefore, with two possibly related urgent and intractable real-life problems: how to make social care policy that is better able to deliver on what it

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[1] This company is not to be confused with The Barod Project (Barod), the 2017 rebranding of a Welsh charity called DrugAid.

promises, and how to address the weaknesses observed by Barod in current public involvement practices.

These are not just conceptual problems or challenges for services; these have led to problems that are blighting people's lives despite the last 50 years of policies. The statistics and policy statements about health, education, employment, and housing (see 2.4 and 4.6) represent real people who are facing real injustices that were supposed to have been addressed long since.

This thesis matters because people's lives matter. Developing a new approach to public consultation is a modest but strategic contribution to such intractable problems.

1.2.2 Overview of the research

Barod had already carried out considerable thought and work around public (non)involvement in policy-making, as is described in 2.5 and 2.6. Their work included developing an idea that they called 'coffee shop conversations'. They needed academic support to develop the idea further, and this became the focus of a research proposal jointly designed with Bangor University. It became a partnership between Barod and Bangor University through the Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarship (KESS) scheme. KESS is a European Social Fund programme that builds partnerships by bringing together a student (who gains a research and industry experience), a company (that gets academic research carried out and builds its own research capacity), and academic expertise from Welsh universities.

As such, Barod's ideas and work were moved into the academic world with a view to better understanding the problems of public involvement and developing possible solutions to take back into the real world. In some ways this positions the research within public sociology (as described by Burawoy, 2005). As a form of public sociology, my approach has been to include outsiders (Becker, 1973) and support an "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" (Foucault, 2003, p.7) rather than engage in practices closer to knowledge translation. My approach resonates more with Fatsis (2018) than public engagement approaches to public sociology (eg National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, 2020).

The most appropriate approach for research such as this was deemed to be design-orientated and transdisciplinary. Starting with a problem rather than a specific research

question needs a design-orientated approach. A real-life problem is better understood if viewed from more than one angle and through more than one academic lens.

In a nutshell, the argument of the thesis[2] is:

- Wales needs social care policies that achieve what they say they are designed to achieve. In relation to people with learning disabilities, this means making good on decades of policy intentions for people's lives that cannot yet be demonstrated as having been achieved.
- There is a need for more strategic use of and better methods for public **consultation**.[3]
- Achieving policies that work will require more than just a new public consultation approach. It will require a recognition of the **complexity** (Lowe et al., 2020) of social care issues, an acceptance that people use different **mental models** (Cárdenas-Figueroa and Navarro, 2020) which implies what any person knows is partial and perspectived, a realisation that there can be no social justice without **epistemic justice** (Fricker, 2007; Byskov, 2021), and a willingness to adopt **transdisciplinarity** (Laasch et al., 2020).

The programme of research is divided into two parts. The first part explores how Welsh Government policy is made, how people *think* it is made, the role of public involvement, and people's perceptions of public involvement. This involves a combination of desk-based research (literature and knowledge review) and field research. It forms the evidence base for the second part of the research. The second part involves developing a public consultation method, building on initial work conducted by Barod, the company partner. This work begins with collaborative autoethnographic work, with me as part of a team of five women from Gwynedd and Anglesey. It then moves to collaborative field testing of the method, now called CSC16, with Barod.

The 'not just the usual suspects' of the thesis title refers to those collaborating in the research **and** those who took part in public consultation for the first time during the field testing. While collaborative research is common, the collaborators were somewhat unusual as will become clear in Chapter 2 in the description of the key actors.

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[2] The terms in **bold** will be unpacked later in this chapter and more thoroughly in Chapter 4.
[3] The task of reimagining other more coproductive aspects of public involvement is left to others, for example those responsible for the outstanding work of Co-production Network for Wales and its online Knowledge Base (Co-production Network for Wales, n.d.).

To achieve its aims, this thesis needs to make visible some of the reasons policy-making isn't working well and deliver a credible method that contributes to epistemic justice in policy-making rather than reinforcing existing injustice.

This raises the question: what *is* epistemic (in)justice?

1.3   Epistemic (in)justice

Social justice is a deeply rooted concern of much of sociology (Becker, 1967; Denzin, 2017), with the term being used for a number of related concepts (Buettner-Schmidt and Lobo, 2011). This thesis uses the definition of Buettner-Schmidt and Lobo (2011):

> "Social justice was defined as full participation in society and the balancing of benefits and burdens by all citizens, resulting in equitable living and a just ordering of society. Its attributes included: (1) fairness; (2) equity in the distribution of power, resources, and processes that affect the sufficiency of the social determinants of health; (3) just institutions, systems, structures, policies, and processes; (4) equity in human development, rights, and sustainability; and (5) sufficiency of well-being." (Buettner-Schmidt and Lobo, 2011, p.948).

Knowledge and knowing is part of everyday human and social life. As Newbiggin and Ridley say, "epistemic injustice is foundational to other forms of social injustice because the capacity as a giver of knowledge is intrinsic to human value" (2018, p.37). The question needs to be asked, therefore, "what knowledge counts and whose knowledge matters?" (ibid.). The term commonly used for this is epistemic injustice, where someone is "wronged specifically in her capacity as knower" (Fricker, 2007, p.18).

Making injustice visible is a first step toward challenging it. Fricker refers to two forms of injustice. The first, testimonial, refers to (de)valuing knowledge depending on who expresses it. In other words, some people are treated as less credible witnesses. This can relate to their social status, personal characteristics or professional role. The second, hermeneutic, is "the injustice of having some significant area of one's social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to hermeneutical marginalization" (ibid., p.158). It encompasses a lack of conceptual resources for understanding one's experience (Hookway, 2010) and disadvantage when trying to make sense of a social experiences as a consequence of gaps in collective understanding of such experiences (Fricker, 2006). It can include failing to recognise people as "capable of obtaining and transmitting knowledge" (Hookway, 2010, p.152), or silencing people (Dotson, 2011).

In this thesis, epistemic (in)justice is used for any form of social (in)justice as it relates to people's knowledge and ways of knowing, following the definition of Byskov (2021) whereby "In order for someone to be unjustifiably discriminated against as a knower, they must at the same time also suffer from other social injustices" (ibid., p.118).

Fricker argues that the systemic experience of epistemic injustice requires her to focus on the evil of epistemic injustice rather than the virtue of epistemic justice (ibid., p.1), and yet this section is headed epistemic (in)justice. This reflects the dual function of this thesis in making visible epistemic injustice in academic and policy life, but also enacting epistemic justice and attempting to do so *as if* it were already normative.

In terms of epistemic justice, it is tempting to "Have no respect whatsoever for authority; forget who said it and instead look what he starts with, where he ends up, and ask yourself 'is it reasonable'" (Feynman, 2007, pp.28-29). Indeed, a personal commitment to epistemic justice had meant eschewing a doctorate for two decades. But, quite simply, in a world that does respect the badges of authority, Barod decided it was in Barod's best commercial and political interests to have someone with credentials that would open doors that we had not been able to. At its heart, Barod is trying to lever changes in discourse. Every and any tool that adds force to that lever or increases the strength or positioning of the levers is worth using. If having a Dr Collis predisposes powerful audiences to assume that what Dr Collis says is more reliable than what Mrs Collis says, then the decision becomes: either refuse to use that lever because it is forged by the epistemic injustice we fight or use the lever in our fight to change the very system of epistemic injustice that forged it.

As part of the commitment to epistemic justice, the research straddles the real world/academic world boundary. One consequence was the decision not to choose an academic disciplinary way of viewing the real-life problem, but to look around the academic world for any disciplinary perspectives that might shed light on the real-life problem. It is also evidenced by the decision to produce a novel format for a thesis, a decision explained in 1.5.1.

1.4   Design-orientated, transdisciplinary, collaborative research

Research takes shape in part because of the researcher and their context. Two academics in similar contexts with similar goals will design and conduct research

differently because they are different from each other. That this research became design-orientated, transdisciplinary, and collaborative is in part a function of me and my context. My perspective on life is reflexive, critical, and broadly social constructionist. My research is reflexive because reflexivity is deeply embedded in who I am and how I live everyday life. My critical stance is that research is a powerful and strategic tool to create the conceptual frameworks that facilitate social change, and to enable people to step back from their immediate lived experience of social injustice in order to examine that experience more analytically, systematically and from different angles. Social justice is a legitimate concern of the critical qualitative researcher (Denzin, 2017). This research, as all my research, is positioned as both critical and qualitative. I am also, ontologically, a social constructionist. Although this is usually described as an epistemological stance, for me it is ontological as it is a belief about the nature of the social world and not simply the social nature of knowledge. It is built into the foundations of the public involvement method, the development of which I describe.

1.4.1 Design-orientated

The design orientation is appropriate because the research problem is a design problem, namely: how does one develop a method for public consultation that may contribute to the making of social care policies that work?

The design process itself includes a diversity of processes and models that share the purpose of creating a service or product to fulfil a need. Herbert Simon's definition of design is still at the heart of design thinking: "Everybody designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones." (Simon, 1969, pp.55). This definition would clearly include design-oriented critical qualitative inquiry and policy-making. Since then, design thinking has blossomed. Dubberly (2005) describes 150 models, charting the developments associated with changes in design thinking, notably the changes as designers began to combine their thinking first with systems thinking and then complexity theory. One of the most accessible ways to engage with the design world for the first time is through the work of the Design Council. Their work includes the 'double diamond' visualisation of the design process (Design Council, 2007). The diamond shapes represent the expansions and contractions of focus during the design process. It is not the most nuanced of models, but it is perhaps the most accessible to those unfamiliar with design and is adequate for the current purpose.

The design orientation means the research comprises two parts. The first 'diamond' involves discovering as much as possible about the problem and the context for which a

solution is to be developed. This elevates the literature/evidence review (Chapter 4) in this thesis to being part of the design-orientated research, rather than a preamble to new research. Unfortunately, the knowledge review revealed strategic knowledge gaps that needed to be addressed through fieldwork (Chapter 5) before it was possible to begin developing a solution.

The second part of the research equates to the second 'diamond' in focusing on developing a workable solution. That design research is reported in Chapters 6 and 7 which together take the design from 'coffee shop conversations' via CSC16 to CSC21.

The nature of design is that discussion cannot be stored until the design work has been completed. Each next stage is predicated on a discussion of the previous stage's findings. Therefore, some of the discussion traditionally left for a discussion chapter has taken place in-chapter as the findings are reported and decisions are made about the next step to take. This positions design-orientated research close to action research (Bilandzic and Venable, 2011).

1.4.2 Transdisciplinary

The term 'transdisciplinarity' has different academic usages. It should not be conflated or confused with interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary work where each actor maintains their distinct disciplinary practices and approach to knowledge (Jeffrey, 2003).

It was known from the start that this research would address a real-life problem, and "You cannot ask all the interesting questions about any really significant phenomenon within the same theory or even within a set of commensurable, logically integratable, theories… because all problems – like people – can be seen in different ways" (Calhoun, 1995, p.8).

Transdisciplinary research is designed to "grasp the complexity of problems, take into account the diversity of lifeworld and scientific perceptions of problems, link [different] knowledge, and develop knowledge and practices that promote…the common good" (Pohl and Hirsch-Hadorn, 2007, p.20). It presumes social constructionism and presumes that the research begins and concludes in real-life settings (Laasch et al., 2020, p.741).

When the research was being designed and conducted, there was no obvious off-the-shelf model for something that tried to integrate different disciplinary approaches while working across sectors. By the time of writing the thesis, such a model exists as is

summarised on the following page (Table 1.1, adapted from Laasch et al., 2020, pp.736). This is a good retrospective definition of the research, although this thesis is the work of a "solo transdisciplinarian" (Berstein, 2015). This required me "to fuse knowledge from a number of different disciplines and engage with stakeholders in the process of generating knowledge." (Wickson et al., 2006, pp.1052).

Table 1.1   Summary of definition of transdisciplinarity (Laasch et al., 2020)

	Sectorality	**Intersectorality**
Interdisciplinarity	*Sectoral interdisciplinarity* Collaborative practices by practitioners from multiple disciplines, but only one sector integrating knowledge for a shared overarching issue-object.	*Transdisciplinarity* Collaborative practices by practitioners from several disciplines and sectors integrating knowledge for a shared overarching issue-object.
Disciplinarity	*Sectoral disciplinarity* Collaborative practices by practitioners from one discipline in one sector, using discipline-sector endemic knowledge to address a discipline-sector issue-object.	*Intersectoral disciplinarity* Collaborative practices by practitioners from multiple sectors in one discipline integrating knowledge of the discipline from multiple sectors in order to address a disciplinary issue-object shared between sectors.

Transdisciplinarity is an approach to researching "'wicked problems' that need creative solutions", relying on "stakeholder involvement and engaged, socially responsible science" (Berstein, 2015[4]). This challenges "an acceptance of disciplines as a basis for organizing knowledge, inquiry and teaching" (ibid). Wicked problems are ones that have proven resistant to solution (Rittel and Webber, 1973). Public involvement in policy-making has the hallmarks of a wicked problem. Despite rhetoric and interventions at different times, in different ways, by different institutions, and in different contexts, only a tiny minority are actively involved.

Transdisciplinarity is appropriate for researching and analogous with complex adaptive systems, requiring as it does the bringing together of multiple actors, informations and viewpoints to "create something new that is irreducible to the disciplinary components that were initially brought to bear" (Leavy, 2011, p.31). It is a common approach in environmental science, which is perhaps unsurprising given ecosystems are archetypal complex adaptive systems and research challenges in environmental science can rarely

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[4] No paragraph or page numbers provided online or on downloaded pdf.

be addressed without transdisciplinarity (Oliver et al., 2017). Transdisciplinary complex adaptive systems even has its own acronym, T-CAS, (Murphy et al., 2021), where it is used in Wales to describe the emergence of a school health research network. T-CAS cannot be separated from concepts of co-production, collaboration, and action research as a mechanism for coproducing change through system stewardship rather than centralised policy interventions (Murphy et al., 2021). Such approaches are still in their infancy, and it would be wrong to imply that this doctoral research was knowingly designed as T-CAS research. However looking back from 2021 at the last six years of doctoral research, T-CAS is a good descriptor for the research approach.

Transdisciplinarity also requires the ability to "think laterally, imaginatively, and creatively not only about solutions to problems but to the combination of factors that need to be considered." (Berstein, 2015[5]). These are skills I have worked to develop throughout my doctoral studies.

The drawback of solo transdisciplinary research as a doctoral student is that it can give the impression of having studied too broadly and too shallowly if research is seen as necessarily orientated around academic disciplines (Fig. 1.1).

However, if the research were re-orientated around the real-life problem of public involvement in policy making rather than orientated around academic disciplines, it is clear that in depth, focused research has taken place (Fig. 1.2). It is this re-orientation that positions this research as both transdisciplinary and of sufficient depth to meet the requirements of doctoral examination.

Transdisciplinary research is no substitute for monodisciplinary research, that is research conducted within narrowly focused areas of expertise. They require two very different sets of academic expertise. The transdisciplinary researcher needs expertise in finding and synthesising knowledge from different academic disciplines and different knowledge sectors (Laasch et al., 2020). I would argue that both forms of research are needed if the academic world is to increase its real world impact and respond to the UK research councils' rhetoric of impact and knowledge translation (eg Arts and Humanities Research Council, n.d.).

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[5] No paragraph or page numbers provided online or on downloaded pdf.

Figure 1.1   Saying a little from a lot of disciplines (crossdisciplinary research)
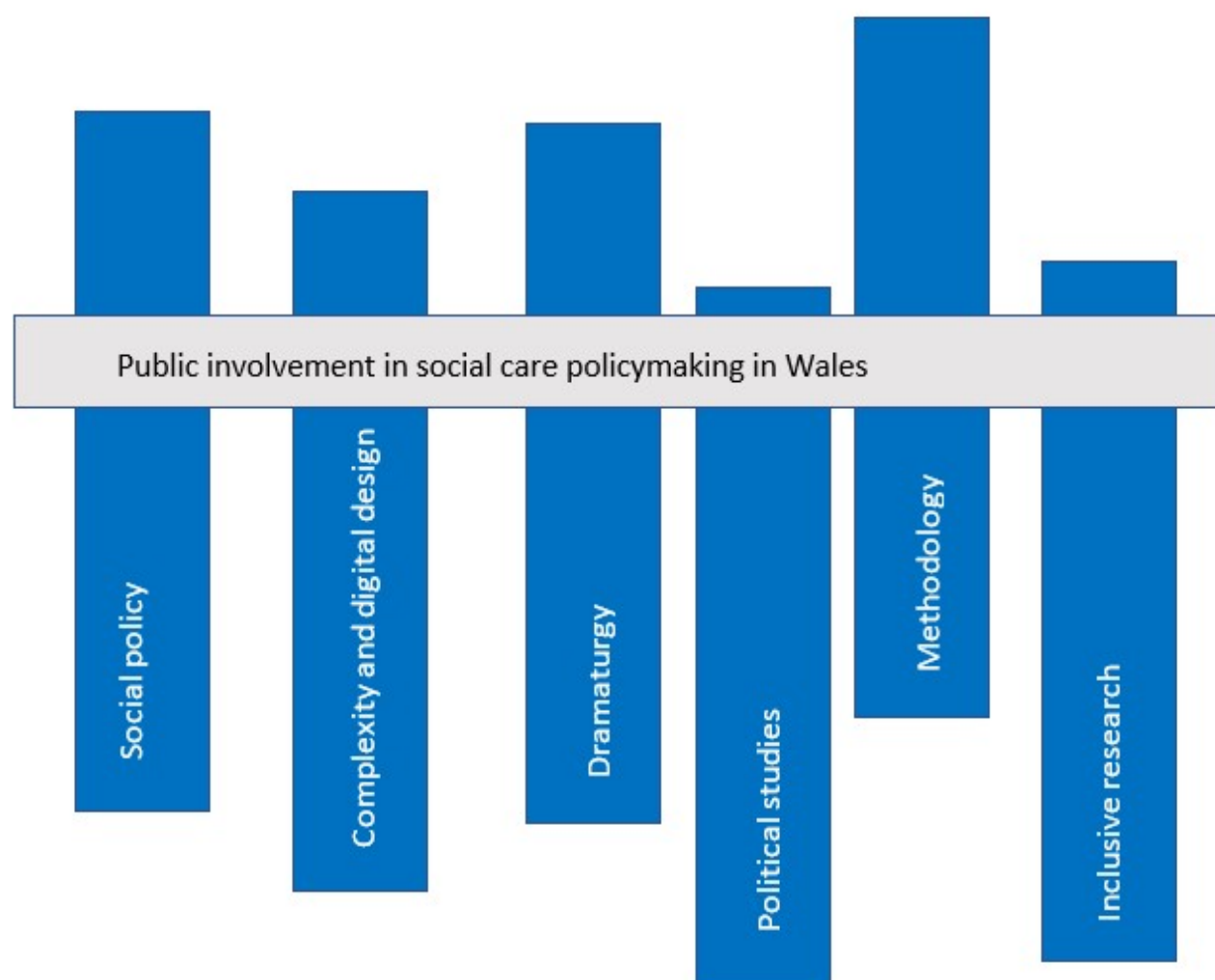
Figure 1.2   Saying a lot about a little (transdisciplinary research)
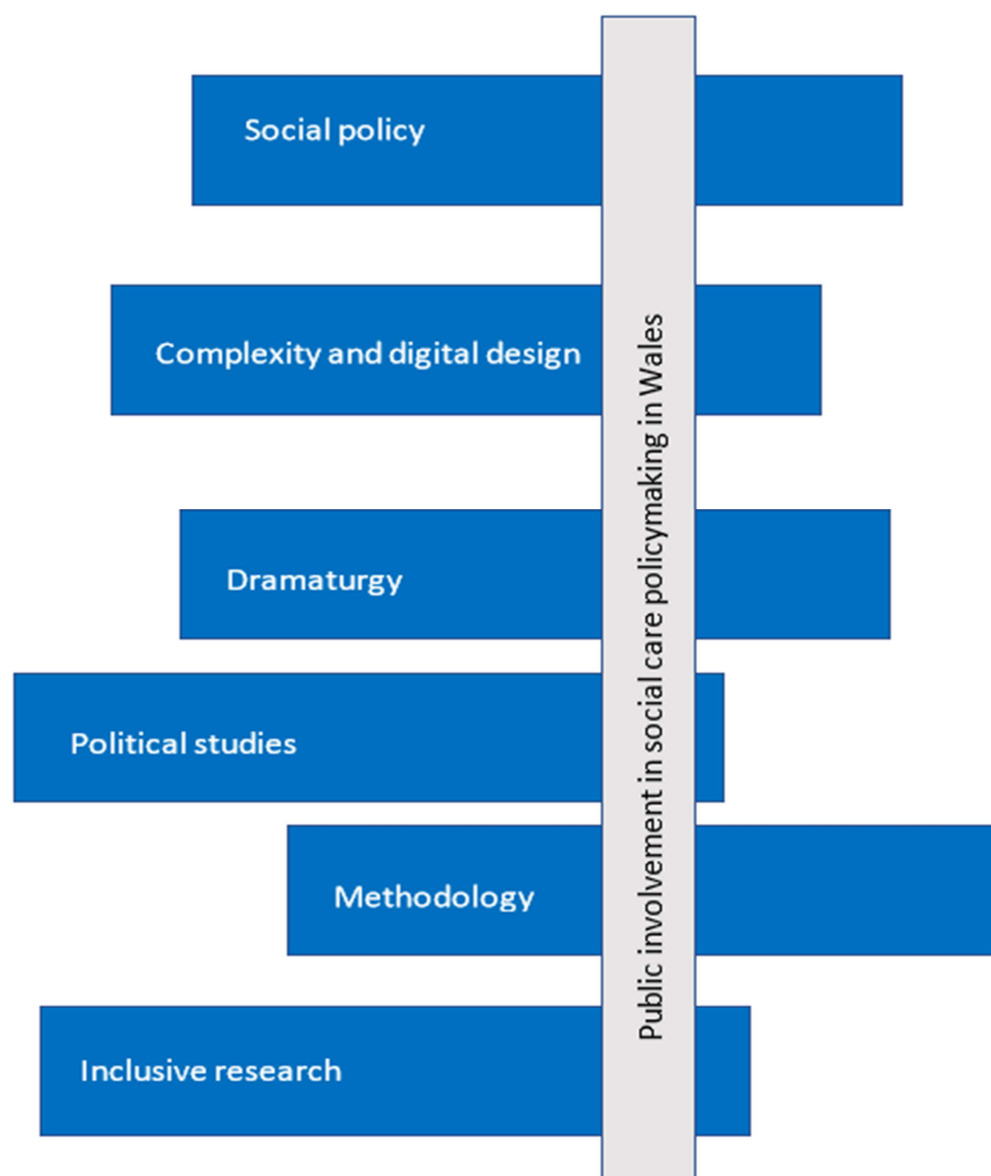
1.4.3 Collaborative

Collaboration is a prerequisite of transdisciplinarity. My dual reasons for collaborative research are that knowledge is partial and perspectived and the epistemic justice of valuing the knowledge of the 'participant' as highly as my knowledge as 'researcher'. This second reason situates my use of 'collaborative' close to its use in inclusive research. The KESS partnership made it both easy and desirable to develop collaborative working with the company partner.

Collaborative is often asserted of research, but less often defined. The intention was to enact epistemic justice in the collaborative relationships and research. Fortuitously, by the time it came to writing the thesis, there was a powerful collaborative image from the world of inclusive research, that of 'alongsiders' (Chalachanová et al., 2020). For me, this image denotes a positionality whereby no-one in the collaboration is an insider or an outsider, and there is no hierarchy of knowledge. This makes it easier to enact both hermeneutic and testimonial justice. It does, however, sit uneasily with the thesis requirements for the doctoral examination that this thesis must show "Acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice" (Bangor University, 2021), without reference to the equal value of other ways of knowing and other forms of knowledge. For that reason, this thesis is, quite literally, submitted for examination as an 'alongsider thesis'.

Whether this research turned out to be collaborative, transdisciplinary and design-oriented is addressed in the methodological discussion (Chapter 8).

1.5 Conversations

My research revolves around conversations. I have taken part in academic conversations; I have used conversational methods; I have developed a conversation-based method from its first iteration as 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC21.

When I picture a conversation, my first image is of people in each other's physical company who are listening and talking. That is quickly followed in my mind by images of phone calls, video calls, rapid exchanges over social media or text, awkward moments, miscommunications, and intimate exchanges. For me, a viva is easily recognisable as a conversation: examiners of academic repute and an apprentice academic meet and

interact verbally and synchronously, and together they co-create an academic conversation.

But a thesis is a written text. The idea of a *thesis* as joining an academic conversation, or indeed any text joining any kind of conversation challenges assumptions about what a conversation is. It is difficult at first glance to see how and with whom 'the thesis' can be considered as being in conversation, or what that conversation might look like.

Throughout, I have been mindful that new knowledge must be connected to "what's already been said, and this must be done in such a way that people understand the point." (Becker, 1986, p.141). At the same time, I have been mindful that "If you take the old way too seriously, you can deform the argument you want to make, bend it out of shape in order to make it fit into the dominant approach" (ibid., p.146). This is pertinent because I have tried to stand at the intersection of three worlds with the hope of strengthening the connections between them. Their approaches to knowing "start from different premises, address different questions, [and] recognize a different kind of answer as appropriate" (ibid., p.147). Although Becker suggests this means "there is nothing to translate. They are simply not talking about the same things." (ibid.), I believe it is possible, indeed essential, for the worlds to find ways to communicate. That is part of the purpose of this thesis. However, just as a monologue is frequently boring and rarely sparks creative co-creation of new ideas, so a thesis that only engages with academic literature in one chapter before commencing a monologue that lasts until the Discussion chapter is, to my mind, missing conversational opportunities. I have therefore constructed the thesis more as a conversation between my findings and the writing of others.

St Pierre (2014) raises the interesting question of why published words are treated differently from transcribed words, rather than being analysed and held in conversation with each other. In some ways I have adopted this approach. In others, I have respected the academic convention that the act of constructing an academic paper produces a qualitatively different knowledge from conversation transcripts or the less formal communications among academics that are part of everyday academic life. For this reason, only published academic literature and professional practice documents (including websites) are included as cited references.

At this juncture, I want to highlight the emotional and cognitive tension of using the kinds of knowledge and ways of knowing that are privileged in the academic world to argue that such privileging enacts and reinforces epistemic injustice thereby reproducing

social injustice. Part of the response was to produce an artefact for submission with the traditional academic thesis. This comprises left hand pages in Everyday[6] (Learning Disability Wales/Collis, 2012). The right hand pages (and the Word document submitted for examination in line with university regulations) are in Academic. This parallel page format is a standard bilingual approach, allowing people to read across texts and giving equal status to both texts (Comisiynydd y Gymraeg/Welsh Language Commissioner, 2014, p.17). Using a bilingual design technique underscores that Everyday and Academic are treated *as if* different languages in this thesis.

1.5.1 'Alongsider thesis'

Chalachanová et al. (2020) describe a desired relationship within an inclusive research team as one of 'alongsiders'. 'Alongsiders' are people who identify as working alongside each other despite being traditionally assigned separate and often asymmetric roles in relation to each other.

Epistemic injustice includes restricting access to valued knowledge (Byskov, 2021) and such injustice has no place in a research team of 'alongsiders'. Therefore, it is important as part of being 'alongsiders' to develop ways to make valued knowledge available to all. If I were to write in Academic only, I restrict access to the knowledge within my thesis to academic audiences and those willing and able to access knowledge that is written using academic language and conventions. This would exclude most of the Directors of the company partner, the colleagues from Barod who researched collaboratively with me and the other members of the collaborative autoethnographic team.

While KESS2 requires a report to the company partner, there is no expectation that the full academic knowledge of the thesis will be included within that report (KESS, 2018, slide 17). Instead of this approach, I wanted to see whether I could produce a side-by-side thesis that makes the same kind of knowledge accessible to both audiences, albeit using different vocabulary, with differences in degrees to which something requires detailed explanation and considering what I know of how my research collaborators make sense of the world. In other words, the 'alongsider thesis' attempts to write not just about its topic but from within its topic (Ashmore, 1989). This is not an approach

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[6] 'Everyday' is a term coined by Barod for a style of writing that uses people's everyday spoken language and sentence structures. It is explained in Clear & Easy, a handbook I researched and co-created for a consortium of organisations led by Learning Disability Wales. The handbook also describes 'Easy Read', a combination of graphics and simplified text preferred by many self-advocates.

commonly seen academically, perhaps because it is tacitly assumed that academic knowledge is not and cannot be for all.

The 'alongsider thesis' is by no means perfectly done. I have attempted to open a conversation by doing this, rather than offer the last word.

1.6   Structure of the thesis

Foreword is an open letter to Alan Armstrong. His death in February 2021 was personally devastating and a tragic loss to the academic community as well as to his friends, Carmarthenshire People First and Barod.

1.6.1 Opening chapters

Chapter 1, **Introduction**, begins by explaining why this thesis matters and giving an overview of the research (1.2). The chapter then explains an important concept for this thesis: epistemic (in)justice (1.3). The chapter moves on to talk about the type of research approach taken (1.4) and the idea of a thesis as entering an academic conversation (1.5). This includes explaining why this thesis is told in two texts, one academic (right page) and one more everyday (left page). The chapter then explains the structure of the thesis (1.6) before offering a brief conclusion (1.7).

Chapter 2, **Context,** explains why the context is important (2.1) before introducing key actors in this research (2.2). One of the recurrent themes of the research is being insiders and outsiders – or perhaps 'alongsiders' - and this is introduced in relation to my own positionality (2.3). The chapter moves on to look at the learning disability context in Wales (2.4) before presenting work done by Barod before this doctorate began. Their work on public involvement has considerable merit and this is the first time it has been brought into academic conversation (2.5). Their development of 'coffee shop conversations' meant this research did not begin with a blank sheet (2.6). The chapter concludes (2.7) by highlighting Barod's contributions and summarising the roles of the other actors in this research.

Chapter 3, **Methodology and methods**, is an extended chapter. As the introduction (3.1) explains, methodology and methods are both the means and the topic of this research. The methodology uses four filtering questions to identify methodological commitments before explaining how these commitments impact the possibilities for research design (3.2). Researching ethically, including epistemically justly, presented

conceptual and practical challenges particularly as not all parties had the same ethical expectations (3.3). The meaning of the word 'data' and how to work with data are described and related to epistemic (in)justice (3.4). The overall research design (3.5) is followed by descriptions of five methods. Interviews (3.6), collaborative autoethnographic research (CAE) (3.7), and collaborative field testing (3.8) are described and discussed in some detail before moving on to the knowledge review and other literature work (3.9) and the workshops (3.10). This research pushes some methodological and methods boundaries, so some are highlighted (3.11) before a brief conclusion (3.12).

1.6.2 Part 1 Learning about policy-making and public involvement

Chapter 4, **Knowledge review**, outlines meanings of policy, policy-making and stakeholders (4.2) before describing three approaches to understanding policy-making (4.3). The chapter addresses two key concepts, evidence (4.4) and public involvement (4.5) before moving on to focus on Wales. This begins with the Welsh political and social care policy context (4.6) before looking more closely at public involvement in developing the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (4.7). The knowledge review updates information about the Welsh context (4.8) before explaining that little is known about everyday policy-making practices in Wales (4.9). The discussion (4.10) draws together different parts of the knowledge review and discusses the findings that appear most important to consider when developing CSC. The chapter finishes with a conclusion (4.11).

Chapter 5, **Policy-making research** reports empirical findings. It opens with a recap of the fieldwork (5.1) and a description of the analyses (5.2). The findings are reported in sections 5.3 to 5.7 and summarised in 5.8. The discussion (5.9) draws together information relevant to developing CSC. The chapter finishes with a conclusion (5.10).

1.6.3 Part 2 Development of a public consultation method

Chapter 6, **Developing CSC16,** moves from a brief introduction (6.1) to a recap of the collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) activities. The videoed CSC is described (6.3), followed by information about the team members' individual accounts (6.4). Analysis is described from the half-day collaborative workshop (6.5), individual reflections or analysis (6.6), and a full-day workshop (6.7). Further analysis is reported in 6.8. Two strands of theorising are described in 6.9 and the learning about CSC is discussed (6.10). The chapter moves to a description of CSC16 itself and additional notes for Barod

to inform the collaborative field testing (6.11). The chapter finishes with a conclusion (6.12).

Chapter 7, **Developing CSC21**, outlines the collaborative field testing (7.1.1) before reporting the work with Client 1 (7.2) and recommended changes based on feedback and a development workshop (7.3). The second field test, Client 2, is reported in 7.4. In 2019, most of the original CAE team met to hear and discuss Barod's experiences of using CSC16, the developments, and some of the immediate challenges (7.5). That CAE workshop made it possible to develop the next iteration of CSC, CSC21 (7.6). A worked example of CSC21 is given in lieu of a final round of field testing (7.6.4). This is followed by discussion and theorising of CSC21 (7.7). The chapter finishes with a conclusion (7.8).

1.6.4 Closing chapters

Chapter 8, **Discussion**, begins by explaining that the design-orientated approach means much discussion has been incremental (8.1). The discussion comprises four sections: the original challenge of making social care policy that works (8.2); looking at the work still needed on CSC21 (8.3); a methodological critique of the research itself (8.4); and epistemic (in)justice in relation to this research (8.5). The chapter finishes with a conclusion (8.6).

Chapter 9, **Conclusions**, begins by reviewing the purpose of this research (9.2), whether Barod got what they were expecting (9.3), and tentative conclusions about what may be required for Welsh Government to make policy that means people with learning disabilities finally get ordinary lives (9.4). The chapter then considers the contributions of CSC21 in and of itself, the research approach, and knowledge transfer (9.5). The thesis is about to conclude, but work remains unfinished, so the next possible steps are described in 9.6. The thesis concludes where it began, with Alan's life, and the aspiration that one day having an ordinary life will no longer require someone with learning disabilities to be an extraordinary person (9.7).

References and appendices follow the standard format.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter highlights the real-life significance of this research, namely that people with learning disabilities were first promised ordinary lives in 1983 and most are still waiting. This is an urgent and seemingly intractable problem.

Barod has highlighted problems with public involvement. This may be associated with the failure of successive policies to deliver ordinary lives to most people with learning disabilities. Barod began working on a putative solution, 'coffee shop conversations', before approaching Bangor University for assistance.

This is a KESS doctorate. This means that the research project was co-designed by academics and a company partner and financed by the European Social Fund together with Bangor University and Barod.

The research is design-orientated, comprising two parts. In the first, the research seeks to gain a fuller understanding of the problems of social care policy-making and public involvement. In the second, the focus moves to developing a possible solution.

The research is necessarily design-orientated rather than question-driven due to the nature of the research problem. That the research is transdisciplinary, and collaborative is rooted in the researcher's commitments to social and epistemic justice, reflexivity and social constructionism.

As part of the commitment to epistemic justice, the thesis is presented in its printed format as an 'alongsider thesis'. This is not possible to replicate in Word, the format required for doctoral examination, and the alongsider thesis is submitted as a PDF artefact as Appendix 4.

The next chapter describes the situatedness of the research in terms of the actors, the learning disability context, and how Barod came to approach Bangor University with a proposal for a KESS partnership.

Chapter 2   Context

2.1   Introduction

The previous chapter outlines why this research matters, the approach taken to the research, and the structure of this thesis.

This chapter describes the situatedness of the research in terms of the actors, the learning disability context, and how Barod came to approach Bangor University with a proposal for a KESS partnership.

The chapter begins by providing information that puts this research into context. It explains the implications of a Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarship (KESS) funded doctorate (2.2.1), describing the company partner and the student (2.2.2 and 2.2.3). The research involved collaborative autoethnographic work and so the team are introduced in this chapter (2.2.4).

The chapter describes a number of institutional changes, not always of my volition, and their impact on this research (2.2.5). My personal fuzzy and changing situatedness as insider/outsider are discussed and the potential value of the concept of the 'alongsider' is reiterated (2.3).

The chapter then moves to the learning disability context in Wales (2.4). While Chapter 1 asserts that social care policy has failed to deliver ordinary lives, this chapter evidences that assertion and describes some of the key actors in the learning disability world.

Barod's conceptual work on public involvement is presented in 2.5. This unpublished work forms part of the foundation for this research. Barod began work on a possible new approach to public involvement in 2013 (2.6), but by 2014 recognised the need for academic assistance. At this point, they approached Bangor University with a view to co-designing a submission to KESS for possible funding of a research studentship.

The chapter concludes with a re-statement of the key points from this chapter and how this informs the methodology and methods of Chapter 3 (2.7).

2.2 Key actors

2.2.1 Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships (KESS) programme

Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships (KESS 2) is a pan-Wales higher level skills initiative led by Bangor University on behalf of the HE sector in Wales. It is part funded by the Welsh Government's European Social Fund (ESF) convergence programme for West Wales and the Valleys. This research was funded by KESS/KESS2 (Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships). One purpose of KESS is to establish research collaborations between Welsh companies and universities. The application was co-designed by Bangor University and Barod, initially as a Masters by Research in the final year of KESS, but subsequently continuing as a doctorate for the equivalent of an additional two years full time under KESS2. The implication of this is that the additional research had to build on what had been designed as a one year research project. If it had been conceived as three years full time equivalent from the start, it might have been approached differently.

2.2.2 Company partner

Barod Community Interest Company is a small cooperative based in Wales, set up in 2013 and run by a mixture of people with and without learning disabilities. As a Community Interest Company, it has not only business aims but community aims as detailed in their community interest statement. The original legal form was a company limited by guarantee with small membership. This means to be a member is to be a director and vice versa. As a workers cooperative, to be a worker was also to be a member/director. This later changed to a wide membership, meaning not all members were directors, and while all workers were members there was also an option for community membership for non-workers. As a company limited by guarantee generating its income from trading, Barod is defined as part of the social enterprise sector. For most of its existence, the composition of the board of directors means it can be framed as a disabled person's organisation and the composition of its workforce has always met the EU definition of a social business and the UK definition of a social firm.

I was one of four co-founders. I stood down as director shortly after becoming the KESS student but remained an employee until October 2020. Barod's strapline is "spreading ideas, changing attitudes". Their focus is on making public life more accessible for everyone. The initial idea for this research was theirs. Throughout, they provided a reality check of the academic world approach. For example, when I explained to Alan

Armstrong how Fricker used epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007, 2012, 2017), he nodded and said, "You mean when people treat us like we don't know anything, and they think they know better than us, and when they say, 'oh you don't need to know about this'" (pers. comm.). It is ironic that the academic language of epistemic injustice was inaccessible to him, but the experience of such injustice was all too readily accessible. It is worse than ironic that the context for his response was an early experience of attempting to engage with the academic world.[7]

Alan died as this thesis was being finalised. Alan and I tried to model what we called 'side-by-side' research co-production (Centre for Research in Inclusion, 2017). We thoroughly approved when the term 'alongsiders' was introduced (Chalachanová et al., 2020) which is one of the reasons for its adoption and extension in this thesis.

2.2.3 Student

As student and Barod employee, I have spent the last six years operating and carrying out often overlapping research in two organisational contexts, a university and a small workers cooperative. I have acted as a bridge between the academic world and Barod's world, translating and adapting knowledge to the benefit of both (Armstrong et al., in press). I moved on from Barod in October 2020, shortly after watching as three Barod activist researchers with learning disabilities critiqued an academic paper, with minimal guidance from myself, for the first In Response paper in the British Journal of Learning Disabilities (Lewis et al., 2020). It felt as if my job in Barod was done.

2.2.4 Collaborative autoethnographic research team

A central part of this research is collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) work. The reasons for this choice and an explanation of the method and how used is in Chapter 3. As part of this chapter, it is sufficient to say that I created a temporary research team of five women, myself included. All wish to be publicly identified[8]. Alphabetically by second name, they are: Diane Holmes, Ellie Jones, Rachel Retallick and Helen Thomas. They are all white women living in North Wales whom I knew well before inviting them to join with me in the research. We continue to be friends, and their occasional input and support since the completion of the CAE has been invaluable.

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[7] This was not the only way he experienced engaging with the academic world. He also worked with those who share his (and my) commitment to creating academic spaces of epistemic justice.

[8] See Appendix 2

2.2.5 Supervisors and their schools

The social policy years (2014 to 2015)

My first two supervisors, Dr Anne Krayer and Professor Catherine Robinson, were part of the School of Social Science. Their field was social policy, as was my topic. They navigated me through the initial stage of the research, when I was registered for a Masters by Research.

The sociology years (2015 to 2019)

After the PhD transfer, it became clear that my research approach was epistemological and sociological. After an extended study break, Dr Roger Slack and Dr Sara Louise Wheeler supervised me, with Dr Clair Doloriert as thesis committee chair. Regrettably, Roger and Sara were made redundant in 2017 leaving the university unable to provide appropriate supervision. Dr Gideon Calder of Swansea University very kindly stepped in and provided a lifeline, with Dr Clair Doloriert, Bangor Business School, generously offering to become my Bangor University supervisor.

The organisational management years (2019 to 2021)

The change in supervision required a change in school and doctoral registration, from social policy and sociology to business management. As a consequence, the focus of the thesis shifted to try to align the literature and language towards organisational management. Dr Calder remained my first supervisor.

Each change left its fingerprints on how the research was conducted. There would have been no thesis if I had remained focused on social policy, but that first year provided an invaluable solid foundation. This is not the thesis I would have written if Roger and Sara had remained my supervisors. Equally, it is not the research I would have conducted if Gideon and Clair had been supervising me from the start. I believe my thesis and its contribution to the academic world, the policy world and Barod is richer for these multiple influences.

2.3 Insider? Outsider?

Chapter 3 argues that reflexivity and positionality affect research design, research ethics and, ultimately, the research findings. My positionality as an insider/outsider is both relevant and ambiguous. In relation to the topic of social care policy-making, my positionality was affected by: involvement with the policy world in Wales since 1993; occasional but ongoing interactions with social policy and inclusive research parts of the

academic world since 1993; and lived experience of the impact of social care policy since 1988 (Fig. 2.1).

Figure 2.1   Positionality in the years before starting the doctorate

The policy world

Anne
and social
care policy-
making

World of lived
experience
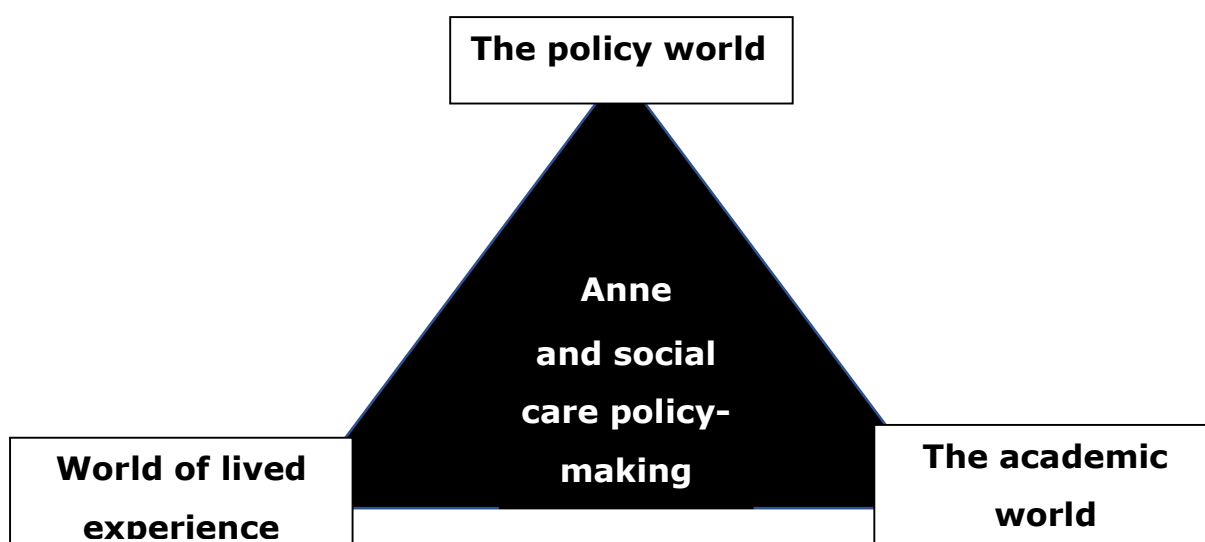
The academic
world

There is extensive academic literature about insider research (eg Merton, 1972; Cassell, 2005; O'Reilly, 2009). To my mind, the researcher's status raises questions of how that status affects what and how they know (epistemic questions), how their approach to the research is or may be impacted by their status (methodological questions), and not just which methods are most appropriate but how it is appropriate to use those methods (methods and ethics questions). As Dwyer and Buckle (2009) put it, "As a qualitative researcher I do not think being an insider makes me a better or worse researcher; it just makes me a different type of researcher", and therefore it is important to know one's positionality. This is discussed further in Chapter 3.

Most insider/outsider literature acts as if the researcher's status in the academic world is taken for granted. It is as if the insider/outsider positioning can be represented by a 2 x 1 matrix (Fig. 2.2).

Figure 2.2   Position in relation to the field

Field insider	Field outsider

There is a strand of autoethnographic research about the 'outsider within' (e.g. Collins, 1986; Ngunjiri and Hernandez, 2017; Faifua, 2010; Tienari, 2019), where an academic's sense of being an outsider within their own academic world is explored. Here, however, it could be argued that the field is academia and therefore they are still positioning themselves in relation to the field.

It is rare for this assumption to be problematised, as with Wheeler and Hopwood's 2015 duoethnography about tinnitus. Wheeler positions herself as an academic insider and Hopwood positions himself as an academic outsider; both are insiders to the world of tinnitus. Something similar could be imputed to 'collaborative witnessing' (e.g. Ellis and Rawicki, 2013) whereby an academic works with a community member to co-construct an account of the community member's autoethnographic story, however it is moot whether such co-constructed accounts should be framed in this way given they are not so framed by the co-authors.

Prior to the doctorate, my position was outside the institutions of academia, but having peeked in often enough to have insider ways of knowing and talking about social issues. My position was inside the field by being part of Barod, but an outsider in ways of knowing and experience life as someone with learning disabilities. My position had been inside the policy world when working for the Fostering Network, but was now closer to being outside looking in.

So far, 'insider' and 'outsider' have been treated as if they exist, but perhaps academic researchers always occupy "the space between" (Dwyer and Buckle, 2008). This accommodates no-one ever fully being insider to another's experience and always being partly insider if social interaction is possible. Rather, it is a case of being *more* insider or *more* outsider (Crean, 2018; Collins, 2002). On that basis, I have constructed the matrices of Figure 2.3 to represent my positionality. The boxes refer to 'more towards' rather than 'wholly'. My self-identity is marked at the start of my doctoral studies (blue crosses) and at the end (green crosses). The fourth world, complexity and design, is a world I did not even know existed when I began my studies.

Figure 2.3   My self-identity as insider/outsider in relation to the four worlds

Academic world

| Outside | ←————— 2014   2021 —————→ | Insid |

Policy world

| Outside | ←————— 2021   2014 —————→ | Insid |

World of lived experience

| Outside | ←————— 2021   2014 —————→ | Insid |

Complexity and design world

| Outside | ←—————   2021 —————→ | Insid |
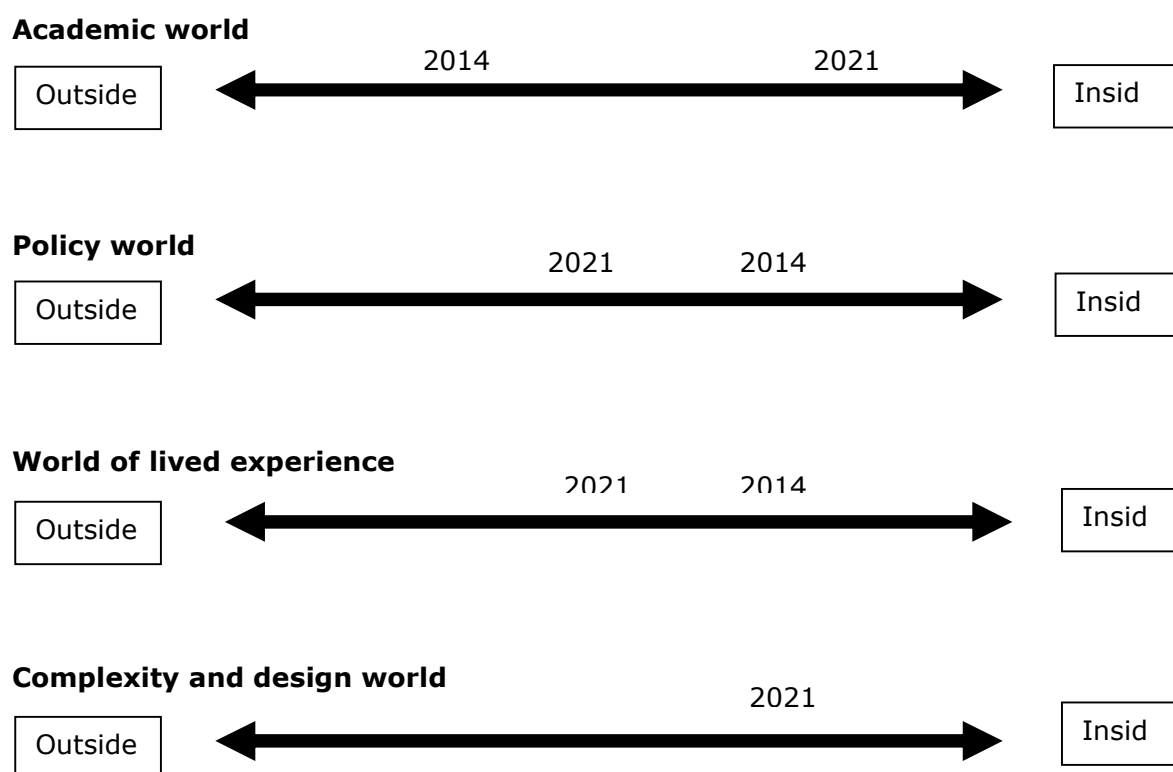
The function of a doctorate is to gain and demonstrate academic competencies, therefore most doctoral students would expect their insider/outsider status to shift as mine did over the course of doctoral studies. Unlike most doctoral students, my intention was to remain an academic outsider but 'pass'[9] *as if* part of the academic world. It was only late in 2020 that I owned my academic identity.

What I had not anticipated was ceasing to feel so at home in the worlds of lived experience and policy as I adopted the framing and language of the academic world. My experience of becoming more of an outsider to the world of my lived experience is in keeping with Travers (1992) who describes people becoming "strangers to themselves" (p.601) through attending to aspects of life that routinely go unremarked.

As with Wheeler and Hopwood (2015), the CAE team transgressed the expectation that academic research is conducted by academic insiders. Such transgression is inherent in inclusive research, and it is within that context that Chalachanová et al. (2020) coined

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[9] 'Passing' is the ability to be perceived as having a social identity at odds with personal identity, as described in Stigma (Goffman, 1990b (1963)).

the term 'alongsiders'. 'Alongsiders' is used to describe a co-working relationship with a team that comprises those who might otherwise consider themselves academic insiders/field outsiders, and academic outsiders/field insiders. It captures the intended equity of status within the research team without glossing over difference. 'Alongsider' is an authentic description of each person's status as researcher-participant within the CAE team.

The language of insider, outsider, 'alongsider' could applied to the policy world as well as the academic world. For this thesis, insiders are those who can move comfortably within the policy world, either because they belong by right based on a job role (eg policy profession civil servant; policy officer of Third Sector organisation[10]), or because they are accepted by those who belong by right and are fluent in the language and culture of the policy world (eg 'the usual suspects' who are invited to take part in policy-making).

Outsiders are those who do not belong in the policy world and do not have the language or cultural knowledge to move freely within it. This would include those on the outside looking in who are aware of their outsider status and those on the outside who are unaware that they are outsiders. These roughly equate to the right-hand quadrants of Barod's categorisation of 'the public' (Fig. 2.4).

Any of the public involvement practices, such as co-production or co-design could involve working relationships between comparative insiders and outsiders of the policy world. Awareness of epistemic (in)justice and power asymmetries will vary between individuals and within working relationships whether or not the awareness is framed in the language of epistemic (in)justice.

To reapply and extend the term as used by Chalachanová et al. (2020), alongsiders are people who are aware of and seek to redress, institutional epistemic injustice and power asymmetry in their working relationships. These people's working practices will also be described using one of the 'co-' words, but the epistemic relationship is fundamentally different from 'co-' relationships of insiders and outsiders[11].

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[10] At least in Wales, because of the Welsh Government's Third Sector Scheme
[11] It is debateable whether alongsider relationships, according to my usage at least, can be enacted within institutional arrangements that position people as insiders and outsiders of the institution. But that belongs to another story that cannot be told within this thesis.

2.4   Learning disability context in Wales

2.4.1   General information

There are approximately 13,500 adults with learning disabilities known to social services in Wales (StatsWales, 2019). It is believed that there are possibly more than 60,000 other people in Wales who could be described as having learning disabilities but who are not known to social services (Welsh Government, 2018a). Unfortunately, "Data on people with a learning disability are recognised as being poor in Wales." (Welsh Government, 2018a, p.2) so it is difficult to provide an evidenced overview of life for people with learning disabilities in Wales. This was confirmed in the process evaluation of the implementation of the SSWA that noted:

- Challenges to capturing and evidencing data include:
  — uncertainty of how best to do it, how to best to report it, a continued emphasis on quantitative data, and time/capacity to do it meaningfully
  — difficulty attributing positive outcomes to a particular type of support or intervention
  — learning to use WCCIS effectively, especially in respect of data extraction, analysis and reporting
  (Llewellyn et al., 2020, p.9).

The only data routinely collected by StatsWales are categories of accommodation. On March 31st 2019, 11,000 people with learning disabilities lived in the community of whom over 7,000 live with their parents or other family while others were living independently or in lodgings with support. The remainder lived in registered care homes or NHS provision (StatsWales, 2019). On 23rd May 2019, there were 256 people as in-patients in specialist units managed by or commissioned by NHS Wales (Mills et al., 2020). Of the adults with learning disabilities in Wales, around 600 are members of the national self-advocacy organisation, All Wales People First[12]. Some members are known to social services and others not (All Wales People First, 2020).

2.4.2   An ordinary life?

In 1983, the ground-breaking All Wales Strategy for Services for Mentally Handicapped People (Welsh Office, 1983) promised people an ordinary life. Regrettably there is not space in this thesis to analyse the 1983 Strategy and conduct the research needed to compare it to today's lived reality or today's social care policies. There was a small flurry

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[12] People First is a self advocacy movement by and for people with learning disabilities.

of academic research about the implementation of the 1983 Strategy in the late 1990s (e.g. Evans et al., 1994; Perry and Felce, 1995; Felce and Grant, 1998; Todd et al., 2000). The consensus was that "A policy which promised much has, apparently, achieved relatively little… The AWS was a social policy initiative which, on most measures, failed to deliver what it promised." (Walmsley, 1999, p.278). Since then, ProQuest only shows one paper (Felce and Allen, 2007) addressing implementation of the 1983 Strategy which concluded that "development in practice has not lived up to policy rhetoric" (ibid., p33).

The lack of routinely collected data and Wales-specific current research makes it difficult to assert with confidence how far the 1983 Strategy has been fulfilled in terms of people with learning disabilities having an ordinary life. What is known from the 2018 review, Improving Lives (Welsh Government, 2018a) is that people's lived experience is of a "'fight' and a 'battle' to get the right services and the right support" (ibid., p.3) and there are insufficient supported housing options. Those with more complex health needs receive poorer services and may be "living in NHS assessment and treatment centres for over a year and be in effect homeless" (ibid., p.3).

Health inequalities and "avoidable and premature deaths" are noted (ibid., p.4), as are people's vulnerabilities and "high profile cases [of] sexual abuse and slavery" (ibid., p.9). Rights asserted in policy since 1983 are asserted again in 2018, with priorities noted as reducing health inequalities and "increasing housing options closer to home, integrated social care, health and education, and increased employment and skills opportunities" (ibid., p.4). People with a learning disability are described as having needs "often not being met and services are not adapting appropriately" (ibid., p.9).

Having a job is part of an ordinary life for most people. Data about employment of people with learning disabilities are not recorded in Wales, but the English figure of 6% of people with one or more hour a week of paid work is assumed to apply in Wales (Welsh Government, 2018a, p.11). It is not unreasonable to expect an ordinary life to include "having your own front door" (ibid., p.11) but this is described as an "aspiration" (ibid., p.11) for many adults with learning disabilities.

This is not to say substantial progress has not been made since 1983. In 2012, Cardiff People First published an evaluation of their living history project about Ely Hospital. The project was initiated when it was realised that younger members had no awareness of their cultural heritage or the experiences of older members.

In their own words:

> "The project started with older people showing their video 'Ely Voices' to the young people at a meeting, over two years ago. The young people didn't know anything about the hospital. They wanted to know more. 'I had no idea that there was a hospital – why didn't they leave? Were people ill? Was it like a hospital with beds and everything? Were they allowed to leave? What about their family?" (Cardiff People First, 2012, p.3).

Older members talked about being stripped for communal bath time, prevented from seeing their family and worse (ibid.). An ally, Jim Mansell commented "Ely Hospital was a truly awful place, and that we must keep up the good work we were doing" (p.34). And yet, even today, members of Cardiff People First are campaigning for the ordinary lives envisaged in the 1983 report. Again, in their own words:

> "Some organisations in the South Wales region didn't want to give sexual health information directly to young people with a learning disability. The reasons they gave were: - They didn't want to 'encourage these young people to have sex'. - They didn't have the money to give accessible information to people with a learning disability. - Their staff were not trained to talk to people with a learning disability." (Cardiff People First, 2010, p.1)

2.4.3 The Ministerial advisory group and the Learning Disability Consortium

Under varying names and with various terms of reference, there has been a ministerial advisory group since 1999 (LDAG, 2001). The advisory group was set up in response to the strength of feeling expressed at a 1998 Third Sector conference to "obtain the views of stakeholders on the obstacles to achieving the Strategy's objectives for people with learning disabilities living in the community and how to overcome them". (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002).

The ministerial advisory group currently comprises people with learning disabilities, parents/carers, local authority, NHS and Third Sector. In addition, the Welsh government works with a consortium of national learning disability organisations, each of which claims a legitimate right to speak on behalf of people with learning disabilities and non-statutory sector service providers.

Currently, Consortium members are:

- All Wales People First, the "united voice of self-advocacy groups and people with learning disabilities in Wales" (AWPF et al., 2020, p.2).
- Learning Disability Wales, a "national charity representing the learning disability sector in Wales" (ibid.).
- Mencap Cymru, "the voice of learning disability in Wales" (ibid.).
- All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers, whose "mission is to bring a national voice and recognition to parents and carers of children and adults living with learning disabilities in Wales" (ibid.).
- Downs Syndrome Association, "the only charity in the UK dealing with all aspects of Down's Syndrome" (ibid.).
- Cymorth Cymru, the "representative body for providers of homelessness, housing and support services in Wales [who] act as the voice of the sector" (ibid.).

2.4.4 The 2021 All Wales People First manifesto

The All Wales People First's Manifesto (All Wales People First, 2021) comprises information that they "want Members of the Senedd to understand [about] what is important to us and other people with learning disabilities in Wales". This includes threats to self-advocacy groups, refusal of some to accept their chosen terminology of "people with learning disabilities", lack of employment, inaccessible public transport, being "still often treated as second class citizens or children" (p.8), inequality in "all areas of our lives" (p.8), avoidable premature deaths, disproportionate impact of Brexit on people with learning disabilities, and continued restrictive practices including physical and chemical restraint. This does not read like the manifesto of and about a group of people who have already attained the ordinary lives that the 1983 All Wales Strategy was designed to deliver.

2.5 Barod's ideas about public involvement

Barod's four co-founders all had extensive lived experience of public involvement in social care policy-making. For two, this came from their longstanding involvement in People First as members, leaders, trainers and facilitators. For two, this came from support and facilitation of People First members' engagement with social care policy-making. This made Barod unusual in being co-founded by people with and without learning disabilities, working together on an equal basis. My own experience included a previous policy role with what has become Fostering Network which had included working with Welsh Government on task and finish policy groups as well as engaging

young people, foster carers and social workers in policy consultations. Additional experience came from past involvement in policy-related social care research.

Drawing on this collective knowledge, Barod drew up a list of seven concerns about current (in 2013) practices in public involvement:

1. Most methods assume people can read and write
2. Most methods assume people can socialise with strangers
3. Most methods put people on the spot by using direct questions
4. Policy-makers require people to get involved on the policy-makers' terms
5. Methods do not appeal to people who 'don't do' public involvement
6. Public involvement activities do not appear to value everyone's time and knowledge
7. Public involvement activities can be tick-box exercises.

One of Barod's approaches to "spreading ideas and changing attitudes" (Barod, n.d.) is 'Barod Think'. These are development days where a topic is discussed with a view to making sense of it, reconceptualising it and/or developing services and products as a response to it. Public involvement featured regularly in Barod Think sessions. For example, two ideas developed through 'Barod Think' sessions into workshops (described in Armstrong and Collis, 2014, and pictured in Centre for Research in Inclusion, 2017).

Barod Thinks include thinking about the reasons people might or might not get involved in social care consultations. One source of academic knowledge was the work of Tony Bovaird, who had spoken at the Audit Wales event[13] where Barod was delivering a version of their Shared Space workshop on co-production. His use of a 'know/care' 2 x 2 matrix (Bovaird and Downe, 2008, p.15) plus Barod's reflections on combined lived experience led to Barod developing their own speculative 2 x 2 matrix (Fig. 2.4).

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[13] Changing the relationship between services and the public who use them, 17th July, 2014, SWALEC Centre, Cardiff. Details can be accessed from https://www.wao.gov.uk/events/re-shaping-services-public

Figure 2.4   Barod's matrix of involvement

	Involved	Not involved
Interested	**'The usual suspects'** Those already engaged with Welsh Government. This includes those described as 'the usual suspects' by policy-makers and those described as having 'vested interests' by those outside the policy world.	**'The excluded'** Those who would like to be involved but who have no access to involvement. They may be unaware of opportunities for involvement or they may be unable to access the opportunities available to them.
Not interested	**'The disillusioned'** Those who still get involved but have lost interest. Sometimes this is referred to as having consultation fatigue or over-consultation. It is often associated with a belief that they are marginalised within the process and have nothing to show for their involvement.	**'the 98%'** [a] Those who live their lives unaware that involvement in policy-making is an option, or who believe involvement is only for 'other sorts of people'.

a This refers to those left after the most generous estimate I could make of the population of Wales that engaged indirectly or directly at any stage in the development of Sustainable Social Services or Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Barod's contention was that in any given situation, it would be possible to categorise someone into one of the four quadrants. The same person might well be in different quadrants in different situations. Bovaird and Downe (2008) used 'know' and 'care' for their 2 x 2 matrix, whereas Barod used 'involved' and 'interested'. Bovaird and Downe's *don't know/don't care* quadrant is similar to Barod's *not involved/not interested*. Bovaird and Downe described this quadrant as "the voice of the apathetic majority" (ibid., p.15) and suggested that this group were unlikely to respond to any formal method. What Barod decided was to focus on developing an approach that people in their *not interested/not involved* quadrant might respond to (Fig. 2.5).

Barod had already been using an approach, casually named 'coffee shop conversations' that, in their opinion, had potential for developing into a product that would appeal to people in the bottom right quadrant. Most people do not engage, therefore "those who do engage are by definition a small, self-selected sample and there is no reason to

believe that they have typical views." (Bovaird and Downe, 2008, p.14). Anything that could address this 'representativeness deficit' (ibid., p.16) was likely to have value to policy-makers, making it a potentially marketable product.

Figure 2.5   Potential ways of involving people from all quadrants

	Involved	Not involved
Interested	Higher commitment opportunities such as co-production. the opportunity to be treated as equal partners and for that to be recognised in practical arrangements (e.g. payment) and inclusion in decision-making and accountability.	Development of inclusive practices and use of participatory methods. Development work to find who is absent from involvement, identify why, and then co-design methods that are less excluding.
Not interested	Build into the involvement method ways of evidencing how people's involvement makes a difference. *There is always the possibility this will show that there is no impact, in which case involvement is wasteful and disrespectful.*	Low commitment opportunities that do not disrupt people's everyday lives. Taking part is rewarding in itself.

2.6   The start of 'coffee shop conversations'

Barod has a commercial interest in facilitating social policy consultations and supporting communication between Welsh Government and ordinary citizens. This includes producing Easy Read versions of consultation documents and running consultation activities, usually with groups termed 'hard to reach'[14]. Barod was looking for 'something' that worked better than the off the shelf participatory methods they could find.

Around this time, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) had produced a document for public bodies on co-production of public services called Putting People at the Centre (WCVA, 2014a). Barod pointed out to WCVA that for co-production to work, ordinary

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[14] This is a commonly used but, in Barod's mind, inappropriate term for groups of people who are routinely excluded because those arranging consultations only have connections with a limited range of groups of people. This reflects the wider issue of the lack of diversity of those responsible for arranging consultations.

citizens also needed resources. WCVA responded by commissioning Barod to produce a sister publication (WCVA, 2014b). In order to do this, Barod needed to find a way to listen to ordinary citizens and talk with them about co-production to try to find ways to explain the concept that resonated with their lives. This provided an opportunity to see whether it was possible to do it by just chatting over coffee with a variety of people rather than by organising workshops.

The reason for wanting to try this was three-fold. The first was personal experience of people-watching in cafes and realising how often conversations were related to social policy issues and speculating that those talking were unlikely to go to meetings but had some incredibly valuable insights. This suggested that cafes were appropriate places for such conversations to take place. The second was reflections on the social construction of reality (e.g. Berger and Luckmann, 1966) and critiques of methods like interviews (e.g. Hammersley, 2008; Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002). This suggested that any social research or consultation method would affect what was said, and therefore what was said was not what could have been eavesdropped in a café. The third was Erving Goffman's work (e.g. 1990a (1956)) which offered possibilities for ways to stage a conversation in a café such that the influence of the method would be reduced, and conversation might be closer to what could have been eavesdropped. Goffman used drama as a metaphor or framework for making sense of social life, noting "The claim that all the world's a stage is sufficiently commonplace for readers to be familiar with its limitations and tolerant of its presentation" (Goffman, 1990a (1956), p.246). The last of these ideas is developed further in 6.9.2 and 7.7.2.

And so, the question was asked directly or indirectly on social media if people wanted to meet me informally at a café or other public place of their choosing, where they would be bought coffee and cake, be paid £10 and then we would simply have a conversation while I tried to explain something that was a bit complicated until we found a language and story that connected with them.

The more questions were asked during one of these conversations, the longer it took to come to the 'oh, that's what you mean' moment. Conversely, the more that the conversation was allowed to meander, the sooner the person used a turn of phrase which, when fed back in relation to co-production, led to them becoming able to explain co-production back to me in their own terms and in their own language.

The computer folder needed naming. The initial conversations were held in coffee shops, a natural social habitat for most of my extended social network. And so the folder was

called 'coffee shop conversations'. It was quite literally a placeholder, but the name stuck. Subsequently, Barod was commissioned to facilitate several consultations by different public sector clients. Each time a variant of the 'coffee shop conversation' formed at least part of the work.

A distinctive feature became the way in which notes were made. Rather than recording conversations, on the basis that this never usually happens in cafes, written notes were made. To avoid the sense of it being an interview, these notes were not made in a linear way and nor were they made in such a way that only the person making them could see them. Rather, they were sketched onto blank paper, in clear sight of those in the conversation (See Fig. 2.6). Before the conversation finished, the facilitator would go over the notes they had made with the person or people they had been talking with. In going over the notes, any errors could be corrected, additional notes made and ways of grouping the information could be challenged or corroborated.

Figure 2.6   Examples of notes from pre-research 'coffee shop conversations'

©Barod, included with their kind permission

By late 2014, Barod had a working description to go with the name:

> We use coffee shop conversations:
> - For a quick, in-depth public perspective from diverse people
> - For a conversation between equals
> - To tap into people's ideas for solving complex problems
> - To hear from people who don't "do" public engagement
> - To hear what people think, not just what they wanted to tell SSIA
>
> (Barod, 2014)

Barod believed that 'coffee shop conversations' was achieving something that they had not achieved with other methods, but they wanted to know more about how it worked

and how it could be improved. They had enough engagement with the academic world to realise that the answers might be found inside it. It was for this reason that they entered into partnership with Bangor University through the KESS programme.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter highlights three elements of the situatedness of this research that curtailed the options available and contributed to informing the choices made of methodology and methods for this thesis. These are:

- The KESS collaborative partnership. This means the doctoral research needed to accommodate specific funder requirements and the active involvement of a company partner in addition to university doctoral school requirements.
- The changing institutional situatedness. This contributes to the transdisciplinarity richness of the thesis, which brought with it challenges in drawing together academic approaches that are not normally found together.
- The student's insider/outsider positionality. This underpins the commitments to approaching the topic from the perspective of those living with the challenge rather than a particular academic perspective, and to making the research findings usable in real life.

