University of Southampton

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of Politics and International Relations

Comparing Network Governance in England and China: The Case of Elderly Care and Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities

by

Yongmei Li

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

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This thesis is motivated by the growing interest in introducing and applying the concept of network governance in China. The main questions the thesis addresses concern the feasibility of network governance and the similarities and differences between practices in England and China. I probe the policy areas of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. The concept of network governance is employed as a framework for the fieldwork and the data collected. The research questions for the thesis are:

1. Is there network governance of local public service delivery in England and China?

2. If there is, what are the differences and similarities between the local public service delivery in England and China from the perspective of network governance?

3. What are the reasons for these differences?

These three questions are theoretically and practically significant in exploring whether and how the distinctive tools of network governance affect the public service delivery process in England and China. The third question covers the interplay between network governance tools and network structures and provides a more nuanced answer to the first and second questions.

England and China have both witnessed a changing process in which the structural relationship between the state, the market and NGOs varied with the different developmental stages in each country of neoliberal reforms such as privatization and the contracting out. Both of my fieldwork sites have experienced community development policies that were aimed to boost the community and the development of NGOs in many ways and by various kinds of input, including resources.

NGOs are to some extent dependent on the state for various resources to co-produce and deliver public services, which is a shared and pressing policy issue in both England and China – mainly due to neoliberalism and contracting out. Community NGOs also strive for self-development by trialling different patterns or models to improve capacity and resources. However, does austerity in England's welfare state boost third sector innovation and participation in co-producing public services? Does centralized policymaking in China with no welfare state block the way to diversifying local practices and policy networks? This study begins by asking whether there are policy networks in England and China. If there are, how and to what extent do NGOs rely on the state?

Resource exchange and interdependence are two essential characteristics of network governance which interact with trust-building and diplomacy in everyday interactions between policy actors. Given that hierarchy, market and network structures of governance all entail problem areas as well as strengths, this study explores how the interplay between resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy shape the structures of governance. The study also addresses hitherto underexplored areas of actor-centred analysis on interorganizational networks, as it explores interactions between individual actors from different organizations in the policy network. In doing this, the study testifies as to whether network governance, as a western social science theory, works in China.

This thesis uses comparative ethnographic methods to provide a detailed interpretation of network governance in everyday public service delivery. The ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in Water District, China and Waterfront City, England. These areas are comparable as they have similar geographical areas, similar population sizes and administrative functions and both face similar urgent policy issues in elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. The first round of the fieldwork was performed in England from 16th April 2018 to 31st August 2019, and the fieldwork in China took place between 19th January and 31st May 2019. The fieldwork focused on NGOs' and local governments' everyday life in their delivery of public services in Waterfront City in England and in Water District in China, respectively. The data used for writing up the ethnography in both sites were extracted from 32 semi-structured elite interviews and 288 hours of participant observation in England and 33 semi-structured elite interviews and 31 hours of participant observation in China. Additionally, local government meeting document packs, local newspapers and annual reports were also collected as secondary data during my fieldwork. The data were coded according to four themes of network governance – resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy – in order to generate the main findings of this research.

The significance of this study lies firstly in its attempts to make an unusual comparison between network governance practices in local public service delivery in England and China, secondly to

seek answers to the theoretical puzzles that whether network governance still exists in England and if so, whether it travels well to China, and what the differences and similarities in local public service delivery from the perspective of network governance are, and thirdly to examine how individual policy actors' beliefs and behaviour affect local practices.

The unusual comparison between England and China produced surprising findings, and there were more similarities than differences. The main findings of the study cover the differences and similarities between individual actors' contributions, the interplay between resource exchange and interdependence and trust-building and diplomacy, the existence and collapse of network governance and varying forms of key concepts.

- In England, austerity policies undermine network governance. The limited resource exchange due to austerity and state-only consultation keep NGOs at a distance to various extents.

- In China, despite the highly centralized nature of power and government, unexpected local diversified practices do exist. Some NGOs use diplomatic skills and build negotiating capital via different means to maintain their relationship with local governments. Meanwhile, the increasing equality and practicality enhance local government trust in NGOs and secure NGOs' flexibility in terms of providing innovative solutions to dilemmas.

- In both countries, trust-building between local government and NGOs is negatively affected by the improvisational and limited discretionary power and accountability for all security and financial risks. In China, negotiable discretionary power allows governmental regulations on NGO service provision to be more flexible and innovative between areas. In England, little improvisational discretionary power reduces NGOs' trust in local government as the NGOs have little or no flexibility and are constantly monitored. Individual actors play essential parts in the local practices of network governance in both countries.

- As theoretical concepts, trust-building and diplomacy vary from one setting to the next and are transformed by local practitioners into other forms. In China, local government shows its trust in NGOs by involving them in public service delivery contracts. However, distrust can begin if a minority of NGOs misuse government funding and the practice spreads more widely. In England, mutual trust is affected more significantly by NGOs than by local government.

- There are different models of public service provision that may not be confined to government contracts but involve purely voluntary networks or a mixture of both. Under such circumstances, long-term and large-scale contractors with professional local

knowledge of public service delivery adopt different styles and strategies in terms of diplomacy. They either choose to be critical friends with the city council or defend the rearrangement of council policy. Other managers of self-regulated network are more self-reliant, gaining negotiating capital locally and establishing social enterprises.

Chapter 5-9 analyse the theoretical concepts and features of policy networks in England and China one by one and Chapter 10 Conclusion thoroughly elaborates on six similarities and five differences in this research.

The theoretical contributions of this thesis lie in the assurance of the existence of network governance in China as a western theory, and a cross-country comparison of network governance. Both approaches contribute to the existing framework of network governance by testing its feasibility and validity, by exploring the diverse contexts and by addressing explanations of the theoretical framework.

The methodological contributions of this thesis include in-depth and multi-sited ethnography and comparative interpretive political research. Ethnographic study equipped me to explore the daily behaviours and beliefs underlying the behaviours of individual local practitioners and the interactive relationships between policy actors.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name:	Yongmei Li

Title of thesis:	Comparing Network Governance in England and China: The Case of Elderly Care and Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University

Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated

Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed

Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work

I have acknowledged all main sources of help

Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself

None of this work has been published before submission

Signature:		Date:	

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PART I: CONTEXT

Chapter 1: Introduction

The methodological contributions of this thesis include in-depth and multi-sited ethnography and comparative interpretive political research. Ethnographic study equipped me to explore the daily behaviours and beliefs underlying the behaviours of individual local practitioners and the interactive relationships between policy actors.

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1.1 A Story from the Field

During my fieldwork, I asked the same question when talking to NGOs: I asked them to describe the relationship between the government and the NGOs. Among all the answers, Mr. Sheng Jun[1]'s impressed me the most.

> *Whoremaster and prostitute. We love the government for its funding, but we also hate it for its bad temper and always breaking its word. (Mr. Sheng Jun, Yu Yue Social Work Centre, Water District, China)*

I was surprised when I heard this graphic metaphor. It reflects two facts: that the flow of contact is dynamic and ever- changing, and that the power relationship favours the government more than the NGO within the hierarchy in which network governance is embedded. Surprisingly, the second fact also appeared in England, where it manifested itself as a permanent contractual relationship between local government and NGOs in which local government has its own list of long-term contractors who work in a closed circle of public service delivery. In China, NGOs can have one team with two distinct levels of involvement in district level and municipal level or municipal level and provincial level. This represents a surviving strategy for more flexible contract bidding when something goes wrong in the short-term contractual relationship.

To be or not to be dependent, that is the question. In China, NGOs are like shooting stars, staying active for a brief period of two or three years. Dependency on the government brings more stable resources for 2-5 years and means being routinized by the government as a body responsible for security and financial risks. A small group of NGOs are shifting to the market model in order to become more independent. In England, NGOs as contractors only challenge the council when they feel the council can be challenged or stand together with the council thoroughly and declare that they have been consultative and sympathetic when facing service users in difficult cases. Other independent groups consciously keep their distance from the council because their intention is to realize that the value of mutual help in the community as a safety net rather than find themselves trapped into working as a statutory provider. In China, NGOs for people with learning disabilities reflect a voluntary group started by a group of mothers in England. "*Helping people to reduce their need for other people's help*" is the slogan and vision for the Chinese NGO Reducing Help[2]. Life skills training is prioritized by NGOs in both locations to enable a more inclusive social life for people with learning disabilities. Innovative solutions to stigma and social exclusion from a wider society are

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[1] Mr. Sheng Jun is the vice chief of a service delivery NGO called Yu Yue Social Work Centre in Water District, China.
[2] Reducing Help is an NGO providing day care for people with learning-disabled people in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Ning Jing, a mother with a son with learning-disabled people.

needed in many ways by these everyday providers of public service. The theme of diversity, both in England and China, underpins this thesis.

1.2 Background

The British political tradition of a liberal-democratic state, although it appears to under a process of erosion, still persists (Buser, 2013; Barnes et al, 2003; Corbett & Walker, 2013), while in China, state power is dominant (Yuan, 2014; He & Thøgersen, 2010). The implicit pluralism of network governance seems to match the ethos of a liberal-democratic state seeking to encourage civic engagement. The 'fit' with Chinese authoritarianism seems less obvious, however. The differences between two countries with different regimes are so prominent that the comparison is unexpected, technically impractical and theoretically impotent in terms of adding value to our level of understanding. What are the characteristics of these different regimes, compressed into their simplest forms? This thesis aims to unpack such apparently obvious differences and examine what happens to the labels used by scholars in both countries when each country's practices are subjected to a decentred analysis based on ethnographic fieldwork.

Community and NGO development are boosted by the state, although the privatization of public service is popular in local government in England and China. The Chinese policy context is characterized by area-based performance competition, reputation-building targets and policy experimentalism caused by the multi-level outsourcing that covers both the administration system and NGOs, the latter being ostensibly the outsiders. In England, the Big Society Agenda is aimed at local community participation and devolution to county level to create more space for the innovation of local governance. Privatization and the Third Way characterise England's version of neo-liberalism.

Since 1969, the state has experimented with community participation, especially in deprived communities to help them make their voices heard (Chandler, 2000; Parkinson, 2004) or in marshalling needed resources (Graaf, Hulst and Michels, 2014). This is the case whether one addresses the initial stage of policy design or the process of implementation. To a certain extent, the tension between community participation and governmental control reflects the tension between the responsiveness of the political system and the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector (Brugué and Gallego, 2003). In 1997, a democratic renewal agenda for England proposed by New Labour set out two goals: improving service delivery and promoting local democracy. (Taylor, 2007). The New Labour local government reform agenda set out a radical vision for democratic renewal, "bringing government back to the people" by giving a greater say to local

communities and greater freedom to local councils (Chandler, 2000). Social cohesion was considered vital, and could be enhanced through various measures, including active citizenship. Big Society and progressive localism proved to be the political agenda that opened the local landscape for more political alternatives and to address deprived community groups and emergent issues relating to the inequality in resources between these groups and others. Although New Labour's commitment to community participation was considered commendable, many problems remained unresolved, including tensions between central and local government and the distribution of responsibility between public institutions and communities. The hollowing-out of state theory in network governance helped explain this contradiction, and the Big Society theory arguably offered a way to conceptualise the policy and address some of these challenges.

1.3 The Purpose, Question and Method of the Study

Existing discussions on China's political regime consider the political and policy processes to be authoritarian. In the eyes of Chinese scholars, authoritarianism is an umbrella term covering diversified policy practices. Focusing on high-level abstractions such as democracy or authoritarianism does not help to tease out the everyday practices of public service delivery, but focusing on policy context, levels of government, policy networks and the fragmented nature of implementation generates many more research questions. This is what this thesis sets out to demonstrate, and why it adopts the methodological approach of political ethnography and decentred analysis. Investigating only one country is neither empirically interesting nor theoretically illuminating. As such, more relevant and interesting finding will be made by examining the similarities and differences of network governance in England and China.

The idea of developing communities and NGOs has attracted the government's attention in England and in China. Since 1969, the British state has experimented with community participation, especially in deprived communities by giving them voices (Chandler, 2000; Parkinson, 2004) and marshalling needed resources (Graaf, Hulst and Michels, 2014). Active citizenship is encouraged through national policies such as the Big Society and progressive localism for service delivery improvement and local democracy. Using pilot experiments, urban programme and community development projects fostered the establishment of numerous local community NGOs. In England, the institutional relationship and structure is more horizontal, where the degree of autonomy of local government and NGOs are high, and NGO development has been encouraged by the national and local government, with neoliberalism, the Third Way (Giddens, 1998: 64-68) and Big Society leading the way to stronger localities.

Third way politics advocates the value of equality, the protection of the vulnerable, freedom as autonomy, no rights without responsibilities, no authority without democracy, cosmopolitan pluralism and philosophical conservatism (Giddens, 1998: 66). Third way politics are central to the policy agenda of promoting local democracy through community participation and NGO development.

The institutional context of communities and NGO development is very different in China. China has been perceived as an authoritarian state since 1949, although recent studies of fragmented authoritarianism (Qian & Mok, 2016; Mertha, 2009) identify opportunities for innovation and offer insightful findings on local level public policy success. While an authoritarian polity emphasizes the centralisation of control and power, the local fragmentation of China's political regime opens up the possibility for innovation and flexibility at local level. As China's market-oriented economy developed, the gap between different social classes grew wider, and lower social classes need a wider range of public services. The national government does not have a strong capacity to handle these emerging public needs, and they require the help of community NGOs (He & Wan, 2013). In general, community organization acts as a bridge connecting local government and communities. Unlike official community NGOs, some newer community NGOs have been built and supported by local residents since the 1980s (Wu, 2013) and their relationship with government and society differentiates them from more traditional community NGOs. The new types of community NGOs are characterized by a strong bond between groups of residents (Kang, 2009), and various objectives such as recognising local needs can be fulfilled through community NGOs, which are more likely to provide multiple and need-oriented services than local government. There are two ways of considering the relationship between the government and the community organizations: one is through their reliance on government and the other is a more deliberative, bottom-up approach (Lu, 2013). This is reflected in the two ways that community organizations function in public service provision: to extend government power, and to substitute for government.

In terms of public service provision and its longitudinal reform in England, the overwhelming impact of neoliberalism supports the universal privatization and outsourcing of public services. In the initial phase, the government seeks more options from the competitive free market, moving on to emphasise community and NGO power or advocate the effective mixture of deliberative governance, local government representation and collective action. Unlike British scholars' keen interest in the neoliberalist reform of public service delivery, scholars in China adopt the practices of neoliberalism for the economy but not for the role of the state. Outsourcing and contracting out boost the public service options and save the government a great deal of money, but it also induces problems like misunderstanding local needs, rent-seeking, conspiracy between the government and NGOs, ambiguous responsibility boundaries and missing contract targets. These issues

challenge the government's functions as a service buyer and demand the revitalization of community workers and service user participation on a massive scale. The level-by-level, top-down assignment of tasks and area-based competition between the same levels of government in China are part of a hierarchical institutional structure.

Therefore, the research questions of this thesis are firstly sprung from the review on the institutional context, the policy context and the trend of neoliberalism in England and China shed light on the possible space of the existence of policy network governance in both countries by pointing out the local community motivation and the encouraging grand context of intensive interaction between policy actors such as conflicts and cooperation. However, literature review in Chapter 2 is just a raw source of research questions. The local public service governance structure, dependence, resource exchange and negotiating capital are four raw themes, under which there are a couple of questions. (see Chapter 2, 2.3) The tasks left by Chapter 2 are whether network governance really exists in both sites and if yes, what the extent of network governance is in both sites, which are further constructed by theory review in Chapter 3.

The second source of research questions is dilemmas and challenges arise from public service co-provision in both countries articulated above and network governance as a theory model with strong potential explanation power. Research questions in Chapter 2 are filtered, refined and polished by connecting the review on public service co-production in both countries and network governance theory. As well as the dilemmas and challenges that arise from public service co-provision by the state and NGOs, it was the increasing popularity of network governance in China that attracted my interest in exploring the feasibility of the western theory of governance. The dilemmas of network governance generalized by Jessop (2000) and Rhodes (2017) are rooted in the incompatible nature of the state, the market and network actors. The third and also the last source of research questions consists of the distinctive tools such as resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy for problem areas and solutions provided by network governance, which are examined in this thesis. The framework and skeleton of research questions are further clarified by applying these four distinctive tools. These four key components are not only employed as my tools to identify and interpret the phenomena of dilemmas and challenges of network governance in the fieldwork but also themes for thematic analysis in writing the fieldwork.

The general question is whether the term network governance adequately describes policy practices in England and China. This question can be broken down into more specific questions.

- Are there policy networks for elderly and social care in England and China?
- What is the extent of network governance practices in England and China?

- How do resource exchange and interdependence interplay with trust-building and diplomacy to shape the cooperation and conflict resolution in network governance?

The first two questions are answered by eliciting the interplay relationship between four key theoretical concepts, querying the existence of policy network and the extent of network governance in both sites. Through reviewing concepts such as interdependence, resource exchange, trust-building and reciprocity and diplomacy as key components of network governance, this thesis breaks down the general questions further above into three sets of questions around each component:

1. **Are there interdependencies between policy actors in both policy arenas and in both sites? If so, what are the similarities and differences in that interdependence?**

2. **What are the resources available for each actor in both policy arenas and in both sites? What are the similarities and differences?**

3. **Can I identify trust-building, reciprocity and diplomacy in everyday practices in policy arenas and in both sites? How do they affect the network? How are they affected by the network? What are the similarities and differences in each policy arena in England and China, and what are the reasons for them?**

I selected elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities as areas of study mostly because there were grounds for assuming there were equivalent, pressing and similar dilemmas in these area in England and China. I deliberately chose governmental units of similar population size and with similar administrative functions in each research site.

The unusual comparison attempts to pierce the superficial surface of authoritarian and democratic service delivery systems. One aim is to identify unexpected similarities as well as more expected differences. The wave of network governance reforms in China led me to explore what can and cannot be learnt from western theories and practices by comparing public service delivery practices in England and China. One of the core questions posed by network governance theory is which governance structure, or what mixture of structures, to choose. A governance structure does not always fit every context, so this thesis investigates the governance structure in England and China from below looking at what structures exist and how they work. The thesis explores the micro-level, collecting data from individuals and organisations. It explores the beliefs and practices of everyday providers of public service delivery.

I took every chance for participant observation and interviews adaptively and pragmatically. I equipped myself for everyday ethnographic study with basic habits and facilities, overcame the difficulties in negotiating access, sought a diversity of informants and language skills and dealt with

uncertainties in the fieldwork. I conducted my field work in England from April to August 2019 and in China from January to May of the same year. The data were collected from everyday life of public service delivery in NGOs and local governments in Waterfront City in England and in Water District in China respectively. The ethnographic data for both sites were extracted from 32 semi-structured interviews and 288 hours of participant observation in England and 33 semi-structured interviews and 31 hours of participant observation in China. Additionally, local government meeting document packs, local newspapers and annual reports were also collected as secondary data. Then the data are coded according to four themes of network governance: resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy in order to generate the main findings of this research. In general, the decentred and interpretive thematic analysis of individual policy actors' beliefs and behaviour is the essence of the methodology.

1.4 The Significance of the Study and Its Contribution to the Theory and Policy Fields

The significance of this study lies in its attempts to make an unusual comparison of network governance practices in local public service delivery between England and China, to seek answers to the theoretical questions of whether network governance still exists in England and whether it travels well to China, and if so, what the differences and similarities of local public service delivery from the perspective of network governance are, and to examine the ways in which individual policy actors' belief and behaviour affect local practices.

Several theoretical and methodological contributions will made by conducting this research. Firstly, it will contribute to the Chinese academic literature by filling the gap in how policy networks of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities in England and China are established and how they work. It will examine comparable empirical data of network governance in England as a reference system to combat the misleading generality of theoretical concepts, and it will bring scholarly attention from macro-level analysis of institution and organization to a more decentred actor-driven analysis on diversified local practices.

Secondly, the findings that revolve around the dilemmas and characteristics of network governance in England and China will draw the attention of practitioners and scholars to the idea of adapting theories of governance local contexts.
The third contribution lies in the methodology of the thesis. The idea of comparing two countries with different political regimes and social cultures using political ethnography will enrich the existing literature on qualitative fieldwork.

1.5 The Main Findings and Their Importance

The main findings of this research begin by studying the feasibility of network governance as a theory, and the similarities and differences of network governance practices in England and China. This can be examined under the following headings:

- The development stage and provision mode of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities and how they affect the resource exchange and interdependence between local governments as service commissioners and NGOs as service providers. In England, elderly care is less of a concern than social care for people with learning disabilities, while in China the situation is reversed. Elderly care is far more privatized in England, usually to retirement homes and private care agencies, while in China government-funded elderly care is still prevalent and is a growing industry.

- Resource exchange in elderly care happens more intensively and constantly between local government and NGOs in China than it does for social care for people with learning disabilities in China or elderly care in England. The latter two groups pool resources from other approaches to sustain service provision.

- Interdependence and routinization are inevitable aspects of elderly care NGOs in China. With or without this interdependence, elderly care in England and China actively promote a variety of innovative local service delivery practices. Social care for people with learning disabilities is an everyday task for practitioners in China whereas the practice is less intensive in England, which mainly experiences peak demand during school holidays. Both countries encounter and deal with the stigma effects and social exclusion for the disabled. Everyday makers of social care for people with learning disabilities are often individual mothers who have children with learning disabilities and who are the sole providers of resources and organizational vision.

- The lack of improvisational discretion and over regulations covering risk and financial auditing are the common barriers to trust-building for policy network actors in England and in China. In England, austerity is used as an oft-repeated excuse to keep NGOs away from the policy network, and NGOs adopt various approaches to accumulate negotiating capital and set up self-regulated networks of their own. Negotiating capital accumulation, self-regulated networks, being critical friends and standing together with the government are all weapons of the weak, meaning that they are weapons of choice for surviving or thriving in the policy network.

- (v) Therefore, in China, mutual trust is more determined by government belief and behaviour, but in England NGOs' attitudes towards local government is a more decisive factor. The lack of state response to NGOs undermines their trust in local government and affects any reciprocity between them negatively, while the NGOs' practicality and professionalism helps facilitate the government's trust in them. In England and China, a small and permanent group of contractors within service provision NGOs either perform as critical friends or never contradict government opinions. Neither approach allows NGOs to cross the line and criticize the government publicly.

These findings are important in that they reveal surprising and striking similarities that network governance in England and China both faces, but the actors deal with similar dilemmas very differently. Some of the approaches that work in one country are certainly work trying in the other. As apparently incomparable countries, England and China display these inescapable rules and dilemmas if policy networks exist and good governance is required. However, differences in policy contexts and similarities in theoretical concepts warn us to use network governance sensibly in different settings.

1.6 The Outline of the Thesis

Following this Introductory chapter, Chapter 2 describes the relationship between governments and NGOs and local participation in public service delivery in England and China, which form the background of this study. The chapter maps out the institutional context of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities, and is characterized by the Big Society agenda, pilot studies and the neoliberalist practices of privatization, which respectively represent the government's effort to carrying local participation forward and the simultaneous hollowing out of state power in public service provision. Section 2.2 is an equivalent section on China, following the same structure of horizontal and vertical relationship and looking at the policy characteristics of pilot experiments. It claims that a hierarchical relationship exists between the state and NGOs, and between area-based performance competition and policy experimentation. Both points shape our understanding of the general features of horizontal and vertical interrelationships within the administrative system and beyond the system's boundaries. This section also addresses the ways in which neoliberalism and privatization are affecting social care provision in China.

The third chapter "Theory: Network Governance and its Application in England and China" identifies the theoretical gaps this study seeks to fill as well as the research puzzles it seeks to resolve. It begins with the debate around the definition of network governance and looks at the three development phases of network governance in western academia. In section 3.2, key issues in

network governance such as interdependence and resource exchange, trust and consensus-building and diplomacy are reviewed and the research questions are identified. More importantly, this section then proposes a different anchorage point from the one used in the existing literature, suggesting that network governance can be applied as a decentred and actor-driven approach. This point partly echoes my choices of methodology. The third section introduces Chinese literature on network governance as it is applied in the delivery of public services. It criticizes the Chinese literature for lacking empirical evidence, for focusing on institutional or structural analysis rather than actors, and for never considering any mixture of governance structures. The chapter ends by refining the research puzzles raised in chapter 2 for further examination in the fieldwork. It poses two main research questions with sub-questions arising from the theoretical concepts. Meanwhile, three comparative themes are derived from Chapters 2 and 3 and the fieldwork to offer a thematic analysis of the ethnographic fieldwork data. The comparative themes are resource exchange and interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy and everyday makers of local practice.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology used in this thesis, looking at both research design and fieldwork practice. The chapter justifies my case and site selection, my ethnographic approach and the focus on such an unusual comparison. More importantly, many stories from the field – the sweet and the sour – vividly demonstrate how I overcame the difficulties and the uncertainties in practicing fieldwork by remaining pragmatic, positive and opportunistic.

The next five empirical chapters represent the beating heart of my thesis. Chapter 5 is an introductory chapter that raises the curtain for readers by providing a bird's eye view of policy networks in both countries. Section 5.1 describes the general situation of the charity circle through the lens of umbrella NGOs. How do umbrella NGOs, service provision NGOs and different levels of government interact with each other? How do these interactions impact the NGOs' spheres of influence? How do they consider the relationship between policy actors? The answers to these questions are included in Section 5.1. Section 5.2 explains the pivotal policy changes and the basic policy arrangements in elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities in England and China. Section 5.3 explains local policy networks in elderly care and in social care for the disabled in both sites, and Section 5.4 concludes by looking at the characteristics of these local policy networks.

Following this overview of the whole picture, Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 develop my in-depth thematic analysis on resource availability and exchange, interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy in cooperation and conflict and the individual everyday makers of local practices.

Chapters 6 and 7 follow the same structure, as they deal with the resource availability and exchange and interdependence in the respective policy areas of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities.

Chapters 8 and 9 follow the same comparative thematic analytical structures on mutual trust building, reciprocity and diplomacy in everyday cooperation and conflict. Each fieldwork chapter ends with an individual conclusion, but Chapter 7 also concludes with an overall discussion of the similarities and differences in resource availability and exchange and the level of interdependence in both elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities.

