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***“Examining the circumstances of successful social enterprises in times of austerity and challenge”<sup>1</sup>***

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**THIS IS A CONFERENCE DRAFT:**

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1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at 18th NCVO/ VSSN Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference 10-11th September 2012, University of Birmingham, UK

## ABSTRACT

This paper will offer possible lessons which can be drawn from the situation and circumstances of new and successful social enterprises in the current context of challenge and public expenditure retrenchment. Previous recessions and crisis have seen the emergence of new charities and not for profit organisations. The Youth Hostel Association was founded in 1930 at a time of similar economic uncertainty and crisis partially in response to the perceived need for holidays and opportunities for companionship at a time when people were unable to afford conventional holidays.

Many of the organisations considered here are those which have been formed relatively recently and have shown dramatic growth over a period of time when many existing and in some respects similar organisations have encountered challenge and have had to consolidate and retrench. They work in a range of areas. Food appears as an area of particular interest. Some are focused on young people and on aspects of disability. MAC-UK works with young adults with unmet mental health needs. It was a winner in the Charity Times Awards 2011 and has recently a winner in the Santander Social Enterprise Development Awards. Achievement for All (AFA) also founded relatively recently has rapidly become a national charity which supports schools to improve the aspirations, access and achievement of learners and young people which in two terms has already recruited over 800 schools to its school improvement programme. It has been successful in winning funding and also has been the subject of a major and positive evaluation by Manchester University. A key factor in its growth has been a partnership with Price Waterhouse Coopers and the Department of Education. The other organisations considered include the Magic Breakfast which has grown dramatically following the demise of government funding for breakfasts for disadvantaged schoolchildren and the general Food setting which is represented by a diversity of organisation the most significant of which is probably the Trussell Trust.

The various organisations and sectors show distinct differences in their nature and development. But a common factor in all is the reduction or demise of government funding and clear evidence of need for their services .

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2 The author acknowledges the contributions of the following : Dr Charlie Alcock , Clinical Psychologist and CEO ( and founder) of MAC-UK

Brian Lamb OBE, Chair (and founder) of Achievement for All and Visiting Fellow at London South Bank University , Centre for Government and Charity Management

Professor Sonia Blandford Chief Executive (and founder) Achievement for All

The paper explores the similarities and contrasts in the success of these organisations and will seek to draw lessons which may have wider applicability to other evolving and emergent organisations. The paper draws on earlier work with two of the organisations which suggested that one factor was a positive engagement with the private sector, a visible media presence and a demonstration of clear outcomes.

## Introduction

Exploring the nature of successful organisations has long been a staple element of business research. The landmark study by Peters and Waterman which examined the characteristics of successful companies became a key text on MBA programmes in the 1980's (Peters and Waterman 1982). Indeed its influence generally on managers was considerable. The issue of success in the not for profit sector has been less marked by such a landmark publication. Possibly the publication which may most resemble Peters and Waterman in this sector is that of Crutchfield and Grant. Like Peters and Waterman the authors were not embedded in academic settings (Crutchfield & Grant 2008.). Both of these publications are based in the US context and arguably might have limitations in their application in a UK context as a consequence.

What perhaps has not been the focus of as much attention was what happened to Peters and Waterman's 'excellent companies' when they were revisited some 20 years later. Most had disappeared or been otherwise taken over. As Warren Buffet has been quoted as saying:

"It's only when the tide goes out that you learn who's been swimming naked." <sup>3</sup>

Few would argue that we are, in fiscal terms, confronting an departing tide. The falling tide shows who was swimming with inadequate clothing but also may impede new entrants to the water. The NCVO Almanac of 2102 records a sector struggling with reduced resources and increased challenges. In the current economic climate one would anticipate that new third sector organisations would confront more challenges and that it would be a brave founder who would regard this as 'the best of times' to start a new charity in the expectation of quick success and ease of access to resources.