In Wales, regrettably, few data about the lives of people with learning disabiliities are routinely collected meaning it is difficult to grasp the scale of the challenge of making sure they have the kind of ordinary life that people without learning disabilities might take for granted. However, it can be inferred from the 2021 All Wales People First manifesto that the policy promises from 1983 are still to be fully realised.

Barod had conducted considerable intellectual and practical work around public involvement before they approached Bangor University for academic assistance. This thesis is the first time this work has been put in the public domain in a citable format.

Barod's two key academic contributions on which this doctorate was built are:

- Dividing 'the public' into quadrants using a two-by-two matrix of 'involved' and 'interested' and considering what would be needed of public involvement approaches for each quadrant.

- Testing an idea for a way to engage with people who are 'not involved, interested' (i.e. excluded by current methods, but wanting to be involved) and 'not involved, not interested' (i.e. those for whom public involvement is not even on their radar).

Together, Chapters 1 and 2 lay the foundations for this research. The next chapter provides the basis for decisions about this research and an appropriate research design.

Chapter 3   Methodology and methods

3.1   Introduction

The previous chapter describes the situatedness of the research in terms of the actors, the learning disability context, and how Barod came to approach Bangor University with a proposal for a KESS partnership.

This chapter provides the basis for decisions about this research and an appropriate research design.

This is an unusually extended methodology and methods chapter due to a combination of the following:

- The research design is unconventional and therefore needs more explanation.
- The methods and ways in which they were used are not 'off the shelf', meaning more detail is needed.
- The methodology and methods decisions for the research cannot be separated from the methodology and methods of the public consultation method that is designed as part of this research.
- Additional detail is appropriate as this thesis makes significant methodological contributions.

Before moving to the main body of the chapter, this introduction notes the use of personal creative analytic practices (3.1.1). These are included in the introduction because they enabled the research rather than forming part of the research itself.

The methodology (3.2) opens with four questions, the answers to which guide the overall research approach. The research design is also shaped by commitments to being as ethical and epistemically just as possible. What 'researching ethically' means for me and for this research is described in 3.3. Epistemic justice requires an attention to what data are and how they should be worked with (3.4). The chapter then outlines the research design (3.5), describing it as a hybrid of the design process and research process.

The remainder of the chapter describes the methods themselves, focusing on the three more methodologically challenging approaches: interviewing (3.6), collaborative autoethnography (3.7), and collaborative field testing (3.8). For the other two methods, knowledge review (3.9) and workshops (3.10), the steps taken are detailed but there is less discussion of the methods themselves.

The chapter closes with brief consideration of academic contributions (3.11) and a recap of the research design (3.12). The discussion of the methodology is deferred until Chapter 8 to encompass how the research was conducted and what the research produced.

3.1.1 Personal creative analytic practices

For me, creative analytic practices (CAP) (Richardson, 1999) and writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson and St Pierre, 2005; Ellis et al., 2011) are a necessary adjunct to research rather than the subject of the research. Over the last six years, I have used blogging, automatic drawing/writing, word pictures (i.e. poems where the meaning is in the placing of the words on a page as much as the words themselves), switching between first, second and third person writing, and changing locations, pens, and types of paper. These have assisted in cognitive processing but are not part of the formal data analysis and so are not submitted with the thesis.

My neurodivergence[15] can leave me at literal loss for words, with an awareness of 'something' but inability to articulate it even to myself. At that point, artistic and kinaesthetic creative practices become essential for sense-making and finding words. These are not used for performance value or to convey research findings, but as a bridge between becoming aware of 'something' and being able to articulate it to myself.

The most notable example of using creative research practice when words have failed was the making of a sensory assemblage, an actual artwork (see Fig. 3.1). This was co-created with Mel Roberts, a North Wales mosaic artist in October 2019. It offered a powerful method for sense-making in relation to the theoretical research as the following research journal entry shows.

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[15] Neurodiversity assumes there are a diversity of ways in which humans' brains are wired (Silberman, 2015). It embraces this diversity, rather than equating divergence from accepted norms with impairment. To identify as neurodivergent is to assert neurological divergence from accepted norms.

I stuck down the last glass bead. I stepped back. It told my story.
It was overwhelming to be able to see on the mosaic what my thesis
meant in a way I have never been able to put into words. I had felt
what my thesis meant; it was simply that my lexical, logical, reasoning
brain had been unable to turn feelings into words. By turning feelings
into decisions about what to put where, in conjunction with talking
through the individual decisions about what felt right, I have become
able to talk about my thesis.
(Research journal entry, Wednesday, 25th October, 2019)

Figure 3.1   The Sensory Assemblage

The sensory assemblage forms no direct part of the thesis and is not being submitted for
examination. It is included in the Methodology because the creative act was an essential
part of enabling me to articulate the research. Its creation and role in bridging the gap
between sensing and articulating will form the basis for a future methodological paper.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Filtering questions

My commitment to social and epistemic justice (1.3) precedes the methodological decisions reported in this chapter. Part of this includes a commitment to making sure that research is perceived as ethical by all those involved, not just the university.

Methodology, research design and methods textbooks abound and often contradict each other. I draw primarily on Bryman (2012), Denzin and Lincoln (1998a, 1998b), Crotty (1998), Hughes (1990), Gray (2009), Roberts (1981), Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002), and browsed Sage Core Research Methods online (Sage, n.d.). This reading informed the development of four questions to guide fundamental decisions about appropriate research approaches for me as a researcher. Table 3.1 shows the four questions, the answers, and the implications of these answers.

Table 3.1   Decision maker

Question	Answer	Implications
Question 1: Do I think everyone's knowledge of the world takes the same form as mine?	No	The approach needs to recognise that knowledge is partial and perspective. See 3.2.2, 4.3.3, 6.9.3, and 7.7.2.
Question 2: Does it matter who does the research?	Yes	The research needs to be reflexive and assume positionality is inherent but not problematic provided it is transparent. See 3.2.3
Question 3: Am I doing research to try to change the world?	Yes	The approach needs to be critical. See 3.3.2.4. The approach needs to focus on impact. See 3.2.5
Question 4: Is what the researcher knows more important than what the people they research know?	No	For epistemic justice, the knowledges of 'participant' and 'researcher' need equal valuing, making a collaborative approach an appropriate choice. See 1.4 and 3.2.6

3.2.2 Others' knowledge of the world is different from mine

> "Each teller speaks from a biographical position that is unique and, in
> a sense, unshareable. Each hearer of a story hears from a similarly
> unshareable position. But these two versions of the story merge and
> run together into a collective…version of the story that was told."
> (Denzin 2014, p.51)

Kidder and Fine (1987) describe 'big Q' and 'little Q' approaches. 'Big Q' uses qualitative methods **and** qualitative methodology, as opposed to with neo-positivist methodology ('little Q'). By believing others do not see the world like me, I side with 'Big Q', and a belief in the social construction of what is considered 'reality'.

Of the many possible ways to talk about this, the main one chosen for this thesis is mental models. Originally part of cognitive science, mental models are people's internal representations of the social world that provide a basis for organising information, making decisions and taking action. The concept of mental models has become mainstream in organisational academic literature (Cárdenas-Figueroa and Navarro, 2020). Mental models are associated with how we process information, use language and organise what we know. In the academic world, for example, different language may be used for similar concepts, or similar language for different concepts. How the concepts are arranged and connected differ according to academic discipline. In other words, different academic approaches operate with different mental models.

Mental models are invisible; they cannot be directly accessed, but it is argued that they can be elicited and made visible as cognitive maps that more-or-less represent the mental model (Harper and Dorton, 2019). They may be individual, shared (i.e. part of someone's cultural and social identity) or team (i.e. are used by members of the team in order to work together, but not necessarily used outside of that context). The literature about mental models and its relevance to policy-making and the 'coffee shop conversation' method are discussed in 4.3.3 and 7.7.2.

3.2.3 Reflexivity and positionality

My personal positionality was described in 2.3.

Reflexivity is integral to how I negotiate social interaction and everyday life, including social research. Thinking reflexively is a skill developed using and because of my

neurodivergence. By observing patterns in social interactions and overlaying a framework that makes those patterns more visible, Goffman - probably unintentionally - produced in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1990a (1959)) a de facto instruction manual for autistic people who wish to make sense of social interactions. It provides a sufficiently detailed codified description of social situations to allow people who do not intuitively develop social interactional skills to become more skilled at giving expressions and receiving impressions in a way that reduces social fatigue and reduces the risk of mis-presentation and mis-interpretation. In effect, he provides the toolkit in this work that enables autistic people to build a skill described in another of his works, *Stigma* (Goffman, 1990b (1963)). This is the skill of avoiding the appearance of fostering a false identity (Goffman, 1990 (1959), p.66) when 'passing' as someone neurotypical within a neurodiverse society.

This is the main skill on which 'coffee shop conversations and its subsequent iterations is founded. It is closely allied to the skills of an ethnographer who wishes to blend in and a qualitative interviewer seeking to create rapport with strangers. These include knowing and using the signs indicative of a particular setting, role and type of performance; managing interactions so they are observably congruent with setting, role and performance; and avoiding discrepant behaviour and signs. Goffman observed techniques for all of these as he watched everyday social interactions. Each chapter of The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (ibid) describes a different set of techniques, all of which contribute to a maintenance (or disruption) of the impression of orderly social interaction. As Goffman puts it, 'observers can glean clues from his [sic] conduct and appearance which allows them to apply their previous experience with individuals roughly similar to the one before them' (ibid, p.13).

If the principles of reflexivity and social construction of reality are accepted, it becomes difficult to create a logical argument for a point beyond which researcher reflexivity need not go. This risks the philosophical challenge of attempting to write a thesis *as if* knowledge exists having asserted there is no solid basis from which to assert anything.

This is the challenge of infinite regress. The challenge is expressed by Deleuze (2015 (1969)) as he discusses Alice's adventures on the other side of the looking-glass as:

> "If we agree to think of a proposition as a name, it would then appear
> that every name which denotes an object may itself become the
> object of a new name which denotes its sense: n_1 refers to n_2, which
> denotes the sense of n_1; n_2 refers to n_3; etc. For each one of its
> names, language must contain a name for the sense of this name… It

appears in rigorous form on the other side of the looking-glass, in the meeting of Alice and the Knight." (Deleuze, 2015 (1969), p.29).

While this is a challenging concept in words, it is easier to grasp in pictures. It is for this reason that Figure 3. 2 is included as a visualisation of the logic of the above quotation.

In addition to it being the logical conclusion once reflexivity is admitted, one reason for drawing attention to infinite regress at this point is its explanatory value in 7.3.2 and 7.6.2 when it became clear that elements of CSC21 could not be codified. As part of his language games, Wittgenstein says "the use of a rule can be explained by a further rule" (Wittgenstein, 1958, S20), and with every rule articulated for CSC21, another clause to the rule became necessary to remedy imperfections in the previous clause. This is similar to the argument that the Tortoise used to lead Achilles down a path of infinite regression when Achilles wanted to assert a simple deductive 'truth' (Lewis Carroll,1895*).*

Figure 3.2   Gilles Deleuze with the mirrors ad infinitum

© Gerard Uferas, 1968. Reproduced by his kind permission.

A counterargument to the logical assertion of infinite regress once any attempt is made to 'know' or assert 'reality', is that humans somehow manage to exist and interact *as if* such things as 'reality' and 'knowledge' have existence. That is, we manage to socially construct more or less adequate versions of 'reality' and 'knowledge' in order to interact socially, communicate and operate as societies. This is my basis for accepting the adequacy of partial researcher reflexivity given that, to my mind, ignoring reflexivity is not an option.

Social researchers are "social agents enmeshed in a social world." (Cook, 2014, p.279). Given this, all social researchers need to practice at least partial reflexivity. Partial research reflexivity is awareness of the researcher's positionality and how that affects what is seen by the researcher. At its simplest, researcher reflexivity is the "thoughtful, self-aware analysis of the intersubjective dynamics between researcher and researched" (Finlay and Gough, 2003, p.ix). An exemplar would be Finch (1993) examining her experiences of interviewing women, and the ethical, methodological, and political issues "upon which [she] found necessary to reflect both as a sociologist and as a feminist." (p.166).

Researcher reflexivity can be seen as a composite of personal reflexivity (as with Finch, 1993) and epistemological reflexivity (Cromby and Nightingale, 1999). Epistemological reflexivity requires the researcher to consider how their research design impacted the research, and to what extent the design reflects their epistemic assumptions about the world. Skills in reflexivity lend themselves to turning the reflexive gaze on oneself. Cook argues that such "critical self-reflexivity" lends itself to the researcher turning their sociological imagination on their own lived experience (Cook, 2014, p.271). While, apart from the collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) work, this research is not autoethnographic, the combination of lived experience and critical self-reflexivity means it is possible to see shades of the autoethnographic in how the research is approached.

Reflexivity can lead to confessional writing, a practice described by Van Maanen (1988) and critiqued by Coffey (1999) and Seale (1999). This thesis makes visible matters of sociological interest which might otherwise remain hidden from sight and uninspected. It is not done to be confessional but to avoid "hiding 'shop floor practice' … in the formal way [I] talk about what [I] do" (Becker, 1998, p.5). It is done for quality assurance and because some of the ways in which methods have been used may be a little unusual and of methodological interest.

3.2.4 Critical qualitative inquiry

My whole-life commitment to social and epistemic justice means that any research approach would need to be critical and address any asymmetries that are contributing to epistemic injustice. My stance on this is as per Denzin (2017) who advocates pushing back and resisting "the politics of evidence that define the audit culture and marginalize critical inquiry" and redefining the place of "the academy, indigenous epistemologies and the public intellectual in these public spaces" (p.S8). He describes the potential of

qualitative inquiry to change the world quite literally by reframing it through offering different perspectives and different understandings of what the 'world' is. His agenda is one that Barod would endorse, namely:

> "The desire is to create an ethically responsible agenda that would have these goals:
> - It places the voices of the oppressed at the center of inquiry;
> - It uses inquiry to reveal sites for change and activism;
> - It uses inquiry and activism to help people;
> - It affects social policy by getting critiques heard and acted on by policy-makers;
> - It affects changes in the inquirer's life, thereby serving as a model of change for others"
>
> (Bloom and Sawin, 2009 cited in Denzin, 2017, p.9).

3.2.5 Impact

Methodologically, the focus on impact as part of a critical approach orientated the writing of the thesis toward approaches that would be seen as credible by those who it is hoped will use CSC21 in the future, and away from what I would consider more philosophically satisfying ways to present the research. Both ways of presenting the research would have been academically adequate; only the former is adequate for the purpose of real world impact.

3.2.6 Collaborative and transdisciplinary

The meanings in this research of 'collaborative' and 'transdisciplinary' are explained in 1.4. Building on 1.4, it is worth noting that the methodological pluralism of transdisciplinarity could perhaps be an example of multifaceted triangulation. This is the practice of using the multiple facets to add depth, complexity and breadth to the research (Flick, 2002, p.227) rather than for validation. This sits comfortably with Richardson and St Pierre's crystal approach (2005). To me, transdisciplinarity is closer to the emergence of a complex adaptive system (McElroy, 2000; Lowe et al., 2000) than something crystalline.

3.3 Researching ethically

3.3.1 Researching with university ethics approval

Ethical approval was given in 2015 for the original collaborative autoethnography, semi-structured interviews, and documentary analysis. This was in line with the research ethics procedures and handbook then in place for Bangor University's School of Social Science.

A first ethical amendment (2016) permitted two workshops and conversational interviews to supplement the policy-making research of Chapter 5. This was also granted under the School of Social Science framework.

A second ethical amendment (2019) permitted additional work of the original collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) team. This was granted under the procedural ethics framework in place for Bangor Business School.

All participants were able to give their own consent (Department for Constitutional Affairs, 2005), therefore no best interests decisions were required. No participants were vulnerable, and the topic is not notably emotive or sensitive.

Copies of paperwork form Appendix 1.

3.3.2 Seven ethical challenges and how they were addressed

The previous section describes the application of rules to determine whether research can be permitted. Researching ethically is never that straightforward (Wiles et al., 2007).

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) describe two dimensions to ethics that they term procedural ethics and "ethics in practice" (ibid., p.262). For them, procedural ethics "involves seeking approval from a relevant ethics committee to undertake research involving humans" and they have "learned to write our responses to the questions in 'ethics-committee speak.'" (ibid., p.263). This was what was required for my first ethical approval. The School of Social Science Ethics Handbook, version 2.0, December 2015, ran to 13 pages of instructions on how to prepare the paperwork together with example documents that could be copied. The 604 words of guidance on informed consent made

clear what was required for gateway consent, that is the signing of a form that permits someone to enter into the research. However, there is no advice on negotiating ongoing consent within an ongoing research relationship.

In other words, the handbook of instructions on preparing paperwork for ethical approval contains little of what Guillemin and Gilliam (2004) describe as ethics-in-practice. Ethics-in-practice refers to decisions that need to be made in the field, whether potentially serious (e.g. how to respond *at the moment* someone discloses abuse mid-interview) or the microethics of everyday qualitative research activities (e.g. establishing an appropriate relationship).

Gilliat-Ray (2011) covers similar ground in her alternative categorisation of "Ethics – capital 'E'" and "ethics – lower case 'e'". The former is roughly equivalent to procedural ethics and the latter is roughly equivalent to ethics-in-practice. She comments that "Ethics with an upper-case E leaves much unsaid, and some of its core principles are very largely taken-for-granted and assumed to have the same meaning for most people or groups" (ibid., p.4). My experience resonated with her observation that formal research ethics committees may be "concerned less about real ethical practice and more about the prevention of litigation" and may not readily accommodate that "what counts as … 'harm' or 'consent', might differ between people from different communities or cultural backgrounds" (ibid.).

This raises the idea that understanding of what is ethical is not universal. My stance is similar to Pollock (2012) who asserts that "the 'ethical' frameworks currently regulating research are contingent cultural constructs: the product of particular time, place and competing interests" (p.2). For example, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Research Ethics Board require anyone wanting to conduct research with Indigenous people to obtain Indigenous community acceptance before requesting ethics board approval (Brunger et al., 2014). More radically, Indigenous researchers have networked and begun a global conversation about principles for research ethics and how to decolonize research ethics review (Bull et al., 2020). This work leads the way in combining the concepts of research ethics and epistemic (in)justice.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) propose researcher reflexivity as a resource for navigating the grey areas between a procedural ethics approach and the messy realities of field work. That is what is attempted in this section.

Procedural ethics requires a clear divide into researcher and participant roles, marked by who is required to give informed consent. This risks perpetuating both testimonial and hermeneutic injustice by positioning one in a more powerful and knowledgeable role than the other in relation to the research. This underpins the reasoning for choosing CAE as an appropriate approach.

The default of procedural ethics is anonymity for participants and naming for the researcher. This default reinforces an asymmetry in the relationship, with one party being named as 'knowing' and the other not. This becomes problematic if knowledge is seen as co-constructed, co-created, co-constituted or co-produced as the researcher and participant interact.

This has been resolved for part of the research by using collaborative autoethnography. This positioned everyone in the team as dual researcher-participant, including me. This has been achieved by all five of us signing the informed consent, rather than just the four researcher-participants who were not doctoral students.

Challenge 2:   Requirements for informed consent and research design

In relation to research design, a practical challenge created by the division into research and participant is that informed consent introduces a formality that seemed likely to disrupt the phenomenon, 'coffee shop conversation', that was to be researched and evaluated. CAE was suggested by Dr Sara Louise Wheeler[16] as a possible way forward, so that a small team of people worked in depth rather than me as a researcher working more broadly with multiple participants. Later development used collaborative field testing whereby the company partner, Barod, used CSC16 in the field with clients and provided feedback to me. The academic role was restricted to providing advice and theorising.

Challenge 3:   Anonymity and epistemic (in)justice

Despite the CAE team being researcher-participants, the default position had to be the anonymity of all but me. However, permission was granted by the research ethics

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[16] Sara only became my supervisor later.

committee for them to be allowed to choose to be named after taking part in the research. My request for this provision principally related to the epistemic justice reasons for choosing CAE as an approach but was also informed by the work of Guenther (2009), and Moore (2012). First, it would be socially unjust for only one of a collaborative team to be named. Either all or none of us should be able to be publicly acknowledged for our epistemic contributions. Equally, it would not have been appropriate to ask people to decide about naming before the research, given three of the four had no prior research experience to draw upon to make an informed decision. In the final (2019) workshop, the CAE team discussed anonymity and naming at length and all were clear they chose to be named. As Rachel commented "I've put quite a lot of effort into it. It's nice to be recognised for it." (Reflective, 2019). However, I advised waiting until the thesis was written before giving their final decision. This was because until people see which of their words are in print, how their voices have been represented, and what others have said, they cannot know whether they would wish to be publicly identified with their past words.

In practice, all members of the team chose to be named as members of the team (Appendix 2). They all chose at least partial attribution of their words and work. Within the CAE, however, one activity (CAE video, 2015) had a dual function. What was said on that occasion about policy-making forms part of the policy-making research data, not part of the CAE data. When used for that purpose, the data are anonymised as they are for all participants in the policy-making research.

Challenge 4: Ongoing consent

Procedural ethics require people to give informed consent before they can become participants. They must also be told of their right to withdraw from the study. For the CAE, this included the caveat that it might not be possible to disentangle and remove their contributions once collaborative analysis and writing had begun.

No guidance was provided on how to ensure ongoing consent where activities involved the same participant(s) on more than one occasion as with the CAE. My personal practice was informed by the work of Renold et al. (2008) and retrospectively checked against Parsons et al. (2016) and Moore et al. (2018). These papers relate to research over time with children and young people but were helpful in confirming that my approach and field decisions had been appropriate.

My belief is that consent was informally confirmed before and during activities, by checking if people wanted to continue and providing space to talk about how they were experiencing their research involvement. Making the right to withdraw more than just a statement in paperwork required careful ongoing management due to our ongoing friendship. This was managed by being alert for signs of discomfort. I made sure team members knew it would not compromise my chance of passing the doctoral examination if they declined or withdrew.

In 2019, we debriefed (Reflective, 2019) and this confirmed that my understanding is compatible with how they had experienced the research. For example, Rachel commented "we could have said we're not going to do it at any time and because we know you, we know that would have been OK" and Diane responded, "No, I never felt under pressure, I never felt anxious about it." (Transcript, Reflective, 2019). Rather than being friends leading to more pressure, the "honesty in the relationship" (Rachel, Reflective, 2019) meant the team members felt that "If we had all said to you, we can't come today, you would obviously have been really disappointed but you would genuinely have accepted it and we genuinely believed you that it was ok whatever we did" (Rachel, Reflective, 2019).

As part of addressing the ethical challenges of this research, a systematic literature search was conducted around meanings and requirements for informed consent. This does not form part of this thesis but will inform a future paper on the theory and praxis of researching ethically together with our collective experiences of ongoing consent and the right to withdraw.

Challenge 5:   Managing the risk of elite identification

Anonymity can be problematic for elite participants and participants who have a public profile, particularly in a nation as small as Wales. While they might remain anonymous to those outside their circle, internal confidentiality is hard to promise (Tolich, 2004). Of the policy-making research participants, three held senior positions in the civil service and two held senior positions in civil society organisations. All brought a distinctive perspective to this research making four of the five potentially identifiable even though not named. Ways to mitigate the risks of unintentional disclosure when writing up were considered, in line with the reflections of Lancaster (2017) and Odendahl and Shaw (2001). During the fieldwork itself the audio recorder was placed on the desk and participants were told that they were welcome to pause it or switch it off to discuss

something that should not form part of the official record of our meeting. This technique was used in one interview. The participant switched the recorder off, conversed with me on a sensitive topic as part of deciding what they were comfortable to say, "for the tape" and then put the recorder back on. Decisions made during writing up of the research using the process described in Table 3.2. This was devised based on how I would wish a researcher to handle my sensitive data if I were the participant. It was agreed during supervision that this was an appropriate way to manage risk of identification.

This decision tree only resulted in one piece of data being withdrawn. Other data either had their identifier removed or were changed from direct quotations to comments.

Table 3.2   Inclusion of sensitive data

Question	Next step
Could the participant become identifiable?	If yes, answer the next question
Is it appropriate to contact them?	If yes, discuss with them and agree an action. If no, continue down the list.
Would it impact on the quality of the findings if I omit these data?	If no, withdraw it. If yes, continue down the list.
Could the information be used without direct quotation without affecting data quality?	If yes, do it. If no, continue down the list.
Would removing their identifier from the quotation adequately protect their identity?	If yes, do it. If no, **withdraw these data** from the findings regardless of impact on quality of research

Challenge 6:   Confidentiality when researching with friends

In a CAE, particularly where people will meet socially outside of the research, confidentiality needs to be problematised. Namely, is the boundary of confidentiality around the *people*, or the *role*? To put it in other words, was what was said during a research activity confidential to the research activities? In practical terms, this was a decision about what we could or could not discuss when we met socially. The decision we made together was that, for us, what happened as research stayed as research. This assumed that we always knew and remembered whether we were meeting for research or socially.

Blurring of this distinction is always a risk in CAE, as discussed by Guyotte and Sochacka (2016). It is also a common risk in what Geertz calls "deep hanging out" (1998) and Moeran (2007) describes as "observant participation". While overtly covert research is easy to avoid, it is possible to fall into what could be termed covertly covert research

whereby the researcher believes that someone is aware that their time together is part of the research because the person had read the information pack and signed the form, but the participant has forgotten and is acting in a way they would not if they remembered that it was research. This was the experience of Gilliat-Ray (2011) when shadowing a Muslim chaplain. While she considered time in the car together as research time, the chaplain had considered it 'time out' from the research relationship and had spoken more openly as a consequence. Informal conversations are valuable as data, but the risk of blurring research and social conversations needs minimising as part of maintaining research ethics (Swain and Spire, 2020). In this research, risk was minimised by using verbal prompts and checks to confirm if we were in 'researcher-role' or 'usual-social-role' mode.

Challenge 7   Making co-created knowledge available to the co-creators

A thesis is designed for academic examination. However, a thesis is also a repository of co-created knowledge. Therefore, a commitment to epistemic justice as part of researching ethically suggests that the thesis should be available to all co-creators. As my co-creators are not academics, a decision was needed whether to write a summary report of findings submitted as an appendix or write a 'bilingual' thesis in Everyday *and* Academic. The decision for Everyday not Easy Read[17] as the non-academic language was pragmatic. Everyday is the language of most of the co-creators and can be made accessible to the others by being read and discussed as a team. Easy Read is more technically challenging, restricts details, needs access to specialist graphics, and most importantly needs to be co-produced. Future work with Barod will consider how best to take the information in this thesis and make it more accessible to more people with learning disabilities.

3.3.3 Concluding thoughts about researching ethically

It is of concern that it might be possible to receive ethical approval from an institution without the applicant reflexively considering ethics-in-practice.

Perhaps more fundamentally, there are questions of who has the right to determine what is ethical and whether ethics principles as universal or culturally contingent. The work of Indigenous researchers problematises the idea of universal ethical principles (Brunger et

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[17] Easy Read uses pictures, short sentences, and simple words (Learning Disability Wales/Collis, 2012).

al., 2014; Bull et al., 2020; Stevenson, 2007; Ellis and Earley, 2006; Tauri, 2018), arguably more forcefully than when it is problematised by non-Indigenous researchers (e.g. Dingwall, 2008).

3.4   About data

3.4.1 Methods, data sources and data

In relation to working with data, this research is predominantly 'big Q' (Braun and Clarke, 2020). Data were not sat waiting to be collected, just as themes did not sit in the data waiting to emerge (Braun et al., 2019). Instead, methods were used to co-construct data in social interaction (Mason, 1996, p.36). This is why interactions are given data identifiers in this research rather than participants.

My positionality has risked blurring whether an interaction with someone who was known professionally and known as a research participant was co-constructing 'data' or gaining 'information'. A functional approach has been taken whereby information was only 'data' if made available (e.g. documents) or co-constructed (e.g. interview) as the result of an activity for which there was ethical approval. 'Data' have been analysed. 'Information' affects what was seen when the data were analysed. Reflexivity has helped maintain awareness of the role of both 'data' and 'information' in the construction of findings.

3.4.2 To transcribe, get professional transcription, or work from recordings?

The research interaction itself is not data. 'Data' are whatever account or record of that interaction is used by the researcher to construct findings (Mason, 1996). A recording, transcript, field notes, photographs and flipcharts might all be considered data. Clarity is therefore needed about what the data are from any interaction. It is also important to be aware that nothing about the turning of an interaction into 'data' is epistemically neutral. The original interaction is experienced differently by each party. Recordings capture only part of what comprised the original interaction. What recordings and their transcripts offer is greater external verifiability than field notes and memory alone (Mason, 1996, p.52-53). However, as the 'data' are increasingly distant from the interaction, the power of the researcher representation of the interaction increases (Jeppesen, 2016). For example, a transcript is always the transcriber's representation of what was captured in the recording (Riessman, 2008; Masny, 2015).

Most of the research interactions were audio recorded. The exceptions were the two policy-making research workshops, for reasons explained in 3.10, and the 'coffee shop conversation' that took place as part of the CAE which was video recorded. Not all audio recordings were of usable quality (as noted when methods described). Fortunately, there were always notes made during the interview and fieldnotes made immediately after.

Transcription only became ubiquitous when analysis became associated with the use of software (Masny, 2015). Previous experience of NVivo distanced me from a holistic approach to the data, making it a poor choice for me for this 'big Q' research[18]. Transcription is also helpful for rapidly reviewing and organising the data. However, transcription loses much of the richness and nuance of an interaction. It is not possible to capture on paper the slight differences in tone and fractional difference in length of pauses (Jeppesen, 2016). For this reason, much of the analysis involved working directly with recordings, making timed notes and noting phrases that seemed to capture something significant. The comparatively small volume of data made this logistically possible. This meant that by the time full or part transcription had been used for ease of moving between segments of text for close analysis, it was possible for me to hear the encounters in my mind as I looked at the words on the paper.

Two interactions (a semi-structured interview and the CAE pre-meeting) were professionally transcribed before transcription was problematised. These were checked against the audio recordings and changes made (e.g. 'Roma' had been transcribed as 'roamer'). The interactions were self-transcribed in full or part where transcription was required to supplement timed notes from repeated listening to the audio recordings.

3.4.3 How will the data be analysed or interpreted?

Three approaches to analysis/interpretation were used in this thesis.

Collaborative analysis

The CAE collaborative analysis involved five individuals writing reflexive accounts of a shared experience, analysing (together and individually) each other's accounts, then working collaboratively to generate an account. No research training was provided, and

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[18] Quirkos has since proven invaluable for managing a large volume of data in a Barod action research project. Its visual approach allowed me to focus on reflexive interpretation rather than code-book approach to analysis.

minimal direction given as to how any of the analytic work should be conducted. The outworking of this approach is described in detail in Chapter 6.

'Little q' analysis

The first analysis of the policy-making research data treated the four questions as data topics[19] (Braun and Clarke, 2020). This was because the questions spoke to gaps in the evidence base needed before design of what became CSC21 could begin. Therefore, my priority was getting answers to the questions rather than listening to and for the experiences and perspectives of participants. This meant a codebook approach was used in the manner of 'little q' qualitative research, rather than reflexive analysis. Details are given in Chapter 5, together with the coding tables developed. This approach directly contravenes the overall epistemic justice and methodological approach of the thesis. It is justified pragmatically because designing CSC relied on answers to the questions, and epistemically by repeating the analysis using a 'Big Q' approach.

'Big Q' analysis

The intention had been to use reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, guided by Braun and Clarke, 2014; Braun and Clarke, 2016; Braun et al., 2016). However, this presumes a two-way dialogue between researcher and data, with the researcher being aware and making transparent (as far as possible) their commitments and positionality's influence on how the data are interpreted. For me, there was a conversation of data, literature, and myself, with additional contributions to the conversation from Barod colleagues and university supervisors.

This conversation involved a "multi-layered, complex and messy" interaction of data and theory (Masny, 2014, p.345) and similarities with diffractive analysis (Mazzei, 2014). Bozalek and Zembylas (2017) bring reflexivity and diffraction into conversation, but decide they are epistemically incommensurate. My approach to knowing being partial and perspectived made it non-problematic to use two incommensurate approaches simultaneously, and this led to a visualisation that captures both the reflexive and diffractive elements of analysis. The visualisation was the product of a conversation with Diane Holmes, an artist as well as part of the CAE team. It uses spirography as a metaphor for analysis (see Fig. 3.3 and 3.4).

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[19] Until reading their 2020 paper as part of self-evaluating my data analysis when writing this thesis, this would have been described as treating 'questions-as-if-themes'.

The outer toothed ring (the data, both literature and fieldwork) remains fixed; the cog (me in conversation with Barod colleagues and university supervisors) moves continuously around the outside of the ring. As the cog moves, the pencil traces the path of movement (Fig. 3.3). Like the Spirograph, my gaze is deflected by my thinking as I rotate within the confines of the outer circle of literature and fieldwork data.

Figure 3.3   Researcher preparing to converse with their field work and literature
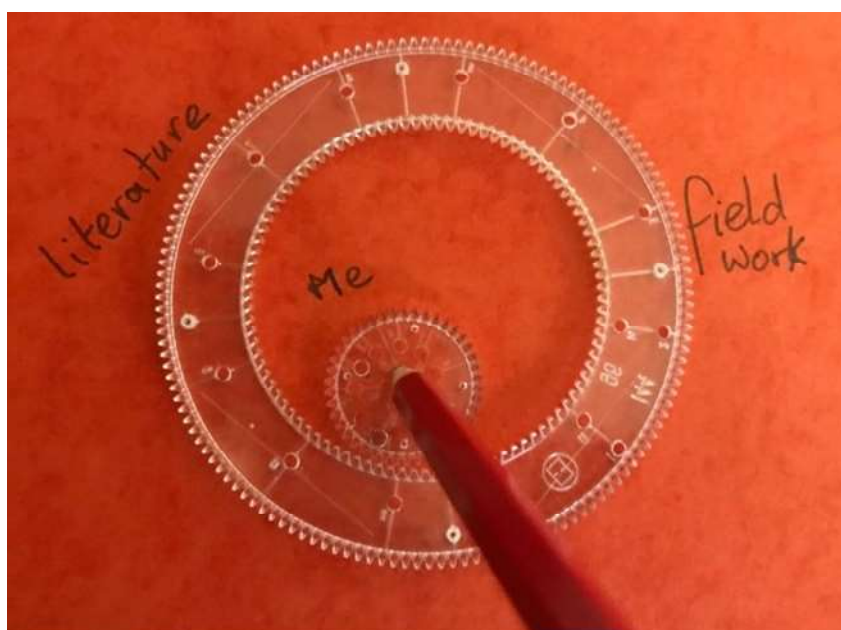
The pattern of movement is reflective[20], in that as the cog turns, the pencil appears to bounce off the outer ring. This is more obvious as you look at the edges of the pattern. However, the interplay of cog, pencil and ring mean the tracing of the movement (Fig. 3.4) gives the *appearance* of a diffraction pattern[21]. This is more obvious when you focus on the centre of the pattern. The loops of my gaze (Fig. 3.4) alternate between the fieldwork data and literature data, marginally shifting and reshaping the surfaces on which my gaze rests. The marginal displacement of the outer ring each time the cog connects leads to something far messier and more three-dimensional than Figure 3.4.

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[20] **Reflection** is the change in direction of a wavefront at an interface between two different media so that the wavefront returns into the medium from which it originated.
[21] **Diffraction** is a physics concept which occurs when waves bend around small obstacles, or spread out after they pass through small openings

The metaphor as it stands is adequate for describing the 'big Q' analysis in this research but cannot be developed fully within this thesis.

Figure 3.4   Spirographic visualisation of the interpretative/analytic process
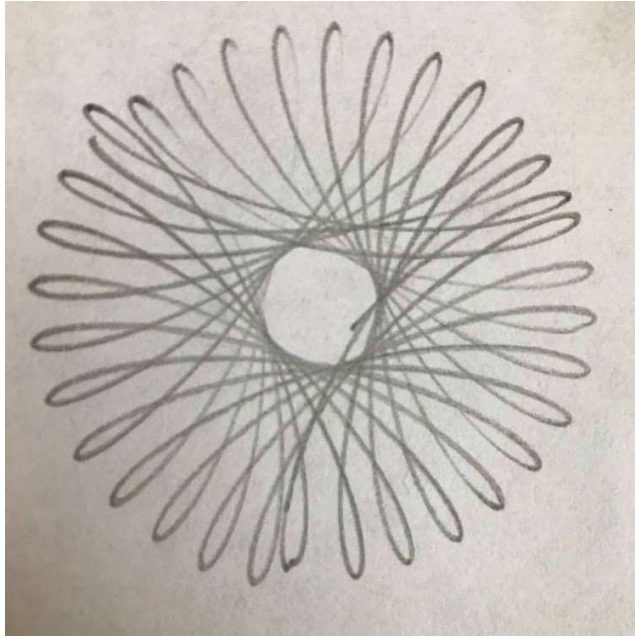
3.5 Research design

The purpose of the research is to understand a problem in order to then design a solution. This means the research did not begin with a question. Given this, the design process offers a better framework for writing about the research than the usual social research process. The two processes are distinct but can be hybridised. As already explained in Chapter 1, this design-orientated research adapts the Design Council's 'double diamond' approach (Design Council, 2007; see Fig. 3.5). As Figure 3.5 shows, the idealised 'double diamond' masks the substantial overlapping period where both discovery and development were occurring. In this research, there was no identifiable define stage after the research had begun. The final stage, deliver, will be conducted in the future.

Figure 3.5   Design process 'double diamond'

(Adapted from Design Council, 2007)

Develop: 2015 to 2021

Discover

Define
(ongoing, not delineated)

Develop

Deliver
(2021-2022)

Discover: 2014 to 2021
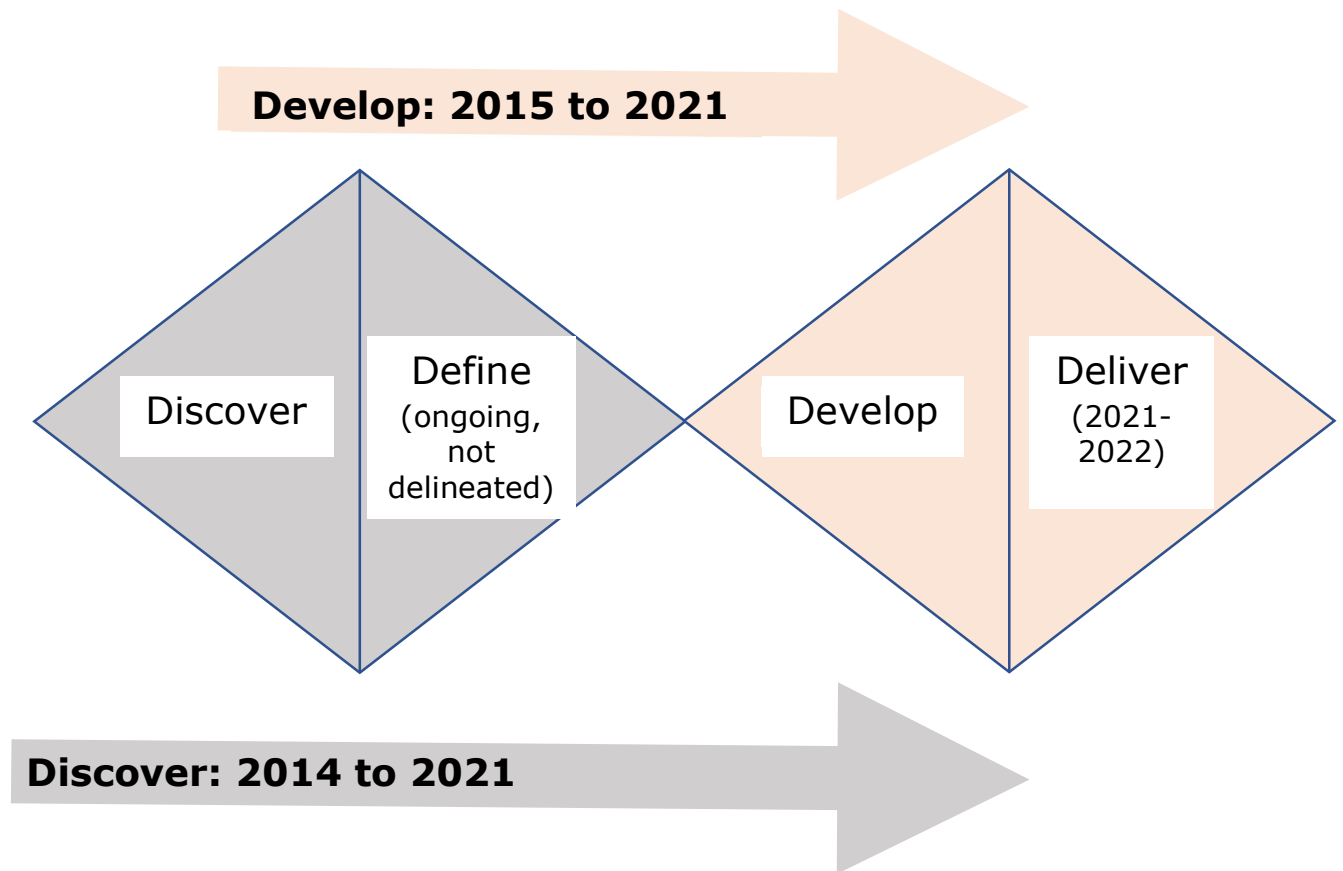
3.5.1 Overview of the methods

The methods are outlined in Table 3.3 in the order in which their findings are reported. The knowledge review and CAE methods were used to produce data for more than one purpose within the thesis and these additional uses are noted in italics.

Table 3.3   Methods overview

Method	Use of method	Chapter(s) reporting findings
Knowledge review (throughout research) See 3.9	Combination of search and analytic strategies.	Chapter 4, Knowledge review *Methodological findings: Chapter 3, Chapter 6, Chapter 7, Chapter 8*
Workshops at conferences (2015) See 3.10	1 x workshop with nine 'policy world' people. 1 x 'workshop' with 16 people at a learning disability conference.	Chapter 5, Policy-making
Interviews (2015) See 3.6	3 x semi-structured interviews with civil servants. 2 x semi-structured interviews with Third Sector leaders. 4 x conversational interviews with ordinary citizens	Chapter 5, Policy-making
Collaborative autoethnographic work (CAE) (2015, except final reflexive workshop in 2019) See 3.7	Planning meeting Videoed 'coffee shop conversation' on topic of policy-making. Individual reflexive accounts about 'coffee shop conversations'. Half day workshop to compare accounts. Individual reflections and/or preliminary analysis of the accounts. Full day analytic workshop. Final reflexive workshop.	Chapter 6, Developing CSC16 *Chapter 5 reports the policy-making conversation held as part of the CAE. Chapter 7 reports the 2019 final reflexive workshop.*
Collaborative field testing (2017 to 2019) See 3.8	Company partner's fieldwork comprised field testing with two clients (2017 and 2018), and development workshop (2017) Student's work comprised data analysis, theoretical/ methodological research, and advice on refining method based on company partner feedback	Chapter 7, Developing CSC21

3.5.2 Discovery

In the design process, discovery is where desk research and user research take place until the context and problem as sufficiently understood to begin to design a solution. (Design Council, 2007). This thesis follows the lead of the Open Policy-making team of the Cabinet Office (Open Policy Making, 2017) by subdividing the work of Discovery into Diagnose (Chapter 4) and Discover (Chapter 5).

Compared to a traditional doctorate, the literature review has been broadened slightly into a knowledge review that takes account of sources of information and types of knowledge not always included in literature reviews.

3.5.3 Development

In design, development is usually multidisciplinary and often uses methods associated with Agile (Design Council, 2007). Rigby et al. (2016) describes Agile approaches. Of these, Lean is often favoured by public services in Wales (e.g. Williams, 2017), but Scrum is perhaps a more favourable approach for policy-making as a design process (Room, 2011). This research has overtones of Scrum in its focus on transdisciplinary innovation.

Chapter 7 closes with a description of CSC21. That is where the research finishes. For the design process, this represents a premature ending. There was no final testing, obtaining regulatory approval, or checking standards are met. There were no plans for evaluation, replication or scaling. There was no launch of the new product or services. Chapters 7 to 9 include plans for how some of this could be done in the future.

3.6 Interviews

Two approaches to interviewing were used.

- Five semi-structured interviews, each with one participant selected for their positioning: civil service policy professional (I1); civil servant with responsibility for developing the SSWA (I2); civil servant with an outside observer role (I3); senior manager in a Third Sector umbrella body with a policy remit (I4); senior manager of a Third Sector membership organisation representing people with learning disabilities (I5).
- Four conversational interviews with ordinary citizens (n=2, n=3, n=1, n=1). These participants self-selected to remain after taking part in a Barod-hosted 'coffee shop conversations' (CSC). People from a further eight 'coffee shop conversations' chose not to become research participants.

3.6.1 Why interviews?

Qualitative interviews are "conversations with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984, p.102). While Burgess focused on the informal conversation aspect, Neuman (2011) was clear that this is no "friendly conversation" because it has an "explicit purpose" (p.451). The extent to which a qualitative interview is conversational depends on the purpose and methodology, but it is this conversational interaction that distinguishes qualitative interviews from survey interviews which involve face to face administration of a structured set of questions (Singleton and Straits, 2001). Qualitative interviews require the skill to simultaneously listen deeply and reflectively, remember what has been said, balance talking and listening, observe the non-verbalised communication, and (usually) make notes in case the recording equipment fails (Mason, 1996, p.46). There is a diversity of approaches to qualitative interviewing, but what they all share is that both the researcher and the participant are aware of their roles as interviewer and interviewee. Conversational interviewing foregrounds those "aspects of sociability, reciprocity, and symmetry in turn taking found in mundane conversation." (Given, 2008, p128).

For researchers who believe the social world is best understood as either constructed or constituted socially, questions need to be considered of what can be learned from a research interaction about a person's life outside of that interaction. As Mason (1996) said, "You cannot separate the interview from the social interaction in which it was produced, and you should not try" (p.40). Depending on the methodology, the role of the interviewer may be foregrounded or minimised but can never be ignored.

My intention is to be adequately reflexive to recognise my role in co-constructing the data, without foregrounding my role. Part of this reflexivity involves awareness that the mental model of the topic that I bring to an interview will not be that of the interviewee, and that it is the interviewee's mental model that is relevant and of interest.

In one way, the interviews are highly directive. I designed four questions for the specific purpose of filling gaps in the evidence base. My intention is not to explore holistically how interviewees understood the research topic. The interviews are therefore not feminist (Oakley, 1981) because I had exercised my power as interviewer to frame the interview on my terms. However, the data from the interviews needs to reflect the interviewee's mental model of the topic more than mine. Therefore, apart from making

sure that the four questions were covered, I enter any avenues of conversation opened by the interviewee rather than pursue my own agenda. As Bryman notes, "the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply" (2016, p.471).

Given the risk that I may misinterpret what was said by processing it in line with my own mental model, the advice of Bryman (2016, p.478) was considered, and clarifying questions were employed, such as 'When you said that, were you meaning…?' and 'Would it be fair to say that…?'.

In relation to the data, the goal has been to read them interpretively, to infer more generally what kind of perspectives people might have about public involvement in policy-making. Reflexivity in this process was used to guard against unthinking inferences, to minimise the risk of unwarranted inferences. This approach was taken even when conducting the 'little Q' analysis.

Fontana and Frey (1998) focus on a different side of interviewer skills: the cultural competency to communicate *as if* culturally similar to the interviewee; their self-presentation skills; and their ability to establish rapport (1998, p.77-78). Culturally, semi-structured interviews are appropriate with elite participants who are used to being interviewed in their professional capacity. The degree of formality would not be intimidating as it was professionally familiar, and it would provide security to the interviewee that they would be led through a series of well-thought-out questions. Informal conversations with elites are not part of my cultural repertoire, and therefore not something I could comfortably attempt. Culturally, ordinary citizens are generally more familiar with informal conversations, so conversational interviews were used with ordinary citizens to "generate verbal data through talking about specified topics with research participants in an informal and conversational way." (Roulston, 2008). There was clarity of what needed to be covered during the interview, but more freedom in the order and the wording of the questions and greater informality in setting and interviewer's self-presentation.

Enacting the cultural in this way invoked Goffman's (1990a (1959)) observations of how to present the self socially. For example, drawing on Goffman's work meant I dressed for the semi-structured interviews as for a business meeting and held myself and used language as I would when wanting to present a professional image. For the conversational interviews, I dressed more casually, smiled more, and used more small talk in the time before the recorder was switched on.

3.6.2 Semi-structured interviews

Selection and recruitment

The semi-structured interviews were with people who were engaged in or part of the policy world. Selection was purposive, as indicated in Table 3.4, using relevant criteria (Coyne, 1997).

For one set of criteria, there was only one potential participant who fortunately agreed to participate. For the other four, there was a very restricted number of people suitably positioned. Within each limited pool, the decision about who to approach first was a combination of whether they were already aware of 'coffee shop conversations' as this might allow them to reflect on it as part of the interview, and ease of access to that person. In each case, the first person approached agreed to take part.

3.6.3 Conversational interviews

Resource constraints meant that selection combined purposive and convenience sampling. The selection was purposive in that those invited had just taken part in a Barod 'coffee shop conversation' and therefore had experienced something of the method. It was convenience in that resources did not permit the organisation of conversational interviews, and therefore this part of the research 'piggybacked' a consultation that Barod was facilitating across Wales about the future of health services. Those recruited covered a diversity of protected characteristics and socio-economic profiles. On my behalf, Barod contacted the people they had recruited to explain my research and ask if they might be willing to remain after the consultation to be research participants. It was made clear this was optional, and people could decide on the day whether to stay or leave. On the day, people only stayed after four of the twelve consultations (n=2, n=3, n=1, n=1; see Table 3.5). This reduced the utility of the data because the profiles of those who chose to remain were too similar, namely White and with some kind of professional role. Resource constraints meant it was not possible to remedy this.

Before each interview, people were reminded that the conversational interview was for academic research. We went over the information sheet and people signed the informed consent sheet.

Table 3.4 Purposive selection of semi-structured interview participants

Data identifier	Role	Selected for?	Reason
I1	Civil servant with policy profession support role	Status within UK civil service policy profession	Expert knowledge of the UK Civil Service guidance, regulations and processes for policy-making, and awareness of practices within Welsh Government. Such a participant could fill gaps in knowledge I had gained from documents I could source.
I2	Civil servant from the Social Care policy division of Welsh Government	Hands-on government role in social care policy-making	Hands-on involvement in the making of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Such a participant would have lived experience from within Welsh Government of the making of the Act, including public involvement arrangements.
I3	Civil servant with an overview and scrutiny role rather than a direct policy-making role	Knowledgeable insider critique of policy-making	An insider perspective from someone not involved in the everyday practice policy-making work. Such a participant, particularly if they have an overview, could provide information against to consider the information given by civil servants with a direct policy profession/policy-making role.
I4	Senior staff member with a policy remit from a Third Sector umbrella body	Overview of Third Sector and public involvement in policy-making	Civil society places a major role in mediating and facilitating public involvement in policy-making. Someone senior within an umbrella body could be expected to have an oversight of the Third Sector's role and direct engagement with Welsh Government policy makers. Such a participant could provide a high level overview across Wales and across the sector.
I5	Staff member with a policy remit from a membership organisation representing people with learning disabilities	Hands-on role in speaking for self-advocate members and supporting members to speak for themselves.	Barod's concerns about public involvement are grounded in the experiences of people with learning disabilities, therefore it was important to include a participant who was both involved in the policy world and involved with people with learning disabilities. Such a person could provide insights that would help me evaluate the validity, or otherwise, of Barod's concerns.

Table 3.5   Characteristics of conversational interview participants

Data identifier	About the participants	Location
CI1	2 community activists with some consultation experience	Conversational interview, South Central Wales cafe
CI2	3 web designers	Conversational interview, South East Wales office lounge
CI3	1 nurse with research responsibilities	Conversational interview, North Wales cafe
CI4	1 person, small tech start-up owner	Conversational interview, Southwest Wales cafe

3.6.4 Questions

The lines of questioning for the semi-structured and conversational interviews are shown in Table 3.6. These were asked sequentially in the semi-structured interviews. In the conversational interviews, the first question was asked, and then the other three added in whichever order was appropriate for the conversation.

Table 3.6   Lines of questioning

Semi-structured interview questions	Conversational interview questions
How does Welsh Government make policy?	How do you think Welsh Government make policy? [unless they give an answer that shows reasonable grasp, show and describe an outline of the process]
Who should be part of that? (prompt for public involvement, prompt for who within that)	Who should have a say?
Why those people?	Why?
How should public involvement happen?	How?

3.6.5 Data

Each interview was audio recorded. The interviews lasted between 57 and 94 minutes[22]. In addition to the audio recordings, notes were made during the interviews and immediately after. This proved essential as only three of the five semi-structured interviews yielded transcribable data as the audio quality of two was too poor for transcription. Of these, two interviews were self-transcribed and one professionally transcribed. The conversational interviews were all partly self-transcribed.

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[22] As noted below, 3.6.X, one interview involved turning the audio recorder off. This totalled around 15 minutes, which I included in the interview time even though it was time where consent was not given for the information to be included as data.

3.7 Collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) research

3.7.1 Why this method in this way?

My need was for a collaborative method suitable for people who were 'not the usual suspects' for being researchers, rather than a suitable autoethnographic method. In other words, for my purposes being collaborative was essential and autoethnographic was selected as the most appropriate vehicle for the collaboration. Collaborative was important because of my belief that accessing more perspectives gives a better understanding than relying on one. The collaboration needed to be with 'not the usual suspects' because this method was being used in lieu of holding a series of CSC under research conditions. From the start, this meant the 'C' was more important than the 'AE' in this CAE.

Ethically and epistemically, a collaborative method was required that positioned everyone as knowers and knowledge co-creators, rather than some being reduced to sources of information (Fricker, 2012). This has been termed radical equality (Winter, 2017), resistance of dominant power relations (Kara, 2017), and a moral imperative (Fielding, 2020). It is acknowledged as a challenge, and one where there is often a gap between the theory and the practice (Mason and Boutilier, 2009).

Before introducing the criteria that led to choosing CAE, it is worth a brief introduction to the concept of autoethnography. Autoethnography is "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)" (Ellis et al., 2011). While 'graphy' more usually means writing, in the context of 'writing as method' (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005) to write is to analyse and therefore this definition is appropriate in this context.

Autoethnography is not one method but a "spectrum from 'evocative' to 'analytic'" (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013, p.64). There are examples of solo (e.g. Richardson, 1997; Wall, 2006), duo (e.g. Richardson and Lockridge, 2002; Wheeler and Hopwood, 2015), co-constructed witnessing (e.g. Ellis and Rawicki, 2013) and collaborative (e.g. Ellis et al., 2008) from across the evocative to analytic spectrum.

There are a number of criticisms of autoethnography, most of which are marshalled by Delamont (e.g. 2009). These needed addressing if CAE was to be used (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7   Criticisms of autoethnography and how they are addressed in this research

Delamont (2007; 2009)	Response in relation to the proposed use of the method in this research
Ethnography requires critical distance from that which is being studied. Autoethnography cannot fight familiarity because the self is being studied.	This is overcome with a robust CAE team where each member of the team contributes individually and critiques each other members' interpretation of events. This provides a critical element that even the most reflexive researcher lacks when attempting to critique their own interpretation of an event.
Autoethnography is almost impossible to write and publish ethically because others are implicated, and if closely associated with the named autoethnographer have no anonymity.	This research is only autoethnographic in relation to shared experiences, and therefore there are no issues of disclosing identities of others or seeking retrospective consent (Lapadarat, 2017).
Research should be analytic not merely experiential, and autoethnography is all experience.	This cannot be claimed of analytic AE, and this collaborative AE was set up to be analytic.
It focuses on the powerful, "not the powerless to whom we should be directing our sociological gaze" (2007, p.2).	This sounds problematically like an argument for ethnography as study of the exotic 'Other'. It is true that focusing on social issues as experienced by academics limits the voices and experiences heard. This is a regrettably corollary of under-representation of society's less power people in the academic workforce. In this research, four out of five of those using their sociological gaze have no power or role within the academic world.
It abrogates the sociologist's duty to go out and collect data.	This claim is problematic in its belief that data are sitting 'out there' to be 'collected'. Empirical research beyond a case study of one is essential for sociological advancement of knowledge. However this does not negate the value of the case study of one, whether or not that one is the researcher themselves.
Sociologists are not interesting enough to be the subject of sociological study.	Again, this sounds problematically like an argument for ethnography as a study of the 'Other'.

One additional recent criticism is that autoethnography's "potential for narcissism and self-indulgence may still be unavoidable in CAE". (Roy and Uekusa, 2020, p.388). As this research had an external focus, this risk was ameliorated.

Two significant papers (Chang and Bilgen, 2020; Lapadat, 2017) were published too late to be part in deciding to use CAE but are used in 8.4.3 to critique the decision and how CAE was used. In particular, both offer ways to quality assure CAE work.

Ultimately, the choice of method was guided by four questions listed in the order they were used to narrow and confirm the choice of CAE.

1   What is permissible under Bangor University's ethics procedure

For doctoral research, ethical approval has to take top priority. Given the methodological pluralism of the research, considerations of epistemic justice takes precedence over methodological coherence. Quality assurance is important for impact, but secondary to integrity. Anyone working with me to co-construct data had to be considered a research participant. This applies to any collaborative research approach.

2   What is epistemically just

This indicated CAE as the most suitable method, being the only one that allowed all of us to have the same dual status of researcher-participant. The dual status is implicit in AE, whichever nuance of researcher-*and*-researched or researcher-*is*-researched (Doloriert and Sambrook, 2009) is foregrounded. While the research ethics committee might have considered me 'more researcher than participant' and my colleagues 'more participant than researcher', we were free to enact the relationship as equally researcher *and* participant. This was enacted by all five of us signing informed consent paperwork, and all five sharing ownership of the co-constructed data.

Ethically this mattered because if CSC could have been designed single-handedly by me, it would have been unethical to waste people's time by asking them to be participants. If their contribution was integral to the design work, then both Barod and I considered it unethical to recognise our contributions differently. CAE also has ethical advantages in being inclusive of those who unable to publish academically by themselves as co-authors and self-representers rather than those quoted in the findings and represented by someone else (Lapadat, 2017; Pickering and Kara, 2017). Among collaborative methods, it has been argued that CAE "flattens power dynamics in the team" (Lapadat, 2017, p.599).

The next two questions were used to check that CAE was appropriate.

3   Coherence with overall methodological stances

CAE is a suitable approach for foregrounding the partial and perspectived knowledge and reflexive work of different people who have a shared experience or who are researching the same phenomenon (Chang et al., 2013). Their suggestion of working individually as well as collectively, makes it possible to guard against premature attempts to come of consensus thus maximising the contribution of different voices and perspectives.

As someone with reservations about asking others to make themselves vulnerable while personally retaining the status of researcher, ethnomethodology offers an incidental endorsement of autoethnography, namely that "the first and most accessible thing for observation is yourself" (Francis and Hester, 2004, p.35).

The benefits of multiple perspectives of those equally researcher and participant include:

- "Collaborative autoethnographers combine their energy and data to create a richer pool of data from multiple sources" (Chang et al., 2013, p.89).
- CAE "invites community to investigate shared stories and balances the individual narrative with the greater collective experiences" (Blalock and Akehi, 2018, p.94).
- "Collaboration allows multiple voices and perspectives into the research, and it increases the source of data and information from a single researcher to multiple researchers; this contributes to a more in-depth understanding and learning of the self and others" (Chang et al., 2013, p.23-24).

4   Quality assurance, and how the method would be perceived by those whose approval is central to real world impact

The purpose of this research is to do something about an urgent real-world problem. Policy-makers are the people with power to do something about it. As the knowledge review will make clear, the quality criteria of evocative autoethnography[23] would not meet the criteria for robust research evidence (Nesta and Alliance for Useful Information, n.d.). This ruled out the evocative approach. Both Lapadat (2017) and Chang et al. (2013) assert that the collaborative element of CAE enhances rigour through the multiple perspectives, with "A built-in process of internal peer-reviewing [that] starts to

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[23] Namely, the narrator's credibility, the account's believability and connection with the reader, and whether the story speaks to the reader in a way that illuminates (Ellis et al, 2011).

form through data collection, analysis and interpretation sessions as the mutual scrutiny, interrogation and probing continue" (Roy and Uekusa, 2020, p.388). The method also needs to prove its ethical and epistemic justice credentials for Barod to use it. Lapadat (2017) notes that indigenous and community CAEs removes the real risk that autoethnography (and any traditional social research method) privileges the voices already privileged.

3.7.1 Recruitment and gateway informed consent

The team size was determined by balancing the need for multiple perspectives against my limited capacity for managing relationships. A team of three to five has since been identified as ideal to "embrace diverse perspectives, the power of collaboration and ethical research practices" (Roy and Uekusa, 2020, p.389). This team totalled five.

Criteria for invitation were purposive. A list was drawn up of people who:

- had taken part in at least one of Barod's 'coffee shop conversation' with me. This was so there was a previous experience against which to compare the videoed CSC, in case the videoing and doing of the CSC as part of the research did alter the nature of the conversation.
- knew me and knew or knew of other potential invitees already. A prior relationship was unavoidable as one criterion of CSC is that everyone knows or knows of each other.
- were known to be confident enough to disagree and offer alternative ways of thinking. Without this, there would be little value in working collaboratively.

This gave a list of six women. Four were known to have greater flexibility in their schedules, so they were approached first. This was the only element of convenience in the selection process.

Tolich (2010) offers ten guidelines for ethical autoethnographic work, relating to consent, consultation, and vulnerability. All were considered and factored into the collaborative work, for example rechecking consent and making sure nothing is written in this thesis that has not been shown to people mentioned[24]. Initial consent was individual, with no-one knowing who else was being approached. It was made clear to potential collaborators that taking part was genuinely voluntary, they could decline to

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[24] This goes beyond Tolich's guideline which is merely not to include anything that you would not wish to show someone.

take part or withdraw at any time, and that whatever they decided would not affect our subsequent relationship. This is essential given our prior relationships. Each of the four invited women chose to sign the informed consent paperwork. This officially made them researcher-participants members alongside me in the CAE team.

3.7.2 Summary of CAE activities

The CAE comprised a number of activities during 2015, and a follow-up reflective workshop in 2019 (see Table 3.8).

Table 3.8   Summary of CAE activities

Data identifier	What	Who	Where	Tangible data
Pre-meeting (2015)	First meeting: becoming a group	All	Bistro, Anglesey	Audio recording, transcript
CAE video (2015)	Videoed CSC	All	Café, Gwynedd	Video and audio recordings, A3 pad notes, partial transcript
Helen (2015) Rachel (2015) Ellie (2015) Diane (2015) Anne (2015)	Individual accounts of CSC	Each individual	Unknown	Text
Half-day (2015)	Half day workshop	All	University 1	Audio, transcript, flipchart and post-its
Full-day (2015)	Full day workshop	Initially all; one person left	University 2	Audio, transcript, flipchart and post-its
Reflective (2019)	Final reflective workshop	Anne, Diane, Ellie and Rachel	Café, Gwynedd	Audio, transcript, own notes, notes from collaborators

3.7.3 Pre-meeting

The five of us met upstairs in an airy bistro. The purpose was to explain the research, invite questions, and make practical arrangements for the next steps. We discussed past 'coffee shop conversations' and the idea of 'being researchers'. It was our first meeting as a group, so afterwards each person was asked privately if they still wanted to take part, having tried groupwork. All the women chose to continue.

3.7.4 CAE video

This was a staged and videoed CSC about how Welsh Government make policy. It was held in a café where we had previously met socially and also previously met for a Barod 'coffee shop conversation'. Permission was granted by the café owner for videoing, and a table was used where no-one apart from us would be in camera-shot or walk past. This was transcribed, and the transcript is referenced as 'CAE video'. In addition, the notes made on A3 plain paper during the CSC were photographed and referenced as 'CSC A3'. The purpose of this meeting was to video us having a CSC about policy-making. The questions were the same as for the conversational interviews (Table 3.6), namely:

- How do you think Welsh Government make policy?
- Who should have a say? Why? And how?

In the context of the policy-making research, the use of CSC was to enable a fuller, participant-led exploration through conversation of the topic of how Welsh Government make policy. The focus was on creating as close to a naturally occurring conversation as possible in the belief that the way in which people talked around the topic and made sense of it was more important than receiving answers to questions the researcher had defined as the relevant questions to ask about the topic.

In the context of the CAE itself, its role was to give us a shared experience of a CSC for the later research activities.

3.7.5 Individual accounts of 'What is a Coffee Shop Conversation?'

Each of wrote an individual response to the question: "What *is* a Coffee Shop Conversation?". This approach is described by Chang et al. as the concurrent model which "keeps your teammates from influencing each other's thought and allows each member to stand on equal footing when you share our individual stories" (Chang et al., 2013, p.69). Ideally, there would have been a cycle of individual accounts, workshop, individual accounts, workshop (Klinker and Todd, 2007), but this would have made inappropriate demands on the rest of the team. Instead, there was only the one round of writing individual accounts. Seeing how each of us responded to the question was the reason for this method, so no guidance on what people *should* write was given, although anyone who asked was offered support.

3.7.6 Half-day workshop, 2015

The aim of the half-day workshop was to have first sight of each other's accounts and begin to co-create a description of CSC. We met in a Bangor University seminar room for three hours. The meeting was audio recorded. Most of the analytic work was done from the audio recording, with relevant sections later being transcribed.

In addition, each person made notes on a paper tablecloth addressing the question, "What makes a good host?". The tablecloth was kept and the notes were typed up.

3.7.7 Full day workshop

The aim of the full-day workshop was to continue analysing the individual accounts and try to answer: 'What makes something a CSC?' We met in a different university building, with more space to spread out and access to a kitchen.

The workshop was audio recorded and the transcript is referenced as 'Full-day, 2015'. The flipcharts were photographed with the Post-its on, and referenced as Flipchart 1 etc. The Post-its were typed up and referenced as 'Post-its, Full-day'. The co-produced definitions are referenced as 'Team, Full-day'.

After some discussion about how to approach the task, we wrote initial responses individual on Post-its. We used an interactive process of placing and replacing Post-its each of us had written until we found a principle for determining why a Post-it was in *this* cluster and not *that* cluster. We accepted a principle if it made sense to each of us, even if we did not all agree that it was the way we personally would have chosen to organise the Post-its. One person needed to leave during the morning.

By the end of the process we were able to draw lines around the clusters and name the demarcations (see example, Fig. 3.6).

Figure 3.6   Drawing lines around clusters of Post-its
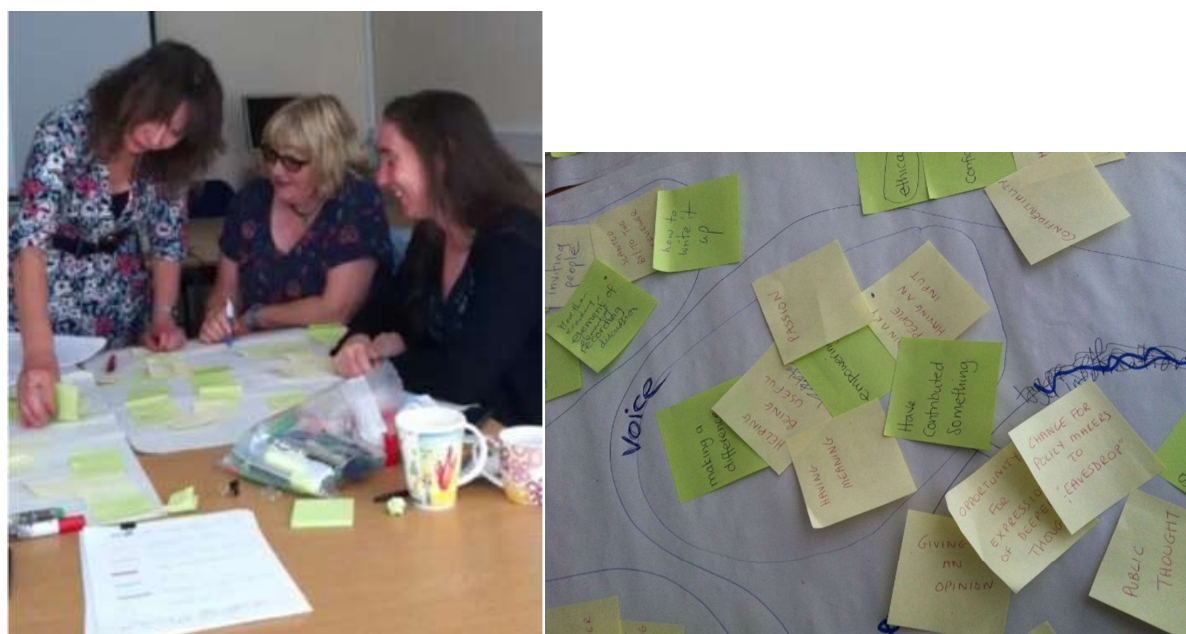
The workshop finished with discussion led by Diane that generated an agreed provisional single sentence answer to 'What is a Coffee Shop Conversation?'.