 Chapter 9 copies this structure and compares trust-building and diplomacy in the networks of social care for people with learning disabilities in England and China.

Finally, we arrive the conclusions. Chapter 10 provides a general account of the similarities and differences of policy context of elderly care and social care for the disabled in England and China. I summarise similarities and differences against my original research questions. Section 10.3 discusses the feasibility and usefulness of network governance as a new theory in China and as an old theory in England. I point out the changing forms and meanings of trust-building and diplomacy in each country. Section 10.4 discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the research methods used, and the final section proposes a future research agenda For the Chinese government based on the lessons learned in this thesis.

Chapter 2: Policy Context in England and China

This chapter describes the contexts of the case studies in Chapters 5-9. It covers the institutional and policy contexts, including NGO-Government co-provision of public services and the services that lie at the heart of the case studies: care of the elderly and social care for people with learning disabilities in England and China. In the conclusion, I draw together the questions that arise from my review of other people's fieldwork. In the next chapter, I will identify the questions that arise from my review of the relevant theories.

The first section looks at the institutional context, and describes state-NGO relations in both countries, examining British NGOs and community development against a background of the Big Society and civil society concepts, and the Chinese government's incorporation of NGOs into its administrative system to extend and widen service delivery in local areas. NGOs in China includes not-for-profit, charity and voluntary organizations, which are partially or completely independent. In England, NGOs refer to charity and voluntary organizations, which are completely independent. In this thesis, NGOs are all unofficial charity and voluntary organizations.

The second section of policy context suggests that public service delivery in British and Chinese contexts shares a common belief in outsourcing, as advocated by neo-liberal reformers. The Chinese policy context is also characterized by area-based performance competition, reputation building targets and policy experimentalism caused by multi-level outsourcing that covers both the administration system and NGOs, who are ostensibly outsiders. In England, privatization and 'the Third Way' characterise England's version of neo-liberalism.

2.1 Context in England: Structure, Policy Process and Public Service Delivery

The institutional structure in which NGO development is situated in England is characterized by the state promotion of local democracy and civic participation in public service delivery by Big Society Agenda and the Localism Act. This is a also seen in China (see Section 2.2). These policy agendas aiming at public service delivery by local participation were tested in pilot points in England, through which the top-down approach secured local level empowerment from the state, while the bottom-up approach stressed the frontiers of individual workers' contribution. Meanwhile neoliberalism's contracting out under austerity fragmented local collective actions and led to the social exclusion of the elderly and people with learning disabilities.

2.1.1 Institutional Context: NGO Development in Big Society

Since 1969, the British state has experimented with community participation, especially in communities deprived of getting their voices through official channels (Chandler, 2000; Parkinson, 2004) or of marshalling necessary resources (Graaf, Hulst and Michels, 2014) whether one addresses the initial stages of policy design or the process of implementation. To a certain extent, the tension between community participation and government control reflects tension between the responsiveness of the political system and the efficiency and effectiveness of public sectors (Brugué and Gallego, 2003). Public administration looks at *how* things should be done, while politics is about *what* things should be done. In other words, public administration is a tool, while the political system determines the destinations and targets for public administration. The relationship is like a bow and arrow. However, is public administration necessarily the symbol of rationality, professionalism, neutrality and specialization?

In 1997, a democratic renewal agenda proposed by New Labour set two goals: improving service delivery and promoting local democracy (Taylor, 2007). New Labour's local government reform agenda set out a radical vision of democratic renewal, 'bringing government back to the people' through giving a greater say to local communities and more freedoms to local councils (Chandler, 2000). Social cohesion was considered indispensable and could be enhanced through various measures including 'active citizenship'. Williams, Goodwin and Cloke (2014) took their argument on Big Society[3] and progressive localism from previous neoliberalist arguments that stressed the exclusion of the state's role in partnership with social and community power in public service provision, and the overwhelming impact of the corrosive market model (Corbett and Walker, 2013).

The Big Society concept is an approach to outlining and conceptualising community participation policies as an arena for a wider neoliberal narrative. It challenges the existing balance between public, private and voluntary service provision, conceptualises problems and critical challenges, and puts forward ideas about future directions. Central government advocated giving more responsibilities to individuals, families and community groups to support a bigger and stronger society, circumscribed by public spending cuts after the financial crisis in 2008. Centralised bureaucracy was condemned as waste of money and time, and the idea of opening up public services for service users to take control, and to make rewards and drawbacks match the effort put in, is more significant (Cameron, 2011).[4] Policies of progressive localism were designed to address

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[3] The Big Society was a political ideology developed in the early 21st century, which proposed "integrating the free market with a theory of social solidarity based on hierarchy and voluntarism". See: https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Big_Society

[4] Cameron, D., Speech on Big Society, Milton Keynes, 23 May 2011. Available at: https://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/05/society-government-public

deprived community groups or emergent issues about inequality in resources between these groups and others (Ishkanian, 2012; Williams, Goodwin and Cloke, 2014). Building up a stronger culture of giving was the core ideal of the Localism Bill promoted by the state (Cameron, 2011).[5] In general, Big Society and progressive localism proved themselves as a political agenda that opened local landscapes for greater political alternatives.

Under New Labour's public participation agenda, two main mechanisms were put into effect, including public panels and neighbourhood forums. City councils oversee local implementation by training local volunteers to work with residents, carrying out community appraisals to identify local issues and community responses. Meanwhile, the Council developed its community leadership role and coordinated responses with many agencies to fulfil residents' needs (Fenwick and McMillan, 2012).

Table 2-1 Types of Community NGOs in England

Type	Examples	Characteristics	Quantity	Activity Venue
Umbrella NGOs	Waterfront City Voluntary Services	Self-funded by multiple means, like fund raising activities and consultant services for common NGOs; partly funded by government for completing specific project	Different cities have different local umbrella NGOs. There is no unified brand cross the country.	Depends on specific situation, some have their independent venues for local branch and headquarters, but others rent community centres from the council which are locally located but owned by the local council.
Non-governmental Charity Organizations	Age UK, YWCA (Youth and Women Christian's Association), SCiA (Social Care in Action), Man-ability, Tulip Road Association, Green Alliance, Youth Option	Self-funded; specialised in one particular area or group; registered in Home Office; monitored and supervised by local branch or national headquarters	Some are individual community groups in different cities, some have national superior and local branches based at cities	
Community-based Autonomous COs	Neighbourhood Centre; Community Leisure Centre; Fitness Club	Self-organized; highly autonomous; based on shared interest or hobbies	Depends on the degree of activeness and local community needs	

Table 2-1 shows different types of community organizations in England that serve various target groups. Here, community organizations refer to non-governmental organizations that have direct

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[5] ibid

or indirect connections with local communities and residents. There are three types of community organizations in the UK. The first are umbrella NGOs that look after charity organizations within a specific area (see Table 2-1, row 2). The second are charity organizations that provide different kinds of public services for people, society or the environment (see Table 2-1, row 3). The third are community-based NGOs, like neighbourhood centres, community leisure centres and fitness clubs (see Table 2-1, row 4). These organizations do not serve particular groups and are mainly organized around activities for community residents.

Historically, Urban Programmes and Community Development Projects (CDPs) are primary initiatives propelling urban regeneration and reinforcing local participation that have lasted for decades. There is a parallel between community development under the Conservatives and New Labour. Community involvement experienced a drop during the shift in power from Labour to Conservative and then enjoyed a busy period when successive New Labour governments came into power. Reviews of community involvement in policy show the enormous attention paid to vulnerable or disadvantaged community groups, which were key features of policy formulation and implementation (Foley and Martin, 1999; Durose and Rees, 2012; De Graaf, Van Hulst and Michels, 2014). According to most research on community participation, it is obvious that the driving force is the state – particularly the New Labour government.

Although New Labour's commitment to community participation was commendable, many problems remained unresolved, including tensions between the central and local government and the distribution of responsibility between public institutions and communities. The hollowing-out of state theory helps to explain this contradiction and the Big Society theory arguably offers a way of conceptualising the policy and addressing some of the associated challenges.

Discussions on the hollowing out of state[6] (Rhodes, 1997; also see Section 3.1.2) have been a constant factor of these debates, especially when discussing constraints on local power. However, many researchers (Pierre & Peters, 2005; Grix & Phillpots, 2011) confuse hollowing out as a fixed state and a process. When elaborating theories of governance, hollowing out depicts a governance situation in which central state institutions have come to play increasingly weak regulatory and coordinating role in service delivery. That means it is a *process*, rather than an *outcome*.

The community involvement policy approach often encounters problems caused by contradictions between central government policymaking and sophisticated reality in local communities (Taylor, 2007). The primary challenge of balancing local diversity with social cohesion in nurturing local

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[6] The hollowing out of the state describes a phenomenon in which the state's functions and statutory responsibilities are replaced by other institutions emerging from the market or civil society.

community participation requires considerable skill and sophistication, a practice that resembles the selective local implementation of public policy in China (Zhu, 2018). In terms of the central-local impact on local governance, local government is institutionally bound to central government, which sets a ceiling on local finances and fixes policy parameters. Buser's (2013) study on Big Society and localism also suggest three factors shaping and restricting central-local relations, based on the levels of constitutional protection, financial autonomy, central government intervention.

The transformation from informal to formal community participation is perceived as a popular and efficient approach in cultivating community participation at larger scales. In this thesis, formal community participation in Waterfront took the initial form of community NGOs. (see Section 5.1) Specific examples are The Ward Advisory Board, The Single Regeneration Budget Group and The Older People's Group.[7] These groups have their own interests and identities, and there may be some conflicts and problems when dealing with central government. However, they are legitimate members of the local policy system and they accept local authority rules and administrative approaches.

Most academic studies of the factors that shape participatory arrangements to influence state action show that these arrangements must conform to the pre-existing rules and structures that underlie everyday policymaking (Barnes, Newman, Knops and Sullivan, 2003; Bailey,2005). Institutional design at the local level is important since it affects relationships with local authorities, and indirectly imposes positive or negative effects on community NGOs' performance. Also, before considering institutional design, the skills of democratic citizenship play a vital role in shifting the real power and the right to have a voice in decision-making. Michels and De Graaf (2010) identify three relevant aspects of democratic citizenship: the development of civic skills, opportunities for public engagement and access to discussing neighbourhood issues and problems.

2.1.2 Policy Process: Pilot Experiments in Promoting NGO Development

Big Society may offer a resolution to critical challenges in conceptualising and implementing community participation policies. As previously mentioned, marketization and individualization reforms in public service areas and neo-liberalism orientated reforms in local democracy represented two mainstream approaches for the New Labour government. However, in 2010 and 2011, the Conservative government's Localism Act notably incorporated localist agendas into

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[7] The Older People's Group offers an informal setting where the elderly can support themselves independently with support, advice and access to services. Activities for members include lunch clubs and day trips. This is a normal subgroup embedded in NGOs for elder care like Age UK (https://www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved/social-groups/) and KCBNA (http://www.kcbna.org.uk/older-peoples-group-2/).

legislative programmes, reflecting a wider interest in Big Society, through which new mechanisms of civic participation, activism and democracy could be instigated.

Emerging local needs are significant drivers of policy change. Many upcoming and previously non-existent roles and responsibilities in local governance have emerged, which demand government transformation and local and interdisciplinary or interdepartmental knowledge and speciality (Imrie and Raco, 1999). Consequently, reconnecting local communities and the government via a series of policies or agendas has been prioritised in local governance (Huxley, Andrews, Downe, Guarneros-Meza, 2016).

The Third Way was initiated by New Labour as a flagship agenda to tackle social exclusion resulting from neoliberal marketization by opening pragmatic, decentralized and experimental spaces for local governance networks in public service delivery (Temple,2000). Following the precedents of Thatcherism and Neo-liberalism, the Third Way marked a transition from Labour to New Labour, which accepted liberal market reforms but sought to bind these reforms to social and local democracies. Addressing the way in which the state handled welfare provision, Powell (2000) interpreted the Third Way as a means for the government to intervene and address social issues. New Labour stressed improvisational and rapid real-time assistance underlying equality in welfare provision, which echoes the pragmatic reforms of the ethos of public service provision in which procedure-based and consumer-oriented justice were realized (Powell,2000; Temple, 2000). In theory at least, public service reform in England represented a journey from national prescription to local autonomy through tailoring national criteria to local needs and levels (Lee and Woodward, 2002).

The second feature of recent reforms is that the local state transferred discretionary powers to local NGOs to undertake innovative exploration in service provision and improvement. After several years' trial and error, persistent problems drove government concerns with community. In 2020, organisational capacity and lack of cohesion have become an urgent theme of reform for the public sector. Whether community is a problem or a solution depends on each situation, but the paradox now exists in which the community is both a problem and its potential solution. How can communities tackle their own issues of poverty and incapacity simultaneously? Rolfe (2015) identifies three community responses: by voice, through choice, and via community self-help. Community involvement policy and legislation allows NGOs or residents' groups to challenge the local knowledge of NGOs or market service providers, thereby legitimizing the choice of service provider or service type. Consequently, more and more researchers are concerned about accountability issues when the government allows its power to be shifted to community groups (Imrie and Raco, 1999; Chandler, 2000; Taylor, 2007; Parkinson, 2004). Imrie and Raco's research

(1999) on the changing nature of local governance highlighted the fact that to improve efficiency, the government has been increasingly closing off policy and planning from public scrutiny and democratic accountability. Chandler (2000) concluded that the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' (DETR) Guidance on community participation techniques focus more on involvement than accountability. Since community groups are actors in local governance, together with local authorities and the private sector, the problem of accountability between these actors is another topical issue. New policy agendas and strategies aim to enhance the function of community NGOs and residents, while local practices and experiments were the responsibility of local authorities, including pilot projects involving residents' associations and citizen forums. Many local experiments and practices have been initiated by local authorities or community activists with different intentions (Barnes et al, 2003). Forums established by government officials are mostly designed to facilitate dialogue between local authorities and the public, while community action groups and self-help organizations are often set up by community residents themselves to challenge local government decisions or proposals (see Table 2-1). Community NGOs function in a similar way, bridging community residents and local governments. (see Section 2.2.1 **Institutional Contexts: The Hierarchical Relationship between the State and NGOs**)

Top-down approaches cultivate the reform of local organizations and administration, aiming to resolve problems including legitimacy, efficiency, lack of responsiveness and social exclusion, but the bottom-up approach to these institutional arrangements is of importance too. Jupp (2012) unveiled the everyday practices of communities in Salford, where connections and cross-sectoral relationships can be cultivated more successfully in the longer term than they were under New Labour's short-term experiments or pilot schemes. The significance of front-line community workers is shown to play a part in reconciling policy demands and community priorities through working experience and local knowledge in micro contexts. (Durose, 2009)

2.1.3 Public Service Co-provision: Neo-liberalism and Contracting Out under Austerity

Contracting out and outsourcing are forms of privatization in policy practices that aim to reduce state intervention in public service provision and diminish the state's burden of debt. In this section, cases like privatizing the utilities and public transport (Caves, 1990; Miller, 1994) are excluded, as this thesis focuses on public service delivery rather than public facilities or assets, and particularly on elderly care and social care for people with learning difficulties. The concept of "The contract state" (Cordella and Willcocks, 2010; Kirkpatrick and Lucio, 1996) appeals to some scholars and stands out as a distinctive notion that features the new marketized ethos of public administration.

The origins of privatization and the main areas in which privatization initially took place can be traced back to technical tasks (Cordella & Willcocks, 2010) and employment (Bach, 2000) – services that involved limited interaction between the state and service providers throughout the delivery process. After the Labour Party came to power in 1997, the state model of service delivery was blended with the market model, and public participation marked a new stage of reform that reversed the fashion for privatizing state-owned assets. Overall, existing research on neoliberalism and privatization – including outsourcing and contracting out – do not cover cases of adult social care. Instead, neoliberalism and privatization frame the policy context and provide the background for this thesis, against which some privatization of age care and social care emerged.

Although new institutionalised links were established, these links did not function well as a tool of local control over policymaking (Chandler, 2000). There is an explanation for this blind spot in marketization and New Public Management. Chandler (2000) suggests that while government has increasingly contracted out many public services and built up more collaboration with the private sector, collective action has become more fragmented, leading to increased social exclusion in many already disadvantaged communities.

Being put into quarantine by the formal political process, elderly care users and the voluntary sector which provides social adult and childcare became financially marginalized. In the shadow of fiscal austerity and neoliberalist privatization following a period of post-recession austerity, these two policy areas faced budget cuts and were urged to become more and more self-reliant and independent from official funding (Meegan, Kennett, Jones and Croft, 2014). This meant that the first distinctive feature of community participation policy in England was that a large number of resources was invested into disadvantaged communities with residents suffering from economic or other kinds of deprivation. This orientation towards underdeveloped communities represents an attempt to define the community as both a problem and the solution (Rolfe, 2015).

Since this thesis focuses on the elderly and people with learning disabilities as two disadvantaged groups, I now turn to studies on the social exclusion of these two groups. The phenomenon of socially exclusion of the elderly in deprived urban neighbourhoods in England has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention (Scharf, Phillipson and Smith, 2003; Smith, 2009). According to fieldwork studies on social deprivation of the elderly in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Speak and Graham, 2000) and Liverpool (Andersen et al, 1999), the loss or lack of accessibility to basic daily services like shops or supermarkets has alienated older people with restricted mobility and low income from normal life. The diverse forms of social exclusion that the elderly faced was a policy blind spot. Scharf, Phillipson and Smith (2005) also identified five types of social exclusion among elderly: exclusion from material resources, social relations, civic activities, basic services and neighbourhood services.

In contrast to the older people's segregation from society, disabled people's demands for social inclusion focused on their basic right to work as independent individuals. The existing work barriers for the disabled and their marginalized status in the job market are major contributing factors to their sense of exclusion, and this aroused much academic and political attention (Barnes and Mercer, 2005). Later, Redley (2009) examined people with learning disabilities, querying whether their social inclusion could be promoted by emphasizing work equality and the customization of personal welfare services. This research suggests that New Labour's ambitious policies were only weakly connected with economic reality, paid insufficient attention to the intellectual impairment of this group and failed to provide strong enough guidance and support to generate sustainable and acceptable employment from the standpoints of the job market and those with learning disabilities.

With the austerity programme announced by the Conservative-led coalition government in 2010, a series of side effects (referred to as Austerity Plus) put public services under tremendous pressure and pushed the government to embrace a more collaborative approach to public service delivery that included devolution to service users or those around them (Griffiths and Kippin, 2017). A smaller state that interfered less directly in public service provision echoes the vision of the Big Society agenda and the idea of the shrinking state (Griffiths and Kippin, 2017; Bach, 2012).

The face of the third sector also changed along with popular co-production by multiple policy actors including the state, service users, private companies and NGOs. Responsibility and associated costs were not only attributed to the government but also to other co-producers of public services such as NGOs. However, NGOs' responses and attitudes to the responsibility and costs of public service provision were of less concern (Myers, 2017). Although there is an obvious increase in government funding to the third sector, funded NGOs are big contractors and large organizations who work closely with central and local government. The essence of government funding was criticized to disguise the increased marketization of public services (Bach, 2012: 400). Small and medium size voluntary organizations who were more likely to resist the government arrangements based on their practical experience of service provision were ignored, and the concept of user-centred service provision preached by the government drifted away from such disproportionate support for large and small-to-medium voluntary organizations.

The following tables illustrate provision of age care in England. They cover the annual data on aging rate, aging population numbers, levels of informal adult care, retirement homes for elderly and residences for the disabled, as well as the input and output of age care provision and the year-on-year growth rate of age care provision.

	Citizens above 65 years old in China[8]	Citizens above 65 years old in the UK[9]	Rate of citizens above 65 years old in total population in China[10]	Rate of citizens above 65 years old in total population in the UK[11]	Number of Elder Care Institutions In China (Hundred)[12]	Number of Elder Care Beds in the Institutions in China[13]	Output of Informal Adult Care in the UK (Million)[14]	Retirement Homes for Elderly and Residences for Disabled in the UK (Hundred)[15]	The average number of citizens above 65 years old in China sharing one elder care institution	The average number of citizens above 65 years old in China sharing one retirement home
2019	176,030,000	12,390,000	12.6%	18.58%				116.4		
2018	167,000,000	11,989,322	11.9%	18.04%	300	7,463,000		111.5	5567	1075
2017	158,310,000	11,982,880	11.4%	18.2%	290	7142,000		106.3	5459	1127
2016	150,030,000	11,814,100	10.8%	17.996%	280	6800,000	68285	101.2	5358	1167
2015	143,860,000	11,784,910	10.5%	18.1%	280	6698,000	68674	98.9	5138	1191
2014	137,550,000	11,406,821	10.1%	17.66%	340	5514,000 (CARER 2887,000)	68579		4045	
2013	131,610,000	11,091,030	9.7%	17.3%			68117			
2012	127,140,000	10,840,629	9.4%	16.78%			61236			

2011	122,880,000	10,400,000	9.1%	16.5%			62047			
2010	118,927,158[16]	10,304,000	8.91%[17]	16.55%			60584			

Table 2-2 Aging Society and Aging Facilities in China and in the UK by Year (2010-2019)[18]

Table 2-2 shows the steadily increasing proportion of people aged over 65 in China and in the UK. As column 4 shows, the rate in China in 2010 is 8.91% and remained below 10% before 2014. In contrast, the rate in the UK starts at 16.55%, which is much higher than that of the same year in China. The figure rose more slowly in England than in China, rising to 18.58% in 2019. The eighth row shows the figures for informal care in the UK, which is not counted in China. This reflects the idea that in China, informal care for elderly people is not considered as a form of care.

Therefore, the size of China's aging society is increasing, while British society has been an aging society for many years and is currently at a more stable state, although with a high elderly population. The last two columns show the average number of citizens above 65 sharing an elder care institution in China and sharing a retirement home in the UK. The figure in China has increased while the figure in the UK has dropped slowly. The total number in China always lagged behind that

[8] Statistic Source: 中华人民共和国国家统计局历年统计公报(National Bureau of Statistics of People's Republic of China)http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/tjgb/ndtjgb/

[9] Statistic Source: Office for National Statistics https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/overviewoftheukpopulation/july2017

[10] Statistic Source: 中华人民共和国国家统计局历年统计公报 (National Bureau of Statistics of People's Republic of China)http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/tjgb/ndtjgb/

[11] Statistic Source: Office for National Statistics https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/overviewoftheukpopulation/july2017

[12] Statistic Source: 中华人民共和国国家统计局历年统计公报(National Bureau of Statistics of People's Republic of China) http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/tjgb/ndtjgb/

[13] Statistic Source: 中华人民共和国国家统计局历年统计公报(National Bureau of Statistics of People's Republic of China) http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/tjgb/ndtjgb/

[14] Statistic Source: Office for National Statistics https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/satelliteaccounts/datasets/householdsatelliteaccountfullukaccounts2005to2014

[15] Statistic Source: Office for National Statistics https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/j2z6/mm23

[16] Statistic Source: 中华人民共和国国家统计局历年统计公报(National Bureau of Statistics of People's Republic of China) http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/pcsj/6rp/html/A0301a.htm

[17] Statistic Source: 中华人民共和国国家统计局历年统计公报(National Bureau of Statistics of People's Republic of China) http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/pcsj/6rp/html/A0301a.htm

[18] Data source: Official Website of Statistic Bureau of People's Republic of China, Annual Report from 2011-2018, 20/12/2019.

of the UK. This suggests the overall public provision of elderly care is much less in China than in the UK and it is rising in China. Again, the figures imply that these two countries are at different stages of elderly care provision.

Table 2-3 Elderly Care Productivity in England (1997-2017)[19]

Older adult care: Indices for inputs, non-quality adjusted output, quality adjusted output, non-quality adjusted productivity, quality adjusted productivity, FYE 1997 to FYE 2017					
FYE 1997=100					
England					
	Inputs	**NQA Output**	**QA Output**	**NQA Productivity**	**QA Productivity**
1996-97	100.0	100.0		100.0	
1997-98	99.9	98.5		98.6	
1998-99	99.4	102.7		103.3	
1999-00	100.7	103.1		102.4	
2000-01	101.8	103.8		102.1	
2001-02	101.8	105.1		103.2	
2002-03	110.5	113.4		102.6	
2003-04	116.4	116.5		100.0	
2004-05	126.2	120.3		95.4	
2005-06	129.2	117.6		91.0	
2006-07	125.4	115.3		91.9	
2007-08	121.3	112.8		92.9	
2008-09	122.0	110.7		90.8	
2009-10	122.2	106.1		86.9	
2010-11	121.4	102.4	102.4	84.3	84.3
2011-12	114.5	97.3	99.0	84.9	86.5
2012-13	111.0	92.4	94.9	83.2	85.4
2013-14	110.0	90.1	92.5	81.9	84.1
2014-15	108.6	88.9	91.3	81.9	84.1
2015-16	107.0	88.1	90.3	82.3	84.4
2016-17	108.7	88.3	91.5	81.2	84.2
Source: Office for National Statistics					
Note: Figure covers only services for which activity can be directly measured, and excludes services measured in the overall productivity measures through the "output-equals-inputs" approach					

Table 2-3 shows elderly care productivity in England from 1997 to 2017. The input into elderly care remained steady. The gap between annual input and quality adjusted output fluctuated between 20 to 30. Notably, there is a sharp and continuous decrease of input and output from 2009.

2.1.4 Summary

The policy context in which social care for elderly and people with learning disabilities has developed is moulded by institutional context. In England, the institutional relationship and structure is more horizontal and less hierarchical, and where the degree of autonomy for local government and NGOs is high. The development of NGOs has been encouraged by national and local government since the advent of neoliberal concepts. The Third Way and Big Society have jointly led the way to stronger levels of locality as well as a local shift in power. To conclude, the institutional relationship between state, market and society in the evolved policy ideology since 1979 can be generalized as shown in Figure 2-1 below.