The Charity Commission has been analysing the annual growth trends in Charities but prior to this the NCVO commented in a 'Third Sector Foresight' that :- "There is

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<sup>3</sup> Source

[http://www.cnbc.com/id/20147026/Warren\\_Buffett\\_and\\_the\\_Perils\\_of\\_Swimming\\_Naked](http://www.cnbc.com/id/20147026/Warren_Buffett_and_the_Perils_of_Swimming_Naked) Accessed 8 Aug 2012

little evidence to suggest that the recession has had an impact on the number of charities - new registrations have historically been driven by changes to legislation, whilst administrative action by the Charity Commission has led to more charities being removed in recent years".<sup>4</sup> The Charity Commission itself noted that the number of charities created each year in recent years appeared to be relatively stable.<sup>5</sup> However arguably charities formed in straightened and difficult times may well, in Buffett's terminology, be seeking to swim when the tide is going out.

Therefore evidence of clear success on the part of such organisations merits our attention as it is suggestive of organisations which have succeeded in spite of an environment which is challenging in terms of resources. Equally it could be argued, however that such environments are the very spur to the creation of such organisations. After all, using the tidal analogy in a different way, a ship makes use of the falling tide to assist its departure from port to the open sea.

## **Some example charities**

### **Food Related**

The growth of food related organisations in the not for profit sector is illustrated by a number of examples. They represent an interesting diversity of forms and impacts. Possibly one of the best known is Incredible Edible of Todmorden which is possibly one of the most ministerially 'visited' and heralded examples of what the Big Society is meant to involve.<sup>6</sup> However arguably it is as much a movement as an organisation and indeed it is hard to discern what legal form it possesses. There is no indication of a Charity or CiC format rather it appears to be an fully exempt limited company registered in 2009 for the

"Growing of vegetables and melons, roots and tubers"<sup>7</sup>

. One of my accountant colleagues described it as 'akin to an office tea club' in respect of such accounts as appeared to be available on their web site. Yet it has

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4 Source <http://www.3s4.org.uk/drivers/number-of-general-charities>  
Accessed 8 Aug 2012

5 Source : [http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/About\\_us/About\\_charities/More\\_than.aspx](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/About_us/About_charities/More_than.aspx)  
Accessed 8 Aug 2012

6 See <http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk> accessed 14 April 2013

7 [http://www.creditgate.com/company\\_information/incredible+edible+todmorden+ltd.aspx](http://www.creditgate.com/company_information/incredible+edible+todmorden+ltd.aspx) accessed 14 April 2013

had enormous impact in terms of inspiring similar activities elsewhere and has obtained grants and sponsorship from a range of sources (despite not having the usual charitable form). In some respects it sits somewhere between the 'guerrilla gardening movement and the more formalised evolution of 'urban farming'

The lessons of Incredible Edible would seem to be that small can be beautiful and that in a situation where there is austerity then the potential to utilise otherwise growing spaces such as hedgerows and otherwise neglected verges can catch the imagination. The model is not uniquely English and there are examples in Canada (Vancouver) and in the USA (Detroit) of urban gardening.

Indeed possibly the example of Bristol demonstrates a greater impact albeit on a local level.<sup>8</sup> Here the community and the city have worked together to enable food production on municipal land. The food so produced is available for distribution to those in need. A recent BBC Radio programme (Costing the Earth 3 April<sup>9</sup>) merits attention by social enterprise and third sector researchers interested in learning about the success of 'urban farming'. Urban farming in its wider manifestations is a major movement and possibly in its more recent evolution one of the success stories which can be attributed significantly to austerity.