3.7.8 Reflexive workshop

In 2019, the CAE team reconvened for a reflexive workshop. Reflexive workshops are opportunities to look back at shared work. They are often also opportunities to look forward. A reflexive workshop allowed the other members of the original CAE team to look at how CSC had developed since their involvement. It was an opportunity for them to critique the work, revisit their own opinions about CSC, and consider together whether the work we had done in 2015 had been worth doing. As such, it was essential in terms of epistemic justice to hold this workshop rather than presume that with the end of the CAE those in the team had lost any right to critique what had been done with their work. The reconvening of the team also provided the multiple perspectives on the 2019 iteration of CSC, which shaped the final stages of the design work of this thesis and guided recommendations for where to go next with CSC.

Four of us met for a full day in the café we had used for the videoed Coffee Shop Conversation in 2015. The purpose was to discuss how CSC had developed and talk about the experience of researching together. I was seeking guidance from people who had different perspectives from me and each other, and who weren't afraid to speak openly. During our six hours together, we unravelled my and their feelings and thoughts

about the collaborative research, including my guilt that the research relationship had been less equal than I felt I had promised. They asked probing questions when I explained what CSC had become and how Barod had been using the method. After lunch, we moved to outside tables to enjoy the sun, the change of scenery and the long trestle table on which the original flipcharts from the full-day workshop could be spread and revisited. Together, we identified possible strategies for a future Delivery phase, and identified challenges still to be solved. We talked about academia, universities, research and approaches to public involvement in health and social care research.

3.7.9 Writing about the CAE

CAE writing should be co-authored (Chang et al., 2013; Lapadat, 2017; Pickering and Kara, 2017). As the CAE did not continue to this stage, Chapter 7 uses extracts of co-created conversation (Reflexive, 2019) in lieu of co-authored text.

Chapter 6 includes a brief vignette. Unlike the extracts in Chapter 7, this is creative writing in that it uses a combination of flipchart, transcript and memory to evoke a sense of an occasion (Pitard, 2015).

3.8   Collaborative field testing

3.8.1 What is collaborative field testing?

The approach was informed by the Government Digital Service's user research approach (Government Digital Service, n.d.). All references to method are derived from or adapted from the user research service manual. The collaborative field testing in this research equates to the Alpha stage user research.

Field testing comprises both the fieldwork itself and the work either side to plan the fieldwork and process the feedback.

3.8.2 Division of labour

If this were not a KESS collaboration, the entirety of the field testing would have been conducted as part of doctoral studies and, presumably, anyone participating in a CSC16 would have been classed as a research participant. As this was a KESS collaboration, the

work was split between the student and the company partner. The company partner conducted the fieldwork by using CSC16 as part of the suite of methods they offered clients. This meant that the fieldwork gave a better indication of how CSC16 performed in the field, as it was being used in the context for which it was being designed. It also meant that this part of the field testing was not conducted under ethical approval, and therefore was not admissible as data.

Ethical approval included requesting access to non-public documents. Therefore, the data were not the fieldwork itself but non-public documents relating to it that were made available for research purposes. While there are public documents in the form of clients' reports, these were not used as they would have publicly identified the clients. The documents comprised:

- outputs from a CSC development workshop, February 2017, that I had facilitated as a Barod employee.
- Purposive sampling grid, project management notes (fieldnotes, training notes, analysis 'screen grabs'), and any spreadsheets and reports held by Barod or the client where permission was granted by the relevant client as well as Barod.

The documents and their identifiers are listed in Table 3.9.

The purpose of accessing the documents was not documentary analysis but reviewing how CSC16 had been used.

Table 3.9   Summary of documents

Document identifier	Document owner	Description of document
D1	Barod	Purposive sampling grid for Client 1
D2	Barod	Project management notes from the work with Client 1
D3	Barod	Spreadsheet for analysing data from CSC for Client 1
D4	Barod	Development workshop notes
D5	Barod/Client 2	Purposive sampling grid for Client 2
D6	Barod	Project management notes from the work with Client 2
D7	Barod	Photographs of notes made during CSC for Client 2
D8	Client 1	Report from Barod to Client 1
D9	Client 2	Report from Barod to Client 2

The KESS partnership requires the student to spend time on company placement. These placements were aligned to just before and just after Barod conducted the fieldwork with clients. The placement allowed me to advise Barod on designing the fieldwork part of the field tests, provide ongoing real-time advice as Barod was using CSC16, and receive feedback from Barod as part of the placement. One placement involved facilitating a CSC16 development workshop for and with Barod. The academic contribution also included subsequent reviewing of documents provided, theoretical research, and findings from the CAE reflexive workshop.

During this period I remained an employee of Barod. This resulted in my being one of the Barod employees working with clients on consultations, including some of consultation work using CSC16. This required careful management to ensure that no information from the employee role 'leaked' into use as data in the doctoral student role.

3.9   Knowledge review and other literature work

All search strategies are described using the terminology of Booth (2008). Table 3.10 is based on that paper. Access to books and journals was restricted by availability through Bangor University library, and later restricted to online only after a move to Swansea and then the pandemic preventing physical access to a library. I became temporary custodian of Dr RS Slack's considerable personal library of methodological literature, and much of this work would have been impossible without his generosity of spirit.

3.9.1 Literature review addressing public involvement in Welsh Government policy-making

After an initial scoping review in 2014 using successive fractions, the literature review was first conducted in 2015. It was repeated in 2019 and 2021. All five of the strategies in Table 3.10 were used.

The building blocks strategy began by provisionally identifying key and additional search terms using advice from supervisors, expert informants within the policy world in Wales and the UK Civil Service and checking reading lists from assignments submitted for my Masters in Policy Research and Evaluation. Strings of key terms were checked by searching in Google and scanning the first four pages of results to identify additional search terms and starting points for searching for professional and practice documents.

Table 3.10   Strategies for literature searching (adapted from Booth, 2008)

Strategy	Description
Building blocks	Development of search strings of what Booth (2012) describes as "facets", ie search terms. This approach is enhanced by considering a strategic order of introducing or dropping facets.
Related articles features	Automated service within some journals and databases, whereby interest in one citation generates a list of related articles.
Successive fractions	This starts with a very broad search, with successive facets/search terms being added to progressively filter and reduce the result set.
Berry picking	Supplementary approach, having carried out systematic searches, to identify additional information using forward and backward chaining via references/citations, checking journal indices having identified relevant journals, and searching by author.
Interactive scanning	Deliberate generation of a vast set of results when unfamiliar with a topic, in order to begin to identify key search terms, facets, journals, authors and themes.

Table 3.11 shows the terms then used in a systematic literature search of ProQuest and Web of Science.

Table 3.11 Search terms used in the 2015, 2019, 2021 academic database searches

Key term	Additional search terms
'public'	'citizen' 'voter' 'member of the public'
'involvement'	engagement, participat*, coproduc*, co-produc*, consultation, voice
'policy-making'	'policy making', 'making polic*'
'social care policy'	
'Welsh Government'	'Welsh Assembly Government'
Wales	Cymru, Welsh
'UK Civil Service'	'civil service' 'Cathays[a]'
'public managerialism'	'new public managerialism'
'complexity'	'systems thinking', Agile
'policy design'	
'Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act'	SSWBA

[a] Cathays is the Cardiff location where most Welsh Government civil servants are based.

All searches excluded anything not in English or Welsh and anything before 1983.

The systematic search began with the following five strings:

> Public OR Involvement **AND** policy-making OR 'social care policy' **AND** 'Welsh
> Government' OR 'UK Civil Service' OR Wales
>
> 'policy design' **AND** Wales **AND** public
>
> 'public managerialism' **AND** 'Welsh Government' OR 'UK Civil Service' OR Wales
>
> Complexity **AND** 'Welsh Government' OR 'UK Civil Service' OR Wales
>
> 'Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014'

'public' and 'involvement' were only searched in conjunction with another term to avoid swamping results with papers about research involvement.

These search strings were also used to search within:

- Welsh Government and Senedd websites (searches conducted 2014, 2017 and 2020)
- Co-production Network Wales knowledge hub (2020)
- Social Care Online

Titles and abstracts were hand sifted in two stages. Firstly, they were rapidly scanned and those clearly not relevant were discarded. The abstracts of remaining papers were read.

PDFs or Word versions of literature/documents that passed these checks were downloaded to Mendeley. Weblinks and other sources of information such as photographs were stored in a Word document. Links were re-accessed in the final writing up to check that they were still active.

Academic literature was quality assured by checking the status of the journal or author (NICE, 2012). Quality assurance of professional, practice and web-based information involved checking the credibility of the organisation or individual producing the information, comparing assertions against other evidence, and considering the basis for any assertions.

Working with the literature involved reading them in Mendeley or online and making notes on paper. A spreadsheet was used for anything being considered for inclusion in the thesis. This had a citation column, potential quote or summary of text, and potential

sentence or notable feature. This made it easy to sort the information into a narrative for Chapter 4, Knowledge review.

Chapter 4 is called a knowledge review rather than a literature review because it has additional information from expert informants to supplement gaps in the literature. Such additional information was only included if corroborated by at least two expert informants. They are not cited as personal communications as there is no GDPR-compliant permission for the information to be stored with their names.

3.9.2 Policy context literature search

Welsh learning disability policy documents were identified from 1983 to 2015, together with key social care and public service reform policy documents 2004 to 2021, using a combination of expert knowledge and searching within Welsh Government and Social Care Wales websites.

A smaller number of key documents were identified (as used in Table 4.3).

The titles of these key documents were searched in ProQuest to identify any academic literature about those documents.

3.9.3 Spirographic literature work

As described in Chapter 3, the data analysis involved a conversation primarily of myself, the data and literature, with additional contributions from Barod colleagues and company supervisors. In practical terms, this means that as topics became relevant to the thesis, multiple organically evolving additional searches were conducted using a combination of interactive scanning (Google, Google Scholar) and followed by successive fractions until a key paper was identified, at which point berry picking was used. The nature of such searching is a conflict between keeping an auditable trail and working at speed. This work was done at speed to permit the broadest searching and transdisciplinary cross-fertilisation of ideas. However, this means there is no auditable trail to prove or retrospectively construct how decisions were made.

For each topic, the investment in the search strategy was proportionate to the significance of the topic in the thesis.

3.9.4 Methodological literature work

This was conducted for three purposes.

The first was to inform the methodology and methods of this research. This was conducted first in 2014 with guidance from supervisors and the university subject librarian. As required, additional cherry-picking was used to find textbooks and papers that would help clarify, confirm or alter the use of methods and to refine my methodological thinking.

The second purpose was to allow self-evaluation of the methods and research design as used, and this was conducted in 2021. It focused on areas of practice where I was aware of significant developments since the research was planned. I was aware of developments from a combination of scanning recommendations from Mendeley, Researcher and Academia.edu, notifications from Bepress via the saved search function, and following Twitter-active academics and centres for co-production whose work was relevant (e.g. Paul Cairney, Ginnie Braun, Helen Kara, Patricia Leavy, Co-Production Collective).

The third purpose was to develop a theoretical basis for CSC21. This focused on three aspects of the method: how to know if the right people were selected across a set of conversations (see 6.9.3 and 7.7.4); how to know who should be in any single conversation and how to make each conversation as close to natural as possible (see 6.9.2 and 7.7.2); and how to analyse the data in epistemically responsible ways (literature also informs the conduct of this research, so is described in 3.4). Expert advice was then taken about key academics, texts or phrases from current and previous supervisors. From this starting point, a combination of berry picking and successive fractions was used to identify papers to read. Theoretical work was central to the ongoing design work of both CSC16 and CSC21. Reference is made in Chapter 6 and earlier in Chapter 7 to theoretical epiphanies that proved turning points in the design of the research. However, for clarity, the end points are presented as a whole in Chapter 7, Designing CSC21.

3.10 Workshops

The workshop method was chosen to allow for activities in addition to talk, for example creating art, writing on flipcharts, taking part in quizzes, and for its familiarity to

potential participants. Both workshops took place at conferences where other workshops were also being held. Unlike focus groups or group interviews, workshops allow for an ebb and flow between whole-group and sub-group or individual work. They do not rely on conversational skills. Personal support to participate can be provided more discretely in activities than in conversation.

3.10.1 Workshop 1

This took place at a conference in Wales for those wanting to co-create ideas and build networks in relation to improving public service delivery and policy. The workshop was described as an opportunity to participate in doctoral research about public involvement in policy-making. Nine people (four women and five men) self-selected to attend. During the workshop, comments indicated they worked within civil service, policy think tanks, and senior management in Third and public sector organisations.

The conference took place under the Chatham House Rule[25]. This made it inappropriate to ask those participating to disclose the details required for informed consent paperwork. The culture of the event was people could leave or join workshops at will, therefore choosing to stay and actively participate was deemed freely given consent. Given the nature of the event, the workshop was not audio recorded, apart from my audio recording myself explaining the purpose of the workshop, how the information would be used, and inviting them to stay or leave. This was done with people's permission in case at any future stage it needed to be evidence that participants had understood the nature of the research. At this point, people were also provided with the standard information sheet about the research.

Workshop materials were Post-its, pens, and large sheets of paper with the headings:
- How do you think Welsh Government makes policy?
- Who should have a say?
- How should people have a say?

People self-organised to write and talk as they wrote. Non-attributable notes were made of some conversations with verbal permission. These were made on large sheets of paper, and people invited to amend or cross out any information as these notes would

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[25] "When a meeting, or part thereof, is governed by the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information they received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), not that of any other participant may be disclosed" www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chatham-house-rule

be treated as part of the research data. This was followed by a brief re-grouping after which people were asked to cluster the Post-its thematically. The workshop closed with re-grouping, a brief silence to allow for reflection, and then a final round of group discussion during which notes were made.

Photographs were taken of the thematically grouped notes by anyone who wished to (Fig. 3.7).

Figure 3.7   Workshop 1 grouped notes

3.10.2 Workshop 2

This took place at a learning disability organisation's annual conference, at the invitation of the organiser. There were over 100 delegates, mostly self-advocates[26] but including support workers, allies[27] and facilitators/advisors. An invitation was given to all delegates to contribute to the research, and delegates self-selected whether to accept the invitation.

Although called a 'workshop', plans changed at the last minute to avoid the risk of confusion between other workshops happening which were for consultation and this workshop which was for academic research. After discussion with the organisers and my

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[26] A self-advocate is a person with learning disabilities who speaks for themselves, and may also speak on behalf of others with learning disabilities
[27] Allies are people without a formal role in relation to self advocacy, but who actively support and promote people with learning disabilities speaking for themselves. I consider myself a long-time ally.

supervisors, I suggested that I set up a stall, clearly marked as research. People could come to me during the lunch break or at the end of the conference to answer any or all of the research questions by writing their own answer or asking me to write it down for them. It was agreed that informed consent packs would have raised people's anxieties without increasing how informed people's consent was, and therefore ethical approval did not require signed informed consent.

Sixteen people (11 self-advocates, five allies) contributed data. Given the nature of the conference, all would be expected to have some knowledge and interest of policy-making.

3.11 Pushing the boundaries

This research did not set out to be quite so methodologically rich or complex. That it became so could be attributed to starting with a real-life problem, using research to design a possible solution, and the significant changes of supervisor and schools.

The research design and approach make a number of methodological contributions. Some are outlined here. Others are deferred to Chapter 8 as they relate to both the conduct of the research and product of the research, CSC21.

3.11.1 Not just the usual (academic) suspects

This research takes a new approach to transdisciplinarity (Laasch et al., 2020). Academic disciplines are combined in a novel way, and the research collaborators extend beyond the university. Unlike Laasch et al. (2020), ranging across academic disciplines in this research is a solo rather than team responsibility. This research also extends their inter-sectoral approach to include public sector and 'lived experience'.

3.11.2 Thinking about research ethics

None of the ethical challenges of this research are unique, but the work undertaken to address the ethical complexities of this particular research contributes to academic knowledge. In particular, there is a contribution from making epistemic justice a core facet of researching ethically.

3.11.3 Thinking about data analysis

This research delves deeply into thinking about how data are analysed/interpreted. What has been termed 'Spirographic analysis' may simply reflect my inability to see how my methods match existing approaches. In other words, I may have simply created a name for something that is already in use under another name. Alternatively, this research may have stopped on the cusp of making a potentially significant methodological contribution.

3.11.4 Creativity as an enabler

Finally, while it is no longer novel to use creative analytic practices or arts-based research as research methods, this thesis adds to the literature by describing their use as enablers of research rather than the research itself.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter provides the basis for decisions about this research and an appropriate research design. It describes the methodological approach, the research design, the planned methods and why they were appropriate, and changes that had to be made to the planned methods.

The overall approach draws on established methodological approaches but is fully aligned to none. This is a consequence of adopting a real-world standpoint rather than a particularly disciplinary standpoint, as befits research that addresses a real-life problem in urgent need of a real-life solution. This led to a design-orientated, collaborative, transdisciplinary approach. The overall approach is strongly influenced by considerations of epistemic justice and what it means to research ethically.

The research design comprises two parts, Discovery (Chapters 4 and 5) and Development (Chapters 6 and 7). The chapter describes the methods used. For Discovery, these were knowledge review, semi-structured and conversational interviews, and workshops. For Development, two collaborative approaches were used. The first stage involved collaborative autoethnographic work. The second stage involved collaborative field testing.

The chapter closes by drawing attention to some of the ways in which the methodology and methods push the boundaries of current academic practices.

The next chapter reviews what is known about approaches to policy-making and the Welsh social care policy context, with a focus on public involvement.

Part 1

Learning about policy-making
and public involvement

Chapter 4   Knowledge review

4.1   Introduction

The previous chapter provides the basis for decisions about this research and an appropriate research design.

This chapter reviews what is known about approaches to policy-making and the Welsh social care policy context, with a focus on public involvement.

This is the first half of the evidence base for the design of CSC. This means it is less laying the foundations for the research and more part of the research itself. It focuses on academic literature and, in relation to professional practice, practice literature. Absences from the literature are supplemented by online information, such as organisational websites and blogs, or expert knowledge. The initial scoping literature review in 2014 identifies the need for fieldwork to address some of the gaps. This knowledge review is shaped by a Spirographic interaction with the policy-making fieldwork reported in Chapter 5.

For quality assurance, any such additional information was corroborated by checking with at least one other source. The need to fill gaps in literature means this chapter is described as a knowledge review rather than a literature review.

The first part of this chapter focuses on ways of thinking about policy and policy-making. It begins by laying the foundations on which the rest of the chapter builds (4.2). It moves on to four approaches to policy-making that I consider important for this thesis (4.3), and then discusses two key concepts: evidence (4.4) and public involvement (4.5).

The second part of this chapter focuses on Wales. It begins with the social care policy context from 1983 to 2021 (4.6). The start date is the year that the All Wales Strategy for Mental Handicap was launched. Within that section there is a brief description of two conversation-based consultation methods popular in Wales during 2011 to 2015. The chapter moves on to describe and discuss public involvement in developing the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (4.7). This section is supplemented by personal communications with expert informants to confirm my recollection of significant activities for which there is no longer any publicly available information.

Sections 4.6 and 4.7 deal with the period up to 2015. It is now 2021. Therefore, a brief update is provided on the Welsh social care policy-making context of 2021 (4.8). The final section of new literature is about everyday policy-making (4.9). The paucity of such information led to the policy-making fieldwork reported in Chapter 5.

The chapter then discusses two key considerations, that of ordinary citizens as stakeholders, and the significance of there being insiders and outsiders in relation to social care policy-making (4.10).

The conclusions (4.11) summarise what the information in this chapter means for the design of CSC.

4.2   Laying the foundations

4.2.1 About policy

Policy is "a set of ideas or plans that is used as a basis for making decisions" and/or a statement of an organisation's "attitude and actions regarding [a particular] issue". (Collins, 2021). However, it can be harder to define academically (Cairney, 2015). The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) describes policy as "a plan, course of action, or set of regulations adopted by government, businesses, or other institutions designed to influence and determine decisions or procedures" (NCCPE, n.d.). In practice, government social care policy encompasses everything from primary legislation to how to charge for domiciliary care.

An analysis of successful policies identified seven requirements:

1. Understand the past and learn from failure
2. Open up the policy process
3. Be rigorous in analysis and use of evidence
4. Take time and build in scope for iteration and adaptation
5. Recognise the importance of individual leadership and strong personal relationships
6. Create new institutions to overcome policy inertia
7. Build a wider constituency of support.
(Rutter et al., 2012, p.17)

None directly relate to public involvement, although the concept of 'opening up' the policy process may be associated with public involvement as part of wider stakeholder

involvement. There are suggestions that "only those supportive of the original goals are liable to perceive …an outcome as a policy success" while "opponents are likely to perceive failure, regardless of outcomes" (McConnell, 2010, p.39). It would have been interesting to know how many of the policies identified as successful in this study would still have been identified as successful if those most affected by them had been invited to comment.

Policy is made by people and organisations (Cairney, 2016). Within Welsh Government, the primary social care policy-makers would be the Minister and Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services along with the civil servants of the Health and Social Care Division. If legislation is required, all Members of the Senedd and the Senedd itself have a policy-making role in scrutinising and voting.

There is a blurred line between those who make decisions and those who influence decisions (Cairney, 2016), with the civil servant-Minister relationship described as "symbiotic" (Jary, 2015, p.9). The UK Civil Service Policy Profession Skills Framework (HM Government Policy Profession, 2013) requires civil servants to "bring together evidence, politics and delivery to support Ministers in achieving outcomes for government", advise Ministers and bring together "often discordant information …[to] produce the 'best available' option.". However, civil servants may instead "anticipate minsters' decisions" leading to their providing "an unnecessarily constrained range of options" (Hallsworth, 2011a, p.92).

4.2.2 What is policy-making?

Simplistically, policy-making is the process of making policy. The key documents governing UK Government policy-making, including the UK civil service staff working in Welsh Government, are the HM Treasury's Green Book (HM Treasury, 2020a) and Magenta Book (HM Treasury, 2020b). The Green Book is "guidance issued by HM Treasury on how to appraise policies, programmes and projects" including "guidance on the design and use of monitoring and evaluation before, during and after implementation." (HM Treasury, 2020a, p.1). The Magenta Book details approaches to policy evaluation with the purpose of ensuring "that public money is well spent, that government intervention is well-targeted, and that any regulation is an appropriate balance between burden and protection." (HM Treasury, 2020b, p.8). In addition, the UK Civil Services provides guidance to civil servants on policy-making through policy profession frameworks.

A system can be understood as "an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something" (Meadows, 2017, p.327). Whether something is seen as a system "begins with the perception of a relationship between parts and wholes in our surroundings." (Buchanan, 2019). This implies that whether something is seen as a system perhaps says as much about the mental model of the person seeing things as a system as it does about any existence of 'a system'.

Policy-making meets Meadows' definition of a system, as do the social issues about which policies are made. The question is, therefore, not whether these are systems but what sort of systems they are. Equally, Buchanan's statement indicates the importance of who defines whether something is a system. This is, perhaps, of greater significance for social issues than policy-making per se. It matters, for example, whether a system is defined as 'the lives of people with learning disabilities' or 'the services used by people with learning disabilities'. The elements, their interconnections and purpose will be understood quite differently even though both could be labelled a 'learning disability system'.

However, this is not a thesis about systems thinking, systems design or complexity theory. Some reference to them is necessary for achieving the purpose of understanding why social care policies haven't worked and seeking to design a public consultation method to address at least part of that problem. Human, Learning, Systems has been selected as adequate for the purpose of this thesis (Lowe et al., 2020). This is outlined described in section 4.3.1.

There is more than one approach to policy-making, as is made clear in 4.3. However, there is little evidence about the everyday practices of policy-making (4.8).

4.2.3 Stakeholders

The language of 'stakeholder' is familiar to the worlds of public service and public policy-making, but the concept originated in the business world (Freeman, 1984). Freeman defined a stakeholder as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" (ibid., p.46). Clarkson (1994) defines someone's stake as the risk to them in relation to the firm's (in our case Welsh Government's) activities. Social care policy is a clear risk to anyone who uses, or supports and cares for someone who uses, social care services in Wales in that their quality of life or very life depends on these Welsh Government activities. This makes them legitimate stakeholders.

Stakeholder and public involvement are part of policy-making in the UK. It is governed by the Gunning Principles (Sheldon, 2012, p.2), In addition, there is a Welsh Government code of conduct for public engagement (National Assembly for Wales, 2013).

Mitchell et al. (1997) expanded the meaning to include those who have a potential or latent risk relationship and not solely those with a current, demonstrable relationship. This expands the scope of legitimate stakeholder in Welsh Government social care policy-making to all ordinary citizens, any one of whom might need social care and support now or in the future.

Mitchell et al. (1997) focuses on three facets of being a stakeholder: legitimacy, urgency and power. They describe any stakeholder possessing all three as a definitive stakeholder.

Being recognised as a legitimate stakeholder is a collective agreement rather than an objective fact (Scott, 2014). In the context of social care policy-making, any legitimate stakeholder can claim the right to be involved in decisions. This does not mean that the stakeholder is heard or has any influence. This requires salience.

Salience, according to Mitchell et al. (1997) is greatest when a stakeholder possesses all three facets. They assert that "Power gains authority through legitimacy, and it gains exercise through urgency" (ibid., p.869). They also note that urgency is more significant than a rational decision about the priority of a stakeholder's claim for involvement. For Chen et al. (2018), only power and urgency "were consistently and positively related to salience" (ibid., p.822). While ordinary citizens have legitimacy, and if using care and support services may also have urgency, it is rare for them to have power.

Salience is located primarily with the actors (in the case of policy-making, the civil servants responsible for organising public involvement), whereas rationality is primarily located with the organisation (in this case, the written procedures for public involvement). Salience is significant if, as Arnstein (1969) argues, potential participants decide whether to respond not based on their right to speak but on whether they believe they can exert influence by participation, whether the issue is relevant – and whether they *want* to exercise influence.

The worked example (Fig. 4.1) shows how the key components of legitimacy, urgency and power might impact someone's salience as a social care policy stakeholder. The terms in bold are those used by Mitchell et al. (1997) to describe different categories of stakeholder.

Figure 4.1   Worked example of stakeholder salience for an ordinary citizen Sam[28] and social care policy

Sam is a family carer. Sam is a **demanding** stakeholder (urgency), demanding to be heard on the basis of the needs of a family member for whom they provide care and support.

Sam might become a **dangerous** stakeholder (urgency and power) if they found employment in a powerful media position, or a **dormant** stakeholder (power) if they had no current difficulties with social care.

What if Sam worked for a small Third Sector carer's organisation engaged in campaigning for urgent change? Then they'd become a **dependent** stakeholder (legitimacy and urgency), but still with little power to demand to be heard or to influence policy decisions. On matters where Sam's organisation was not campaigning, Sam's organisation would be a **discretionary** stakeholder (legitimacy).

Could Sam be a **dominant** stakeholder (legitimacy and power)? Sam might have a senior management post in a social care charity that Welsh Government depend on to provide social care services. If the charity is happy, they have no urgency. However, Sam has their ear and their direct phone numbers, so if the need arises Sam can – and will – exercise their power and become a **definitive** stakeholder (power, legitimacy and urgency).

4.3 Approaches to policy-making

4.3.1 Policy-making as a system

Policy-making is a system using the definition of Meadows (2017). The question becomes what sort of system. Of the approaches to systems, complexity, design and

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[28] Chosen as a gender neutral name. Most current family care is provided by women, but it is not helpful to normalise or problematise this in this worked example by choosing a gendered name.

public policy, the approach most relevant to this thesis is Human, Learning, Systems (Lowe et al., 2020).

There are four types of system: simple, complicated, complex and chaotic. The descriptions in Table 4.1 are drawn from Lowe et al. (2020) and slides from two presentations (Lowe, 2020; Blanuet, 2020).

Table 4.1   Types of system (adapted from Lowe et al., 2020; Lowe, 2020; Blanuet, 2020)

Type of system	Description
Simple	A simple system is 'do this, get that' and is comparatively stable across contexts.
Complicated	A complicated system is still rooted in a linear 'do this, get that'. Designing a solution to a complicated problem requires careful identification of multiple variables that are the root causes of the problem and that will affect achieving the desired solution. If applied to policy, the solution for a policy failure would be more careful identification of previously unaccounted for variables.
Complex	Complex systems are qualitatively different from simple and complicated systems. There is no linear 'do this, get that', but a web of interconnected interdependent changes and adaptations in response to changes. Problems cannot be solved. Rather, the system needs changes introduced that encourage the system to self-organise into a system in which that problem is resolved and desired outcomes are achieved. Such interventions are risky, as it is impossible to predict the effects
Chaotic	This is less a system and more the consequence of the destabilisation of a system. Elements of a previously complex system will self-organise into a new complex system.

Simple

The policy process is often described in academic texts and professional practice as a cycle (Howlett et al., 2009; NCCPE, n.d.; HM Treasury, 2020a). The policy cycle is an example of a simple system.

Complicated

In the 1980s and 1990s, private sector management practices were adopted within the public sector. There was an emphasis on targets, benchmarking, performance related contracting, monitoring and results (Hughes, 1998). People who used public services were consumers or customers.

This approach can be termed New Public Management, or NPM (Gruening, 2001). It brought with it competition and consumerism as mechanisms for driving up standards in public services, together with setting up internal markets through the disaggregation of public organisations into "corporatized units for each public sector 'product'" (Hughes, 1998, p.95) and putting parts of public services out to tender (Hood, 1995).

NPM was firmly embedded in Welsh local government and public services before devolution, meaning its practices were, in effect, inherited from Westminster by the first Welsh Government.

The Green Book (HM Treasury, 2020a) and the Magenta Book (HM Treasury, 2020b) both assume that the social issues being addressed are complicated systems. Both describe policy-making as a complicated system, for example the use of the policy development cycle (HM Treasury, 2020a, p.15), the linear description of strategy to programme to project to output to outcomes (ibid., p.14) and the guide to experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation methods (HM Treasury, 2021b, p.48).

Policy divisions and academic disciplines are admirably designed for complicated systems, where a complex problem can be meaningfully "sliced" into manageable models amenable to deductive logic (Saeed, 1992).

It is difficult to disentangle NPM from evidence-based policy-making (EBPM) as will become clear in 4.4. Both reproduce the power asymmetries that determine what and whose knowledge is awarded the status of 'evidence' (Ansell and Geyer, 2017).

Public involvement is on the basis of being a consumer and as part of democracy (Harrison et al., 2002). It is not related to the potential of ordinary citizens as thinkers, knowers or problem-solvers.

Complex

Complexity theory has been applied to social issues since the 1990s (Barbrook-Johnson et al., 2021). It offers significant insights for policy-making (Cairney, 2012), including a way to explain why interventions designed for health or social issues are often ineffective or have unintended consequences. Lowe et al. (2020) identify health and social care systems as complex, requiring a complex policy response and service response.

Complex systems need to be "studied as a complete and interacting whole rather than an assembly of distinct and separate elements" (Mitleton-Kelly, 2003, p.41) as constituent parts cannot be understood in isolation from their interdependencies within the system.

Cognitive diversity is important for innovation and creative solutions to entrenched problems (e.g. Aggarwal and Woolley, 2019; Post et al., 2009). However, having a team cognitive map is important for effective team working (e.g. Mathieu et al., 2000). Toader et al. (2019) suggest that convergent (shared) maps have greater utility for effective team working and implementation phases, but that divergent cognitive maps are important for adaptation and times of change.

Most project management tools are designed for complicated systems, which causes difficulties when working with complexity (Daniel and Daniel, 2018). They conclude that "Complex and uncertain projects require newer methodologies that help the project 'emerge' rather than being fully pre-planned, and that are based on understanding (model-based theories)" (ibid., p.189). Research on innovation has found that diverse teams can have challenging team dynamics, but that these are reduce when the team is permitted to function as a complex system, rather than required to work sequentially or hierarchically (Post et al., 2009).

Perhaps the greatest challenge to policy-makers is that complex, adaptive systems are not suited to the exercise of centralised 'command and control' approaches to policy, power and accountability (Cairney, 2012). Where complexity of social issues is understood as the social issue being a complex adaptive system (e.g. Cairney, 2012; Lowe et al., 2020), the very role of policy-makers shifts from policy interventions to 'stewarding' the system (Hallsworth, 2011b) in such a way that the system can self-organise into a system that has ameliorated or eliminated the social issue. In other words, policy-making becomes the building of capacity and resilience in key actors and organisations within the system, rather than direct interventions (ibid.).

System Stewards (Hallsworth, 2011b) argues that social problems are increasingly complex, involve ever more actors, and occur in increasingly decentralised contexts. As such, viewing the social problem as part of a complex system, and viewing the role of government as stewardship of systems requires a fundamental shift in approach to policy-making, and they proposed system stewardship as a solution. The foreword to the report defines it thus: "policy makers need to see themselves less as sitting on top of a delivery chain, but as stewards of systems with multiple actors and decision makers –

whose choices will determine how policy is realised". The Housing Division of Welsh Government explicitly adopted a system stewardship approach in 2011 as they worked on the new national housing strategy for Wales (Welsh Government, 2011b).

HM Treasury guidance on policy-making and policy evaluation has not readily accommodated approaching social policy issues as complex adaptive systems. Rather, it enforced requirements to present business cases and evaluate policy in ways more appropriate for complicated systems, in keeping with the historic dominance of New Public Managerialism (Lowe and Wilson, 2017). This was addressed for the first time in 202 with the Magenta Handbook: Supplementary Guide: Handling Complexity in Policy Evaluation (HM Treasury, 2020c).

This potentially game-changing move is described by Bicket et al. (2021) as having taken "considerably longer than anticipated" (ibid., p.21) to produce, requiring not just synthesis of academic literature, but ensuring relevance to policy-makers, compatibility with the main Magenta Book and clarity for those unfamiliar with the concepts or language of complexity. They noted that a lack of shared technical vocabulary meant they "resorted to paper and pen to illustrate and debate different characteristics of complexity" (ibid., p.26). This use of drawings offers a way forward for other situations where those without shared vocabulary (or with shared vocabulary but different meanings to important words and phrases) may need to work together closely to co-produce or co-design.

Özesmi and Özesmi (2004) state that "By examining the structure of maps we can determine how stakeholders view the system, … functions affecting the system which are out of their control, or whether they see the system as hierarchical or more democratic" (ibid., p.50). McNeese and Reddy (2016) found that individual concept maps were sufficiently convergent to be synthesised into a collective team concept map. This offers a powerful rationale for public involvement in mapping any social issue as a complex adaptive system.

The above literature would support two reasons for involving ordinary citizens, at different points in the process. The first reason is to make available to policy-makers a diversity of mental models of the complex adaptive system. This could be achieved through user research or public consultation. The second reason is to be involved in co-creating a collective team concept map from the information made available. Concept mapping can be part of work to develop a team or shared understanding of an issue (Gray et al., 2014. cited in Harper and Dorton, 2019). This is the approach described by

Nesta as "collective intelligent design" (Nesta, 2021), and is similar to some approaches to collaborative data analysis (e.g. Armstrong et al., 2019). Shortall (2013) argues for the third reason. He considers the contribution of expert and experiential knowledge about complex policies and programmes to be essential on the grounds that they are best placed to both imagine the policies in action and be aware of unintended impacts.

In summary, no single perspective can make sense of a complex adaptive system. The absence of different perspectives from within the system will means there is little chance of a policy working as vital information about the system will be missing.

Chaotic

The first UK Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020 destabilised the complex system that is social care (Audit Wales, 2020). From the point of chaos, elements of the system began self-organising (ibid.). The story of the emergence of a new complex system is still unfolding.

4.3.2 Policy-making as design and co-design

There is no intrinsic link between policy design and complexity. However, in Wales moves towards complexity are part of the move towards policy design. Therefore, it is this context for policy design that is relevant to the thesis.

The policy process can also be seen as a design process (see 3.5). The Design Council describe the benefits of a design approach to policy-making as:

- bringing together diverse stakeholder groups
- generating more ideas for legislation and policy change
- introducing rich ethnographic insights into policy development
- mapping out the whole policy development process whilst retaining a detailed view of different steps
  (Design Council, n.d.)

The concept of policy design has been gaining traction in parts of the UK and Welsh Government. A turning point came in 2013, when the Cabinet Office set up the Open Policy-making team, which replaced in 2016 by the Policy Lab (Exley, 2020). Policy Labs are not unique to the Cabinet Office or to the UK. Wales has Y Lab (Y Lab, n.d.). There are other policy labs around the world (apolitical, n.d.). Finland is one of the leaders for policy design that recognises social issues as complex systems (Sitra, n.d.).

The remit of the Policy Lab is to be:

> Responsive to the needs of citizens and government
> Inclusive and open in approach and outcomes
> Systemic and embracing complexity
> Effective in delivering measurable impact.
> (Policy Lab, 2018, slide 16)

Despite this remit, there seems to have been little increase in public involvement (Exley, 2020). From her review of UK Government policy documents, Exley concludes that open policy-making has had more success in opening the policy process to new experts rather than ordinary citizens. This is in accord with the observations of Kaehne and Taylor (2016).

Thus, although policy labs are talked about as "providing a forum for open, honest conversations around a policy topic" (Hinrichs-Krapels et al., p.1), policy labs in the UK do not seem to extend these conversations to the general population or those with lived experience of the issue for which a policy solution is sought. Indeed, the focus is on policy topics rather than lived experiences that might benefit from a policy intervention. This would appear to be a common feature of policy-making, even where a design approach is used.

The design approach is also favoured by Nesta. Nesta describes itself as "The UK's innovation agency for social good" (Nesta, n.d.). Their playbook[29] on collective intelligence design (Nesta, 2021), for example, is strong on its rhetoric of crowdsourcing from citizens to identify and understand the problem and finding solutions through "tapping into the collective brainpower of citizens, a wider pool of innovators, or seeking out tested solutions from elsewhere" (ibid., p.18). As of 31st January 2021, however, the examples of such crowdsourcing in the Playbook are from outside the UK.

Public involvement has two functions within policy design. As with all design processes (see 3.5), policy design begins with Discovery. User research, particularly the user research done as part of the Discovery phase (e.g. Baxter et al., 2015; Policy Lab, 2018) gives ordinary citizens a chance to be a source of information (Fricker, 2012).

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[29] 'playbook' is a term in vogue in design circles. In other contexts it would be called a 'hot to guide' or a toolkit.

The second function is to work alongside other members of a diverse design team as part of a co-design approach (e.g. Donetto et al., 2015; Robert et al., 2015; Hooper et al., 2015). Here, the role of the public is closer to being good informants (Fricker, 2012).

There is an epistemically significant distinction between being "a good informant" and being a "source of information" (ibid., 2012, p.249). The former is an active knowing subject, able to co-construct and shape knowledge; the latter is merely an object from which information can be extracted. The conditions required for a good informant are: that they fit into the group or context, that channels of communication are open, and that others can see the person's suitability as an informant. Source of information, by contrast, can as easily be an inanimate object as a human.

While there has been huge growth in literature about co-design, it could be argued that at least some of what is described as co-design might be better understood as consultation (Locock and Boaz, 2019).

4.3.3 Policy-making as an organisational field

An organisational field is "a community of organisations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field" (Scott, 1995, p.95). What Scott (1995) describes as a common meaning system, others have described as a shared team cognitive map (e.g. Mathieu et al., 2000). This description of an organisational field sounds similar to a description of system (e.g. Meadows, 2017).

Organisational field research has not been applied to policy-making in the UK, so is described here in more detail than the other approaches. It is included for its explanatory potential of everyday policy-making and its association with mental models. This thesis cannot do justice to exploring its potential; that must be left to future research.

Furnari (2018) offers two ways of viewing organisations fields. They could be primarily "durable structures of network relations and shared meanings" (2018, p.324) with forces that "shape and regulate actors" behaviour by defining "culturally legitimate models of organisation and action" (Clemens and Cook, 1999, p.442 cited in Furnari, 2018). They could be "fields of play" (Furnari, 2018, p.324), where actors compete within a structured space for advantages within whatever game is being played. The significance of this difference is whether the primary mechanism for change within a field will be

structuration, for example how the organisations within the field are positioned and networked, or cultural-cognitive processes of actors, for example through reframing an issue or phenomenon in a way that results in a wide-scale adoption of a new common sense. This is significant for this thesis because it indicates where and how the organisational field of Welsh Government policy-making could be changed so that social care policies are more likely to work.

Furnari suggests a 2x2 matrix of structures and actors. This has been adapted in Figure 4.2 for the social care policy-making organisational field.

Figure 4.2   Creating organisational field change

	Actors are adversarial (ie blaming of politicians for causing and sustaining the social issue)	Actors are collaborative (ie broad social conditions are identified as causing the social issue, and abstract structures like 'the system' are blamed for sustaining the issue)
Centralised structure (Welsh Government)	If there is power symmetry between field elite and those blaming them, field change is likely. If power is asymmetric, there is unlikely to be change. If there is, it is likely to be chaotic.	The field is unlikely to change. If it does, the elite status of the elite is likely to be reinforced.
Fragmented structure (Boards set up under SSWA and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act comprising multi-agencies across regions)	Either no change or splitting into two polarised organisational fields.	Change is likely, with new alignments of actors within the field.

Why public involvement?

Organisational fields research was not designed for policy-making research so there is no direct reference to public involvement and why it should be part of the organisational field.

The nearest equivalent to ordinary citizens and their involvement would be business customers. Customers are not part of the organisational field. But the businesses in the field listen to their customers because they do not want to lose customers (e.g. Pinho,

2008; Lin and Huang, 2013). This is a problem in social care policy-making. People who are the 'customers' or 'consumers' of the policy cannot just go somewhere else (e.g. McLaughlin, 2009; Fotaki, 2011).

4.4 Evidence

4.4.1 What counts as evidence?

Evidence is "anything that you see, experience, read, or are told that causes you to believe that something is true or has really happened" (Collins English Dictionary, 2021). It is the second half of the definition that turns information into evidence. Academically and in policy-making, there are significant disagreements about what 'evidence' means, the status of different knowledges as evidence, and what else has a legitimate place in policy-making (Cairney, 2019).

The political move towards more effective use of evidence in policy-making began in the UK in 1999 (NCCPE, n.d.). At that point, the Cabinet Office Strategic Policy Making Team described evidence as: "Expert knowledge; published research; existing statistics; stakeholder consultations; previous policy evaluations; the Internet; outcomes from consultations; costings of policy options; output from economic and statistical modelling". (Strategic Policy Making Team, 1999). In 1999, the UK Government's focus was on increasing the "timeliness and relevance of research evidence" (NCCPE, n.d.), although subsequently the concern became that civil servants and politicians may have become the barriers to more effective use of evidence (ibid). This is the context for civil service policy profession reforms such as the 2013 framework that requires skills in marshalling and applying evidence (UK Civil Service, 2013).

The original breadth of meanings became somewhat lost in the growth of EBPM and its privileging of certain types of empirical knowledge as evidence (e.g. Nutley et al., 2013). Some of the original breadth of meaning of evidence is retained in SCIE's aim of synthesising organisational, practitioner, user, research, and policy community knowledges (Pawson et al., 2003). However, Nutley et al. (2013) suggest that in practice, SCIE "primarily use empirical research" (ibid., p.17) in their reviews, including "user and carer testimony" (ibid.) only if information about users and carers is not available from research. They argue for privileging research knowledge over theoretical or experiential knowledge on the basis that empirical research documents methods, is peer reviewed and externally scrutinised, making it easier to judge trustworthiness and "access the validity of one claim compared to another" (ibid., p.6).

The EBPM movement champions scientific evidence (Parkhurst, 2017), as is evidenced by the What Works Network's description of randomised controlled trials and systematic reviews as "robust evidence" (What Works Team, 2018, p.4) and the joint Nesta and Alliance for Useful Evidence statement that "research is only one sort of evidence, but has the advantages of greater rigour, relevance and independence" than other forms of evidence (Nesta and Alliance for Useful Evidence, n.d., p.67). These advantages are gained from research's "explicit documentation of methods, peer review and external scrutiny" (ibid., p.67).

As noted in 4.3.1, EBPM is a good fit for NPM approaches. In turn, both are good fits for those who treat public policy issues as if they can be solved by Government policy provided the logic models and scientific evidence are adequate. It is somewhat ironic, however, that EBPM became so deeply ingrained in UK policy-making despite the lack of evidence that it leads to more effective policy (Nutley et al., 2007).

'Evidence' is never neutral. It always needs to be understood in relation to the operation of power. Even scientific research cannot be considered value-neutral or objective. What is researched, what counts as evidence and how that evidence is used are all sites of enactment of power relations with some forms of knowledge privileged over others (Parkhurst, 2017; Hallsworth, 2011a; Shortall, 2013; Hammersley, 2005). Decisions by policy-makers about what kinds of knowledge are admissible or valued cannot be separated from how they view the world (Shortall, 2012).

The EBPM literature makes almost no reference to public involvement having any legitimate role in policy-making. For example, a model showing policy decisions as the confluence of research and evaluation, practitioner experience and judgements, context and organisational actors, and stakeholders, makes no reference to any non-professional stakeholders (Nesta and Alliance for Useful Evidence, n.d., p.66). The same guide refers to the professional judgement of "academics, government officials, journalists and other pundits" as performing worse than "dart-throwing monkeys in forecasting the future" (ibid., p.68). This is ascribed to cognitive bias leading to "the inability to be entirely objective" (ibid., p.68). Even in relation to the risks of going beyond research evidence, there is no reference to the judgement or knowledge of ordinary citizens. Indeed, the entire practice guide omits mention of public involvement. A similar silence is found in an analysis of successful policies (Rutter et al., 2012) that identified seven requirements for success and made no reference to public involvement.

There is no such ideological exclusion of experiential knowledge in complexity or design approaches to policy-making. However, despite a commitment to open policy-making associated with the design approach, there seems to have been little actual increase in public involvement (Exley, 2020).

4.4.2 Academics as evidence-producers

Finally, it is important to consider the role of academics as evidence-producers. Academics are encouraged to demonstrate research impact by engaging with policy-makers, but most of the advice presumes that the policy process is linear (Cairney and Oliver, 2020, p.228).

Complexity approaches make it less clear when or how to integrate evidence into policy-making (ibid., p.234). One part of advice that arguably still applies is the importance of agreeing ground rules for any collaboration between academics and policy-makers, in particular about ethics, consent, confidentiality, data, and intellectual property (ibid., p.232).

Policy integration is a term used to cover different approaches to working across policy divisions and Ministerial responsibilities (e.g. Tosun and Lang, 2017). It can "be conceptualized as a process either of coordinating and blending policies into a unified whole, or of incorporating concerns of one policy into another." (Briassoulis, 2004). The variety of terms approximate to different terms for disciplinary integration (eg Cooke et al., 2020).

Certainly, generating policy-relevant research evidence will need to be considered differently with the move towards policy design and complexity. Hinrichs-Krapels et al. (2020) argues that monodisciplinary research evidence is likely to be unfit for purpose and argue for a move towards transdisciplinary policy-relevant research. The locus of policy research needs to shift from alignment to individual policy sub-systems to "boundary-spanning regimes or policy networks" (McGee and Jones, 2019, p.138). A transdisciplinary approach such as Laasch et al. (2020) that draws on the knowledge of different sectors and different academic disciplines seems well placed for that shift of alignment.

4.4.3 What about qualitative research?

Qualitative research has a dubious status within EBPM. Bell and Newby (1977) argue that debates about ontology and epistemology may have resulted in a "loss of confidence" that makes "sociology less demonstrably 'useful' and make[s] the information thus obtained less amenable" (ibid., p.29) for the purposes of elite groups.

Walker (1985) argues qualitative research can offer policy-makers "a theory of social action grounded on the experiences of those likely to be affected by a policy decision" (p.18). Denzin (2017) goes further, answering critics with a confident "this is NOT JUST [sic] a qualitative study. This is ethically responsible activist research" (p.9) that makes a difference to the lives of socially oppressed people.

As will be evidenced (4.8) the Welsh Government make a strong commitment to social justice and policy as a tool for addressing inequalities. This suggests that qualitative research *should* have a role in Wales. Indeed, the Code of Practice for Part 2 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWA) states that "Any population assessment should be a balance of qualitative information that is underpinned by quantitative information. Local authorities should not undertake a population assessment as a purely statistical exercise." (Welsh Government, 2014a, p.26).

4.4.4 Not *just* evidence

Cairney (2019) describes EBPM as a political slogan used to support a greater role for scientific evidence in policy, rather than a description of how policy is made. He points out that even when two actors agree on the evidence, they may disagree on what this means for future policy.

Hallsworth (2011a) concluded that, whatever was written in frameworks and guidance, civil servants did not attempt to make policy based solely on evidence, nor follow the stages of the policy cycle. This concurs with the conclusions of Nutley et al. (2002) that policy-making is inherently political and describing it as evidence-informed or even just evidence-aware is "a more realistic view of what can be achieved". (p.2). Despite this, they note that they have retained the use of 'evidence *based'* in their report because of its familiarity. One is left wondering how many of those still using 'evidence based' have adopted a similar logic.

Lipsky (1980) focused on local implementation of policy, but the lessons are potentially applicable to the civil servants responsible for the making of that policy in that policy-makers themselves are enacting processes handed to them on how to make policy. He noted how lack of time, information and other resources impacted on how decisions were made and what was decided. This resonates with the suggestion of Kaehne and Taylor (2016) that the reason civil servants encouraged public and practitioner involvement in developing the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 was a desire to outsource due to under-capacity. It opens interesting possibilities to consider public involvement, at least in its more co-productive forms, as an outsourcing of labour rather than a source of evidence.

Andrews (2017) asks how academics can demonstrate the public value of evidence-informed debate and policy-making, noting little is known of how Ministers collate and use evidence. He argues from a review of academic and think-tank literature, combined with his personal experience as a Minister for nine years, that the academic community needs to be aware that Ministers focus on the short term future, it is important to build relationships of trust in order for evidence to be trusted, and they need to shape the public discourse. Monaghan (2009) argues that effective lobbying by interest groups can be far more influential in shaping policy than 'robust' evidence, and Andrews seems to concur.

Although little may be known about the everyday practices of how Ministers use evidence, the Knowledge and Analytical Services of Welsh Government (Thurston, 2014) state that evidence is at the heart of factors influencing Welsh Government policy-making. However, Thurston notes that evidence is surrounded and overlapped by experience and expertise, judgement, resources, values, habits and traditions, lobbyists and pressure groups, and pragmatics and contingencies (Thurston, 2014).

4.4.5 Are public consultation findings 'evidence'?

Certainly, for EBPM, the answer can be assumed to be an emphatic 'no'. This can be deduced from the total absence of public involvement, including consultation, from key literature on EBPM (see above).

The status of academic qualitative research as evidence is moot. In EBPM, qualitative research ranks poorly in the hierarchy of evidence. However, for policy design and complexity approaches, qualitative research is one of the tools used in the discovery phase of design.

Public consultation often uses qualitative-type methods, such as focus groups, workshops, and free-text written responses to consultation documents. Therefore, if qualitative research is accepted as 'evidence', might public consultation findings also be accepted? Arguably, the answer is still 'no'. Approaches that are widely accepted in public consultation, such as self-selection, leading questions, and inadequate data analysis and reporting, would not be accepted in academic qualitative research. This suggests that even if policy-makers value the evidence from qualitative research, they may not treat public consultation findings as 'evidence'.

4.5   Public involvement

4.5.1   What is 'public involvement in policy-making'?

There are no academic or practice agreement about the meaning of the term. Even social care research and social care policy/services use the same words with different and sometimes opposite meanings (see Table 4.2).

This thesis uses 'public involvement' as the term with least risk of confusion between research and policy-making meanings. There is still some risk as some literature uses 'participation' in the way this thesis uses 'public involvement' (e.g. Arnstein, 1969).

For clarity, 'public involvement' is used in this thesis for:

> "*Any* interaction between policy-makers and those whose role in the interaction is as a citizen, user of public services, or someone living in the community or geographic area affected. The focus is on role rather than personhood, as everyone who lives in Wales plays these roles at times including those who also have the role of policy-maker." (Self-definition of 'public involvement' for this thesis).

Problems with public involvement have long been recognised and attempts have been made to remedy this including the CLEAR diagnostic tool (Lowndes et al., 2006). This tool takes the perspective of ordinary citizens: Is this something that people *can* do, will *like* to do, are *enabled* to do, *asked* to do, and will the consultation commissioner *respond* to those who participated? The questions embedded in CLEAR all speak to ways to enhance the epistemic justice of public involvement.

The next challenge is defining 'consultation'. Participation Cymru (2011) reserve it for the formal process, as does the Code of Conduct for Public Engagement (National Assembly for Wales, 2013). However, Arnstein (1969) defines consultation as "inviting citizens' opinions" and suggests "it can be a legitimate step toward their full participation" noting that of itself it "offers no assurance that citizen concerns and ideas will be taken into account" (p.219). Consultation is also used to describe "forums specifically formulated in order to allow new policy ideas to be argued, tested, upheld or dismissed" (Smith-Merry, 2012). Both are within the everyday meaning of 'consult', namely, to ask people's opinions and advice about what to do (Collins English Dictionary, 2021).

The broader sense of 'consultation' is used in this thesis, with 'formal public consultation' used to denote the first meaning.

Table 4.2   The language of public involvement

Term	Health and Care Research Wales (2020, p.2)	National Principles for Public Engagement[a] (Participation Cymru, 2011)
Participation	Being a research participant	People being actively involved with policy makers and service planners from an early stage of policy and service planning and review.
Engagement	Being told about research	An active and participative process by which people can influence and shape policy and services that includes a wide range of different methods and techniques.
Involvement	Any role in shaping, delivering or implementing research. This role could range from being asked opinions through to leading a research project.	Used as a verb when describing participation and engagement. Not used as a noun.
Consultation	[This is not defined in Health and Care Research Wales (2020) but is encompassed by the definition for involvement]	A formal process by which policy makers and service providers ask for the views of interested groups and individuals.

[a] Endorsed by Welsh Government.

Throughout, the term ordinary citizen has been used to avoid debate about meanings of 'the public' and 'publics'. As explained in the Glossary, this term is used with the meaning given by Exley (2020), namely:

> "'Ordinary' here refers here to people who would otherwise have limited policy making input (beyond e.g. voting in elections). 'Citizen' refers in part to those possessing formal citizenship status but also those who may not possess such bestowed rights but may still engage in citizenship practices (Lister, 2003) such as activism and exercising voice in public services (Strokosch and Osborne, 2016)". (Exley, 2020, Endnote 1)

One nuance potentially lost when in literature and practice around consultation is the distinction between the person being consulted as "a good informant" or a "source of information" (Fricker, 2012, p.249). The former has is an active knowing subject, able to co-construct and shape knowledge; the latter is merely an object from which information can be extracted. This distinction has important implications for the epistemic (in)justice of any consultation.

4.5.2 Why involve ordinary citizens?

As noted in 4.2.4, ordinary citizens, at least in Wales, are all legitimate stakeholders in social care policy-making. Not all reasons for public involvement relate to people's status as stakeholders. For example, Involve[30] (2005) suggest governance, social cohesion, social justice, improving the quality of services, and building the capacity of individuals and organisations thus building stronger communities. (Involve, 2005, p.20).

Each of the approaches to policy-making described above has their own justification for public involvement, and Welsh Government has strong policy commitments that justify and frame the reasons for public involvement.

A strong argument for involving ordinary citizens would be if it resulted in more effective policies. There is little research evidence to suggest that public involvement results in more effective social care policies and "The popularity of citizen participation belies fundamental uncertainties about … its associated benefits." (Stewart, 2013, p.124). There is considerable anecdotal evidence that any impact of public involvement is mixed (Involve, n.d.), but I did not find any robust evaluation or impact research. This may be

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[30] This Involve is the 'UK's leading public participation charity' (https://www.involve.org.uk) and not the wing of NIHR responsible until recently for public involvement in health and care research (https://www.invo.org.uk/)

because the term is under-conceptualised with a "remarkable degree of terminological instability" (Stewart, 2013, p.124) making it difficult to evaluate.

Certainly, literature reviews (e.g. SERIO, 2018) include more papers referring to the lack of evidence base and preponderance of assertions and perspectives (e.g. Edelman and Barron, 2016; Conklin et al., 2015; Rifkin, 2014) than papers with empirical evidence. There is slightly more empirical evidence about the impact of public involvement on health research (e.g. INVOLVE, 2013; Health Research Authority/INVOLVE, 2016; Faulkner, 2016) where involvement was found to improve the research design especially the relevance of the research, the research questions, and the ethical standards of the research. NICE argue that public involvement leads to their products having "greater focus and relevance for the people most directly affected by our recommendations", but provide no evidence (NICE, 2013). There is nothing about the differences in the research process and policy-making process that would contraindicate provisionally imputing similar outcomes to public involvement in policy-making. Involve worked to address this by developing toolkit to evidence impact (Involve, 2005), but there is little evidence that it has been used beyond the case studies within it, where both financial and 'soft' benefits were demonstrated from public involvement.

One study found evidence of involvement impacting on health policy, but this related to whole-community rather than individual involvement (Bias et al., 2017). Another looked at the effectiveness of the public consultation process from a public administration perspective (Van Damme and Brans, 2012), but did not draw conclusions about the impact of public consultation on the outcomes of the subject of the consultation.

Van Damme and Brans (2012) analyse the effectiveness of the public consultation process in terms of: (1) how the process affects people's access to the consultation, (2) what kind of answers respondents can give (3) whether there are opportunities for deliberation among potential or actual respondents but did not study whether consultation responses had any impact on the final outcome.

There is more case study evidence that co-production and co-design affect outcomes (eg Nesta, 2012; Bovaird and Loeffler, 2013; Nind et al., 2016), but as yet no meta-analysis of case studies and "the actual and potential impact of co-production on citizen outcomes is as yet only sketchily researched" (Loeffler and Bovaird, 2016).

A systematic evidence review of co-design concluded "Stakeholder involvement alone is not sufficient for effective intervention development" (O'Brien et al., 2016).

4.5.3 Public involvement and epistemic (in)justice

Involving the public may appear to be addressing epistemic injustice, but may instead be a mechanism for reproducing injustice, particularly for those deemed unreliable as knowers (e.g. Beresford, 2019; Rose and Kalathil J, 2019; Madden and Speed, 2017; Tam, 2013).

Arnstein argues that:

> "Participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit. It maintains the status quo" (Arnstein, 1969, p.216).

Of consultation and information-sharing, she says "When participation is restricted to these levels, there is no follow through, no 'muscle', hence no assurance of changing the status quo." (ibid., p.217).

Returning to Fricker (2012) and Arnstein (1969), it is important for ordinary citizens to have the opportunity to be good informants, valued for working out what information means. However, this is not something offered in EBPM.

In EBPM, ordinary citizens' knowledge is not treated as evidence. In co-design, ordinary citizens may be part of a team working alongside academics and policy-makers. However, while others get paid for their knowledge and time, it is rare to find examples of ordinary citizens being similarly paid or employed.

This leaves ordinary citizens with a choice. One of the epistemic strategic challenges is deciding whether to adopt the accepted knowledge practices and argue from within those, or to refuse to accept them. Liz Stanley and Sue Wise comment of feminism that "A feminism grounded in Cartesian presuppositions will produce no revolution in intellectual or any other aspect of social life, but merely admit feminist experts into the hierarchies of scientism" (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p. 229). The same principle applies to public involvement. Any public involvement grounded in new public managerialism merely admits members of the public into the institutional hierarchies of public involvement.

4.6 Welsh political context

4.6.1 Social care policy, From Welsh Office to Welsh Government (1983 to 2011)

Policies about people with learning disabilities and their services can be considered in three waves. The first, 1971 to 1994, was pre-devolution. This means policy was determined by the UK Government, although the Welsh Office had a degree of autonomy to make Wales-specific policy. The key policy from this period was the 1983 All Wales Strategy for Mentally Handicapped and Their Services (Welsh Office, 1983). The 1983 Strategy was designed and funded to last ten years. It refers back to the UK-wide 1971 White Paper, Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped (HM Government, 1971). The 1994 Welsh Mental Handicap Strategy Guidance (Welsh Office, 1994) updates and reaffirms the 1983 Strategy.

The second wave was from 1999 to 2007. This begins with devolution and limited powers to make Wales-only policy within Wales[31]. This was seized upon by the forerunner of Learning Disability Wales, who organised a conference (2000) looking at the implementation of the 1983 and generating policy recommendations for the new Welsh Assembly Government. As a consequence, Welsh Government initiated a Ministerial advisory group. This included people with learning disabilities, carers, Third Sector providers and statutory sector representatives. Their first report was Fulfilling the Promises in 2001. (Learning Disability Advisory Group, 2001). This report was not fully adopted by the government, but in 2004 they produced Section 7 guidance[32] called Service Principles, Service Responses (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004). The final policy specific to people with learning disabilities and their services is the 2007 Statement of Policy and Practice for People with Learning Disabilities (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007a). This policy has not been updated or superseded (Welsh Government, 2018a).

The third wave began in 2007 with Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b), a ten-year strategy for social services that built on a policy stream around public service reform and sat alongside a ten-year health strategy, Designed for Life

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[31] The National Assembly for Wales was founded in 1999 and describes itself as "the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people" (Senedd, n.d.). From 1999 to 2011, their powers were restricted to secondary legislation, meaning any primary legislation had to be routed through the UK Parliament.

[32] Section 7 guidance has legal force in that if someone fails to comply with it they can be required to demonstrate that what they did was an alternative and equal or better way to achieve what is laid out in the guidance.

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2005). From Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities came an independent commission on social services and their report From Vision to Action (Independent Commission on Social Services in Wales, 2010). This led to Welsh Government issuing Sustainable Social Services (Welsh Government, 2011). That policy required legislation changes. This need coincided with Wales receiving the power to make primary legislation.

Over the next three years, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWA) was developed and enacted from 2015 along with multiple Codes of Practice and Regulations. A Parliamentary Review[33] of Health and Social Care in Wales completed its work in 2018. The implementation of SSWA is being evaluated (Llewellyn et al., 2020) and stories about the impact of social care and support on people's lives (Cooke et al., 2019) is beginning to generate evidence. In 2021, a White Paper is looking to address ongoing challenges to providing seamless services for people who require more than one health or social care service (Welsh Government, 2021). The consultation on this White Paper is used to illustrate how public consultation could have been done differently using CSC21 (see 7.6).

While no new learning disability-specific strategy has been issued since 2007[34] there have been important reviews, most notably the Transforming Learning Disability Services in Wales (Social Services Improvement Agency, 2014) and Improving Lives (Welsh Government 2018a).

Alongside the SSWA, Welsh Government held a national conversation that became the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (WFGA). This Act is having a profound impact on public services in Wales. They are now legally required to evidence alignment of any policy decisions or changes to service against the principles of the WFGA. They must also produce an annual report showing how they have complied with the WFGA (Welsh Government, 2017b).

It is possible to trace three social care policy threads from 1971 to 2021, namely the importance of public involvement, the need for public services to work together, and the right of people who use social care services to have an ordinary life. It has already been argued in 2.4 that the policy goal of ordinary lives has not been achieved. Public involvement is part of a broader Welsh Government agenda and is addressed in 4.8. The third thread, the need for public services to work together, is illustrated in the extended Table 4.3. This theme 'book

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[33] Although the National Assembly for Wales only became the Senedd/Welsh Parliament in 2020, the term was in use from 2018.
[34] There is an overlap between those with learning disabilities, those who are autistic and those with additional learning needs. There have been autism strategies and additional learning needs policies/legislation, but nothing specifically for those with learning disabilities.

ends' the fifty years from 1971 to 2021 neatly, it is cited as a cause for slow progress in relation to the 1971 policy and is the subject of the 2021 White Paper. It is also evidenced as a major factor in whether someone experiences services positively (Cooke et al., 2019).

Table 4.3   Working together as a social care policy theme

Information source	Quotation or summary
Welsh Government (2021)	"In this context of a fragmented system, partners working together is vital. There is evidence of good practice here, but equally there are concerns about the progress of integration." (p.7).
Llewellyn et al. (2020): process evaluation of SSWA implementation	"The Act has, to an extent, enabled the integration of social care and health to develop in respect of collaborative regional approaches, commitment and buy-in from leaders, integrated working spaces, mutual respect and trust, and consistent messages to both organisations." (p.8). "There is an identified disconnect between the rhetoric and reality of pooled budgets and questions about their role" and "Priorities for further implementation of the Act included the continuation and development of integration and partnerships, monitoring and evidencing outcomes, and the infrastructure to facilitate integrated working" (p.10).
Welsh Government (2018a)	"Whilst Welsh Government has set out its broad strategic aims [for system design] in legislation and policy, this has not always translated into actional priorities and practice" (p.29).
Welsh Government (2018b)	"Joining up and integrating services is a challenge" (p.3). "More integrated health, social care and housing is an aim and whilst this is challenging, it could improve life chances and services and allow funding to be used more effectively." (p.4).
Lewis (2015): Integrated care in Wales: a summary position.	"At the heart of this situation lies an old paradox. While most leaders in health and social care in Wales readily accept that greater integration would deliver better care for their patients and clients, and would be a key element in solving many of the other problems which currently confront them, it often seems just too difficult to make the initial step change that is required." (p.54)
WFGA 2015	Integration and co-operation are two of the five required ways of working.
Social Services Improvement Agency (2014)	"Now more than every we must focus on…securing innovative and effective delivery including through greater collaboration and integration of services" (p.5).
SSWA 2014	Part 9 legislates a requirement for cooperation and partnership of services and organisations.

Table 4.3 (continued) Working together as a social care policy theme

Information source	Quotation or summary
Sustainable Social Services (2011)	"The days in which public services could act separately are past. Where appropriate we expect public services to work together to deliver integrated services" (p.3). "There are good examples of integrated services that bring together the range of local government services - education, housing and community development… But we need to go further…. Sustainability depends on picking up the pace of integration." (p.17).
Independent Commission on Social Services in Wales (2010)	"We acknowledge that there can be fragmentation and poor co-ordination across health and social services and that this needs to be addressed with greater pace and more systematically building upon the many examples of good schemes and good practice that we encountered during our review." (p.22). "services must, in practice, work in a properly integrated way" (p.31). "A particular concern is the apparent lack of joining up across Welsh Assembly Government portfolios and divisions. This tension will become more problematic as new models of services are developed that involve service integration." (p.34).
Welsh Assembly Government (2007a): *Statement of Policy and Practice*	"Experience in Wales over the last 20 years demonstrates that good and effective joint working…can be achieved" but "The effectiveness of joint working arrangements across Wales has become inconsistent" (p.44).
Welsh Assembly Government (2007b): *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities*	"Joint working is often good at the individual level but more difficult for organisations. Restrictive finance and performance systems, a lack of joint training, leadership and managerial capacity can hinder partnerships." (pp.25-26).
Welsh Assembly Government (2004): *Service Principles, Service Responses*	"The 'health care' – 'social care' split can sometimes prove to be a barrier to satisfactory addressing the needs of individuals" (p.8) "All involved services, eg education, social services, health, housing, should develop effective joint working arrangements for transition planning" (p.16).
Learning Disability Advisory Group (2001): *Fulfilling the promises*	The advisory group's vision for 2010 including ensuring "effortless and effective movements between services and organisations at different times of life" and "fully developed collaborative partnerships to deliver flexible services" (Sect 1.2).

Table 4.3 (continued) Working together as a social care policy theme

Information source	Quotation or summary
Welsh Office (1983): *All Wales Strategy*	"This will require close co-operation and joint decision making about the care of mentally handicapped people" (p.10).
Welsh Office (1983): re 1971 White Paper	There has been ""too little progress … since the publication in 1971 of the Government White Paper 'Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped'" because "nowhere were services … fully integrated with each other" (p.i)

What these extracts illustrate is that working together has been identified both as a challenge and a policy imperative across the 50 years. There is evidence of progress and examples of good practice (e.g. Welsh Government, 2021, p.7; Llewellyn et al., 2020, p.8; Welsh Assembly Government, 2007a, p.44). However, there are repeated assertions that working together is both essential and proving challenging (e.g. Welsh Government, 2021, p.7; Llewellyn et al., 2020, p.10; Lewis, 2015, p.54). It would be not unreasonable to infer that the need for successive policies to call for similar actions indicates a lack of policy success.