Figure 2-1 Policy Ideology Evolution in England since 1979[20]

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[20] Compiled from the following references: Marsh, D. (1991). Privatization under Mrs. Thatcher: a review of the literature. *Public Administration*, 69(4), 459-480. Warner, M. E. (2008). Reversing Privatization, Rebalancing Government Reform: Markets, Deliberation and Planning. *Policy and Society*, 27(2), 163-174; Bach, S. (2000). Decentralization and privatization in municipal services: The case of health services. Sectoral Activities Programme Working Paper WP, 164; Powell, M. (2000). New Labour and the third way in the British welfare state: a new and distinctive approach? *Critical social policy*, 20(1), 39-60; Temple, M. (2000). New Labour's Third Way: pragmatism and governance. *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 2(3), 302-325; Lee, S., & Woodward, R. (2002). Delivering Public Services: Mechanisms and Consequences: Implementing the Third Way: The Delivery of Public Services under the Blair Government. *Public Money and Management*, 22(4), 49-56.

Nationalism
(Thacherism)
Consevative Government
1979-1997

State

Society

Market

Neoliberalism
Labour Government
1997-1999

State

Market

Society

Third Way
New Labour Government
1999-2010

State

Market

Society

Neoliberalism in Austerity
& Third Way
Conservative Government
2010-

Market
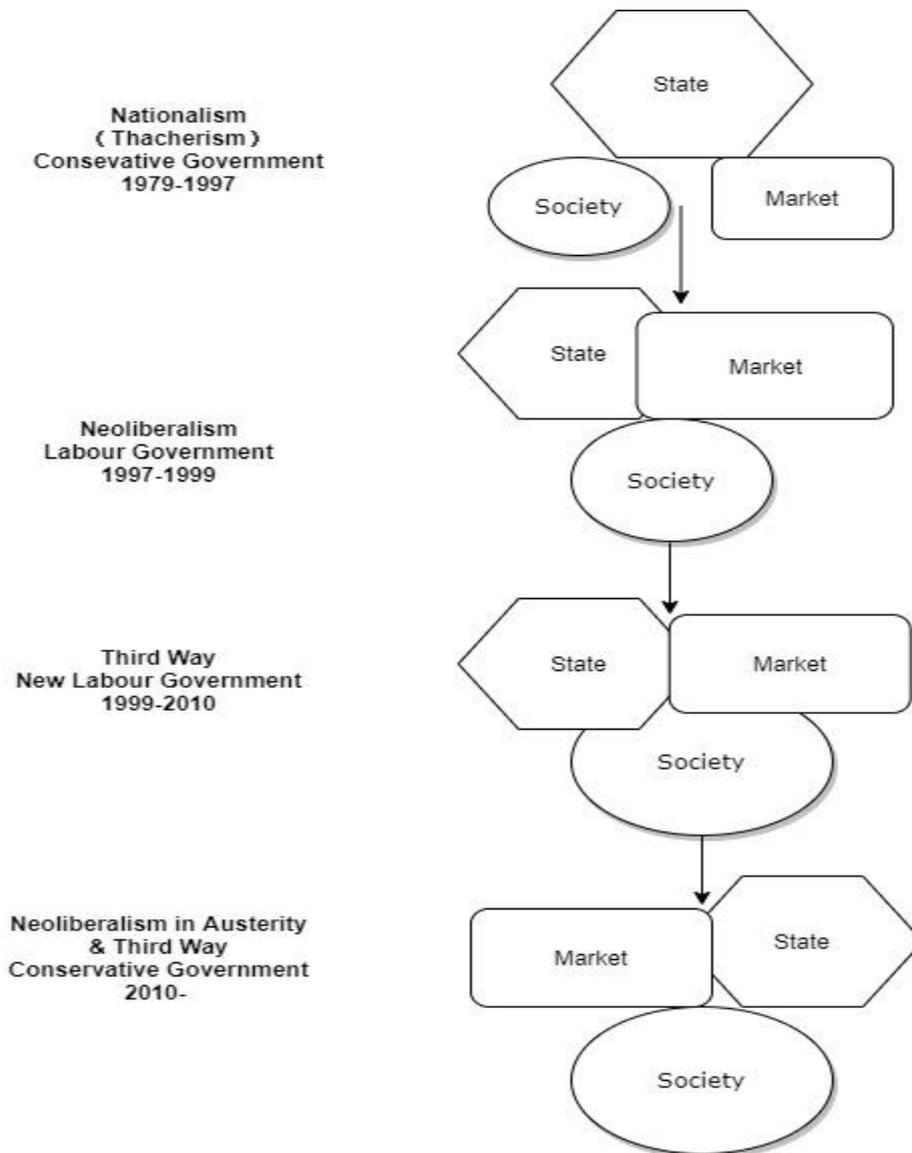
State

Society

Under Thatcher's Conservative Government from 1979 to 1997, state power dominated public policymaking and the voices of society and the market were small. When New Labour took over, the neoliberalist reform of public services between 1997 and 1999 were symbolized by cooperation between the state and market. Power in society was not given an equal status to function in this phase. The third phase was characterized by the Third Way under the New Labour Government from 1999 to 2010. This political ideology advocated that public service reform should embrace the power of society as well, neither totally relying on the state nor merely accepting the logic of neoliberalism driven by the market. In the fourth and last period, neoliberalism contracted out, and society muddled through austerity and the Third Way to promote a bigger and more responsible society. On one hand, government austerity resulted in spending cuts in the public sector and cuts in public services, which led to a continuous – although decreased – contracting out. On the other

hand, the fragmentation of public service provision catalysed by neoliberalism and austerity required innovative solutions from a stronger society.

The story of community and NGO development in England shows the overwhelming impact of privatization and the outsourcing of public services in the initial phase, followed by more options that included the competitive market, and a later to an emphasis on community and NGO power, advocating an effective mixture of deliberative governance, local government representation and collective action.

2.2 Context in China: Institutional Structure, Policy Process and Public Service Delivery

This section reviews policy and institutional contexts in China from three aspects: institutional structure, policy process and public service delivery. The institutional structure is characterized by a hierarchical relationship between the state and NGOs, while the horizontal and vertical systems of public administration in China tighten the bond between the local horizontal system and NGOs. The diversity of NGOs develops and fosters more possibilities for local service delivery. Meanwhile, the area-based performance competition is a typical Chinese feature of policy experimentalism in deliberative democracy, echoing similar policy trends in England which come in the form of pilot testing, the Big Society agenda and progressive Localism. China also resembles England in contracting out public service delivery, although not long neoliberalist guidelines, as in England.

2.2.1 Institutional Contexts: The Hierarchical Relationship between the State and NGOs

China has been an authoritarian state since 1949, although recent studies of fragmented authoritarianism (Qian & Mok, 2016; Mertha, 2009) identify opportunities for innovation and offer insights into public policy innovations at the local level. While an authoritarian polity emphasizes the centralisation of control and power, the local fragmentation of this political regime allows the possibility of innovation and flexibility at the local level.

2.2.1.1 Community NGOs in China

There are some basic features of community NGOs that are unique to China. Many scholars agree that they are non-political, non-profitable, non-governmental, self-governed and voluntary (Yu 2012). Non-political refers to local level organizations. Even in ancient China, the system of prefectures and counties at the local level under feudal autocracy was little more than a system for conveying top-down information and demands (Liu, 2000: 13, pp2-3; Wan, 2012) Local flexibility

and diversity were therefore considered almost irrelevant to central government control (Cao & Liu, 2016; Qu, 2016). The feudal autocratic control of the state never reached county and prefecture levels (*Huang Quan Bu Xia Xian*) and public administration was a tradition throughout the long history of feudal autocracy in China (Li, 2011; Wang, 2018). That tradition continues, despite political and economic change, and today fragmentation and authoritarianism coexist, with fragmented authoritarianism providing opportunities for local governance. Meanwhile, the local Communist Party branch is manifested in Community Resident Committees and Street-level Offices to ensure effective communication and engagement in local affairs, enhancing the Party's influence at community level. Qin (2013) pointed out that it is government policy to cultivate community NGOs, not an example of pluralism. As China's market-oriented economy developed, the gap between different social classes became wider, and those in lower social classes needed more public services. The national government does not have a sufficiently strong capacity to handle these emerging public needs, which requires the enhancement of community NGOs (He & Wan, 2013). With local NGO participation, scholars agree that for both traditional as well as new types of community NGOs, the emerging needs of different localities are strong driving forces for their development (Chen & Wang, 2009; Wu, Chen & Wu,2015). Table 2-3 summarises the characteristics of community NGOs in China.

2.2.1.2 State-Community NGO Relations and the Role of NGOs in These Relations

In general, community organization is a bridge connecting local government with community residents. Complex and trivial tasks, like street sanitation, competition among communities, communist party work evaluation or one-child policy implementation performance assessment increase local burdens. Government-sponsored community organizations can be divided into street offices and resident committees. The former is an official institution that consists of public servants and can exercise its power in a certain street area in People's Congress Elections.[21] It can implement compulsory education policy and police safety issues. The Congress is a self-governing organization with non-official members that is responsible more for organizing activities than conflict solving.

New community NGOs have been cultivated by community residents since the 1980s (Wu, 2013), and their relations with government and society differentiate them from the traditional community NGOs. Since new community NGOs are set up by residents for specific reasons, they tend to be closer to residents and more often stand on the opposite side to local government. The development of both kinds of community NGOs means that they have taken some responsibilities

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[21] The People's Congress is a similar concept to a local parliament, which consists of local citizens as representatives. Delegates are elected by local citizens every four years and can go from the bottom level to upper levels after being elected.

and functions from municipal administration (Zhou 2001; Gao 2011; and Yu 2012. There are some contradictions between new NGOs and the old administration system which activated these new NGOs. The latter are normally mutual assistance organisations, including community service groups, homeowner associations and the like (Zhou, 2001). The new types of community NGOs are characterized by a strong bond between various groups of residents (Kang, 2009). This mirrors the situation in England as the informal and non-governmental community organizations paly increasingly important roles in local governance practice and are even becoming equivalent to official powers. (see Section 2.1.1)

Table 2-4 Types of NGOs in China

Type	Example	Characteristics	Quantity	Activity Venue
Official COs (GONGOs: Government-operated NGOs[22])	Committee of Community Residents	Fully funded and monitored by the government. covering many community services (e.g. vocational services, fertility services, elderly care, school education, criminal security)	One in each territorial community registered in the Bureau of Civil Affairs	Government-owned community centre
Official Charity Organizations (GONGOs or Quasi GONGOs: Government-operated NGOs or Quasi Government-operated NGOs[23])	Red Cross; The Women Association; The Disabled Association	Mainly funded by the government but also accept donation from the society; work collaboratively with Official COs in service delivery	National agency and local branches in different administrative levels	Self-owned office buildings or rent offices
Non-governmental Charity Organizations	One Foundation. Smile Angel Foundation; Green	Self-funded; specialised in one particular area or group; registered	Some are individual community groups in different communities, some	Self-owned offices

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[22] Jing Yijia (2011). The Cooperative Relationship Between the Government and NGOs in Social Service Provision: An Analysis Based on Local Reform Practices, Public Administration Review (*Gonggong Xingzheng Pinglun*), 4(05):5-25. 敬乂嘉.社会服务中的公共非营利合作关系研究——一个基于地方改革实践的分析[J].公共行政评论,2011,4(05):5-25.

[23] Jing Yijia(2011). The Cooperative Relationship Between the Government and NGOs in Social Service Provision: An Analysis Based on Local Reform Practices, Public Administration Review (*Gonggong Xingzheng Pinglun*), 4(05):5-25. 敬乂嘉.社会服务中的公共非营利合作关系研究——一个基于地方改革实践的分析[J].公共行政评论,2011,4(05):5-25.

	Hunan; Love Save Pneumoconiosis	in the Bureau of Civil Affairs; monitored and supervised by the National Charity Association and the Red Cross	have national superior and local branches based at cities	
Community-based Autonomous NGOs	Homeowner Association; Art groups; Volunteer groups	Self-organized; highly autonomous; based on shared interest or hobbies	Depends on the degree of activeness and local community needs	Venue depends. No permanent office, rent offices or negotiate working area with official community centre.

Table 2-4 shows the type, examples, characteristics, quantity and activity venue for all kinds of community NGOs in China. The intimacy between them and local government and their degrees of autonomy vary. In China, official community NGOs shown in the second, third and fifth row of Table 2-3 are normally geographically distributed within communities, the geographical boundaries of which are defined by the Bureau of Civil Affairs. The first type is official community organization that functions as a level of public sector within a community, the responsibilities of which cover all aspects of residents' daily lives and all kinds of groups within the communities. The second type is made up of official charity organizations, which not only offer help to community residents but also manipulates the resources from the community to benefit deprived groups within the community, like women and the disabled. The third and fourth type are both NGOs, and the differences lie in the scale at which they work and the people they care about. The third type is charity organizations based on one or more groups of people in society, not limited to a community. The last includes community-based autonomous organizations, independently governed by community residents either for their own rights and hobbies or the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged groups in the community.

In cases where local government empowers the community, builds close relations with its residents and cedes functions to community NGOs (Zhou, 2001), community governance can be maintained to satisfy residents' needs (Gao, 2011). Shi and Liu (2013) argue that functional interaction between government and community NGOs is necessary, as there are abundant opportunities to fulfil various objectives through unilateral collaboration, and community NGOs are more likely to provide multiple and need-oriented services than local government.

Previous studies focused on problems arising from the collaboration process between traditional community NGOs, the government and the market, as well as the difficulties in developing collaborative relations (Xia, 2003). According to Xia, there are three theoretical models in community governance: community autonomy, community democratic politics and community networks. The first model focuses on pressure exerted by the central CCP on local government to implement their decisions. In the second model, the Communist Party is active within various community NGOs, while social groups and intermediate organizations function as bridges between them, although it is unclear which organization dominates. In the third model the government, community NGOs and community residents collaborate with each other in politics, civil society and the economy, but the rules of the game are ambiguous.

Despite being supported by the government, community NGOs are still insufficiently embedded into the community. They lack sustainable development and are restricted by external relations with the government and the market (Yuan, 2014; Huang, 2017). As the support provider, the government is expected to encourage community NGOs to strive for multiple means of capital accumulation, and to perfect and achieve a policy of fostering community NGOs. Meanwhile, the development of community NGOs does not in itself work towards improving their participation in social governance through cooperation with local government and market (Huang, 2014). This literature addresses multiple dilemmas, including the fact that NGOs are highly reliant on external resources, especially government support (Yuan, 2014; Li, 2015), despite market failure (Yuan, 2014；Li, 2015) and the low quality of high-level organizational support (Yuan, 2014). Some Chinese scholars consequently strive to reclaim the role of local government in NGO development, not merely as a resource provider, but as an institutional and policy designer (Huang and Ji, 2014). Intermediary social organization relies on the government for non-institutional support rather than official institutional resources – such as authority, personal networks and charismatic leadership. (Ge & Zhu, 2012)

The Yantian pattern in Shenzhen is cited as an example of traditional community organization reform resulting in an operational pattern referred to as "One Association and Two Stations". As a result of reforms, administrative affairs are distributed to the Community Working Station and public services to Community Service Station, and the Community Residents' Association oversees both stations. The Association is responsible for decision-making, discussion and the supervision of public affairs, whereas the two stations oversee the specific execution of decisions made by the Community Residents' Association.

Generally, these approaches reflect divergent ways of looking at the relationship between the government and the community organizations: one is hierarchical and relies on the government,

while the other takes a more deliberative format (Lu, 2013). In other words, community organizations change the power structure, supplement the public realm, or partially replace the government or the market (Zhou, 2001). Zhou (2014) explored possible patterns of community organization structure that could be applied in China, including community boards and community development cooperative organizations.

The literature identifies two roles for community organizations in public service provision: to extend government power (Lu, 2013; Qin, 2013) and to substitute for government. Lu (2013) traced the development of government-led community organizations and examined their features. The author concluded that community elites are so influential within community groups that they are often absorbed by local government. Due to their reputation and capacity to mobilize resources, the formal identity granted by the government enhanced the functions of these elites in community governance enormously. Furthermore, community organization led by elites may use propaganda to mobilize the community, which is of great value in solving community conflicts. In this way, community organizers become the agents of government, exerting power in community governance.

The second role, that of substituting state provision, comes with the shift from government production to government purchase from the private sector, or from independent provision by the NGOs themselves (Han, 2009; Zheng, 2009; Gao, 2011). According to Wang and Le's (2008) division of NGO participation models in the public sector and in outsourcing the public services, provision takes in not only competitive contract bidding but also the dependence of the NGO. Furthermore, Wang & Le (2008) and Le (2008) embraced the opinion that the state and NGOs should build up contractual relationships instead of conventional hierarchical relationships in order to promote the delivery of public services efficiency and quality.

However, in the case of the market's intervention in government regulation, community service providers will at times seek to persuade the government to ignore their illegal actions. They may offer bribes to the government, and their collaboration with the government may prevent or hinder the institutionalisation of public opinion through grassroots organizations or other local forms of collective action. Gao (2011) suggests that the government should regard community organizations as independent entities that exist outside government and accept that they have an irreplaceable role in community organization.

In his review of pertinent community organization studies, Gao (2011) concludes that polycentrism (Polanyi, 1951) and Denhardt's theory of polycentric governance (2000) have affected the transformation and expansion of community organizations profoundly.

2.2.2 Policy Process: Area-based Performance Competition and Policy Experimentalism in Deliberative Democracy

There are some surprising similarities between English and Chinese NGOs in terms of community development. Both are marked by incrementalism in local public policy implementation among local officials and local governments (Zhou, 2007). However, in China, the relationships between local governments, NGOs and the private sector has resulted in area-based performance competition (Li, 2018) and policy experimentalism (Heilmann, 2008; Zhu, 2018). The ambiguity of general policy statements leads to selective policymaking and implementation at the local level, a finding that echoes some western scholars' discussions of fragmented implementation in authoritarian states (Zhu & Zhao 2018; Whaites, 1998).

Sometimes, local officials will expand their political performance and build their reputation by taking successful examples from elsewhere and transfer process to their own localities. However, the dysfunctional side effects of vertical incentives by central government may hinder the path from one location to another. This sort of research on policy experimentation echoes western experimentalism and policy diffusion studies (Zhu and Zhao 2018). Policy diffusion is also a side-effect of these characteristics of public administration in China. With top-down outsourcing, policy targets and incentives for local competition in a wide range of policy areas, local governments are forced to seek more assistance in policy implementation under the pressure of the punishment and reward system. They are compelled to extend the policy chain further, to include external bodies such as NGOs and private companies. The common phenomenon of local official promotion of policy ornaments (Zhou, 2007) coupled with the internal top-down outsourcing of policy targets (Zhou, 2014) incentivizes the local area-based NGOs to compete for policy experimentation points (Li, 2018).

The development of traditional community NGOs is viewed in China as an innovative way of introducing deliberative democracy (Li, 2008). Odd though it may seem in an authoritarian context, many researchers seek to explore the interaction between community NGOs and the government through the lens of deliberative democracy (Lu, 1999; Gao, 2011). The target is to cultivate partnerships between civil society and the government to achieve deliberative governance in community public service delivery and state power supervision (Li & Chen, 2008; Zhou, 2010).

Deliberative democracy is a western concept that travelled to China because some Chinese scholars identified conditions under which it might work. China's unitary leadership system has resulted in non-competitive democracy instead of competitive democracy (Lin, 2003). Lin followed Robert Dahl (1999: 112) in dividing democracy into competitive, non-competitive and deliberative forms. The

emerging needs and conflicts of interest within a plurality of social classes increased dramatically due to economic reforms, resulting in tensions between the modern market economy system and demands for political rights, leading to a choice between competitive and deliberative democracy (Lin,2003; He & Chen, 2005). To achieve efficiency and avoid political competition in China, the rationale for choosing deliberative democracy seemed clear (Lin, 2003), and the political culture of achieving consensus and keeping in touch with the common people was already a common theme in the CCP's development. This fitted well with the aspirations of deliberative democracy (Lin, 2003; He & Chen, 2005), although the political system would need to adapt itself to the contemporary era and develop practical forms of deliberative democracy that specifically related to the Chinese context. The local formal authority is generally motivated to apply deliberative democracy because it provides legitimacy when adopting new policies (He &Chen, 2005). The community-level trial of issue-centred committees offers an example of fostering informal power as an acceptable form of deliberative democracy (Liu, 2003), while issue-centred committees in the community empower residents to express their needs and opinions about daily life issues, allowing their voices to be heard in senior level administrative departments.

Kang & Han (2007) concluded that state-society relations allows the administrative state to incorporate society. A strong state and a weak society are the essence of this argument, in which the state has the dominant role in its relationship with different types of NGOs. Consequently, some Chinese scholars focus on the autonomy and independence of NGOs. Wang & Song (2013) discuss the co-existence of NGO autonomy and dependence, and criticize over-generalization, especially in terms of the failure to distinguish between different NGOs and to explain variations in their degrees of independence.

In response to the popularity of civil society in western academia, Ji (2013) reviewed literature on NGO development in China. Her research suggests that civil society (*Gongmin Shehui*) and corporatism (*Fatuan Zhuyi*) offer two mainstream perspectives for examination. Corporatism represents a political ideology which advocates the organization of society into corporate groups, such as agriculture, labour, the military, scientific, or guild associations on the basis of common interests.[24]

As well as the interactive relationship between administrative systems that include horizontal clusters of different departments and vertical lines of action between individual departments and NGOs, exploring the CCP's relationship with NGOs appeals to some scholars as the party system includes significant interaction with society (Lin, 2007; Huang, 2015).

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[24] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporatism

Huang (2015) argues that the public service provision NGOs play an important role in realizing multiple governance models, negotiating linked interests practically and emphasising need-oriented public service system reconstruction. Recent studies on state-society relationships have emerged from the debate on whether the state or the NGOs themselves dominate in NGO development, turning to the cooperation that exists between these two actors and exploring specific Chinese features while the state and NGOs become more and more equal than conventional debates allow.

At micro-level, the actions of community NGO's are confined by the context of grand policy. Local policy practices by NGOs go in different directions, take alternative paths and achieve unexpected results as central government guidelines are general and vague. In Chinese society, traditional community NGOs act at an informal and relatively independent local level, creating strong links with community residents. However, by being financially supported by central and local government, they are supposed to shoulder responsibility from all sides, delivering public services for the elderly and for children (Yu & Jin, 2012; Yu & Li, 2011), and delivering vocational training for the disabled while managing local conflicts through intermediation (Chen & Wang, 2009; Wu, Chen & Wu, 2015).

2.2.3 Competitiveness in Neo-liberal Contracting-out of Public Service in China

As discussed in Section 2.2.1, the hierarchical relationship between the government and NGOs is the backdrop against which all public service co-production and delivery happens. Due to the growth of China's aging society, the emerging local needs of elderly care provision must carry national policy arrangements and local policy provision forward in China (Zhang,2012; Chang & Zhu, 2013; Jing, 2013). Policy experimentalism is another feature of public service delivery. The formal procedures for outsourcing projects at different levels of government was initiated at three points, including Pudong New Area in Shanghai and Luwan District in Shenzhen, between 1995 and 2002. The idea then spread to wider surfaces between 2003 and 2010 ranging from individual districts to provinces and then to national government (Wang, 2014).

Heilmann (2008) identified a link between local experimentation and national policy in the Chinese policy process. Local experiments were used to boost economic development. This process became known as a "point to surface" path, starting with individual experiment points which if they are successful become part of central government policy and are introduced throughout the country.

This approach can be found in social welfare provision from 2010 onwards. A great many national social welfare and social care reforms took place specific provinces, including Shanghai, Zhejiang,

Guangdong and Beijing. These central-local relationships do not present or require conventional order and obedience (Jessica et al, 2017). Unlike British scholars' keen interest in neoliberalist reforms of public service delivery in England, scholars in China seldom relate local public service delivery directly to neoliberalism. They discuss public service delivery using concepts such as privatization, marketization, outsourcing and contracting out. In other words, they adopt the practices of neoliberalism but not its views on the role of the state. Scholars in China focus more on the practice than the underlying ethos or philosophy.

Jing (2011) introduced competitiveness in bidding for public service contracts (Wang and Le, 2008) as a variable in the analysis of hierarchical relationships between upper- and lower-level government from the perspective of the public sector-NGO relationship in outsourcing. The study concluded that due to the inconsistent targets of upper- and lower-level governments, the use of closed contracting with little or no competition led to conspiracies between local governments and NGOs against upper levels of government. The system differed from the ideal principal-agent relationship between the government and NGOs in an open contract competition system (see Table 2-3).

2.2.4 Summary

The features of institutional context differ significantly between England and China in the basic sense that China has five public administration levels in whereas England has only two. In China's public administration system, level-by-level top-down task assignment and area-based competition between the same levels of government in public service provision form part of the hierarchical institutional structure. The second characteristic of policy context in China is experimentalism and its links to selective implementation. China's social welfare, healthcare and urban regeneration policies were all experimental. They began at "points" and were introduced to a wider "surface" if successful. As the foundation and key venue for increasing NGO involvement, community development was part of an experiment in specific areas such as Shanghai, Zhejiang and Guangdong.

Privatization is the third characteristic of China's policy context in. Outsourcing and contracting out increase and improve public service options and save the government a great deal of money. However, it also induces problems such as misunderstanding local needs, rent-seeking, conspiracy between the government and NGOs, ambiguous boundaries of responsibility and missing contract targets, all of which challenge the government's functions as a service buyer and demand the revitalization of community worker and service user participation at a bigger scale.

2.3 Conclusions and Research Questions

This discussion of relevant literature in England and China suggests four core questions to explore in my fieldwork:

2.3.1. Structure

Based on the review of neoliberalist privatization, contracting out and outsourcing in England and China, both countries have witnessed a changing process in which the structural relationship between the state, the market and NGOs have varied. Therefore, the first aspect I intend to explore through fieldwork relates to the governance structures of public service delivery in England and China and the effect these structures have on relations between state and society. This prompts the first two research questions:

> *RQ 1: What are the governance structures of public service delivery in UK and China?*

> *RQ 2: What kind of effect does community organization in England and China have in shaping state-society relations? Does it change the power structure, supplement the public realm or partially replace the government or the market?*

2.3.2. Dependence

Having examined literature on the degree to which NGOs depend on the state and the degree of autonomy that different types of NGOs enjoyed, my second research area specifically emphasizes the different degrees of dependence and autonomy of the NGOs in both counties. This prompts my third research question:

> *RQ3: What are the major constraints on the independence of NGOs? Are public services in England and/or China characterised by autonomy, independence and discretion?*

2.3.3. Resources

One of the main reasons NGOs become dependent on the state or other actors is the lack of necessary resources for co-producing and delivering public services. England and China have both experienced the prevalence of community development policies, which are aimed to boost the community and the development of NGOs in many ways and through different methods, including resources. Community NGOs also strive for self-development by trialling patterns or models to evaluate capacity and resources. Against the background of fiscal austerity in England and abundant financial support in China, this gives me a third area to study and a fourth research question:

RQ 4: To what extent are English and Chinese NGOs dependent on either government or their own resources? Are the primary causes in England different or similar to those of China?