There are other food developments which can also be seen as linked to austerity. In London the Magic Breakfast has expanded as a direct consequence of the cutting or removal of public grants for breakfasts for school children whose families were either too chaotic or too impoverished (or both) to be able to furnish the children with a significant first meal of the day. A high proportion of these children were eligible for free school meals but this related to lunch not breakfast. The Magic Breakfast, created by Carmel McConnell in 2000, perhaps significantly has drawn its support from Food companies like Quaker Oats and Tropicana who provide not just the actual tangible ingredients but often the logistical and staff support to enable breakfasts to be delivered to hundreds of school sites across London each school day. In the website acknowledgements of support what is significantly absent is much reference to any public body (such as local authorities) or even the Dept of Education. The removal or reduction of government funding for this activity through austerity (what else?) is arguably a growth incentive for the Magic Breakfast. There is little evidence that the public sector had any significant role in directly encouraging its growth...possibly the main role the public sector has had since the onset of public spending cuts is in not obstructing the development and work of the Magic Breakfast. The organisation itself notes that:

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bristollocalfood.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Bristols-local-food-update-Jan-Feb12.pdf> Accessed 13 April 2013

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/costearth>

Magic Breakfast works with a range of private sector companies to reach the communities most in need. For example, Quaker Oats and Tropicana orange juice are provided free of charge by those companies. Other partners include Morgan Stanley, Pearson, All Star Lanes, LCH, Clearnet and ect.venues. In addition the charity receives support from the ASDAN and the Transformation Trust, an important ally in addressing child poverty in the education system.

<sup>10</sup>

The last food example is possibly the one which politically is the most contentious – that of Food Banks. In 2008 one of my Masters students completed a dissertation comparing Food Banks in the UK, USA and Canada.<sup>11</sup> In the dissertation the student (who at that time worked in that sector) observed that:-

“The initial conclusion is that the UK food bank sector is not operating with parity with the USA and Canadian sectors, as it is about 60 times smaller and has recently been shrinking. “

The timeline for the students data was 2000-2006 and if the student were to repeat the study now he would certainly not find that the UK food bank sector is ‘shrinking’ though he may well find it is still not on parity with North America.

Preliminary research by this author suggests that Food Banks appear to combine some of the elements of both the ‘movement and localism aspects’ of Incredible Edible and Urban Farming with the private sector affiliations of the Magic Breakfast. They also add ( especially in the USA) a faith based component in that there appears to be a strong link to churches. The main national Food Bank in the UK is the Trussell Trust and it has seen its activities grow exponentially. Food Banks are, in definitional terms, subject to some variation. Adrian Harris in the aforementioned dissertation reported the following ( the first from Wikipedia and the second from an traditional academic source).

“A food bank is a place where food, typically non-perishable goods (and sometimes frozen perishable goods such as meats or concentrated juices) are offered to non-profit making agencies for distribution to people in need of food, for free or at very low prices (or in exchange for volunteer work). These agencies are typically non-profit making organisations or run as part of a church or community outreach group. A food bank is like the wholesale arm of the food distribution system for those living in poverty”<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Source Magic Breakfast Press Release , Monday 23rd January 2012

<sup>11</sup> **A comparison of UK, Canadian and USA Food Banks**, Adrian Harris (Masters Dissertation, London South Bank University May 2008

<sup>12</sup> **Wikipedia Definition of a food bank available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food\\_Banks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_Banks), (accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2006)**

A food bank is a centralized warehouse or clearing house, registered as a non-profit organization for the purpose of collecting, storing and distributing surplus food (donated / shared), free of charge either directly to hungry people or to front line social agencies which provide supplementary food and meals” (to front line agencies which provide supplementary food and meals to the hungry”)<sup>13</sup>.

Politically Food Banks are extremely sensitive for the Government as they represent a basic failure in respect of the provision of food to citizens. Recently Patrick Butler writing in the Guardian noted:

“Volunteers rallying to distribute food aid to those who can no longer afford to put a meal on the table isn’t the big society David Cameron planned, Many charities may be dying a slow death by cuts to grants and contracts, but in one area the big society is alive, well and seemingly thriving: the provision of emergency food aid. Food banks, soup kitchens and emergency breakfast help for hungry children: all these social phenomena represent an austerity-era civil society growth industry in the UK”.<sup>14</sup>

Arguably they are all a bell weather of poverty which is hard to deny or ignore. The dramatic growth of Food Banks in the UK since the start of the recession can be seen as a direct consequence of austerity and a perceived failure of the public welfare system. However there is a significant lack of political acknowledgement of their role by government and the Prime Minister and other government ministers , whilst lauding the likes of the Magic Breakfast and Incredible Edible have been remarkably coy about seeking ‘photo opportunities’ associated with Food Banks.