4.6.2 Public involvement in social care policy

Public involvement was important even before devolution (Welsh Office, 1983). Since devolution, the commitment to public involvement has increased. The early days of devolution brought success in increasing the involvement and openness towards Third Sector organisations, provided the organisations had sufficient infrastructure support to engage (Chaney, 2012). Despite this, there *was* "a 'disconnect' between the rhetoric and reality" of public involvement (ibid, p.455). Moving to the local government level, there was even less evidence of successful public involvement (Wales Audit Office, 2012).

Each succeeding learning disability social care policy has promised that public services will listen to, involve, learn from, put at the centre, give voice and control to or co-produce with the people who use the services. For example, the 2007 Statement of Principles and Practice includes a preface from All Wales People First[35] saying how they were involved in its development. In the preceding foreword, the Minister for Health and Social Services, Brian Gibbons, says: "This preface contains powerful messages and I endorse them." (2007a, Foreword).

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[35] People First is a civil rights movement by, of and for people with learning disabilities. All Wales People First has elected representatives with learning disabilities from across Wales.

A few years earlier, Welsh Government had declared at the start of this second term that their priority would be a "vision for public services and the way they are designed and delivered in and for Wales." (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a, p.1). This would use cooperation rather than competition as a driver for improvement and efficiency. There was talk of "putting the citizen centre-stage" (Welsh Government, 2004a, pp.9–18) and that "Effective services will be designed and delivered with the active participation of citizens, communities and businesses" (ibid., p.3).

Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities led to the setting up of an Independent Commission, which published its report, From Vision to Action, in November 2010 (Independent Commission on Social Services, 2010). The Commission received written evidence, organised oral evidence sessions, and met individually with those in the policy world (civil servants, politicians, representative organisations and lobbying groups) and with academics.

The principle of public involvement had already been established in Sustainable Social Services (Welsh Government, 2011a), for example: "Service users and carers, including children and young people, need a stronger voice in service design and evaluation" (Welsh Government, 2011a, p.15). The Welsh principle for greater public involvement was "stronger citizen control" and not "a market-led model of consumer choice" (Welsh Government, 2011a, p.15; Moffatt et al., 2012).

4.6.3 General policy context, 2011 to 2014

This period marks a strengthening discourse of changing demographics, austerity and increased expectations from the public. These became widely known as 'the jaws of doom', a phrase claimed by Sir Albert Bore (Bore, 2013) in relation to a graph showing demand for services rising while resources available to provide services would be falling (Birmingham City Council, 2012, p.16).

At the same time, the concept of co-production was being introduced to Wales. In the North, the Communities Can conference brought Edgar Cahn to Wales to introduce the ideas of Time Banking and co-production from his book, No More Throw-away People: The Co-production Imperative (Cahn, 2000). Meanwhile, in the South, the 2013 Co-producing Stronger Communities conference heard Eddie Bartnik, Mental Health Commissioner for Western Australia, explain ways to strengthen communities rather than over-rely on public services. In some ways, 'the jaws of doom' opened a door for those who had long wanted a more co-productive approach, given one of the routinely

asserted benefits of co-produced services is better outcomes at lower cost (e.g. Bovaird and Loeffler, 2012; Batalden et al., 2016). In other ways, it risked turning co-production into a management tool for cost savings without the transformation of relationship.

SSWA and its associated Codes of Practice are rooted in the language of coproduction. A central principle is greater voice and control for all citizens, whether using care and support services, caring for someone who does, or accessing preventative services such as information and advice.

This period also saw work on another ground-breaking piece of legislation, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFGA). As the Netherwood Sustainable Futures Report for WLGA suggests (Netherwood, 2015), SSWA focused on the wellbeing of individuals, families and carers within communities, while the focus of WFGA was on the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the communities themselves. The report notes that both Acts call for the same kind of fundamental culture change in public service. This is, perhaps, unsurprising as both Acts deal with 'wicked issues' that require a complexity approach (Head, 2019) – and moving from a managerial to a complexity approach requires moving from one culture to another (Lowe et al., 2020).

While the SSWA enshrines the term co-production in law, the WFGA arguably embodies the principles of co-production without using the term. Instead, it refers to the involvement of 'people', 'citizens' and 'stakeholders'. Significant public involvement took place before the first drafting of both Acts. For the SSWA, this had included the public inquiry (Independent Commission on Social Services in Wales, 2010) to which Sustainable Social Services was a response, in addition to the opportunities for the making of the Act itself (4.2.4 and 4.2.5). For WFGA, this was involved a two-year national conversation called 'The Wales We Want' to inform work on the Bill. In the Ministerial statement released when the draft Bill was released, Jeff Cuthbert stated: "We will have thought more about the long term, worked better together, taken early action and engaged with citizens on this journey." (Welsh Government, 2014b). Cynnal Cymru had co-designed the national conversation approach with Welsh Government. They reported 6,474 people had been brought together in over 100 group conversations, and "almost 1,000 responses had been received as reports, videos, postcards, drawings and surveys." in the first year of the conversation (Cynnal Cymru, 2014).

The Knowledge and Analytical Services is responsible for providing evidence reviews for elected members, and in 2012 produced the Citizen Voice report (Knowledge and Analytical Services, 2012). The report concluded there was strong government rhetoric

about putting citizens at the centre, but it was never clear which citizens, how they should be involved, or what purpose their involvement served. Influence was described as more important than voice, with both being required for a relationship of trust between those involved and those involving them. The report suggested engaging with representative organisations over individual citizens was an effective way to ensure the representativeness of voices heard.

By the end of this period, the idea, if not practice, of working co-productively with 'the public' was becoming mainstream in Welsh public services. For example, the Wales Audit Office (now Audit Wales) organised seminars with Tony Bovaird as keynote speaker and workshops offering "examples of how the relationship between those who deliver and people who use services has changed, including examples of co-production and social enterprises." (Wales Audit Office, 2014).

4.6.4 Consultation event methods, 2011-2014

In Wales in 2015, conversation-based and participatory consultation events were common. Focus groups and World Café were commonly used[36]. While World Café is not described as a consultation method (Brown, 2001), this has been a common usage of the method in Wales[37]. A fuller description of both is deferred until 6.10 where they are compared with the newly-designed CSC16.

Focus groups

This term was used as a catch-all for any method that involved a facilitator meeting with a group of people and asking questions rather than accepted academic meanings (as described in Table 6.6). Focus groups might take place at a regular group or member's meeting, strangers may have self-selected after invitations were sent to Third Sector organisations, or people may have been individually invited. What they had in common was being organised via existing networks or Third Sector organisations with policy connections. The methods at the meeting might, in academic terms, be considered a workshop or a focus group (Caretta and Vacchelli (2015) so in Table 4.4, 'focus groups' have been separated into focus group (question-led discussion actively led by facilitator) and workshop (activity-based, with less facilitator involvement once activity explained).

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[36] Corroborated by expert informants as documents that would have been cited that were on Participation Cymru and Welsh Government websites have been archived and were not retrievable.
[37] Personal communication in 2017 with an accredited World Café facilitator from Wales, together with being a participant in a number of events described as World Café.

World Café was a method developed by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs and described in The World Café (Brown with Isaacs, 2005). The book draws heavily on Brown's doctoral thesis which unfortunately is only available to those who pay to be trained as World Café facilitators making it difficult to evaluate the methodological strength of the approach. The method is described as "an innovative methodology that enhances the capacity for collaborative thinking about critical issues by linking small-group and large-group conversations" (Brown, 2001, p.1). It relies on five principles: Create hospitable space, explore questions that matter, connect diverse people and perspectives, listen together for patterns, insights and deeper questions, and make collective knowledge visible to the group (Brown, 2001). The approach involves a number of diverse groups of up to eight people sat at table, with a question to consider. After conversation, one person remains at the table as a 'host' while the others disperse to other tables to continue the conversation, to "cross-pollinate" ideas and "invite a more accelerated and richer network of dialogic interactions on a larger scale than is common in most dialogue circles" (ibid., p.4). The method relies on diversity of people, their willingness to come to a meeting, and their ability to converse with strangers. From experience of it, World Café has excellent potential for co-production, but is inappropriate as a method for involving those in the 'not involved, not interested'.

Table 4.4 compares these methods with Barod's concerns about public involvement.

Table 4.4   Comparison of the methods with Barod's concerns

Barod's concerns	Focus group	Workshop	World Cafe
Most methods assume people can read and write	Often	Often	Yes
Most methods assume people can socialise with strangers	Often	Often	Yes
Most methods put people on the spot by using direct questions	Yes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Policy-makers require people to get involved on the policy-makers' or organiser' terms	Yes	Sometimes	Often
Methods do not appeal to people who 'don't do' public involvement	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know
Public involvement activities do not appear to value everyone's time and knowledge[a]	Varies	Varies	Varies
Public involvement activities can be tick box exercises.	Rare	Rare	Rare

[a] People are not paid. It is difficult to know if people's input was listened to. Expenses and refreshment policies were varied.

4.6.5 The role of Welsh Government civil servants

Welsh Government civil servants, like all civil servants in devolved administrations, are part of the UK Civil Service. The UK Civil Services has eight specialisms, of which one is the policy profession (McCrae and Gold, 2015). The policy profession "designs, develops and proposes appropriate courses of action to help meet key government priorities and ministerial objectives" (HM Government Policy Profession, 2021). As of 2017, there were approximately 17,800 policy profession civil servants in the UK with many more having a policy role.

At the time of making SSWA, the civil servants were required to operate according to the Policy Profession Skills Framework (HM Government, 2013), consultation guidance for staff (National Assembly for Wales, 2013), and in line with the National Principles for Public Engagement (Participation Cymru, 2011). In addition to these rules, civil servants needed to be mindful of the Gunning Principles for consultation (Sheldon, 2012). These principles state that:

> (i)   consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage;
> (ii) sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response;
> (iii) adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and
> (iv) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account
> (Sheldon, 2012, p.2)

The Consultation Guidance for Staff provides detailed guidelines on preparing for, conducting and reporting back on public engagement and consultation activities:

> - Consultation and engagement are essential to effective policy-making and delivery: there should be no unpleasant surprises for our stakeholders when final proposals are published
> - Engage early, regularly, and imaginatively: consult widely and openly
> - Consultation documents must be concise and clear: the template MUST be used and the published document branded
> - Use the website: all consultations MUST be available on line, on the consultation pages
> - Report back on the outcome of the consultation - to Ministers, and to the public
> (National Assembly for Wales, 2013, Summary)

The National Principles for Engagement require civil servants to design effective engagement, enable anyone who wishes to get involved to do so, work with partner organisations, make information jargon-free, tell people the impact of their contribution, and share learning on how to improve engagement.

The civil servants involved in developing the SSWA would have had consider responsibility for three areas: collating and assessing evidence, responding to changing political contexts, and converting policy ideas into deliverable plans (HM Government Policy Profession, 2013). In the making of the SSWA, the civil servants shared the power to synthesise often discordant information, manage the constraints of a given area and produce the 'best available' option with other stakeholders, through the establishment of leadership groups (including the National Social Services Citizen Panel) and technical working groups that drew on different sets of knowledge and different ways of experience the challenges of social care. While retaining their legal responsibility and accountability, it appears that the civil servants attempted to go beyond being informed by others to co-producing a 'best available option' with others (Hallsworth, 2011a; Jary, 2015).

The rules for civil servants described above and the Institute of Government research (e.g. Hallsworth, 2011a and 2011b) lay out the boundaries within which policymaking occurs and the required role of civil servants within the process. However much public involvement forms part of the policy rhetoric, therefore, the responsibility and power for sifting rather than synthesising information remains with the civil servants. This limits the potential for what Arnstein (1969) terms citizen participation that can change the status quo (p.217).

4.7 Public involvement: Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act

4.7.1 Opportunities for involvement

Formal opportunities for public involvement in developing the SSWA and responding to consultations on draft versions suggested that the civil servants wanted to enact the Welsh principle of people being citizens rather than consumers in relation to public services, and that they wanted to apply the principles of voice, choice and control, at least in limited ways, to the making the SSWA and not just to people's rights in relation

to their use of public services. In addition to the two types of opportunity open to the public for all legislative work (submission of evidence to relevant committees) and responding to formal consultations), ordinary citizens could apply to join the National Social Services Citizens Panel and, if networked into Third Sector organisations that were known to relevant civil servants, could play a role in the technical working groups. The co-productive elements were a set of three leadership groups and a set of technical groups. The leadership groups were for political leaders from all sectors, professional leaders from social services, and "members of the general public with personal experience of care and support services" who comprised the National Social Services Citizen Panel (Jones and Cross, 2017, p.3). The technical groups worked with civil servants to develop the regulations, codes of practice and statutory guidance that would be required to implement the Act. These drew on the expertise of people in the statutory, Third and private sectors.

Jones and Cross (2017) conclude that establishing the Citizen Panel and technical working groups succeeded in opening up policy-making to more people who use social care services or who care for someone who does. The five Citizen Panel research participants highlighted the importance of diversity of personal history/background, type of social care or carer services used, and region. It was recognised that "it is often the same individuals who are invited to provide a citizen voice" and "seeking the views of citizens who do not typically take part in such processes" was valuable (ibid., p14). This was in addition to the successful increase in collaboration (described as co-production in the report) with external organisations including other public bodies and Third Sector organisations. The report also concludes that the Citizen Panel had wanted and asked for more communication with the other leadership groups and the technical working groups, and the other groups had also wished for more communication. The report hints at tensions about bringing 'outsiders' into the policy world: "It was also felt that there was caution around what panel members might say and to whom, and that they were therefore kept separate from the wider co-productive process." (ibid., p.21). Members of the Citizen Panel had felt it important they could "say what they wanted without feeling there was a right or a wrong answer" (ibid., p.22). They valued opportunities to speak directly to civil servants and politicians, or to share video stories believing "seeing somebody talk about what had happened to them had more power to it than the written word." (ibid., p.23).

Having lived through the making of the SSWA and acted as policy personal assistant to a member of the Citizen Panel, I know that much more occurred than can be evidenced in literature. As noted in the Introduction (4.1), where recollections could not be

corroborated by literature, they have been included in this section provided they were corroborated by at least two expert informants. It is discouraging that website changes and government digital archiving means that most documents have been lost from the public domain and could not be accessed despite direct communication with the head of the social care division of Welsh Government. I bitterly regret not downloading and archiving documents at the time and have changed my information practices accordingly. It is also discouraging that no academic literature was identified despite extensive literature searches.

4.7.2 Formal public consultation

There were formal public consultations for:
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill
- Each set of Codes of Practice/Regulations relating to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- How to know if the Act is working (national outcomes framework, and measuring performance)

Documents were released for each of these consultations. These were publicised via Welsh Government lists of interested and relevant parties and through the Welsh Government's weekly consultation newsletter. The documents were also available on the Welsh Government website under 'open consultations'. After each consultation closed, the responses were analysed and summarised. All documentation, including the summary, is made available on the Welsh Government website under 'closed consultations'. The summary includes an Annex with a list of respondents[38].

In the (then) absence of literature, I collated responses in 2014 as part of scoping this research before submitting the original research protocol. I coded a total of 777 different respondents across the consultations, including 42 responses that seemed to come from individuals (see Table 4.5). None were coded as private sector, although some of the professional networks included membership organisations of private sector organisations and sole traders. Respondents were coded as researchers[39] if they gave a job title in an academic institution.

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[38] Those responding have the option of anonymity, in which case the number of those who respond anonymously is included in the list.
[39] Cardiff (n=4), Swansea (n=1), Bangor (n=1), and Glamorgan (n=1) Universities, and Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Subsequently, Kaehne and Taylor (2016) published their documentary analysis of the Stage 1 formal public consultation process, noting who had responded, whether they had used a template-type response, and the nature of the submission. This is reported in detail as it is the only academic literature about public involvement in the making of the SSWA.

Table 4.5   Sector/status of respondents

Status	n =
Researchers	8
Third Sector	287
Statutory	290
Professional representative body	83
Individual	42
Forums or networks[a]	62
Undetermined	5
Total	777

[a] These were either cross-sector or Third Sector.

Kaehne and Taylor (2016) wanted to find if the role of consultation had increased since devolution in line with the Welsh principle of using citizen voice rather than consumer choice as a driver for change. Of the 84 respondents, they identified one as 'private individual'. Their content analysis suggested motivations to respond were often lobbying on a single issue or lack of routine access to Welsh Government and Senedd committees. They queried whether Third Sector used the formal consultation in the most effective way "to get their voices heard" (ibid., p.94). This raises the question whether the role is to get *their* voices heard, or for them to get their *members'* voices heard[40]. The lack of this question in their paper might indicate a conceptual blurring of the Third Sector's role as representational of members or advocating for their organisation.

Kaehne and Taylor (2016) suggested that "limited civil service resources to prepare legislation" (ibid., p.80) might have made increased public involvement an attractive proposition. However, my counter-suggestion would be that increased public involvement would be more likely to increase civil servant workload, and therefore make it less attractive. It is perhaps more likely it is because, as they note, the principle in Wales is to rely on partnership and consensus-building for policy-making. This would be borne out by the extensive evidence of public engagement work in the years leading up to Sustainable Social Services (see 4.6.2).

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[40] It was beyond the scope of this thesis to ascertain if and how Third Sector respondents consulted their members before submitting a response as none noted this in their response although many in their preamble referred to their representative role and number of members.

Kaehne and Taylor note "clear evidence about a lack of engagement" and that individuals in particular "failed to respond in significant numbers" and were "significantly under-represented in the policy-making process which the present study investigated". They suggested this might indicate a "predominance of organised interests" with implications for "the role of individual stakeholders in policy-making processes" (ibid., p.94). They also noted a similar pattern of lack of engagement by the mostly small private care service providers, speculating that this might be a response to Welsh Government's ideological position of working far more collaboratively with the Third Sector than the private sector.

4.8 Policy-making 2021

4.8.1 Substantive changes

There have been a number of substantive changes to the context of public involvement in social care policy-making since 2015. The most significant for the context within which CSC21 will be used are:

- There are more innovative and open methods for engaging people who use social care in the design of services and policies (e.g. Cooke et al., 2019).
- The Public Service Boards established through the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and Regional Partnership Boards established under the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act both require citizen and service user representation.

Despite this, only 19% of those taking part in the 2019 National Survey of Wales (Hafferty, 2019) believed they could influence local decisions[41].
- Policy design is becoming embedded across the UK civil services through mechanisms such as The Policy Lab of the UK Government's Cabinet Office (Policy Lab, n.d.).
- Complexity theory and systems thinking are slowly gaining traction in the civil service in Wales, through such mechanisms as Academi Wales, Y Lab, and the Internal Behaviour Change Unit of Welsh Government. Such changes are now easier for civil servants by the issuing of the Magenta Book Supplementary Guide: Handling Complexity in Policy Evaluation (HM Treasury, 2020c).

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[41] Unfortunately, there is no equivalent dataset about influencing national decisions.

- The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act has placed new duties on public bodies, including enhanced requirements of public involvement in policy-making and public services. This has been taken forward by the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner, and in particular the Art of the Possible programme. (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019a). This programme included a workstream on public involvement which repeats the general Welsh commitment to improve public involvement.
- The future implications of the pandemic response are unfolding as this thesis is being submitted. In Wales, the lessons are being documented and disseminated in real time by Audit Wales using the Human, Learning, Systems approach (e.g. Audit Wales, 2020). It is possible that we will look back to 2020 and see it as the year that public services restructured to become complexity-friendly.

4.8.2 Welsh Government current commitment to social justice, equality, fairness and 'meaningful' involvement

In Wales, the policy imperative for public involvement was democratic, in an explicit rejection of the English consumerist approach (Welsh Government, 2011a, p.15; Moffatt et al., 2012). Stewart (2013) notes that a democratic approach can favour a majority view, whereas a new Social Movement approach prioritises those who are disadvantaged by majorityism. In other words, a policy designed using a democratic approach to public involvement may lead to a policy that works well for the majority of people, but further excludes those already at the margins.

The Welsh Government priorities for 2016 to 2021 were detailed in Taking Wales Forward and summarised as "more and better jobs through a stronger, fairer economy" improved public services and a "united, connected and sustainable Wales" (Welsh Government, 2016, Foreword). Prosperity for All was the primary policy vehicle for this. It committed Welsh Government to developing "a more joined-up approach to involvement, engagement and consultation" (Welsh Government, 2017a, p.9), declaring "in order to make a real difference to people's lives, we need to do things differently and involve people in shaping the services they use every day." (ibid.). A Healthier Wales goes further:

> "Continuous engagement and an ongoing conversation with the Welsh population will ensure everyone has a voice in our whole system approach and how it develops." (Welsh Government, 2018b)

All public policy in Wales must now be framed in terms of the seven wellbeing goals and five ways of working (one of which is public involvement) in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Art of The Possible programme identified the need for "enabling an embedding a culture of meaningful citizen and stakeholder involvement" and "ensuring people's needs, aspirations and ideas are taken into account and reflected in decision-making" (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019b). The report notes ordinary citizens wanted the public sector to "set their agenda by listening to people, meaningfully involving them throughout the decision-making process, and being open to real change as a result" (ibid., p.5).

The legislative commitment to involvement, co-production and engagement in social care is clear from SSWA and its related Codes of Practice (see 4.6.3).

4.9   Everyday policy-making practices in Wales

Everyday practices are at least as relevant as the accounts of processes provided in handbooks (e.g. Becker, 1998, in relation to research practices; Lipsky, 1980, in relation to bureaucratic practices). The ethnomethodological literature on the sociology of scientific knowledge provides a particularly rich vein of comparison between everyday observable practices and the descriptions of those practices provided in handbooks (Francis and Hester, 2004).

A search in 2014 for publicly available information about everyday policy-making practices in Welsh Government drew a blank. From lived experience, knowledge from other devolved nations is more likely to relevant than knowledge from Westminster. This judgement is based on having worked with civil servants from across the four nations when employed by what became the Fostering Network, and from listening to policy officers from UK-wide organisations talk about the different everyday practices in the four nations. There was no publicly available information from the other devolved nations either. However, there was a little information about everyday practices more generally in the UK civil services. A special edition of Evidence and Policy (Freeman et al., 2011) confirmed both the importance and lack of empirical practices; its papers focused on theorising practice rather than reporting observational studies. From a more recent 'research provocation' paper in the same journal (Freeman, 2019), it would appear that there is still a gap in such studies.

Stevens (2011) treated a temporary post in the UK civil services as if ethnographic insider research. He concludes that despite a stated commitment to evidence and EBPM,

the complexity, inadequacy and volume of often conflicting information resulted in mishandling of evidence. He found that uncertainty was removed from argument to strengthen the policy story, even if that compromised the validity of the evidence. The only other source of evidence is the Institute for Government set of reports (Hallsworth 2011a, 2011b) drawing on over 50 interviews with civil servants. One chapter is tellingly titled 'The gap between theory and practice' (Hallsworth, 2011a). Civil servants are cited saying it is important to use the policy cycle, but also acknowledging they do not use it. One is cited as saying policies "are not made with your policy cycles... that's not how the real world works" (ibid., p.30). Another called the policy cycle a "policy myth" (ibid., p.31). Like Stevens (2011), Hallsworth found that civil servants did not handle evidence or information impartially, citing one participant who had said: "We do still too often try and anticipate what the minister wants and give it to them, rather than give them a genuine 'These are the options and these are why they are good or bad.'" (Hallsworth, 2011, p.92).

Not only is there a dearth of relevant studies, but in relation to policy research, "practitioners fail to recognise themselves or their work in standard disciplinary accounts of the activities in which they are engaged" (Freeman, 2019, p.372).

Given the significance of knowing about everyday practices and the paucity of evidence, it became imperative to carry out some empirical research to learn something about the everyday policy-making practices of Welsh Government. Ideally this would have taken the form of an ethnographic observational study informed by Goffman's dramaturgic framework (1990a (1956))[42]. If the whole purpose of this thesis were to understand the everyday practices of policy-making in Wales, it would have been possible to carry out more comprehensive research on this topic. However, the focus of the thesis is the design of a consultation method. This meant resources for additional fieldwork were limited and only exploratory work was possible, as is reported in Chapter 5.

4.10 Discussion

Much of the discussion occurs as this chapter processes. However, four matters would benefit further discussion.

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[42] It was encouraging to see that this idea is shared by Freeman (2019) who proposes a similar enterprise, although disheartening that it has not yet been conducted.

4.10.1 Ordinary citizens as stakeholders

As noted in 4.2.3, ordinary citizens are legitimate stakeholders. As Arnstein (1969) argues, people are only likely to get involved if they believe they will be heard. This requires a belief in their salience. For Chen et al. (2018), only power and urgency "were consistently and positively related to salience" (ibid., p.822). Traditionally ordinary citizens have little basis for power. The Welsh Government commitments to social justice (4.8.2) provide power to Welsh citizens in that they provide a right for citizens to demand to be heard. Greater awareness of this power might help change the relationship between Welsh Government and ordinary citizens and increase the willingness of ordinary citizens to engage in the policy-making process.

4.10.2 Insiders, outsiders, and organisational fields

If policy-making is considered an organisational field, there will be field insiders and field outsiders. The insiders, by definition, share a common meaning system or operate using a team mental model.

It would be interesting to explore whether some of the dynamics of public involvement in social care policy-making in Wales could be attributed to degree of ability and/or willingness to operate using the current team mental model. There are two phenomena of public involvement that are widely recognised when mentioned, both anecdotal. Firstly, as ordinary citizens become engaged in policy-making activities, they change how they talk, how they seem to approach a topic and how they act when engaged in policy-making activities. The second is that some of 'the usual suspects' receive invitations and are welcomed into policy-making activities, while the names of others are greeted with eye-rolls.

One speculative explanation of the first is that ordinary citizens begin with a different mental model and gradually align their mental model of the topic to that of those previously engaged in policy-making (Scott, 2018). Scott's research indicates that participants alter and align their mental model of 'the problem' towards an existing shared model, leading to "enduring consensus" (p.55). Similarly speculatively, the second anecdotal observation could reflect the extent to which 'the usual suspects' are willing and able to operate using the shared model. In other words, those willing and able to adopt the team mental model are welcomed into the organisational field; those who do not or cannot are those whose names are greeted with eye-rolls. However, this

must remain speculation until, one day, empirical and ideally observational studies have been conducted.

Both speculations, if future research were to corroborate them, would be enactments of epistemic injustice. The speculations imply that inclusion of ordinary citizens into the organisational field of policy-making is based on their willingness and ability to operate using the team mental model rather than their own.

There is another serious implication of these speculations. If Toader et al. (2019) is correct and diversity of mental models (i.e. thought diversity) is essential for adaptive behaviour, the requirement for an organisational field to share a common meaning system is problematic. Not only is the requirement to operate using a team mental model a matter of epistemic injustice, it is also inherently pragmatically flawed if the social issues requiring policy-making activity are complex adaptive systems. In other words, the very thought and knowledge diversity envisaged by open policy-making and potentially available by engaging with members of the public on their own terms is lost if personal mental models and shared mental models from communities outside the policy world have to be suppressed on entering the policy world in favour of adopting the policy world's own team mental model.

4.10.3 What does this chapter contribute to CSC design decisions?

- Each of the three approaches to understanding policy-making has implications for the design of CSC:

  NPM treats social issues as complicated systems, amenable to policy interventions with impacts that can be predicted using a theory of change. This approach is associated with EBPM. Ordinary citizens have a role if they are customers, citizens or voters. If consultation findings want to be taken seriously, the consultation needs to be done like research. This means working on a theoretically robust selection or sampling frame, generation of meaningful data, and theoretically robust approach to analysis. All these are absent in current approaches to public involvement, arguably contributing to its poor status as evidence.
  Policy design treats social issues as requiring a design solution. The emphasis is on discovering as much as possible about the issue before beginning to design a solution. Ordinary citizens are welcomed as knowers and sources of information. This Discovery work can only benefit from producing research-quality evidence. Policy design is arguably more effective if combined with complexity approaches

that understand social issues as complex adaptive systems. This means there can be no direct path from policy intervention to predicable change. Policy integration becomes essential, as no single policy or policy division encompasses all parts of the system. Ordinary citizens' involvement is welcomed because of the value of their diversity of ways of knowing the system as they experience it and as they are agents within it. This approach also means that academic research designed to produce useful evidence needs to transdisciplinary. This means consultation methods need to elicit ordinary citizens' diversity of ways of knowing.

- Organisational field approaches offer one way to understand why policy-making seems to have its own culture and language that is at odds with ordinary citizens' ways of talking and thinking about policy issues. Ordinary citizens' involvement is welcomed if they can operate using the field's common meaning system.

From this knowledge review, it can be argued that changing public involvement alone will not solve the problem that social care policy not working (1.1). To my mind, the problem runs deeper and solving it will require:

- A presumption that social issues are complex adaptive systems, with a need to focus on understanding as much as possible about the system.
- The consequent need for policy to focus on stewarding the system rather than centralised 'command and control' interventions. Approaches to system stewarding are similar to community development approaches. Reviewing those was beyond the scope of this thesis but from past engagement with UK and international community development, my belief is that the community development literature would make a significant contribution to policy complexity research.
- A strong transdisciplinary co-design team at the heart of both understanding and stewarding the system. This necessarily includes a diversity of those with lived experience who are willing to commit to engaged ongoing co-design work.
- Testimonial and hermeneutic re-valuing of each person's contribution to such a co-design team. Currently, my (limited) lived experience of co-design suggests power asymmetries within the complex adaptive system seem to be reproduced in the power asymmetries within co-productive teams.

The direction of travel of the work of Academi, Good Practice Exchange and Internal Behaviour Change Unit, particularly in the light of such work as Measuring the Mountain (SSWA; Cooke et al., 2017) and Art of the Possible (WFGA; Future Generations

Commissioner, 2019a), suggest that the future for policy making in Wales may involve design and complexity approaches.

4.10.4 Does policy work?

Changes do occur for people with learning disabilities when social care policy is made. For example, the closure of Ely Hospital is a consequence of the All Wales Strategy (Welsh Office, 1983). Whether this amounts to policy 'working' is a separate question. The answer depends on what 'works' means. For this thesis, the chosen primary benchmark is whether people with learning disabilities consider they have a life that matches the outcomes written into the 1983 Strategy (Welsh Office, 1983). Figure 4.3 combines the All Wales People First manifesto calls for action (All Wales People First, 2021) and promises from the 1983 Strategy.

If the extracts from the 1983 Strategy had 'worked', then most of the manifesto calls for action would be redundant. For example, if "Full access without question to the same services, including health services, that are available to the rest of the community (Welsh Office, 1983, p.4) had been attained then in 2021, All Wales People First would not need to be saying people with learning disabilities do not have equal access to healthcare or that public transport is inaccessible.

It is clear that there is at least some evidence that policy has not worked. Perhaps a more profound question needs asking which is whether policy *can* work. My inclination on the basis of the literature reviewed in this chapter is to say that policy that treats social issues such as 'ordinary lives for people with learning disabilities' as if they are complicated systems is inherently unable to deliver its goals, whereas policy that is made in a way appropriate for seeking to change a complex adaptive system may stand greater chance of success. In this, I follow the stance of Lowe et al. (2020) and the premise of Human, Learning, Systems.

Figure 4.3   Has policy worked?

"Full access without question to the same services, including health services, that are available to the rest of the community" (p.4)

SOS

Summary

1. Self advocacy is under threat
- Ensure self advocacy is funded

2. People want to change our terminology
- Respect our choice to use 'people with learning disabilities'

3. We want to work
- Support more employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities

"There is need for better career guidance and work preparation." (p.7)

4. We need public transport
- Ask us how to make it accessible

5. We are not treated equally to others
- Include the UNCRPD into Welsh Law
- Create a Commissioner for people with learning disabilities

6. We do not have equal access to good healthcare
- Remove health inequalities

"They should not be devalued because of their intellectual impairment." (p.1)

7. Brexit will impact us more than most
- Create a plan to protect us from the impact of Brexit

8. Too many people live restricted lives
- Make a law in Wales like Seni's Law

"These general principles apply to all, however severe their handicaps [sic]." (p.1)

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter reviews what is known about approaches to policy-making and the Welsh social care policy context, with a focus on public involvement.

It begins by describing three approaches to understanding policy-making, New Public Management (NPM), policy design, and an organisational field approach. It then focuses on meanings of 'evidence' and 'public involvement'. all ordinary citizens in Wales are legitimate stakeholders, whether or not currently involved with social care and support public services. The way the policymaking process is understood affects the importance attached to public involvement and the roles assigned to ordinary citizens. While organisational field approach has, I believe, potentially the greatest explanatory power for current and desired roles within policymaking, the research necessary to develop this idea is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Complexity and design thinking, particularly that of Human, Learning, Systems, is used to identify NPM as being inherently inadequate due to its attempt to address complex adaptive systems (i.e. social issues) using an approach suited to complicated systems. The association between NPM and evidence-based policymaking (EBPM) is noted, together with the privileging of 'expert' knowledge over lived experience knowledge. I argue that 'evidence' is a powerful heuristic in Wales and therefore cannot be ignored. This means that CSC needs to meet the criteria for 'robust evidence' even if this thesis rejects the adequacy of NPM and EBPM.

Not all approaches to policy design assume social issues are complex adaptive systems, but this is largely the case in Wales. This approach is more open to public involvement on the basis of what ordinary citizens know and how they make sense of the social issue. The policy design process is compatible with a consultation-type public involvement in defining a social issue and a coproduction-type public involvement in co-designing possible policies. It is this approach that is taken forward in the thesis as having potential for making more effective social policy. CSC is developed to be compatible with this approach, while also having utility within the existing largely NPM approaches.

The chapter then moves to the Welsh context, describing the social care policies that most affect the lives of people with learning disabilities and Welsh Government policy stance on public involvement. Particular attention is drawn to the context of 2011 to 2014, this being the period leading up to the policy-making field research and the period during which the SSWA was developed.

The chapter notes the opportunities for public involvement in developing the SSWA, along with the public non-involvement in the formal public consultations.

The chapter then lays out the current policy context in Wales for policy-making and public involvement before noting that no research has been published about Welsh Government everyday policy-making practices.

Four key themes are discussed, either for their general academic interest (ordinary citizens as stakeholders, and the explanatory potential of organisational fields) or their immediate relevance to this thesis (what the chapter contributes to CSC design decisions, and a brief discussion of whether social care policy *has* worked and *can* work).

This knowledge review reveals gaps in knowledge, particularly around everyday policy-making practices.

The next chapter extends what is known by reporting and discussing research findings about how Welsh Government make policy and attitudes towards public involvement. It also considers the implications of Part 1 of the research for the development of CSC.

Chapter 5   Policy-making research

5.1   Introduction

The previous chapter reviews what is known about approaches to policy-making and the Welsh social care policy context, with a focus on public involvement. It also considers the implications of this and the previous chapters for the development of CSC.

This chapter extends what is known by reporting and discussing research findings about how Welsh Government make policy and attitudes towards public involvement.

The initial scoping of literature indicated what is known is insufficient to provide an adequate evidence base for developing CSC. Therefore, limited fieldwork was conducted with the aim of supplementing the evidence. The limited nature of the fieldwork means the findings reported in this chapter need to be treated with caution if used for any purpose other than building the evidence base for the development of CSC. The knowledge review was informed by the analysis of this fieldwork and the fieldwork analysis was informed by the knowledge review, in keeping with Spirographic analysis (3.4.6). On completion of the knowledge review and the analysis, key findings from both were brought together in the discussion section of this chapter.

The chapter opens with a recap of the fieldwork (5.1.1) and notes on the reasons for reporting the first analysis in such detail (5.1.2). Two approaches to analysis were used (5.2). The first used a 'little Q' approach, and the second used 'big Q'. This related to the purpose of analysis, rather than methodological commitment to using two types of analysis.

The findings are presented in sections 5.3 to 5.7 and are summarised in 5.8.

The discussion (5.9) and conclusions (5.10) represent the evidence base taken into the development of CSC.

5.1.1   Recap of fieldwork

People were recruited using a criterion sampling approach to provide perspectives on public involvement in policy-making from inside and outside the policy world (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1   Recap of fieldwork

ID	Participants	Activity	Duration	Data
I1	Expert informant - Policy profession	Semi-structured interview, Welsh Government building, Cardiff	48 min	Audio recording, notes
I2	Civil servant - Social care division	Semi-structured interview, Welsh Government building, Cardiff	62 min	Audio recording, notes
I3	Civil servant – observer role, outside Welsh Government	Semi-structured interview, Office, Cardiff	75 min	Audio recording, notes
I4	Policy officer, civil society umbrella body	Semi-structured interview, Office, Cardiff	Approx. 40 min	Notes[a]
I5	Spokesperson, learning disability organisation	Semi-structured interview, Hotel, Cardiff	Approx. 45 min	Notes[b]
W1	9 people, mixed professional roles	Interactive workshop, Public building, Cardiff	1 hour	Flipchart and post-its
W2	16 people contributing individually during conference breaks over the course of two days	Asynchronous workshop, Hotel, Cardiff	During conference breaks over two days	Postcards
CI1	2 community activists with some consultation experience	Conversational interview, South Central Wales cafe	66 min	Audio, Notes
CI2	3 web designers	Conversational interview, South East Wales office lounge	29 min	Audio, Notes
CI3	1 nurse with research responsibilities	Conversational interview, North Wales cafe	46 min	Audio, Notes
CI4	1 person, small tech start-up owner	Conversational interview, Southwest Wales cafe	56 min	Audio, Notes
CAE video, 2015	Diane, Ellie, Helen and Rachel[c], with Anne hosting the CSC.	CSC, North Wales cafe	84 min	A3 pad with notes and sketches; video; audio; transcript

[a] Audio recording too poor quality to transcribe, due to background noise.
[b] Audio failed to record.
[c] While the CAE team who acted as participants are named here, their contributions are anonymised within the data in this inquiry.

All fieldwork covered the same ground, using variants of questions (Table 5.2). All interviews were co-constructive, and therefore each interview took slightly different directions depending on the lead of the interviewee.

Table 5.2   Summary of questions

Information wanted	Variants of question	Participant
Knowledge or awareness about how Welsh Government make policy [where awareness was limited or absent, the process was outlined as it had been explained by I1]	Can you tell me how Welsh Government makes policy?	I1-5, W1
	How do you think Welsh Government make policy? (follow up "I don't know" with: "Have you any idea?".	CI1-4, W2, CSC1
Beliefs about public involvement in policy-making	Who should have a say? And why?	CI1-4, W2, CSC1
	When we talk about public involvement, who do you think should be involved? Why do you think they should be involved?	I1-5, W1
Awareness of methods for public involvement, and suggestions for future methods	Can you tell me anything about how people are or should be involved?	I1-5, W1
	How do you think Welsh Government should try to involve people?	CI1-4, W2, CSC1

5.1.2 Presenting findings

Decisions about how to present research findings are important in terms of research impact. Using Harley and Cornelissen's (2020) typology of approaches for presenting qualitative findings, an approach based on the Gioia model was selected as most appropriate for use in a policy world context. This is because there is still suspicion of the value of qualitative research as evidence among those who are more comfortable with the hierarchy of evidence common within evidence-based policy-making. The Gioia model makes explicit the match between data segments and theoretical coding, guiding the reader through the analytic pathway and thereby giving an impression of research rigor to those perhaps less comfortable with qualitative research as evidence (Harley and Cornelissen, 2020). The main disadvantage is that the reliance on text fragments reduces the richness of the data. Given the relative lack of richness in the data being analysed, this was not as problematic as if the data had been thicker. The comparative

thinness of the data was because this was additional fieldwork rather than a more rounded ethnographic research.

The coding tables are included in 5.2 to prevent disturbing the narrative flow of the findings. For avoidance of confusion, having completed the analytic work as evidenced in the tables, the narrative itself will be presented in line with the purpose of the Discovery phase, namely, to discover as much as possible about the context within which CSC would be used.

5.2   Analysis

5.2.1   Why two analyses, and how do they relate to the discussion of findings?

The original intention was to conduct two analyses and present the findings and discuss them separately. The first analysis and discussion of findings would use the interview and workshop questions *as if* themes. The intended purpose of this analysis was to meet the overall doctoral research need to build the evidence base on which to develop CSC. The second analysis would use a more reflexive, Spirographic approach. The intended purpose of this analysis, presentation and discussion of findings was to contribute to the academic knowledge about everyday policy-making, and in particular, knowledge about public involvement in policy-making.

However, by the time the analyses were ready to move to the writing of findings, sufficient had been read and reflected on about epistemic (in)justice that it did not feel ethical to use the first analysis as it stood. Participants' own voices had not been centre-stage or in an equal dialogue with my voice. Rather, the analysis was framed wholly around my knowledge needs. Therefore, the first analysis was reviewed in the light of the second analysis. Revisiting the original text fragments and relistening to the audio recordings (or checking notes where audio not available) allowed the analyses to be combined. It is this combined analysis that forms the basis of the discussion of findings in 5.3 to 5.7. While the discussion of findings is still orientated towards knowledge needs for the second part of this research, namely developing CSC, the findings themselves are presented more reflexively.

5.2.2 First analysis

The first analysis used a codebook approach in the style of Ziebland and McPherson (2006). For this analysis, the questions themselves were treated as if pre-existing themes. This was on the basis that the questions asked were predicated on my understanding of what was important to know as part of building the evidence based for developing CSC. Codes were generated for text fragments as required.

The data were separated into insider and outsider datasets, based on the criterion sampling. The separation into two datasets for analysis means that for each question there are two tables. For example, the list of codes and examples of associated text fragments about how Welsh Government makes policy is given in Table 5.3a (insiders) and Table 5.3b (outsiders).

This stream of tables (5.3a to 5.6b) shows the codings developed in the first analysis, together with examples of the text fragments coded for each of the codings. They provide an overview of participants' responses that directly relate to the questions asked.

Table 5.3a Insiders: How Welsh Government makes policy

Coding	Examples
Process	If it was a manifesto commitment, the process may start with a preferred policy option. At other times, it starts with public pressure or a Minister realising there is a problem that needs addressing. (W1)
Constraints	We are constrained by the EU and Westminster. (I2) There is a strong culture in each policy team, and that affects how policy is made. (I2)
Top down	By the time it gets to public involvement, the consultation isn't about 'what' but 'how'. (I4)
Co-production	I've got to be honest; I've seen very little real co-production in action, but I think this is the perfect way of doing it. (I3)
Public involvement	They might not necessarily question themselves as to, okay are we involving the right people, what steps can we take to do that? Are we working in a way that is good practice, what does good practice even look like? (I3)

There are only two references to co-production, both by I3. However, these are given a code because of the Welsh Government policy importance of co-production.

Table 5.3b Outsiders: How Welsh Government makes policy

Coding	Examples
Don't know	I haven't any idea. (W2) I haven't really thought about it. It just happens. (CI4) I'm actually quite shocked how little I know about it. (CAE video, 2015)
Public pressure	We can lobby, but lobbyists don't get listened to unless there's a vested interest with money. (CI1) Social media gives people influence. Politicians stop and think, perhaps. (W2)
Politicians	It comes from the Minister, the front end. Or am I thinking of The Thick of It? (CI2) It's what gets in the party manifestos. We elect members to speak for us, but then they get a party whip so can't speak for us (W2*)
Public involvement	People come to us and ask what we think, then say "We'll tell you later what we are going to do" (W2) There isn't much direct involvement with the public feeding into understanding the problem. How many people know the right channel to say their ideas? (CI2)
(Dis)satisfaction	People are whispering in Ministers' ears, and the people who benefit is a very narrow bunch of people, not the wider population of Wales. (CI1) I've been on the receiving end of a few policies that are a continual source of frustration, but I don't know how it was made. (CI2) There isn't one person whose interest is to make the whole of Wales and everything about it better, so everyone is fighting for their corner. (CAE video, 2015)
Process	Probably some sort of consultation and it goes from there. (CI2) Load of people sitting round a Table and it comes into a policy idea, and people say that's a great idea. (W2) People define what a desirable policy is and a desirable outcome, and then they say you need to pay us to do consultancy on that. (CI4) It's a mixture of academics and policy makers making decisions about things. (Reflective, 2019)

Table 5.4a   Insiders: People who should be involved

Coding	Examples
Those affected	Everyone the policy is intended to affect. (W1)
Those who know something	Public who know and can express an opinion on the issue. (I5) Academics who can provide evidence. (I1) Providers, for practicalities and to protect their self-interests. (I2)
Representative bodies	Politicians are the voice of the people. Professional bodies. Membership bodies. Charities. (W1)
'The public'	Common citizens. Not just the usual groups. (W1) Ministers like to hear from … real people, ie those who are not paid (I1)

Table 5.4b   Outsiders: People who should be involved

Coding	Examples
Affected	Don't talk to consultants, but nurses and cleaners. Talk to people who live with it every day. (CI1)
Engaged	The people who vote. (W2) People with a passion for the subject. (CAE video, 2015)
Know something	But I wouldn't want us to be responsible. We aren't experts. (CI2) Then the housing offices, and the council. They would also be involved. And local councillors. (CI3)
Me/my group	There's a patient action group at the hospital and they have set up their own website. (CI2) Listen to me. (W2)
Everyone	We live in a democracy, so everyone. (W2) A cross-section of the community (CAE video)
Concerns	Probably everybody in Wales I'd say, except people who can't grasp answers to hard, tough questions (W2) It's the usual suspects. Same old same old. Vested interests. They have the same vote as I have, but if they have money then it gets listened to, and if you stand up against it you get fired. (CI1) If public get to choose, you get some odd policy decisions. So just getting the public to decide doesn't mean we get better policy. (CI2)

Table 5.5a   Insiders: Reasons people should be involved

Coding	Example
To get policy right	You risk disadvantage if you don't consult. (I1) See how much money's been saved, because service actually meets somebody's need rather than we're delivering a really rubbish service that doesn't – isn't doing what people want (I3)
To fill gaps in policy-maker knowledge	Representative democracy needs expertise (lived/knowledge) to confirm or deny a policy. (I3) The formal consultation has more interest in outliers, things that had not been considered (I1)
Obligation	You consult to say you've ticked a box. (I4) Why do we consult? There is a legal duty (I1)

Table 5.5b   Outsiders: Reasons people should be involved

Coding	Example
Rights	All have rights to a say. (W2)
Knowledge	You need a balance because there are different ways of knowing (Reflective, 2019) Because we know what we need. (W2)
To speak for others	That's why it's good to have organisations like Shelter because they can, to a certain extent, represent other people's voices. (CAE video, 2015) Why local councillors? It affects a lot of the people they are standing for. They are a figure head in the community. People are more likely to approach them firsthand. (CI3) Experts, because policy-makers will listen to them. (CAE video, 2015)

Table 5.6a   Insiders: Methods for involvement

Coding	Example
On our terms	Consultation on preferred policy: focused, so you get usable, useful answers. No leading questions. (I5)
On their terms	Use community leaders to raise awareness. (W1) Be more effective, energetic, imaginative in reaching out for opinions. (W1)
Informal	The minders in black suits can be off-putting, but if everyone is sitting down with a cuppa and you introduce people to the Minister, then people start talking and they want to listen. (I2)
Inclusive	Make it accessible and non-jargonistic for the general public. (I2) Ask: What would help make it a successful process for them? (I3)
Inform them	Provide people who are interested in the issue with relevant information. (W1)
Methods	User research methods (e.g. ethnography, discussion spaces) (W1) Crowdsource solutions for wicked problems. (W1) Online. Meetings. Forums. Panels. Roadshows. (W1) Petitions. Make society more disruptive. (W1)

Table 5.6b   Outsiders: Methods for involvement

Coding	Example
Genuineness	Welsh Government need to go out to where people are and listen. (W2)
	That's where you get exclusion, from questionnaires and things where they impose their view on the people that they're supposed to be asking. (Reflective, 2019)
Inform us	But it's getting to know about. (CAE video, 2015)
	If you are interested and computer-literate, you can already get involved if you are in the know. (W2)
	It's something that they could make more clear for us so we would know more about it. (CAE video, 2015)
Methods	We should vote. (W2)
	A website? Maybe that would help? (CI3)
	Try to target people where you think you may get a sitting audience. And make it informal. (CI3)
	Anything that doesn't put you on the spot. (CAE video, 2015)
	Respond to a consultation. Whether they listen or not, I don't know, but at least you can say something. (CAE video, 2015)
Collective action	Do protests and petitions. (W2)
	It's hard working on it on your own. I can't wait to have a team. (CI1)
	Get a supportive group around you if you are going to use your voice. (CAE video, 2015)
Elected members	I'd write to my AM and ask them to look into it for me (CI2)
	They go out with staff and organise events. (W2)
Concerns	They need to talk about X gets spent and your lives changed like this. Not X got spent and X jobs were created. (CI1)
	I mean the kind of people who go to a focus group are the kind who say, 'the government should be helping me, or doing this or that'. (CI4)
	Avoid getting sucked in to doing a full time job for free. (CAE video, 2015)
	They ask questions to which they want answers, not to hear what issues are important to people. (W2)
	If it's not written down, they say "Ah, you didn't say that". (W2)

5.2.3 Second analysis

The purpose of the second analysis was to hold a more equal conversation with the data. In the first analysis, the data were dominated by my voice and framing of the conversation. In the second analysis, I listened to the recordings, remembered the original conversations and tried to imagine how the participants might have labelled what they said (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7   Themes, meanings and examples

Theme	Meaning and examples
Value as evidence	This refers both to the overall status of consultation as providing evidence for policy-making, in the context of evidence based policy-making, and how different people's contributions are (perceived to be) valued. ***Examples:*** They don't listen to me. If I had a PhD and said 'that won't work' they'd listen to me. (CAE video, 2015) You hear from so few people that you can't trust it as evidence' (W1)
Genuineness *Sub-themes:* • *Wanting to listen* • *Reaching out* • *Ticking the box*	This refers to whether Welsh Government want to listen, and whether public involvement can influence outcomes. ***Examples***: It's all centred in Cardiff. We are the poor relations up here. What's the point in saying anything, as it will all get decided down there anyway? (CI3) We say it's open, but in one case the decision had been made before the consultation went out. (W1).
Being listened to *Sub-themes:* • *Inform us* • *Insiders*	This theme includes access to opportunities to influence policy-making (including but not restricted to public involvement activities), as well as who is believed to be listened to once they have access. ***Examples:*** It's the usual suspects. The same old vested interests. (CI4) They only listen to what they want to hear. (CI1) Expecting people to come to you… It's just not going to work. (I3) They didn't mean to exclude us, it just didn't cross their minds to tell us about the event. (I5)
Motivation *Sub-themes:* • *No point* • *Vested interests*	This theme is mostly about perceptions, as by and large the participants would not describe themselves as people who get involved in policy-making. It includes beliefs about those who do get involved, and reasons why people do not get involved. ***Examples:*** The sort of people who get involved are the ones who want something (CI4) But they *don't* want to listen, do they? (CAE video, 2015).
Important voices	This theme addresses the basis for involvement as well as categories of people. It includes the roles of 'real people' and charities that work with and speak for 'real people' in policy-making. ***Examples:*** Everyone (I3, I4, W1, W2, CI2, CI3, CI4, CAE video, 2015) They need to talk to people on the street who are homeless, not just go to Shelter (CAE video, 2015) Talk to experts, because they know. (I5)

5.3 The Welsh Government policy-making process

The section presents findings about the process itself, reasons provided for public involvement being part of the process, the stage of the process at which public involvement is most valuable and the role of the civil servant. It concludes by asking who knows this information. In relation to the bigger picture of developing CSC, this section identifies the stage at which CSC could have most strategic impact on policy decisions.

5.3.1 The process itself

The fieldwork began with the policy profession participant (I1). Visual notes of the interview (redrawn as Fig. 5.1) were shown to the participant at the end of the interview and they confirmed the visual notes were accurate. The seven stages they identified were:

1. Identify a problem
2. Decide if policy intervention can address it
3. Scope possible policy interventions
4. Consult
5. Choose preferred policy
6. Consult
7. Finalise policy

The participant described four points at which public involvement is legitimised by Welsh Government: identifying and understanding the social problem; scoping possible policy solutions; consultations prior to the release of a draft policy for formal consultation; participation in the formal consultation. Of these, only the last is required by law, although it was described as "good practice to involve people at the earlier stages" as by the end "there should be no surprises for stakeholders" (I1). The Gunning principles (Sheldon, 2012) and Code of Conduct (National Assembly for Wales, 2013), however, imply this is more than just good practice.

Figure 5.1 Stages of policy making and the four points at which public involvement could occur (from I1 visual notes)
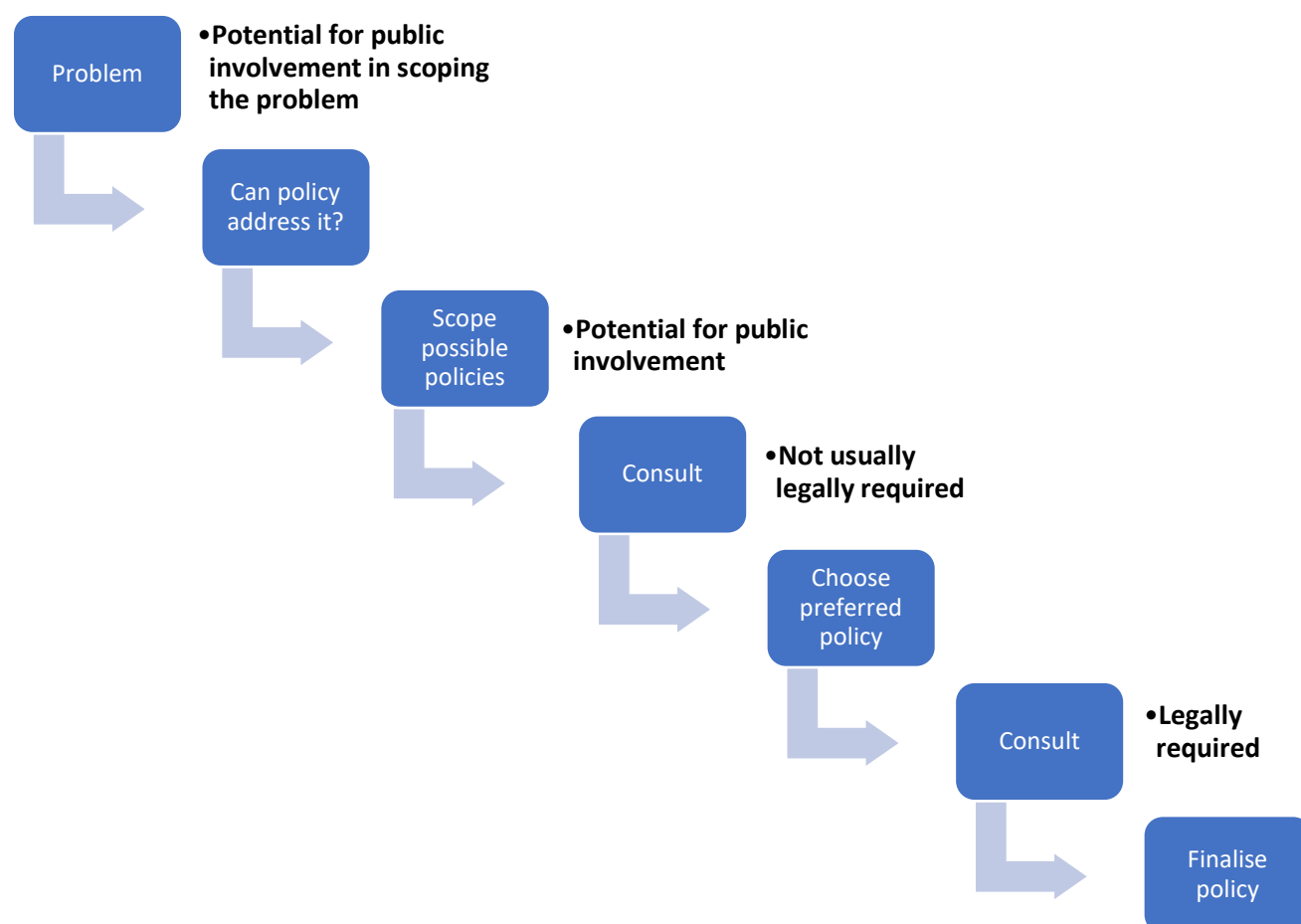
5.3.2 Reasons for public involvement in the process

Disaggregating the data into insider and outside data suggested four reasons for public involvement (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2   Matrix of reasons for public involvement

	Legitimacy	**Pragmatic**
Insider	Obligation	Getting the policy right
Outsider	Rights	Common sense

Obligation

Obligations were seen as legal (statutory duties to consult, W1), moral (promise to consult, giving legitimacy to the policy, both W1) or pragmatic (e.g. "to reassure the Minister", I1). It was acknowledged that consultations might be carried out "to say you've ticked a box" (I1, I2, I3, I5 and W1). The participant in I3 noted that focusing on the obligation can lead to a negative focus on the costs and inconvenience of public involvement. They wished civil servants realised how much money and difficulty is saved by getting public involvement right, so that the policy leads to a service "actually meets somebody's need rather than delivering a rubbish service that isn't doing what people want" (I3).

Getting the policy right

The civil servants talked in terms of getting the policy right, with one noting that "You've spent a few years working on it and you start to think of yourself as an expert … but you're never going to know the same amount as somebody who's living that on a day to day basis" (I3). The formal public consultation was seen as a final check the policy was right, so had "more interest in outliers, things that had not been considered, than volume" (I1). The participant in I5 suggested if people who will be directly affected are shown ideas for a policy, they "will know if it works or not." and can ask "'have you realised if you do this then *that* will also happen?'" (I5).

Rights

The right to be involved mattered most to participants with learning disabilities (W2). Many were frustrated at the barriers, such as complicated language, long documents, not being told, needing internet access and lack of transport to meetings. Rights mattered because "you *should* be able to have your voice heard." (W2), but "People in power get together and make policy. We don't get our rights" (W2).

Common sense

For other outsiders, it just seemed common sense to listen to people who "really knew about it" (CI3) because it was part of their everyday lives. This comment captures a frequent sentiment: "if they'd asked anyone round here, they could have told them the policy wouldn't work" (CAE video, 2015). The lack of 'common sense' was associated with civil servants and politicians being seen as having little in common with the lives of

those who will be most directly affected by the policy being made (W2; CAE video, 2015) and therefore unable to make good policy without taking advice from those affected.

5.3.3 Where in the process is public involvement most strategic?

Some participants thought it was always pointless because, for example, "it didn't matter what we said, they were going to close it [a hospital] because of the money." (CAE video, 2015) and "the decision has been made already." (CI4). Certainly, I1's assertion that the formal public consultation is a final check that the policy is right suggests a provisional decision at least has been made prior to that consultation.

Civil servants noted that outsiders have greater impact earlier in the process, and that building relationships is important. This introduced another concern of outsiders – cronyism (see 5.5). The Third Sector insiders generally experienced early involvement as positive. They felt they has a voice in framing the issue and advising on potential solutions.

The participants in CI2 were digital designers. Once the policy-making process had been outlined, they immediately interpreted it in design terms. They valued public involvement in their *own* work in making sure they understood the issue that needed solving. They could imagine such input being equally valuable in policy-making. They were wary of "too much public involvement for possible solutions, because you'd get something watered down." They noted "Solutions is our job. It's where you need experts" (CI2). The participant in I5 similarly suggested it was best to restrict looking at solutions to "a small group" with wider involvement targeted at providing information that could be used by "experts in making policy." (I5).

5.3.4 The role of the civil servant and Minister

Civil servants have a powerful role in relation to access. The participant in I1 was clear that "officials advise, ministers decide". However, they noted (in line with the UK Civil Service Policy Skills Framework, 2013) that officials judge what information is relevant to give the Minister, as "ministers are not experts in everything so rely on officials for advice". On my wondering if this gave considerable power to the advisory role, the participant paused with their head tilted then changed the topic. There was a general agreement from civil servants that the principles of a policy were set or at least shaped by Ministers. Any influence the civil servants had was in determining how the principles could be implemented. More than one of the insiders described civil servants 'steering'

the Minister, with one noting that "Ministers may have an idea, but how to write it is affected by the civil servants and it's that minutiae of the policy that affects people" (W1).

One participant (I2) referred to a "strong culture in each policy team" that affected how policy profession guidance was implemented. They declined to elaborate. Ministers were described as having little time for direct involvement in the shaping and writing of draft policies and consultation documents. One civil servant simply referred me to 'The Thick of It'[43] if I wanted to understand the relationship of civil servant and Minister.

Civil servants highlighted that political manifestos may pre-judge the preferred policy option. Where this happened, the role of the civil servants was to create the business case for that option. On other occasions, a Minister "may know of problem from lobbying, other AMs, constituency case work or civil servant" (I1). The Minister might then ask the civil servants to investigate and provide evidenced policy options (W1).

Third Sector participants (namely I4, I5 and some of W1) either sought influence by going to Ministers or by "gaining the ear of the right civil servant" (I5). Videos of ordinary citizens' testimonies were said to have a powerful influence, with one civil servant saying: "It got under my skin watching it, so I just hope [the Minister] has really started to think, 'this is actually people's lives that we're affecting here'." (non-attributed[44]).

5.3.5 The role of evidence

Insiders generally accepted evidence should not be ignored but would disagree about what counts as evidence and the desirable balance between evidence and politics in the making of policy.

For example:

> Person 1: That's anecdote, not evidence.
> Person 2: It's all evidence.
> Person 1: No, we're not social scientists going out and asking the right people.
> Person 3: Isn't that technocratic, giving social scientists precedence over politicians?
> Person 1: I think there's a certain level they should.
> (Exchange among civil servants, W1)

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[43] British TV comedy, satirising the inner workings of government.
[44] Consent to include the quote was for it to be non-attributed.

Another aspect of the quality of evidence was its lack of representativeness. For policy-making, "when you are creating the evidence base, you have to have a wide range of consultees" and not rely on self-selection (W1). Those consulted needed to have "experiential knowledge" (W1) and not just speak for those who have.

In I3, the participant switched from talking about people's stories to statistics and results-based accountability when asked what they considered counted as evidence. They said this was because "that's the way that people commonly see it, that is, stats equals evidence and people's opinions are hearsay, almost" (I3). They expressed concerns about collecting the "correct evidence", noting that "otherwise you're starting to collect data which is meeting civil servant or government needs without actually thinking 'Is this what a good service looks like to people?'" (I3). They also had reservations about the quality of qualitative research they had seen, feeling "people just don't necessarily see the value in it because they're not getting good data back" (I3). They noted that both qualitative and quantitative data were open to being interpreted "to your own ends", but that it was easier to see that happening with words than with numbers. As a consequence, they believed numbers were treated as more "objective" and "reliable" than qualitative data (I3).

Outsiders did not mention evidence, just political decisions and the influence of lobbyists.

5.3.6 Who knows how policy is made?

Insiders could describe the policy-making process. By and large their accounts map onto the seven stages. However, the participant in I1 noted that the standard two-hour policy profession training course for civil servants was insufficient to ensure they understood how to implement the process.

Apart from the two participants in CI1, no-one from outside the policy world knew how policy is made. One said it was "made by people in Cardiff behind closed doors" (W2). Everyone else responded with puzzled silence or saying they didn't know. Most were unsure of Welsh Government's responsibilities because they "haven't really thought about it. It just happens." (CI4). Most were "actually quite shocked how little we know about it" (CAE video, 2015). After a pause, some people hazarded tentative guesses, such as "There's probably some sort of consultation and it goes from there." (CI2), or perhaps a "load of people sitting round a table and it comes into a policy idea, and people say that's a great idea and they do it" (W2), or "it's a mixture of academics and policy-makers making decisions about things" (Reflective, 2019).

The lack of knowledge required me to talk participants through the process using the outline from I1 before being able to ask the remaining questions.

All insiders and almost all outsiders had heard of 'public involvement'. One civil servant had been directly involved in innovative approaches, such as establishing the National Social Services Citizen Panel and spoke positively about public involvement. Few others had anything positive to say. Even those within the civil service expressed reservations about their own and their colleagues' practices with one noting they had "seen very little real co-production in action." (I3). It was noted that there was no requirement to evaluate or reflect on personal practice.

5.4   Personal experiences of public involvement

This section describes people's personal experiences of public involvement, either as insiders or outsiders of the policy world. In relation to the bigger picture of developing CSC, this section identifies flaws in the process and practices, some of which need to be addressed by CSC and some of which need addressing by discussion with Welsh Government.

5.4.1 Are Welsh Government reaching out?

Civil servants expressed frustration that people were not getting involved despite opportunities and then complaining later about policies. Outsiders expressed frustration that they were never asked for their opinion and that policies would be better if only policy-makers listened to them. This suggests some kind of disconnect between Welsh Government and ordinary citizens.

No one talked about Welsh Government "going to people directly and empowering them to take part" (I3). Equally, despite the rhetoric of co-production in policy documents, I3 noted that they were not seeing evidence of it in practice[45]. One Third Sector participant sighed: "You could miss opportunities, not because they don't want you but because it never occurred to them to tell you about it" (I5).

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[45] Absence of evidence does not mean this does not happen. However, if such practices were widespread, I would have expected at least one of the policy-engaged participants to be aware of it, even if those recruited as members of the public were not.

People at the second workshop were not sure if Welsh Government were reaching out because "People come to us and ask what we think, then say 'We'll tell you later what we are going to do'" (W2). They felt unequal partners in the process and queried it if was worth getting involved. It felt as if "By the time it gets to public involvement, the consultation isn't about 'what' but 'how' and that's too late" (W2), a sentiment echoed in I4 by a Third Sector leader (see Table 5.3a).

Some people within Welsh Government seemed to have a "genuine desire to listen to and learn from members of the public" (I5). However more than one outsider said they had tried to tell of their experience "but for some reason they were determined not to listen" (CI1) and "Sometimes they just don't want to know." (CAE video, 2015). There was no obvious correlation between listening (or not) and the policy division, as these three examples related to the same division.

5.4.2 On whose terms?

Involvement was described by insiders and outsiders as being on Welsh Government terms. An insider noted a "tendency to push information out and get people to respond on your terms" with consultations "structured in a way that makes sense to them" (I3). Public involvement required "fitting into their structures and systems rather than starting with people's priorities" (I4). Such practices are "where you get exclusion from" (I5), namely by Welsh Government "imposing their view on the people they are supposed to be asking" (Reflective, 2019) and "asking questions to which they want the answers, not to hear what issues are important to people" (W2).

One issue was intelligibility. Easy Read versions of consultation documents were not always available. Those that were did not always make sense because they did not connect with the everyday experiences of people with learning disabilities (W2).

Indeed, policy was commonly seen as framed to make sense to policy insiders rather than those who will be affected by the policy (I3; CI1; CAE video, 2015). A civil servant noted that their own parents "say 'just tell me how it affects us' if I try to tell them about a policy consultation" (W1).

As a consequence, some of those "whose expertise might be really useful to the consultation" are excluded by "the language of the consultation or the frame of the consultation." (I3). One participant believed this was dangerous as "only White educated middle-class solutions get proposed that just won't work for people generally". (I3).

5.4.3 Barriers within the process

Everything from 5.4.2 contributes to the barriers to public involvement.

The immediate barrier was that most outsider participants had never considered how policy gets made, even though they knew that policy affected their lives. Most were unaware public involvement is welcomed and had never considered actively engaging with Welsh Government policy-making. When one participant was told involvement was welcomed, their response was "But how many people know the right channel to say their ideas?" (CI4). There were frustrations at being "on the receiving end of a few policies" that seemed ill-informed (CI2), with the frustration increased by having no idea what to do about it.

The participant in I3 listed the main barriers as:

- Not being 'in the know', and therefore not knowing consultations exist, why responding matters, how to find consultations and, even if these were addressed, not knowing how to respond.
- Consultations being framed to suit the civil servants rather than the interests, language and concerns of the people who will be affected by the policy.
- People's past experiences, both of being consulted and more generally of negative experiences associated with authority figures and public services.

The civil servant in I2 flagged their regret of not hearing from those "whose expertise might be really useful to the consultation, but who don't understand the language of the consultation or the frame of the consultation" (I2). They gave examples of working with Third Sector representatives noting "it's not the same as working directly with people who are living with the issue" (I2).

There was a sense that policy-makers and "Cardiff' were 'over there somewhere'" (CI4) living such different lives from most people in Wales that "they really genuinely don't understand" (CAE video, 2015). Many were distrustful, thinking policy-makers were quite content to make policy that would benefit them and their friends (e.g. CI1; CI2; CI4).

Those who had experience were not generally positive. One Third Sector manager noted "I've had one very bad and one very good experience recently and that's just in one directorate" (W1). The bad experience was a Welsh Government summary of consultation responses that the manager said they knew was misleading, noting "If

Welsh Government is looking for support for what they plan to do, they should be honest and say that, and not call it a consultation" (W1). Others commented that public involvement is "slow, frustrating and nothing happens" (CI4), and that "we try, but how it gets fed through to people making decisions is the issue" (W2).

One civil servant noted that past bad experiences of public involvement meant there was no chance of working directly with some groups due to lack of trust, and that "policy-makers may need to work through trusted intermediaries" (I3).