2.3.4. Negotiating Capacity

In reviewing community development in England, the literature review uncovered a series of articles focusing on the function of local knowledge in community participation in England. There was no equivalent section in the literature on China, which means that my fieldwork will have to evaluate the reality and power of local knowledge in both countries. From a broader perspective, local knowledge offers a source of negotiating capacity, so other sources and methods of acquiring negotiating capacity should also be examined in the fieldwork chapters on both countries. This fourth area of study prompts a series of research questions:

RQ 5: Who holds the local knowledge and how does local knowledge function as a resource for negotiating?

RQ 6: How is the negotiating capacity developed at neighbourhood level? How does it influence community participation?

RQ 7: Do NGOs have the requisite organisational resources and skills to manage their relationship with government, other NGOs and the private sector?

These questions form the direction of the field research. However, they will be refined and simplified further at the end of theory chapter.

Chapter 3: Theory: Debate and Discussion on Network Governance and Its Application in Public Service Delivery in England and China

In the second decade of the new millennium, interest in 'network governance' grew steadily among Chinese scholars (see for example: Yu,2000; Mu & Zhu, 2005; Zhu,2011; Wang & Song, 2019). This chapter reviews the Western literature and the more recent Chinese contribution to the subject. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 address the long-standing classical literature on network governance in the western context, encompassing the evolution of differentiated definitions as well as the three waves of governance and key issues such as interdependence, resource exchange, trust, diplomacy and reciprocity.

Section 3.3 examines the introduction and application of network governance in China and argues that the concept has been considered theoretically in the Chinese literature but remains untested in the field. It asks whether the idea of network governance travels well to the Chinese context of public administration. Finally, Section 3.4 identifies the two research questions that will be explored in fieldwork on elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities.

3.1 Defining Governance and the Three Waves of Governance

The assertion that the state is moving from *government* to *governance* is a common if disputed claim that is made and contested by numerous scholars (Rhodes 1996 and 2017; Peters and Pierre,1998; Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan,1997). I follow Bevir and Rhodes (2010: Chapter 5) by considering the study of governance in three waves: firstly, from government to governance, or governing without government; secondly, meta-governance, or balancing the three governing structures of hierarchy, markets and networks; and thirdly decentred governance.

The first wave focuses on arguments on the rise of policy networks and the hollowing out of the state, and the core argument is that governing can exist without government. In this incremental process, trust and diplomacy between interdependent organizations becomes increasingly vital, taking the place of the traditional hierarchical relationships between policy actors.

The second wave is based upon the literature on meta-governance, which claims that government still plays an essential part in network governance, using hands-off instead of hands-on measures to achieve its goals.

The third wave considers the concept of decentred governance, which stresses that the state contains a multitude of diversified practices and advocates bottom-up approaches to governance. It rejects the focus on institutions or social logic in its analysis of beliefs and practices. The decentred

analysis of the state creates a picture of state governance from the analysis of local practices, conflicting meanings and beliefs and competing traditions and dilemmas.

3.1.1 Defining Governance

Defining governance is a slippery task. The term can refer to describing the characteristics that distinguish governance from other concepts in public administration and politics and to theoretical usages of governance.

The first step is to define 'government' as the baseline for defining 'governance'. These two concepts are closely related, which means that in order to obtain an accurate and comprehensive understanding of governance, a background knowledge of government is necessary. For example, Finer (1970: 3-4) defines government as: "the activity or process of governing" or "governance"; "a condition of ordered rule"; "those people charged with the duty of governing" or "governors" and "the manner, method or system by which a particular society is governed". Rhodes (1996) suggests that governance indicates a change in the meaning of government, and refers to a new process of governing, a changed condition of ordered rule or a new method by which society is governed.

3.1.2 First Phase: From Government to Governance, a Dead End or an Ongoing Process?

The phrase "the hollowing-out of state" is used to describe a process by which a government is eroded or eaten away by marketization, the increasing use of agencies, broader government bodies such as the EU and eventually the limited discretion of public servants (Rhodes, 1996; see also 2017: 120). Rhodes (2017: 131) argues that "Governance is not a choice between centralization and decentralization. It is about regulating relationships in complex systems."

When considering the hollowed-out state, network governance becomes the tool by which the government delivers public services. Through the lens of governance, the British public administration experienced a transformation period from government to governance; a shift from governing with government to governing without government. However, this concept has stimulated a great deal of controversy. Torfing (2012: 10) argues that the claim that there has been a shift from government to governance has three limitations. Firstly, that the process of change has been oversimplified, creating the impression that government has suddenly lost its dominant role. Secondly, that the rise and expansion of governance has come by undermining the power of government. Thirdly, that the role of the government has been substantially underplayed, and the resulting analysis of decentred governance will therefore be uncertain.

The British government has lost some functions horizontally to agencies and vertically to EU institutions. This came about because of government failures caused by rigid, formalised, inefficient, isolated and narrow administration silos. Space existed for the rise of network governance because

it spanned and transcended these silos. Network governance was viewed positively because it promised to solve government failures in policymaking and implementation (Torfing 2012: 9). Interest in governance grew, attracting attention in the study of public policy, international relations and economics. Traditional forms of government appeared out of date and were replaced by various forms of governance (Torfing 2012: 2,10).

The Chinese government found itself confronting similar challenges with a rapidly changing and increasingly differentiated society and failed to adjust itself to this new era. Service delivery in primary policy arenas such as healthcare, childcare and care of the elderly has not been contracted out or privatized. Meanwhile, in the area of housing policy, multiple actors are cooperating and conflicting with each other. Network governance in China is more relevant to the changing relations between the public sector and the third sector. The relationship between the government and the market is close and continuous, and business and government engage constantly. (Hsueh, 2016; Milhaupt & Zheng, 2014) In many service areas that could be privatized – especially housing policy – the government and market organizations support each other to form insider interest groups ahead of any interaction with residents or non-governmental organizations. Problems have emerged from this, such as the exclusion of the third sector by alliances in interest between the public and private sector as an outsider interest group. The effect of fragmented public service on people's daily lives is now absent. This is a critical lacuna that I will fill in with my fieldwork in England and China. In China, the consequences of the hollow state are different from the British experience, and Chinese central government has enhanced its political control, especially in some national-level issues. However, at the provincial, municipal and even district/county level, service delivery and power distribution are comparatively fragmented. Whether this will generate opportunities for network governance is a subject that is still insufficiently explored. In this thesis, the discussion on the third sector will seek to answer this question.

3.1.3 Second Phase: The New Governance. Governing without Government

Rhodes (1996) identifies at least six uses of the term "governance":

- as the minimal state
- as corporate governance
- as the new public management
- as 'good governance'
- as a socio-cybernetic system
- as a self-organizing network.

Of these, governance as the minimal state and governance as a self-organizing network are most relevant to my thesis. The following paragraphs summarise and explain the relevance of each term.

Governance as a minimal state reflects neoliberal ideology and its preference for less government control, as seen for example in reductions in public spending after the privatization of public services (Kavanagh 1990: 1-12). The government becomes smaller in size as it performs more of a regulatory role rather than as owner and provider of the public facilities and services. Austerity policies in England after the Conservative government came into power in 2010 were marked by outsourcing or privatisation, demonstrating a clear ideological preference for governance as a minimal state. The Big Society Agenda discussed in Chapter 2, reflects the devolution of public service provision from the national to the local level, and the reversed the direction of bottom-up reforms and research agendas.

In a minimalist state, network governance replaces bureaucracy, reduces expenditure and cuts government. The overlap with the notion of hollowing out is obvious. The hollowing-out of the state causes public service delivery and institutional fragmentation (Milward and Provan, 2000; Klijn, 2002). The marketization process is symbolized by resource exchange between economic actors and the state. The autonomy in decision-making of economic actors is surrendered in return for political influence, while top-down authoritative decision-making is partly abandoned in favour of a more effective economic performance (Jessop, 1998). Public service delivery is not a simple economic issue and becomes more determined by service users' needs. Without the interference of state or other autonomous powers, public service delivery would be fragmented due to the lack of any systematic review of potential problems (Jessop,1998), and the government policy system must adjust to the challenging tasks resulting from highly differentiated and atomistic societies and pluralistic and fragmented institutional systems. The challenge for government is therefore to manage the complex sets of interdependent organizations or networks in order to realize collective direction, planning and consensus building (Rhodes, 2017: 127).

Governance as a self-organizing network develops the argument surrounding the need to put together packages of organizations that can share resources, and such networks can eventually become autonomous. Network management – also referred to as hands-off steering – becomes the main task of government, while autonomous networks can develop and implement their own policies and resist government steering.

The phrase 'governing without government' refers to the self-governance of informal non-state organizations, and autonomy implies a significant degree of freedom. Dependence on the government may diminish between government and non-governmental organizations, which is why governing can survive without government. Rhodes (2017) concludes that network governance has four defining characteristics: interdependence between organizations, continuing interaction, game-like interactions and a significant degree of autonomy from the state. In comparing England

and China, this thesis will explore both countries' varying degrees of interdependence in network governance, thus prompting my third research question:

3. What resources are held by network actors, and to what extent are they dependent on each other?

3.1.4 Third Phase Meta-governance, or which Governing Structure: Market, Network or Hierarchy?

The state – also referred to as a hierarchy or bureaucracy – and the market are widely recognized as the two major resource allocation mechanisms of western societies. To them, we can now add network governance. Bureaucracy remains the prime example of hierarchy or coordination by administrative order and is still a major method of service delivery in both England and China. Markets and quasi-markets as service delivery mechanisms have become widespread with the rise of neoliberalism, and there are many examples of privatization and outsourcing or contracting out. Network governance is a governing structure comparable to hierarchies and markets and has many strengths in terms of service delivery that are increasingly recognized by governments – including the Chinese government.

The major contribution of the literature on meta-governance has been to focus attention on the balance between hierarchies, markets and networks; "it is the mix that matters" (Rhodes, 1998). For the government, it is no longer a question of choosing between different types of governing structures. The task has become how to manage the mix of different types of governing structures. Contracting can erode trust in local networks, but trust and negotiation can reduce the scope of price competition. Rhodes (2017: 78,173-189) uses the metaphor of mixing oil and water to describe this phenomenon. The differences between the three are summarised in Table 3-1.

In line with New Public Management reforms, Torfing (2012: 122-132) sets out three rules of thumb for meta-governance in public policy and service provision. Politicians and top managers should pay more attention to steering than rowing. They should increasingly devolve services to local public service managers and street-level bureaucrats. They should replace bureaucratic rules and commands with a combination of storytelling, economic incentives and performance benchmarks. Service users' preferences should drive public service.

Table 3-1 Comparing Three Governing Structures[25]

	Hierarchy	Market	Network
Period of Public Administration	(Traditional) Public Administration	Public Management/ New Public Management	New Public Management/ Governance
Central Mechanisms	Bureaucracy	Price Competition. Rational Choice	Interdependent Organizational Cooperation
Special Toolkits	Administrative Commands; Formal Authorities	Privatization; Contract; Market or Quasi-market tools	Trust and Diplomacy; Resource Exchange; Power Dependence
Values and Goals	Public Accountability; Service Delivery	3E: Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness. Policy Outcomes. Customer-oriented	Systematic Service Delivery; Efficiency and Accountability
The Role of the Government	Rowing	Steering	Indirect Steering. Encouraging and Enabling

3.1.5 Lessons Learned by Facing Dilemmas of Network Governance

The deficiencies of each mode of governance cannot be tackled by addressing the mode itself. The dilemmas caused by any deficiencies involve the function of meta-governance as an outsider that can offer solutions for managing the overall situation. This rational mixture of network, hierarchy and market governance modes is a challenge that confronts the government.

Several theorists of network interdependence (Torfing, 2012; Rhodes, 1997 and Kickert et al, 1997), as well as Jessop's (2002) state-theoretical approach to meta-governance, have all considered why each governing structure can fail.

I prefer Rhodes's (2017: 78-81) generalization of four sour laws of network governance because they represent four dilemmas for policy actors: "Why Can't They Be More Like Us?", "Not me, Guv", "You Can't Shake Hands with a Clenched Fist" and "They Talk the Talk but They Can't Walk the Walk". Schaap and Van Twist (1997: 64) echo the third dilemma, applying the closed circle's filter for perception selection as the framework of reference (Schaap, 2007: 118-119). They contend that this represents an intentional strategy which is conscious of cognitive closure as the inherent nature of policy network, but do these four dilemmas exist in local practices in England and China?

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[25] Sources: Compiled from Rhodes 1997 and Rhodes 2017.

The failure of governance may be embedded or rooted in the incompatible natures of the state, the market and network actors. The specific reasons include but are not limited to coordination difficulties across all levels and between organizations or individuals, oversimplification of governance conditions and lack of knowledge regarding the governance object (Jessop, 2002). Dixon and Dogan (2002), agree that the diversities of self-interest and motivation and the subjective interpretations that underpin different experiences shape governance behaviours.

A community-based social network can be viewed as a strong and autonomous network which is able to resist central government control. The obvious challenge for the centre is how to manage such networks, and critical factors are mutual trust, reciprocity and diplomacy. Reciprocity exists between policy network actors when established bonds and normative rules and guidance are in place for long-term exchange, obligations and duties. Rules of the game stabilize and consolidate governance networks under changing and complex circumstances (Rhodes, 2017: 76; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000). Diplomacy refers to managing policy networks by negotiation, and because one outcome of negotiation involves trust-building and diplomatic skills, the process of diplomacy is to make the utmost use of these factors.

Rhodes (2017:47) proposed ten commandments for managing network policies, including constant nurturing, know your limitations, develop clear roles, take your share of the joint administrative burden. Rhodes (2017:77) also proposed ten lessons for founding policy, including large amount of reliable local information, localising service provision, shared or overlapping narratives of what is going on between joint sectors.

Quantitative data from Klijn et al (2010) suggests that connective abilities are indispensable and key to managing network, and network management also affects the outcome of network governance. In other words, the network manager must identify crucial actors and connect with them to realize network governance goals by managing a variety of perceptions, initiating and sustaining policy network in several rounds of games.

The challenges for government involve choosing between hierarchy, market and network and managing a mix of these structures along with all of the stakeholders. The essence of managing network governance is facing diversified actors in different institutions who have differing beliefs and practices, and to find compatible ways of working together in turbulent settings.

Section 3.2 will focus on the specific toolkits for and components of effective network governance.

The second set of questions for this thesis focuses on the successes and failures in network management. Which forms of network governance works best in England and China and which forms fail? Why? Are the dilemmas discussed above similar or different for each country?

3.2 Issues in the Study of Governance

This section avoids the increasingly arcane debates between many protagonists of governance (see Rhodes 2017: 47-56). Instead, it seeks to identify the key issues that everyone confronts, namely interdependence and diplomatic skills, resource exchange and trust-building, and consensus-building, which I will explore further in my fieldwork.

3.2.1 Interdependence and Resource Exchange in Interactive Governance

Firstly, common ground exists between network governance theorists upon which I can build in my case studies and thematic analysis. Torfing (2012: 14) defined interactive governance as the complicated process in which interactions between groups of political and social actors with distinctive interests emerge, and in which a plurality of ideas, rules and resources are mobilized, exchanged and arranged to design, facilitate and attain shared goals. There is a substantial overlap between Torfing and Rhodes' approach (Torfing 2012: 77; Rhodes 2017: 82 and 217). Both emphasise that governance is a broader term than government, as it encompasses services provided by permutations of government and the private and voluntary sectors (Rhodes, 2017: 42). Network governance therefore refers to the sharing of power and resources among a variety of policy actors, resulting in interdependence between these actors. Governance is best seen as a metaphor describing the interaction between organizational systems and their networks (Frederickson 1996: 84-85).

Governance is a continuous process of social steering via multiple interactions between the actors involved in a network (Torfing 2012: 77-78; Rhodes, 2017: 82). This forms my generic starting point. My case studies will explore the patterns of interdependence within networks and the balance between hierarchies, markets and networks. However, I begin with the simpler question of whether network governance exists in the British and Chinese local governments.

A common categorisation of resources includes information, legal resources, money and expertise or technologies held by actors. Provan and Huang (2012) identify information, knowledge and other intellectual assets as tangible resources in policy network, the increased proportion of which become held by a pluralized group of actors, leading to the decentralization of the network structure, reducing transaction costs and promoting the effectiveness of networks. If a small group of actors possess these tangible resources, the network structure will become centralized.

The need for resource exchange arises mainly from the fragmented distribution of different resources and resource dependence between each actor in specific policy networks. This represents the most significant defining factor of interdependence in network governance (Rhodes, 1997). Past research focusses on increases or decreases in resource dependence and exchange

between actors (Rhodes, 2017: 63,67; Torfing et al, 2012; Jones et al, 1997) but seldom examines or identifies how different resources affect network practices and outcomes.

Policy networks comprise sets of resource-dependent organisations whose relationships are characterised by power-dependence. This means that "any organisation is dependent on other organisations for resources", and "to achieve their goals, the organisations have to exchange resources". So, actors "employ strategies within known rules of the game to regulate the process of exchange" (Rhodes, 1997: chapter 2), and relationships are a game in which organisations manoeuvre for advantage. Each deploys its resources, whether constitutional-legal, organisational, financial, political or informational, to maximise their own influence over outcomes while trying to avoid becoming dependent on the other players. Behaviour in policy networks is therefore game-like, rooted in trust and regulated by the rules of the game that have been negotiated and agreed by network participants. Variations in the distribution of resources and in the bargaining skills of participants explain differences in outcomes within a network as well as variations between networks. Finally, the networks have a significant degree of autonomy from government (Rhodes, 2017: 46).

3.2.2 Trust and Reciprocity in Fostering Coordination

One of the elementary characteristics of a network is frequent and sustained interaction between policy actors. In order to achieve network governance sustainability (Rhodes, 2017: 186) and avoid the increasing risks and complexities that can be generated by frequent interactions, trust is essential for building confidence in others' intentions to prevent actors from opportunistic behaviour (Klijn et al, 2010; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007). Trust is defined as positive judgements about other actors (Milward et al, 2010) and as a mechanism for coping with different and changing perceptions by different actors (Bovaird, 2005).

Rhodes (2017: 187) lists signs of high and low trust that provide a clearer understanding on the definition of trust. (see Table 3-2)

Table 3-2 Symbolic Signs of High-trust Relationships and Low-trust Relationships

High-trust relationships	Low-trust relationships
Long-term obligations and spontaneous support	Short-term expectations and balanced exchange
Shared values or ends	Divergent values or ends
Communicate freely and frankly	Communicate restrictedly
Do not mind cost and benefit calculation much	Accurate calculation of cost and benefit
Consider other's interest or group interest more	Consider self-interest more
Being comfortable with or do not fear about relying on others' intention or action	Minimise dependence on each other's discretion

Trust in network governance is essential when building trust between horizontal actors becomes more important than vertical integration. Trust can add certainty (Milward et al, 2010; Klijn et al, 2010), reduce transaction costs, create spaces for innovative arrangement and promote expertise and knowledge sharing by different policy actors (Klijn et al, 2010). Trust is also the precondition of relational contracts. Edelenbos and Klijn (2007) considers trust to be an element that is independent from actions in the network. Trust can be influenced by rules and norms but can also result from interactions within policy networks.

As a form of collaboration, transaction and information exchange costs are the inherent weaknesses of networks, although they can be contained through trust-building (Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004; Emerson et al, 2012; Rhodes, 2017: 78). Mutual trust also contributes to mutual understanding and shared goals (Emerson et al, 2011; Rhodes, 2017: 75).

In Rhodes' (1998) version of network governance, trust is the central mechanism by which networks distinguish themselves from hierarchies and market governance structures. Cooperation is facilitated by trust in network governance. while in hierarchy and market governance it is facilitated by command and prices respectively. (Rhodes 2017: 75) The potential for trust-based relationships to supersede contract-based relationships or hierarchical control and obedience relationships has been tested and confirmed. (Bovaird, 2005)

In the light of this review of resource exchange and interdependence in interactive gameplaying, this thesis will address two research questions concerned with trust-building and reciprocity:

RQ1. How does trust affect resource exchanges and interdependence among actors and thus affect types of network governance?

RQ2. How is trust-building influenced by rules, norms and strategies for resource exchange and interdependence in different network governance structures?

3.2.3 Resolving Conflicts: Diplomatic Skills

Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan (1997: 126-132) discuss the management of complex networks using regulatory, financial and communicative instruments, all of which target the actors and relationship between them. Instruments of regulation aim to change the number of actors and the relationships between them through rules of empowerment, behaviour and resource distribution. (Kickert et al., 1997: 127-128) Financial instruments refer to the inherent mechanisms of demand and supply in the market function (Kickert et al., 1997: 129-130). As network governor, the government creates a specific demand which attracts new actors to be game players and facilitates network governance by introducing regulatory rules. Communicative instruments (Kickert et al., 1997: 130-132) represent diplomacy in network governance (Rhodes, 2017: 76), and focus on policy actors, their relationships, and means of achieving consensus and avoiding conflict. They also emphasise the establishment of shared beliefs for consistent actions at operational levels, although diplomacy stresses continuous negotiation and persuasion in pursuit of more explicit understandings of mutual intentions and requirements.

The concept of connective capacity (Edelenbos et al., 2013; Van Meerkerk et al.,2015) also entails diplomatic skills. Connective network management style helps set the stage for game players within policy networks by developing the interrelations between players. Maintaining constant and intensive connections helps with reciprocity, as the diplomatic connections represent an accumulative source of negotiation. Connective network management is enhanced by reciprocity because the inherent friendship, loyalty, obligations and duties help realize connectivity by engaging with more fresh perceptions and information for potential solutions (Van Meerkerk et al., 2015; Rhodes, 2017: 76). Three further questions arise from this discussion of diplomacy in network governance:

    1. Do the practices of diplomacy differ between the two countries?

    2. How does diplomacy affect the practices of network governance?

    3. How is diplomacy affected by resource exchange and interdependence?

3.2.4 The Missing Anchor: Network Governance as a Decentred Approach and the People as Everyday Makers

The discussion above identified several questions for analysis in my fieldwork. However, so far, I have neglected the role of individual actors. Can a policy network exist without the perceptions and

behaviours of individual actors? The question of whom the network belongs to is central when organising people into networks. (Rhodes, 2017: 87,100)

Grassroots practitioners often enable participation through informal political activities. Participants may not be officially admitted as formal political actors, but their commitment and employment in informal networks is worth researching (Bang & Eva, 1999). In creating a new political identity, a full description of everyday participants' practices is often missing from studies of network governance. Fuller descriptions of the decentred approach to democratic governance fills that gap. (Rhodes, 2017: 108-110)

Policy implementation is a key factor of public administration, although intention and practice can and do diverge (Kickert et al., 1997: 170). Intentionally or unintentionally, the behaviour of actors may not conform to the initial aims of the policy, and network members say one thing and do another. When that happened, should we consider the initial statement or take a closer look at what underpins participants' behaviour? Sometimes, the means prove unfit for purpose, and networks cannot meet their requirements. There is a black box in political and policy processes, and the bottom-up, decentred approach helps open the black box in two ways.

Firstly, it is actor-centred, and focuses on the co-producers and deliverers of everyday public service. By exploring everyday behaviour, it unpacks individual beliefs and practices. The results of a policy are not always set by the meta-governor – the state hierarchy. We must explore the role of non-governmental actors in network governance as well as the specific actions of front-line workers. Making the means meet the ends is a battlefield upon which public service policymakers act with governmental and non-governmental actors.

Secondly, the decentred analysis of trust-building in everyday practice is worthy of academic attention. In network governance, trust is interpersonal rather than institutional. Personal trust differs from the institutional trust that derives from the contracts because it is immeasurable and exists without being monitored. Reciprocity facilitates long-term trust, and actors must build on frequent interactions rooted in everyday communications in order to build cooperation (Rhodes, 2017:186-187). Knowledge exchange and innovative solutions are also facilitated by trust (Klijn et al., 2010), and personal relationships reflect a further source of trust-building. Trust provides a foundation on which local policy communities, as opposed to formally elected political actors, can represent their groups (Chapman and Lowndes, 2014). This bottom-up approach provides a clear rationale for putting people back into policy networks, but the influence of everyday makers of public services in the local policy community is both underestimated and overlooked. Trust between everyday actors and local communities can be built up more easily, and acts as a source of social capital (Bang & Eva, 1999).

This discussion on making means meet ends in everyday public service delivery poses a further research questions for further exploration:

4. How do individual actors respond to the dilemmas of network governance?

3.3 Does Network Governance Travel Well? The Case of China

This section reviews two waves of network governance in China and criticizes the explanatory power of the literature that introduces or applies network governance in policy areas in China. A couple of questions emerge for in-depth analysis in Part II.

3.3.1 The First Wave: Introducing Network Governance in China

Chinese literature focuses on theory, with little practical consideration of adapting Western theories to a Chinese context. There are few empirical studies of how China practices network governance, and insufficient analysis of how it goes about doing so.

Chinese scholars' works on network governance or governing by network date back to 2000,[26] and focused on introducing theorical approaches to public administration and policy [27] with little attention paid to empirical results. Reviews and summaries mirror each other, although some emphasize different facets of governance, which attracted much popularity and publicity and was applied in various policy settings (Sun & Li, 2008; He & Qi, 2009). In China, the concept was referred to as network governance in public administration.

The introduction of and support for network governance in China is meaningful because it reminds public administration theorists and practitioners of proactive public participation pros and government-dominated cons. In theory, network governance represented a paradigm shift away from public management, which stresses the dominant role of the powerful state and the obedient role of society. Network governance represented one of many forms of public administration reform in China.