As with the Magic Breakfast Food Banks often rely upon positive relationships with the private sector , especially supermarkets. This relationship can be seen in terms of ‘corporate social responsibility’ but also can be seen ( for the supermarkets) as meeting other agendas such as enabling an ‘arms length ‘ distribution through a socially accepted third party of food products which have reached a ‘sell by date’.<sup>15</sup> Also it may serve to reduce the incidence of what the Americans describe as ‘dumpster diving’ around supermarket premises by people seeking discarded products.

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13 Riches G, 2002, pp650, Definition of food banks.

14 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/mar/05/food-banks-thriving-government-embarrassment>  
accessed 15 April 2013

15 Hawkes C, Webster J, 2000, *Too Much and Too Little? Debates of Surplus Food Redistribution*, SUSTAIN, The alliance for better food and farming, London.

The logistical aspects of Food Banks to some extent represent a diversity of approaches whereby some operate almost like the supermarkets with which they have a symbiotic relationship with products on shelves and 'customers' selecting from what is available. Others operate more on lines akin to a disaster relief charity with an assessment of individual need and the provision of a 'package of food' based upon that assessment. Some take the model of 'teaching to fish' with an element of education in basic food preparation offered to those seeking assistance. What does appear common to almost all is a high level of voluntarism and a low cost base style of operation. There is an ecological and environmental dimension (reduction of landfill and food waste) which has perhaps now become subservient to the focus upon provision of food to those who are unable to obtain it by other (legal) means.

### **Achievement for All-genesis and lessons.**

Achievement for All is a school improvement programme with a focus on children with Special Educational Needs and Disability and Vulnerable learners. Its genesis was from the Lamb Inquiry into Parental Confidence in Special Educational Needs<sup>16</sup> which identified the underperformance of children with SEND as a major issue and set up the largest national pilot in Europe to test out new approaches to improving outcomes for children with SEND and improving parental involvement in Education.<sup>17</sup> The pilot, led by Professor Sonia Blandford, showed such dramatic results-37% of children exceeded the national average of all children in English, 42% exceeded the national average of all children in Maths. All children with SEND in the control group exceeded the progression levels of those in the non-control group.<sup>18</sup> Parental satisfaction in school provision was dramatically increased while bullying of children with SEND was reduced and school attendance increased. It was against this background of unprecedented success for a policy initiative and pilot that the Government decided to roll the programme out and produced a competitive tender as part of its Green Paper proposals on reform of the system.<sup>19</sup>

The Charity Achievement for All 3AS was founded both to deliver the Government programme but also develop a broader national and international offer to schools.

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16 Department for Education. (2009) Lamb Inquiry into Parental Confidence in Special Educational Needs.

17 The pilot included over 450 schools and 28,00 children.

18 Department of Education. (2011) Achievement for All National Evaluation: Final report Professor Neil Humphrey Dr. Garry Squires.

19 DFE (2011) Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability. London: Department for Education.



Working with a private sector partner, PwC, it developed a social enterprise model of delivery which aims to be self-sustaining within the period of the Government funding so it is not dependant on further grant funding. This model also fits with Governments aim of devolving commissioning and budgets to school heads for most SEND provision. It also chimes with a renewed Government focus on SEND provision and improving outcomes that came out of the report and others which fed into the Governments own Green Paper on SEND.