5.4.4 "Sticking your head above the parapet"

One participant described public involvement as "sticking your head above the parapet" (CI3). They had taken a public stand on a hyperlocal issue and been blamed when the resultant policy was not to everyone's liking. Another knew someone who had received a death threat. Other participants had stories of feeling marginalised or penalised or accused of "getting ideas above their station" (W2) when they or others they knew had used their voice publicly on a social issue.

5.5 Who gets listened to, and how do they get access?

This section identifies people's perceptions of who is currently being heard within Welsh Government policy-making. It identifies some of the reasons that those not currently involved would not wish to be seen as involved, and some of the policy consequences of their absence.

In relation to the bigger picture of developing CSC, it indicates the importance of broadening involvement. It also suggests CSC must avoid people thinking taking part turns them into the sort of person they think gets involved in policy-making.

5.5.1 Who gets listened to, and who doesn't?

Many outsiders felt the policy process "suits vested interests very well" (CI1) and people gravitate to politicians because they want personal influence and money. One participant put it more bluntly but congruently with all the others: "People are whispering in Ministers' ears, and the people who benefit is not the wider population of Wales." (CI1).

In addition to people with vested interests, Welsh Government were believed to listen to "people like bankers" (W2), "people who are in it for themselves" (W2), "the sort who went to grammar schools and are well known in their field, and highly educated" (CAE video, 2015), and "the elite who go to conferences, people who are high up in organisations" (CI1). In the first workshop, those listed were "the ones who feel most comfortable to be in the space", "people who know how the system works" and "the loudest voice, the person who knowledge the best person to lobby" (W1[46]).

A consequence of this was that it was believed only a certain type of person would get involved, namely someone who "wants something from the government" (CI4). People who did not want to be seen as out for something for themselves would avoid public involvement because they weren't "that kind of person" (CI2).

An example was given of civil servants "looking for expertise and who they perceived to have expertise" which led to "only White and middleclass men being invited" to a policy forum (I3).

A North Wales perspective was "What's the point in saying anything, as it will all get decided down in Cardiff anyway." (CI3).

5.5.2 Policy consequences of only hearing from a restricted range of people

Only hearing from some people and "not involving people from different walks of life" (CI4) was blamed for "policy-making taking some very real wrong turns" (I3). This was because people talk about "something completely different from someone else, because it's life experiences and what matters to you" (CI3). Only hearing from those who "want something from government" risked policy-makers getting "the impression that's what everyone wants, because they don't hear from the people who are too busy getting on with it." (CI2).

Only listening to "the usual suspects" (CI1) was seen as problematic because then "you just get niceties and you don't get people going 'That's crap', and that's what they need to hear" (CI1). Most participants from outside the policy world talked about policy-makers only listening to "people like them who tell them what they want to hear" leading to "policies that don't work for most people" (CI1).

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[46] Each quotation is from a different person

Outsiders were generally dissatisfied with the outcomes achieved by new policies, with the most common perspective summed up as: "it's obvious they haven't got a clue and they don't listen to anybody, because if they listened to people talking about their lives, they wouldn't do what they do" (CAE video, 2015).

5.6   Who needs to be listened to in order to make good policy?

This section identifies people's perceptions of who Welsh Government need to listen to and why. It also addresses whether people think Welsh Government would listen if they *did* speak. The implications for the bigger picture of CSC are that the method needs to be a rewarding experience of itself, as widespread cynicism means most will not participate in the hopes of changing policy or even being heard.

5.6.1 Do people think Welsh Government want to listen?

There was deep cynicism as to whether Welsh Government *want* to listen. On a number of occasions, my saying, "So, given Welsh Government want to listen…" was cut off by "But they don't do they?" (CAE video, 2015; CI1; CI3; CI4). There were multiple comments that Welsh Government only want to listen if people say what they want to hear. Someone had contacted Welsh Government and been told it would be looked into but had "heard nothing since because they didn't want to hear" (CI1). The co-participant in CI1 responded "There's a very narrow bunch listened to, there's an echo chamber and there's not much debate".

Participants rationalised reasons why civil servants might not want to listen, for example, "What you find in people's worlds is so horrific that to find something out about it and then not be able to do anything about it… It's much easier to just stay at arm's length than get involved." (Reflective, 2019) or that "I wasn't peddling a line they would want to hear." (CI1).

While most of the civil servants involved in social care policy-making seemed keen to listen to "real people and not just 'experts'" (W1), this message has not been received by the 'real people' themselves. Some participants felt Welsh Government only want to listen to people with qualifications or data to prove their point, for example: "They don't listen to me but, obviously, if I had a PhD as well as my experience, I could say 'This is wrong' and they'd listen to me." (CAE video, 2015) and "I feel passionately about it. But if I want a voice, I need data to prove it" (CAE video, 2015).

Public involvement depends on people believing there is a genuine desire to involve them. As one participant said, "I think it's quite difficult to get useful responses off people if they feel that they're not being empowered and that what they say has no effect." (I3). Most participants from outside the policy world expressed uncertainty about the genuineness of any desire for involvement, even when told of occasions where feedback from public involvement had been acted upon. These were treated as if exceptions, for example "I suppose if your civil servants are asking you how to listen to people, maybe they might use what people say" (CAE video, 2015).

The perspective of most participants about most consultations was that they were done to 'tick the box'. Even civil servants felt, at times, that it was a box ticking exercise because political decisions had already been made. At other times, civil servants noted that consultation were occurring without members of the public being told the constraints and parameters within which the policy would need to be enacted. These could be constraints from Westminster or the European Union that limited Wales' freedom to make its own policy, or it could be financial constraints. Such unarticulated constraints meant consultations were experienced by members of the public as box-ticking.

5.6.2 Legitimate voices

One of the direct questions was who *should* have a say in policy-making. Insiders and outsiders alike gave vague answers such as:

- Everyone
- Ordinary people
- Anyone affected
- Anyone who wants
- People with expert knowledge

When asked for specific examples, participants struggled and simply rephrased their original general answer, for example "everyone" became "you know, ordinary people" (CI4). When not asked directly, participants suggested things like "just talk to people who live here every day" (CI4) because "they may be the people who come up with good solutions that work on their level" (CI1).

Some participants said they played their role by voting, but there was a general feeling summed up by this quotation, "We elect members to speak for us, but then they get a party whip so can't speak for us." (CI2). In addition, some participants thought Third

Sector and local elected representatives should be involved to speak on behalf of ordinary citizens.

In W2, some of those affected by an issue had organised to speak collectively on that issue. Several mentioned monthly meetings to talk about issues, organising protests and the fear that "if it's not written down, they say 'Ah, you didn't say that'." (W2). One participant noted that it is "hard working on it on your own. I can't wait to have a team[47]." (CI1).

The women in the CAE team talked of their excitement in discovering that they were allowed to speak on matters that affected them. For others, the central idea was of having no voice, by which they meant that whatever they said would not be heard by those making decisions about their lives. These participants gave examples of having used their voices and feeling their voice had been ignored or misunderstood. This had led to them not engaging in opportunities to use their voice. Others seemed to believe that there was no point and therefore had never attempted to get involved, and the resultant policies affirmed their belief that policy-makers were only interested in listening to a very narrow range of people with vested interests and power.

The conundrum was that the people who they felt *should* be listened to were not the people who would choose to get involved.

Despite this, everyone who took part in a conversational interview was there because they had accepted when invited personally and informally by Barod for a chat over coffee. Some even expressed pleasure at having been asked.

By the end of CAE video (2015), all of the women had recognised occasions when they had used their voices within the policy-making process. Equally, the other outsider participants recognised occasions where they had engaged with policy-making, although not all described it in terms of "using their voice" (CAE video, 2015). All the insider participants referred to engaging in policy-making as part of their professional role; none referred to it outside of this role, with one commenting: "I must admit I've never ever done it in my spare time, I've never responded to a consultation in my spare time, it was always something I did as part of my job." (I3). Their comment was followed by a long pause while they looked thoughtful.

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[47] Participant was about to start a grassroots organisation to tackle the issue about which they were an activist

Participants' use of the concepts of being vocal and using your voice seemed distinct. My impression was that participants talked about "using your voice" (CAE video, 2015) as a focused, purposeful act, whereas "being vocal" (CI3) was often disparaged in terms of "liking the sound of their own voices" (CI3) and having no legitimacy as they only had a self-appointed role. Those who were vocal were sometimes seen as "acting for community benefit" (CI3) and sometimes as "having their own agenda" (CI4). In contrast to those seen as being vocal, there were also those seen as "not vocal enough, too reticent to come forward with ideas." (CI3). For these people, a collective or mediated voice (i.e. someone speaking on their behalf) was particularly important.

5.6.3 Mediated voices

'Mediated voices' is my term for those who stand between an individual who will be affected by a policy and those making the policy and speak on behalf of the individual.

For policy-makers, mediated voices can be more efficient and less disruptive than hearing directly from multiple individuals (I1, I2).

Some outsiders said it was easier to speak to someone they knew and ask them to present their perspective than find ways to do it themselves. One participant had contacted their local councillor and the local councillor spoke on their behalf as part of a Welsh Government consultation (CI4). Some were willing to talk to a grassroots group or representative organisation and rely on them to pass on their opinion (W2).

In some cases, this involves a person or body elected to represent members. Many Third Sector membership organisations have this as an explicit function and membership benefit, as do professional bodies. In other cases, it involves senior managers having access to policy-makers, while those working directly with members of the public have no access to either the senior managers or the policy-makers. One participant noted:

> We have section managers who go to meetings in Cardiff. We aren't
> having a voice in the policy debate. We are just told. … In the past
> when I've voiced my concerns, I've been reprimanded for it and told to
> shut up. If you speak out you are seen as a trouble maker. So I stay
> quiet to keep my job. So I don't have a voice. (Not attributed).

The role of Third Sector organisations in contributing to policy-making as mediated voices has been researched by others (e.g. Mazzei et al., 2020). In this research, they were selected as policy world insiders. One intermediary noted "There's just no way you

could possibly understand what kind of issues people are facing. Actually, I think we are all relatively 'there in our glass towers' looking at what's happening below." (Not attributed).

5.6.4 The role of the Third Sector in public involvement

Insiders talked about the role of the Third Sector as representing the interests of their members and bringing expert knowledge in their own right. One Third Sector participant voiced the opinion strongly that particularly the larger and service provider Third Sector organisations "push for policy to suit them, and that may not be what's right for their members" (not attributed). They noted times where "What's right for me isn't what's right for the organisation" (I5). Shortly after the Winterbourne View scandal[48], one participant[49] noted an occasion when they had tried to highlight a serious issue relating to institutional abuse with Welsh Government but had not been heard because "They said, 'we work with this organisation and they tell us what we need to know'" (not attributed). However, the participant had been trying to blow the whistle on that very organisation. Participants from W1, I3 and I5 all noted that involvement of Third Sector representatives was important but no substitute for direct involvement of ordinary citizens, particularly those with lived experience of the problem or who would be affected by the proposed policy. For example, "They need to talk to people on the street who are homelessness just go to Shelter, because you need to hear the voice of the people themselves. And maybe the people who it directly affects aren't having the say they might want to have" (CAE video, 2015).

5.7 How people *should* be able to get involved

This section looks at methods ordinary citizens suggested, and approaches used by or suggested by policy world insiders. The implications for the bigger picture of CSC are that any method needs to address existing actual barriers (5.4) and perceived barriers (5.5, 5.6). CSC needs to be clear which sort of involvement it is offering. CSC needs to retain features from Barod's 'coffee shop conversations' that people found appealing.

One of the questions asked in the policy-making fieldwork was "How should people get involved?" Almost all the responses related to people responding to invitations and opportunities from Welsh Government. There were some comments in I1-I5 about Third

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[48] Serious abuse within a care home, uncovered by a Panorama documentary in October 2012
[49] Not identified given the nature of their comment. Debriefed with participant and allegation had since been dealt with.

Sector organisations taking the initiative and approaching either civil servants or Ministers. Two participants (CI3, CAE video, 2015) suggested people could go to their elected members. Participants in W1 had discussed using online petition sites such as Change.org and 38 Degrees. No-one had mentioned the Senedd petitions process. However, when it was mentioned to participants in the CAE video and CI3, they seemed pleasantly surprised, enthusiastic about its potential, and wanting to know more details about it.

All but one of the participants offered very general responses to the question of how people should get involved, such as "be inclusive" (W2), "online engagement" (W1) or "run consultations" (CI4). Even when asked for practical examples, participants invariably simply rephrased their initial response. For example, "be inclusive" became "make sure you don't leave anyone out" (W2), and "online engagement" became "use virtual methods" (W1). The one participant who offered more detailed descriptions had developed training in participatory methods, co-production and consultation facilitation as part of a previous job. Their responses are described separately after everyone else's.

5.7.1 Principles

Whatever the method, there were some principles that recurred across the answers. These can be summarised as:

- be open
- be inclusive
- be accessible
- remove barriers

There was no difference in the kind of suggestions made by those within and outside the policy world about how to achieve open, inclusive and accessible public involvement. Suggestions involved reducing jargon, taking time to listen, being clear about limits to what people's involvement could achieve, and making sure there was a way for people to know how their involvement had (or had not) been part of shaping policy. In none of these instances were specific details given that would assist in operationalising these principles. The lack of detail, even when asked what something like "reducing jargon" might look like (W1), made it uncertain whether participants had direct experience of the principles being operationalised in public involvement activities.

All these principles are in keeping with Barod's principles for public involvement, meaning they had already been incorporated by Barod into 'coffee shop conversations'.

5.7.2 Methods

Although those not involved in policy-making knew little to nothing about the process, they did have thoughts about how people like them could try to influence policy-making through campaigns or direct action to bring issues to politicians' attention.

When how they thought policy-makers *should* involve them, they had plenty of suggestions (see Table 5.8). These are reported in detail due to their importance in checking that the design of CSC responds to their suggestions.

Policy insiders suggested:

- Drawing up a plan of stakeholder groups and asking for invitations to go and meet with them
- Building a list of key informants and trusted intermediaries and asking them the best way to involve them
- Understand communities and how to communicate with them
- Ask what would help make involvement a successful process for them
- Tell people they don't *have* to respond in the structure of the consultation
- Approach interest groups directly
- Check the questions you ask are in language that people will understand

Table 5.8   Outsiders' suggestions of how they should be involved

Fieldwork	Comment	Relevance to CSC design
CI2	Don't ask 'what do you think of this?' The questions need to be focused to get a useful answer, but not leading questions, not manipulative questions. But a focused question, not an open comment section. You need useful opinion, not just sounding off.	Reflect whether questions may have a role.
CI3	A website? Maybe that would help? Not trying to think of the right answer. Try to target the people where you think you may get a sitting audience, like the libraries and community centres. Or do a roadshow maybe. Some sort of van that visits communities and sits in the local care park and you can go. I just think that it's somewhere people don't feel too intimidated by, it's not too formal. I'm just thinking they have these vans that go round supermarket carparks and they just go in and can pick up leaflets or speak about what's on their minds.	Taking part to be easy to accommodate within everyday life. Avoid formality. Reflect on questions/ questioning.
CI4	So, say you have an opinion and you feel pretty strongly about something and you want to express your opinions and your voices about this issue, you can't do that by answering consultation questions. It's important to talk to a lot of people, to see things from a different perspective.	Different perspectives. Allows expression of own opinion
CAE video, 2015	It's better in a group because you bounce ideas off each other. Don't have an interviewer who is just asking questions and putting you on a spot. Or feel you have to give the 'right' answer to. Have a bridge between the public and policy people	Reflect about group. Reflect on questions. Reflect on 'right' answer.
W2	Not someone stopping you and interviewing you and putting you on the spot. I like a good honest debate. Don't use referendums. They are expensive and complicated. Make it easy, informal, and something that might happen in everyday life. They need to listen to People First, or they won't be listening to people with learning disabilities.	Reflect on questions. Is CSC about debate? Everyday-ness. Diversity. Third Sector role.

5.7.3 Insights from I3

This participant had most experience of participatory consultations and public involvement. They described an occasion where a trusted community leader arranged and hosted a meeting in a style familiar to members of their community, where quite

different concerns and solutions were raised from the meeting with the same people organised by civil servants. Other successful experiences of reaching 'beyond the usual suspects' had included making sure they did not wear a suit when going to meet people who had previous bad experiences of authority figures. They noted that it was important to take the lead from people themselves. For example, when working with LGBT+ young people, many had said they wanted to take part online in a moderated setting because of past experiences of discrimination and marginalisation in group settings. When working with Roma families and Irish Travellers, the work had been organised by a community leader, and they had been invited by the community to attend and observe a meeting facilitated by the community leader.

This participant also spoke of the importance not just of reaching out but of finding out what people's priorities are before deciding how to carry out a consultation.

5.7.4 Insights about Barod's 'coffee shop conversations'

Participants from I3 and I5 were aware of 'coffee shop conversations' and those taking part in the conversational interviews had just taken part in one. All those who stayed were White and had professional roles.

- The informality made it easier to speak, because "things just come out when chatting" (CI2) and "it's very informal which makes it easier to just speak" (CI3).
- People talked about feeling less guarded as they did not feel they would be judged, for example: "If you are sitting round a table with a chairperson…you are bound to feel a bit wary of what you'll say and what others will think of you, and it will influence what you say and don't say." (CI3). One reflected that they had "talked naturally, from the gut" during the 'coffee shop conversation' but "now I know it's a research interview, so I'm trying to rationalise it before I open my mouth" (CI4).
- The ordinariness of the activity meant "it didn't feel like doing public involvement", so they had been happy to oblige by agreeing to meet. One participant (CI4) commented that they'd have said no if they'd been invited to a focus group, but they were happy to talk over a coffee.
- The space in which the CSC takes place is important. One person noted "If we'd met somewhere I'd not been before, it might have been more stilted, and maybe you'd think what are the right answers a bit more" (CI3). Meeting somewhere familiar was an important part of not feeling on display but "part of the furniture" (CAE video, 2015).

It is important to remember that people from only four of the conversations run by Barod chose to stay. No-one had to give a reason, but some of the people said research sounded too formal. It is possible others did not stay because they had not enjoyed the 'coffee shop conversation'. This means the feedback may be biased towards those who enjoyed the method.

5.8 Summary of findings

Caution is needed in using these findings as only a small number of policy world insiders were selected, and the small number of ordinary citizens self-selected and belong to a similar demographic. Nevertheless, the findings from this chapter have value in and of themselves, given the paucity of empirical research about this topic. Accordingly, they are summarised in 5.8.1. The focus of this thesis, however, is the design of CSC, therefore these findings are summarised in 5.8.2. These summary findings are then discussed in relation to the conclusions from the Knowledge Review in 5.8.3.

5.8.1 General findings

- There are four stages in the policy-making process where public involvement could occur (5.3.1). Of these, the best suited for widespread public involvement are the start as part of understanding the social issue, and the end as part of final checks that the policy is right (5.3.3).
- The main reasons for public involvement are pragmatic, either to get the policy right (insiders) or because it seems common sense (outsiders) (5.3.2).
- Civil servants have an important role in making sure the detail of a policy will work, even though Ministers set the policy direction (5.3.4).
- Evidence is important to policy insiders, although there is not always agreement what constitutes evidence (5.3.5).
- People who had experience of public involvement (as members of the public, Third Sector, or civil servants) were unsure whether Welsh Government listen. They felt that involvement was on Welsh Government's terms with Welsh Government framing both the social issue and the possible solutions (5.4.2).
- The biggest barrier for others was simply not knowing they could be involved, or how to be involved (5.3.6, 5.4.3).
- There was a general cynicism about whether Welsh Government listen, and a distaste for cronyism which was seen as rife (5.3.3, 5.5.1, 5.6.1).

- Additional barriers included impenetrable language of consultation documents, past bad experiences, and a perception that policy-making is Cardiff-centric (5.4.3).
- The policy consequence of only hearing from a limited pool of people with similar experiences was described as policy that does not work (5.5.2).
- The Third Sector has a legitimate role in speaking on behalf of others, but this cannot be conflated with hearing from ordinary people themselves (5.4.3, 5.6.2, 5.6.3).
- For public involvement, and by extension CSC, to be acceptable to ordinary citizens, it needs to be open, inclusive, accessible, and remove the barriers noted above (5.7.1).
- Barod's version of 'coffee shop conversations' had some positive features, namely informality, not feeling they would be judged, it feeling a very ordinary activity, and it being in a familiar space (5.7.4).

5.8.2 Findings relating to CSC design

In relation to the design of CSC, the key findings were:

- The most strategic point for involvement is in shaping the definition of the social issue itself (5.3)
- In 2015 at least, there were serious flaws in public involvement practices, only some of which can be addressed by a new method (5.4)
- There is an urgent and important need to broaden involvement. This needs to be done in a way that does not make people feel they need to become a different sort of person to who they are (5.5)
- Taking part needs to be rewarding in of itself (5.6)
- It needs to be clear that CSC is 'just' offering an opportunity to be consulted, not to actively engage in policy-making (5.7).

5.8.3 Discussion of findings in relation to the Knowledge Review

The Knowledge Review concluded, based on Clarkson (1994) and Mitchell et al. (1997), that ordinary citizens in Wales are legitimate stakeholders even if not currently directly impacted by social care policy (4.2.3). However, for this to be meaningful, ordinary citizens need to recognise themselves as stakeholders and know how to exercise their rights as stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997; Scott, 2014). The research reported in this chapter indicates that ordinary citizens do not routinely recognise themselves as

stakeholders or know they could be involved (5.3.6, 5.4.3). Those who felt they should have a voice because of what they know were largely unaware how to get involved (5.6.2). If Welsh Government wants ordinary citizens to engage, then awareness of a right to be involved and practical information about how to get involved needs improving.

The Knowledge Review used Furnari (2018) to argue for the potential relevance and explanatory power of organisational fields in relation to policy-making. The findings in this chapter strengthen this argument. For example, participants talked about involvement being on Welsh Government terms, with Welsh Government framing the social issue and the possible solutions. This is what might be expected if Welsh Government were at the core of the organisational field of policy-making. In addition, barriers identified by participants such as impenetrable language and alien culture could be explained using Scott (1995) and McLaughlin (2009) if policy-making is understood as orientated towards field insiders and ordinary citizens are organisational field outsiders. Feeling like outsiders is congruent with the cynicism of ordinary citizens about whether 'people like them' are listened to. Taking this argument further is left to future research.

The Knowledge Review used the literatures described in 4.4.1 to conclude that 'evidence' has a particular meaning in policy-making, drawn from its association with evidence based policy-making (EBPM) and privileging 'objective' and statistical research over qualitative research. Research reported in this chapter confirms the association between 'evidence' and 'objective' research in the minds of both policy insiders and ordinary citizens. The current heuristic importance of 'evidence' (e.g. What Works Team, 2018) means that CSC will need to have the signifiers of being 'robust evidence' in order to be taken seriously. These include careful documentation of the method, a rationale for who is selected, and a style of writing associated with 'evidence'. The privileged status of 'evidence' is challenged by the importance attached by some ordinary citizens to 'common sense' (5.3.2) in policy-making.

The Knowledge Review noted in 4.6 and 4.7 that Wales has strong working relationships between Welsh Government and the Third Sector (e.g. Jones and Cross, 2017). The research reported in this chapter identifies the Third Sector as having a legitimate role in speaking for others and having a major role in speaking for and broker involvement of their members (5.6.3). However, participants made it clear that involving the Third Sector is not a substitute for hearing directly from ordinary citizens (5.6.4). Reasons given include not all citizens are members of Third Sector organisations, each person has

a unique perspective that may be lost when they are spoken-for, and organisations may have different vested interests from their individual members.

The Knowledge Review considered the literature about policy-making in 4.3 (e.g. HM Treasury, 2020a; Exley, 2020; Parkhurst, 2017; Lowe et al., 2020) and concluded that New Public Management (NPM) was inherently inadequate (4.3.1), while policy design was more compatible with understanding social issues as complex adaptive systems (4.3.2). Nothing in the research reported in this chapter is incompatible with this conclusion. The research identified four stages in the Welsh Government policy-making process where public involvement could occur (5.3.1). If policy-making is framed in terms of design, it may be appropriate to frame the four stages for public involvement as user research as part of Discovery (ie identifying the problem), being part of a co-design team (namely the middle two stages, ie making sense of the information collected during Discovery, and then designing possible solutions), and user feedback (i.e. scrutiny of proposed solution). This reframing is compatible with the experiences of ordinary citizens (5.4) and their reflections on how people *should* be able to get involved (5.7). This adds to an understanding of public involvement by clarifying that there are different purposes and therefore different approaches needed at different points within the policy-making process. Policy design approaches suggest that an effective policy relies on an adequate understanding of the social issue. This makes it strategic to learn how ordinary citizens understand and experience the issue.

This chapter's findings indicate that Third Sector organisations may be involved in framing the social issue but the involvement of ordinary citizens does not routinely occur until later. Strategically, this is an argument for designing CSC to support the early Discovery phase of policy design.

5.9   Informing the development of CSC

The focus of this thesis is the development of CSC. Section 5.9 draws together the learning from the first part of the thesis that informs this development work.

5.9.1   Substantiating Barod's previous work

Barod's thinking about public involvement (2.3) appears to be substantiated by a combination of the knowledge review and this chapter's findings. A small number of 'the usual suspects' are actively involved in policy-making. Some are increasingly

disillusioned and losing interest. A number would want to be involved or more involved but find barriers in their way. By far the majority of ordinary citizens appear disconnected, disinterested or cynical. They are not involved, and not interested in public involvement in Welsh Government policy-making.

The methods closest to 'coffee shop conversations' (focus groups and World Café) have features that Barod considers are barriers to the involvement of people with learning disabilities. Formal public consultation processes and documentation are inaccessible to most, not just people with learning disabilities.

5.9.2 How do these findings compare to the civil service guidance and rules for engagement?

The guidance and rules for civil servants (4.6.5) spell out clear commitments to the National Principles for Public Engagement's meaning of public engagement. There is little evidence from 4.7 and this chapter is that these commitments are being met. Rather, the evidence indicates the 2015 picture of public involvement is closer to the research meaning of 'public engagement', ie informing the public (Health and Care Research Wales, 2020, p.2). It is equally clear that the Welsh Government's policy commitments to involvement (4.8.2) are not being met, although there is some evidence of novel approaches that show Welsh Government's commitment to change (4.8.1). The development of CSC needs to take account of policy commitments and current practices and support Welsh Government to fulfil its public involvement policy commitments.

5.9.3 What is the most strategic part of the policy-making process for use of CSC?

Once a social issue has been framed[50] there is little role for the ordinary citizen beyond responding to this framing. Strategically, therefore, it is important to be part of this framing process. This means CSC would be best designed for this stage. Often, this happens as part of developing political and manifesto commitments, meaning it happens before civil servants are involved. This suggests CSC might be attractive to those seeking to inform manifesto development, but that would be a marketing consideration rather than a design consideration.

In a New Public Management (NPM) approach, the framing may be informed by an evidence review. This means CSC would need to create research-quality evidence. In

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[50] Framing is how the issue is understood, that it is seen as problematic, and that it is believed to be in need of policy intervention

policy design, framing the social issue is part of the discovery phase which often involves user research. CSC could become a powerful user research method. Where complexity approaches are used, CSC could contribute to collective intelligence gathering about the system within which the issue exists.

There is little evidence of any involvement of ordinary citizens in framing the social issue. Findings in this chapter suggest this can lead to policy proposals and policies that make no sense to ordinary citizens.

Currently, formal public consultation takes place at the end as part of the final scrutiny. CSC could have a role in identifying factors not previously considered if there has been inadequate public involvement earlier in the process.

5.9.4 A consultation method that generates 'evidence'?

Bell and Newby talk about "the social production of what passes among members for knowledge about that phenomenon" (1977, p.19). There is an argument that information can only meaningfully be described as 'reliable evidence' if the person receiving the information construes it as such. A pragmatic stance in the current context is that 'reliable evidence' is anything perceived as 'reliable evidence' by policy-makers. In summary, this probably means: What people say in consultations is not taken seriously as evidence (4.2.5). Introducing the word 'evidence' switched conversation to statistics (5.3.5). Qualitative research is often still seen as poorer quality evidence than statistics (4.2.5), but one can only hope that as policy design and complexity approaches gain traction this will change. These two approaches ask 'why'-type questions, which are the questions commonly associated with qualitative research.

There is much potential for public involvement and high-quality qualitative research to blur into each other in terms of methods and quality of findings (Locock and Boaz, 2019). However, as Locock and Boaz note, ethics review places a straight dividing line between 'is research' and 'is not research' (ibid., p.415). This is, of course, only an unavoidable issue if the researcher is based in a university or wishes to publish in a peer reviewed journal. For those of us placed outside the academy it may be sufficient to be transparent about methods, including ethics, when working alongside or engaging with ordinary citizens on social policy relevant issues.

Key features of qualitative research that are inevitably lacking in public consultations are:

- Selection or sampling strategy
- Appropriate choice of data analysis methods

Both are intrinsic to the value of the findings, and therefore need to be designed into CSC.

5.9.5 Why do ordinary citizens need to get involved?

There is fortunate convergence between people's desire to talk on their own terms (5.7) and the needs of collective intelligent design (4.3.2). The value of diversity of mental models for understanding a complex adaptive system is established by Ozesmi and Ozesmi (2004) and Toader (2019). Allowing people to speak of a social issue on their own terms allows them to speak using their personal mental model. If people then self-organise their own notes to clarify how they conceptualise the issue, more is learned about how those people understand the system. It is nothing as sophisticated as a cognitive map (Ozesmi and Ozesmi, 2004), but could have value in lieu of concept maps.

This line of reasoning is foreshadowed in the 'coffee shop conversations' and CSC16, but only becomes an explicit part of the design in the final stages of developing CSC21. It is an exciting line for future development.

5.9.6 Should CSC be a 'co' or a 'con'?

Should CSC be some form of co-design, co-creation or co-production? Or should it be a consultation? The policy imperative in Wales is for the 'co's (4.8), and 'co's have the potential to be powerful tools for epistemic justice and 'alongsider' working relationships in policy design and complexity approaches. Weighed against this needs to be the cynicism of the general population (5.5, 5.6), negative experiences of past involvement (5.4) and desire for methods that can form part of everyday life (5.7.2).

Arguably, Welsh Government policy-making operates like an organisational field with a "common meaning system" (Scott, 1995, p.95). Perhaps, until there is openness to diversity of mental models and skills to work as a team without a shared mental model, the 'co's are better saved for those who are already able to operate using the field's shared mental model. Once there is evidence that ordinary citizens involved in the 'co's believe they are in 'alongsider' relationships, once there is evidence that their involvement is making a difference, and once a way has been found to generate a common meaning system that does not privilege those with professional roles in policy-

making, then it will be time to focus on broadening involvement in the 'co's. This will take some time and seismic changes, potentially via the mechanism suggested by Furnari (4.3.3) and potentially after a period of chaos (4.3.4).

The need for a diversity of perspectives and knowledges about the social issue cannot wait for that. Therefore, CSC can be of most strategic benefit by finding a way to make information from a diversity of perspectives and experiences available to those who are engaged in the 'co's.

Despite a commitment to epistemic justice, this would make CSC an example of people being sources of information (Fricker, 2017) and towards the bottom of the ladder of participation (Arnstein, 1969). As part of making sure CSC is a 'con' and not an actual con, it would need to be explicit about its role in gathering intelligence for others to use rather than offering a direct role in shaping policy.

5.9.7 In-method reward

Barod's current approach (2.5) already has in-method rewards. People are paid. People get the refreshments of their choosing in the venue of their choosing. People are given the opportunity to talk about a social issue on their own terms. There is honesty that this is a one-off and one-way interaction. People can ask to be sent a copy of Barod's report but no promises are made that policy-makers will read it or act on the information. These features contribute to valuing them as knowers and valuing their knowledge in a way that may, in reality, demonstrate more epistemic justice than some work that gives the outward appearance of being a 'co'.

5.9.8 The context in which CSC will be used

The fieldwork was conducted in 2015 and it is now 2021. This makes it hard to be sure about the context in which CSC will be used. Although there have been changes in the Welsh policy-making context, much has stayed the same. The style of writing of public consultation documents has not changed. The reliance on people finding out for themselves about policy work has not changed. Engagement with a Third Sector membership organisation is still the route by which civil servants reach out, and by which ordinary citizens can learn about opportunities to speak about their lives and experiences.

What has changed and continues to change are the structures whereby different stakeholders can contribute to social care policy. In 2021, Wales has Regional Partnership Boards, Social Value Forums and Local Service Boards, all of which require 'citizen' representation in addition to statutory and Third Sector representation. There is some evidence in the literature that a move to more open policy-making has opened these structures to a greater diversity of experts, including people who could be described as 'experts by experience'. There is no evidence of opening up to a greater diversity of ordinary citizens. Neither is there any evidence that the disconnect has been bridged between the mental models used within those structures and the mental models of ordinary citizens who use social care services.

To achieve the goal of broadening public involvement beyond 'the usual suspects', I would argue that three things need to happen:

- people need to **know** there is the opportunity and know how to use it
- people need to **care** enough to engage
- the reward for engaging needs to be worth the **effort**

5.9.9 Key considerations for developing CSC

As stated in 5.8, from the findings in this chapter, the key considerations are:

- The most strategic point for involvement is in shaping the definition of the social issue itself (5.3)
- In 2015 at least, there were serious flaws in public involvement practices, only some of which can be addressed by a new method (5.4)
- There is an urgent and important need to broaden involvement. This needs to be done in a way that does not make people feel they need to become a different sort of person to who they are (5.5)
- Taking part needs to be rewarding in of itself (5.6)
- It needs to be clear that CSC is 'just' offering an opportunity to be consulted, not to actively engage in policy-making (5.7).

From the knowledge review, the most important additional considerations for the design are that it needs to allow people to bring their own mental maps to the social issue, and it needs to be developed in a way that is seen as generating high quality evidence. This means CSC needs a design that demonstrates the value of the evidence it generates. One way to do this is to meet academic research standards of evidence. For a

consultation method, this suggests that indicating its value in devising a systematic approach to sampling and giving careful consideration to fieldwork and analysis.

As described in 4.5.1, CLEAR is a quick way to check the quality of involvement. It means:

C	**Can** people do it?
L	Will people **like** doing it?
E	Are people **enabled** to do it?
A	Are people **asked** to do it?
R	Do people who take part get a **response**?

Barod's 'coffee shop conversations' already deliver the first four things, judging by feedback in 5.7.4. There is little that a method can do to make sure that the fifth think happens. That is why the in-method reward is so important.

5.9.10 Should the research proceed to the development stage?

At this point in the design process, a decision needs to be made on two grounds:

- Is enough known to proceed? In other words, is it time to conclude the discovery phase?
- Is it worth proceeding? In other words, is this a problem that can be solved by design?

In my judgement, there is now a sufficient evidence base from which to move to the development phase. The judgement is more challenging for the second ground. It is clear that a new method of itself will not solve the problem of social care policy that is not working. However, it is equally clear that the problem of social care policy-making cannot be solved without a new approach to public involvement. On that basis, the decision was made to proceed to the development phase.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter extends what is known by reporting and discussing research findings about how Welsh Government make policy and attitudes towards public involvement. It also considers the implications of this and the previous chapters for the development of CSC.

The chapter begins by describing how the data were analysed. It includes coding tables from the first analysis to evidence the link between the data, the findings, and the discussion of findings.

The findings are first presented and discussed in relation to the Welsh Government policy-making process and personal experiences of public involvement. Important findings include how little those outside the policy-making world know about how policy is made, and the considerable barriers to getting involved. One barrier is the seeming disconnect between the language and culture of the policy world and the languages and cultures of ordinary citizens.

The chapter then moves to presenting and discussing findings about perceptions and attitudes about public involvement. There is a conflicting message from ordinary citizens. On the one hand, cynicism about whether Welsh Government would listen to them and a belief that people who get involved are usually those who want something or who like the sound of their own voice. On the other hand, there is a belief that Welsh Government needs to hear from ordinary citizens because of what ordinary citizens know.

The findings from this chapter have general relevance to academic knowledge about policy-making in addition to relevance for developing CSC. Ordinary citizens may be stakeholders, but this only has meaning of they are aware of this and know how to exercise stakeholder rights. The findings indicate that 'evidence' has a special status to both policy insiders and ordinary citizens, making it important for findings from CSC to be perceived as robust evidence even while challenging the status given to 'evidence'. The Knowledge Review described three approaches to policy-making: systems, design, and organisational fields. In terms of systems and design, the findings support the argument that complexity and co-design are more appropriate than approaches that treat social issues as complicated and exclude ordinary citizens from the design team. In particular, the findings indicate that the most strategic point in the process for public involvement is in defining the social issue and not in responding to policy-makers' framing of and response to the issue. The findings also confirm that the organisational fields approach is relevant and that research exploring this further might be highly fruitful.

The chapter then draws together information from Chapters 1 to 5 that is needed to inform the development of CSC. The key decisions are made that CSC should be a consultation method, that taking part in a CSC conversation needs to be reward in and

of itself, and that it is appropriate to proceed to the next part of the research – the development of CSC.

The next chapter describes and reports the research that developed the method from 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC16, the iteration handed back to Barod for real world testing and developing.

Part 2

Development of a

public consultation method

Chapter 6   Developing CSC16

6.1   Introduction

The previous chapter extends what is known by reporting and discussing research findings about how Welsh Government make policy and attitudes towards public involvement. It also considers the implications of this and the previous chapters for the development of CSC.

This chapter describes and reports the research that developed the method from 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC16, the iteration handed back to Barod for real-life testing and developing.

The research and design work in this chapter does not start with a blank sheet for the method or its methodology, as it builds on the earlier work of Barod. There were already some non-negotiables, such as everyone being paid for their time, making notes that everyone in the conversation could see, and going over the notes together before finishing the conversation (2.4).

The chapter begins with a brief recap of the CAE work (6.2).

The findings in this chapter comprise the CAE (6.3 to 6.7), additional analysis of CAE data (6.8), and work to strengthen the theoretical foundations of the method (6.9).

The chapter then moves to a discussion of the CSC method, including a comparison with two other conversation-based methods, focus groups and World Café (6.10).

Section 6.11 describes the iteration of CSC, CSC16, that was handed back to Barod for collaborative field testing. This section also notes some of the challenges presented by the move to collaborative field testing.

The conclusion (6.12) summarises the chapter, noting that the CAE work had to stop before it was completed.

6.2 Recap of the CAE work

Extensive details of the CAE work are given in 3.8, and it is not proposed to repeat the detail here. However, most of Table 3.8 is reproduced here as Table 6.1 to provide an overview of the fieldwork that forms the basis of this chapter.

Table 6.1   CAE activities to develop CSC16 (adapted from Table 3.8)

Data identifier	What	Who	Where	Tangible data
Pre-meeting (2015)	First meeting: becoming a group	All	Bistro, Anglesey	Audio recording, transcript
CAE video (2015)	Videoed CSC	All	Café, Gwynedd	Video and audio recordings, A3 pad notes, partial transcript
Helen (2015) Rachel (2015) Ellie (2015) Diane (2015) Anne (2015)	Individual accounts of CSC	Each individual	Unknown	Text
Half-day (2015)	Half day workshop	All	University 1	Audio, transcript, flipchart and post-its
Full-day (2015)	Full day workshop	Initially all; one person left during the morning	University 2	Audio, transcript, flipchart and post-its

The CAE involved collaborative analysis. The fruit of this analysis has been treated as both findings and data. It is findings in so far as there was agreement about the interpretation of the data. It is data in so far as it was used as part of an additional, later, solo interpretation and analysis of everything from the CAE. This approach was agreed with the other members of the team on the basis that the life circumstances of two people did not permit them to continue at that point. If everyone had been able to continue, it would have been more appropriate to apply for an ethical amendment to allow continued collaborative work.

6.3   Description of the videoed CSC

This is described at length as it was our shared experience of CSC, and as such is central to the CAE work. Our CSC was about Welsh Government policy-making and public involvement in policy-making.

The video and audio recording lasted 1:43:23. The equipment was switched on shortly after the drinks and cakes had arrived, and after everyone had been reminded of the purpose of the video and asked if they were happy for me to start recording. By this time, we had been together for about 15 minutes. The first recorded minutes involved conversation about the cake, the weather, and stories of a recent kayaking expedition. At 8:20 I said I guessed that was a good day for the conversation as it was elections the next day, and shortly after asked if anyone had any ideas how Welsh Government made policy. That led to a 10 second pause before Diane laughed and said, "It's a mystery". The next few minutes (to 19:45) involved the women working out what they did know about policy and politics, with occasional prompts or implied questions like "I wonder where civil servants fit in". There were a lot of pauses, looking away, focusing on cake, and occasionally joking.

At 19:45, Rachel started to talk about consultations she knew about, which led to a conversation about local hospital consultations. After a natural lull at 29:18 (12 second pause), I mentioned the Senedd petitions which led to questions about what sort of things could be debated, which led to Helen remembering the plastic bag tax. The conversation diverted to environmental issues, then from 34:55 to 39:06 there was a flurry of questions to me about how they could get something debated or raised in the Senedd. For the next 33.04 minutes, the conversation followed a similar pattern to that in Figure 6.1. It ranged across power, who should have a voice, how to make sure people are not excluded, that politicians cannot understand everyday problems, and their thoughts about social issues that needed better policies.

Occasionally after an extended diversion, I tried to steer the conversation back to the topic of policy-making. For example, at 52:46 after a long conversation about schools, I intervened by saying "This whole coffee shop conversation came about as a way to get a better way for politicians to know things like that". For the next few minutes, the women all talked about past coffee shop conversations, how they'd felt about them and what they thought about the idea. They then segued into a longer conversation about not trusting politicians, poor financial decisions, and wondering how politicians prioritise between youth work and roads.

Figure 6.1   Sample text from CAE video

Anne: Yes, if you go on the Welsh Government website, there's a tab that says consultations…

Ellie: Oh, OK

Anne: And you just go there and

Helen: mmm consultations

Anne: There's a whole list and you can sign up to get emailed every week, every month

Ellie: and that presupposes that you've got internet access and that you are au fait with this, because that cuts out a lot of elderly people doesn't it.

Anne: Yes

Rachel: yes, but I mean it is a very positive thing

/Ellie: it is. Yes, it is/

Diane: Because you can say what you think … supposedly directly to the government

Rachel: In a way so it is quite a good thing. Whether they listen or not, I don't know, but at least you can say something. And it's a lot easier than just writing to your MP or whatever because that takes a lot of determination. But to do it in a consultation, that's easier.

Ellie: It is, but it's a problem. It's the best we've got. But it does cut out elderly people, and unemployed people and people who might not have access to the internet.

Rachel: Can you ask them to send you one?

Anne: You could ask them, but how would you know they existed?

Ellie: I'm just trying to think which groups it would favour and which it wouldn't in North Wales. Like people with learning disabilities.

Helen: A lot of people use the library for the internet. I've noticed that. You'd be surprised. They just go in to check their emails, honestly, they just use that service. I suppose like you said, Anne, community groups would publicise things that were relevant to them, to their community. And the word could spread quite quickly, that it's important to us.

Ellie: Do things like that get reported in the local newspapers?

Anne: I don't know.

Helen: So say you have an opinion, and you feel pretty strongly about something, and you want to express your opinions and your voice about this issue, so you'd be able to do that them wouldn't you.

(Lines 517-547, Transcript, CAE video)

At 1:12:00, a friend spotted us and came over to talk, remaining out of camera shot. Although the camera remained running the content was not transcribed. Ellie restarted

the conversation with "So, we were talking about who they should consult. We got grassroots people and groups".

At 1:30:25 Helen asked the time, and we began to move to talking about what happened in the CAE after this video session. The waitress then began to clear the table at 1:37:02, so I began to pack away. Only later did I realise that in my haste we had not completed an essential part of the CSC – going over the notes together (Fig. 6.2).

Figure 6.2   A3 notes from CAE video 2015
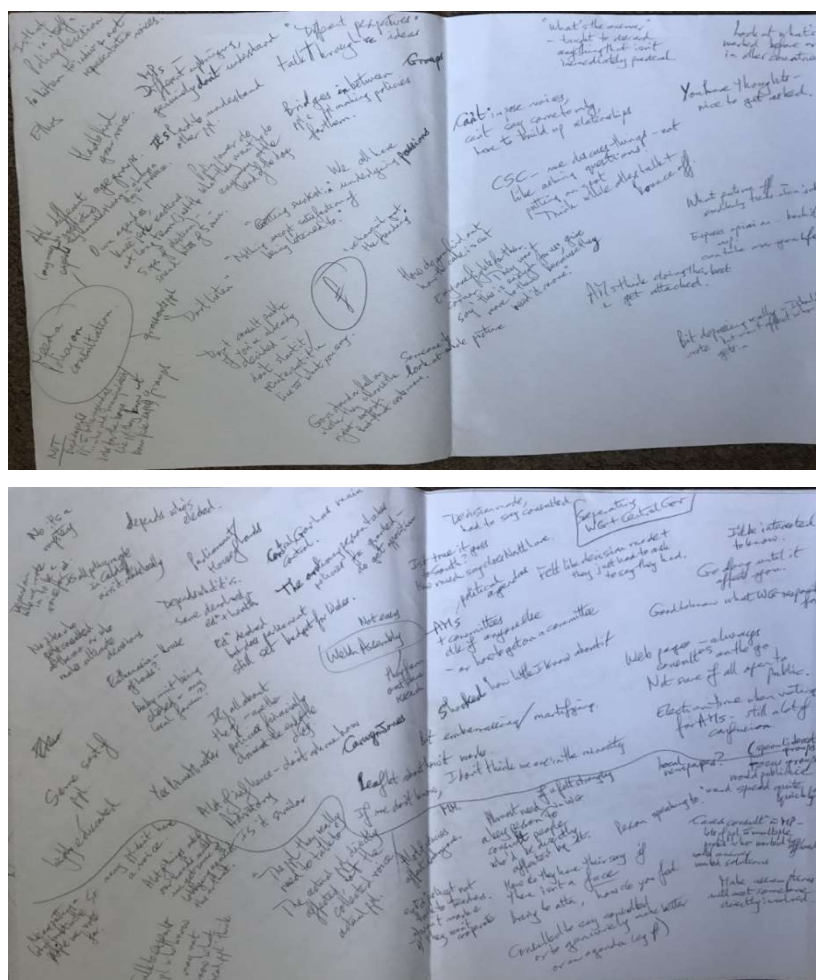
Compared to all previous 'coffee shop conversations', I had to provide far more information because it was a topic that people had not thought about and about which they knew little. Watching back the video, I can see signs of my internal struggle to act natural while worrying whether I was doing the research right and, belatedly, whether working as a CAE team might damage our friendship. Despite this, there were enough elements of a 'normal' CSC for the CAE video to have provided a valuable shared experience on which to base our individual accounts of 'What is a coffee shop conversation?'.

6.4   Working individually

Each of the five women wrote their own account, each noticing and focusing on different features of CSC. The individual work was a central element of the CAE work, being an opportunity to generate data rather than move prematurely to collective discussion. For this reason, each person's account is described in detail.

Ellie combined her reflections on two pre-research 'coffee shop conversations' and the CAE video. She highlighted:

- Coffee, cake, chatting, and catching up with friends.
- The CSC is a social occasion, but with a focus on a given subject, so the chat is less varied and personal than in ordinary conversations with friends in a coffee shop.
- Being invited "makes you feel valued".
- The relaxed feel makes it less "daunting to throw things into the mix, or to ask something that you may be afraid sounds foolish!"
- A CSC requires people to trust each other.
- A certain amount of noise in the café "is necessary so that other café users aren't listening in to the conversation".
- Preference for a host that she knew.
- A host needs to know something about the subject, but not be "too directive or try to lead you in your thinking, but lets your thoughts evolve".
- A CSC gives you time to think as the conversation evolves, unlike being asked questions that need answering at the point they are asked.
- Takes reasoning skills and ability to articulate thoughts in ordinary language. This would make it difficult for some groups of people, including those who find it hard to focus or who struggle with language.
- It must involve a cross-section of the community "so that the outcomes do not become biased".
- It is easier to take part *and* gives more "opportunity for expression of deeper thought" than interviews or debates.

Helen highlighted the emotional challenge of the CAE video compared to the previous 'coffee shop conversation' she had taken part in. While some of this was associated with the videoing and her being part of the research team, a lot was to do with the subject. She wrote things about the topic of the CAE video that she, perhaps, had not felt able or

ready to say on the day. As with Ellie, Helen highlighted the coffee, cake and it being a social occasion. Helen also highlighted:

- Needing a venue that was comfortable but with fewer distractions and noise than at the pre-meeting.
- Feeling she had nothing of value to say.
- The impact of her strong Welsh cultural heritage and being a first-language Welsh speaker on how she felt talking about politics in English with a group of women who were not born and bred locally.
- Feeling liberated to speak about issues of injustice that concerned her.
- It had been a "slightly negative experience" taking part in this CSC, although "overall the whole experience has been a very positive one" as it helped her find and use her voice.
- If someone she hadn't known had invited her "I most probably would have declined".

Rachel's account drew on a pre-research 'coffee shop conversation' and the CAE video. She highlighted:

- Meeting friends in a coffee shop for good coffee and cake, but with an added aspect.
- General chat and catching up before discussing a topic.
- The facilitator making notes on blank paper.
- People had "different passions and interests" that led to interesting discussion.
- Free coffee and cake were "a significant attraction" as was "the opportunity to do something without the children… and exercise my brain".
- CSC are not confidential, as anyone in the café can hear what is said.
- Conversation developed, and new ideas "would pop into mind and the different participants would prove new thoughts".
- Relaxed atmosphere.
- Importance of notes that are "written up well" and "genuinely express the participants' opinions".
- Social rules in group conversations limit the volume of one person's contribution, and conversations in general are not suitable for a "long, reasoned, thought-out argument".
- "If CSC were designed as a tool to encourage people to be pro-active, I think it would be a very effective one".

Rachel compared her CSC experience with a past consultation interview about home education. Both had involved coffee in a café and been conversational. In the interview "we felt that there was a desired result which we were not party to. There were right and wrong answers" and a feeling that the interviewer was not accurately recording their comments.

Diane noticed that there were more similarities than differences between a CSC and an ordinary conversation in a coffee shop. She chose to highlight a series of 'more than' statements rather than differences:

- More of a challenge, because of wondering what she could contribute.
- More of a single focus because there was a pre-arranged topic.
- More of a conscious interaction, because of the note-making and knowing that others would use the information from the notes.
- More mentally lively, because of finding "I could contribute to something I had no idea I had any part in".

Other points she highlighted were:
- The personal challenge of speaking in a group, and preference for one-to-one conversation
- The importance of a 'welcoming, safe and familiar coffee shop environment.
- Being drawn into the conversation, and as a result, ideas being drawn out
- It being good to see things from different perspectives.
- "This sort of conversation makes you feel that you have a voice, even if you have thought government policy-making has nothing to do with you".

Anne's (my) account highlighted:
- It is a conversation, which involves listening and reflecting.
- It isn't about lobbying or defending a position.
- Notes from a CSC is the equivalent for a policy-maker of them eavesdropping on a conversation.
- Videoing or audio-recording would destroy the informality and make it impossible to share looking at the notes at the end.
- "I feel I have no idea what a CSC is, because I do things intuitively without realising what I'm doing".
- What people say in meetings tends to be better argued but one-dimensional, whereas what they say in a CSC is messy, sometimes contradictory, and therefore more informative.

- It requires less motivation to go for free coffee with friends than go to an organised meeting.
- Paying underlines that we "need the input of the others in the conversations".
- What people say in a CSC is a social construct of that social interaction, but it has good-enough relevance for policy-making.

The summary of themes in Table 6.2 represents my perspective on the themes. As 6.6 will show, this is only one way to make sense of the individual accounts.

Table 6.2   Summary of topics and provisional themes

Provisional theme	Topic	Accounts in which it appears
Social	Cake	Ellie, Helen, Rachel, Diane
	Social occasion	Ellie, Helen, Rachel
	Importance of the right cafe	Ellie, Helen, Diane
	Relaxed, informal	Ellie
	Knowing each other, including knowing the host	Ellie, Helen
Conversation	Conversation evolves; space to think	Ellie, Rachel, Diane
	Conversation, not lobbying	Anne
Host and their roles	Importance of the right host	Ellie
	Importance of host in 'holding the space'	Ellie, Helen
	Importance of the notetaking	Rachel, Diane, Anne
Purpose	Focus on topic	Ellie, Helen, Rachel, Diane
	Free coffee with friends requires less motivation than a public meeting	Anne
	Equality and valuing people	Anne
Diversity	Importance of diversity across conversations	Ellie
	Importance of first language, culture	Helen
Affect	Emotional work	Helen, Diane
	Liberation of finding/using voice	Helen, Rachel, Diane
	Insecurities about value of contribution	Helen, Diane
	Importance of no right or wrong answers	Rachel
Limitations	Cafes are not confidential	Rachel
	Restrictions of group conversation	Rachel, Diane

In relation to The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Goffman, 1990a (1956)), Table 6.2 highlights the importance of setting ('the right café'), signifiers of the nature of the performance ('cake'), and the challenge of creating a back region performance when using a back region setting for consultation – i.e. for an activity associated with front region performance ('emotional work', 'insecurities about value of contribution').

(Lack of) confidentiality (Rachel, 2015) was not raised later in the CAE. However, it requires further consideration. Invitees control where and how the conversation happens, and in this way they have some control over how confidential the conversation is likely to be. When Barod was using 'coffee shop conversations' pre-research, more sensitive topics sometimes led to people suggesting more confidential spaces such a booths in cafes or going to their home. Going to a non-public space would always require risk-assessing, but the risks are mitigated if all those in the conversation already know each other well enough that this would not be first time in a non-public space together. It brings into question whether CSC is an appropriate method where a conversation is needed that is more confidential than the kind of conversation that routinely takes place in cafes.

6.5   The half-day workshop

We met for the morning in a seminar room in Bangor Business School, finishing with a light lunch. It was our first research activity at the university, and we all commented at the time or later that it changed the atmosphere, making the workshop feel more formal than our previous meetings. It was the first time we had seen each other's accounts, and our aim was to discuss them as the first stage of data analysis. Towards the end, I suggested we tried to make a list of the attributes of a good CSC host by writing our own thoughts on the paper tablecloth provided.

This workshop highlighted the importance of language and cultural heritage. As a Cymraes[51], Helen had felt inhibited in the CAE video because her first language has a 'different flow, different humour, everything. It's to do with something that's quite deep rooted in your culture, being Welsh, really' (Helen, Half-day, 2015). This led to a greater awareness of us all that 'it would be a terrible weakness of the whole thing if it was all done in English' (Helen, Half-day, 2015). This was considered particularly important for a CSC, because it is harder to play a full part in a conversation in a second language than to contribute to more formal public involvement events.

There was disagreement between Anne and Rachel over Anne's comment that a CSC was not for lobbying or defending a position, with Rachel arguing that it would be inappropriate to tell someone with strong opinions not to defend their position, and Anne arguing that lobbying and defending were better suited to meetings than conversations. They agreed that if someone was already actively involved in lobbying or speaking on an

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[51] A Welshwoman, defined by her Welsh culture, heritage and language

issue, then a different public involvement opportunity would probably be more appropriate. Equally, for anyone wanting to talk at greater length, or who already had an opinion that they wanted to share, a one-to-one conversation might be preferred to a group conversation.

However ordinary going for coffee might be, a CSC is 'not the sort of thing you normally do' (Diane, Half-day, 2015) so it is important to avoid the apprehension associated with not knowing exactly what to expect. Anne's casual 'it's just a coffee and chat' had been insufficient to allay apprehensions. This underlined the tension of how to reframe what is usually a front region activity as a back region activity. Anne felt an explicit verbal cue was needed that the performance would be back region; a naturally occurring back region performance would not need an explicit verbal cue (Goffman, 1990a (1956), p.77).

Meeting as friends was important because 'you haven't got any of that friction that you have with new people, where you're watching to see how quiet or dominant they are' (Rachel, Half-day, 2015). For Rachel, however, the occasion had been one of 'meeting as friends' which had framed it for her as a back region performance because she did not feel the need to monitor her own or other people's style of interaction (Goffman, 1990a (1956), p.110-111).

Two women thought they would have declined the invitation if they hadn't known the person inviting them. One wasn't sure they'd have had the confidence. One would have accepted but 'not in the similar spirit, I would just do it impersonally' (Rachel, Half-day, 2015). This flagged a potential flaw in the method, as so far Barod had relied on their extended and diverse social networks but would need to reach beyond those if CSC was to become an established method.

The manner of invitation mattered. A personal invitation made it feel that 'your voice is already established and important' (Helen, Half-day, 2015), and the strong pleasure at being 'asked what you think about something' (Diane, Half-day, 2015).

People had felt valued for the coffee and cake which was 'better than money!' (Ellie, Half-day, 2015), and their opinion being valued enough to be paid for their time was possibly more important than the money itself.

Due to time, the final 15 minutes of the workshop was spent writing individually about the qualities and role of 'the host', rather than discussing it as collectively. The clustering of the notes (Table 6.3) was done by Anne, not as a collaborative activity.

The notes within the personal qualities and skills clusters in Table 6.3 indicate the importance of the host in establishing the type of performance required and maintaining the performance as one of conversation rather than interview. In terms of the team enacting the performance, the host is very much team leader with the others as team-mates 'whose dramaturgical cooperation one is dependent upon in fostering a given definition of the situation' (Goffman, 1990a (1956), p.88).

Table 6.3   What makes a good host?

Collated individual notes	Clusters
Maybe same age group as participants? Diverse	Demographics
Interested in CSC Able to fully understand the approach Knows the subject	Knowledge
Grounded; confident in themselves; able to 'hold a safe space' Encourager; supportive; affirming Enjoys conversations (and coffee and cake!) Open and friendly Good sense of humour Genuinely wants to listen and know what others think Empathic; concerned for needs and feelings of all participants Orderly Thoughtful; self-reflective	Personal qualities
Gives space so others can take the conversational lead Able to build trust of group and put people at ease Able to include everyone (not letting any one person take over); ability to draw out anyone who might not speak readily Know when to speak, when to add information and when to be quiet Able to stimulate thought/conversation Able to engage and bring out the best in people Able to handle difficulties Able to reflect back after each stage Good listener Observant Able to hold lots of different perspectives as well as own Clear instructions for practicalities, location/parking - expected time taken Good manager Good communicator Can doodle key points accurately	Skills

Table 6.3 (continued) What makes a good host?

Collated individual notes	Clusters
Ethical	Values
Guides without restricting/controlling; able to balance giving info and not imposing it on group	
Able to lead without being too dominant	
Respect for opinions	
Non-judgemental	
A lover of people!	

6.6 Homework!

The half-day workshop had been the first time we had seen each other's accounts. We each took home a full set and reflected on them. Ellie, Diane and Anne took this a stage further, doing some individual analysis on paper that was brought to the full-day workshop. An example of Ellie's work (Fig. 6.3) and a photograph of Diane's work (Fig. 6.4) are included. Anne's work involved spreadsheets and is not included here as her analytic work is already over-represented in this chapter.

Figure 6.3   Example of Ellie's analytic work
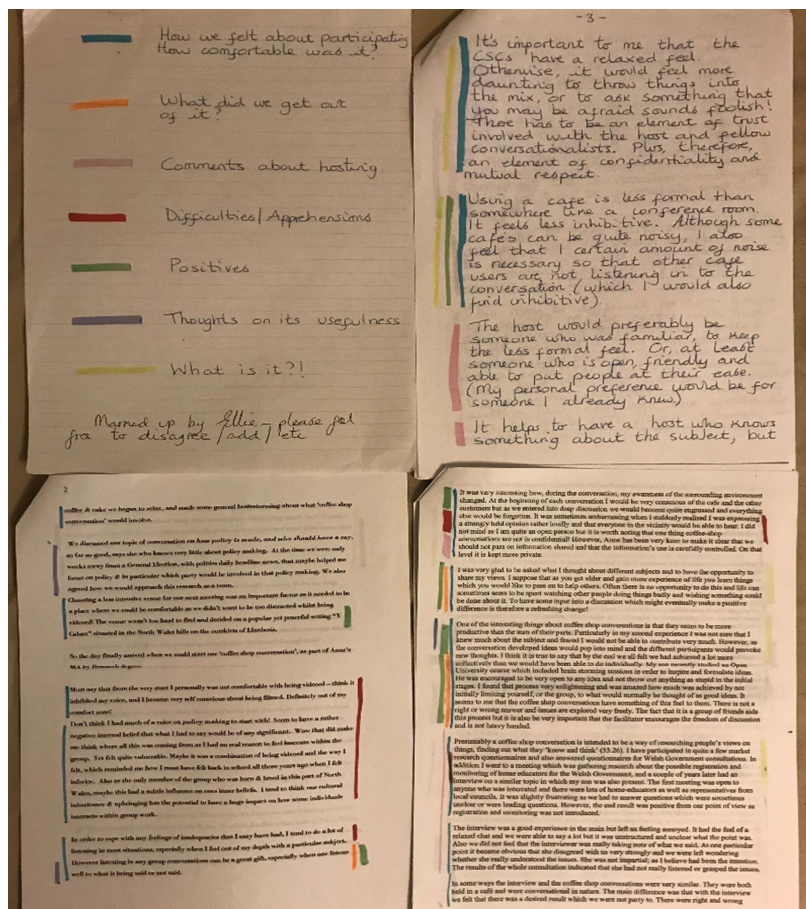
Figure 6.4   Diane's analytic work
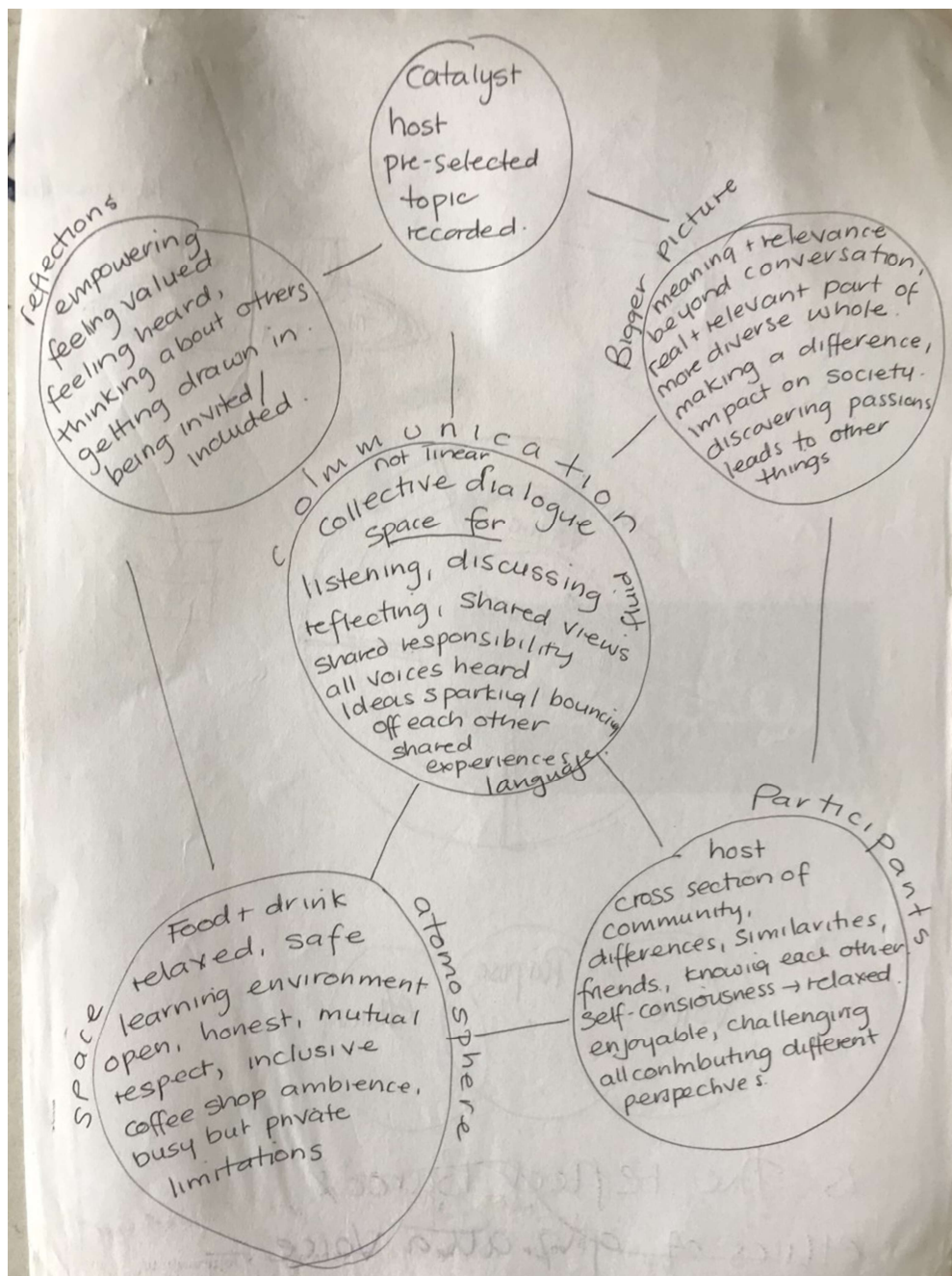
What is notable at this stage is that Ellie, Diane and Anne all took approaches to analysis that reflect something of who they are. Ellie is grounded and proactive. Diane is creative and reflective. Anne is outcome-driven.

Table 6.4 shows some of the differences in provisional themes. None of the provisional themes is inaccurate; each is perspectived and partial.

Table 6.4   Comparison of provisional themes from the individual accounts

Ellie	Diane	Anne (from Table 6.2)
How we felt	Space	Social
What we got out of it	Participants	Conversation
Hosting	Bigger picture	Host and their roles
Difficulties	Communication	Purpose
Positives	Catalysts	Diversity
Usefulness	Reflections	Affect
What *is* it?		Limitations

6.7   The full-day workshop

Vignette[52]

It was already 3.15pm on the day of the full day workshop, and we had to be out of the seminar room by 3.30pm. As I tried to tidy, Diane stared at the sheets of paper with their clustered Post-its and tried to construct a one-sentence summary.

She offered suggestions; the others refined them; I scribbled the versions while tidying. At 3.29pm we agreed:

> *A coffee shop conversation is a radical way to enable ordinary people to*
> *find their voices on a variety of subjects through a social event.*

One sentence seemed very little to show for all our work. And yet it distilled the work that had gone before.

The workshop had begun six hours earlier with general chat, catching up, making coffee and settling into what was, for four of us, the new environment of a university seminar room. While I was photocopying the spreadsheets and tables I had worked on, Ellie produced the colour-coded analysis she had done of all five individual accounts (see Fig 6.3) and Diane produced her drawing of her overview of the themes in the five accounts (Fig 6.4) which I then photocopied. The task for the day was left vaguely defined as "This is where we do the 'What is a coffee shop conversation?' bit" (Anne, Full-day, 2015). After some discussion about how to tackle the task, Ellie's colour-coded analysis was used as the starting point for the workshop.

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[52] This vignette provides an evocative summation of the last 15 minutes of the workshop. It is written using the audio recording, flipcharts, and my memory of the feelings about this 15 minutes.

The workshop began by discussing how to approach the task of working out what we knew collectively about CSC. The goal was unclear, beyond "seeing what we can come up with together by the end of the day" (Anne, Full-day, 2015). The agreed approach was for four of us to write one thought per post-it, and for the fifth person to begin the task of clustering the Post-its into themes or ideas. As the number of Post-its increased, everyone began to share the task of clustering Post-its and discussing how to group them. During this, one person had to leave. In the afternoon, the work continued and we began formalising the clusters by drawing lines around them and naming the clusters. Towards the end of the afternoon, the focus shifted to coproducing a definition of CSC.

Data from the full-day workshop comprised an audio recording (partially self-transcribed) and a set of Post-its on flipcharts. Reviewing the audio recording showed that the Post-its and flipcharts had captured the key points of the conversation, apart from the strength of feeling about the importance of the cake. The finding about cake is therefore included before presenting the findings captured in the Post-its and flipcharts.

6.7.1 Cake

The recording makes it clear from the conversation that the most important part of CSC was the quality of the cake. It had symbolic value by giving the message that 'this is important, and we are glad you are here' (Diane, Full-day, 2015). Good cake provides a topic of conversation and focus of attention as part of 'settling you down into something normal' (Ellie, Full-day, 2015). It adds to the overall sense of wellbeing and enjoyment: 'It just makes you feel good, and it's special, and it makes you happy, and you want to be there' (Rachel, Full-day, 2015). As Diane put it, 'it's the base of the triangle. You need it when you get there' (Diane, Full-day, 2015). For Anne, providing good cake was a 'minor cue' to everyone about the nature of the performance (Goffman, 1990a (1956), p.59). For everyone else it was a 'sign of something important about [the] performance' (ibid.). As people's comments show, the value of the cake as a signifier went far beyond Anne's purpose of establishing the performance as one of friends meeting.