Network governance identified innovative methods for managing local public affairs and reorganizing public service delivery systems. Networks represented a new approach, but the challenge for this thesis, both theoretically and practically, is to relocate a western approach to a Chinese policy context. Some scholars are sceptical about the feasibility of network governance (Li, 2017) but most are optimistically and enthusiastically forecasting its application in China. So, it is

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[26] Yu Keping, 2000; Peng, 2002; Mu & Zhu, 2005; Zhu, 2011
[27] Yin, 2007; He & Qi, 2009; Li, 2012; Sun & Zhang, 2014; Du, 2015; Han & Shan, 2015; Wang & Song, 2019

essential to determine whether network governance already exists in China, and if so, are there any new or transformed elements?

The second wave of Chinese scholars working on network governance covers a small group of empirical studies, summarising network governance theory and applying it in specific policy scenarios [28] including environmental protection, [29] housing policy, [30] community governance, [31] public risk, [32] food security, [33] energy policy, [34] public service provision [35] and electronic government. [36] Most empirical studies do not criticize the feasibility of the western approach, although the static and fragmented institutional structure of vertical and horizontal public administration in China is complex and dynamic. Network governance is a prescriptive approach to complexity and dynamics in public policy, so we need to ask if *network governance exists in England and China, and there any new or transformed elements affecting it?* This question echoes the research question set earlier. There is a third branch of literature that explores the trans-regional network governance of different public issues in China, focussing on meta-governance. It considers the coercive power of the government and advocates devolution, turning vertical power structures into horizontal power distribution. Cross-regional collaboration contributes to network governance by raising three questions: Does it help reinforce conventional hierarchical interdependence, or does it broaden interactions by incorporating more policy actors? How do cross-regional or cross-sectoral policy networks coordinate fragmented local interests to facilitate united actions? What are the characteristics of governance structures in horizontal relationships between local actors within policy networks?

The split between the vertical and the horizontal in Chinese public administration means that vertical administration hinders horizontal collaboration because of the innate nature of hierarchical structure. There is one vertical line representing the CCP committee and general government office[37] and a second representing functional government departments. In public land regulation and planning, the possibility for network governance exists between the CCP committee and its general office at the lower level, and between specific functional departments at provincial level.

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[28] Xu & Wang, 2011; Han & Shan, 2015

[29] Yi, 2012; Fan & Yin, 2016; Lu, 2016; Xie & Zhang, 2018; Wang & Sun, 2019

[30] Zhu, 2008; Ding & Yang, 2008; Tan & Lou, 2012

[31] Dan, 2014; Li,2016; Liu & Xing, 2017

[32] Liu & Xiang, 2005; Peng & Yu, 2017; Hu, 2017; Yu & Lv, 2012

[33] Li, 2016

[34] Zhu & Shen, 2010

[35] Suo, Yang & Liu, 2013

[36] Xiang, 2007; Su & Wu, 2011

[37] The general office of local government is the counterpart of the State Council of the People's Republic of China in lower-level government, consisting of core chief members who sit in CCP local committees and are responsible for different policy areas, and secretaries who assist core members in the general office. It is also equivalent to the British government's cabinet office at different levels.

Cooperation is possible between actors who have equal power yet hold different resources (Li, 2014). Environmental protection issues, for example, represent typical policy areas where cross-region policy networks tackle the challenge of achieving united collective actions despite fragmented regional and departmental targets (Ma, 2011; Fan & Yin, 2016). This thesis will focus on the horizontal relationship between governmental departments and NGOs within one region in England and one region in China instead of cross-regional networks in both countries.

Studies on electronic governance (Xiang, 2007; Su & Wu, 2011) consider electronic technologies as facilitators, flattening hierarchical information systems inside or outside government, tightening interdependence between actors and promoting the responsiveness of policy networks. Network governance is applied adaptively, while the geographical region and the local government in that region affect the policy network.

A third group of studies focuses on NGO participation in network governance, emphasising the role and position of NGOs and the boundary between NGO and government responsibilities in taking actions. Scholars agree that NGOs exist to supplement governmental functions (Tian, 2011; Zhao & Jin, 2013), such as liaising between government and citizens, mobilizing social resources and achieving consensus and united action among citizens (Yi, 2015; Hu, 2017). However, scholars disagree on whether collaboration increases the effectiveness of network governance (Yu & Lv, 2012). Zhao & Jin (2013) examined government-led and self-organizing governance networks in policy networks on crisis management. Government-led networks produced conflicts that do not exist the in self-organizing networks, but self-organizing network lacked confirmed tasks and the capacity for meta-governance. Similarly, Yu & Lv (2012) showed that in regional planning policy, citizens are less interested in planning than in public service provision and are more concerned about outcomes that affect their daily lives. The key challenge for government-led networks is to manipulate diverging NGOs and functions as an improvisational and flexible governor as well as an autonomous public service provider (Tian, 2011; Yi, 2015) within a policy network, especially when tackling emergent issues. (Zhao & Jin, 2013; Hu, 2017)

This research stresses the key principle of cross-departmental or cross-regional collaboration (Suo, Yang & Liu, 2013; Li, 2014) but do not address the way day-to-day communication and consensus-building, interest assignment and resource exchange can be accomplished between these departments or organizations. In general, although network governance is seen in relation to public policy problems, these analyses miss the essence of network governance because they do not explore the view from the bottom or the everyday practices of all network participants. Five deficiencies arise from differences between network governance in western countries and the existing network governance analysis in China.

Firstly, network governance studies in China employ western theories without supportive evidence from fieldwork. They can transplant western theories to China because they consider the Chinese context in a highly generalised way when proposing possible reforms to policy arrangements (Liu & Xiang, 2005; Zhang & Lou, 2006; Tian & Wei, 2015; Chen & Xiao, 2015). Different policy scenarios can be considered as different fields, and network governance is the seed buried in the fields. But what are the characteristics of the fields, and will the seed thrive there? These questions are seldom addressed.

Secondly, many studies do not assess the usefulness of network governance in the Chinese context. Most studies adopt network governance first and only consider its limitations in a small concluding section (Li, 2008; Sun, 2011; Chen & Xiong, 2018). Few scholars systematically analyse the feasibility and limitations of network governance. Li (2017) reviews empirical studies alongside original theory, identifying three limitations on its possible application in China. Unlike conventional western traditions of autonomy, Chinese citizens lack such feelings of independence. The sphere of governance is still dominated by state power, and interaction between different policy actors is to a certain extent constrained (Li, 2003) and is not the essential issue in China (Zheng &Shao, 2015). Meanwhile, in contrast with the changing role of western politicians from decision-maker to meta-governor, the vertical hierarchy in China remains a massive obstacle to network governance. Lastly, consensus-building in a vertical and hierarchical value system is challenging. Unlike other Chinese scholars, Li (2017) directly confronts the difficulties posed by differences in political regimes between western countries and China, making some surprising conclusions. Although China is considered authoritarian, there is an increasing pluralization of interests and a burgeoning middle class (Xu, 2012) that can afford the time of learning and other resources to take part in network governance. Regardless of the political regime and ideological differences, more work needs to be done on identifying the space of network governance (Mu & Zhu, 2005; Yin, 2007; Chen, 2017).

Third, other Chinese factors limit the usefulness of network governance. Network governance scholars pay little attention to when network governance theory was originally applied in western practices and how its application or feasibility varied during different times. Delineating the national arrangements for local community network governance in the US (Xu & Wang, 2011) or the transition from hierarchical governance to network governance in the east parts of the EU (Song & Ren, 2015) do not help us re-examine the feasibility of network governance in China.

Fourth, the literature overemphasises institutional or structural perspectives without taking note of the people involved. Many scholars consider a static governance structure, ignoring the changing dynamics of different policy activities. In Chinese public administration, each level has the same functional departments as other levels, creating a vertical system for policy delivery. The horizontal administration system consists of different functional departments which must work collectively

with other departments at similar levels as well as the departments with the same function at other levels of government. This split between vertical and horizontal administration systems challenges emerging governance systems because the sectoral and department-based system is a major obstacle to cross-sector collaboration (Liu &Xiang, 2005). The traditional administration system blocks information flows within the government, aggravating the imbalance between government and society. Liu and Xiang (2005) argue that the inherent characteristics of network governance, and the interdependence between different actors with difference expertise in emerging network governance, are frustrated by state institutional barriers. As well as the vertical and horizontal administration systems, Yang (2002) concedes that the social and political order in developing countries such as China should be a priority, which would allow the institutional adjustment for embracing governance to be facilitated by state power, without which core task coordination in governance could not be accomplished. Many scholars (such as Li,2003 and Yang, 2002) consider state and society as two opposite and contradicting sides rather than paying attention to the interaction between them when discussing network governance. Neither a shrinking state nor a booming society is practical in China because of the condition of network governance. However, Yu & Wang (2010) and Zheng & Shao (2015) adopt Jessop's strategy-related analysis (Jessop & Ai, 2002) and advocate the examination of flexibility (Zheng and Shao, 2015) and changing relationships (Yu & Wang, 2010).

Fifth, scholars still differentiate markets, hierarchies and networks rather than exploring the mixed reality of interacting governance structures. It is assumed when considering network governance that the mix is most important. Markets, bureaucracies and networks always mingle and function collaboratively. However, Chinese scholars do not explore this mixture. For example, Fan and Yin (2016) examined the interaction between bureaucratic collaborative governance by bureaucracy, by contract and by network in cross-boundary environmental governance. Bureaucracy emerges as a key feature of collaborative network governance, with collective decisions influenced by hierarchy. The authors also compared the feasibility of each model in dealing with cross-boundary environment issues, concluding that collaborative governance by contract works better than collaborative governance by network, which in turn performs better than collaborative governance by bureaucracy. There is no discussion of interweaving between these governing structures.

In order to unpack what happens behind the broad labels of bureaucracy and network governance, this thesis uses ethnographic approaches to provide a detailed interpretation of network governance in everyday public service delivery. Additionally, as network governance is based in a western context, any trial application must adapt the theory to the Chinese context. The point of comparing such apparently non-comparable political and administrative systems is to assess how well any given theory will travel.

3.3.2 Network Governance in Chinese Public Service Provision Cases

This section reviews the characteristics of network governance in Chinese public service provision by referring to the original western theory model. Inter-agency communication, local needs, resource exchange and network structure are frequently discussed by Chinese scholars, but still need more investigation.

The network governance of elderly care in China is characterised by a state-dominated hierarchy and weak participation at community level (Wu & Yu, 2018; Jia, 2017; Cai, 2017). Sai (2013) and Jia (2017) present evidence of establishing electronic platforms to promote communication between government, community organizations and service users, which is one of many technical processes for promoting inter-organizational communication. However, it does not address essential communication problems within hierarchical network governance.

Liu (2018) investigated the policy network of incorporating medical treatment into elderly care, describing the interplay of production and professional networks, context supporters and service users based on Rhodes' typology of networks. The key point about policy networks is that they are influenced by local needs for elderly care. However, no account exists of how such processes shape policy networks, meaning that they remain a puzzle to be solved.

Network structure and resource availability are two essential components of network governance analysis, but Chinese scholars have not effectively engaged with them. Innovative practices in the provision of community-based elderly care in Shanghai reveal key characteristics of network. Li and Lam (2017:43-65) and Chen et al (2015:23-44) discussed the network structure, resource availability and exchange in these cases. In defining governance, Chen et al (2015) identify four types of network: information exchange, resource-sharing, policy advocacy and service delivery. I argue that information exchange and resource sharing may exist in all or in part in public service delivery networks as processes. According to definitions by Rhodes (2017) and Torfing (2012), these two concepts performed more as public service delivery network processes than trust and consensus-building, autonomy, or the function of resource dependency in an interactive governance of networks. In discussing network structure, Li and Lam (2017) and Chen et al (2015) used centralized and decentralized networks to differentiate fieldwork data. Li and Lam compared high levels of resource availability in a hierarchical centralized network and limited resource availability in a decentralized network, which is more adaptable in reality. But is the level of resource availability necessarily limited in a decentralized network? Can a centralized network adapt to the real process of elderly care service delivery? The network actors' – including the government and service

providers – choice and interaction may provide a new source of variables with which to investigate variations in the established types of network.

3.4 Research Questions

This theoretical review identifies several questions that I will explore in my field work. First, England and China both experienced changes in the relationships between the state, the market and NGOs. So, the first question must be to ask whether network governance arrangements exist in both countries.

If there are policy networks, my second question concerns the degree of dependence and autonomy of NGOs in both countries. One of the main reasons that NGOs become dependent on the state or other actors is the lack of resources for co-producing and delivering public services. Both countries have experienced reforms in community development policy which aimed to boost community and NGO development, but were these reforms supported by the requisite resources, including but not limited to financial resources?

Thirdly, in reviewing community development literature in England, a group of articles focuses on the function of local knowledge in community participation. There is no equivalent literature for China, so I will need to explore the role of local knowledge in both countries. From a broader perspective, local knowledge is a source of negotiating strength, so other means of acquiring negotiating strength will also need also be examined in the fieldwork chapters.

Three main questions deriving from Chapters 2 and 3 are:

1. Is network governance a feasible theoretical model for explaining local public service delivery in England and China?

2. What are the differences and similarities of local public service delivery in England and China from the perspective of network governance?

3. How do trust-building and diplomacy affect resource exchange and interdependence in different network structures?

When the answer to the third question is found, the answers to the first and second questions will be answered too.

I will pursue the answer to my main query in the thesis by examining policy areas for elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. I will examine the feasibility of network governance in both contexts and apply this theoretical approach to the thematic analysis of ethnographic fieldwork data in both countries. In other words, network governance will be used to illuminate fieldwork data. Its concepts will be used as clues for my fieldwork and analytical tools when writing up the fieldwork.

Chapter 4: Methodology: Research Design and Fieldwork Practice

This chapter describes how I conducted my study and why I approached it in the way I did. The chapter relates to my fieldwork practice. I refer to the literature where relevant, but it is not a literature review. The main methods I used were participant observation, interviews and documentation. For participant observation, I attended council meetings and public forums and I also took voluntary jobs with Age UK Waterfront, Man-ability and the River Avon Community Trust. I conducted interviews with local residents, members of community organizations, local government councillors and officials. I was also offered access to local documentary sources such as Waterfront City Council's council and committee minutes and the internal files of relevant NGOs. I crosschecked each interview not only with other interviewees but also with my observations of what my interviewees did at work. Did they do what they said they were going to do? Whenever possible, I checked interviews and observations against the limited documentary record. There were four stages to the fieldwork: a pilot study, ethical approval and guidelines, interview snowballing and partial immersion. I discuss these practices and stages in more detail below.

Section 4.1 justifies my selection of countries, explaining the unusual comparison between England and China. Section 4.2 briefly spells out my research design, including case selection of both local authorities and the policies of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. I also explain how I conducted my ethnographic fieldwork. Section 4.3 examines the way I dealt with difficulties and uncertainties in negotiating access. Section 4.4 describes how I managed myself in everyday fieldwork during my journey in both countries, and Section 4.5 explains the thematic analysis and summarises the main themes identified. They are listed in tabular form as an opening map for the fieldwork chapters.

4.1 Unusual Comparison between the England and China

4.1.1 Why Compare England and China?

The differences between the two countries are so obvious that the reader might reasonably conclude that this unlikely comparison is technically impractical and theoretically useless in adding any value for any further understanding of the subject. After all, England is small in both geographical area and population size compared to China. England is a representative democracy with party competition, while China is an authoritarian state ruled by a single party. However, the differences between the regimes cannot be compressed into simplified labels. This thesis looks beyond the seemingly obvious differences, unpacks the labels given to both countries and uses a decentred analysis of the fieldwork data to reveal unexpected similarities as well as the more obvious expected differences (Boswell et al, 2019: 1, 12; Peters, 2013: 3-5).

As argued in Chapters 2 and 3, scholars and the Chinese government favour network governance even though the political regime, cultural traditions and social norms are very different from Western countries. What is the justification for this preference? This puzzle led me to explore what China can and cannot learn from Western theories and practices. When a researcher is accustomed to a familiar setting, he or she may take certain practices for granted, and can miss even obvious criticisms and blind spots in the theory. Lipset (1994: 153-154) justified his comparative study of Japan and America on the grounds that the different contexts sensitised him to the actors' beliefs and behaviour not only in a different context but also in the more familiar one.

In brief, the British liberal-democratic political tradition persists (Buser, 2013; Barnes et al, 2003; Corbett & Walker, 2013), while in China, state power is dominant (Yuan, 2014; He & Thøgersen, 2010). The implicit pluralism of network governance seems to fit a liberal-democratic state seeking to encourage civic engagement, but the fit with Chinese authoritarianism seems less obvious. One of the core questions posed in network governance theories is which governance structure, or what mixture of structures, to choose. The focus on governance structures shifts attention from macro-level of political traditions to the respective roles of society and the state viewed from the bottom-up. A governance structure does not always fit every context, whereas a political tradition is all-embracing. This thesis investigates the governance structures in England and China from below and asks what structures exist and how do they work. It explores the micro-level, collecting data from individuals and organisations. It also explores the beliefs and practices of everyday makers in public service delivery.

The trade-off between breadth and depth is another significant challenge for social science researchers. Interpretive research emphasises depth. It trades off breadth for depth, and horizons can become narrow. My aim is to combine breadth and depth by using the descriptions of complex specificities to address the larger issues of governance theory. In this way I do not sacrifice breadth for depth (Boswell, Corbett and Rhodes, 2019:7-9).

4.1.2 Why Compare Elderly Care and Social Care for people with Learning Disabilities?

Little comparative work has been done on network governance in China. Of the 46 research papers in Chinese that use network governance as an analytical framework in different public policy issues, nine concern elderly care, and none explores social care for people with learning disabilities. There are a few cross-national comparative studies on the network governance of elderly care service delivery in China and Netherlands (Alscher, 2017), in France, Germany and England (Bode, 2006), in England and Netherland (Hardy et al,1999) and in Taiwan, Spain and the Netherlands (Klijn et al, 2014). For social care for people with learning disabilities, there are only individual country analyses

in China (Liao & Luo, 2011; Li & Lam, 2017), Norway (Sandkjær Hanssen Gro and Marit Kristine Helgesen, 2011) and Sweden (Johansen and Borell, 1999; Trydegård and Thorslund, 2010).

Alscher (2017) compares Shanghai and the Netherlands because the cross-border comparison tests the feasibility of the successful model of growing up in Netherlands and in China, where the hierarchical and bureaucratic system presumably affect the application of Netherlands model. There are two principal reasons why Klijn et al (2014) compared Taiwan, Spain and Netherlands. Both research projects intended to expand the scale at which the existing theory is applied by involving more countries. Specifically, Taiwan, Spain and Netherlands typically represent East Asia, Southern Europe and Northern Europe using the case selection criterion of public management tradition (Klijn et al, 2014).

Coincidently, the fieldwork in Shanghai (Alscher, 2017) and in Taiwan (Klijn et al, 2014) both suggest that the hierarchical leadership in East Asia impacts the network governance of elderly care. However, the Shanghai government functions by exchanging information and resource distribution for cooperation and the Taiwan government can be relied on for unilateral conflict resolution or seeking harmony by not articulating differences in perception between policy actors. Higher authorities are not successful in addressing unexpected events and achieving negotiation and compromise, but Dutch government performs better due to its administrative culture. Both studies suggest the influence of hierarchical power on network governance outcomes, the feasibility of which I intend to test in this thesis. Can conflicts in perception between different policy actors be resolved by other means? Are resource distribution and information exchange necessarily controlled by the state?

In general, elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities are both public services which the government in England and China promoted in practices. (see Section 2.1.3 and Section 2.2.3) Therefore, I selected these two policies to compare the network governance in both England and China. However, network governance of both kinds of social care is commonly seen in western welfare states rather than China's context. Thus, the application of network governance theory in China is more intriguing and through comparing it with welfare states long-lasting practices, the feasibility of this theory in China and the status of practices in China can be clarified.

4.2 Ethnography Research Design: Criteria and Toolkits

My starting point for this journey of comparison was my scepticism about the current trend of introducing or attempting to transplant network governance as a western theory to China. I explore

this puzzle by comparing practices in England and China and asking what similarities and differences exist between the two countries.

Second, I had an adaptive strategy in place relating to what would happen in the fieldwork. I let the fieldwork lead me to wider topics and more surprises (Boswell et al, 2019: 58) and I tried to seize any possible chances for uncovering more stories and information while remaining cautious and sceptical about information, cross-checking as much of it as possible. The abductive researcher has a positive and curious state of mind. In practical terms, the researcher must admit that the truth is elusive and discovering what is going on is not a one-time task. At each stage, I must question my findings and open my mind to more changes that will make my data more robust. The function of my pilot study was to identify insightful clues for shaping the research project further as it evolved.

Thirdly, I focused on individual actors in an attempt to decentre abstract 'policy' into its specific practices. In other words, I build up a picture of the policy from the bottom-up and through the eyes of the people who were responsible for implementing it (Rhodes, 2018: 5-7). The practitioners' beliefs about how policies affect individuals, whether policies or policy changes are positive or negative, and how they should cooperate with the government are all constructed through participants' daily actions. Uncovering the whole story involves exploring various beliefs and meanings that actors cling to, and my interpretation positions each actor's interpretations in a wider web of meanings and beliefs. I follow Anderson's fieldwork experience in Indonesia (Anderson, 2018:67). In Anderson's retrospective story, his academic thoughts on the comparative fieldwork were "intellectual and bookish" until he entered the field in Indonesia and allowed the natives to light his way (Anderson, 2018: 114). Human agency is central to decentred analysis because people are the conveyors and facilitators of the storytelling (Rhodes, 2018: 3-7).

My case selection consisted of three aspects: research sites, policy areas and specific cases. I was pragmatic and opportunistic in my case selection before and during the fieldwork. Any intrinsically interesting cases turned my radar on and kept my eyes wide open. Before commencing the fieldwork in both countries, I browsed online and chatted with friends about selecting the policy areas to be studied. These discussions led me to the topic of the aging society and to people with learning disabilities. These are the common challenges for both sites. The provincial, municipal and district government in China has endeavoured to promote elderly care delivery in local communities for the past ten years. Common services and shared challenges make Water District in China a comparable site with Waterfront in England, even if Waterfront City Council had a longer history of service provision for both groups.

My criteria for fieldwork site selection were primarily the scale and functions of the administrative areas. Water District in River City in China is an established service provider in both policy areas, and the Water District Government carries out similar functions to Waterfront, my English case study site.   Waterfront City Council was also active – even innovative – in seeking to improve residents' participation in community and urban affairs. The populations of Water District (310,000)[38] and Waterfront (254,275)[39] are similar, although of course by Chinese standards Water District is a relatively small administrative area.

I selected social care for the elderly and people with learning disabilities as two policy arenas for three reasons. The first was the visibility and frequency of local service delivery issues around elderly care and social care for disabled groups, which *a priori* suggests the availability of data. Secondly, these policy issues recur and are significant in both countries. Thirdly, the local governments of Waterfront City in England and Water District in China both prioritize public service deliveries to elderly and people with learning disabilities.

Table 4-1 shows the starting point for my four case studies in England and China, based on my reading of the local documentation. They represent the typical types of network governance of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities.

Table 4-1 Ethnographic Cases by Policy Areas and Countries

	China	UK
Elderly care	Partially self-organized network within Government-dominated framework	Self-organized Network
Social care for people with learning disabilities	Self- organized network	Mixed structure of hierarchical and network governance

4.3 Fieldwork in Practice: The Sweet and the Sour

Research design remained an intellectual exercise until it encountered fieldwork practice. Below I explain how I handled the difficulties and uncertainties in the fieldwork.

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[38] http://www.shangcheng.gov.cn/
[39] http://www.Waterfront.gov.uk/council-democracy/council-data/statistics/mye-Waterfront.aspx

4.3.1 Pilot Study

Before the formal fieldwork began, I spent three months involved in a pilot study for two reasons: to learn colloquial English and to establish my own local network. I browsed the internet for information about community-based organizations that had daily connections with Waterfront City Council in their electronic newsletters and links to the policy areas I had chosen. I emailed three community-based NGOs to see if they would talk to me.

Some of the outcomes were as expected, but others were surprising. My encounter with the former mayor of Waterfront City Council was important because she became a snowballing intermediary for the body of the fieldwork. Her help exceeded my expectations. With the help of other informants – for example, the manager of Avon Community Trust, who is a colleague of the former mayor – I established my initial snowball network in Waterfront. The leaders of the community trust also acted as my referees for my subsequent application for two NGO volunteering posts. They did this because of my volunteer work in the community trust. The managers and the former mayor played the role of gatekeepers for my fieldwork, helping me to negotiate access to more informants. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019: 52-55). An expected outcome was the improvement in my oral English ability in everyday life. I even began to understand the local accent!

I also took the opportunity afforded by council meetings to acquire more policy information by identifying relevant scrutiny panels and committees and building connections with potential informants for my main fieldwork after ethical approval had been obtained.

4.3.2 Fieldwork Practices: Interviews and Participant Observation

My fieldwork in England lasted from 16th April 2018 to 31st August 2019, and the fieldwork in China lasted from 19th January to 31st May 2019. The work was all completed in strict compliance with the university research ethics standards after being approved.[40]Initially, the ethical approval for the fieldwork in England allowed me to work between 16th April and 31st August 2018, but I went back to do more fieldwork in England after finishing my work in China as I needed more informants and was able to gain more access to them when I returned from China. I applied for and received an extension to 31st August 2019.

During the almost one and half year fieldwork in both countries, I undertook 32 interviews in England and 33 in China (see Appendix B and D). These interviews did not include occasional

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[40] The ERGO system is the research ethic examination system of University of Southampton. My ERGO reference number for fieldwork in the UK is 30423 and the counterpart for my fieldwork in China is 32220.

conversations that took place during my non-participant observation and public events and meetings. I observed 47 council meetings and 12 NGO events. I also volunteered three times a week in NGOs for four months of non-participant observation (See Appendix C). The total hours of observation were 288 hours in the English fieldwork site. In China, participant observation time totalled 31 hours (see Appendix E). In the English fieldwork, I browsed council meeting information on the city council website[41] and scheduled my observations in advance. For other public events, I sought information via email from my existing participants and through my volunteer work. I began my voluntary work in April 2018 with Age UK and traveled to three sites once a week. My voluntary work for Man-ability started in July 2018 and I volunteered there every Thursday and Saturday for two afternoons for two months. While doing my observations in China, I relied on my existing network of participants for the information and approval of attending public events and government meetings. I appeared in my interviewees' working venues as much as possible to get a better general idea about their working environments.