Within a year of formation the Charity has grown to a £3.3 million turnover with over 40 central staff and a large network of part time consultants that help deliver the programme into over 1,100 schools. While it is early to do a full evaluation of results so far the standard of the pilot programme is being maintained or exceeded. Importantly schools chose to buy the support from the Charity with the Government funding allowing the development of the programme infrastructure and supplementing charges until a volume of schools is achieved that secures sustainability without Government money.

An innovative aspect of the development has been the partnership between a private sector and charity organisation to support the development of the Charity. Given the restrictions around new entrants in relation to Government and other contracts; the need to show a number of years trading, typically also a significant level of reserves and track record of delivery, it was imperative that the Charity had a partner. PwC was the lead contractor for the first year of the contract and provided both the capital underwriting and project management support and advice to the Charity. After the first year, having passed a number of novation requirements with the Department of Education, the Charity is now the lead contractor but still employees PwC to produce the next stage of monitoring and impact measurement-crucial to demonstrate that the mission is being achieved and also illustrate wider outcomes.

## **MAC-UK**

MAC-UK was founded in 2008 by Charlie Alcock, a clinical psychologist. Following experience with gangs in New York as part of a training placement she made contact with extremely deprived and disaffected young men in North London.

MAC-UK uses 'street therapy' to engage with the most excluded and deprived young people who, though often in need of mental health services, are least likely to access them. The organisation offers a new model of working and has demonstrated its impact with over 75% of the original group of participants now in education, training or employment. 25% are in receipt of NHS medical care.

From its beginnings in 2008 which involved Charlie seeking to make contact at a neighbourhood fish and chop shop MAC-UK has now grown to an organisation with 12 full time equivalent staff and three sites across London.

Perhaps significantly its declared aim is ..” not to exist in its current form in ten years and to have had a radical impact on the way in which mental health services are delivered to our most deprived young people”.<sup>20</sup>

The charity has a lively website which includes links to a range of media sources including appearances on radio by Charlie Alcock. There are also links to a range of sources including reports by the Childrens Commissioner , the Centre for Social Justice and the Home Office. MAC-UK has featured as a case study in a number of reports and Charlie herself has been in demand for media appearances ranging from the Moral Maze to Women’s Hour. ( see Internet sources in bibliography)

MAC-UK has won a number of Charity Awards and has clearly attracted much media attention. It is perhaps noteworthy that the organisation indicates that it works extensively with up to 30 young people. Its impact on a broader front is based upon extending its model through links with wider organisations using its reputation as a source of psychology training and also through developments driven by the young people associated with it ( Mini MAC).

## **Key Lessons of Achievement for All**

### **Big Society?**

The model developed by the Charity of partnering with private sector met the Governments preference for using the Third Sector/Private Sector as innovative providers and ensure greater diversity of provision.<sup>21</sup> Charity leadership has proved to be a more acceptable and less contentious path for modernisation of public services<sup>22</sup> what is unique about this approach has been the involvement of the private sector in underwriting the risk for the first year of the project.

Further the social innovation approach works well in a situation where there was not going to be the resources to roll out the whole programme through Government funding and that the aim of the Government funding was to challenge the sector to come with more innovative proposals. Because the Charity was led by person who was responsible the policy development and process and also the leader of the pilot that demonstrated the success of the approach it was also able to bring together the

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20 Source: <http://www.musicandchange.com/263/About-Us>  
Accessed 9 Aug 2012

21 See for example Open Public Services White Paper (2011) and follow on document Open Public Services (2012)

22 For case studies see “The Impact of RNID on Auditory Services in England: Borrowing Lawnmowers and the price of Salt” with Professor Alex Murdock. Journal of Social Enterprise Vol 5 no 2 2009.

most credible leadership which would be acceptable to other school leaders, other voluntary sector partners, parents groups and the Department for Education.