6.7.2 Flipchart data

Table 6.5 uses the wordings from the Post-its. It groups them as they were collaboratively grouped, and it uses the names given to the lines drawn around each cluster of Post-its.

A comparison of Table 6.4 with Table 6.5 shows that some aspects of CSC have grown in significance during the day's analytic work, mostly due to the addition of Rachel and Helen's voices. In particular, 'voice', 'learning' and 'ethical' are seen as needing identification as themes for the first time. Being a social occasion is a theme throughout, and the full-day workshop confirms its centrality to the method.

Table 6.5   Verbatim post-its and their cluster labels

Cluster label	Wordings from post-its
Voice	Making a difference, helping, being useful, having meaning, have contributed something, ordinary people having an input, empowering, passion
Purpose	Giving an opinion, opportunities for expression of deepest thought, chance for policy makers to 'eavesdrop', public thought, giving an opinion, finding out what people think, thinking outside the box, sharing experiences, story telling, knowing what's going on in people's heads, reinforcement of ideas
Practicalities	How to write it up, more than recording elements of discussion, slanted by/to the interviewing, inviting people, host, enabling contribution, wanting to know what others think, facilitator, not an interview
Learning	Brain exercise, learning from each other, formulating thoughts, encouraging, proactive, stimulation, ideas sparking, not the purpose to education or transform the group - but it happens, mutual learning
Group	Working within a group, equality in the group, perspectives, more than the sum of its parts, broad outlook, respect, not about being clever or having the right answer, no right or wrong
Social occasion	Coffee and cake, meeting with friends, friends, general chat to start with, people we know, space for everyone to take a conversational lead, enjoyment, safe space, listening environment, relaxed atmosphere, relaxed, time limit, not a simple social interchange, chat, dialogue/discussion, time for discussion to develop
Consultation	An objective, topic, focus, topic/subject, single focus, catalyst, particular given subject, participants, cross-section of community, diverse, shared views/perspectives
Ethical	Confidential, shared control, paid, inclusive

The importance of voice

"I was very glad to be asked what I thought about different subjects and to have the opportunity to share my views… To have some input into a discussion which might eventually make a positive difference is therefore a refreshing change." (Rachel, 2015).

For the women in the CAE, the most important thing the method offered them was a voice.

For the two who had taken part in public consultations in the past, the method offered something that was "not an interview, so there's less manipulation, less chance of misrepresentation, and no-one telling you what you can tell them by making you stick to answering their questions." (Rachel, Full-day, 2015).

Helen reminded us eloquently of the importance of language and culture to voice. We only knew her as her English-speaking self, and because of that her voice was affected. As she put it, "you've got this dialogue going in your head before speaking, meaning sometimes you've missed your conversational turn" (Helen, Half-day, 2015).

The importance of being valued

This was evidenced by being paid, because "it makes you feel good, it feels nice that someone's prepared to pay you for your time" (Diane, Full-day, 2015). Possibly it was evidenced even more so by the quality of the cake. Both were taken as a proxy for the policy-maker's interest in what you have to say. Not everyone in the CAE believed policy-makers wanted to listen, or that anything they said would make a difference (CAE video; reported in previous chapter). For them, simply being valued within the conversation by the quality of the cake and the quality of the listening was important.

The importance of learning and space to reflect

> "As the conversation developed ideas would pop into mind and the different participants would provoke new thoughts. I think it is true to say that by the end we all felt we had achieved a lot more collectively than we would have been able to do individually." (Diane, 2015).

I had not intended the method to offer invitees a learning opportunity. However, Diane's sentiments were echoed by the other women when we discussed the individual accounts.

The importance of being ethical

Ethical is used with different meanings depending on the user and the context. CSC does not comply with university procedural ethics. Certainly, the manner of the invitation, the information provided, the payment of participants, and the presumed consent mean CSC as used by Barod would fail to be approved by a university research ethics committee. It

was for this reason that it would not have been possible in this doctoral research to organise a series of CSC in the style of Barod and use data from those CSC to design the method. And yet the other people in the CAE team had experienced participation in previous CSC as deeply ethical, and Barod had designed 'coffee shop conversations' in line with their approach to ethics. The CAE findings suggest this is because people felt valued as people not just for their utility, had been given space to find and use their voice, and were offered an opportunity to contribute to policy-making in a way that made sense to them. They recognised that the method could be inclusive, not only in broadening the diversity of those who engaged but also in valuing the differences in people's experiences.

Social occasion

> "Coffee dates with friends were a rare occurrence because of lack of time and money (free Waitrose coffee dates excepted!). So, for me, the coffee and cake was a significant attraction and the opportunity to go out and do something without the children, make new friends and exercise my brain a bit was a pleasant change from the norm." (Rachel, 2015).

If a person does not enjoy social conversations, then CSC is not an appropriate method. Some people have as much access as they wish to social occasions. For others, free coffee and cake in pleasant surroundings is a major attraction.

The Post-its in this cluster indicate different cues that established the performance as a social occasion. In relation to The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Goffman, 1990a (1956), there were props (coffee and cake), cues associated with the choice of physical setting (safe space, listening environment, relaxed atmosphere), the use of scripts associated with a type of performance (general chat to start with), the composition of the team (meeting with friends, people we know), and careful management of the performance to maintain the impression of a meeting with friends (space for everyone to take a conversational lead).

6.7.3 Unpacking the single sentence definition

The full-day workshop ended with Diane leading us through trying to construct a single sentence definition. Four features recurred throughout this process and are put in bold:

> "A coffee shop conversation is a **radical** way to enable **ordinary people** to find their **voices** on a variety of subjects through a **social event**." (Team, Flipchart, Full-day, 2015).

Radical: During our videoed CSC about policy-making, all four of my collaborators had recalled occasions where they had been consulted about public services or policies or had been aware that such things had occurred. To them, the idea of sitting down informally and socially to talk was a radical departure from anything they knew of public involvement.

Ordinary people: The target group being 'ordinary people' was the same as it had been before the CAE, and I found the ordinariness of the phrase encouraging. It allayed my fears that the CAE might 'professionalise' their approach as they learned the jargon of public involvement. The choice of 'ordinary people' was striking, given the conversations about making sure CSC would work for asylum seekers, people with learning disabilities, homeless people, and categories of people who are too often not categorised as 'ordinary people'. My speculation is that 'ordinary people' was used for anyone who did not have an influential or direct role in policy-making, or a high-profile role in public life.

Voices: Describing the method as one that 'enables ordinary people to find their voices' was an immense shift from what I had thought the method was about, namely allowing policy-makers to 'eavesdrop' on ordinary people so they could make better informed policy. I still saw CSC as designed to benefit policy-makers. Everyone else saw a method designed for the benefit of 'ordinary people'.

Social event: There was no question that CSC could be on a variety of subjects, and the importance of it being a social event was clear.

6.8   Working by myself

Reflecting on the CAE analysis, reviewing the recording of the CAE workshops and the individual accounts, and pondering on the findings of Chapter 5 led to the understanding described in this section and summarised in Figure 6.5.

6.8.1 Values people's knowledges and individuality

> "So to actually, I think, listen to people talk in their own language about the issues that they're facing is a lot more inclusive than at the moment what we do is send people information in complex language and expect them to respond to it." (I3, policy-making research).

Valuing people's knowledges and individuality means letting them make their own sense of the topic. It means letting them decide what the client needs to know given what the client intends to do with the information. This means each conversation will be different and each host will enact their role differently. This is not problematic, provided the host has understood and can operationalise the principles of a CSC.

This is part of what is described in 1.3 as epistemic justice. It is part of the reason for using CAE, as well as being integral to CSC.

Figure 6.5   What makes a conversation a CSC?
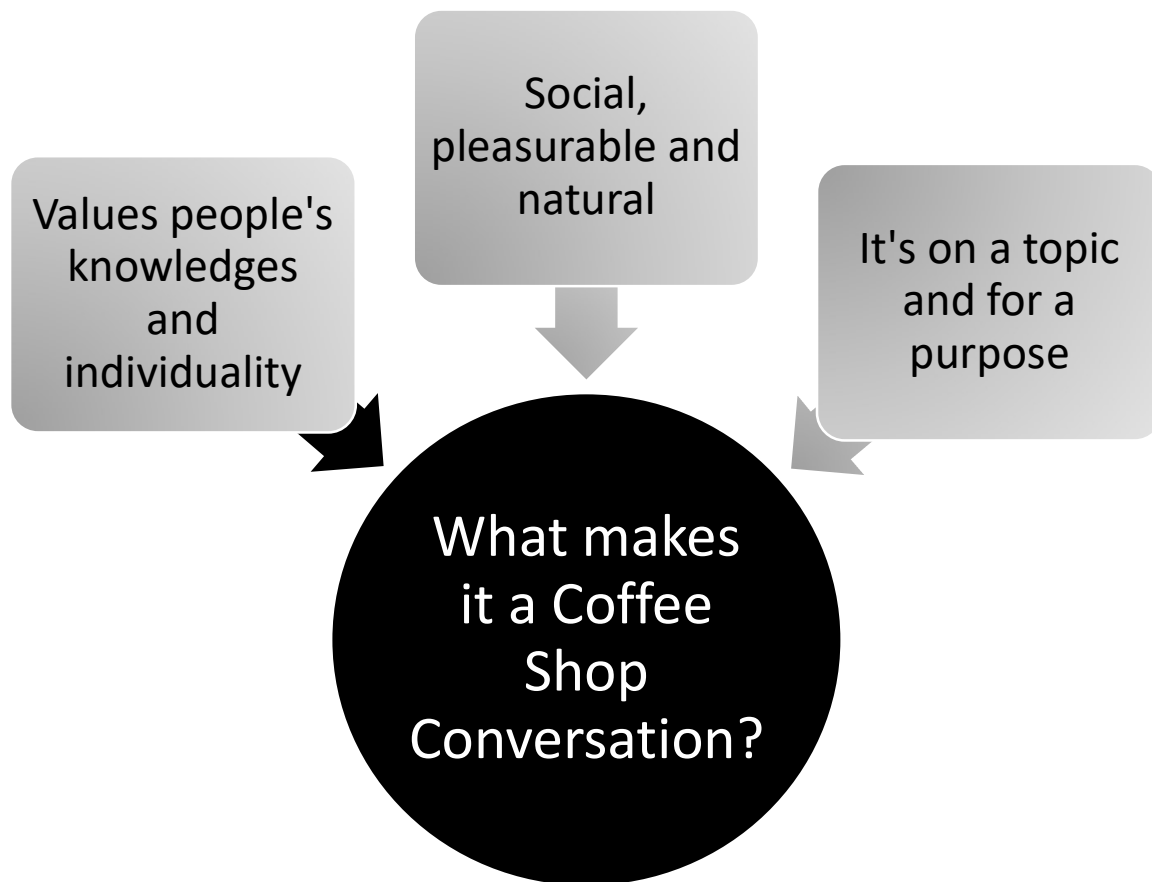
6.8.2 Social, pleasurable, and natural

> "If it wasn't a pleasurable experience that you'd like to repeat, then even
> if it was a conversation in a coffee shop, it wasn't a Coffee Shop
> Conversation." (Post-its, Full-day, 2015).

What social, pleasurable and natural looks like will be different for different people. The women in the CAE were used to meeting in social groups, and for them being in a group was an essential part of something being a CSC. They recognised that other people are better in one-to-one situations and pointed out that some people just don't enjoy conversations. We agreed that CSC would be an inappropriate method for anyone who did not enjoy conversations. We also agreed that a group conversation would be a very different experience from a one to one. In a group, ideas are bounced around and co-generated. In a one to one, there is more opportunity to talk more deeply. We concluded that neither is better than the other; what matters is that it feels natural to the people talking together.

We noted that keeping it social when meeting for a purpose, making notes and being paid would be a challenge, and need to be done differently for each conversation depending on the social setting and the personalities of the people in the conversation.

6.8.3 It's on a topic and for a purpose

"If it isn't in the notes, the client won't get to hear it." (Post-its, Full-day, 2015).

The skills of the host are central, because as they make the notes they need to be thinking of feeding back to a client rather than making minutes of a meeting. At the same time, they need to allow the conversation to develop naturally rather than push for specific information they as host think the client needs to hear.

An important part of the process from pre-research use of 'coffee shop conversations' was that people should never leave a conversation without going over the notes together. This is where the host reminds people that if it isn't in the notes, the client will not get the information; equally if it is in the notes, the client will think it accurately represents the voice of the people taking part. From experience of hosting 'coffee shop conversations' pre-research, this is where people may choose to add more specific information, and also make amendments and corrections to what is on the paper.

6.8.4 What it's like to take part

One of the ways that the CAE defined whether a CSC had taken place (rather than a conversation in a coffee shop) was by what it was like to take part:

- It needed to be in people's comfort zone, and "presented as something similar to any invitation to have coffee with friends, but with an added aspect" (Post-its, Full-day, 2015).
- People needed to know there were no right or wrong answers, that it was not a test, and they were not being asked to represent anyone or be accountable for anything that might happen as result of what they had or had not said.
- Invitees who want to 'present a long, reasoned, thought-out argument' (Rachel, Full-day, 2015) may feel frustrated because that should not happen in a CSC. Invitees need to be clear they are invited for a social coffee and chat, not to a public meeting.

- It needs to feel like a conversation, not "explaining the reasons behind your convictions or defending a position, or lobbying for change" (Rachel, 2015).

6.9 Strengthening the theorising

6.9.1 Overview

The research reported in this chapter, the knowledge review and the policy-making research indicate two priorities for methodological work before developing CSC16 for collaborative field testing:

- Making something as naturalistic as possible despite it being staged.
- Knowing who needs to be involved in order to have a suitable diversity of people.

Both relate to the potential importance of CSC as an intelligence-gathering tool for the Discovery phase of design or for building a more collective understanding of a complex system.

The social interactions of social life can be framed in terms of drama. Dramaturgy is strongly associated with the work of Erving Goffman, in particular his 1956 work, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Dramaturgy observes and describes social interaction as if drama. This includes observations of how people in a variety of situations (con artist, asylum in-patient) may employ devices in an attempt to foster a particular interpretation of who they are and the nature of a social encounter.

This is repurposed in this thesis to identify ways to stage an interaction (in this case a conversation) as naturalistically as possible. Public performances on a social issue perhaps say more about what people think they *should* say about that issue or what they want to be *seen* to say. Back region performances are less guarded and scripted, and therefore potentially say more about someone's mental model of the issue.

Talking 'on their own terms' is, perhaps, another way of saying 'talking using their own mental model of the issue'. If these two features can be combined in CSC16, then there is greater chance that the notes from any given conversation will provide insights into people's mental models. This is why the method of note-taking and initial in-conversation analysis is fundamental to something being a CSC. Neither mental models nor complex systems are linear. Forcing notes into linearity makes it harder to talk

around a topic. It also makes it nigh on impossible for the notes to be grouped towards the end of the conversation. This provides one perspective or set of perspectives on the social issue from one point within the system.

What is also needed is a diversity. This requires working out who needs to be involved. At this stage, the theorising hovered between intersectionality and using the protected characteristics of the Equality Act (2010) as a proxy for diversity. Diversity is important because without it marginalised groups are liable to remain marginalised. Welsh Government have a commitment to diversity as well as equality, inclusion, and social justice (4.8). In design and complexity terms, diversity is also important as a way to get different perspectives on the system by working with people from different points across the system.

Figure 6.6 is included as Diane Holmes' creative response to conversations about complexity and diversity.

Figure 6.6   Complexity and diversity

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6.9.2 Presentation of Self in Everyday Policy-making

Erving Goffman's dramaturgic approach is spread across many of his texts, especially Stigma (1963), Asylums (1968), and Frame Analysis (1974), but is found it its most complete format in The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1956).

The basic premise in Presentation of Self is that social interactions can be viewed *as if* dramatic performances. In this book, Goffman constructs a framework or scaffold using theatrical metaphors, and suggests it is a "guide worth testing in case-studies of institutional social life" (1990a (1959), Preface) which he suggests offers a fifth lens through which to observe and analyse social interaction, the others being technical, political, structural and cultural, (ibid., pp.232-233).

The introduction to The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life opens thus:

> "When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed. … Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him. Informed in these ways, the others will know how best to act in order to call forth a desired response from him". (ibid., p.13).

The task of the organiser and host of a CSC is to provide information that helps define the situation as a natural, everyday conversation. He continues to describe the sources of information that can be used to manage the impressions that others receive of a person's social identity: roles, titles, location, personal appearance (including clothing), props, and opening conversational exchanges. Together, these construct a person's 'front', that is they give expression to the sort of person someone is – or the sort of person they wish to be seen as in the case of a con artist, inpatient in an asylum or someone wishing to 'pass' as possessing a particular a social identity. Even if there is no consciously planned use or arranging of expressive signs, those present receive impressions of who that person is. They also receive impressions of what kind of social situation they are in and therefore what responses are called for from them (ibid., pp.13-27).

In particular, Goffman describes two types of performance, "front region" and "back region" (pp.109-140). Both are acknowledged as performances. A front region performance is marked by awareness of a third-party audience, and the requirement for all those on stage to work as a team to co-create a performance. He uses the example of

a waiter front of house (front region performance) whose facial expression and body language change as he goes through the door into the kitchen (back region performance) (ibid., pp.123-124). For the back region, an actor's front is only required to convince fellow actors that one is, indeed, an actor. For the front region, the actor's front is required to convince the audience that one 'is' the role and not merely playing a role (ibid., p.114).

The aim of CSC is to create a back region performance (6.9.1). This requires the deliberate use of expressions that foster the impression that a back region performance is called for. It is possible to do this, even where there are discrepancies between what a person might expect and what a person experiences. This first requires identifying the discrepancies between a CSC and a conversation in a coffee shop.

Discrepancies

There were four discrepancies in a CSC:

- The host and the others may not already meet as part of everyday life, even though the host has been matched with them because they are sufficiently similar that they *could* quite naturally meet.
- Someone (usually the person who arranged to meet) makes notes on an A3 pad, so others can see and comment on the notes. Note-taking is not a usual part of back region socialising.
- There is a pre-arranged topic that needs discussing at some point in the conversation. People know that the notes of what they say is going to be used by a client.
- Everyone is paid for their time.

The first discrepancy was a flaw in the original design, carried forward into CSC16 but removed in CSC21. The other three cannot be removed, so their impact needs minimising. Barod's experience with CSC and the CAE work indicate that the pre-arranged topic does not necessarily lead to front region performance although it can create a little awkwardness in transitioning from actual 'conversation in a coffee shop' to 'conversation on the topic'. Finally, as long as payment was framed as a reward to everyone for just having a chat and making notes, it did not seem to have a significant impact it being a back region performance.

Making notes was a significant design challenge. Anyone who knows me is aware of my resorting to a doodle pad and pen mid-conversation to help make sense of the conversation. For me, making notes is not discrepant. The rest of the CAE team pointed out to me that for most of the population of Wales, it is. The method of CSC relies on notes being made during the conversation. Without that, a shared account cannot be agreed upon and notes cannot be clustered. The problem was waved aside in the hopes it would resolve itself or an answer appear during the field testing.

Expressions

My working assumption was that the stronger the signifiers that CSC was happening back region, the less chance that the discrepancies would turn the CSC into a front region performance.

The collaborative analysis and the policy-making research both indicated that a back region performance would be supported by:

- The people taking part knowing each other, because "you haven't got any of that friction …when you are waiting to see how quiet they are, how dominant they are" (Rachel, Pre-meeting, 2015). Meeting with unknown people, or people only met formally, means "you are bound to feel a bit intimidated or a bit wary of what you'll say and what others will think of you. It might influence what you say and don't say". (CI3).
- Avoiding questions that make people feel the need to perform.
- Meeting in a physical space associated with back region performances, including the removal of uncertainties by going somewhere familiar. It "needs to be a place where everyone is equal" (Diane, Pre-meeting, 2015), recognising that this means different things to different people. CSC usually occur in spaces where background noise cannot be controlled. Some noise helped with not feeling on display, but too much was distracting. Speaking in an otherwise silent space was seen as "a bit clinical and inhibiting" (Diane, Pre-meeting, 2015). The significance of noise depends on people's ability to filter out background noise during a conversation. This ability varies considerably.
- The skills of the host in understanding how to invite people, present themselves and conduct themselves *as if* it were a naturally occurring social occasion. The characteristics of the host as described in Table 6.3 should support this.

6.9.3 Diversity, protected characteristics, intersectionality and bias

Although each conversation needs to aim for homogeneity, each set of CSCs needs to include as much diversity as possible.

While policies may be adequate for the majority of people, they can severely disadvantage a minority. Indeed, the Equality Act 2010 requirement for Equality Impact Assessments is a recognition that some people, by virtue of characteristics protected under the Act, have experienced negative impacts from changes to policy or public services in comparison with people who do not have protected characteristics.

These nine categories provide a simple legal framework for thinking about diversity, but they are not the only ways to categorise diversity of experience or perspective. In relation to a particular policy context, other categories may be more significant predictors of diverse experiences and perspectives. Furthermore, any approach that privileges one characteristic risks hiding and devaluing the individuality of each person's experience of living with that characteristic.

Ellie expressed concerns early on that many people's voices would be excluded if it was only the organiser's friends who got invited (e.g. Ellie, CAE video; Ellie, 2015; Ellie, Half-day, 2015; Ellie, Full-day, 2015). Initially I had thought of diversity in terms of protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Ellie pointed out that a conversation with a White homeless man who was engaged with outreach services would say nothing about how a Black asylum-seeking woman with no recourse to public funds might experience homelessness. This led to thinking about identity politics and intersectionality.

We intuitively know that a White, married, home-owning cis-hetero-male Social Science professor who uses a wheelchair after a car accident will experience being disabled very differently from a young Black, single, insecurely-housed trans woman who uses a wheelchair due to life changing injuries in a hate crime assault. This is why intersectionality needs to be built into any CSC sampling approach.

The phrase "identity politics" was coined by the Combahee River Collective (1974) in the context of recognising simultaneity, that is people having more than one identity label at the same time. The women of the Collective wrote of not belonging in the women's rights movement because they were Black, but not belonging in the Black rights movement because they were women or heterosexual. However, the term

"intersectionality" to describe this simultaneity was only introduced later by Crenshaw (1989). Both approaches highlighted power asymmetries and social injustice as encountered and enacted in the complexity of identity labels that can be applied to people.

Current use of the term intersectionality depends on beliefs about the stability or fluidity of identity and identity categories. For CSC16, it was not helpful to think anti-categorically (e.g. McCall, 2005) because culturally assumed categories impact on everyday life and therefore everyday experience of social issues. Any approach of utility for CSC would need to treat the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act as significant categories, given the requirement on public bodies to pay due consideration to these categories when considering diversity and equality. This made it helpful to consider inter-categorical (e.g. Crenshaw, 1989) and intra-categorical (e.g. Orr et al., 2007) intersectionality. This meant taking into consideration both how the different categories interact (e.g. 'gender', 'disability', 'ethnicity'), and the social hierarchies within a category. The simultaneity principle would suggest that those with only one protected characteristic would be at the top of any such social hierarchy.

The importance of diversity can be understood in terms of rights or utility. If people with different experiences, different cultures and different identities make sense of experience a social issue differently, it is important to capture those different understandings in the Discovery phase of policy design. As with the first part of this methodological work, there are a myriad of academic lenses for thinking about how people make sense of and 'know' anything. At this stage of the research, it was left as a taken-for-granted that the social construction of reality means a diversity of voices would lead to a diversity of ways of 'knowing' and experiencing a social issue.

Insights about intersectionality informed the development of a 'diversity grid', although at this stage it was still initially premised around the Equality Act (2010) due to the public sector equality duty meaning that public consultations must take the protected characteristics into account when monitoring uptake.

6.10 Discussion

This section discusses these findings in the light of earlier findings, discussions and conclusions in Chapters 4 and 5.

The method that Barod called 'coffee shop conversations' has potential. The policy-making research confirmed the disconnect between policy-makers and ordinary citizens, where policy-making is something that happens 'over there' in a different world. For those who do want to engage, there are frustrations that existing opportunities for public involvement seem to be on Welsh Government's terms, often using language that is unfamiliar and ways of framing the topic that do not match their lived experience of the topic or address their priorities.

The method has similarities with the conversation-based methods of focus groups and World Café (as described in 4.5). Table 6.6 compares these three approaches.

Table 6.6   Comparison of CSC16, World Café and focus groups

	Coffee Shop Conversation	World Café	Focus Group
Origins	2014, Barod, to address perceived inadequacies of other methods.	1995, Juanita Brown, "intuitively sensed" (Brown with Isaacs, 2005, p.21)	1937, Princeton University Office of Radio Research, to look at response to marketing messages
Key early text	PowerPoint for Behaviour Change Festival (Barod, 2016)[a]	The World Café: Shaping our futures through conversations that matter (Brown with Isaacs, 2005)	The Focused Interview (Merton et al., 1956)
Uses (in addition to public consultation)	None so far.	qualitative research; generating new ideas ('collective wisdom')	qualitative research, market research
Aim/purpose	"A coffee shop conversation is a **radical** way to enable **ordinary people** to find their **voices** on a variety of subjects through a **social event**." (Team, Flipchart, Full-day, 2015).	Create collective wisdom. Generate enthusiasm and direction for action.	Provide information for a client or data collection for academic research.

[a] No longer publicly available. A copy can be requested from Barod Community Interest Company.

Table 6.6 (continued) Comparison of CSC16, World Café and focus groups

	Coffee Shop Conversation	World Café	Focus Group
Why use this approach?	We wanted a consultation method that worked for people who don't get involved in consultations; a method that got a bit closer to how people might actually behave rather than how they think they would behave (the donut and the diet); a method that didn't rely on being able to read, write, know the answers or socialise with strangers; a method that didn't put people on the spot.	To re-create the kind of conversations that take place (took place) over dinner with family and others discussing topics that mattered, where there are new ideas created through interaction and excitement/desire for action - not just rehashing of personal beliefs.	Different purposes, including: accessing subjective perspectives; as the 'quali' parts of a 'quali-quant-quali' study; to generate ideas; to gauge group response; to explore ways to reach consensus; to study group interaction.
Principles or rules	Set of 7 rules (see Table 6.8 in 6.11).	Seven principles: set the context; create hospitable space; explore questions that matter; encourage everyone's contribution; cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives; listen together for patterns, insights and deeper questions; harvest and share collective discoveries. (Ibid., p.40)	Organised discussion. Led by a facilitator. Group needs to be sufficiently homogenous to work together, but sufficient heterogeneous to generate debate. Usually 8-12 people. Usually 1-2 hours. Usually people who do not know each other. Follows set questions or topic schedule.

Table 6.6 (continued) Comparison of CSC16, World Café and focus groups

	Coffee Shop Conversation	World Café	Focus Group
Questions	Conversation relating to a topic, not a specific question. Limited use of questioning by the host.	Questions generated as 'questions that matter' to the people there. (Ibid., p.78)	Questions or topic schedule devised by the researcher to meet the needs of the commissioner.
Selection of participants	Diversity grid, drawn up based on characteristics that are predicted to be most relevant to the purpose; for any conversation, selection of people who would naturally meet in a similar context to the proposed coffee shop conversation.	People from all stakeholder groups within the same World Café.	Participants with a shared characteristic and reasonable degree of homogeneity who form a sufficiently heterogenous group that they can spark and refine ideas as they talk in a group setting.
Observable method	We meet; we chat; I introduce the topic; I jot notes on a blank sheet of A3 paper; we look at the notes together; we go home.	Venue arranged as a café with Tables for 4-5 people. After a short conversation on a pre-determined topic, with comments written onto a paper tablecloth, some people change tables. The conversation continues with new group. After some rounds of conversation, there is a harvesting of the collective wisdom (there are a range of techniques used for this).	People arrive at the venue. The facilitator introduces the topic. People contribute. The facilitator introduces questions. At the end, the facilitator summarises and thanks people.

Table 6.6 (continued) Comparison of CSC16, World Café and focus groups

	Coffee Shop Conversation	World Café	Focus Group
How information is recorded	Handwritten notes on a blank sheet of A3 paper.	Always notes on tablecloths and/or post-its. Sometimes graphic facilitation. May be audio or video recorded.	Usually audio or video recorded. May be additional handwritten notes.
How information is analysed	Two-stage. Stage 1 is in-conversation, with grouping of notes and (ideally) naming of the groupings). Stage 2 is done by the organiser using preferred qualitative data analysis method but starting from the notes provided and not 'raw data'.	Each individual is responsible for analysing and discussing their analysis during and between the conversations. Final stage of all participants looking at the composite of what has been written/drawn, then commenting. The convenor may produce a report. The graphic map represents the analysis of the graphic facilitator.	Any qualitative method. May include attempts to quantify qualitative data.
What it feels like to take part	Relaxed, social, fun, stimulating, thought provoking.		
Comments on power/ relationship	Uses strategies to create 'us', rather than facilitator/consultees.	Uses strategies to create 'us' on tables, with at least one person monitoring/recording the room as a whole.	Clear separation of roles between facilitator and participants.

In order to be acceptable to people who do not consider themselves the sort of person who gets involved in policy-making, the method needs to continue to prioritise being an activity that is as close to someone's everyday life as possible. As part of achieving this, and also as part of its value in scoping and understanding social issues, people must be able to talk about the topic on their own terms, using their own framing, and in their own language.

In order to be treated as 'evidence', any findings from CSC would need to stand up to social research scrutiny. This means being aware of the quality standards for qualitative research, but also being mindful that quantitative research is associated with evidence being perceived by policy-makers as more robust. Given the methodological inappropriateness of reducing qualitative data to numerical data when the purpose of using qualitative research is to explore people's ways of making sense of a social issue, an approach such as SenseMaker[53] would not address this need. Where perceptions of robustness and actual robustness could be enhanced is in descriptions of approaches to selecting participants.

The findings highlighted the wisdom of using the CAE approach to move from the 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC16. If all the analytic work had done by me, the significance of CSC as a way of people finding and using their voices would have been missed. This was expressed in terms of empowerment, enthusiasm to learn more, a new awareness of the depth of feeling disengaged and disempowered, and the start of hope that the voices of ordinary citizens could, perhaps, have national impact – if, as I had assured them, at least some policy-makers were genuinely wanting to listen and learn. All I had seen were potential direct benefits to policy-makers, with only the indirect benefit to those who took part in a CSC of policies that were more likely to improve people's lives and less likely to fail or lead to unintended consequences in implementation. I was also the only person who had missed the symbolic importance of the cake.

For CSC, the key design features that frame something as a CSC rather than either a conversation in a coffee shop or a research activity appear to be:

- Framing the invitation so the similarity to everyday socialising is clear, while not under-estimating people's apprehensions at it being something new to them.
- Making sure people chose a time and space associated with being relaxed and 'natural' and did not associate with putting on a public face or performance.
- Hosting a conversation in such a way that it remains 'natural' (and not something closer to a conversational interview) while collecting enough topic-relevant information to be a CSC and not just a conversation in a coffee shop.
- Hosts would need to be recruited and trained if a set of conversations was going to be diverse and the hosts were known to the people who they invited to meet

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[53] SenseMaker is a commercial tool in increasing public service use in Wales, that analyses narrative fragments in order to 'sense' quantifiable patterns. It is one approach to pattern detection when dealing with complex systems, but not appropriate for all purposes.

with them. This would also require working out what 'diversity' means in relation to whose voices need to be heard in a policy consultation.

- Making adequate notes and checking them together at the end to make sure everyone was happy for them to be sent as a record of the conversation.

CSC potentially offers many things to invitees. This is important because most of the target audience is people who don't go to public meetings, don't respond to consultations, and have no interest in engaging with policy-makers. The method needs to seem attractive enough for them to choose to get involved and rewarding enough for them to be willing to be involved in similar public involvement opportunities in the future. The CAE highlighted the importance of CSC to people who are invited to take part in terms of voice, being valued, having a space to reflect and learn, and an opportunity to be part of a social occasion.

From the 2014 to 2016 research, it was possible to design a version of CSC for Barod to test. Such versions are often called 'beta' versions meaning they have been through a Discovery phase or similar early research and are now ready to be tested in a limited and monitored way in order to further develop and refine the version.

6.11 Description of CSC16

This description in Table 6.7 was drawn up in 2016. The purpose was to take the learning from the research and use it to design the next version of CSC. The entirety of the information in 6.11 was made available to Barod, meaning this section is written as a semi-stand-alone description for a company audience. It draws on all the research to date. Although the CAE team had completed its work in 2015, a draft of this description was circulated for checking and comment to other members of the team.

The quotation was included to add colour and to help Barod make operational decisions. In the version used in 2016, the quotations were anonymised.

Table 6.7   Description of CSC16

Task	Notes
Planning with client	The organiser meets with client to agree how many conversations are needed, any particular categories of people they want included and a timescale.

Recruitment	Helen: If a stranger had come … and invited us to a coffee shop conversation, in that case I – I would have declined … Diane: To meet a group of people that you don't know with a – a host you don't know, I probably would have declined as well. Rachel: Um, in theory I would have done it, in the sense it wouldn't bother me that I didn't know the person … but I'd do it more impersonally. (Helen, Diane, and Rachel, Full-day) The organiser either *is* the host or recruits someone to be the host. The host invites friends to meet for a coffee, explaining as they invite them that the client wants to find out about [the topic] in order to [make a policy/plan a service], and that the client will pay for them all to have a chat about it while the host makes some notes to send to the client. The host asks their friends to suggest a place and time to meet.
Diversity	It is important to have maximum diversity within a set of conversations. Use the protected characteristics of the Equality Act (2010) as a starting point. Make sure people are from different parts of Wales and different social circumstances (eg not all middle-class; not all Cardiff). Check there isn't a bias as a result of recruiting people who only have one protected characteristic.
Fieldwork	1. The host and their friend(s) arrive, order coffees and just chat. 2. The host brings an A3 pad of plain paper and pens. They make notes of the conversation in plain sight, and try to cluster similar themes on the page. In some conversations, invitees will join in the note-making either on the host's sheet or their own. The notes may be verbatim or the host's own summary. It is important to leave space when making notes as conversations jump around, and extra notes may need to be added about something previously noted. [See below for additional information] 3. At some stage, someone will usually turn the conversation to the reason for meeting that day. If not, the host reminds everyone why they are there. 4. They have a conversation. Like any conversation it can wander in all sorts of directions. The host must not be too swift or anxious to turn the conversation back to the topic, or it will start to feel more like a focus group.

Table 6.7 (continued) Description of CSC16

Task	Notes
Fieldwork (continued)	5. Because it is a conversation not an interview or a focus group, the host takes part too, and (unless it is the organiser) what they say forms part of the notes. 6. A natural pause in the conversation, for example ordering more coffee or going to the toilet, is always good. Some people will start talking in more depth or differently having used the pause to reflect. 7. When the conversation seems to be reaching a natural conclusion, the host begins summing up what they think they've heard, making sure everyone can see the notes. They do this by going round the sheet of paper, putting lines around the clusters as they talk. 8. This always generates clarifications, additional information and corrections of how the notes have been clustered. The host makes additions and amendments as people talk. 9. This continues until people agree that it is an accurate record of what they want made available to the client. 10. The host takes a photo of the notes and sends it to the overall organiser.
Analysis (1)	The first stage of analysis has occurred during the conversation, in that the host has made notes of the conversation that reflect their understanding of what is important and relevant in what is being said and clustered them. [See below for additional information]
Analysis (2)	The organiser uses their preferred qualitative data analysis method to produce themes from the information on the sheet.
Reporting	The style of report writing depends on the needs and preferences of the client and the skill set of the organiser. The overall organiser is accountable to the client for making sure that the style of the report matches the client's needs.

6.11.1 Additional information about note-making

Rachel and Diane had experiences of public consultations where they felt what they said was mis-recorded or misinterpreted by the facilitator. Rachel initially suggested it would be better to audio record CSC as "an accurate record of what was said, [because] that's better than having someone taking notes and maybe leaving out people's comments or distorting them." (Rachel, Full-day, 2015). In discussion, she agreed that it was safer in terms of representation to have a transparent process for agreeing what was written during the conversation than for a facilitator to take away a recording and decide what to select as significant from it. This does, however, require at least one person in the conversation to be able to listen and make notes as a conversation is proceeding.

Relying on notes as the agreed data rather than working from audio recordings also makes it much quicker to analyse the information.

6.11.2 Additional information about analysis

The checking process at the end of the conversation means that there has been collaboration in what is to be recorded and how it is clustered. It also means that the decisions about what is important and how to cluster the information (and sometimes even what to label the clusters) has been done by the people in the conversation and not retrospectively by a researcher/facilitator listening to a recording or reading a transcript and making those decisions. This does raise potential concerns about the information that is lost. This was tested using the CAE video. In comparing the transcript and the A3 pad notes, nothing of significance would have been gained by working from the transcript. This is because the text fragments coded on the transcript were similar to the information recorded on the A3 pad. This does come back to the importance of someone in the conversation being able to make good notes.

6.11.3 Challenges moving into the collaborative field testing

The first challenge was two features of CSC16 that would perpetuate barriers excluding some people with learning disabilities:

- The notes need to be written. Not everyone is literate.
- Conversations privilege those who have good conversational skills and need less reflective time and space. In a limited way this is ameliorated by the final stage in a conversation of going over the notes together.

The second challenge was research integrity. Barod, my supervisors and I discussed how to manage this for the next stage of the research. I had two roles: doctoral student, and Barod employee responsible for negotiating contracts for CSC16 to be used in the field. I would then be responsible for project managing the work, and often hosting conversations. Achieving clarity of role was largely achieved and maintained by quite literal use of the two hats on the front cover of this thesis.

6.11.4 Rules

The final task before moving to collaborative field testing was drawing up a set of provision rules to guide negotiating contracts and project managing a set of CSC (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8   Provisional rules

Rule	Reason for the rule
1. It's a conversation among people who already socialise together, or who might choose to meet informally in everyday life.	It needs to be a back region performance if you want people to talk freely.
2. It happens in a venue and context where people feel at home	This helps make it back region.
3. It is designed for people who have everyday knowledge of the topic.	This is because the aim of CSC16 is to learn how ordinary people make sense of the topic. People with expert or specialist knowledge will have role-related ways of making sense of the topic. Their knowledge is important, and their involvement should be welcomed and sought, possibly in more engaged ways that a one-off conversation.
4. No-one has more right than anyone else to control the conversation – although the topic is agreed in advance	What matters is that people talk on their own terms about the topic. Having to respond to how someone else sees an issue is one of the problems of public involvement.
5. Even if the person who arranges it has specialist knowledge, they don't use it during the conversation; the conversation is a chance to learn from people, not an opportunity to tell people what you want them to know.	As above.
6. It is a conversation. Everyone, including the person who arranged it, takes part. It does not involve a series of questions or a requirement to 'perform'.	Part of making it back region.
7. If Barod is being paid, then everyone taking part in a CSC gets paid.	Part of being ethical and enacting epistemic justice by financially valuing everyone's time taken to share information and co-create knowledge.

6.12 Conclusion

This chapter describes and reports the research that developed the method from 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC16, the iteration handed back to Barod for real-life testing and developing.

The CAE team began by staging a 'coffee shop conversation' before each person worked individually on descriptions of their experience of that conversation and any previous 'coffee shop conversation' experiences. The purpose of working individually first was to establish individual voices before working collaboratively to understand what makes something a 'coffee shop conversation'.

The CAE work had to finish prematurely, requiring me to work by myself to complete the analysis and writing. Two strands of theory inform this iteration of CSC. Goffman's use of dramaturgy identifies ways to stage a performance that appears natural and, as part of this, who needs to be part of any given CSC conversation. Approaches to diversity and intersectionality shape decisions about selecting people to take part in the overall consultation.

The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Goffman, 1990a (1956)) informed Barod's original concept of 'coffee shop conversations', indicating the possibility of and tools for staging a back region performance of an activity associated with front region performance. The findings in this chapter resonate strongly with Goffman's description of how physical setting, props, scripts, and expressions from the host of the performance team establish the nature of the performance and roles that actors are expected to play. The discrepant nature of elements of CSC are described, together with how the impact of these is ameliorated. The expressions that maintain the impression of a back region performance are described and discussed.

This iteration of CSC is distinguishable from other conversation-based consultation methods in not relying on questions and in fostering the impression of a back region performance. The significance of the latter is that people will speak less guardedly than when they feel they are making a public performance. The speculation is that this means people will talk in line with their own mental model rather than seeking to manage impressions by introducing discrepancies between their mental model and what they say.

The iteration is described and codified into CSC16. As part of the move to collaborative field testing, additional notes are made about two key facets of CSC16, the making of notes and the analysis of the notes.

The next chapter describes the development of CSC16 into CSC21 through the use of collaborative field testing, additional CAE work, and theoretical work.

Chapter 7   Developing CSC21

7.1   Introduction

The previous chapter describes and reports the combination of CAE work and theoretical research that developed the method from 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC16, the iteration handed back to Barod for real world testing and developing.

This chapter describes the development of CSC16 into CSC21 using collaborative field testing, additional CAE work, and theoretical work. The chapter brings to completion the design-orientated research begun in Chapter 4. This stage of development was only possible because of the KESS programme. This provided a collaborative arrangement between the university and company partner that allowed me to develop my advice and consultancy skills through a company placement, and that allowed the company partner to carry out the field testing of CSC16 in a commercial real-life manner.

The chapter begins with an account of the field testing with Client 1 who was developing a website. The account includes the activities, feedback from Barod, and my personal reflections (7.2). The learning from this first field test was taken to a development workshop, which made recommendations for changes before the second field test (7.3).

The second field test was with Client 2 who was developing a new corporate vision. The account includes personal reflections and a comparison between the two field tests (7.4).

The CAE team reconvened, partly to discuss learning from the field testing. It highlighted challenges, strengths, and potential futures of CSC (7.5). Reflections on these are incorporated into the development of the current iteration, CSC21 (7.6.1 to 7.6.3).

It is beyond the scope of the thesis to conduct a field test of CSC21, so instead a worked example of how it could be used is provided (7.6.4).

CSC21 has a number of key features as a consultation method. These are discussed, with a focus on theorising, in 7.7.

The chapter concludes with a summary (7.8).

7.1.1 Recap of the collaborative field testing activities

The collaborative field testing is described in 3.8 and recapped here in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1   Key development activities

Year	Activity	Notable information
2017	Use of CSC16 with Client 1	First use of the Purposive Sampling Grid. Attempted training new hosts by teaching them. Tested the CSC16 rules.
2017	Barod workshop. *The note-taker did not attribute comments to individuals, but simply recorded key information from the workshop.*	Barod bought in expertise from the CAE team. The CSC16 rules were refined. The Purposive Sampling Grid was developed to focus more on intersectionality than protected characteristics.
2019	Use of CSC with Client 2	Tested the new approach to designing the Grid and selecting hosts rather than participants. Tested a new approach to training hosts.
2019	CAE reflective workshop (Reflective, 2019)	Ethical approval was sought to reconvene the CAE team for a reflective workshop. The primary purpose was to reflect on having been participant-researchers together, with a secondary purpose being to discuss methodological developments of CSC since the 2015 CAE work.
Ongoing	Theoretical work	This was ongoing and responsive to feedback from the field testing.

Testing in the field was done with commercial clients, of whom two were willing to give consent for internal documents to be shared and used for doctoral research purposes. Both clients have been anonymised. This means links to public reports have not been included and details have been omitted that would enable the clients' identification.

Descriptions of fieldwork are reconstructed from documents provided by Barod and the client for use in the research and from my personal reflections as a Barod employee involved in the field testing.

7.2   Client 1

7.2.1 Description of field testing

This section draws on documents D1 to D3 and D8 as described in 3.8 and Appendix 3.

Client 1 was working on a social care related website and needed to find out how people not currently using social care might search for information, and what sort of information they would want to find. The client was already working with a digital design team but wanted additional input in the Discover phase. They commissioned Barod to carry out an initial exploratory set of eight conversations, followed by a further 22 conversations once they had seen the value of the approach.

As part of my company placement, I facilitated a workshop to discuss what had been learned from the work with Client 1. I then used this to suggest changes to the method for the next field test.

Discussions were held with the client to identify any particular voices or characteristic that needed to be included in the set of CSC. The contract was for twelve conversations. Barod drew up a purposive sampling grid based on this (see Fig. 7.1). The provisional purposive sampling grid was shared with Client 1 for approval before people were approached to take part. When a conversation takes place, a cross is inserted in each relevant row for the person or people in that conversation. More conversations need to take place until each row has at least one cross in it. At this point the grid is said to be completed. The requirement to achieve this with as few conversations as possible which forces selection of people to take part in conversations towards intersectionality. Otherwise, it would take far more than twelve conversations to complete the grid.

In order to identify the people or groups, the Barod team met together to think about people in their extended social and professional networks who they thought would be open and available to take part in a CSC, and who were more likely to have intersectional lives, perspectives and experiences. A provisional list of 15 was drawn up. As people or groups agreed, their name and a pen portrait were added as a column header and their characteristics marked with a cross on the relevant rows.

Figure 7.1   Provisional purposive sampling grid for Client 1

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Recruited												
	Host												
AGE	Teens												
	16-34												
	35-64												
	65+												
GENDER & SEXUALITY	Cis hetero Male												
	Cis hetero Female												
	Trans												
	Gay/Lesbian/Bi												
	Fluid/Non-binary												
LANGUAGE	Welsh												
	English												
	British Sign Language												
INCOME	Unemployed												
	In-work poverty												
	Adequate/higher income												
AREA	Rural												
	Urban												
	Multiple deprivation												
	Well-resourced												
ETHNICITY & RELIGION	White												
	Gypsy/Traveller												
	BME women												
	Muslim Asian women												
DIGITAL CONFIDENCE	Low												
	High												
DISABILITY/CARING	Learning Difficulties /ASD												
	Dementia												
	Full time informal carer												

The twelve chosen conversations were a mixture of individuals and pre-existing groups. With individuals, the person who knew them (or knew of them) invited them and hosted the conversation. The client wanted at least two Welsh-language conversations, which could not be hosted by Barod workers. Therefore, Barod recruited and trained two first language Welsh speakers from their professional network and asked them each to host a conversation in Welsh.

Two pre-existing groups were included. They were asked if they wanted to self-facilitate a conversation or wanted someone from Barod to join the group for the conversation. One chose to self-facilitate and the other asked Barod to provide a facilitator.

Instructions to hosts were verbal. They can be summarised as follows. Invitations should be verbal and framed as "Client 1 wants to find out what people would do if they needed to find information about social care. They want to know so they can get their new website right. Barod's getting paid to do some work on this, so we are paying anyone we talk with because that's only fair. Could we meet for a coffee and chat some time?". The fieldwork description from 6.11 was shared, along with an example of A3 notes from a previous CSC[54]. Minimal instruction was given on note-making beyond saying the notes needed to be non-linear, needed to be in plain sight and it would be fine for others in the conversation to write on the A3 sheet as well.

The notes were analysed in a spreadsheet set up as in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2   Layout of spreadsheet

CSC ID	Text[55]	Word association	Cluster	Theme
CSC1	go to GP surgery to look for leaflets and numbers, but don't want to talk to GP	where	Access info	Where to publicise
CSC1	I don't want my dad seeing I'm looking at care homes	privacy	Type of info	Must haves
CSC1	no idea, but I don't want to sift through lots of answers	DK	Features	Must haves
CSC1	how to get help if your family can't help	need	Type of info	Must haves
CSC1	not everyone has access to the internet, so train librarians to use it with you	support	Access info	Where to publicise
CSC1	if desperate, you want it instantly, or at least the promise that it is going to give you what you want quickly	instant	Features	Must haves
CSC1	if desperate, you want it instantly, or at least the promise that it is going to give you what you want quickly	what you want	Access info	Must haves

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[54] I do not have permission to share that example of A3 notes. However it was similar to the example in Fig. 2.6

[55] These are composite examples, not exact text fragments from work with Client 1.

One text fragment is entered twice because two words came to mind during the word association[56]. The purpose of the word association is familiarisation with the data, and to offer insights into potential cross-cutting themes. It only informed clusters if text fragments had not been clustered by the people in the conversation. After the word association came adding the cluster names. One cluster, 'Features' had been written alongside a line around some of the notes. The other two clusters were indicated as clusters by lines on the notes but not named by the people in the conversation. Themes were identified in the light of Client 1's intended use of the findings from the conversations.

Reporting to Client 1 involved using themes as section headings and writing a summary of the significance of the theme, then including a number of the notes from that theme. The report focused on recommendations.

7.2.2 Feedback and personal reflections

The purposive sampling grid

The client had been satisfied with the grid approach. However, there were more characteristics and variables that needed accounting for than just protected characteristics, for example familiarity with the digital world, past involvement with social care, and geographic location. Some (e.g. geographic location) could be imagined to be generically significant. Others (e.g. past involvement) might be specific to this set of CSC.

Recruiting and training

Once the grid had been drawn up, Barod looked to its networks to find people with facilitation skills who were believed to have the attributes needed for a host (see 6.5). Training involved explaining the CSC method and showing them examples of completed notes. The Welsh speakers were recruited for their facilitation skills. There were no reported difficulties in training them to make notes, but significant difficulties were reported in getting them to hold a natural conversation together rather than slip into interviewer/interviewee roles when asked to practise on each other in the training session. The notes they made of their conversations were linear, even though on blank paper.

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[56] This would not usually be marked by red text; that is simply to highlight why the fragment is entered twice.

Fieldwork

No-one reported difficulties with the fieldwork. Most of the notes showed the pattern of note-taking expected for a CSC. One of the Barod team, however, had made notes in a reporter's lined notepad and "tidied them up" (pers. comm.) while typing them. This reduced the richness of the data, and reduced confidence that the framing of the notes reflected how the participant would have framed it.

Verbal accounts of some activities sounded indistinguishable from workshops. Despite this, a diversity of people were involved in the consultation and the information they provided was rich and varied.

Personal reflections: Space

My assumption had been that the people in the conversation were more important than where the conversation took place for making something a CSC. As part of the work for Client 1, this was tested by organising CSC:

1. with someone known well, but in a café unfamiliar to us both.
2. with someone unknown who was a regular at one of my regular cafes.

The first felt like a public performance and not like a CSC. Both of us were looking round. The conversation was more stilted than our usual conversations. My focus slipped to gathering information for the client, more than talking around the subject.

The second felt like other CSCs. We both knew the café well, so there were no uncertainties about culture or etiquette, or practical worries like how to order or where the toilets were, or even how long it would take to get from home to the café. The café itself has a distinctive ambiance and culture. The fact that we both chose to use that café regularly may have indicated a commonality in how we approach the social world that contributed to the ease of the conversation.

These reflections resonate with the importance of staging as a way to 'define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he [sic] will expect of them and what they may expect of him' (Goffman, 1990a (1956), p.13). The work with Client 1 suggests staging may be a stronger signifier and definer of type of performance required than the people who are enacting the performance.

One conversation felt back region conversation but was definitely not a standard CSC. Two of us from Barod met with care workers who would otherwise have been having a team training session. We brought large amounts of home-made cake, some shop-bought cake and fresh fruit, to supplement the Rich Tea biscuits supplied by the employer. We encouraged people to sit and chat with each other about the topic while we circulated the room and joined the groups that people had naturally formed. In effect, Barod had created an enjoyable back region for care workers, and when we joined them they continued to talk naturally. When their manager entered the room, everyone stiffened slightly, the laughter stopped, and conversations became more focused on the task. While not a CSC scenario it worked as a CSC because it provided the carers with a pleasurable, social occasion without requiring them to do anything that was not part of their everyday world.

This reinforced the findings from the previous chapter about the importance of cake. The performance people expected when they arrived was of 'staff being trained or consulted'. Reflecting on Goffman's work (1990a (1956)) suggests that the reasons for the performance shifting to something closer to a back region social occasion were the change from dry biscuits to a choice of cakes and fruit (reinforcing the findings of Chapter 6 about the importance of cake) and the absence of their manager. Goffman describes teams and the role of team leader in establishing the situation and therefore the type of roles and performances required (ibid., pp.83, 88, 90). The absence of the manager seems to have allowed the situation to be reframed, using the cake, away from 'staff being trained' to 'social occasion' – at least until the manager entered the room.

7.3   Recommendations for changes before the next field test

The 2017 development workshop (D4) reviewed information from 7.2. The workshop indicated a number of changes should be made to CSC16 before its next field test.

7.3.1 Recruitment

In CSC16, the purposive sampling grid was used to identify attendees. There had been some tensions in the work with Client 1 between the rule that said people should know each other and the practical requirement to make conversations happen, often to very

tight schedules. As a result, I had hosted more conversations than was appropriate, a dilemma that was discussed at the workshop.

One suggestion arising from the workshop was that it might be more effective in terms of rolling out CSC if the purposive sampling grid was used to identify the characteristics of a potential host. That person would be contacted to explain the concept of CSC, asked if they were interested, and then asked if they had someone with whom they could imagine having a social chat about the topic. If both answers were 'yes', then they would need to be trained. This would mean training people who had no background in qualitative research or facilitation, which called for a re-think of training method.

Pragmatically this involved a trade-off. It would take longer to find and train hosts. However, it would potentially involve less work in supporting the recruitment of participants. It would also gradually build a pool of people that could form the future basis for a network or community of practice.

7.3.2 Space

In the CAE, Diane had sketched her analysis of the five individual accounts, which included a bubble she called 'space' and 'atmosphere' (Fig. 7.3).

Figure 7.3   Space and atmosphere
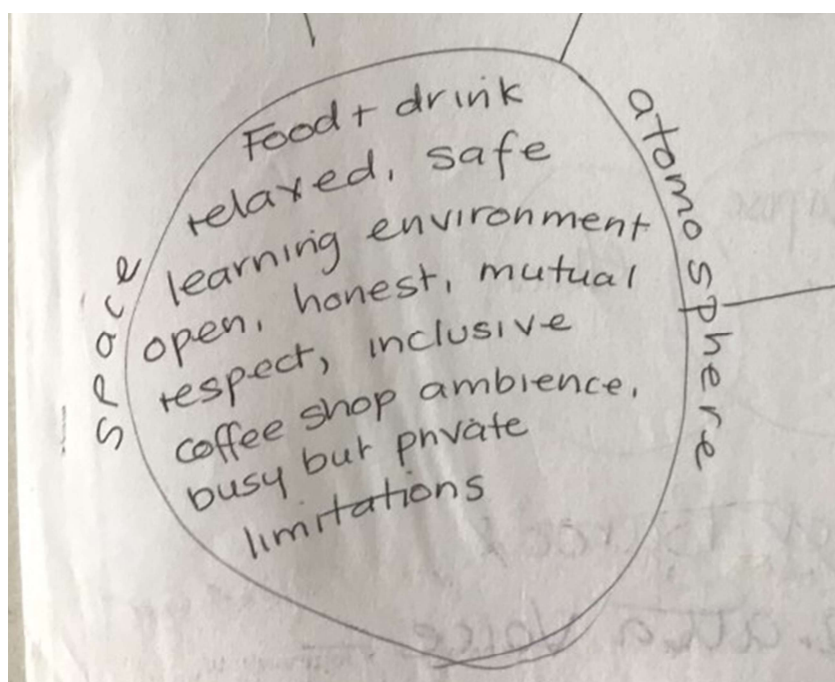
©Diane Holmes, detail from Diane, CAE analysis, 2015

This sketch was shown in the Barod CSC workshop to prompt discussion of how to make sure that future CSC took place in a 'space' (not just a venue) that would support back region performance. No-one questioned Diane's pairing of atmosphere and space, or the features she associated with it (food and drink, relaxed, safe learning environment, open, honest, mutual respect, inclusive, coffee shop ambience, busy but private, limitations). It would be impossible to codify 'space' into a set of rules that, if followed, would lead to a CSC being held in a suitable space. The workshop did not draw conclusions, simply reaffirmed the importance of space as something more than physical location. Instead of codification, the decision was made to ask people being trained as hosts to think about places where they had previously had these kinds of conversation, and to think about who they had had them with. They would then be asked if they could imagine doing a CSC in one of those places with one of those people. The importance of space resonates with Goffman's observations about the importance of physical setting in establishing the kind of performance required, as discussed in 6.4, 6.7.2 and 7.2.2.

7.3.3 Training

The training approach had not worked well enough to use the same approach in future. In addition, rather than training people who had been selected for similarity to a target group, in future we would be training people who *were* the target group.

CSC16 requires hosts to be able to facilitate a natural conversation while making notes. There was also a profile for people who were likely to be good hosts (see Table 6.3). A note was added at this stage to the profile indicating that people who have professional roles as minute takers, interviewers or facilitators might find it difficult to avoid switching into that role.

7.3.4 Payment

Some issues had arisen in the work for Client 1 with people not being comfortable with the idea of being paid. For Barod, CSC are a prime example of co-producing knowledge that could not exist if either party tried to apply their knowledge in isolation from or dominance over the other. Therefore, for Barod it would make no ethical sense to carry out CSC commercially and then pay some of the knowledge co-producers in the conversation but not others.

Two compromises had been used. The first had drawn on guidance from INVOLVE (2018) about payment for public involvement in research, namely making payment to an

organisation rather than an individual. In two instances with Client 1, a grassroots user-led organisation had been asked to organise and host CSC and a payment was made to the organisation that covered both their work and the involvement of members. It was left to the organisation and those who took part in the CSC to agree the allocation of the money.

Sometimes the exchange of money was not ethically possible. It would have changed the nature of a relationship in difficult or unacceptable ways, or it was culturally inappropriate. This occurred, for example, using the method with an extended settled Roma Gypsy family on the fringe of my social network. To exchange money would have destroyed the nature of the relationship and been offensive. Rather, they expected that they could call on me in the future as the relationship had been allowed to become one of mutual involvement. This raised its own ethical issues. It was agreed with Barod that the relational reciprocity was with me, but I could draw on company resources to fulfil any reciprocity. This kind of situation is not uncommon in inclusive research arrangements, where an academic may work professionally with a self-advocate researcher but also provide unofficial support with, for example, negotiating complicated statutory systems. It is the ethical need for transparency in relational reciprocity that led to Barod initiating what became a proof of concept web science research about the feasibility of an online inclusive research Time Bank (Nind et al., 2017).

7.4 Client 2

7.4.1 Description of field testing

This section draws on documents D5 to D7 and D9 as described in 3.8 and Appendix 3.

Client 2 was planning a new corporate vision. This would bring changes that would affect the public. Client 2 had already opened a formal consultation process. They became aware only those already in contact with their organisation were responding and they needed wider input. They would need the findings within the month. Barod was engaged to talk to a diverse sample of the population of Wales. The only criterion was that they must not have been involved with Client 2, and that people with each of the protected characteristics must be included. The formal consultation had a set of questions, therefore Barod suggested carrying out a double analysis to report once against the questions and once to show them what people had said when given the freedom to respond to the topic and the reason the client was consulting.

Discussions were held with the client to identify anything that they were aware of that would affect someone's experience or perspective on the consultation topic. This was a change from the conversation with Client 1 that focused on voices and personal characteristics. The shift in conversation reflected a developing understanding that diversity was important not just on the grounds of rights or legitimacy, but the need for a diversity of knowledges and mental models of the topic. This was used to draw up a provisional purposive sampling frame[57] (see Fig. 7.4). For this field test there was a shift from focusing on protected characteristics to thinking about what would most affect someone's experience and perspective. There was also a shift from recruiting participants (and then finding a culturally appropriate host) to recruiting hosts who invited one or more of their social circle to meet with them. The client requested that rows were added to the grid, namely separating LGBTQ+ into LBGQ and Trans; married/civil partnership; pregnancy/caring responsibilities for child; caring responsibilities for adult. This was because their Equality Scheme required them to demonstrate that they had taken all the protected characteristics into consideration.

The client asked that some of their staff were trained in the method. Three staff self-selected to be trained. All three were White and English-speaking. None declared any protected characteristics except gender (two men, one woman). One was aged 22-39; two were aged 40-64. The Barod team met to think of the best way to find people to recruit that would make sure all the other rows were completed within the agreed 18 conversations. Some could be done by Barod workers or their extended professional and social networks. Where this was not possible, small relevant Third Sector organisations and community groups were asked if anyone was interested in getting involved.

The training involved meeting each person (or in the case of the client's staff, meeting the three together), explaining the concept of CSC16, and asking if they could imagine talking on this topic with someone they knew well. We talked through their choices until it was clear to me that they had an appropriate person in mind. They were then asked where they might usually meet that person for this kind of conversation.

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[57] The client's expert knowledge identified the rows as the most salient ones.

Figure 7.4   Provisional purposive sampling grid for Client 2

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1		Recruit host																		
2		Photo of notes received?																		
3	AGE	16–21 in education																		
4		16–21 not in																		
5		22–39																		
6		40–64																		
7		65+																		
8	GENDER & SEXUALITY	Cis hetero Male																		
9		Cis hetero Female																		
10		LGBTQ+																		
11	INCOME	Unemployed																		
12		In-work poverty																		
13		Adequate/higher																		
14	AREA	Rural																		
15		Urban																		
16		Multiple deprivation																		
17		Well-resourced																		
18	ETHNICITY	White British																		
19		East European																		
20		Black women																		
21		Asian men																		
22	EDUCATION	Few or no Level 2 qualifications																		
23		Level 3 or higher qualification																		
24		Graduate																		
25	LANGUAGE/ CULTURE	Welsh speaking and Welsh																		
26		English speaking and Welsh																		
27		English speaking, not Welsh																		
28		Deaf (BSL)																		
29		First language not Welsh/English																		
30	DISABILITY or DIFFERENCE	Learning Difficulties																		
31		Autistic																		
32		Wheelchair user																		
33		Visually impaired (uses screen reader)																		
34	FAMILY/SOCIAL CONTEXT	Rest of family involved with client																		
35		No immediate family involved with client																		
36																				

Having outlined the method, I explained that the easiest way to learn was by having a practice with me. If needed, I would interrupt to point out salient features or suggest trying a different approach. At the end, there would be a debrief. The training focused on the practices that enable and are barriers to off-stage performances (see 6.9.2). This taught me that everyone has their own unique style of making notes and their own triggers that cue them into back region or front region performances. One person could not jot the areas that needed covering on a separate piece of paper before the conversation without adopting an interviewer role – sitting up straighter, asking more questions, leaning forward with pen ready to write while listening to me. He tried putting them in different corners of the A3 sheet instead, and instantly physically relaxed and stopped asking direct questions. When we debriefed, he had a job that required him to have a list of questions to ask when interviewing people on the phone; the props in our first attempt at a conversation had triggered him into adopting that role.

This approach to training seemed to work, so it was used with the other hosts recruited. Two of the first hosts trained seemed naturals. They were told some of the rows we were still trying to recruit for and asked if they knew anyone who might fit that description. In one case they did, and they were asked if they would like to try passing on the training to that person. This was because the ability to go to the 'second generation' without losing too much of the ethos or practice was potentially important for future scaling of the method. Photographs of the notes from conversations showed that some conversations had been richer than others. However, all conversations contributed relevant information.

Client 2 was already running a traditional consultation with questions. Therefore one analysis of the notes was done as described for Client 1. A second analysis was done against the client's questions. The client requested a brief report, focusing on the analysis against the questions, and a face to face meeting to discuss the findings from the first analysis. As a result of the face to face meeting, the client then asked for a report on "what people had actually said" (pers.comm.). The client emailed later to say that the input from CSC16 had led them to making a fundamental revision to their intended strategy.

7.4.2 Personal reflections on analysis

As with all CSC, the first stage of analysis took place within each conversation, comprising the agreement of what should be included in the notes, and in how the notes were grouped.

With Client 1, the centralised analysis was reflexive and thematic. Client 2 already had a formal public consultation underway where responses were being analysed against the questions asked in the consultation. For this reason, Client 2 required a similar analysis of the data collected using CSC. This was provided. Approximately half of the data could be coded against the questions without twisting what seemed the meaning of the data. Before conducting this analysis, a reflexive thematic analysis had been conducted. This was done first to reduce the risk of distorting what was seen in the data. The importance of this order had become apparent when conducting the analysis of the policy-making data reported in Chapter 5. For me, at least, it is harder to see patterns in data if I have already reviewed the data in the light of someone else's framing (i.e. someone's questions).

What double analysis showed was that when allowed to range freely and conversationally across a topic, people did touch on subjects that were relevant to the client. However, the reflexive thematic analysis also showed that CSC allowed people to touch on subjects that were relevant but that the client had not known to ask about. In effect, it both answered the questions people knew to ask, and identified the kind of questions that people *should* ask.

It is a weakness of this research that examples cannot be shared without making it possible to identify Client 2. It will be important to find a way to conduct at least one set of CSC in such a way that examples can be given.

7.4.3 Comparison of use of CSC16 with Client 1 and Client 2

Table 7.2 compares the two uses of CSC in the collaborative field testing.

Table 7.2   Comparison of use of CSC with Client 1 and Client 2

Feature of CSC	Example of use from 2017	Example of use from 2019
	Client 1	*Client 2*
Purpose	Consultation with potential future users to inform the development of a social care web portal	Consultation with people who had no interest or engagement in sport to inform the development of a new vision for increasing physical activity levels in Wales
Number of conversations	12 (for rapid initial report) + 18 (for depth and to make sure no key themes had been missed)	18
Recruitment	First use of Purposive Sample Frame, to identify invitees. No need to recruit hosts as we had sufficient appropriate hosts. Hosts used social media, own social network and asking their network for suggestions.	First use of Purposive Sample Frame to identify hosts. First formal training sessions for hosts who were not part of my social/professional network or my network's network. Trainees asked to identify who they could invite as part of the training.
Payment	£10 cash and refreshments OR refreshments and donation to the charity hosting the conversation equivalent to £10 per person.	£10 cash and refreshments OR refreshments and payment of fee to the organisation hosting or arranging people to take part.
Locations	Pub, cafe, invitee's dining table, coffee shop, play centre, office lounge area.	Pub, cafe, dining table, coffee shop, third sector drop-in, invitee's lounge
Informed or presumed consent?	Presumed	Presumed
Capturing the conversation	A3 pad, paper tablecloth.	A3 pad, paper serviettes, paper tablecloth.
Checking the notes	At end of conversation.	At end of conversation.
Data analysis	Entered into Excel. Rapid thematic analysis.	Entered into Excel. Rapid thematic analysis and analysis against the consultation questions.
Reporting	Interim report of key themes, final report, presentation to client, presentation for client to cross party group at the Senedd.	Draft report presented to client, final report.
Feedback from client	Re-thought how to organise information on the site, re-thought use of language, added features suggested by participants.	Heard messages they would not otherwise have heard. This altered their Vision and their communication strategy.

7.5 CAE reflective workshop (Reflective, 2019)

As there was no opportunity to produce a co-authored account, extracts from the transcript of this workshop have been used wherever possible.

7.5.1 Making notes

Extract 1   Making notes

Rachel: It would be much better to have someone instigating the conversation and somebody else taking notes. That's how I would do it because trying to be relaxed AND have a chat AND think about what you are trying to achieve AND make notes at the same time, I mean that's difficult, isn't it?

If you record it, that isn't a problem.

Anne: We never record them.

Rachel: Why not?

Anne: Three reasons. Do you remember it felt really weird most of the time for most of us when we recorded the research one?

Diane: Yes, it really does change it. If you were sat with someone and put the recorder on, however normal everything else was, that would not be a normal conversation.

Rachel: Mmm. Doing it on the paper and getting everyone to agree is better really, 'cause in a way you're whittling down the important aspects together, aren't you…. So in a sense, they are not just notes, and you can make sure that your point is on the paper and you can add your actual words so the notes become 'this is what was important in the conversation we had. This is what you need to know'.

(Rachel, Anne and Diane)

Extract 2   Training people to make notes

Rachel: How many did you train to make notes?

Anne: Eight.

Rachel: and how many were successful?

Anne: They all were in the end, but some people took 40 minutes to train and for one person it took three hours. [one person] had to keep her notes on a serviette because as soon as it was actual paper, she was straight into interview mode…. For others, all you had to get them do this turn the paper round from portrait to landscape as soon as it was portrait it was a list but when it was landscape they splurged in different directions.

Ellie: Did you ever sit in on one that they'd done?

Anne: No. I saw their notes, and I supposed I took it on trust if the notes looked decent.

Rachel: I would have

Anne: I'm not sure I could have just sat in without…

Ellie: You'd have to have a bit of a character change, maybe!

(Rachel, Anne and Ellie)

At that point, one of the women laughed that I'd have to have a bit of a character change to be able to 'just sit in'. We all laughed because we all knew it was true. That highlighted how far the development of the method to date revolves around who I am.