Table 4-2 Summary of the Workload of Ethnography Fieldwork in England and China

	Duration	Interview (times and average hour)	Meeting and Event Observation (times and total hour)	Participant Observation (frequency and total hour)
UK	16th April 2018-20th September 2018 June 2019-August 2019	32 times, 30mins to 1.5 hour per time	59 times 118 hours	3 times a week,2-3 hours per time for 4 months 170 hours
China	19th January 2019-31st May 2019	33 times, 30mins to 2 hour per time	21 hours	10 hours

I stored all the materials I collected during my fieldwork according to ethical research guidelines as I had promised on my ethical agreement. The names, locations, and working venues of all the fieldwork participants are anonymised, as are the names of the research sites. Apart from that, official documents about the community organization development and participation in local democracy were checked beforehand and my interviews and observations were analysed as secondary material.

4.3.3 Fieldwork Snowballing Route Map in England and China

There were marked differences in conducting fieldwork in England and China. Since the local policy network in England is relatively loosely connected, snowballing always stopped somewhere. In

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[41] https://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/

China, once I had successfully connected with the interviewee, snowball sampling was highly productive. However, unlike the English context, the opportunities for attending government meetings were limited. When I could not continue with the snowballing process, I checked for open meetings or events where I could approach potential interviewees.

From the perspective of my fieldwork, the helicopter talks with Mrs. Lin in the beginning of my fieldwork gave me access to NGOs. Mrs. Judy Tyre was the head of Waterfront Voluntary Services. Our conversation also functioned as a helicopter talk and guided me in the right direction in my English fieldwork.

Waterfront

In this section, I elaborate on my fieldwork snowballing route map for Waterfront by demonstrating the routes. I pursued my research contacts via three routes as shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4-1 Fieldwork Snowballing Map in England.

1st Snowball Route: Local University professors---City Council Staff---NGOs and other council staff I started my snowballing by asking my department professor for help. Professor Arthur Woodrow was the first gatekeeper for my fieldwork. He gave me initial access to the network within my target group and advised me how to dress and conduct myself when facing the informants (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019: 50). I attended a course where city council staff whose portfolios included customer experience and strategic planning were guest speakers. I emailed the course organiser to ask him to introduce me and my thesis topic to those guest speakers and to ask whether they would be interested in taking part in my fieldwork. I obtained one quick response to my interview requests. This interview was a helicopter interview which directed me to other potential NGOs and council departments. At the end of this interview, I asked Mr. Zack Cooper for more names for my following interviews.

2nd Snowball Route: Public Event and Public Service NGO voluntary work---Public Service NGO Leaders

I also attended NGO events such as the Friday Forum organized by Waterfront Voluntary Services every month, and took voluntary jobs in public service NGOs in pursuit of more NGO leaders (Section. I did a 5-minute presentation in April 2018 at the Friday Forum, talking about my research in front of various NGOs and seeking their support for my work. I also applied for voluntary job positions in three significant NGOs within the selected policy areas and worked there three times a week from April to August. I interviewed five NGO leaders and gained access to other NGOs through networking with these NGOs. By attending council meetings, I contacted councillors and staff in person and either had short chats with them or got their contact information for subsequent interviews. I devised a bus route for approaching more NGOs in person when I had no better options, and got two more interviews this method.

3rd Snowball Route: Email Some NGOs---Other NGOs

As well as the two snowball routes illustrated above, I also browsed online for more contact information and emailed NGOs or local journalists. The emails to NGOs succeeded sometimes but email to local newspaper journalists produced no response.

River City

In this section, I elaborate on my fieldwork snowballing route map for Water District in China, which took three routes.

Figure 4-2 Fieldwork Snowballing Map in China

Mr.Meng (PhD studen in Public Administration, Hai Province University)

Mr. Wu (My master course instructor)

Line 1

Mr.Teng (Local Expertise in NGO and Community;Professor in social work in a local university)

Mrs. Lin Yan (Bright Vision Charity Development Center)

Mrs. Zheng Ya Ping (Vice Chief, NGO Management, Ocean Provincial Department of Civil Affairs)

Mr. Shi Qian (Researcher, Center for Social Governance, Ocean Province University)

Line 2

Mr. Shan Yun Xiang (Chief, Eternal Young Social Work Center)

Heard of key NGOs

WABC; Xingxing Yuan

Mrs. Yan Ling (Chief, Water District NGO Development Foundation)

Mr. Sheng Jun (Secondary Chief, Yu Yue Social Work ServiceCentre)

Mrs. Zhu Xiao Yun (President, Water District Social Work Association)

Mr. Yuan Wen Hua (Chief of NGO Management, Water District Department of Civil Affairs)

Mrs. Xia Zhen (Ocean Province Jing Lao Elder Care Ltd.)

Mr. Tian Wei (HBS Elder Care Facility and Services)

Mr. Liao Bo (YJR Social Work Center)

Mr. Cheng Rui (Chief, Qing Nian Social Work Service Centre)

Mrs. Shen Jing Yuan (Public Relation, WABC, River City)

Mrs. Nie Hua (YWCA River city, Elder Care Service)

Mr. Teng Liang (Manager, Happy Stomach Community Elder Canteen)

Mrs. Ke Yan Xia (Wisdom and Aura Day Care Center for Learning Disability)

Mrs. Chang Le (Chief of Elder Care Section, Water District Department of Civil Affairs)

Mr. Zhou Jie (YWY Elder Care Center)

Mr. Huang Xiao (Chief of Inclusive Art Project for Learning Disability; Dean of Art School, River City Normal University)

Mrs. Gu Li Mei (ZY Street-level Working and Healing Center)

Mrs. Ding Ling (Star Dust Training Center for Autism Children)

Mrs. Ning Jing (Reducing Help Day Care Center for Learning Disability)

Line 3

Mrs. Qin Hui (PhD student in Public Administration, FDU)

Mr. Han Chao (Chief of Propaganda, Municipal Disabled Alliance)

Mr. Wen Feng (Chief of NGO Management, HB Street-level Office)

Mrs. Wan Fang (Elder Care, HB Street-level Office)

Mr.Will (Star Dust Training Center for Autism Children)

Mr. Lin Quan (Hao Zi Wei Social Work Center; Community Elder Canteen)

Mrs. Hu Yu Zhen (Chief, YWCA River City)

Mrs. Tan Yan (NGO Management, XY Street-level Office)

Mrs. Jin Li Yuan (Chief of Elder Care, Jin District Department of Civil Affairs)

Mr. Meng Shao You (Secretary, Water District Disabled Alliance)

Mrs. Yang Li Ping (President, River City Shao Yong Nian Special Education School)

Mrs. Wen Qing (Chief, Loving Care Station and Loving Mutual Support Association)

- - - - - - - - - - Unsuccessfully recruited interviewee

———————→ Successfully recruited Interviewee

1st Snowball Route: Local University Professor (Expert in Umbrella NGO) --- Umbrella NGO --- Care Service Provision NGO for the elderly and people with learning disabilities

I contacted Mr. Meng, a friend who is a third-year PhD student based in Ocean University to see whether he would like to put me in contact with local researchers examining public service delivery and NGOs. Mr. Meng set up a WeChat[42] group talk with me and Mr Teng, who had the same PhD supervisor as him. Mr. Teng asked me for my research introduction and interview questions and sent me his feedback asking me to explain unclear points. I sent the revised version back to Mr.

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[42] WeChat is an instant message app widely used in China, the daily active use of which is around 11 hundred million messages in China. It is comparable to Messenger and other UK social media.

Teng. After a month's wait Mr. Teng put me in touch with five contacts in River City, who worked for an umbrella NGO, elder care NGOs and the district department of civil affairs.

I set up the interviews prior to my arrival in River City in Mid-January with Mr. Teng's help. As shown in the map above, Mr. Huang offered me the same help, invited me to a new year gala, where I was introduced to with Mr. Han Chao, from the district Disabled Alliance. After talking with him, he agreed to ask the president of the municipal special education school and another influential NGO for their approval of my meeting with them. Eventually, the route ended with Mrs. Yang Li Ping (Jing City Shao Yong Nian Special Education School) and Mrs. Wen Qing (Loving Care Station and Loving Mutual Support Association) (see Section 9.3.2 China: Partly Political Parental Activism).

2nd snowball route: Local University Researcher---Local Umbrella Organizations and Government Officers---Learning-disabled and Elder Care Service Provision NGO

The second snowball route started by chance, and I did not expect it to turn out so successfully. I travelled to Shanghai to observe a national conference. In my master supervisor's panel, I spotted Mr. Shi Qian, a researcher from my River City research site based in Ocean University whom I had added to my WeChat contacts a year ago because I had a bi-monthly part-time translation editor's job in his team. My master's supervisor introduced me to Mr. Shi, who invited me to his upcoming group interview next week. The main subject was local governments purchasing public services from NGOs, which partially overlapped with my project, so I agreed without hesitation. This one-week group interview allowed me the opportunity to ask my own questions and gain access to local umbrella NGOs. I snowballed via these new contacts for more service provision NGOs. Among these contacts, Mrs. Yan Ling and Mr. Liao Bo functioned in bridging me with more contacts. Mrs. Yan was the chief of the NGO Development Foundation in charge of the funding issues across the district. I added her as a WeChat contact and contacted five bid winners of this year's elder care projects. Mr. Liao entered the NGO industry five years ago and has worked for the Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities and some other NGOs, so I asked him for his support. He listened patiently to my project brief and my research needs in River City and responded to me on WeChat with three WeChat account numbers for the NGOs Reducing Help, Star Dust and Wisdom & Aura.

3rd snowball route: Experienced Interviewer---Elder Care NGO---Local Government Officer

When I was in England for my first-year study, I saw that Miss. Qin Hui was conducting a field trip to River City on canteen development for the elderly. Later, she enrolled in Fudan University as a

PhD student in public administration. When I flew back to China, I asked her for help, and she put me in contact with Mr. Lin Quan on WeChat. Mr. Lin talked many times about his personal communication with local government officers, so I sent him a request to connect me with some local officers. He agreed. When I contacted Mr. Lin for help with looking for more local officers, he did not get me useful clues immediately due to the busy working period before the festival. I knew the reason, so I asked him to see if they could meet me after the New Year holiday from mid-January onwards. Mr. Lin agreed and put me in touch with Mrs. Jin Li Yuan the chief of elder care in district government two weeks later. I agreed and had a meeting with Mrs. Jin in mid-January.

Snowballing generated many interviews in England and China, so I considered the process a success. However, there are limits to this approach, which I will discuss in Chapter 10, particularly in terms of whether the sample of interviewees is biased. (see Section 10.4.2 **Limitations of Research Methods**)

4.3.4 Partial Immersion, Hit and Run and Multi-sited Ethnography

Hit and run is a flexible way of conducting ethnography. It involves moving in and out of the settings where the researcher observes everyday actions and actors for days rather than months at a time. The researcher shifts between different settings, interviewing different categories of actors and accessing different sets of data during the fieldwork (Boswell et al, 2019: 82-83). By following this approach, I encountered the same situations intermittently, but I was able to experience a mix of people and events. The approach enabled me to cover several organizations and sites and report a variety of scenes, actors and data. It facilitated the comparison of actors and events for each policy in the same country and allowed a comparison between both countries for individual policies. Again, I discussed the limits to the approach, especially the question of how long is long enough for a field trip, in Chapter 10. (see Section 10.4.2)

In this thesis, multi-site ethnography simply means that I moved between different sites. I was not based in, nor did I study a single organization. The choice of sites was dictated by my interviewees, and I went where I was led.

4.4 Self-management in Daily Routine and Handling Uncertainties and Difficulties

Once entering the field, I prepared myself for everyday routines and unexpected issues and difficulties. I carried my identification with my contact information, the letter for my fieldwork participants, my portable fieldwork notepad and my electronic voice recorder whenever I

presented myself as a field researcher in multiple sites. I used a carefully devised bus map for more informants and sought every possible opportunity to negotiate access. These were the keys to handling uncertainties and difficulties. More importantly, my perseverance and patience, as well as staying pragmatic, positive and opportunistic, remained the same throughout my fieldwork whenever I experienced opportunities or setbacks.

4.4.1 Ethnographer's Daily Habits

I developed some practical habits for my hit-and-run multi-sited participant observations and my interviews. Firstly, I always brought copies of my Letter for my Fieldwork Participants (Appendix A) and a stock of ten or so printed name cards in my wallet whenever I went out for fieldwork. Whenever I had the chance, I circulated my name card and the one-page introduction letter before the events or interviews. I took every opportunity to introduce myself to people.

Secondly, my fieldwork notepad was always in my handbag, along with my voice recorder. I took notes of any significant information or recorded instant questions that cropped up during my conversation with participants or while I was observing events. I used the back pages of each notebook to recall missing points and reflect on the content on the front pages. In this way, I had a record of both the interviews and my subsequent reflections. The back pages also offered me additional space for retrospective and supplementary notes. I used the notepad papers to jot down the names of potentially relevant interviewees who were present with me in council meetings or at other events.

Thirdly, I added an electronic voice recorder and the voice memo app on my smartphone for voice recording. The mobile and laptop software for converting the voice recordings into text was also useful. I used Xunfei Tingjian[43] software to convert all the voice records in English and Chinese, which saved a great deal of time compared with manual transcription. Following the first steps of converting voices to text, I selected the relevant and useful sections from transcriptions in Chinese and translated them into English so that I could quote from them when appropriate in the fieldwork chapters.

4.4.2 Handling Difficulties and Uncertainties in the Fieldwork

Research design always has an ideal element. Fieldwork was much messier than it was presented in the textbooks. I had to wait a long time for replies. some people rejected my requests for interviews, and I learned several useful lessons. First, I had to manage the stress of waiting and

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[43] https://www.iflyrec.com/

rejection. I had to persevere. I could not take 'no' for an answer, and I had to find other people to interview and other ways to gather data. I had to innovate – which explains the existence of my 'bus route'.

4.4.3. Bus Route Design for More Interviewees

In August 2018, I realized that I had exhausted all the potential snowball routes and could not identify any more potential interviewees. It was summertime, and many of my academic research contacts in England were on holiday, so they were unlikely to reply instantly. I knew I could not sit at my desk and wait for replies; I had to seek out more opportunities for interviews. I designed a bus trip route that linked all home care agencies and made the trip in two days to search for more fieldwork participants. I printed out my research introduction and pin my name cards on each flyer of my research introduction, and I took 30 copies with me on my bus trip. It was not a great success, but I did at least have one instant conversation and made one appointment after visiting ten different agencies.

I employed similar innovations for my observation. Prior to my fieldwork in China, I knew I would have to create opportunities for observing events and meetings because there are fewer open meetings in China than in England. So, I networked with participants who supported my research, and they accepted the idea of giving me opportunities for observation.

I was invited as an award guest by WABC for their award ceremony for excellent students on 11th January 2019. It was a pouring rain when I exited the subway station, so I ran quickly to the Home of Adoring Kindness. The ground floor was a charity shop, but when I went upstairs I saw a small lecture hall decorated in ancient Chinese style. I sat in the middle of the front row, with the other award guests, where I encountered Mrs. Zhu Xiao Yun once again, after the group interview in her workplace the previous October and when she showed me the way to BV social work training two weeks ago. We smiled at each other politely. WABC had prepared a gift bag for each of us, filled with handcraft works by people with learning disabilities. On the corridor beside the main hall there was a long table on which the staff had put baked cakes and desserts from Wisdom Tree Charity Café founded by the municipal special education school. I talked about my fieldwork experience and my thoughts based on the fieldwork in Street Working and Healing Station and WABC:

> *The fieldwork really inspired me; for instance, regardless of the difference between groups, irrespective of the labels we have, we all have something other groups does not possess. That's why the students here with learning disabilities people have such talent in art. We just need to let the advantages we have be seen.*

I stepped onto the stage with other guests and presented the certificate of excellence to Xiao Ming, and I stood and had a photo taken with him at his mother's request. We also had a group photo of the WABC staff and guests. As an outside researcher, I was invited to partake in this joint event by those who are involved in the policy network of social care for people with learning disabilities. This benefit me and WABC, as well as a wider range of actors participating in this local network.

In early December, Mrs. Shen of WABC asked me to attend an art festival aimed at promoting mutual acceptance between people with learning disabilities and local people. Mrs. Shen kindly connected me with Mr. Huang Xiao, who was a professor and dean of the River City School of Art and a team leader for the inclusion (*Rong Na*) project. I added him to my WeChat with Mrs Shen in WABC (World Art of Brut Culture).[44] When Mr. Huang Xiao arrived at the Display Hall in the Powerlong Art Centre, I had been working with his masters' students for half a day as a volunteer for the display activity.

While there were satisfying moments in my fieldwork, there were also the occasional bitter moments. Some interviewees agreed to put me into contact with other useful participants but never responded me after despite being politely reminded. Mrs. Zheng Ya Ping was sorting out some files when I entered her office. She said: "*Look, my office is so messy, I am sorry for letting you see this*". The social pleasantries continued, and we talked about my studies, Zheng's career and her daughter who was also at university. Mrs. Zheng made me a cup of tea and asked me where I came from and what my study experience was. It logically followed that I ask her questions regarding her own career experience.

At the end of our talk, I started some other casual talk. I understood that she had a daughter and asked her where she was studying and what stage her studies had reached. Mrs. Zheng told me she was a freshman at Hu City University studying International Affairs, which is a subject under social sciences. I expressed my appreciation as being in the same major. Before I left I said "May I ask you to do me a favour, please? I intend to contact more staff from the provincial elder care committee, but I don't have access to them. Could you please introduce some for me? Perhaps after the Spring Festival?" Mrs. Zheng said she would, and agreed to contact me after the festival holiday. However, she did not respond to my WeChat messages after the holiday. I thought it was considerably easy for her, and as a high-ranking officer I didn't want to push her. I thought at the time that if people were reluctant to help me, they should say so at the outset.

In England, I encountered similar case when I asked for help from a senior director of childcare services. Mrs. Helena Carter did not reply to three emails until my supervisor sent an email on my

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[44] Brut Art refers to raw art that is unpolished and unrefined and based on the artists' instinct.

behalf. After talking with Mrs. Carter, she felt she was not the right person for my project and agreed to contact Mrs. Julia Marshall, who oversaw the policy network for people with learning disabilities. However, when I emailed Mrs. Helena Carter again when no further information for me after a week, she replied:

> *Hi,*
> *Given how busy the services are can I suggest you send me your questions and we will give you*
> *a written response.*
> *Thanks*
> *Sheila*

I received no response, and I only got a few superficial and shallow answers in some of my other interviews.

Mr. Teng Liang is a middle-aged businessman who runs several seafood restaurants in River City. He calls into one of the Happy Stomach community elder canteens every week, spending half an hour or so in each one. Teng was dressed in a dark blue suit over a sapphire blue shirt. He carried a briefcase, and sat with his assistant, who works as his second in command looking after the canteen for the elderly. Teng had a round face and cropped hair, going a little bald on top. It was 10:30 am, and the canteen was relatively empty. They stood up and showed me the way outside, where we sat at a square table. The waiter brought me a cup of tea with loose tealeaves inside a plastic cup and boiled water. When the conversation started, Teng's assistant lit up a cigarette for Mr. Teng and they both smoked as they talked. Teng's answers sounded fake and superficial. Sometimes, he answered my question and the assistant added a few supporting sentences. I felt incompetent because I seemed unable to get a straight answer from either man. Teng said that his motivation for starting the community canteens for the elderly was that he intended to try something that would make a contribution to the local residents.

Mrs. Yang Li Ping wore a white shirt under a light purple knitted long sweater. Her long hair was tied back in a ponytail. My questions obviously did not interest her, and she answered my questions concisely, using some short phrases like "of course", and "yes, indeed". It felt as if a wall was being built between the two of us, getting higher as we spoke until I could no longer see Mrs. Yang's face. I struggled to find questions to keep the conversation going. The most valuable part of our talk was her the motivation for starting the Wise Tree Coffee Shop. As we talked, she fiddled with her mobile and we had and less eye contact.

Mrs. Blake in Man-ability showed a hint of paranoia when she spoke about the reason behind reopening the KR Road Respite Centre.

> *Blake: So, are you using this as popular research? I don't want any feeding back quotes to the council from Mr Blake and the carers*
>
> *Yongmei Li: No, no.*
>
> *Blake: I didn't want to talk to you openly.*
>
> *Yongmei Li: Don't worry. I have sent you the participant information sheet and consent form that guarantee all you have said to me will be anonymous and confidential. You can have a look at the specific terms for your sake.*

My persistence in getting the opportunity to interview Councillor Bond, who was in the Cabinet for Childcare, ended when he lost his seat in the 2019 local election. I had emailed him as I had done for all potential interviewees, but received no reply after two attempts. Then I happened to see him at a joint policy-making research session held by the Policy Centre and Waterfront City Council. He was sitting at the reception desk when I arrived at the gate. I went to greet him and expressed my appreciation for his work and my interest in today's session. At the interval, I talked about my research project and ask for his help. He talked briefly about the financial burden which the childcare team was bearing and asked why I needed his help. I wrote another email to him setting out the purpose of my inquiries as promised, and asked for an interview. I received no response, but I met him again in the interval of a council meeting a month later. However, he still did not respond positively but asked me to write an email for further confirmation. I stopped chasing him when a friend who was also working with Councillor Bond's team told me that he had lost in the 2019 local election.

In short, I had to remain optimistic and be opportunistic, seizing any opportunities that presented themselves or working on my own initiative. I went where I was led, and I took what I was given.

4.5 Thematic Analysis

I mainly used thematic analysis for data analysis. Quirkos was a newly developed software program for systematic content coding and analysis, and I found it more intuitive and easier to use than NVivo. It played an essential role. I enjoyed dragging, merging and splitting bubbles of different colours to organize my analytical themes, and the visual dimension helped. The literature review suggested several themes for further examination, and I grouped my long list of topics under themes, which I finalized after several rounds of exploration.

Thematic analysis involved reading and rereading my interview transcripts and fieldwork notes, and I drew up Table 4-3 after several iterations. My objective was to produce a manageable list of themes that captured the complexity of the data. I went back and forth between the theme table and fieldwork chapters, querying whether the themes captured the data accurately. Quirkos

facilitated such iterations because it was easy to drag, merge and split them, and to change the layers of sub-themes. Table 4-4 shows the final thematic layout. It is reproduced here as a road map to guide the reader through the fieldwork, and I will explain the themes in more detail as we proceed through the fieldwork chapters.

Table 4-3 Comparative Themes for Chapter 5 (28 June 2020)

	Themes	Subthemes in England	Subthemes in China
The Characteristics of Local Policy Network in England and China	Interdependence and Reciprocity between Umbrella NGOs, Service Provision NGOs and Local Government	Statutory Responsibilities and Combating Austerity	Whoremaster and Prostitute
	Umbrella NGO Resource Exchange Strategy	Resistance against Recurring Challenges of Financial and Human Resource Shortage	The Flow of Contracts: Chasing Experienced NGOs and Easy-going District Government
			One Team under Double-level Brands: Cutting Cost for Expanding Territory and Lobbying Flexibility

Table 4-4 Comparative Themes for Chapters 6-9

Themes	Elder Care in England and China	Social Care for people with learning disabilities in England and China
Resource Exchange and Interdependence **1. Resource Availability and Exchange: The Face of Power** **2. Responding to Mutual Needs: Facing Power**	6.1.1 Governmental austerity and NGO independence VS 6.1.2 Resource abundancy and swinging between independence and dependence	7.1.1 It is impossible to reduce resource dependence VS 7.1.2 High degree of resource independence
	6.2.1 NGOs respond strongly to government needs VS 6.2.2 Putting government needs first	7.2.1 Feeding mutual needs VS 7.2.2 NGO needs are seldom met
3. Interdependence and Reciprocity: State and NGO Game-playing Styles	6.3.1 NGOs make local practices bloom, but the government does not VS 6.3.2 NGOs are looking up but practicing locally	7.3.1 NGO game-playing style in state solo dance VS 7.3.2 Submissive NGO players in state-society routine dance
Trust-building and Diplomacy **1. Discretion and Regulation** **2. Seeking Negotiating Capital outside the State**	8.1.1 England: small and improvisational discretionary power; VS 8.1.2 China: negotiable and improvisational discretionary power	9.1.1 England: small and improvisational discretionary power VS 9.1.2 China: negotiable and improvisational discretionary power
	8.1.3 The common fate: over regulation and routinized burden	9.1.3 The common fate: over regulation and routinized burden
	8.2.1 England: self-regulated voluntary network outside mature privatization VS 8.2.2 China: deriving negotiating capital from market model	9.2.1 England: building negotiating capital locally VS 9.2.2 China: building negotiating capital locally and nationally
The Everyday Maker of Local Practices	8.3.1 England: NGOs and local government in rare conversation VS 8.3.2 China: NGOs are striving for government responses	9.3.1 A mixture of partly political lobbying actor and non-political parental activism VS 9.3.2 Partly political parental activism

	8.3.3 Similarity: individual actors are maintaining everyday practicality	9.3.3 Similarity: parental activism's informal power

The "anything goes" approach to qualitative research has been criticized for lacking concrete and convincing analytical tools, and thematic analysis stands out as a reply to this critique. An illustrative presentation of the systematic data analysis can be achieved by collating and arranging feasible comparative themes and matching the qualitative data with them (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The story of my methods will end here, but the stories of network governance I saw and heard in my fieldwork will begin in the following chapter. Chapter 5 sets the stage on which policy actors in elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities people play their roles. Chapters 6 and 7 take the bottom-up approach to display a decentred thematic analysis on resource exchange, and discuss interdependence in each policy area in both countries. Chapters 8 and 9 repeat this format but turn to the thematic analysis of trust-building and diplomacy.

PART II: FIELDWORK

Chapter 5: A Bird's Eye View of NGO-Government Relations and Policy Context in England and China

This chapter provides a city-wide or overview of NGO-government relations in Waterfront city in England and Water District in China using data collected from umbrella NGOs at both sites. Umbrella NGOs provide the vital functions of bridging services provided by NGOs and local government and enhancing service provision. In China, umbrella NGOs have a major influence on resource distribution to and resource exchanges between local NGOs. The chapter also describes the policy context of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities, which is an essential background for thematic analysis in Chapters 6,7,8 and 9.