### **Policy Fit**

The Charity has benefited by arising out of a policy agenda that some of the key people involved had previously influenced and therefore there was a perfect fit between policy intention and funding. Central to its continued success had been ensuring that the programme remains at the centre of Government policy and it was mentioned a number of times in the Governments implementation document and by Ministers.<sup>23</sup>

Without the original funding to prove the concept-over £31 million –it is doubtful if the funding and focus would have been there to roll out any other form of school improvement aimed at this group. The focus on improving outcomes for children with SEND and vulnerable learners was given its policy expression through the creation of the programme as a major plank of Government policy which then had to be funded-at least in first instance. The drive towards pupil premium as well as the devolution of school budgets away from local authority control creates the possibility of a market for services and further potential demand for the charity.

The pressure on schools budgets and the lack of a strategic approach to commissioning means high transaction costs as often each school has to commission the service separately. Further there is huge competition for the schools budget and no ring-fencing of either the SEND school budget or Pupil Premium which can often get spent on other areas.<sup>24</sup> The Charity has continued to secure Government and OFSTED endorsement for the approach which is crucial as schools need the confidence that in commissioning it they are aligned with Government policy.

### **Charity Model**

Despite being committed to social enterprise model the charity has benefited from pro bono support and some funding from other sources. Critical in the early stages was pro bono legal support from a large legal firm without which some of the contracting would have been difficult, donations of infrastructure-desks, computers,

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23 Department for Education. Support and Aspiration Next Steps.

24 Rachel Cunningham and Karen Lewis. (2012) NFER/Teacher Voice Omnibus 2012 Survey The use of the Pupil Premium. The Sutton Trust.

etc. and enormous commitment from key board members in the early stages with commercial, political, educational, and financial background. A grant from a donor has also covered most of non-Government social enterprise development though the charity is now aiming that each development should be self-financing and we currently have no fundraising staff.

### **Diversification**

While the delivery of the core Achievement for All Programme will remain the charities main focus they are already looking at ways of both enriching the programme with additional add on's-parental involvement and interventions for example. Further the success has already drawn international interest with a partnership with Oslo schools and a pilot project in the United States. This is essential both develop and enhance the programme and also diversify to better ensure that they achieve their mission. This is difficult however outside of the programme funding and so far depends either pump priming from large charitable donations or investing in developments on a social enterprise basis.

## **Conclusion**

So in short having the policy drivers and being able to influence them, being able to provide evidence base of impact, secure a powerful partner and have right people in place at the right time equalled successful charity start up.

## **The Lessons of MAC-UK**

There are a number of factors which emerge from the account and experience of MAC-UK which appear to contribute to its success to date.

### **The discovery of a niche involving market / service failure – putting young people at the centre of the organisation**

The group which MAC-UK focussed upon was finding it challenging to access more traditional services. The group would not have been readily accessed by many state, private or voluntary services. The youth service in terms of establishments would be unlikely to have contact with them and though 'street workers' may have been aware of the group they would not have had the specialist training in clinical psychology possessed by the founder and staff of MAC-UK. Conventional education had probably had little impact and in many cases the group would have been regarded as unsuitable for it.

The usual pattern for this group would probably have been referral to Mental health teams at point of catastrophic collapse and /or incarceration through the criminal justice system. The unpredictable nature of being youth led would have been hard for traditional public services or charities

### **The Leadership Approach**

This is based around co-production and empowering colleagues to encourage a learning based approach. The motto of MAC-UK is 'if you have done it before then you are in the wrong place'. This means the organisation is mistake tolerant... an interesting approach for an organisation involved with young people who could be considered to be vulnerable. Mistakes are embraced and shared and celebrated within the team to enable trust between staff. Areas of life at risk are obviously considered differently.

There is a recognition of needing to draw on help from networks and others

### **Links with other sectors**

Learning is drawn from a range of contexts some of which might not be seen as having a natural affinity with MAC-UK. Dr Alcock refers to learning which can be derived from private sector bodies such as hedge funds and developing concepts of

both safety and quick recognition of failure from practices in hedge fund and finance mentors in respect of investment practices.