Making notes remained problematic:

- I had not realised until the final reflective workshop that not everyone can do all four things Rachel listed at once. This posed a conundrum. Making notes, for many people, will interfere with the ability to hold a natural conversation. This was something I had found when training people as hosts for Client 2. Although a few took to it natural, some found it challenging. For the two people trained for Client 1, the training delivered did not take the scale of the challenge sufficiently into account, and I was left with lingering doubts as to whether they had conducted a qualitative interview rather than a 'coffee shop conversation'.
- Having a separate scribe sounded, to me, more like a workshop. This speculation was not tested during the research but needs testing in future research.
- Audio recording, even if the act of recording doesn't interfere with the naturalness of the conversation, means there are no notes to do the shared analysis at the end of the conversation.

I had told my collaborators that a warning sign that I had not done a good training job was if notes came back looked too neat and orderly. As Diane put it, "sometimes when you're writing you change things or you try to balance things", and as Rachel added, "and you might want to put in the opposite opinions, or you might tidy things up.". Either of these would reduce the value of the notes as reflections of the conversation. However, if the person making the notes was recruited to fit the sample frame, perhaps this is less problematic in terms of data usefulness than if it were only the invitee who was recruited to fit the sample frame. In other words, would it make a big difference to the insights the client got if the data were closer to someone's written account of their perspective rather than notes of a conversation between people who (in theory[58]) would have similar perspectives?

7.5.2 Taking part

Extract 3   "The chance to just talk about me"

Anne: So in one case it was training a Muslim in their 50s who then went on to have the conversation with another Muslim in their 50s.

Rachel: It must be great for them as well to know that somebody wanted them to do. That's really exciting isn't it

Anne: It was exciting. I debrief with people after they've gone and done their conversations, and, in particular with that person, she said it was very exciting because it felt artificial at the start and then they got into it she felt the woman she met with, well, that woman said 'nobody ever gives me the chance to just talk about me'

Rachel: I think it must have been like that for us as well.

(Anne and Rachel)

The findings in Chapters 4 to 6 all show that, while people often don't want to get involved, if they do and they feel valued in how it is done, then being asked what you think feels good. The work with Client 2 reinforced that.

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[58] The theory is considered in 7.6.1

7.5.3 Transferring the ethos[59]

Extract 4   Ethos not rules

Rachel: I think one of the difficulties of things like this is it works really well with the person whose vision it is but then, when you pass it on, the other person doesn't really do it the right way. Because they're not the same person.

Diane: That's right it's working out what's essential and not essential.

Ellie: But when you move a stage on, because you have to train somebody to train other people, you can only do that so many times, can't you or you lose the vision.

Anne: One person I trained did a conversation and then the person they did a conversation with went and did another conversation. It seemed to go OK, but that's probably the stage at which I would need to find a way to watch them. I don't know maybe that's the control freak in me.

Rachel: It could work if the person that is the next person really understands and shares the vision … You've just got to be really protective of it.

Anne: I can't make rules, there isn't a formula. It makes it essential that they understand it, that they understand the vision.

Diane: So it's free, but tied down at the same time

(Rachel, Diane and Anne)

Extract 5   Spreading the vision

Rachel: It's spreading how to do it, that's where it's going to get messed up.

Anne: Yes. If people train people who train people, how do I know that by the time it gets to that outer circle that it still like coffee shop conversations? Because it could be like Chinese Whispers.[60]

Rachel: Yes, because if they had very strong views on something it would affect how it got done. Having said that, anything could be messed up by people. But it's how you try to avoid it happening.

Anne: On the main ways by picking the right people. That's the only way.

Diane: True. It's almost to have the freedom of the conversation you have to have the control so you can have freedom.

(Rachel, Anne and Diane)

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[59] This section heading is a phrase coined by Rachel during this workshop and currently used by Barod to talk about CSC21.
[60] Or as the Chinese call it, *geese to geese.*

The act of trying to train others had made it clear that the method could not be codified. However many rules were made, there would always need to be at least one more rule because each conversation would be different because each person was different. Any codification based on my experiences would only work for someone who was similar to me. This started to become clear when training someone whose natural conversational style was to ask constant questions. The rule not to ask direct questions was designed to keep CSC16 a natural conversation and not an interview. For this trainee, it would have meant asking her to hold an unnatural conversation.

Replication often relies on codification. This is one of the tenets of objectivist organisational knowledge management (Hislop et al., p.61). However, codification is already known to be inadequate for transferring a practice from one part of a complex adaptive system to another (ibid.). In the successful second generation host (i.e. the host trained by someone I had trained), what had been transferred was an ethos and set of principles that were interpreted and enacted in a way that made sense to that person in that situation.

Maintaining an ethos and set of principles while transferring a practice is associated less with training and more with communities of practice (ibid., p.201). A community of practice is:

> "A group of people who have a particular activity in common, and as a consequence have some common knowledge, a sense of community identity, and some element of a shared language and overlapping values." (ibid., p.196).

Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest communities of practice as a way to apprentice people into a way of knowing and set of knowledge.

We discussed how to think about it, and what to call a process of spreading out. Our conclusion was the best metaphor was the disaster movie idea of a virus spreading from 'patient zero'[61]. This led to the idea of something spreading without instituting the feel of a hierarchy. For CSC21, what mattered was the distance from 'patient zero' as the one who 'infected' others with the vision and idea. We felt that two generations was as far as transmission could go before the 'virus' might 'mutate'. This idea was developed into the concept that still needs testing for scaling up and spreading the use of CSC21 (see 7.7).

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[61] This workshop took place in May 2019, seven months before the 'patient zero' of the current pandemic. I think we would have found different language if the workshop had been in May 2021.

7.5.4 CSC: methodologically 'auto' and 'collaborative'

Extract 6   Conversation not interview

Rachel: I think I'm getting confused really because obviously you're finding out what they think.

Anne: Ah, no, you're not finding out what they think. You're talking together and finding out what both of you think. So when you do the notes it's not just watching the other person. You'd put down what you were saying as well.

Rachel: But if it's your grandma you couldn't push your point.

Anne: But in an ordinary conversation you wouldn't be pushing, but here you can be because we are doing a workshop. It comes back to the difference between a conversation and a workshop.

Diane: It's finding a way together, not standing back and saying, 'So what do you think?'. In a way, you are sacrificing your own opinions, so they don't get in the way of thinking together. It's definitely nondirective.

Rachel: You see I keep thinking I couldn't do that with my grandmother.

Anne: But then you probably wouldn't have chosen your grandmother in the first place for the conversation. I'd have said 'Is there anyone in your family or friends that you'd be comfortable to sit and have a chat about health services?'.

(Rachel, Anne and Diane)

A key difference from an interview is that in CSC21 both are equal parties to the conversation, and what both say is of equal interest and significance. The notes, therefore, reflect both people's role in the conversation. Methodologically, this positions CSC21 closer to collaborative autoethnography than ethnography. If collaborative autoethnography had not been used as a method, it is possible that this highly significant shift within CSC might not have been considered.

This was not a feature of CSC16, where the host was more interested in the other person or other people's comments. That was because in CSC16, the host often did not match the profile in the purposive sampling grid. The host simply needed to be able to mix socially and hold a natural conversation with a person or people who matched the profile. However, the change occurred between Client 1 and Client 2 such that the *host* was recruited to match the purposive sampling grid profile.

7.5.5 Centrality of the Grid

> **Extract 7   Homogenous in a conversation, heterogenous across a set of conversations**
>
> *Ellie: Isn't there a danger that you choose somebody who has the same ideas or who you think would have the same ideas as you?*
>
> *Anne: Absolutely and that's the point. Once we have the diversity grid[62] we know we need to find somebody who matches different characteristics. And we ask them if there's someone they could have a chat with about this subject. So, yes, you'd be having a conversation with somebody very similar to you.*
>
> *Diane: Because if you're too far away from them you can't have this sort of conversation.*
>
> *Ellie: So the two people would be very similar usually...*
>
> *Rachel: But you're being really directive, then, about who you're choosing.*
>
> *Anne: Absolutely. I am incredibly directive about choosing the people to match the diversity grid. So really it all comes down to the diversity grid. If the grid is skewed than the whole research is skewed. If the grid has the right characteristics down the side and all the rows have at least one tick somewhere then the research is good.*
>
> *Rachel: So, what you might get from Ellie and her friend might not be that different from what you'd have got if you talked to Ellie yourself.*
>
> *Anne: Yes, and that's fine, because we'd all fit the same profile on the grid.*
>
> (Ellie, Anne, Diane and Rachel)

Public consultation has relied on self-selection. As Chapter 4 and 5 made clear, this leads to only certain sectors of the population getting involved. Even though Welsh Government reach out to 'hard to reach groups', the reaching out is to Third Sector organisations whose remit is to speak for and represent the group. The premise of intersectionality is that within any particular 'hard to reach group', there are those whose voices are more likely to be heard. This suggests that, for example, reaching out to the LGBTQ+ community is more likely to hear from White graduates in professional jobs than unemployed Black people with learning disabilities. This leads to problems whereby policy-makers are only hearing one part of the story.

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[62] This is the name originally given to the purposive sampling grid.

7.5.6 Different worlds, different conversations

> **Extract 8   Different worlds**
>
> *Anne: Let's say I had trained a Black asylum-seeking man in Cardiff. The conversation with him would be completely different from the conversation he would then have with his friend who is also a black asylum seeker.*
>
> *Rachel: And is that what actually happens?*
>
> *Anne: Yes, it is*
>
> *Ellie: Because he's in a different world really*
>
> *Anne: Yes because he's in a different world. So each of these profiles is really thinking about different worlds.*
>
> *Diane: So if you've been recently bereaved and you meet somebody who has been recently bereaved then you'll have a connection and it means you'll talk differently. So you've done all your directive bit at the beginning.*
>
> *Anne: Exactly.*
>
> (Anne, Rachel, Ellie and Diane)

It is difficult to theorise 'worlds' adequately, and yet it is something that is recognised in everyday social interaction. Attempting to theorise 'worlds' proved the most problematic and challenging theoretical work in the thesis, despite or perhaps because of the volume of alternative academic theoretical lenses through which 'worlds' has been viewed. Continuing that synthesis is a possible future line of research. For this thesis, it was theoretically adequate to use the lens of mental models. As theorising 'worlds' was not integral to this research, work to date on the synthesis is not included.

7.6 Description of CSC21, and a worked example

7.6.1 Overview

CSC21 is more than just a way to design and run a public consultation. It is a way that means this can happen *as if* it were a qualitative research project. The main reason for not describing it as a qualitative research approach that can be used for public consultation is that, as yet it is unclear whether individual conversations can survive the informed consent process. Its overarching methodological commitments and approach match those of this research (3.2 to 3.4).

CSC21 is premised on social issues being best understood as complex adaptive systems but it can be used without a requirement to accept that premise. CSC21 refers to the totality of approach to the individual conversations and the design, analysis and reporting work associated with conducting a set of such conversations. In this sense, CSC21 is perhaps a methodology more than a method. Principles from the design and analysis can be used with different qualitative research methods. Principles from the method can be used independent of either the method or CSC21 as a whole.

7.6.2 Ethos not rules

The collaborative field testing began with a set of rules for testing and theorising (6.11.3). this was in the belief that a method needed codifying to make it replicable and potentially evaluable (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Puttick and Ludlow, 2013). Attempts at codification proved frustrating. The rules always needed an additional rule, which needed an additional rule ad infinitum. This was lived experience of infinite regress as described by Wittgenstein (1973) and Carroll (1985). Fortunately, Rachel (Reflective, 2019) commented someone could follow all the rules and it still might not be a CSC because CSC was more an ethos than a formula. Looking back through the eyes of complexity theory and infinite regression, CSCs could never be reduced to a set of rules which, if enacted, would automatically result in the thing we had come to recognise as a CSC.

Given the premise of CSC is that people make sense of the social world in their own ways, and that it is this knowledge and way of knowing that is of value, it had been nonsensical to insist that only *my* way of making sense of the social world was acceptable as a way of doing CSC.

The ethos was already explicated back in 6.8. The conversations themselves are social, pleasurable, and natural - despite being on a topic and for a purpose. Each conversation values people's knowledges and individuality. An entire set of conversations must also value people's knowledges and individuality in the design and analysis. The approach to one-to-one training of hosts (7.4.1) seemed to transmit the ethos without pre-defining how the ethos should be enacted.

7.6.3 Comparison of the versions of CSC

Some features have held stable since Barod's first 'coffee shop conversations', but others have developed. Table 7.3 is adapted from Table 6.7 and provides a quick comparison of observable features.

Table 7.3   Comparison of the iterations of CSC

Task	'coffee shop conversations'	CSC16	CSC21
Planning with client	The organiser meets with client to agree how many conversations are needed, any particular categories of people they want included and a timescale.	The organiser meets with client to agree how many conversations are needed, any particular categories of people they want included and a timescale.	Conversation takes places about what is most likely to affect someone's perspective and experience of the issue.
Training hosts	n/a	Taught explanation of method	Experiential training, including explanation of why features are important so the host can contextualise the enactment of the feature.
Recruitment	Use Barod's extended social networks and social media to recruit, then identify someone within Barod who feels comfortable to host the conversation.	The organiser either *is* the host or recruits someone to be the host. The host invites friends to meet for a coffee, explaining as they invite them that the client wants to find out about [the topic] in order to [make a policy/plan a service], and that the client will pay for them all to have a chat about it while the host makes some notes to send to the client. The host asks their friends to suggest a place and time to meet.	Host is recruited. This may be from existing Barod networks, or by approaching a community organisation to explain CSC21 and ask if they know anyone who might be interested in learning to host. Part of the host training is identifying with them one or more people with whom they might naturally hold this kind of conversation. That recruitment is left up to the host.

Table 7.3 (continued) Comparison of the iterations of CSC

Task	'coffee shop conversations'	CSC16	CSC21
Diversity	No systematic approach	Use the protected characteristics of the Equality Act (2010) as a starting point. Make sure people are from different parts of Wales and different social circumstances (eg not all middle-class; not all Cardiff). Check there isn't a bias as a result of recruiting people who only have one protected characteristic.	Use the conversation about perspectives and experiences as a starting point. Add in any protected characteristics not already included. Limit number of initial conversations to force maximum intersectionality.
Fieldwork	The host and their friend(s) arrive, order coffees and just chat. The host brings an A3 pad of plain paper and pens. They make notes of the conversation in plain sight, and try to cluster similar themes on the page. In some conversations, invitees will join in the note-making either on the host's sheet or their own. The notes may be verbatim or the host's own summary. It is important to leave space when making notes as conversations jump around, and extra notes may need to be added about something previously noted. At some stage, someone will usually turns the conversation to the reason for meeting that day. If not, the host reminds everyone why they are there. They have a conversation. Like any conversation it can wander in all sorts of directions. The host must not be too swift or anxious to turn the conversation back to the topic, or it will start to feel more like a focus group. Because it is a conversation not an interview or a focus group, the host takes part too, and (unless it is the organiser) what they say forms part of the notes.	As 'coffee shop conversations' and CSC16 **except:** Conversations may take place anywhere, not necessarily a public space. Method of making notes is agreed during training to enable a back region performance while maintaining the key feature of 'in plain sight' and non-linearity.

Table 7.3 (continued) Comparison of the iterations of CSC

Task	'coffee shop conversations'	CSC16	CSC21
Fieldwork (continued)	A natural pause in the conversation, for example ordering more coffee or going to the toilet, is always good. Some people will start talking in more depth or differently having used the pause to reflect. When the conversation seems to be reaching a natural conclusion, the host begins summing up what they think they've heard, making sure everyone can see the notes. They do this by going round the sheet of paper, putting lines around the clusters as they talk. This always generates clarifications, additional information and corrections of how the notes have been clustered. The host makes additions and amendments as people talk. This continues until people agree that it is an accurate record of what they want made available to the client. The host takes a photo of the notes and sends it to the overall organiser.		
Analysis (1)	The first stage of analysis has occurred during the conversation, in that the host has made notes of the conversation that reflect their understanding of what is important and relevant in what is being said and clustered them.		
Analysis (2)	The organiser uses their preferred qualitative data analysis method to produce themes from the information on the sheets.	As for 'coffee shop conversations' and CSC16. In addition, if the client has specific questions or is running a parallel question-led consultation, a second analysis can be conducted against those questions. CSC21 describes this as double analysis.	
Reporting	The style of report writing depends on the needs and preferences of the client and the skill set of the organiser. The overall organiser is accountable to the client for making sure that the style of the report matches the client's needs.		

7.6.4 Worked example: Rebalancing Care and Support (Welsh Government, 2021)

Introduction

The SSWA was intended to address integration of services for people who need social care and support, and to improve people's wellbeing. As this thesis was being completed, Welsh Government issued a new social care White Paper, Rebalancing Care and Support (Welsh Government, 2021a, b) that revisits ground addressed in SSWA. This made the consultation a perfect opportunity to consider how CSC21 might be used and how it might contribute to making better policy. The formal public consultation ran to 6 April 2021 and comprised a full consultation document (40 pages; Welsh Government, 2021a) and an Easy Read version (19 pages; Welsh Government, 2021b). Finding them requires knowing its title and searching for it, joining the Welsh Government consultation emailing list, or checking Open Consultations page on their website.

Engaging with the public consultation[63]

The webpage has a "How to respond" button that takes you to three options: an online response form (no Easy Read), an email address with a downloadable response form and Easy Read response form, and a postal address with a downloadable response form (no Easy Read). The downloadable response form comprises ten "Do you agree that…" questions where you choose: agree, tend to agree, neither agree or disagree, tend to disagree, or disagree. There is space below each question to "Please explain your answer". The first question is "Do you agree that complexity in the social care sector inhibits service improvement?". There are no questions about potential impact on those who use social care services. There are then two final, long, questions about Welsh language. There is final space for "any other comment(s)". The form concludes with a box saying "Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here". There is no Welsh consultation document or Welsh form.

The Easy Read form was made available in February, around a month after the main form. The Easy Read form begins by asking people to read the Easy Read version of the White Paper before filling in the form. People are encouraged: "Please try to explain your answers. And give your own thoughts and ideas too." The form begins with a long

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[63] Webpage was modified and response forms were taken down from the Welsh Government website on 7 April 2021.

explanation of how people's answers will be used, who might see them, and data protection laws. It starts by asking for personal information (name, organisation, email address, address and phone number). There is a box to tick if people do not want their answers made public. The questions are still phrased as "Do you agree tha... ", but the language is simpler (e.g. Question 1 becomes "Do you agree that it is hard to improve and care support because the way it is organised is too complicated?"). There are three options to tick (yes, no, not sure). There is no instruction under the first two questions, but the next eight say "Is there anything else you would like to say about this".

How does this consultation relate to evidence from Chapters 4 to 6 about public involvement?

The consultation document and response forms have the features noted in Chapters 4 to 6 as barriers to public involvement, namely:

- It requires the knowledge that Welsh Government has a consultations website.
- It is written in language that, presumably, is familiar to policy-makers but the findings from Chapter 5 and conversations with Barod suggest is alien to most of the population of Wales.
- For those who want to get involved, the language (even in the Easy Read) is challenging to understand because of the implicit assumptions about what is already known (e.g. current arrangements for social care commissioning) and how social care is thought about (e.g. from a service provision perspective, and not from the perspective of people who use social care).
- The response forms require a response of "Do you agree that...", rather than open questions.
- The response forms use a format reminiscent of school examinations, with a question and the instruction to "Please explain your answer".

It was beyond the scope of this thesis to enquire into any public involvement that had informed the drafting of this White Paper, and no such information is included on the webpage, the consultation document, or the response form.

Might CSC21 be appropriate?

The topic is highly relevant to anyone currently engaged with social care and support services, whether as a user of services or because a family member requires care and support. The outcomes of the White Paper are highly relevant to anyone who may in the future need care and support services. The experiential knowledge of those who have

used services in the past is highly relevant. It is difficult to imagine anyone in Wales for whom this consultation on the proposed law is not at least potentially relevant.

CSC21 is designed for use at the start of a process rather than the formal public consultation at the end. By this stage, CSC21 can only offer a final opportunity to identify fundamental flaws, unconsidered factors, or potential unintended consequences if the White Paper is made into law. In the absence of evidence of earlier involvement, such final scrutiny has value. For this reason, using CSC21 would be appropriate.

Using CSC21 in this context

The focus of the White Paper is changing how services are organised, so people get the kind of care and support they need to have the same kind of life as people around them who don't need care and support. If it was me hosting a chat with Ellie, Diane, Rachel and Helen, I might say: "You know how some children and adults and elderly people need support from Social Services and charities and the NHS? [pause] But they don't always end up getting the support they need? [pause] So, Welsh Government is planning to change the law about how services get organised and decisions get made about what sort of services to have. I'm wondering what they need to know before they do that.".

The purposive sample frame would need to identify things that would affect people's experiences and perspectives about well-being, social care and who controls what about public services. Normally, a frame would be drawn up with the client using their expert knowledge. From the case for change in the White Paper (Welsh Government, 2021, pp.14-26), key factors would be:

- Life stage (child, adult, older person, life transitions)
- Living situation (at home, with family, supported living/foster care, registered care/children's home)
- Geographic location (Health Board/existing regional partnership board)
- Ease of access to amenities in general (rurality, deprivation)
- Ethnicity (White, Black, Asian, minority ethnic)
- Welsh language and culture (Welsh)
- Age of informal carer (young carer, adult, older person)
- Health and wellbeing of informal carer (works/studies, struggling, thriving)

- Reason for care and support (safeguarding child, safeguarding adult, mental health, learning disabilities, sensory impairment, physical impairment, dementia, age-related frailty)
- Satisfaction with current care and support (if a spectrum not captured from the conversations, try to identify someone whose experience fills a gap)
- The team or service that provides care and support (make sure it includes Direct Payments, Continuing Health Care, Third Sector/community preventative support).

In conversation with the client, other factors such as gender, sexuality, and a first language that is neither Welsh nor English would be mentioned as potentially relevant.

This would require around 40 rows on a purposive sampling grid, meaning a minimum of 14 conversations for a rapid broad-brush picture. Identifying potential hosts would be done initially through the social and professional networks of myself, Barod and previous hosts. Where that was inadequate, Third Sector and community groups would be approached to help identify someone.

With Client 2, the first 'second generation' training took place, where I trained someone who then trained the person who they had held their CSC with. For 14 conversations, it would be adequate for me to train people and in so doing to identify people with the apparent potential to pass on the training.

For CSC21 to be rolled out at more widely, more than one person would need to be able to do the initial training. Therefore, if CSC21 were being used for this public consultation, I would be supporting someone who had already done 'second generation' training to become a 'generation zero' trainer who, like me, could develop their own first generation of hosts. If this worked well, then in the next set of CSC21, the new generation zero trainer could see whether one of their first generation hosts could pass on the training. It would be at this stage that a community of practice would become essential for quality assurance and maintenance of the vision and principles.

Nothing would be changed about the fieldwork itself, including the making, checking and grouping of notes. However, additional work is needed on debriefing and discussion how this side of CSC21 went as there will need to be future development to address the unfortunate requirement that someone in the conversation (not necessarily the host) can read and write.

There would be a centralised double-analysis, once reflexively to identify themes in people's conversations, and once against the formal consultation questions. Both would be reported to Welsh Government.

Added value to Welsh Government

Welsh Government wants to engage around social care. This is evidenced, for example, by the approach to Measuring the Mountain (Cooke et al., 2019) and the evaluation of the implementation of the SSWA (Llewellyn et al., 2021). Much of the engagement is via Third Sector organisations. This is essential but tends to reach only those in Barod's top right quadrant of people who want to engagement but face barriers.

The research in Chapter 5 suggested that there is a difference between involving ordinary citizens and involving in, with, and through Third Sector organisations. Given there are no indications that ordinary citizens are coming forward and finding the Welsh Government consultation webpage, and far less that they then read and respond, CSC21 because a powerful mechanism for discovering how ordinary citizens understand and make sense of social issues. At this late stage in policy development, all that can be offered is an indication of the policy's likely success. If conducted as part of a policy design Discovery, those responsible for making the policy would have had access to a diversity of knowledge about the problem of poorer than expected well-being outcomes for people in Wales which, from experience of past use of CSC16, could have led to a solution very different from the one proposed in Rebalancing Care and Support (Welsh Government, 2021a, b).

7.7   Discussion and theorising of CSC21

There are five hallmarks of CSC21 that require further theorising and/or discussion, namely:

- Increasing the people who take part in public consultation.
- People taking part on their own terms.
- Increased control over people's interpretation of their own data
- Systematic selection
- CSC21 as an approach to producing high quality evidence

7.7.1 Increasing the people who take part in public consultation

As a tool for use within the current way of thinking about policy making, the distinctive feature of CSC is its ability to engage far beyond 'the usual suspects'. In Wales, this means engaging with the more than 98% of people who have not engaged in any of the consultation or development of social policy at the national level that underpins and enacts the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act or the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

Barod's 2x2 matrix (see Fig. 2.4) includes a quadrant of those who are not involved and have no thought of getting involved. It is this quadrant that CSC21 particularly targets.

Barod's experiences of using CSC show that people from both these quadrants respond well to invitations to get involved in a conversation, provided the invitation is sufficiently casual. There is less evidence in relation to inviting people to learn how to host a conversation. However, none of those trained to host had any difficulty in meeting with the person they had identified they would ask during the training. Barod had built on the work of Bovaird and Downe (2008) when they drew up their own matrix for public involvement (2.5). Bovaird and Downe (2008) concluded that people who 'don't know/don't care' would be not interested regardless of method. This research indicates otherwise, as people who knew nothing about involvement opportunities, had no specialist knowledge, and were not interested in getting involved were amenable to taking part in conversations such as CSC16 (5.7.4).

A conversation as part of CSC21 is a social gathering. Being a social gathering is important for three reasons. First, this research shows that people who would turn down an invitation to a meeting will accept an invitation to meet a friend socially. Second, being a social gathering means people, at least in this research, enjoyed the occasion making them more open to future invitations. The one exception was the videoed CSC with the CAE team that was anything but a normal social gathering. The combination of my nervousness, the video recording, and topic made that CSC unpleasant for one of the team and reduced the enjoyment of others.

CSC21 is also a tool that challenges policy-makers to realise there are multiple realities co-existing within Wales. Implicit in the method is the belief that policy-makers need to learn how people make sense of their social world if they want to make policy that achieves its intended (political) policy purpose and if they want to identify, from public perspectives, what requires a policy response.

The systematic approach to sampling (see 7.7.4) leads to an intersectional diversity of people taking part when looking across a full set of CSC. The intersectional approach not only means those 'hard to reach' take part, but also increases the opportunities for those marginalised within a 'hard to reach' community due to multiple stigmatised identities. This becomes increasingly important as Welsh Government continues its work to reach out through Third Sector organisations to 'hard to reach' communities.

7.7.2 People taking part on their own terms

One of the significant contributions of this research is that people get to take part on their own terms rather than perform a role in response to someone else's staging of a front region performance. In other words, by moving the performance to the back region, people have more freedom to respond as they wish. A small social gathering with a friend or friends is more likely to lead to such a back region performance. Arguably, conversation during a back region performance is more likely to produce notes that provide insights into how those people map the topic being discussed, and less likely to produce notes that reflect what they think they should say about the topic.

The purpose of CSC21 is not to provoke discussion among those with different perspectives. That is an essential part of any co-design or co-production, and methods like World Café are more than adequate for that task. Rather, the purpose of CSC21 is to let people talk on their own terms, and in so doing to provide insights into how they make sense of a complex system from their perspective. This requires what Smith-Walter et al. (2020) would describe as a culturally homogenous conversation. Within culturally homogenous focus groups, they found people's narrative about a policy issue was theoretically consistent with their cultural cognition[64]. Mental models offer a theoretical basis for thinking about cultural homogeneity.

In relation to organisational theory, what Scott describes as a "common meaning system" (1995, p.95) is similar to what Harper and Dorton (2019) describe as shared or team mental models. Team mental models relate to the organisation of role-orientated information and knowledge (Jones et al., 2011). Mental models are important in organisational management for the following reasons:

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[64] Cultural cognition is theoretically distinct but functionally similar to shared mental models.

- To explore similarities and differences between stakeholders' understanding of an issue to improve communication between stakeholders (Abel et al. 1998)
- To integrate different perspectives, including expert and local, to improve overall understanding of a system (Ozesmi and Ozesmi 2004)
- To create a collective representation of a system to improve decision making processes (Dray et al. 2006)
- To support social learning processes (Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004)
- To identify and overcome stakeholders' knowledge limitations and misconceptions associated with a given resource (Morgan et al. 2002)
- To develop more socially robust knowledge to support negotiations over unstructured problems in complex, multifunctional systems (Kolkman et al. 2005).

(Jones et al, 2011, p.6)

All these reasons are relevant to social care policy-makers, but do not explain how mental models and the homogeneity of conversations within CSC21 contribute to achieving these benefits.

Returning to the collaborative field testing, Barod had been using the guideline: "They must know nothing about the subject". As Ellie pointed out "that's going to be a very short conversation" (Ellie, Reflective, 2019). What we worked out was that the guideline meant "They must know nothing more than the average person on the street who has no direct professional, public involvement or lobbying experience that would give them more information or professionalised ways of talking and thinking about the subject" (Anne, Reflective, 2019). We had discussed role-specific knowledge in the 2015 CAE and continued that discussion in the 2019 reflective workshop. Depending on the role someone takes, it seemed that people had access to different knowledge, or at least formulated it in different ways. This was apparent for hosts, in relation to how they interacted depending on whether they had clicked into the role of 'friend' or 'interviewer' or 'facilitator'.

What is described here as clicking into roles relates to the use of props to "define the situation, enable others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him" (Goffman, 1990a (1959), p.13).

Goffman's work on ways of categorising and enacting social roles as part of everyday social interaction is extended in ethnomethodology. Ethnomethodology describes membership devices as powerful tools for orientating parties to interactional categories

(Sacks, 1992; Fitzgerald and Housley, 2015). When training hosts during the work with Client 2, a social worker invariably clicks into that role when given a pen and notebook as evidenced by a shift in conversational style to asking questions and waiting for answers. The person they are talking with then shifts to some kind of 'client' role and the interaction orientates to that as would be expected by any ethnomethodological proponent of membership categorisation. Give the social worker a supply of beer mats and a pencil, though, and they switch out of social worker role into 'friend down the pub' role, which orientates their friend and the interaction to one of 'back region conversation between friends'. In many ways, membership devices can be considered a conceptual development from Goffman's props, and membership categories as similar developments from the front region roles for actors within a play (Goffman, 1990a (1959), compared with Sacks, 1989). While Goffman's work is adequate for theorising CSC21, I suspect ethnomethodology would be more fruitful. There was not scope within the thesis to test this speculation.

An ethnomethodological critique of qualitative methods such as interviews is that more can be learned about what happens during the use of that method than is learned about topic (e.g. Greiffenhagen et al., 2011; Whitaker and Atkinson, 2019). This is related to interviews being experienced as front region performances, and participants of the interview (both 'researcher' and 'participant') therefore enact what they believe is expected in an interview. A skill that is frequently discussed in method literature is rapport. Perhaps part of rapport is establishing a relationship that permits a back region performance. It is also possible that deliberate use of cues, as in CSC21, might provide a more systematic way to elicit back region performances and in so doing the interviewer may learn more from the interviewee.

This section began by noting the importance of a more-or-less culturally homogenous group and relating this to organisational management research about shared mental models. The section moved to theorising roles using Goffman's dramaturgical work as an entry point to noting the utility of ethnomethodology. Types of knowledge associated with roles can be theorised in terms of mental models.

Mental models inform what people notice and what people consider important. The framing of a question is grounded in what the questioner notices and considers important. Therefore, if a consultation or social research method is framed around questions, participants are required to respond to someone else's framing of what is noteworthy and important about the issue. I would argue that the value of CSC21 is in

allowing people to respond freely and on their own times, in line with what they notice and consider important.

In a CSC, people are allowed to talk freely and on their own terms about the topic. This is not just to increase acceptability of the method, although the findings from Chapter 5 suggest that being allowed to talk about the topic on one's own terms is important. This requirement is associated with a set of assumptions, namely that any social issue is a complex adaptive system (HM Treasury, 2020b), that people have mental models which inform how they know the social issue (Harper and Dorton, 2019), that these mental models are akin to system maps (Daniel and Daniel, 2018), and that understanding a social issue requires a collective approach to creating the system map (Nesta, 2021).

This set of assumptions would benefit from further unpacking and exploring in future research, in particular in how they relate to the dramaturgy of CSC.

7.7.3 Increased control over people's interpretation of their own data

Arguably, this is the most interesting hallmark of CSC21 and one of the significant contributions of this research. It is the most tangible expression of the epistemic justice of the method. There are two sides to this hallmark. The first is the role of the notes as data. The only data provided to the researcher/organiser are on a photograph of the notes made and agreed by those in the conversation. These may be made solely by the host or may involve more than one person writing. The notes have been reviewed and clustered in-conversation, meaning this has been done before the researcher/organiser touches the data. There is scope and considerable merit in future research around the making of these notes. Unfortunately, doing it as part of this research was ruled out on the basis of what could be achieved within three years.

The analysis in CSC21 is two-stage, the first of which takes place in-conversation. The second stage often involves a double analysis, once using the 'big Q' analytic method of choice and once using a 'little Q' approach to analyse what is said against questions supplied by the client.

Across this analysis, three sets of mental models are brought into play. The first in-conversation stage relies on the mental models of those in the conversation, particularly the person holding the pen (almost always but not necessarily the host). The grouping of the notes is not as sophisticated as a cognitive map, but it does put on paper something of the mental model of those in the conversation.

The first stage of analysis is intuitive, but not self-explanatory. The following extract from my 2019 research journal is how I described this when training hosts.

> As I make notes, I cluster things that seem similar to me together on the page. As I am talking through what I have written, I have a pencil in my hand, and I start to draw lines to formalise those notes forming a distinct cluster of ideas. I do it slowly, taking time to show I am thinking (rather than telling) and discussing out loud any uncertainties I have – for example "I'm not sure…" or "I'd love to know more about…" or "I have no idea why I wrote that". I have yet to do a CSC where people have not joined in the process of taking what were originally my notes and co-constructing them with me into 'data'. I could categorise their input as corrections of meaning of something I had written, additional stories explaining more about what I had written, challenging the inclusion of something within a cluster, or suggesting a different (better) basis for clustering some of the notes. (Anne's Research Journal, 2019)

This first stage is superficially similar to the collaborative analysis at the full day workshop of the CAE. In both, analysis involved creation then clustering of text fragments (Post-its in the CAE, notes in the CSC). In both, the clusters might be named or just marked by a line. The significant difference is that in CSC21 there is usually no sign of crossings-out or reworking of lines. This could reflect little disagreement, domination by the person holding the pen, or the pen-holder waiting for consensus before putting pen to paper. CSC21 are designed to be culturally homogeneous. The CAE was designed for greater heterogeneity and the flipchart paper shows signs of the significant discussion, debate, and disagreements about how to cluster the notes. What the CAE first stage analysis resulted in was the start of a collective or team mental model about CSC. So, although superficially similar, these are two very different forms of first stage analysis.

Where the second stage of the analysis is 'big Q', however reflexive the analyst the analysis will reflect the analyst's mental model as well as the mental models of those in the conversation. Beginning analysis at this second stage means collating other people's text fragments and protothemes. The text fragments may not appear important to the analyst but were important to the people in the conversation. The protothemes may be incompatible. There is no access to 'the raw data' (e.g. an audio recording) and the analyst was not present during the fieldwork. This is gloriously disempowering for a qualitative researcher who believes in epistemic justice. The analyst will inevitably bring their own interpretations to the data, but they are forced to choose to respect the

interpretations and understandings of the world implicit in the data from each conversation or knowingly do violence to them.

Where the second stage is 'little Q', both the analyst's mental model and the client's team/shared mental model are brought to bear on the data. The analysis is explicitly against the client's team/shared mental model, privileging that understanding of the social issue above the understanding of those in the conversation.

This approach to taking control over the interpretation of your own data is potentially transferable to other consultation methods and, indeed, to social research. For example, in World Café each person is encouraged to make notes on a paper tablecloth covering their table. It would be quite possible for the conversation closed, as with CSC21, with a shared review and clustering of the notes. The epistemic justice benefits of giving people greater control over interpreting their own data *in situ* are reduced if methods rely on recordings and transcriptions as the primary data used by the researcher or consultant for their analysis. This is because it is impossible for someone not to frame an understanding of the recording/transcript in terms of their own mental model.

7.7.4 Systematic selection

If there were such a thing as 'the public' then it would be possible to use randomised sample methods, knowing that the majority of those sampled would be from the main body of the bell of the normal distribution curve and that this would be adequate. For 'the public' to be a meaningful category, its members would need a more-or-less common approach to making sense of the world. This not being the case, an alternative sampling approach is needed.

The reason for choosing to generate a purposive sampling method is to address the criticism of public consultation as 'evidence' on the basis of a tiny and self-selecting sample, and to ensure diversity of perspective and experience of those taking part.

In so far as there is any sampling approach to public consultation in Wales, it is one of convenience. Here, convenience operates at two levels. The methods for data gathering are usually those convenient to the person or organisation, which increases the likelihood that those with overlapping understandings of what is convenient will respond thus skewing the sample away from those who are 'Other' to those organising the consultation. Second, where the person or organisation needs to recruit participants, the tendency is to recruit 'the usual suspects' – i.e. those it is convenient

to find and recruit. This reinforces any existing privileging and consequent epistemic injustice for those not privileged.

Random sampling frameworks by their very nature will prioritise the majority and may well miss numerically small but culturally significant outlier populations. While there are sampling and statistical methods to ameliorate this, any public policy or service that seeks to be generalisable for the whole population is likely to fail to be adequate for the whole population. Therefore, the wisdom of ever choosing a generalisable sampling framework for policy consultation is moot. The powerful and elite outliers have, by definition, greater access to resources than most and are therefore less dependent on public services to meet needs for social care and support. Outliers with fewer resources than the general population are most dependent on public services and therefore most in need of policy that works for them.

The CSC approach to purpose sampling is one well embedded in qualitative research.

According to Patton,

> "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research; thus the term *purposeful* sampling" (Patton, 1990, p. 169).

As this quotation implies, purposive samples are also often premised on the concept of "theoretical sampling" as discussed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Theoretical sampling means selecting subjects who represent the important characteristics that researchers consider of interest to the study. With this approach there is no need to sample multiple cases unless that is expected to extend or modify emerging theory (Pidgeon and Henwood, 1996).

This raises the question of how to operationalise theoretical sampling in the context of CSC and policy-making. Despite the human tendency to categorise in order to make sense of the social world and to create social order, lived human experience is hard to categorise. Traditionally, categorisation has been against one dominant characteristic. In sociology, particularly cultural sociology, the categories of race, class and gender have dominated any discussions of lived experience. More recently, the concepts of intersectionality (as explained in 6.9.3) and fluid or liquid identity (e.g. Bauman, 2000)

have gained traction as attempts to convey the complexity or uniqueness of each human. A fluid identity is one that "does not keep shape for long and [is] constantly ready and (and prone) to change it" (ibid. p.2).

Lived human experience *in relation to the consultation topic* adds another dimension to any attempt to capture the diversity of experiences and perspectives. It is not possible to construct a set of rows that would cover the entirety of human experience and perspectives without constructing a grid that would require the entirety of the human population as the 'sample size'. Decisions need to be made about the characteristics that are most likely to significant impact on a person's experience of or perspective on whatever is being consulted upon. Sometimes there may be research, but usually this needs to rely on a conversation between the researcher/organiser and the client, drawing on their shared professional knowledges. Where there is already a diverse co-design team able to engage in this conversation, greater certainty can be presumed that the relevant factors are known.

Qualitative researchers will have their own skills set to know when they have done enough conversations. For those used to grounded theory, this may be theoretical saturation (e.g. Guest et al., 2006; Hagaman and Wutich, 2017, and their citations). For others, this may be "information power" (Malterud et al., 2015). The latter has the advantage of conceptual congruence with my epistemic commitments. The former has the 'little Q' advantage of sounding more scientific. A challenge for this kind of consultation-as-research is that each conversation adds to the costs, and contracts do not accommodate 'it depends' as an answer to how many conversations will take place.

Not everyone using CSC will be a qualitative researcher, and adequacy of sample size has not been tested for CSC21. This is a priority for the future. However, until then, anyone not confident about spotting when enough conversations have been held, then experience suggests there should never be fewer than eight conversations. Until then, based on a combination of the literatures just cited and experience of using CSC, my practice is to suggest 10 to 12 conversations is a good starting point if there are under 30 rows in the purposive sampling grid and if what is needed is a rapid broad-brush overview. If there are more rows, then one additional conversation for each additional three rows seems appropriate.

7.7.5 Could CSC findings be classed as evidence?

The role of evidence is disputed, but there are no arguments for dispensing with evidence completely (4.2.5). Despite a very broad definition of 'evidence' by the Cabinet Office (Strategic Policy Making Team, 1999), research and in particular types of empirical research, are given privileged status as 'evidence' (Nutley et al., 2013).

Research is argued to have "greater rigour, relevance and independence" than other forms of evidence (Nesta and Alliance for Useful Evidence, n.d., p.67), due to research's 'explicit documentation of methods, peer review and external scrutiny' (ibid). Demonstrating the value of CSC21 for generating evidence will require demonstrating that its use has the above features. The potential for relevance was shown in the worked example (7.6.4). Independence is a tricky concept, particularly when not defined. It carries the implicit question, 'Independent from what?' Part of the answer may be in the required disclosure of actual or perceived interests for peer reviewed publication (e.g. Taylor and Francis, n.d.) and disclosure of research funding. This practice could only benefit all consultancy/research conducted for Welsh Government or used by other organisations as part of policy campaigning.

CSC21 can easily include explicit documentation of methods in a way that would permit peer review and external scrutiny. The methods (sampling, fieldwork, analysis) would all stand up to academic review. A standard practice adopted by Barod is to provide an Easy Read report, with a technical annex containing information that only some of the audience will want to know or check. The ethics of CSC21 are at variance with academic expectations, as no written information is collected about who takes part unless required for the financial audit trail (i.e. information is collected about the host). No printed information sheets are given. No assurances are made of confidentiality and withdrawing. This is in keeping with normative practice for public involvement in policy-making. Further research would be needed to check whether my suspicion is founded that switching to academic ethical procedures would intimidate many of those attracted to CSC21 but who are unwilling to engage in either social research or usual consultation activities.

7.7.6 Reflections on the development from 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC21

Over the course of almost seven years, Barod's 'coffee shop conversations' became first CSC16 thanks to the collaborative work within the CAE, and then further developed into

CSC21 thanks to the collaborative work with Barod. It is somewhat ironic that research focused so strongly on collaboration and epistemic justice was used to develop a method for consultation and not co-production or co-design. However, this was a strategic decision, recognising that many are not willing or ready for more committed involvement but still need to speak and be heard.

CSC21 asks little of the invitees and taking part offers immediate rewards. This makes it attractive to people who are cynical, disconnected from policy-making, whose lives are affected by policies and who hold knowledge that is currently unobtainable but invaluable for making policies that (might) work. People are invited to meet with someone they know at a time and place they choose. They can order food and drink while they talk without worrying about paying the bill. They will be paid for their input at approximately the Real Living Wage rate. They are not expected to read a consultation document or respond to pre-set questions. They have the opportunity to talk around a topic, knowing that what they say will be combined with what others say in other conversations, and it will reach the ears of policy-makers. At worst, what they say will be ignored but they were not inconvenienced by taking part. At best, they have influenced Welsh Government policy on a topic that affects them.

The design of CSC21 is future-proofed in that whichever approach to policy-making becomes dominant in Wales, CSC21 has something to offer. It offers a way to hear from more people, from a greater diversity of people, and allows people to talk about a social issue or topic on their own terms. The purposive sampling frame means that selection is systematic rather than left to self-selection, which addresses one of the criticisms of public consultation and increases the value of the findings as evidence. it is novel in giving people more control over the interpretation of their data without requiring them to engage in collaborative analysis directly with the researcher/organiser. These features are of value whether policy-making in the future uses public management, design or complexity approaches.

Independent of CSC21's potential policy-making contributions, the method contributes to the social research methodological literature through framing the importance of people talking about social issues on their own terms and describing a mechanism to enable it. More than this, CSC21 provides a mechanism whereby people can have greater control over interpreting their own data, thus reducing the risk that research participants find themselves unable to recognise themselves in the findings.

7.8 Conclusion

This chapter describes the development of CSC16 into CSC21 using collaborative field testing, additional CAE work, and theoretical work. The chapter brings to completion the design-orientated research begun in Chapter 4.

The first collaborative field test confirmed that CSC16 was viable and had strengths as a consultation method. Feedback from Barod, personal reflections and a development workshop all contributed to recommendations for changes to CSC16 before its next field test. The most significant of these was the shift from using the purposive sampling grid to recruit participants to using it to recruit hosts. This shift moved each CSC conversation to something very similar to a mini-CAE. As part of this shift, the approach to training hosts changed from 'chalk and talk' to practising on me.

The second collaborative field test showed that it is possible to recruit and train hosts rather than have to recruit participants then find suitable hosts. This field test also showed that data can be analysed against the client's questions as well as analysed reflexively. Doing this means a client receives answers the questions that matter to the client as well as information that matters to ordinary citizens about the consultation topic.

The CAE reflective workshop highlighted challenges, strengths, and potential futures of CSC. The main challenge is the making of notes. The main strengths are that people choose to take part and that people are able to talk on their own terms. The latter is always of importance for epistemic justice. Talking on one's own terms means using one's own mental model. Where policy-makers approach social issues as complex adaptive systems, a method that gives information about a diversity of people's mental models of the system is potentially invaluable. For CSC to have a future, it needs to grow beyond reliance on me. This will require transferring and spreading the ethos rather than codification and replication.

The chapter moves to describing CSC21 and offering a worked example of how its use could have added value to Welsh Government's 2021 consultation about social care. This leads to a largely theoretical discussion of key features of CSC21.

The findings from this chapter support the significance of Goffman's dramaturgical work. By resonating with ethnomethodological concepts, the findings highlight the connections between Goffman's work and ethnomethodology, in particular the extension of Goffman's

props into ethnomethodology's membership devices. The findings of this chapter also resonate with and can be theorised in relation to mental models. This is most notable when theorising what it means to respond on one's own terms. The double-analysis used with Client 2 introduces a way to get closer to epistemically just analysis by reducing the effect of the researcher's own mental model in the interpretation of data. CSC21 is theorised methodologically as if it were a qualitative research method in order to demonstrate that it meets key quality criteria for producing robust qualitative research evidence. This is significant for the potential impact, given the powerful heuristic of 'evidence' still evident in Welsh policy-making.

This brings to completion the design work begun in Chapter 4.

The next chapter discusses over-arching themes from this research, organising the discussion around the topic of public involvement and making policy that works, methodological critique, and finally the theme of epistemic (in)justice.

Closing chapters

Chapter 8   Discussion

8.1   Introduction

The previous chapter describes the development of CSC16 into CSC21 using collaborative field testing, additional CAE work, and theoretical work. That chapter brings to completion the design-orientated research begun in Chapter 4.

This chapter discusses over-arching themes from this research, organising the discussion around the topic of public involvement and making policy that works, methodological critique, and finally the theme of epistemic (in)justice.

The task of discussing findings is incremental in design-oriented research. As such, discussion is spread across the thesis and not solely in this chapter. This chapter's function is to provide space to discuss some over-arching themes. This is done in four sections.

The discussion begins by revisiting public involvement and brings together the two challenges of successive policies that have not yet delivered ordinary lives to people with learning disabilities and public non-involvement despite Welsh Government's desire to engage (8.2).

The chapter then discusses the next steps for CSC21, given that the final phase of the design process, Delivery, did not form part of this research (8.3).

The chapter moves to a methodological critique (8.4). This encompasses the research design, including its limitations and weaknesses in how it was operationalised. The critique discusses the CAE work before discussing whether the KESS partnership and the CSC development research can be considered transdisciplinary.

The final section of this chapter (8.5) revisits epistemic (in)justice, discussing public involvement, a re-visioning of public consultation, and ways in which the 'alongsider' format of the thesis can be considered an act of epistemic justice.

The chapter concludes with a summary (8.6).

8.2 Public involvement and policy-making

8.2.1 CSC21 and the challenge of public involvement

The over-arching purpose of this research was to find a way to improve public involvement as a way to increase the chance of social care policy delivering what it promises. CSC21 itself was discussed in 7.7. This section discusses the extent to which CSC21 can achieve this policy purpose, and what else would need to change in order for social care policy to work.

Chapter 5 concluded with a set of challenges if public involvement were to spread beyond 'the usual suspects' and have strategic impact on the policies that are made. These are summarised in Table 8.1, together with whether they are challenges that CSC21 can address.

Table 8.1   CSC21 and the challenges of public involvement

Challenges (taken from 5.10)	Addressed by CSC21?
People not knowing they can be involved	No (participation by invitation)
People not knowing how to be involved	No (participation by invitation)
Suitable for different approaches to policy-making	Yes
Suitable for defining the issue, not just developing a solution or scrutinising a drafted solution	Yes
Suitable for people who think consultation is 'not for people like them' or who are cynical about involvement.	Yes
Suitable for people who are unaware of how policy is made	Yes
Suitable for people who feel there is no point in getting involved	Yes
Elicits back region performances	Yes
Allows people to respond to a topic in their own terms	Yes
Increases the diversity of voices.	Yes
Lets people use their own mental models to think about the issue.	Yes
Produces information that would be treated as 'evidence', not 'anecdote'.	Yes

However, if we turn to Barod's expectations, CSC21 is less successful.

8.2.2 CSC21 and meeting Barod's expectations

When this research began, the aim was to develop a method that would meet the needs of Barod's target audience: people not involved who were either interested but barriers prevented their involvement, or who were simply not interested (as detailed in Fig. 2.4). Barod's focus was those facing barriers, as it was presumed a method addressing that would also be well-suited to those not yet interested. However, the knowledge review (Chapter 4) and policy-making research (Chapter 5), suggested those prevented by barriers were already engaged with Third Sector organisations, while those not yet interested were not. The knowledge review and policy-making research also indicated that for those interested but facing barriers, the need was for better opportunities to coproduce and co-design rather than better opportunities to be consulted. At this point, the research focus shifted to those who as yet have no interest in involvement.

Within 'people', Barod has always privileged people with learning disabilities. This is for two reasons. The first is that civil rights for people with learning disabilities is the context from which Barod grew. The second is that, as Alan Armstrong frequently said when presenting at events: "If it works for us, it will work for most people" (pers. comm.). Despite my inclusive intentions, CSC21 perpetuates some of the exclusionary practices that Barod had wanted addressed. Therefore, CSC sits uncomfortably with Barod's stance on privileging people with learning disabilities. The method requires a conversational skill set that excludes the many people with learning disabilities who do not communicate verbally or for whom conversation is not their most fluid or preferred form of communication. Additionally, the method requires skills sets of the host that exclude even more people with learning disabilities, reinforcing a dependency on others (family, support workers, self-advocacy facilitators, advocates) that needs challenging rather than reinforcing. The host skill sets include the ability to synthesise information, extract key information and write, all at the same time as listening and contributing to a conversation.

Some of this is already being addressed by Barod. For example, they have been experimenting with having a 'scribe' listening to the conversation and making notes. Perhaps this is less likely to create a front region performance if people talking are used to having a third party present in their everyday life. From past personal research experience[65], leaving a camera running and allowing a group of people with learning disabilities to self-facilitate what was supposed to be a focus group resulted in a different

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[65] From my Master's dissertation research with an advisory group of self-advocates.

conversation from the one that would have happened if I had remained. What would be lost by using this approach is the opportunity for those talking together to carry out the first stage of analysis themselves, as there would be no notes made at the time to check over and group. In the instance just described, people could give a good account of what they had discussed when I returned. This meant I could make notes *in situ* and go over the notes with people. In that instance, though, the group had met in a hotel meeting room, with flipcharts, pens, Post-its and writing skills within the group, meaning they had reference points to remind them what they had discussed. This would not be a standard part of the method.

The more specialised skill set for designing the consultation/research and analysing the collated data is potentially less exclusionary of people with learning disabilities. Research teams of people with and without learning disabilities routinely analyse data collaboratively (e.g. Nind and Vinha, 2014; Kramer et al., 2011; Mooney et al., 2019). Having seen Barod's own research team develop their methodological as well as methods skills, there is every reason to be confident that these stages can work for epistemic justice rather than increase the privileging of some and exclusion of others.

As a methodological approach, CSC offers a solid foundation in keeping with Barod's values and principles that can be adapted by Barod into practical methods that are more suited for their purposes. It is probable that Barod will want to use the existing method with those who enjoy conversation but find alternatives of making notes during the conversation in a way that allows co-creation of the information passed to the organiser. Equally it is probable that Barod will ponder the methodological approach and reconfigure its practical outworking so that the same benefits are achieved without such a focus on conversation.

8.2.3 Policy that works?

Chapter 4 concluded that policy that works would require more than just changes to public involvement (4.10). The focus of this thesis, however, was public involvement. What CSC21 arguably offers is an approach that can provide the intelligence that would be needed by those co-designing policy using a complexity approach. While Wales is waiting for the shift to occur from public managerial approaches to policy making to complexity and design approaches, CSC can inform those making policy by being a consultation method that delivers research-quality evidence.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to research how transitions can occur between complicated and complex. However, early lessons from responding to the COVID-19 pandemic seem to indicate that for public services, the breakdown of complicated systems with the resulting chaos may have created an environment within which the system is self-organising into something closer to a complex system than its previous complicated structures (Audit Wales, 2020).

8.2.4 New challenges for policy evidence research

As the public service world shifts locus toward complexity and the policy world increasingly recognise social issues as complex, so social research needs to respond methodologically in ways commensurate with complexity without losing the in-depth expertise available only by focusing narrowly on a one way of looking at a social issue. This doctoral research used a transdisciplinary approach as a consequence of starting with a real-world problem and looking for a real-world solution. As a one-person academic team, even with the additional collaborative work of the CAE and Barod, doctoral research could only scratch the surface. This research would have benefited from a multidisciplinary team doing the in-depth work as narrowly focused questions or queries arose.

Traditionally, within complicated systems, information is made public in documents that have been written, checked and signed-off by the organisation or institution before being put in the public domain. For academics, this is primarily through journals and conferences with peer review acting as the equivalent of signing-off. Those in the policy and practice world who are moving towards design thinking, and particularly those who are thinking in terms of complex adaptive systems as well as design, increasingly put information into the public domain that is still emergent. For example, the Policy Lab of the Cabinet Office puts information on regularly updated webpages rather than issuing dated documents. It is not uncommon for shared online documents to be uploaded with permissions for editing in a manner similar to Wikipedia, for example Nesta's approach to co-creation of information (e.g. Nesta, ongoing).

For the practitioner, this means being able to access information as it evolves and be part of its evolution, rather than waiting for a finished product. For the academic, this presents challenges in citing emerging and evolving knowledge. It also presents challenges in quality assuring their own work while making it accessible more rapidly than through peer reviewed journals. This challenge was tackled head-on by the National Centre for Research Methods in their recent crowdsourcing of method and

methodological responses to qualitative research in a pandemic where they used shared, editable documents and open access webinars, and made the resources available as a mixture of html pages and documents (Meckin et al., 2021).

8.3 Next steps

8.3.1 What's in a name?

The name of 'coffee shop conversations' was only ever intended as a placeholder. Before this research, conversations were being organised predominantly in coffee shops. If not in coffee shops, then in places where the kind of conversation appropriate for a coffee shop would take place. It is a facet of the middleclass, middle-aged woman that I am that coffee shops play an important role in my life. The women who joined me in the CAE were invited precisely because coffee shops played a similar role in their lives.

However, many of the people affected by social policy issues do not habituate coffee shops. Coffee shops require money. Coffee shops are part of a subculture that, for those in it, may seem like normative everyday life rather than a subculture. To many, the coffee shop culture is part of an elitist culture from which they are excluded. It is part of the same elitist culture as Welsh Government, public bodies and universities. This was one reason I wanted to find a different name.

There was an opposite reason for wanting a different name. 'Coffee shop conversations' sounds too homely and everyday to catch the attention of those in the policy world. Given a choice between commissioning a Collaborative Intelligent Design process and commissioning a set of 'coffee shop conversations', I feared the former would always sound more impressive.

And so, does what I have talked about have a future as CSC? Ironically, despite my distaste for acronyms and my reluctant use of 'CSC' as a device to reduce the word count, the acronym may be the solution. My comfort is that no-one is ever invited to 'come and take part in a Coffee Shop Conversation'. The term is only needed as an identifier for the method(ology), so a client can know what they are buying.

8.3.2 Evaluation and scaling

CSC21 currently lacks two essential ingredients for a successful future:

- It has not been evaluated, either by me or independently.
- It has not been tested at scale. Currently I am the only person who has managed a set of CSCs, and I am the only person who has trained others to host conversations.

The Magenta Book 2020, Supplementary Guide: Handling Complexity in Policy Evaluation (HM Treasury, 2020c) would be helpful in planning any evaluation of CSC21. There are few guides as yet that relate to the evaluation of complexity that are compatible with a Human, Learning, Systems (Lowe et al., 2020) approach to complexity. My more prosaic reason for this recommendation is that the status of the Magenta Book with civil servants means connection with it will increase the credibility of CSCs. For use in the academic research world and in the absence of a qualitative social research equivalent to the validation process for questionnaire-based scales (e.g. Boateng et al., 2018), it is important that CSC is piloted by people other than me, using the method as it currently stands.

If the method adds anything for consultation or social research purposes – or indeed for other purposes such as digital user research – there needs to be a way to separate its practice from me. While I can train a certain number of people as hosts, and even a certain number of people to organise sets of CSC, the future of the method(ology) cannot depend on me.

There are two approaches to this. The first is codification and licensing or franchising. This would retain control over the name and use of the method in the way that Tony Buzan has retained centralised control over Mind Map. Epistemically it would be inappropriate to try to codify and replicate as a means of scaling up. This means any scaling is dependent on the strength of communication of principles and quality assurance. This is possible but challenging through the licensing route, particularly as protection of intellectual property generally requires codification and is difficult to enforce.

Rachel described how she spread her home education practice to other home educators and supporters of home educators. By changing the metaphor from replication, a

mechanistic process, to spreading, an organic process, it became clear to me that the next step for CSC is to support it to spread. This approach is more in keeping my values and the ethos of CSC itself. This second approach, to build a distributed community of practice, is the method used by Simon Wardley for Wardley Mapping. Here, the information about the methodology and method is made freely available (e.g. Wardley, n.d.). However, access to the community of practice is through attending classes. It is a combination of classes as gatekeeper into the community and the ongoing community of practice that provide the quality assurance. Something similar would be feasible for CSC, with gatekeeping for entry into different levels within the community of practice, e.g. for hosts, for hosts who can train new hosts, for organisers and for organisers who can train new organisers. So far, I have only got as far as hosts and hosts who can train new hosts. I have yet to train new organisers. That is, perhaps, my next challenge.

8.4   Methodological critique

8.4.1   Critique of the research design

The design of this research was challenging due to starting with a real-world problem not a research question, disputes about how to enact 'researching ethically', and trying to research something complex that exists in a complicated bureaucracy (Government) and had to be researched from within a complicated bureaucracy (university). It was further complicated by personal circumstances, positionality and context (see 2.2 and 2.3).

The traditional research process is intended for research that can identify a gap in the existing research knowledge and seek to address that gap by asking a specific researchable question. If the starting point is an existing body of research knowledge, this is a realistic goal. However, if the starting point is a problem experienced in everyday life, it is more likely that initial scoping will identify discrete pockets of research knowledge, each of which addresses a different aspect of what is to be researched. While there may be small gaps within these pockets of knowledge, the pockets may not be connected. If the need is to address the problem as experienced, then directing the research towards filling an identified gap in one of these pockets of knowledge is not an appropriate approach. In these circumstances I would argue that the Discovery phase of the design process is a more appropriate entry point for the research. The Discovery phase expects a combination of different approaches to be used to create a holistic understanding of the issue before the research moves on to trying to address the issue.

This in turn lends itself to transdisciplinarity and a design-orientated approach to research (see 1.4).

Being able to identify and scope the pockets of academic knowledge requires the ability to look across academic disciplines. If the decision is made to continue with a holistic approach rather than seek to fill a gap within one of those pockets, the researcher needs to be willing and able to engage with different knowledges from different academic disciplines. This can be done in different ways. In a team setting, it is possible to have several disciplinary specialists who work in a multi-disciplinary way, each using their own lens and expertise to address the issue. However, sometimes what is required is a synthesis of knowledges from different disciplines. This is the realm of transdisciplinary research. It is this approach that was taken for this research.

The drawback, as noted in the Introduction (1.4, Fig. 1.1) is that the research lacks the kind of depth possible if addressing *one* gap in *one* disciplinary pocket of knowledge. The strength is that the research draws together different pockets of knowledge in order to design a solution to a real-world problem. Trying to identify and then synthesise the most relevant pockets of knowledge before, during and after conducting field research presented immense intellectual, project management and knowledge management challenges. What it allowed was the opportunity to continue to view the problem of public involvement in Welsh Government social care policy-making through my eyes as someone living with and experiencing the problem. What it did not allow was the task-clarity that comes from adopting one academic approach to fill one gap in one pocket of existing academic knowledge.

A thesis is designed to be 'complicated' and exists with an academic world that is structured as if it is complicated system. There is a predetermined goal (examination) and, even if the messy reality is that neither the research problem nor the research process need to be understood as complicated systems, the pressure is to reconstruct the problem and the process *as if* both were complicated. Most of the challenges in designing and conducting the research relate to the slow realisation that the research problem and the research process needed to be understood as complex systems, followed by the dawning realisation that I was writing a thesis for a world that expected something complicated. The challenge became how to write about complexity within a complicated framework.

If I were to start again with what I now know, my focus would be the interplay of systems thinking, service design, complexity theory, power relationships, mental models, and co-design. This might have led to CSC21 being a better fit for Barod's purposes, ie a method that addressed the exclusion of those who wish to coproduce or co-design but who currently find themselves marginalised or excluded. If that alternative path had been taken, CSC21 might not have been such a potentially useful tool for generating a diversity of data to inform the Discover phase of policy design.

Finding a way through this is not just my challenge. It is the challenge faced by those who are working within complicated systems to design and implement policy to address problems that need to be understand within or as complex systems.

I am grateful for my approach to the knowledge review, as some highly relevant approaches to my topic only began appearing in academic papers in 2020 (e.g. Exley, 2020; Laasch et al., 2020; Lowe et al., 2020; Barbrook-Johnson et al., 2021). The negative is that it became easy to be overwhelmed at a late stage in thesis writing by how little I knew, and to query why I had done some of the work the way in which I did it. However, by waiting until almost the end to write Chapter 4, it was easier to listen carefully to what people were saying without jumping straight to comparing it with what has already been written. I think if I had done too much reading before working with the data, I would have listened too much to other academics and not enough to ordinary citizens, research participants, Barod and the rest of CAE team.

8.4.2 Most significant design limitations

The research was simply too ambitious for doctoral study. The goal of bringing a real-world problem into conversation with the wealth of academic disciplinary ways of knowing and making sense of that problem might have been an appropriately scaled ambition. Moving beyond that to attempt to work collaboratively to design a real-world solution was most definitely over-ambitious. It resulted in a low sample size for the policy-making research, together with the lack of resources to rectify the skewed self-selecting sample for the conversational interviews. It was partly responsible for the truncated collaborative work with the women, although that was also related to what was ethical to ask of the women in terms of time commitment and what was feasible for the women to offer on a voluntary basis.

An authentic part of the research was choosing not to read academic literature for fear of overwhelming lived experience wisdom with academic perspectives. This undoubtedly

weakened the academic quality of the research. In particular, it made the task of discussing my academic contributions seem insurmountable as I could never be sure whether an apparent contribution indicated that my reading had been inadequate, or I had missed something being a contribution because to me it seemed mundane common-sense knowledge. What this approach achieved, however, was an authentic attempt to draw together different ways of knowing. The goal was to repair the disconnect between academic and everyday ways of knowing, so that knowledge and understanding could flourish in a way that increased the chance of real social change.

These are inherent limitations to transdisciplinary research conducted by one person over three years. It meant that this part of the field testing was not conducted under ethical approval, and therefore was not admissible as data. However, it also meant that field testing could be more extensive than possible within a three-year FTE, already stretched, doctorate. Given the overall purpose of designing a real-world solution to an urgent real-world problem, this was an acceptable trade-off.

This research would have benefited from access to monodisciplinary experts who could identify relevant literatures and concepts as part of a collaborative transdisciplinary team. My supervisors across the years have worked hard to meet this need, and a combination of judicious use of Twitter and personal academic connections helped supplement their work.

There were limitations because of me. In switching from a Master's by Research to doctoral study, the additional time commitment needed to feel worth the investment. Simply producing something that could have been produced in the 'real world' with access to an academic library was not sufficient incentive. The goal was never to become Dr Collis to establish a personal academic career. Barod's goal for me to was to become Dr Collis and open doors for Barod as their research team worked to gain credibility and equality within the academic world[66]. This, together with my ambiguous positionality as student and employee led to blurring of boundaries and challenges in keeping the doctoral research focused on the problem at hand. For this reason, my academic publications and presentations are all with Barod and on topics not directly related to this thesis. Ultimately, I do not regret what I did. As I will argue in 9.2, this approach made possible some of the more significant contributions of this doctorate.

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[66] Despite my having left Barod and the devastating loss of my 'partner in crime' Alan Armstrong, this remains the goal.

There were limitations because literature that would have been invaluable for designing this research was only published later. Simply looking at the Reference section highlights the centrality of texts published since 2015, and in particularly since 2019. For example, if Braun and Clarke had published their critique of quality practice in thematic analysis in 2014 rather than 2020 (Braun and Clarke, 2020), there would have been greater conceptual clarity about the analysis and no need to 'invent' my own Spirographic approach. The significance of other recent texts is highlighted in the critiques of the CAE (8.4.3) and transdisciplinarity of this research (8.4.4).

8.4.3 Critique of the collaborative autoethnography

This CAE involved not just the usual suspects. By bringing together a doctoral student and four women from outside the academic world who have a diversity of past and present connections to academia, this CAE refuted one of the criticisms of AE that it sides with those who already have power by virtue of their academic status. Methodologically, CAE and a conversation as part of CSC21 are somewhat similar. Both are collaborative. Both co-create knowledge. In both, the goal is everyone involved to be positioned as both interpreter of information and source of information. Without the modelling of these in the CAE, it is debatable whether CSC21 would have made the switch from recruiting participants to recruiting hosts.

This CAE was framed around a shared experience, locating it closer to forms of AE described as 'witnessing' (e.g. Ellis and Rawicki, 2013) which draws on Oliver's (2001) work on witnessing as the work of reframing taken-for-granted oppression and injustice and so making it visible in a new way.

Using Chang et al. (2013) as the basis may have distanced the work from the mainstream of AE work. Certainly, Delamont (2009) suggests that most of her strong criticism of AE does not apply to Chang (2007) because Chang is describing and defending autobiographically reflexive ethnography rather than (as Chang says she is doing) autoethnography.

This work was **collaborative**, **auto**, and **ethnographic** (Chang et al., 2013, p.17).

Collaborative: We each brought our own perspective to bear on the same shared experience of a CSC and on our analysis of each other's accounts. This multi-perspectived and collaborative approach was important for gaining a more rounded

understanding of CSC, given the belief that any individual's knowledge of anything is partial and perspective. The bringing together of five partial, perspective ways of knowing and thinking about CSC led to the design of a richer and deeper method.

Auto: We were each the subject of the research. This sat comfortably with our dual roles of researcher-participant, and our reflections and examination of our own experiences of public involvement, the shared experience of the videoed CSC, and our earlier experiences of participation in at least one Barod coffee shop conversations. This latter was one of the selection criteria. Everything said in a research interview, workshop or focus group is in part a construct of the event itself, and not 'the truth'. Autoethnography does not change this, even if the researcher-participant roles are located within the same person. Therefore, autoethnography is not a solution to this style of critique of social research methods, although with high levels of reflexivity there is more opportunity to be aware of the effect of the event on the 'participant' and the effect of the researcher-participant relationship.

Ethnographic: We each embedded ourselves as researchers in a specific social setting to develop a richer understanding of the complexities and workings of that social setting.

Our CAE differed in two significant ways from Chang et al. (2013). Firstly, we did not delve autobiographically into our life stories "in order to gain an understanding of society through the unique lens of the self" (p.18). We delved to different depths of our life stories as we reflected on public involvement and our experience of CSC in order to work out what CSC is. Secondly, only one of us was an academic. Working as a CAE in this way, rather than choosing an alternative methodology for 'researching together', was a deliberate enactment of epistemic justice. It was a statement that all of our knowledges were equally valid and valued. And yet…

> Anne: In my reality, I want policy-makers to get what they need. But for everyone else it was all about voice and cake. And your realities were just so different. And now it's gone back to policy-makers, like my reality is more important. My way of thinking dominates. I've diminished your perspectives.
> Rachel: But it depends what you're focusing on. If you're focusing on making policy and wanting better ways to make policy, then you've got to focus on the policy-makers.'
> Anne: Which is why, I guess, it's a thesis problem, because that's what the thesis is about.
> Rachel: And you feel bad because that's where your heart is, the coffee shop conversations, and if you'd been doing your whole thesis on that, you would have done it a different way.