Inevitably, there are many actors and a plethora of acronyms. I have therefore compiled both a glossary of terms and a cast of characters for each empirical chapter. The various actors are listed in their order of appearance. There are 27 actors and 13 organizations in this chapter (see Glossary of Terms and Cast of Characters for Chapter 5). Finally, as a guide for the reader, I repeat the relevant sections of the thematic guide in Chapter 4. I employ this narrative device in all my fieldwork chapters to remind the reader of my main themes.

5.1 Network Governance and Umbrella NGOs in England and China

Umbrella NGOs in England and China differ greatly in terms of both functions and numbers. In Waterfront, there is only one umbrella NGO, which covers a number of service provision NGOs of various types. In Water District, there are three umbrella NGOs, and there is factionalism within the local circle of umbrella NGOs. The mainstream umbrella NGOs are more responsible for the distribution of resources than the marginalized ones, have more connections with district government and cover a wider range of services than the marginalized NGOs.

5.1.1 England: One Umbrella NGO Covers All Service Provision NGOs

Waterfront is a city located in Hookshire in southeast England. The population is roughly 260,000, and the city covers 72.8 km^2. The main industry here is its seaport and higher education. As the city's local authority, Waterfront City Council is responsible for economic development, public service delivery for the city, environmental issues, public facilities and other statutory public affairs. Currently, the council members are respectively responsible for 6 policy areas including children and learning, finance and income generation, health and adults, green city, the environment, and stronger communities. The deputy leader performs as a cabinet member for customers and organizations alike while the eighth cabinet member is the leader of the cabinet. The structure of

cabinet member and specific portfolios can change over time. Table 5-1 shows the basic setup of Waterfront City and its NGOs.

Table 5-1 Key Figures of Waterfront NGOs

Population (unitary authority area)	Area Size	Number of NGOs	Number of Wards	Number of Community Centres	Main Industries (by numbers employed)	GDP (A Hundred Million GBP)[45]	Public Expenditure (A Hundred Million GBP)[46]
269,781	72.8 square kilometres	1 umbrella NGO; 2 key elderly care NGOs; 3 key Learning Disability NGOs; 1 Special Education School; 126 NGOs in total	16	16	National Health Service Universities Port transportation	132	178.27

NGOs in Waterfront vary in scale and range, as well as in service provision category and sphere of influence. Waterfront Voluntary Services as an umbrella group that supports NGOs of different visions, scales and specialities. I attended the Friday Forum hosted by Waterfront Voluntary Services six times during 2018 and 2019. When I attended the Friday Forum in June, I approached Mrs. Judy Tyre, the deputy manager of this umbrella NGO, and asked her for her email address. During the short interval and tea break, I arranged an interview with her on 19th June 2019.

> **Mrs Judy Tyre (Deputy of local umbrella NGO):** *The voluntary sector covers everything that kind of touches people's lives really. So we just go from cradle to grave for voters from pre-conception to post bereavement care and everything in between. So we've got very small entirely volunteer-run organizations in the city that were called "twenty-pound biscuit-tin" operations through to multi-million pound housing associations. So you've got very different scale and range. You've got branches of national charities. You've got very local community made residents type organizations in almost kind of any sphere of life.*

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[45] Data source: https://www.centreforcities.org/city/southampton/

[46] https://www.southampton.gov.uk/policies/statement%20of%20accounts%202018-19v3_tcm63-408616.pdf

There are voluntary organisations doing things to help support and encourage local people. The sector is vibrant and includes a great deal of diversity in terms of breadth, depth and coverage capacities.

Judy contended that the spirit and vision of the voluntary sector and its organizations lie in their capacity to pool resources to benefit those whom they intend to help.

> **Judy Tyre:** *So we try to prioritize the things that we think, and what organizations tell us, are the most important. I've been doing this job for thirty years. And the kind of framework in which the voluntary sector operates doesn't significantly alter what I call like the four cornerstones base – the volunteer base, there's funding and keeping the plates spinning on the resources of the organization to do the work that you want to do to benefit the people that you want to benefit. Good practice around volunteer management committees, running organizations at those things don't vary significantly.*

Overall, Waterfront Voluntary Services is the only umbrella NGO in the city that provides all the support and services to service provision NGOs. There is no possibility of factionalism here, so the resources from the city council are injected into this single umbrella NGO and the city council builds and maintains connections with it. The picture in Water District in China is different, as illustrated below.

5.1.2 China: Factionalism in Mainstream Umbrella NGOs and Marginalized Service Provision NGOs

Water District in River City, Ocean Province, is a vibrant and ancient district in China. The district is the oldest of all River City's districts. Its economic activities focus on commerce and cultural tourism (see Table 5-2). The local authority has also introduced important public service innovations, especially in service provision for people with learning disabilities. Water District is a pioneering district in that it introduced the umbrella organization, public service contracts and NGO development before most cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. In this section, I describe the influential umbrella organization, Bright Vision Charity Development Centre (*BV Gongyi Shiye Fazhan Zhongxin*), which enjoys long-term collaboration with the district government.

Table 5- 2 Key Figures of Water District NGOs

Popul ation	Size	Number of NGOs	Number of Street-level Offices	Number of Community Resident Committees	Main Industries	GDP (A Hundre d Million	Public Expenditure (A Hundred Million

						Chinese Yuan)[47]	Chinese Yuan)[48]
310,000	18 square kilometres	3 umbrella NGOs 5 key elderly care NGOs 3 key Learning Disability NGOs 1 Special Education School 30 NGOs in active partnership with government	6	54	Tourism, Retail Business	1102.70	40.59

Although Bright Vision was only set up six years ago, competition for government resources provoked factionalism within local umbrella NGOs and among service providers in the Water District. The umbrella NGO promoted NGO development alongside the local government's Department of Civil Affairs.

Mrs. Lin Yan[49] is the chief secretary of the Bright Vision Charity Development Centre.[50] She is responsible for providing services for the elderly in collaboration with the Civil Affairs Department of Water District. She rang me directly to confirm our meeting on Thursday morning[51] at her workplace at China Community Development Display Centre. The centre was built in the ancient

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[47] Data source: https://www.cnstats.org/tjgb/201210/zjhzsscq-2011-fuq_2.html;
http://www.hzsc.gov.cn/col/col1269077/index.html?number=Q001#reloaded
[48] Data source: https://www.cnstats.org/tjgb/201210/zjhzsscq-2011-fuq_2.html;
http://www.hzsc.gov.cn/col/col1269077/index.html?number=Q001#reloaded
[49] In China, when a person is introduced for the first time, he or she will normally say their full name, with family name first and given name second. I will obey the same custom throughout the thesis every time I introduce a person in the fieldwork. Hence, here Mrs. Lin Yan means her family name is Lin and her given name is Yan.
[50] Bright Vision Charity Development Centre (BV Gongyi Shiye Fazhan Zhongxin) is a local umbrella NGO in Water District. The services it provides include fundraising guidance and capacity building training sessions.
[51] Interview with Mrs. Lin Yan, 9:00am 2019/01/23

Chinese tradition of linked rooms and courtyards, made up of several square courts, each surrounded by four rooms facing off in four directions. This was my first visit to this puzzling and strange architecture. Even though Mrs. Lin kindly offered me instructions on how to find her office on WeChat, I still messaged her and had to ask for help from the security guard. Mrs. Lin looked younger than me, maybe 25 years old. She was sitting in front of her office desk when I entered. The office was a shared open space for several NGOs, with a corridor for access to other areas.

> **Li Yongmei:** *Hi, are you Ms. Lin? I am Li Yongmei, who has contact you two days ago on WeChat to book a meeting this morning.*

> **Lin Yan (smiling welcomingly):** *Oh, are you Dr. Li? Hello, hello!*

I let her call me by this title that shows her respect for me as a PhD student. I enjoyed the title of 'Dr. Li' in this context as it implies trust and openness in her responses to me.

> **Lin Yan:** *Please wait for a minute. I am dealing with some reports now. We can move to the conference room next door and have a talk.*

> **Li Yongmei (nodded and smiled):** *That's alright, just take your time.*

Mrs. Lin's welcoming and respectful reaction to me was reflected in many later interviews. Academic people are respected in China for being considered more knowledgeable and intellectual than common people. Shortly, I was led to the conference room, where Mrs. Lin made me a cup of tea and brought her notebook, pen and iPhone. Her hairstyle was a typical young fashionable working-woman's bun in pure black, and her makeup and lipstick brightened her animated face. She wore a light pink dress with a white blouse and a pair of flat shoes. She came across as a professional organization leader.

At the start of the meeting, she expressed her appreciation for my project and promised she would be open and frank. Then she did an introductory history of BV and her career in Water District.

> **Mrs. Lin Yan:** *We are Water District's first umbrella organization. Mr. Yan, our boss, came to River City in 2012 from Shanghai En Pai.[52] At that time, there were few NGOs or public charity innovative investment programmes in River City. People – especially the government – had no idea about NGO development. Mr. Yan caught up with some government officials first and then spent almost two years touring the governmental offices and the NGOs in other developed cities. The investment resulted in a very strong policy in NGO development, which stated that the government would initiate NGO development at the street-level. The street-level office was mandated to invest an annual budget of half million yuan to boost the NGO development.*

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[52] An influential chain Charity NGO in China, having many branches in different large and medium sized cities.

In China, interviews can be guarded, and interviewees are often reluctant to criticize in case their superiors find out. During the conversation, she often nodded to show that she was listening to my questions. Sometimes when she looked at the smart phone screen, she still nodded and said 'yes, yes' to me. As our conversation went on, I asked supplementary questions, which drove the interview in unanticipated directions.

As an umbrella NGO in local district, Bright Vision provides a great deal of training and supervision services for local NGOs that specialize in different public services. Since its establishment, it has also been attached to the district and municipal government, enabling it to build up a substantial influence in shaping the local network map of service delivery.

> **Lin Yan:** *We witnessed many changes and progress for different kinds of NGOs as a result of our help. We sincerely wanted to see improved internal governance within these NGOs after their participation in our capacity-building training. For example, many NGOs who did not know the rules of accounting and auditing initially employed an outside accountant to do that. Many NGOs did not know how to write up project proposal, but we taught them how to write a coherent and logical proposal.*

From the perspective of my fieldwork, the helicopter talks with Mrs. Lin at the start of the fieldwork process offered me access to NGO development and public service delivery.

In mid-October, I encountered another pioneer NGO in Water District started by Mr. Cheng Rui in 2013, the same year as Bright Vision Charity Development Centre began. Mr. Cheng Rui, aged around 35, has a round face and offered a warm smile to everyone in the small conference room. He poured hot water to the plastic cups with green tea leaves and passed the hot tea to us carefully.

Mr. Cheng's office is located in the same hall as Bright Vision, an open and collective workplace in China's Community Development Display Centre. Mr. Cheng is the leader of the Loving Youth Social Work Service Centre, which was the first NGO to sign the public service contract with district government.

> **Mr Cheng Rui, (Chief of Loving Youth Social Work Service Centre):** *I started my career as a social worker in Guangdong Province. Later I came back to River City and pioneered in Bright Vision with Mr. Yang Guang, undertaking service delivery via contracting out from the government. My first contract value was only 200 thousand Yuan. We had to cultivate residents' groups and introduce some social work activities on a regular basis in the Xiang Street. [53] In 2013, the district government launched a new NGO cluster in Xiang Street, so we set up some NGO incubators there. From this first point in Xiang*

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[53] Xiang Street is a block of streets with a long history dating back to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. It has its own historical memorial hall for "Loving the Country and Caring for the Sanitation Movement" Several decades later, it was redeveloped as a leading example of many other street-level offices. Mr. Cheng's centre has run several projects in the course of this redevelopment.

Street, we copied the same pattern afterwards in another four streets. The service package included service provision for the residents, NGO support, encouraging grassroots' activists and volunteer training. The outcomes and effects of this approach were obviously positive, especially for the government. The outcome was easy to observe and discuss, and to brief to the upper levels for any official visitors.

The initial phase provided the basic financial foundation for Mr. Cheng and his team, giving them local experience. The second phase featured a public charity innovation investment programme[54] that was also contracted out by the government. The third and current phase is a mixture of public service contracts, public charity innovative investment programmes (PWIIP) and foundation grants. It is interesting to note the increase in foundation grants in addition to the other two governmental funding sources.

Mr. Cheng worked on all three phases and experienced some tough times due to the shortage of money. However, he was delighted that many apparently trivial starting points were like seeds. When they worked at small scales, they did not realise that the seeds would produce a surprising harvest.

Mr. Cheng Rui: *For instance, the task of veteran management was first transferred from the government to my team two years ago. We were actually 'forced' to do this at that time because the department of civil affairs found no other NGO that was willing or able to do it. We were given only 50,000 yuan to finish this project in one street. However, this sort of project was open to other NGOs for grant bidding later on. Now each subsidized street is obliged to have a veteran service station, and sufficient financial support from the district-level arrives on time. Our team has accumulated the great experience in this area. This kind of story does not only happen in the governmental funding, but also in other enterprise foundation funding projects.*

I booked an interview with Mr. Yuan Wenhua, head of NGO development for Water District bureau of civil affairs at 2:30 pm. He texted me, asking me to come to the District Public Service Centre, which is not where he is regularly based. His reassignment happened at the request of the provincial and central government as a result of a one-stop public service and administration approval reform that required extra staff members to move from the individual bureau or department to the collective district service centre. When I arrived, I texted him and he replied that he was reporting to his boss on the upper floor. I was asked to stay outside at the counter of the Department of Civil Affairs, and told that he would finish his report in fifteen minutes and come down to meet me.

Mr. Yuan Wenhua wore a pure white shirt under a dark blue suit, without a tie. This was the official uniform in this public service centre, where saw almost all the staff here were dressed identically.

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[54] This is another type of governmental contract, mainly focusing on the public welfare goods provision and raising public awareness of public welfare co-production.

He asked me with a puzzled facial expression, "*Are you in a hurry to finish your project or thesis? You work so efficiently and book my time so urgently*." I realised that he appeared to feel pressured when I contacted him for an interview and seemed to want a very rapid response. I admitted that I was doing the fieldwork for my PhD thesis and that I was in China for only a limited period of time. I flattered him by telling him his support was really important for me. In China, young women have to meet the gendered expectations of male public officials. Nonetheless, I posed some direct questions as our conversation proceeded. His replies were cautious, his manner vigilant:

> **Li Yongmei:** *Would the district Department of Civil Affairs implement any biased policy for a specific public service or even organization? Does the Department of Civil Affairs favour any specific public service or other organization?*

> **Mr. Yuan Wen Hua, (Chief of NGO Development, Water District Department of Civil Affairs):** *We do not have any biased policy implementation. Our job is to establish a platform for the official departments and various NGOs. However, we do not really care about the exact nature of collaboration between them. We are willing to encourage more frequent and deeper collaborations, but we do not focus on any particular service area or specific NGO. As a district-level government, we do not have enough time to do an individual examination of an NGO or listen to its report. We communicate only on specific working issues or in response to a call from an NGO representative for a joint meeting. In this way, NGOs can express their needs and complain about any difficulties.*

> **Li Yongmei:** *How do the umbrella NGOs collaborate with other NGOs doing specific service delivery?*

> **Yuan Wenhua:** *Do you want official statement or the truth?*

> **Li Yongmei:** *(laughing but serious): I prefer the truth.*

> **Yuan Wenhua:** *In this district, we only have one NGO that is eligible for successful assessment. The charity organization circle is really small, and it is mainly divided into two factions. One faction is led by BV and the other is led by Professor Ma. They never step into the other's sphere of influence. This is because the entire volume of governmental projects is not very large, and they are all very familiar each other's work. Hence there is a tacit agreement between the two factions. From the government's perspective, BV is very convincing and reliable and has been since we started the NGO development. Mr. Yang brought the pattern from Shanghai here, and even some policy document templates are based upon his work.*

> **Yuan Wenhua:** *Are you in a hurry to finish your project or thesis?*

> **Li Yongmei:** *Yes. Thanks a lot for your valuable time. I can find my own way out. It is so kind of you to talk to me and walk me to your office.*

The talk with Mr. Yuan clarified the fact that there are two central clusters of NGOs in Water District and across the city. When there are central clusters, there must be marginalized groups, because

resource exchange and distribution are affected by central clusters and marginalized groups in the NGO circle. Aspects of diplomacy and reciprocity also vary between the district government and central clusters and between the district government and marginalized groups. In Water District, Mr. Liao Bo managed just one of the marginal groups in the voluntary sector. He began his social work centre after he resigned from community resident committee ten years ago, and the competition and polarization and his replies to some of my questions were given in a sarcastic tone.

My first interview with Mr. Liao took place at the Yu District marriage registration centre because he had a service point here for marriage and family reconciliation. It's been three months since that interview and Liao looked rather tired when we met today. He cut his hair much shorter, making his head look rounder than before. Liao moved a chair to his office desk for me. He treated me politely and offered a variety of hot drink options for me:

> **Mr. Liao Bo, President of YJR Social Work Service Centre:** G*reen tea or loquat flower tea? Loquat flower has healing effect for throat, so maybe we can give it a go.*

> **Li Yongmei:** *Yes, please. Thank you very much.*

The loquat flower tea was there in his cupboard for any visitors or customers, not just for me. Our talk lasted for three hours and took in his previous career, the development of his NGO and his observations and interpretations of the charity organization circle.

> **Liao Bo:** *I was employed as community resident committee[55] chief for almost ten years, and I got to know what the community needed at street-level needs and what they didn't. Later, I left that position because my working plan and thinking conflicted with management and the other committee members. Also, I had accumulated my own ideas on community needs, especially for older people, and the importance of family reconciliation, which became my new starting point after leaving the committee job.*

> *I stayed in many NGOs later when they became more influential, such as Reducing Help[56], Wisdom and Aura[57] and so on, which is why I can put you in contact with them very quickly. I helped Reducing Help to prepare its NGO assessment supporting documents when I was there. I also applied for a position in BV, but I was turned down. In retrospect, I took it as a positive experience, as it pushed me to leave the mainstream circle and set up my own business. In the end, I was marginalized, and I had to flex my muscles to compete with others.*

Even if Mr. Liao's working strategy was more erratic than NGOs who were clinging to local government, his achievements in specific service provision were also praised by the district department chief:

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[55] CRC is the abbreviation for Community Resident Committee in the following paragraphs.
[56] Reducing Help is a Day Care Centre for adults with learning disabilities in Water District, River City.
[57] Wisdom and Aura is a Day Care Centre for adults with learning disabilities in Water District, River City.

Liao Bo: *Once there was a top-down investigation from the central government in Water District. When the district Department of Civil Affairs piled up the existing achievements, the chief noticed a serious problem that the BV and its NGOs are doing more charity innovative projects than some expert service providers. The chief pointed to the display wall at the China Community Development Display Centre and complained, "why do we only have one or two NGOs providing elderly care and family reconciliation services? Do you guys think the majority of charity innovative projects will be considered as strong evidence of our excellent job by the central department of civil affairs?*

Mr. Liao told this story with a mocking laugh and took me to have lunch in their canteen where we met the president of the municipal activity centre for the elderly as we picked up our lunch. The president looked anxious and was still organising her staff. Liao explained that she was worried about the opening ceremony for the municipal activity centre. I asked whether negotiating for the political leaders' time was the cause for her anxiety. Liao did not reply me. Insider or outsider, everyone is guarded in their comments on political leaders.

The factionalism exists within the policy network in a small, closed circle within which only 3-5 permanent players on the NGO side have a long-term working relationship based on mutual respect. Segregation between mainstream and marginalized NGOs reveals the inner and outer circles of the group of NGOs (Schaap & Van Twist, 1997: 64). Unlike its equivalent in Water District, the umbrella NGO in Waterfront City is the only NGO, and the game-playing there is much calmer because there is no competition for resources.

5.2 Local Policy Network of Elderly Care and Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities in England and China

The aging population is a common issue to both England and China (see Chapter 2). However, the cultural differences become apparent when comparing the living status and people's attitude to aging and elderly people. In China, elderly people live with family members more than in England, with a few exceptions in old districts of big cities like Water District, as Mrs. Chang explained:

Mrs. Chang Le, (Chief of Elder Care Section, Water District Bureau of Civil Affairs):
Most of our elderly people live with their children because they do not want to leave this old residential area, to which they have been accustomed.

Elderly people live independently in England, where the nuclear rather than the extended family prevails. Aging is part of most people's lives, and elderly care in any country often represents intensive care for individuals for a relatively short period, compared with lifelong social care for people with learning disabilities, many of whom face congenital disabilities or disabilities from a very early age. When we examine similarities and differences between social care for people with

learning disabilities in England and China, the Chinese infrastructure for this group is full-time on an everyday basis, whereas in England day-care is provided more intensively during holiday periods. The disabled face stigma and social exclusion in both countries, and government targets for social care for people with learning disabilities differ. In China, the government prioritises employability, while in England the priority is on unpaid carers, and English NGOs do not strive so hard towards independent living or social skills of people with learning disabilities.

5.2.1 Local Policy Network for Elderly Care in England

In England, although social care expenditure may rank highly among the country's financial budgets, much of this money is spent on transfer payments rather than social care service provision. Social care is often said to be high priority at national and local levels, but expenditure has not kept pace with the growth in demand. Local elderly care charity organizations have lost government funding for personal care and chiropody, lunch clubs, transport and cleaning services within day care centres due to governmental austerity. Mary Hugo, the service manager in Padwell Day Care Centre, explained the situation for each service option.

> **Mary Hugo:** *I used to have a bus that would pick up people from all over the place here. I can no longer do that now because it's too expensive. If some people on the other side of town want to come here, they have to pay for their own transport.*
>
> *We used to provide meals for the people, but we can't do that anymore because it's too expensive. I used to go and do the shopping on Saturday and Sunday. I wasn't getting paid or anything like that. I used to go all over the place to find which was the cheapest so that I could get enough food.*
>
> *There was a company doing the cleaning, but I had to cancel it because it cost a lot of money. So we got one member from the company that wanted to be part of us to actually do the cleaning herself. But at the same time, I had to look at the budget. Now that we've merged with SCiA, I can't believe how much the budget has gone down. But I know that when we had the meeting, they said to us, "you may need to merge so that we can continue to fund you. If you don't, the funding for day care is going to stop".*

The funding cuts also caused serious problems in personnel management for Age UK. The service manager had to make staff redundant:

> **Mrs. Kaveri Bose (Service Manager of Age UK Waterfront):** *I was made redundant by Age UK, so I will leave the position of service manager next month. I come here to the Rope Walk Centre occasionally to hand over my previous job responsibilities to my colleagues. So I've lost three members of staff. I've lost the cleaner who have lost two assistant managers.*

Local public debates and discussions about finance make a little difference, and the debates can be witnessed in city or county councils across England. Local service users tend to sit in the council chamber hall, representing themselves and hoping to make their voices heard by those elegantly dressed councilors and service managers. But is this scene commonly reflected in other service areas? I rarely saw any elderly people or the NGOs representing them sitting in council chambers in my fieldwork. Waterfront City Council has specific committees for children and family scrutiny, but there is no similar arrangement for elderly care. Being supported to a lesser extent by the city council means that elderly care NGOs build a self-regulated network jointly or individually. For example, Age UK and the Saints worked collaboratively to provide physical training for elderly people, while Community Wellbeing practiced inter-generational projects and neighbourhood support groups successfully.

Figure 5-3 depicts the elderly care network map in Waterfront, showing policy actors that include central and local government, Waterfront NHS CCG, Waterfront Voluntary Services and all private and non-governmental organizations. Age UK, SCiA, Community Wellbeing and Voices for Carers are NGOs doing elderly care and Mayflower, Apex and Bluebird are all private elderly care agencies. A recurring problem was the scarcity of staff. I saw the notice of hunting for more home carers in many agencies, usually pasted on the window facing the street.

> **Mrs. Alisha Fish, SCiA group and Mrs. Hilary Faulkingham, Mayflower Home Care Agency:** *This is not a well-paid job, so it is very difficult to hire carers for elderly.*

The Mayflower Home Care Agency is located in a central area of the city. When I opened the door and entered, I saw three clusters of office desks and two staff sitting in different clusters. The middle-aged lady who greeted me had an obviously impatient attitude. She turned to talk to her colleague on the other desk sometimes and just gave the yes or no answer to many questions or short words to some descriptive questions. I felt that when I ended my interview, she was anxious to be rid of me. I still left a box of Hotel Chocolat chocolates as a gesture of appreciation for her time, as I always did. The sacrifices and contributions are limited, compared to the huge and comparatively trivial requests from the elderly service users. Mary gave me some examples of the volunteers' limitations in the elderly care sector:

> **Mary Hugo:** *But if you need to spend some time with someone who has dementia, if you have to go upstairs to fetch something she's remembered from twenty years ago, how can you support somebody like that? And that's what I said to them. There is a need to pay staff. There are wonderful, wonderful volunteers, and they are absolutely fantastic, but they can't do very much because a lot of my volunteers don't want to have to go through the necessary training. "No, I don't want to do anything," they say. "I'll come here, help with the teas and the coffees, help for a bit," but when I look up she's*

gone because she had to go to a dentist appointment or something, and that's fine. She's a volunteer and that's what she does. She just wants to support us by making teas and coffees, but she says, "Don't ask me to do any training. I've done that. I just want to give a little time".