### **The maximisation of media impact**

The high public visibility of MAC-UK is a combination of the particular appeal of the organisation plus its use of a variety of media. The visibility through case studies and its being featured in government reports, though an consequence of its activities, serves to enhance its continued visibility and credibility in media contexts. The appearance of Dr Alcock on relatively high brow Radio 4 programmes maximises impact with key government stakeholders. It is highly unlikely that the participants of MacUK programmes listen to Women's Hour but the key political stakeholders almost certainly do.

### **Lessons of the success of MAC-UK**

MAC-UK is not a large organisation and is relatively localised in terms of its direct impact on its target group. The training and dissemination activities are a mixture of providing training to psychologists and enabling others to learn from the model. In that respect MacUK is probably still at a critical stage of development. Financially it still has many of the characteristics of a start up charity.

However the particular characteristics of its approach to a target group which is hard to reach by conventional public services and traditional charities combined with its rapid and high visibility in the media, the charity sector and in government are factors which are associated with its success. The independent academic evaluation which is being carried out on the impact of MacUK lends a level of credibility ( even before the actual results are published).

The combination of the client group focus ( including the active participation of the client group in governance and decision making ) with the involvement of an established professional staff group ( clinical psychologists) also distinguished MacUK from other charities seeking to reach disadvantaged youth.

### **Conclusions from the case studies**

The two case studies represent two different routes to success which have some aspects in common. These are set out in Table 1.

**Table 1 COMPARISON OF MACUK and AfA**

<b>MACUK</b>	<b>Common to both</b>	<b>AFA</b>
Open involvement of clients in client focussed approach	A new approach to a high Priority and challenging client group	Dissemination across wide geographic area
Direct delivery in a focused geographic area to relatively small group	Involvement with private sector	Stakeholder engagements focussed on education
Open Learning and risk taking with no pre determined activity	Academic status through key managers ( both with doctorates)	Relatively defined programme
Relative wide range of stakeholder engagements	Independent evaluation by academic institutions	Wide support from the Education policy and practitioner community
Government report as a consequence of activity	Highly media savvy	Government report as instigator of activity

The separate characteristics represent factors which may be particular to each organisation and hence offer possible limitation in furnishing wider lessons for other organisations . However the common factors may well represent characteristics which can be generalised to a wider constituency of organisations. These are briefly discussed below:-

1. Innovation with a priority and challenging client group

Innovation is expected but in a context of austerity and resource constraint this becomes particularly important. The focus upon a priority and challenging clientele ( especially where conventional public sector approaches may have failed) amplifies the impact of innovation on success.

2. Private sector involvement

The common denominator of a degree of private sector involvement perhaps reflects the importance of a context of restrained and diminished public funding. The private sector brings a skill set or approach which enables challenges to be seen through a different set of lenses to that of the conventional public sector or charity setting.

### 3. Academic status of key founders /CEO's

The fact that both organisations have founders/ CEO's with high academic qualifications could be coincidental but it is perhaps indicative of an potential for creative and original solutions . It also suggest an orientation to experiment, learning and evaluation of outcomes.

### 4. Independent academic evaluation

This point is probably linked to the previous one. Founders/CEO's with a strong academic background and research awareness are likely to not only be amenable to independent academic evaluation but possibly seek it out as a prime way to establish the impact of their organisational activities.

### 5. Media and Political savvy

The importance of positive media impact is well known and scarcely needs repeating here. However the expertise of both key organisational founders is demonstrated in the evolution of these two organisations. It is, however , linked not simply to getting media coverage but also the appropriate targeting of media sources. The importance of getting official recognition in government reports combines with , for example, the range of media outlets used. Further ensuring that the political context continues to be support and provides a "fair wind" for the development and implementation of proposals in a context where Government is not simply going to instruct going to instruct public sector organisations to buy services nor provide on-going central support.

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“The project will be evaluated by the Centre for Mental Health with support from University College London. A national steering group of experts in the fields of serious youth violence and mental health will also be assembled to guide and contribute to the project.”