Anne: Thank you. Diane, can I take your drawing home and put it in?
Diane: Of course.
(Reflective, 2019)

Diane had sketched the relationship (Fig. 8.1), showing the five of us working equally within the CAE as a diamond cluster and my ongoing work of doctoral research as the band into which the diamond cluster is set.

Since then, two significant papers have been published that are helpful for critiquing what was done. Such a critique should be collaborative, but circumstances require me to conduct the critique solo.

Figure 8.1   The CAE and the thesis

© Diane Holmes, 2019

Chang and Bilgen (2020) suggest three facets of autoethnography, including CAE: self-originated, dialogical, and contextual. It is **self-originated** in that the researcher is subject and object of the inquiry. The description of the CAE in Chapter 6 shows it was self-originated. It is **dialogical** because the self exists in dialogue in so far as the self is socially constructed, and the current self is in dialogue with past self. In CAE, dialogue is also externally co-constructed. This CAE evidenced such dialogue in both the individual accounts and the collaborative analysis. It is **contextual** because experiences are interpreted in their sociocultural contexts, thus connecting the personal and the sociocultural. For me, this connectivity resonates with feminist and other standpoint claims that "personal is political", a phrase made popular because of the title of Hanisch's 1969 essay, a title she notes was given by the editors not herself (Hanisch, 2006). Our CAE was contextual not in engaging with academic literature but by engaging

reflexively with the world beyond the shared experience of the videoed CSC. This was evident in four accounts, particularly Helen's, and in the discussions during the collaborative analysis. The fifth account was mine, and for me the sociocultural work properly began later in the CAE as we collaboratively analysed the individual accounts.

Lapadat (2017) argues for CAE, suggesting that more rigorous qualitative quality criteria can be applied than to solo AE, such as evidence of interrogation of each other's interpretations, whether the telling of stories avoids representing others' voices, and whether guidelines have been drawn up for how to collaborate, ownership of data and how the data can be used. The guidelines were drawn up as a happy consequence of the research ethics committee identifying my 'alongsider' researcher-participants as participants. This meant all arrangements needed to be transparent and explicit in the paperwork prepared for ethics approval. In this CAE, both the half and full day workshops were redolent with interrogation.

A weakness was the premature ending of the CAE due to a combination of my misjudgement about how long the collaborative analysis would take and the inappropriateness of attempting to extend the work (explained in 6.2). This required me to finish the analysis and write solo for this thesis. While the others said they could hear their voices in what was written, it was no substitute for co-authoring. I already had qualms about whether and how to include the collaborative discussion about the CAE that took place in the 2019 reflexive workshop. If it were included as findings, it repositioned the discussion as data, giving me too much responsibility for analysis of what had been a collaborative discussion. To include it in the discussion was to author the account, itself an interpretive task, on everyone's behalf. Lapadat (2017) put these qualms into words. An ethical advantage of CAE is that it "avoids appropriation of voice as all collaborators are acknowledged as co-authors and owners of their stories" (p.598). With a deep breath, I closed down, filed away and laid aside the richness of that collaboratively generated, collaboratively owned data as not mine to analyse or report by myself. I believe the data are too rich and unique to be lost, so I intend to ask the original team if, and hopefully how, we reform to co-author the story of doing the CAE.[67]

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[67] The original 2015 ethics approval granted by Bangor University recognised the shared ownership of collaboratively generated data, and therefore although I am required to destroy data on the completion of studies and will naturally comply, my collaborators are under no such requirement.

Chang et al. (2013) do not define collaborative in a way that allows a CAE to be evaluated for its collaboration. They simply refer to 'working together'. They discuss whether this is for all or part of the research process, and when it is appropriate to work sequentially rather than concurrently. They also describe decisions about roles within the collaborative team. However, at no stage do they problematise the meaning of 'working together' or offer indicators for the quality of the collaboration. A ProQuest database search for "collaborative autoethnography" plus "quality" returned only one paper that referred to quality and collaboration. Guyotte and Sochacka (2016) argued that "embracing diverse perspectives can serve to strengthen the depth of engagement, quality, and potential impact of (collaborative) autoethnographic research." (p.1). Certainly, the diverse perspectives were evident (see 6.4) and resulted in CSC16 being arguably stronger than if its development had relied on my perspective alone.

The collaborative work could equally have been framed as co-production. Indeed, perhaps the apparent absence of anything termed a CAE that involves people who are not academics may be because such collaborative research is categorised as co-production. Armstrong et al. (2019) coproduced a list of questions to check whether research had been coproduced, and therefore this has been used as a quality check for what was termed a CAE in this research (see Table 8.2), along with a visualisation of the intended research relationship (Fig.8.2).

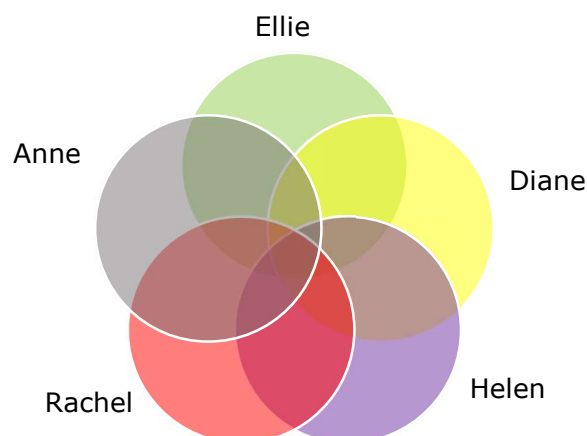**Figure 8.2   Research relationships in the CAE**

Table 8.2 Quality assuring the collaborative element of the CAE

What co-production meant to Armstrong et al, 2019	Evidence within the CAE
You produce something, and do not just talk	Yes, we produced a summary of what 'coffee shop conversation' means, and the important factors about it.
Everyone agrees at the start what co-production means for this piece of work	I told people in the information pack; they agreed. So we did not coproduce the meaning.
The right people are involved. This means involving people with different ideas and life experiences from start to end. They need to be able to work together	Yes, because we saw different things as important, and saw the same things differently.
Everyone in the team is involved. Anyone can have a new idea. Academics and activists bring their life experience as well as their research skills. If someone needs time to think, they say so. Everyone is self-aware and aware of each other, so we know what has to happen for everyone to be involved	Yes. We were all involved in decisions, from where to meet to how to do the analysis. We brought our whole selves. We looked after each other and ourselves. We made space for each other. We checked in emotionally.
Everyone is equal. The team notice if someone is dominating and point it out. Everyone can challenge others. People are side by side; no-one is at the top, and no-one is in the centre. Everyone is paid or no-one is paid. We make the best of each person's strengths. We share power. We treat ideas the same way whoever voices them	We all had the same status as we worked side-by-side. But we all knew I had responsibility for the overall research, and that this research was one part of the bigger thesis. I was challenged, and challenged others as we did the data analysis. We treated ideas the same whoever said them. Having said that, where someone spoke less, I paid more attention when they spoke.
Everyone looks out for each other. We trust each other so we can stay calm (or get back to being calm) when it gets messy and uncomfortable	It did get messy and uncomfortable for a short time in the full day workshop. We all looked out for each other, and debriefed about it.
You put the work in and agree when it is OK for one person to go off to do something and bring their work back to the team	Yes. We planned a mix of working together and working individually.
Co-production means being adaptable and leads to new thinking. You bounce ideas off others. You are willing to change how you think because of how someone else sees things	Without other people's ideas, CSC16 would not have foregrounded diversity or cake as symbolic of being valued. The one sentence summary would not have included the importance of voice.

From the perspective of Diane and the other women, the CAE had been experienced as described in Table 8.2 and visually represented in Figure 8.2. They said they had always

known that the collaboration was limited to one part of a larger thesis. This is why Diane's diamond ring sketch (Fig 8.1) has five equal diamonds set within the gold band of a larger piece of work, the thesis. This is also why I had experienced the relationship as less equal, because I was focusing on the 'diamond ring' as a whole whereas the other women were focusing on the CAE itself.

8.4.4 Were the KESS partnership and the CSC21 development transdisciplinary (Laasch et al, 2020).

The goal for this collaborative research was transdisciplinarity. As defined by Laasch et al. (2020), this is a form of collaboration whereby practitioners from several disciplines and several sectors integrate knowledge for a shared overarching issue-object. This research extends their model to transdisciplinarity involving a solo transdisciplinary researcher rather than a team of disciplinary researchers working in a transdisciplinary way. This research also shows that intersectoral knowledge integration is not limited to professional sectoral ways of knowing, by evidencing through the CAE that academic and lived experience knowledges can be integrated. Table 8.3 compares the components of transdisciplinarity with the KESS partnership and the research approach to developing CSC21.

It is challenging to work in line with the definition of Laasch et al. (2020) of transdisciplinarity as a doctoral student researching independently and not as part of a wider interdisciplinary research team. However, within these limitations, transdisciplinarity can be evidenced for how the KESS partnership was enacted in this research, and in how CSC21 was developed. Barod's role was integral to the transdisciplinarity of both the KESS partnership and the development of CSC21. Barod was engaged as a full knowledge partner throughout the research. This differs from some industrial collaborations, where the company partner has input in designing the research and offering a company placement, but no other role beyond receiving research reports.

Table 8.3   Extent of transdisciplinarity in this research

Deconstruction of the definition of transdisciplinarity (Laasch et al., 2020)	KESS collaborative research	Development of CSC21 (CAE and collaborative field testing)
Were there practitioners from several disciplines?	Yes, due to varied supervision arrangements (social policy, sociology, business), access to the Doctoral School, and the KESS Postgraduate Skills Development Award.	No, as the student was the only academic directly involved. However, the student drew from multiple academic disciplines, as evidenced throughout the thesis.
Were there practitioners from several sectors?	Yes, academic (Bangor/Swansea Universities; KESS), business (Barod), Welsh Government (European Social Fund).	Yes, academic (student), business (Barod), public sector (clients) and lived experience (other members of the CAE team).
In what ways were the different ways of knowing integrated?	During joint supervision from academic and company supervisors. Primary site of integration was within the student.	Collaborative analysis; coproductive workshops. This involved the student 'translating' concepts and technical language among the sectors to facilitate communication and knowledge integration.
What was the shared overarching issue-object?	Successful completion of doctoral research, including the development of a public consultation method in response to the company partner's concerns about public involvement.	A method for public consultation that engaged people who do not get involved in consultations, and that allows people to talk on their own terms about a social issue.

Without the transdisciplinary approach, Barod's role as company partner might have been reduced to co-designing the proposal that was submitted to KESS by Bangor University, providing the student with a company placement, and receiving a final report of the research. As it was, the far greater collaboration benefitted both Barod and me as we cross-fertilized our conceptual thinking and provide reality-checks to each other about the method's development. This research provided an opportunity for knowledge synthesis across four sectors: academic, business, public, and general public, accidentally thereby extending the work of Laasch et al. (2020).

8.5 Epistemic (in)justice

8.5.1 Byskov (2021), public involvement and epistemic (in)justice

Byskov (2021) reimagines epistemic injustice, proposing five conditions including the conditions of disadvantage and prejudice of Fricker's hermeneutic and testimonial injustice (Fricker, 2007). All five conditions are "partial conditions of injustice" (Byskov, 2021, p.129) that act as a "sliding scale where the violation of more conditions constitutes a greater injustice" (ibid.). His argument is that for something to be an epistemic injustice, it is not enough to experience unjustifiable discrimination as a knower. There must also be some combination of consequential disadvantage, prejudice against the person (either personally or because of a category of person to which they belong or are assumed to belong), being a stakeholder, the discrimination being epistemic in nature, and the person experiencing social injustices in addition to the current discrimination.

In Wales, the stakeholder condition in relation to social care policy-making is met by any ordinary citizen, not only those using social care services (4.2.3). In addition, anyone who qualifies to use social care services arguably already experiences social injustice. Certainly, people with learning disabilities routinely face social injustice (2.4). Policy-making is a knowledge-based activity, so public involvement is meaningful only if ordinary citizens are recognised as knowers. This could be as a source of information or as a good informant (Fricker, 2012). What remains is to consider if ordinary citizens face prejudice that means they are discriminated against, whether that is justifiable and whether they are placed at a consequential disadvantage.

It would take another thesis to address and unpack these fully in relation to Welsh Government policy-making, but there are indications in Barod's work on involvement (2.5), the literature about evidence (4.4) and the findings in Chapter 5 that these other conditions are met. Certainly, in terms of EBPM, the knowledge of ordinary citizens is not valued as highly as that of academics. Indeed, academics themselves "often have an implicit epistemology that privileges a certain hierarchy of knowledge and evidence." (Williams et al., 2020, p.6). Just as research has its own language, so does policy-making. This makes it probable that a number of statements in Williams et al. (2020) apply equally to public involvement in policy-making, for example that "marginalised citizens who cannot speak the language of research are thereby silenced" (ibid., p.6) and "when co-production fails to address pre-existing power dynamics in research, it is

service users and lay partners – not researchers – who are most likely to be silenced."
(ibid.). These seem apt statements to describe the findings of Chapter 5.

8.5.2 Revisioning public consultation

Perhaps surprisingly, given this research's commitment to collaboration, co-production, and epistemic justice, the focus of this research is the development of a consultation method. Consultation is towards the bottom of hierarchies of involvement (e.g. Arnstein, 1969). The findings from Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 would corroborate consultation being assigned such a position. For example, consultation findings have no status as evidence within EBPM (4.4). By the time formal public consultation takes place, in principle decisions have been made and the public role is more one of scrutiny than actively influencing policy-making (5.3.3). Formal public consultation documents are written using the mental models and language of policy-makers, and documents tell people what kind of response is required (7.6.4).

Some of this could be remedied. Lack of status as evidence could be remedied by conducting public consultation as if qualitative social research. The flow of information and knowledge in consultation and research is predominantly unidirectional – from the participant to the researcher or facilitator. This positions the participant closer to Fricker's "source of information" than "good informant" (Fricker, 2012). The timing and therefore potential influence of public consultation could be remedied, particularly as policy design gains traction, by reframing public consultation as part of user research during Discovery. However, the information flow would still be unidirectional. Methods such as focus groups and World Café can address the challenge of language and proscriptive response forms, but it is harder to imagine an existing consultation or user research method that does not frame the topic in line with the organiser's mental model– if only in the framing and choice of questions. Enabling this is, perhaps CSC21's greatest potential contribution.

CSC21 itself embeds signifiers of valuing people as knowers throughout the method. For example, the purposive sampling grid approach removes opportunities for prejudice about whose voices are heard. It assigns particular value of as knowers to those who are most vulnerable to social injustice, discrimination and disadvantage, namely those whose circumstances and characteristics make it likely that their mental models are furthest from the mental models of policy-makers.

There is a monetary valuing of people as knowers. The hosts are paid for their work outside of the conversation itself. They and those who they meet with are paid for their time in the conversation. They can choose when and how to meet, and their meeting is at no cost to them as the café bill is refunded to the host.

There is affective valuing of people through personal invitation, wanting to learn how they make sense of something, and making sure the quality of the cake[68] signifies the value placed on the person's involvement.

There is valuing and respecting of what people know and how people make sense of social issues for themselves. This is most evident in the disempowering of the researcher/consultant by removing much of their opportunity to interpret other people's data.

This is public consultation re-visioned. The early indicators from this research are that this approach is not only epistemically valuable but also viable.

A re-visioning of public consultation needs to sit within a re-visioning of policy-making itself. Imagine a future where policy co-design or collective intelligent design means ordinary citizens can be fully embedded in transdisciplinary design teams. There will still be a need for user research or public consultation to learn from those who do not wish to commit to ongoing involvement but who hold valuing information and valuable ways of knowing and making sense of the social issue. This is where CSC21 fits in.

8.5.3 The 'alongsider' format as epistemic justice

Some people will arrive at this point of the thesis having forgotten that they are seeing just the right-hand page of the thesis. This is because university requirements are for a Word version of the thesis together with an artefact that is the full 'alongsider thesis'. Juxtaposing the Everyday and Academic versions allows people to read across. Academics have little time. This approach allows them to scan the left page and then 'read across' to get the details they require. People from the other sectors can read the left page and scan across to work out how academics talk and get pointers to further reading. In an ideal world, the left-hand page would be in Easy Read. However, this is a highly skilled and technical task requiring at least one person who relies on Easy Read and one person with high literacy skills to co-work on its design.

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[68] Or equivalent.

The 'alongsider thesis' is an act of epistemic justice because it makes available to academic outsiders knowledge that is usually treated as the preserve of the academic.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter discusses over-arching themes from this research, organising the discussion around the topic of public involvement and making policy that works, methodological critique, and finally the theme of epistemic (in)justice. It comprises four sections.

The first section addresses the development of CSC21. It concludes that CSC21 addresses many of the challenges inherent in public consultation. However, it perpetuates an epistemic injustice in requiring the person with a potentially more powerful role within the conversation, the host, to be able to write. Also, it is only an appropriate method for those who socialise and converse, meaning it is still excluding of some. However, it broadens participation way beyond 'the usual suspects'. It concludes that a new consultation method will not of itself lead to policy that is more likely to deliver what it promises. This also requires social issues to be understood as complex adaptive systems and the institutions of government (as policy-makers) and academia (as research evidence creators) to realign themselves in transdisciplinary ways. As part of this shift, co-design and co-production will need to move from activities of insiders and outsiders to activities of 'alongsiders'.

The second section considers the work still to be done because, as explained in 3.5.3, the research finished before the final Delivery phase of the design process. This requires field testing of CSC21, including market research about its name, and planning for evaluation and scaling of the method.

The third section is a methodological critique. It critiques the research design, noting its limitations. It notes weaknesses in the research design and challenges that were faced, and concludes it is difficult to imagine how the research could have been done differently within the limitations of doctoral research. The collaborative autoethnographic work is discussed at some length, concluding that within the CAE itself the relationship was one of 'alongsiders'. This section concludes that both the KESS partnership and the development of CSC21 can be understood as transdisciplinary research.

The final section discusses epistemic (in)justice. It notes the irony of arguing so strongly for collaborative relationships then developing a method that reduces people's role to sources of information. It considers data analysis as a site of epistemic (in)justice, noting the discussion from 7.6 in relation to CSC21 and comparing this with the approaches used in the research itself.

The next and final chapter brings the thesis to a conclusion by revisiting the reasons for conducting this research, describing the contributions of this research, and considering possible next steps.

Chapter 9   Conclusions

9.1   Introduction

The previous chapter discusses over-arching themes from this research. The discussion is organised around the topic of public involvement and making policy that works, methodological critique, and finally the theme of epistemic (in)justice.

This final chapter brings the thesis to a conclusion by revisiting the reasons for conducting this research, describing the contributions of this research, and considering next steps.

The chapter begins by revisiting the point of the research (9.2) before questioning whether Barod received what they were expecting when they signed up to become KESS company partners (9.3). It draws conclusions about what has been learned about designing policy that works (9.4). The chapter then shifts to a consideration of this thesis' main contributions to three areas: public consultation, research methodology and knowledge translation (9.5).

This chapter concludes the thesis, but not the work required if this research is to result in lasting impact. The question of what next applies to CSC21 itself, the need for future research, and the need to disseminate the research more widely (9.6).

The thesis finishes as it began (9.7), with reflections on the life of Alan Armstrong and the aspirations of people with learning disabilities for the kind of ordinary life that I, and most academics and policy-makers, take for granted.

9.2   Reviewing the purpose of the research

This thesis covers considerable ground. It is academically broad, not focusing on any particular strand of any single discipline. The scope is ambitious, involving an exploration of policy-making and public consultation before settling into the development of a novel consultation method. The research is also multi-sector, ranging across academic, policy, business, and Third Sector worlds, while prioritising the experiences of ordinary citizens.

As the thesis unfolds across the chapters, Barod's idea and early work are developed into something that has the potential to transform public consultation. This is not for the sake of transforming public consultation, but with an eye to the urgent and intractable challenge of making social care policy that delivers the social justice promised in policy by Welsh Government and the ordinary lives promised to people with learning disabilities since 1983.

Before working on the development of CSC21, the thesis describes what is known about how policy is made, including thinking about different conceptual approaches to policy-making. The paucity of evidence of everyday policy-making practices means Chapter 5 forms an essential part of understanding what needs to be designed into CSC21 and the context in which it will be used.

The research that develops the method from 'coffee shop conversations' to CSC21 can be described as transdisciplinary and collaborative, or at least as being as transdisciplinary and collaborative as possible when one doctoral student is researching collaboratively with people from outside the academic world.

In 1.1, it is stated that to achieve its aims, this thesis needs to make visible some of the reasons policy-making is not working well and deliver a credible method that contributes to epistemic justice in policy-making rather than reinforcing existing injustice.

That social care policy in Wales, at least for people with learning disabilities, is not working well is argued in 2.4 and 4.6. The promise of an ordinary life, with the support needed to make that happen, were first made in 1983. This promise is still not yet fulfilled in 2021. Similarly, the need for public services to work together was identified in the 1983 All Wales Strategy (Welsh Office, 1983) and is repeated in policy from that time onward. In 2021, Welsh Government is consulting on a new law covering similar ground (Welsh Government, 2021) as SSWA has not delivered the required integration of services or the desired well-being improvements (Llewellyn et al., 2020).

Chapters 4 and 5 make visible some of the reasons that policy-making is not working well, in particular the inadequacy of a NPM and EBPM approach to policy-making where social issues are treated as if part of complicated systems and therefore amenable to effective targeted interventions provided sufficient relevant information and evidence is available. These chapters, together with the worked example in 7.6.4, also make visible inadequacies of public involvement in general and public consultation in particular.

The inadequacies with public consultation relate to:

- Barriers created by the policy world having a culture and language alien to those outside the policy world together with social care policy-makers having their own team mental model of social care issues that does not appear to match that of those using social care services
- Public perceptions of what sort of people get involved in policy-making and why they get involved, together with cynicism about the value of getting involved
- The conduct of consultations leading to findings that are partial and would not stand up to scrutiny against any academic quality standards or expectations. This is nowhere more noticeable than in the tiny self-selecting group of ordinary citizens who often repeatedly engage with Welsh Government on social care issues.

In Wales at least, public involvement is legitimated on the grounds of citizenship, social justice, and the importance of what people know through their lived experience. This underpins the policy imperative of working with ordinary citizens as stakeholders. Therefore, this thesis has focused on re-visioning public consultation as a way to develop a credible method that contributes to epistemic justice in policy-making. Changing public consultation alone will not improve policy, but without a new approach to public consultation it is unlikely that a move towards a complex systems approach to policy-making will achieve its potential.

Epistemically, CSC21 values not just the information known by ordinary citizens but also the way in which they make sense of that information and organise their knowledge about the topic of a social care related consultation. As part of this, CSC21 values people's intersectional identities sufficiently to invest time in constructing a purposive sampling grid for each consultation. Each CSC21 conversation enacts epistemic justice by allowing each person to bring and use their own mental model to address the topic on their own terms. People are then able to co-construct agreed notes, including grouping notes in ways that make sense to them. All this occurs before an outsider superimposes their own mental model onto the topic (through framing questions or preparing documents and asking people to respond on those terms) or on what people say (through making notes privately and/or taking away recordings of conversations that are then analysed by the outsider who cannot but bring their own mental model to the topic. Policy-makers, therefore, can access information from the perspective of ordinary

citizens rather than receiving the response of ordinary citizens to the policy-makers' perspective.

CSC21 is designed for consultation and not co-production. The primary reason for focusing on consultation is that it asks least of people who seem by and large disengaged. From the (limited) evidence of Chapters 4 and 5, it seems improbable that majority of people living in Wales would choose to engage with Welsh Government, even if they knew how to find out about opportunities to engage. The secondary reason is that, in Wales at least, the work of Co-production Network for Wales (see Co-production Network for Wales, n.d.) means there is a centralised resource for all who are willing to invest in co-production, along with a growing community of practice to support those wanting to coproduce, and rapidly developing thinking and improvements in practice. This made additional work on co-production less strategic in relation to increasing citizen involvement in policy-making.

9.3   Did Barod get what they were expecting?

What Barod has received is not quite what they expected when they invested in the KESS partnership, co-designed the research proposal, and released me to become the student. Most significantly, while CSC21 has been developed and described, the research design approach meant there was insufficient time to evaluate CSC21. This approach does, however provide two benefits. The first is that CSC21 has a much stronger theoretical foundation and has come to be premised on the beliefs that:

- Complex social issues are best understood as complex adaptive systems.
- Everyone has partial, perspectived knowledge, so will 'map' and make sense of the system differently.
- Combining perspectives gives a fuller understanding of the system, and a fuller picture of the social issue requiring intervention.
- All the different ways of knowing and making sense are valued, as are all the people who know about the system, whether their knowledge is from learning about it or experiencing living within it and regardless of how much power they have to effect change in the system.
- Learning how people map and make sense of the system is best done by allowing them to talk freely on their own terms.

The second is that the long term relationship with academia has opened doors to Barod for wider academic engagement. Barod is now more confident to engage as 'alongsiders' in the academic world and members of the research team know what sort of research relationship they want with university-based academics. Barod has secured contracts since my departure to provide (paid) critical review of papers submitted to a professional practice journal and is brokering plans with world leading academics for appropriate ways to commemorate Alan Armstrong's academic contributions. Conceptually, Barod developed 'my space, your space, shared space' (Armstrong and Collis, 2018), having listened to my attempts to explain mental models and 'worlds'. Attempts to explain that 'space' in CSC21 is about more than just the physical environment led to co-constructing a four-dimensions of space idea: cognitive space (mental maps), emotional space (if you feel you belong), physical space (its accessibility and connotations) and institutional space (culture, language, and procedures). From that has come Barod's[69] as yet unpublished 'Swiss cheese model of co-production', where each of the four dimensions is treated as a slice of Swiss cheese and the holes of all four slices need to align if co-production is to take place.

9.4 Policy that works?

Drawing on everything from this thesis, I would still suggest (as was suggested in 4.10) that what is needed for social care policy that works is:

- a presumption that social care issues are complex adaptive systems. In practical terms, this means there is no centralised control, there are multiple constantly interacting and constantly adapting elements comprising the system, and any direct interventions will have unpredictable consequences.
- the consequent need for policy to focus on stewarding the system rather than centralised 'command and control' interventions. Approaches to system stewarding are stronger in community development literature and practice, which was beyond the scope of this thesis.
- A strong transdisciplinary (Laasch et al., 2020) co-design team at the heart of both sense-making and 'nudging' the system. This necessarily includes a diversity of those with lived experience who are willing to commit to engaged ongoing co-design work.

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[69] The Swiss cheese model is not Barod's; this application is. The Swiss cheese model is usually attributed James Reason (Reason, 2000).

- epistemically just approaches to transdisciplinarity, whereby each in-team contribution is equally valued at the same time as the different strengths of attractors and influences within the CAS are recognised. In other words, someone's power may be recognised as strong or weak within the CAS but this is not reflected in their power within the co-design team.

One feature shared by policy-making and research is that specialisms are divided into divisions (Welsh Government), academic disciplines, and university departments. This is adequate, and even desirable for complicated systems. It allows in depth knowledge to be created and shared in relation to something specific. However, it is not adequate for complex adaptive systems. One property such systems share is that they transcend any silos or divisions. They cannot be managed within a single specialised public service.

The problem of social care policy is too urgent to wait for system transformation. CSC21 needed a design that could begin improving outcomes immediately. Fortunately, this design has been achieved in a way that also 'future proofs' CSC21 for a possible future as a method for gathering a diversity of intelligence rapidly and systematically to inform a policy co-design process that is based on understanding social issues as complex adaptive systems. Until that day, CSC21 is best used *before* trying to design an intervention to change the system. However, it also has value as a final safety net before a policy or law is finalised and implemented.

CSC21 gives early indications that it can address three serious flaws in public involvement:

- Small, self-selecting sample. This is addressed through the systematic purposive sampling frame, and the willingness of people who do not engage in public consultations to meet someone they know for a chat.
- Requirement to respond on Welsh Government terms. This is addressed by allowing people to talk freely about the topic rather than read a document and respond to questions.
- Poor quality evidence. This is addressed by making sure CSC21 stands up to scrutiny as a research method.

More use and evaluation are needed before this can be stated with confidence.

9.5 Contributions

This thesis makes a number of contributions to a number of audiences, as might be expected for a transdisciplinary thesis addressing a real-life issue. There are contributions relating to CSC21 itself, from how the research was conducted, and from the ways in which the knowledge co-created in the research is made available beyond a traditional academic audience.

The following sections are used to highlight what I consider the most significant contributions that this thesis makes. Some are contributions to what is known. Some are contributions to ongoing emergent understandings of social issues and social care policy-making. Others relate to practice so remain potential contributions until acted upon. For example, the contribution of CSC21 to policy-making remains potential until it is used, but CSC21 makes a current contribution to knowledge about approaches to public consultation.

9.5.1 Contributions and potential contributions of this thesis to public consultation practices

Chapter 5 of this thesis adds to the sparse literature on everyday policy-making practices described in 4.9. Chapter 5 is based on a limited data as noted in 5.1 and 8.4.2, but it provides a starting point for future research about everyday policy-making practices in Wales. This of itself is an academic contribution. The findings from the chapter make a potential contribution to policy-making practice by identifying some of the reasons ordinary citizens do not get involved when opportunities are made available.

As 4.4 argues, evidence plays an important role in policy-making but public consultation findings are not taken seriously as evidence. CSC21 makes a potential contribution by being designed for use in public consultation but to the standards expected of qualitative research. This increases the salience of public consultation findings, moving it from a legislative requirement to a source of reliable evidence. CSC21's approach to intersectional purposive sampling also addresses one of the concerns expressed by the participant in I3 that policy-makers only receive a partial picture that is usually skewed towards White and middleclass interests.

Having an intersectional sampling strategy would be of no benefit unless people were willing to be recruited. The findings in Chapter 5 corroborate the evidence from 4.7 and

the understanding of Barod (2.5) that public *non*-involvement is normative. Chapter 5 suggests there may be significant levels of cynicism and disinclination to become involved. The evidence from this thesis is that an invitation to coffee from a friend for an informal conversation about a social issue (at someone else's expense and with payment for time) in exchange for making notes of the conversation is sufficient incentive for people to become involved. The diversity of those who took part is evidenced in Figures 7.1 and 7.4 (the purposive sampling grids). While a cost comparison with traditional public consultation activities was beyond the scope of this thesis, both Client 1 and Client 2 believed they had received excellent value for money (pers. comm. from Barod's financial manager).

Public consultation is usually conducted towards the end of the policy-making process. This thesis uses literature about mental models and the design process to suggest that the knowledge of ordinary citizens is more valuable at the start, when seeking to scope and understand a social issue.

CSC21 is a mechanism whereby people can talk on their own terms about the social issue, and people are encouraged to include in the notes what they think policy-makers need to know. This removes a barrier to involvement described by Barod (2.5) and evident in the findings of Chapter 5, namely people's difficulty in connecting with policy-makers' framing of the social issue and difficulties in understanding the language and culture of policy-making. For policy-makers, this approach can provide answers to the questions that they did not realise they needed to ask.

In the light of mental models literature, this approach can be expected to provide far more valuable information for what Nesta call 'collective intelligent design' (Nesta, n.d.) than information gained by asking people to respond to someone else's framing of the social issue. For this reason, CSC21 makes a potential contribution to any context that includes a 'discovery' phase. It is common within digital design, for example, for discovery to involve the development of personas. These are pen portraits, often ethnographically informed, of the type of person who will be using whatever is being designed. CSC21 offers advantages over speculation to 'second guess' the perspective of the personas by identifying and recruiting actual people who are then trained to host a conversation with someone from their social network.

Policy design is often associated with seeing social issues as complex adaptive systems. CSC21 makes a potential contribution to any context where complex adaptive systems

are involved and a system change is desired. Allowing people to respond on their own terms, and in as natural a conversational way as possible, maximises the opportunity to learn how they see and make sense of the system for themselves and from their perspective. In other words, it gives insights into how people position themselves within the system and interact with other elements of the system. These insights are valuable for any attempt to intervene within the system in order to prompt a desired change to emerge as the system responds to the intervention.

One final contribution made by CSC21 to public consultation is that it provides greater confidence that the interpretation of data would be recognised as authentic by the people contributing the data. This is because the initial stage of interpretation is conducted by people themselves within the conversation, and the researcher or consultation organiser is only presented with a set of notes agreed by those within the conversation as what they wish to share with the policy-maker.

What this thesis does *not* contribute is a deeper understanding or broader knowledge about co-design and co-productive practices. Such collective and collaborative practices are fundamental, in my opinion, to successful and ethical policy-making.

9.5.2 Contributions of this research approach to academic knowledge

As argued in 4.4.2, academics have a role as evidence-producers for policy-making. It is already being argued (e.g. Hinrich-Krapels et al., 2020) that academics need to become transdisciplinary if they want their research to have salience as policy evidence. This thesis is an example of starting with a real-life issue and looking to the academic world for different ways to understand and address the issue. As such, it contributes to the body of literature about ways in which academics can become evidence-producers in relation to complex adaptive systems.

This research pushes methodological boundaries. These contributions are mainly in relation to qualitative data analysis, approaches to collaborative research, and synthesising literatures about researching ethically and epistemic (in)justice. These contributions overlap, for example participants having greater control over the interpretation of their own data (6.11 and 7.7) is intimately associated with epistemic justice (8.5.2). These contributions are noted in passing when discussed throughout the body of the thesis.

I wish to highlight just two, the contribution to the literature of collaborative autoethnography and contributions to what it means to research ethically.

Literature about CAE is not hard to find. However, as explained in 2.3, CAEs almost invariably involve those who are already part of the academic world, even if the topic is a sense of marginalisation, lack of belonging, or being an outsider within the academic world. That this CAE team comprises four people from outside the academic world and one doctoral student is a rarity, particularly as it is not in the genre of 'witnessing' (Ellis and Rawicki, 2013). As such, this thesis contributes to the CAE practice literature by describing in detail how the research was planned and how it unfolded. By taking this approach to CAE, this thesis demonstrates it is possible to increase the diversity of voices within the academic literature through using a collaborative team approach to autoethnography, an idea suggested by Lapadat (2017) and Chang and Bilgen (2020).

This thesis also contributes to the methodological literature about collaborative research by demonstrating that CAE can be an appropriate method when the primary intention is to research collaboratively as 'alongsiders' and equals rather than the primary intention being autoethnographic. As such, it offers an additional option for those who want to explore beyond co-production, co-design and inclusive research and who are attracted by a methodology that positions all members of the team as participant-researchers (Doloriert and Sambrook, 2009).

The second methodological contribution I wish to highlight relates to research ethics, and the way in which this thesis brings together literature and concepts from epistemic (in)justice and literature and concepts about research ethics. This part of the research is reported in 3.3.2. There is little novelty in this contribution. Indigenous researchers have long known that research ethics and epistemic (in)justice cannot be separated (Bull et al., 2020). Having learned from Indigenous researchers that the two cannot be separated, my contribution is the application of this learning to my own non-Indigenous research context.

9.5.3 Contribution to knowledge translation

This thesis is unusual in attempting to provide access to information designed for an academic audience and the co-creators and potential users of the research in the same document by using a side-by-side format. I am grateful to Bangor University for permitting the submission of the 'alongsider thesis' as an artefact. The arguments for

attempting this are made in 1.5.1. In some ways, this thesis contributes merely by existing as an 'alongsider thesis'. The use of 'alongsider' rather than 'parallel pages' or 'read-across' reflects the potential contribution of this approach to thesis production to the world of inclusive research, where the term was coined (Chalachanová et al., 2020).

Knowledge translation is not routinely associated with the epistemic (in)justice literature. This thesis suggests it might be salutary if it were. Making academic knowledge available outside of the academic world frequently requires information to be translated, making it apt that the 'alongsider thesis' uses a parallel page design used in Welsh-English bilingual design.

As it stands, the Everyday pages were 'translated' from the Academic pages rather than written in parallel. This shows in the 'clunky' and somewhat unnatural feel of the Everyday pages compared to the Academic text. Limited pre-submission testing was possible. Members of the CAE team found it engaging and valued being able to see how their part in the CAE work contributed to the thesis as a whole. The side-by-side meant it was possible to read-across. This was valued by the CAE team. However, an experienced academic inclusive researcher was asked to imagine using the Everyday text to help explain the research to a self-advocate researcher, and their opinion was that they would struggle to use it for that purpose. For example, the Everyday version would need concrete examples rather than simply mirroring the Academic text, and it was not always clear what was my opinion, what were findings, and what was written by others. Given another year, it would have been possible to make a more thorough attempt.

The significance of producing an 'alongsider thesis' rather than a summary report is that it provides access to information about how the research was conducted, how and why decisions were made, and an overview of what was already academically known before the research was conducted. Describing this as an 'alongsider thesis' underlines that producing the thesis in this way is a deliberate act of epistemic justice and not simply a desire to increase research impact by increasing accessibility to the research findings.

The major difference between the Everyday text and a summary report is that it does not concentrate on the research findings to the exclusion of other knowledge. This is to avoid contributing to the "unfair denial of knowledge" through an "unfair judgement about epistemic capacity" (Byskov, 2021, p.129). This is perfectly adequate for some purposes, and Barod has already asked me to produce something like this for them to use with potential clients in keeping with the KESS2 requirement to provide the company partner with a final report or presentation (KESS2, 2018, slide 17). However, it is not

adequate for those from outside the academic world who wish to develop their research skills and become more confident in their relationship with academics. In other words, those from outside the academic world who are seeking to become 'alongsider' researchers.

9.6   What next?

9.6.1   What next for CSC21?

This is discussed at the end of Chapter 7 and in Chapter 8. In summary, CSC21 needs field testing to check that the proposed improvements after its testing with Client 2 work as anticipated. In particular, it is important to check that the proposed method of spreading the training is effective. While communities of practice and cascade training are established practices, it needs to be checked that they work for spreading the ethos as well as the methods of CSC21. At the moment, the only evidence that this method is effective relates to my use of it and my self-evaluation of its effectiveness, combined with positive feedback from clients. That is not an adequate evidence base, therefore the method needs independent evaluation, ideally in relation to its use by others.

9.6.2   What next for the research?

There is unfinished business from this research that needs to be addressed before moving on. Throughout the thesis, future lines of research and intended future publications have been noted. Much of the last six years of research did not make it to the thesis and awaits further work.

In summary, the lines of research that need addressing before moving on are:

- The use of creative analytic practices as part of a researcher's toolkit for thinking, and not just as research proper as noted in 3.1. There is already a significant body of literature on this topic, and this would add insights into a different and neurodiverse approach to such practices as aids to research rather than research itself.
- The theory and praxis of researching ethically as noted in 3.3.2. Theoretical research would involve a synthesis of literatures about epistemic (in)justice and decolonial ethics plus a reframing of all social research involving academic world insiders and outsiders as cross-cultural research. Currently these conversations are

being conducted separately, but in my opinion, would benefit from being brought into dialogue. In terms of praxis, this research generated rich data in particular from the CAE about what it means to research ethically and how to navigate ethics in the field. These data have not been used in this thesis, in part because they were co-generated and are co-owned by the CAE team and therefore it is epistemically and ethically more appropriate to defer further work until it can be completed and published as a team.

- Spirographic analysis – or at least a better understanding of the complexity of qualitative analysis as noted in 3.4.6. The work in this thesis to understand qualitative data analysis presents fascinating opportunities for future research, both of praxis and theory.

- Explanatory potential of organisational field research for interactions within policy-making, and between those currently engaged in policy-making and ordinary citizens who are not, as noted in 4.3.3. This thesis suggests that organisational field research is transferable to research about policy-making and public involvement in policy-making. There are indications that it could have explanatory potential. However, it would require further research to test this belief.

- Observational studies of policy-making as noted in 4.8. The current lack of observational studies makes it difficult to understand how policy-making works as a system or organisational field. Without that information, it is difficult to speculate how change might be brought about.

- Additional CAE research with the original CAE team to co-author papers about working collaboratively as 'alongsiders'. As noted in 8.4.3, a weakness of the research was the premature ending of the CAE. This meant that we were unable to co-analyse or co-author any of the material about working collaboratively. This research provides a richness of data about research together that future work by the team could draw upon. Such co-authored papers would form a significant extension to the literature about CAE and act as a real-life test of approaches to co-authoring that might benefit the wider co-design, co-production, Patient Public Involvement, and inclusive research communities.

- More research, both for development and evaluation of CSC21. In particular, it needs to be seen whether CSC21 can work within a research context, and whether those trained to host can reliably 'spread' the ethos and practices of CSC21. As noted in 3.5, this doctoral research finished before the final stage of the design process, namely Delivery. For CSC21 to maximise its potential contributions its ability to 'spread' needs to be tested and the method needs to be evaluated. For credibility, ideally the evaluation should be independent of myself or Barod.

9.6.3 What next for the thesis and its contents?

The 'alongsider thesis' approach is novel and would benefit from additional feedback on its effectiveness and limitations as a technique. Two civil servants, an inclusive research professor, and colleagues at Barod who have said they are willing to give feedback.

The 'alongsider thesis' is intended for the few who want access to the full thesis. Most people, whether inside or outside the academic world, will only be interested in findings and application of findings. Therefore, a series of short briefing papers is planned.

9.7 Concluding comments: An ordinary life?

Alan Armstrong was born in 1971. He was in his second year at secondary school when the All Wales Strategy for the Development of Services for Mentally Handicapped People was launched in 1983. When he died in 2021, he was renting his own flat. He had co-founded a company and had a job. He had an active social life and was a loved part of a local church community, as well as a cornerstone of Carmarthenshire People First. He'd had relationships. He had friends. He had, in many ways, the ordinary life promised back in 1983.

And yet this thesis is premised on the assertion that social care policy in Wales has failed to deliver the promised ordinary life. Alan achieved an ordinary life through dogged determination, refusal to listen when told things just weren't possible, and with the support of networks he had built around him. His life needs to be seen against a backdrop of depressing reports and statistics about the lives of people with learning disabilities in Wales. It could be said that Alan achieved an ordinary life in spite of, and not because of, successive social care policies. He began to gain a foothold in the academic world despite, not because of, accepted academic practices. His life was extraordinary in being ordinary.

This research has begun the development of a new approach to public consultation that aligns with policy design but can be used within more traditional policy-making processes. In a policy world that is increasingly recognising that social issues are complex adaptive systems, this research offers a powerful tool for discovering more about the system before a policy intervention begins to be designed.

That is why this research matters. It matters because social care policy must start working more effectively because people's lives matter.

It matters because an ordinary life should not be extraordinary.

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Appendix 1: Informed consent paperwork

A1.1 Covering letter for the collaborative autoethnographic work

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

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Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

March 2015

Dear

'Coffee shop conversations: an ethnographic study'

I am writing to invite you to take part in this research as part of my MA by Research degree. The research is organised and funded jointly by the European Social Fund, Bangor University and Barod Community Interest Company via a KESS partnership. I have enclosed an information sheet about this study, along with two consent forms.

I am inviting you to be part of the videoed 'coffee shop conversation', to write your own account of what a 'coffee shop conversation' is, and join in the group work where we try to write a description together. If you wish, you can also be part of co-authoring papers or reports about this research.

Unless we have agreed otherwise, any information you share would be treated as strictly confidential – you would not be identified in any reports or outputs arising from this work without your permission.

It is up to you to decide whether you would like to take part. I am asking for a big commitment from you, and I am sure you will have many questions. So please contact me on 07800755076 or by email to sop448@bangor.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Anne Collis
School of Social Science
Bangor University

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

_____

Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

'Coffee shop conversations': an ethnographic study

Information Sheet for potential collaborators

Introduction

I am currently a student at Bangor University, doing some research for Barod Community interest Company via the European-funded KESS programme for a MA by Research degree. I am inviting you to take part in this research. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the project is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information.

What is the point of this study?

The research as a whole will do two things:
Produce a description of 'coffee shop conversations'.
Look at the role public consultation plays in policy-making in Wales, and, within that, where 'coffee shop conversations' fit in.

Why have I been invited to take part?

I am inviting you because you have already taken part in a 'coffee shop conversation' for Barod. This time it is going to be a bit different, though. Rather than the research being about the topic we talk about (*how policy is made, and who should have a say*), the research is to work out what a 'coffee shop conversation' is and what is going on when we have one.

You do not have to take part. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. Whatever you decide will not affect any future relationship. I would strongly recommend that you talk to me and take your time to decide whether you wish to take part. You are also very welcome to talk to anyone else you trust as you make your decision.

What will taking part involve?

Taking part will involve:

- One group meeting in mid April. When I know who is interested, I will check which day and time suits everyone. It will last 1 1/2 hours. We will meet in a quiet coffee shop. We will talk about the research and then agree how we will do this research together.
- Taking part in a videoed 'coffee shop conversation' for Barod in late April/early May. We will set the date and time at our first group meeting. The topic will be *how policy is made, and who should have a say.* This will last about 1 ½ hours. We will meet in a quiet coffee shop. With your permission, I will keep the information about *how policy is made, and who should have a say* and add it to other information I collect about this*.*
- Going away to think about the 'coffee shop conversation', and write (or draw or record) your description, reflections, thoughts and feelings. Writing can be difficult. Here are some ways I can help you if you get stuck:
- You can ask me for some starting questions
- You can ask to borrow a copy of the video
- You can ask to meet me and talk it through with me while I audio-record the conversation.
- One group meeting in May/early June. This will last about 2 hours. We will look at each other's accounts and talk about 'coffee shop conversations'. I will video the meeting. The meeting will take place in a private, comfy room at the University.
- One writing workshop in June. This will last about 6 hours, including a long break for lunch and breaks for drinks. This will take place at the university.

There is one optional extra:

- Further writing workshops to write one or more academic research papers based on what we have done.

Any papers written this way would be sent for publication under the names of all the people who helped write the paper. Depending on University Regulations, I might also include the paper(s) within my dissertation.

Some general things to think about

Agreeing to take part means agreeing to let me video the 'coffee shop conversation'. Being videoed can be a bit off-putting, but I will keep it as unobtrusive as possible. The only people who will see the video are members of the group and the people at the university who are helping me with my research.

I think taking part will be fun and interesting. However, I am asking for a big commitment from you. I cannot offer to pay for your time, but the funding for the study will pay for the food and drinks each time we meet up.

We already know each other as friends and acquaintances. When we work together, there are times we will be fellow co-researchers and times when it will be more like me being the researcher and you being a research participant. It is important that we always know what role we are in when we meet. This is something we will discuss when we have our first group meeting.

Taking part means you will need to do a lot of thinking and reflecting. You can take a break at any point when we meet, and you can ask for as much space and time as you need between meetings to process any of your thoughts or feelings.

Who will know I am part of this research, and who will find out what I say?

Usually, research participants are guaranteed anonymity. This means, any information is removed that could identify you personally when I write my dissertation, report and papers. If you choose to take part in this extra piece of work, you need to be aware that you are waiving your anonymity. Even if I remove personally identifying information when writing about this research study, other people might well be able to recognise you if they have read your co-authored work as well as my work. If you choose not to take part in the extra work, then your anonymity can be guaranteed.

The first group meeting will agree ground rules to make sure all of us understand the meaning and implications of anonymity and confidentiality. As a minimum, this will include agreeing that no-one will talk about the research outside of the group of people collaborating on the research – with the exception that I can talk about it with my supervisors and my academic review panel.

Keeping information safe and secure

Any personal details about you, for example your name, address and phone number, will be kept separately from any information you contribute to the research. This means that no-one can link your name or contact details to anything you say as part of the research.

Any paper-based information I have will be kept securely in a locked box or filing cabinet at the university.

Any electronic information I have will be kept securely on the university's computer system.

At the first meeting we will talk about how you can keep your personal notes safe and secure.

We will need to share some data as part of working together as a group.

I will keep a master copy of the video securely at Bangor University. Anyone in the group can have a copy to help them reflect on the "coffee shop conversation", but these copies need to be handed back or deleted when you have finished working on the study. We will agree ground rules for how to keep copies safely at home when we have our first group meeting.

Where we have agreed that data are shared within the group, we will agreed how to keep that data secure. Unless there is an explicit agreement to this, all electronic data will be kept securely by myself on the university's computer system, and all paper data will be held in a locked box or filing cabinet at the university.

Who owns the information?

Each person owns their own individual account of the 'coffee shop conversation'. If you give permission, I can use those individual accounts in my dissertation, but I will not own them.

As part of the research, we will produce a collaborative account of 'coffee shop conversations'. We will share ownership of the collaborative account. This means that any of us can use the account, but we must always tell other members of the group before we use it. Then, if anyone in the group objects, we cannot use the collaborative account for that purpose.

As part of telling people about the research, I will produce a short report, video and leaflet for Barod about 'coffee shop conversations'. Barod will use these to publicise the method of 'coffee shop conversations.

The intellectual property belongs to Bangor University. This means that we need permission from Bangor University before publishing papers or making money from anything we learn by being part of this research.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You can decide to stop being part of the research at any time, and you are free to choose whether or not I can keep and use any information you have already given me. You need to be aware that it may not be possible to disentangle and remove everything you have contributed once we have begun to write the collaborative account of 'coffee shop conversations'.

Can I change what I say?

If, at any point, you look at what you have said and you want to remove it or change it, you just need to tell me and I will do it.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The end products of the research will be

a MA by Research dissertation for Bangor University

a report for Barod, including a guide on how to train people to facilitate 'coffee shop conversations'. This will be publicly available.

academic papers

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is organised and funded jointly by the European Social Fund, Bangor University and Barod Community Interest Company via a KESS partnership.

What happens if I have any concerns about this project?

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research, please contact the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Julia Wardhaugh, j.wardhaugh@bangor.ac.uk

Contact for further information:

If you would like more information, please contact me, Anne Collis (sop448@bangor.ac.uk), or my supervisor, Professor Catherine Robinson (c.a.robinson@bangor.ac.uk).

Next steps:

Please contact me as soon as you are ready on 07800755076 or sop488@bangor.ac.uk, and we can meet to discuss any questions. If, after that, you think you may want to take part, I will invite you to meet the other people who are interested. After that, I will ask you to decide whether you want to be part of this research.

Thank you for kindly taking the time to read this information.

A1.3 Informed consent form for CAE work

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

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Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

'Coffee shop conversations': An ethnographic study
Consent to Collaborate Form

Please tick the boxes that apply to you.

I consent to collaborate and for the information to be used for the purposes that have been explained to me. ☐

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for this study ☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason ☐

I agree for this research interview to be recorded and for the recording to be used for the purposes that have been explained to me. ☐

I understand that my contact details will be stored on a confidential database ☐

Name: --

Address:--

Post code: _____

Telephone number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form by email.
If you do not have an electronic signature, I will ask you to sign the form when we meet.
Thank you.

A1.4 Covering letter for policymaking research interviews (insiders)

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

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Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

June 2015

Dear

'Coffee shop conversations: an ethnographic study'

I am writing to invite you to take part in this research as part of my MA by Research degree. The research is organised and funded jointly by the European Social Fund, Bangor University and Barod Community Interest Company via a KESS partnership. I have enclosed an information sheet about this study, along with two consent forms.

If you choose to take part, I would like to interview you about public consultation, policy-making in Wales and 'coffee shop conversations'. The interview will take up to 45 minutes and can be done face to face or by telephone at a time that suits yourself. Any information you share would be treated as strictly confidential – you would not be identified in any reports or outputs arising from this work.

It is up to you to decide whether you would like to take part. If you decide that you would like to take part, please complete the consent forms and email them to me at sop488@bangor.ac.uk.

If you would like more information, please contact me at **sop448@bangor.ac.uk**, or you can contact my supervisor, Professor Catherine Robinson (**c.a.robinson@bangor.ac.uk**).

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Anne Collis
School of Social Science
Bangor University

A1.5 Information sheet for policymaking research (insiders)

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

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Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

'Coffee shop conversations': an ethnographic study

Information Sheet for interviews with Policy Professionals

Introduction

I am currently a student at Bangor University, doing some research for Barod Community interest Company via the European-funded KESS programme for a MA by Research degree. I am inviting you to take part in this research. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the project is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The research as a whole will do two things:

Produce a description of 'coffee shop conversations'.

Look at the role public consultation plays in policy-making in Wales, and, within that, where 'coffee shop conversations' fit in.

Why have I been chosen?

I am inviting you because of your knowledge of health and social care policy-making in Wales. I have your contact details because you have previously given them to me, and have given me permission to contact you.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. Whatever you decide will not affect any future working relationship. If you would prefer not to take part, I would be very

grateful if you could suggest someone else with similar background to yours who I could approach instead.

If you would like to talk to me before deciding, you are very welcome to email or phone me.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

If you choose to take part, I will contact you to arrange a time for an audio-recorded interview. The interview will take up to 45 minutes.

There are no fixed questions, but I would like to ask you about:

the process of policy-making for health and social care by the Welsh Government

the potential use of 'coffee shop conversations' (a public consultation tool) within health and social care policy-making by the Welsh Government

Will my role in this study be kept confidential and anonymous?

Yes. Your contact details will be stored on a confidential database. The information you share will be treated in confidence. You will not be identified in any reports or publications. The audio recordings be stored securely in electronic format on the Bangor University system. The audio recordings will be transcribed (by a School of Social Science approved transcriber). The transcripts will be held in a locked box or filing cabinet at Bangor University. The original recordings and transcripts will be kept until the study, including any subsequent papers, is finished.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. If you withdraw, you are free to choose whether or not I may use any of the information you had provided before you changed your mind.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The end products of the research will be

a MA by Research dissertation for Bangor University

a report for Barod, including a guide on how to train people to facilitate 'coffee shop conversations'. This will be publicly available.

academic papers

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is organised and funded jointly by the European Social Fund, Bangor University and Barod Community Interest Company via a KESS partnership.

What happens if I have any concerns about this project?

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research, please contact the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Julia Wardhaugh, j.wardhaugh@bangor.ac.uk

Contact for further information:

If you would like more information, please contact me, Anne Collis (**sop448@bangor.ac.uk**), or my supervisor, Professor Catherine Robinson (**c.a.robinson@bangor.ac.uk**).

Next steps:

If you decide that you would like to take part, please complete and email back the two consent forms. I will then contact you to arrange a time for the interview.

Thank you for kindly taking the time to read this information.

A1.6 Consent form for policymaking research (insiders)

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

_____

Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

'Coffee shop conversations': An ethnographic study
Consent to Interview Form

Please tick the boxes that apply to you.

I consent to be interviewed, and for the information to be used for the purposes explained to me. ☐

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for this study ☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason ☐

I agree for this research interview to be recorded and for the recording to be used for the purposes that have been explained to me. ☐

I understand that my contact details will be stored on a **confidential database** ☐

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____

Telephone number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form by email.
If you do not have an electronic signature, I will ask you to sign the form when we meet.
Thank you.

A1.7 Request to amend ethical approval for additional policymaking research

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

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Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

5th August 2015

Dear Chair

I am applying for an amendment to the ethical approval given for **'Coffee shop conversations: an ethnographic study',** as advised at my academic review meeting of 30th July 2015.

I would like to collect additional data to:

- deepen my understanding of how coffee shop conversations work in a wider range of contexts
- find out from a broader range of people how they think Welsh Government make policy and who they think should have a say.

The ethical considerations for the additional data collection are covered by the ethical considerations detailed in Section 3.1 of the protocol that has been given ethical approval. Any additional considerations are detailed below.

Three events are taking place (a conference, an 'unconference' and a set of activities as part of a Welsh Government public consultation), and I have been invited by the organisers to collect research data from delegates/participants via the following methods:

- facilitate an informal workshop at the Gov Camp Cymru 'unconference' on 26th September for the purpose of data collection
- collect information from delegates at the All Wales People First annual conference, either through table-top discussions or via a stall that people can visit (the National Council are deciding which method is better for them). This will

have the dual purpose of informing All Wales People First's work and research data collection.

- facilitate a set of research discussions across Wales in September/October, to take place immediate after people have taken part in a 'collective conversation' as part of the Welsh Government Green Paper consultation on the future of healthcare. The 'collective conversations' are being run by Barod in collaboration with the Welsh Government. There will be 8-12 of 'collective conversations', each potentially involving 2 to 6 people and taking place around Wales. Anyone taking part in the 'collective conversation' will be invited to stay for the research discussion.

In all three events, the questions are within the scope of the original protocol, namely:

- How do you think Welsh Government make policy?
- Who do you think should have a say?

Additional considerations for Gov Camp Cymru and All Wales People First

These are pre-existing large events. Therefore I will give a verbal explanation of the research from the front platform, and give people the option of taking part in the research activity or not.

Anyone opting to take part will be offered an information sheet and (in the case of All Wales People First) a link to a videoed explanation.

People will give consent by actively choosing to take part in the activity, choosing to make/submit written notes and (in the case of All Wales People First) by adding a sticky dot to the notes. Participants will be able to check my written notes at the time and request amendments/removal of any notes about their contribution. There will be no way of personally identifying anyone who takes part.

At the All Wales People First activity, I will remind people that everything written down and handed in will be used by AWPF but adding a sticky dot means "Anne can also use it for her research".

Additional considerations for the research discussions

Barod will have recruit participants to the 'Collective Conversations' following their usual processes.

At the point of inviting people to take part in a 'Collective Conversation', Barod will give them the information sheet about the research. Barod will make it clear that the two are separate activities, and that taking part in the 'Collective Conversation' does not mean they must stay for the following research discussion.

The initial 'Collective Conversation' might be run by myself (as a Barod worker) or another Barod associate. Either way, after the 'Collective Conversation', I would remind people about the research and go over the information sheet before moving on to the audio recorded research discussion with anyone who chooses to stay for this second conversation.

If you require any further information, please let me know.

I have attached the three information sheets and an informed consent sheet for the 'collective conversations'/research discussion.

Yours sincerely

Anne Collis

cc Prof Catherine Robinson, Dr Anne Krayer

A1.8 Information sheet for policymaking research (outsiders)

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

_____

Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

'Coffee shop conversations': an ethnographic study

Information Sheet for interviews after a Barod conversation

Introduction

I am currently a student at Bangor University, doing some research for Barod Community interest Company via the European-funded KESS programme for a MA by Research degree. I am inviting you to take part in this research. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the project is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The research as a whole will do two things:

Produce a description of 'coffee shop conversations'.

Look at the role public consultation plays in policy-making in Wales, and, within that, where 'coffee shop conversations' fit in.

Why have I been chosen?

I am inviting you because you have just taken part in a Barod 'coffee shop conversation'. I have your contact details because you have previously given them to me, and have given me permission to contact you.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

If you choose to take part, we will have an audio-recorded interview. The interview will take up to 45 minutes.

There are no fixed questions, but I would like to ask you about:

the process of policy-making for health and social care by the Welsh Government

the potential use of 'coffee shop conversations' (a public consultation tool) within health and social care policy-making by the Welsh Government

Will my role in this study be kept confidential and anonymous?

Yes. Your contact details will be stored on a confidential database. The information you share will be treated in confidence. You will not be identified in any reports or publications. The audio recordings be stored securely in electronic format on the Bangor University system. The audio recordings will be transcribed (by a School of Social Science approved transcriber). The transcripts will be held in a locked box or filing cabinet at Bangor University. The original recordings and transcripts will be kept until the study, including any subsequent papers, is finished.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. If you withdraw, you are free to choose whether or not I may use any of the information you had provided before you changed your mind.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The end products of the research will be

a MA by Research dissertation for Bangor University

a report for Barod, including a guide on how to train people to facilitate 'coffee shop conversations'. This will be publicly available.

academic papers

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is organised and funded jointly by the European Social Fund, Bangor University and Barod Community Interest Company via a KESS partnership.

What happens if I have any concerns about this project?

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research, please contact the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Julia Wardhaugh, j.wardhaugh@bangor.ac.uk

Contact for further information:

If you would like more information, please contact me, Anne Collis (**sop448@bangor.ac.uk**), or my supervisor, Professor Catherine Robinson (**c.a.robinson@bangor.ac.uk**).

Next steps:

If you decide that you would like to take part, please complete consent form. I will then contact you to arrange a time for the interview.

Thank you for kindly taking the time to read this information.

A1.9 Consent form for policymaking research (outsiders)

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas,
Prifysgol Bangor
College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor
University

_____

_____

Gwynedd LL57 2DG
Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220
Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

'Coffee shop conversations': An ethnographic study. Consent to Interview Form

Please tick the boxes that apply to you.

I consent to be interviewed, and for the information to be used for the
purposes explained to me.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for this study

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw
at any time without giving a reason

I agree for this research interview to be recorded and for the recording to
be used for the purposes that have been explained to me.

I understand that my contact details will be stored on a **confidential database**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____

Telephone number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form by email.
**If you do not have an electronic signature, I will ask you to sign the form when
we meet.**
Thank you.

A1.10 Covering letter to request use of documents not in the public domain

Coleg Busnes, y Gyfraith, Addysg a Gwyddorau Cymdeithas, Prifysgol Bangor

College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, Bangor University

_____

Gwynedd LL57 2DG

Ffon/Tel: (01248) 388 220

Elusen Gofrestrig Rhif/Registered charity 1141565

Dear X

'Coffee shop conversations': an ethnographic account

I am currently a student at Bangor University, doing some research for Barod Community interest Company via the European-funded KESS programme for a MA by Research degree.

I am writing to ask permission to see and use any Welsh Government guides to the policy-making process (in particular any in relation to health and social care) as part of my research.

The research as a whole will do two things:
- Produce a description of 'coffee shop conversations', a public consultation method developed by Barod.
- Look at the role public consultation plays in policy-making in Wales, and, within that, where 'coffee shop conversations' fit in.

The end products of the research will be
- a MA by Research dissertation for Bangor University
- a report for Barod, including a guide on how to train people to facilitate 'coffee shop conversations'. This will be publicly available.
- academic papers

If you give permission, I will use the documents you provide as part of looking at the role public consultation plays in policy-making in Wales. I will almost certainly want to include quotes from documents for illustrative purposes.

You can withdraw permission to use the information at any time, and you are free to choose whether or not I can keep and use any information you have already given me.

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research, please contact the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Julia Wardhaugh, j.wardhaugh@bangor.ac.uk

I have attached a permissions form. if you have any questions or reservations, do contact me (sop448@bangor.ac.uk) or my supervisor, Professor Catherine Robinson, c.a.robinson@bangor.ac.uk.

Otherwise, I would be very grateful if you could sign and return the attached form, along with electronic copies of any documents you are happy for me to use.

Thank you for kindly taking the time to read this information.
Best wishes

Anne Collis

A1.11   Consent form for permission to use documents not in the public domain

'Coffee shop conversations': an ethnographic study

Permission to use documents

To be completed prior to sending documents.

Please tick the boxes that apply to you.

I give permission for you to use the documents I have sent you, for the purposes that have been explained to me.

☐

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Organisation: _____

Date: _____

Researcher signature: _____Anne Collis_____

Please return this form by email.

Appendix 2: Evidence of permissions

A.2.1   Permission to name Diane Holmes

Thesis

Diane Holmes ██████████████████

Fri 23/04/2021 09:18

To: Anne Collis <sop448@bangor.ac.uk>

Hi Anne

Thank you for sending these parts of your thesis for me to read through. I am happy to be named in all parts just as you have presented. No changes necessary.

A massive well done and all the best for your completed work.

Best wishes

Diane

Get Outlook for iOS

A2.2 Permission to name Ellie Jones

THESIS

Elaine Jones

Wed 14/04/2021 14:55

To: Anne Collis <sop448@bangor.ac.uk>

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your email, and for sending me the pages from your dissertation to look through and agree.

Everything is absolutely fine, and I am happy to be named on the paper.
Thank you for including me in the research - which was both interesting, informative and fun!

Every good wish,

Love from,

Ellie (Jones) x

A2.3 Permission to name Rachel Retallick

Re: Naming

Rachel Retallick ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬

Mon 19/04/2021 17:05

To: Anne Collis <sop448@bangor.ac.uk>

Dear Anne,

Thank you for sending me the parts of your thesis in which I am mentioned. I am happy to be named.

It was a great joy to be involved in your exciting research, developing a new way to help people to find a voice, and pass their views on, so that those making policy decisions can be better informed.

I hope that the re-drafting and finalising of your thesis goes well and that the idea of coffee shop conversations can continue to be developed and become a useful aid for governments and organisations.

I am looking forward to seeing the easy read version of your thesis. I think it is an excellent idea (albeit difficult for you to do!) to make the content of a thesis accessible to a non specialist.

All the best!

Rachel Retallick

A2.4 Permission to name Helen Thomas

Re: Naming in the thesis

Helen Christine Thomas ████████████

Mon 12/04/2021 12:32

To: Anne Collis <sop448@bangor.ac.uk>

I'm happy to be named Anne.
Wow! How we change over time!
Love Helen.

Again huge congratulations you've worked so hard! Well done, so proud of you and I'm privileged to be named in your thesis, however small my input.
x♡💐

Sent from my iPhone

A2.5 Permission to reproduce Gilles Deleuze with the mirrors ad infinitum (1968) © Gérard Uféras as Figure 3.2

Re: Gilles Deleuze with the mirrors ad infinitum (1968) © Gérard Uféras

gerard@gerarduferas.com <gerard@gerarduferas.com>

Sat 23/01/2021 18:44

To: Anne Collis <sop448@bangor.ac.uk>

dear Anne Collins

you have my permission, here is a better picture that you can use. I would be happy to receive and read your thesis when it is complete, iif the picture isn't big enough please tell me and I will send you a larger one

Kind regards

Gerard

Appendix 3: Research activity and data identifiers

A3.1 Interviews

These took place May to September 2015.

Activity identifier	Participant	Data
I1	Civil servant with policy profession support role	Audio, professional transcript
I2	Civil servant from the Social Care policy division of Welsh Government	Notes
I3	Civil servant with an overview and scrutiny role rather than a direct policymaking role	Audio, notes, partial self-transcript
I4	Senior staff member with a policy remit from a Third Sector umbrella body	Notes
I5	Staff member with a policy remit from a membership organisation representing people with learning disabilities	Audio, notes, partial self-transcript
CI1	2 community activists with some consultation experience. No individual identifiers for participants.	Audio, notes, partial self-transcript
CI2	3 web designers. No individual identifiers for participants.	Audio, notes, partial self-transcript
CI3	1 nurse with research responsibilities	Audio, notes, partial self-transcript
CI4	1 person, small tech start-up owner	Audio, notes, partial self-transcript

A3.2 Workshops

These took place in September 2015.

Activity identifier	Participants	Data
W1	Nine people from the policy world. No individual identifiers for participants.	Flipchart, post-its, notes.
W2	Sixteen people from the learning disability world. Nine with learning disabilities, six allies or supporters without learning disabilities. No individual identifiers for participants.	Postcards.

A3.3 Collaborative autoethnographic work

All but the final workshop took place in 2015. The final workshop took place in April 2019.

The activity identifier and the data identifier are the same for the individual accounts.

For audio recordings and transcripts, individuals are identified by first name then activity identifier.

For other data (eg flipcharts), the data identifier is the type of data then activity identifier. Where relevant, either 'team' or the name of an individual precedes the type of data.

Activity identifier	Research activity	Participants	Data
Pre-meeting (2015)	First meeting: becoming a group	All	Audio recording, transcript
CAE video (2015)	Videoed CSC	All	Video and audio recordings, A3 pad notes, partial transcript
Helen (2015) Rachel (2015) Ellie (2015) Diane (2015) Anne (2015)	Individual accounts of CSC	All	Text
Half-day (2015)	Half day workshop	All	Audio, transcript, flipchart and post-its
Full-day (2015)	Full day workshop	Initially all; one person left during the morning.	Audio, transcript, flipchart and post-its
Reflective (2019)	Final reflective workshop	Anne, Diane, Ellie and Rachel	Audio, transcript, own notes, notes from collaborators

A3.4 Collaborative field testing

The field testing with Client 1 took place in 2017.

The field testing with Client 2 took place in 2018.

Document identifier	Document owner	Description of document
D1	Barod	Purposive sampling grid for Client 1
D2	Barod	Project management notes from the work with Client 1
D3	Barod	Spreadsheet for analysing data from CSC for Client 1
D4	Barod	Development workshop notes
D5	Barod/Client 2	Purposive sampling grid for Client 2
D6	Barod	Project management notes from the work with Client 2
D7	Barod	Photographs of notes made during CSC for Client 2
D8	Client 1	Report from Barod to Client 1
D9	Client 2	Report from Barod to Client 2

Appendix 4: The Alongsider Thesis

This is a document that combines the Everyday and Academic thesis into a single pdf document. It is presented as a separate artefact.