Figure 5-1 Elderly Care Network Map, Waterfront
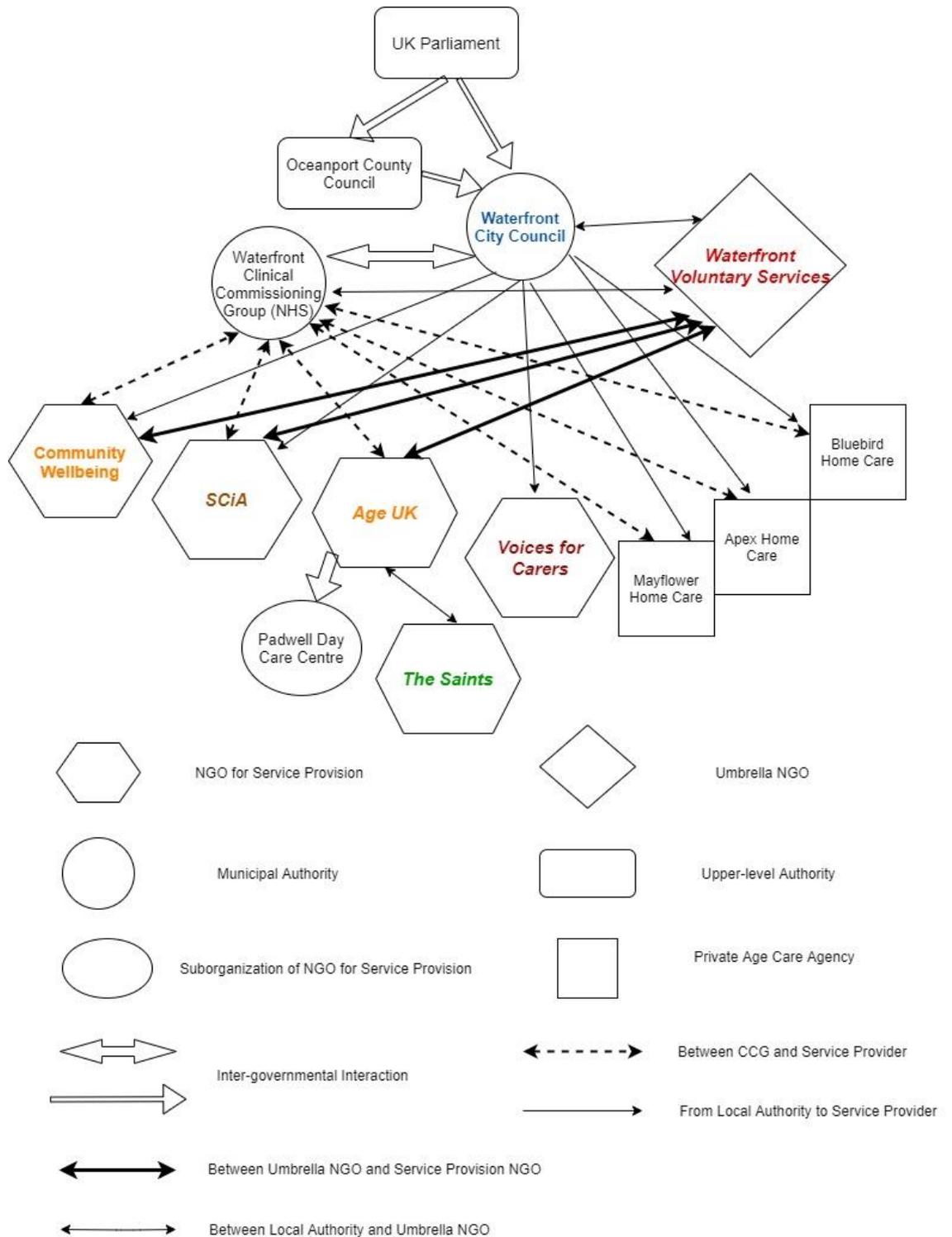
Age UK provides independent social care for elderly people and helps local elderly communities to build up peer and inter-generational support with cross-organization network effectively. The national-level and local agencies are responsible for their fundraising individually and the charity shop is a main source of revenue for local agencies.

> **Kaveri:** *The local branches of Age UK rely on themselves in terms of financial resources and collaboration opportunities with other charity groups, fundraising individually for each local branch instead of getting money from Age UK's head office based in London.*

There are few grant opportunities available to organizations delivering services for elderly people. Kaveri told me that because salaries are low, some colleagues have left their jobs or will leave them soon. Kaveri herself will leave in one and half months. The FALLs Revolution project was launched by Age UK, but the initial proposal was raised by a member of staff in The Saints Foundation, which is a charity organization supervised by Waterfront Football Club. Age UK negotiated the details with the Saints and started this training project. Age UK's FALLs Revolution Project is a scheme that lasted for one year from Spring 2018 at five sites in Waterfront. I interviewed Kaveri at Age UK and became a volunteer myself in April 2018, travelling to three sites and volunteering there every week.

Kaveri is the service manager of FALLs Revolution. After I arrived at Graylings Court, Brian and Anthony[58] gave me some guidance as a volunteer – for example that every time I made tea or coffee, the sink and surfaces should be cleaned immediately. I was advised to meet elderly visitors with a warm greeting and talk to them as I helped them into the training hall. We had two sessions, each for thirteen elderly people at this site. Some paid for this training when they arrived, and the price was five pounds per person. An elegant lady aged 92 arrived with her daughter for the second session, which was a rare phenomenon, because most of the elderly came here alone.

Rope Walk Center is less busy compared with the other two sites. We had only one session for one people, making it a one-to-one session. Our only attendee was Pearl, who lived near St. Deny's Station and came here by taxi. I arrived at 1:00 pm, 30 minutes prior to the session, and when Pearl arrived, I went out to help her from the taxi into the venue and made her a cup of tea when she asked for one. In the first session, Claudia assessed Pearl's mobility. Claudia and Bruce, two other volunteers, did some mobility training on the chair and in the kitchen to enhance Pearl's strength and body balance.

The Saints, which is a charity organization managed by Waterfront Football Club, contacted Age UK Waterfront to see if it had any particular need to be fulfilled. Since the Saints is continuously

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[58] Brian and Anthony are long-term volunteers in Age UK. Brian was aged 75 and Anthony was 52.

committed to expertise in football training and a range of community physical activities in Waterfront, there was a professional group providing exercise training for Age UK.

5.2.2 Local Policy Network of Elderly Care in China

In 2017, Ocean Province launched a series of policy and institutional arrangements that included setting up a provincial elderly care reform and pilot committee[59] and an elderly care industry association at provincial and municipal level, encouraging commercial elderly care development and driving the full coverage of the community through the street day care centre and community elderly care canteen. There was even a commercial street block for the elderly care industry and cultural activities. No matter what the actual effect of these actions is, at least Ocean Province and River City both run pilot projects for elderly care, and local government is ambitious in boosting the elderly care industry. The growing pressure of China's aging population has pushed the government to explore more efficient means of elderly care provision. Mrs. Chang Le is the head of elderly care in the district department of civil affairs. She was my first interviewee in elderly care field, and she briefed me on the background in elderly care policy and its change over time at the very beginning of my fieldwork in River City. Mrs. Chang is about 35 years old and is very warm-hearted. She expressed her surprise when she saw my fieldwork plan, particularly my title as a PhD student based at University of Waterfront in England. Afterwards, she introduced the general longitudinal development over the past 10 years with a smile, emphasising some of the significant progress made during the past five years.

> **Mrs. Chang Le (Chief of Elderly Care, Water District Department of Civil Affairs):** *The proportion of elderly residents in our district is as high as 36.9%. That means in every 10 people, we have 3 or 4 elderly people. We also face another limitation in public space. Since our district is the most condensed district compared with neighbouring districts, we do not have spare public space for elderly care provision. Most of our elderly people live by themselves, without their children at home on a daily basis, because they do not want to leave this old residential area, to which they have been accustomed. Even if our average pension rate is higher than other districts, the habit of saving money remains the same. The elderly tend to save money rather than spend it on elderly care services or products.*

Specialization in elderly care provision is the most obvious trend and is promoted strongly through many high-level policy designs. Mrs. Le admitted that local-level governments, including municipal and district levels, have gained greater flexibility in policy implementation and even some trivial

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[59] The Provincial Elderly Care Reform and Pilot Committee consists of political leaders sitting in the provincial general office and other leaders in provincial department of elderly care.
http://wzmz.wenzhou.gov.cn/art/2014/5/28/art_1240391_4183131.html

policy remedies. Although a great deal of upper-level policymaking is unclear at the initial stages and too vague to implement, lower-level service providers need a direction to follow. Moreover, the rationality behind the decision-making has been significantly improved in recent years through trial and error. I drew an elderly care network map (see Figure 5-4) based on my fieldwork data, which encompasses the vertical and horizontal system of elderly care provision. Basically, there are four vertical levels of Civil Affairs Bureau, covering national, provincial, municipal and district levels, and the NGOs interact with municipal and district bureau and street-level offices more than any others. There are eight NGOs offering elderly care in Water District. The Community Resident Committee (CRC) street-level office has an elderly care service centre, as does every CRC. After any service contracts are agreed between NGOs and municipal or district bureau, NGOs need to cooperate with street-level offices and the CRC for service provision.

The thematic analysis of China data in Section 8.4 will provide more personal and observational details to this system framework and show more about the characteristics of the service delivery process.

Figure 5-2 China Network Governance Map for Elderly Care
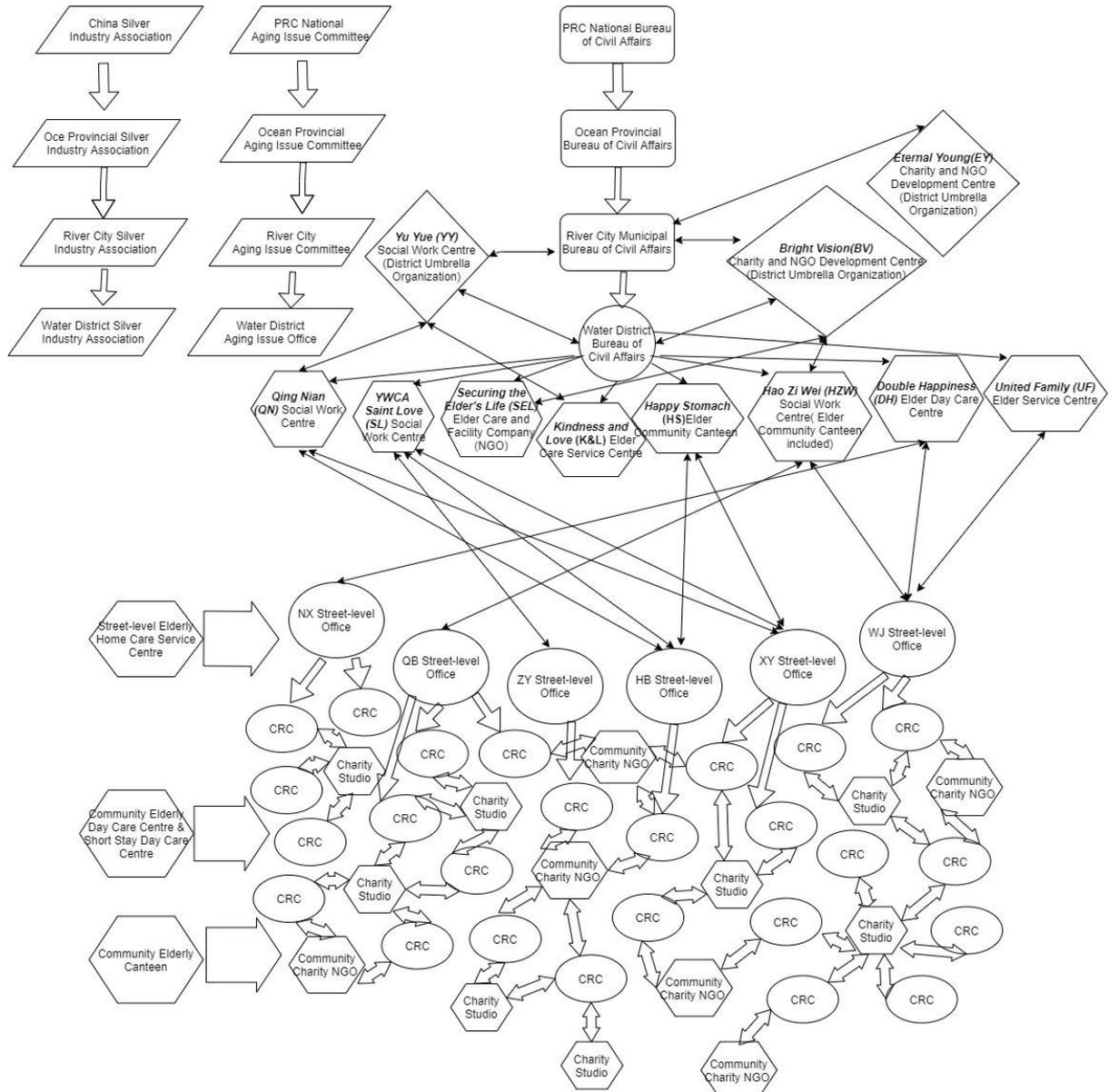
5.2.3 Local Policy Network of Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities in England

The Short Break[60] and JIGSAW[61] schemes were established and initiated by Waterfront City Council for children with special educational needs or learning disabilities. The council officers for these two schemes work collaboratively with Clinical Care Group (CCG) of the NHS. Both schemes are based on a Local Service Network, which involves 30 local service providers (see Table 5-3 and Figure 5-3). Five providers are supported by Waterfront City Council, while three local umbrella organizations work actively within this service sector (see Table 5-3).

Table 5-3 List of Local Service Provider Networks in Waterfront City, England

The Buzz Network (Waterfront City Council)	The Challenging Behaviour Foundation	Minecraft and Meltdowns Minecraft Cafe
SEND Service Team, Portage, Post 16 (Waterfront City Council)	Saints Foundation	The National Autistic Society
Early Years Advisory Team (Waterfront City Council)	Epilepsy Action	Adhara Autism Trust
The Supported Internship Programme Team (Waterfront city Council)	Active Nation	Sophia's House
Waterfront Parent Carer Forum (Waterfront City Council)	The Rainbow Trust	Great Oaks and Rosewood Post 16 Pop-up Shop
Tulip Road Association	Break Out Youth	Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
Waterfront Man-ability	The Rainbow Centre (Fareham)	Usborne Books
Voice for Carers	Waterfront Opportunity Group	The Community Nursing Team
Autism Hookshire	Naomi House	Waterfront SENDIASS Team
Solent Youth Action	Re:minds Support Group	CAMHS (West)

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[60] "Provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends. They offer parents and carers a break from their caring responsibilities and time to spend with other family members or to catch up on other daily tasks." https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztIRo&localofferchannel=0

[61] "Children with Disabilities Team is a specialist and statutory multi-agency health and social care service that undertakes assessments and provides services at the complex level of needs. The Team supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a complex impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families." https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=nStqYS7rVXQ

Figure 5-3 Network Governance Map in Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities
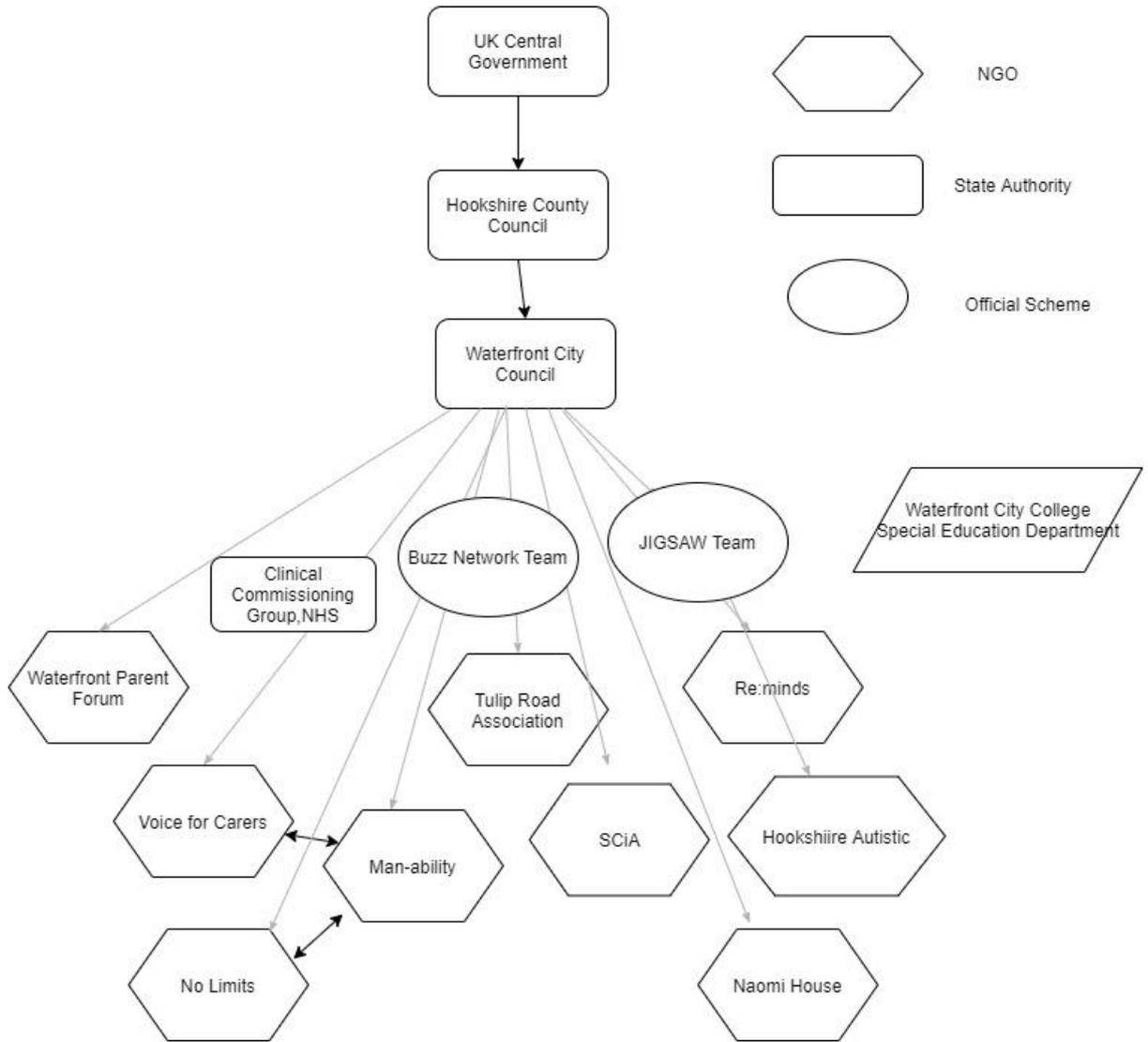
Of the service providers, five are led by Waterfront City Council. They are The Buzz Network, SEND Service Team, Early Years Advisory Team, The Supported Internship Programme Team and Waterfront Parent and Carers Forum. The Buzz Network and Waterfront Parent Forum are two of the leading and most proactive organizations among the official service providers, and the latter has been working hand in hand with the Tulip Road Association to organize information events for local parents, perform consultation work with parents and organise other activities aimed at engaging more parents. The activity coordinator, Clair Pritchard, is also the coordinator of Waterfront Parents and Carers Forum. The Tulip Road Association, Waterfront Man-ability and Voice for Carers are three primary outside bodies, the latter two of which work more independently. These local charity organizations are also involved in respite services, carer services and holiday play schemes.

There are generally four kinds of local provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities: one-to-one support, personal budgeting, play schemes and community-based activities. one-to-one support play schemes and community-based activities are partly funded by Waterfront City Council, so that prices are lower than normal prices for the unassessed families (see Tables 5-4 and 5-5). Families who have been assessed and allocated to a category can use the scheme's personal budget to pay for these services.

Table 5-4 Play Scheme Local Offers in Community Organizations

Play Scheme	Host Organization	Venue	Time	Price of each session
Tulip Road Association Bradbury Holiday Scheme	Tulip Road Association	Bradbury Centre, Tulip Road Association	School Holidays U14 10:00-15:00 U14 09:00-17:00 O1410:00-16:00 Trips10:00-16:00	£18 £25 £20 £30
Tulip Road Play Scheme	Tulip Road Association	The Cedar School	Term Time Fortnightly on Saturdays Ages: 8-19 years old 10:00-16:00 Trips 10:00-16:00	£20 £30
Waterfront Man-ability Fair Play Junior Holiday Scheme	Waterfront Man-ability	Waterfront Man-ability Activities Centre	School Holiday 9:30-16:30	£15.4
Waterfront Man-ability Fair Play Junior Saturday Club	Waterfront Man-ability	Waterfront Man-ability Activities Centre	Alternate Saturday of Term Time 9:30-13:30(Junior-5-11 years) 14:30-18:30(Teens-secondary school transfer age and up)	£8.8
Waterfront Man-ability Fair Play Teen Saturday Club	Waterfront Man-ability	Waterfront Man-ability Activities Centre	Alternate Saturday of Term Time 14:30-18:30	£8.8
Waterfront Man-ability Fair Play Teen Scheme	Waterfront Man-ability	Waterfront Man-ability Activities Centre	Various days in school holidays 9:30-16:30	£15.4

Table 5-5 Local Offers of Support Services in Community Organizations

Support Service Name	Host Organization	Venue	Time	Cost
Kids Direct One to One Service	Kids Charity	In the home setting or in the community	as agreed with chosen provider	Free Activity but Transport Fee is charged
Tulip Road One to One Service	Tulip Road	In the home setting or in the community	as agreed with chosen provider	Free Activity but Transport Fee is charged
Smile Support and Care One to One Service	Smile Support	In the home setting or in the community	as agreed with chosen provider	Free Activity but Transport Fee is charged
Autism Wessex One to One Service	Autism Wessex Community Support Service	Basepoint Enterprise Centre	N/A	N/A
Tulip Road Association - Oaks and Acorns	Tulip Road Association	Tulip Road Association	Open hours 8:30-16:30	N/A
Solent Youth Action Club Flash	YWCA	George Williams House Cranbury Place	11:00-13:00	£4

I witnessed two striking policy changes during my field studies in Waterfront. The first was in the eligibility criteria for children and young with learning disabilities. The existing criteria had been in place for 10 years, and the new criteria changed the criteria for the beneficiary group and upgraded services for the three upper levels of the four categories. The second was in respite services for people with learning-disabilities, where after consultation the KR Respite Centre that had been closed was reopened.

After November 2017, Waterfront City Council decided to reassess the eligibility of existing service users and readjust the existing funding criteria for each category. When council staff reviewed the outcome and the current needs of families in Waterfront, they noticed an obvious inequality between different categories of families. There were four categories of local needs and beneficiary groups based on needs:

Low - additional needs met through mainstream services

Medium - additional needs requiring enhanced or adapted mainstream services

Substantial - child has learning or physical disability that significantly impacts the quality of the child and their family's life, requiring support from targeted services.

Critical - joined-up support from both health and social care (Jigsaw team) because child and family require specialist support.

The most obvious policy change occurred within the low need group. The idea behind this policy change was to raise the low need group's awareness of using Buzz Network and Local services. The medium group would receive a Short Breaks Plus card, providing booking rights to a wider range of grant funded services, although personal budgets would stop. The substantial group was previously accessing Buzz Network and had a personal budget but would now be asked to complete a Short Break assessment. The critical group's service package was also levelled up to the Jigsaw (multi-agency approach) plus Short Breaks assessment with appropriate (but not fixed) personal budgets available.

The existing budget of £480,000 for medium, substantial and critical needs would be moved to cover the medium group for grants, commissioned services and personal budgets. The critical and substantial groups would not have their existing grants increased, but commissioned services and personal budgets would remain in place for these two groups (see Table 5-6).

In more specific terms, the medium, substantial and critical groups would be reassessed to receive a proportion of the upgraded service packages. Of the total of 1350, 850 medium level service users would enjoy enhanced services. (see Table 5-7)

Table 5-6 The Structures of Current and Forecast Revenue Expenditure in Social Care for Children with Learning Disabilities [62]

	Current Revenue Expenditure		Forecast Revenue Expenditure	
	Grant	Commissioned services (contracts) & Personal budgets	Grant	Commissioned services (contract and DPS) & Personal budgets
Critical	£480,000	£975,000	£0	£975,000
Substantial				
Medium			£480,000	
Low		£0	£0	

Table 5-7 Revenue Expenditure Change for Service for Children with Learning Disabilities[63]

	Total estimated will be at this level	Estimates number receiving an enhanced service
Low	5,000	5,000
Medium	1,350	850
Substantial	150	150
Critical/Complex	285	30
Total	**6,785**	**1,030 (not including those at the low level)**

Waterfront City Council staff had already run five rounds of consultations with families with children with special educational needs and disabilities before I attended one, which took place at the Civic Centre at 5:00pm, together with six mothers who are taking care of children with learning or behavioural disabilities. Debora Jacques and Amy Marks are service directors for Short Break. They were present at this consultation meeting and offered further explanations relating to the service provision changes. Maria has a child with autism, and when I asked her opinion about the policy change, she expressed disappointment:

> **Mrs. Maria White (Mother of a child with learning disabilities):** *We had one to one support and play schemes before, and one of the other family members could company my child during the activity. Since he has autistic problems, if we were only given a personal budget to support my child when I take a short break, it wouldn't be acceptable for him. He can't accept strangers playing with him or taking him to the cinema.*

The policy rearrangements were controversial among service users and providers, as subsidy levels are lower for users of critical and substantial levels and the total number of users qualified for the service was significantly reduced.

5.2.4 Local Policy Network of Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities in China

During my field studies in China, I discovered that the group support for people with learning disabilities primarily comes from two sources – the government system and self-reliant mothers of children with learning disabilities. In the government supporting system, there are alliances at different administration levels, running in parallel with each level of government. There is an independent official unit called a Caring and Working Station in each street. Disabled Alliance is not an internal department of government but a separate official charity group. Its function is to issue subsidies for disabled people, to enhance the employment prospects of disabled groups, to

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[63] Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Meeting, Thursday, 12th April 2018 at 5.30 pm, Council Chambers. Public Document Pack.

organize different leisure activities for disabled groups and their families, and to inspect the NGOs that are providing service delivery for disabled group (see Table 5-8).

Table 5-8 Subsidy criteria for different levels of learning disabilities in Water District

	Monthly subsidy for recovery training courses (Chinese yuan)	Monthly subsidy for living costs (Chinese yuan)
Critical	500	50
Substantial	250	
Medium	125	
Low	125	

The Caring and Working Station is normally located in a separate building, which provides a venue for adults with mental health problems and learning disabilities to participate in activities and to be offered care, and to take medication if necessary under the supervision of carers on weekdays. The NGOs I was in contact with fell into two groups – day care centres or autism training centres and special education schools providing art training courses for the Working and Caring Station or Reducing Help. The Wisdom and Aura and Stardust centres were run by the Day Care Centre and WABC, and by Mr. Huang Xiao's Normal University Art and Healing Team at the School. The local policy network map supporting the following narrative is shown in Figure 5-4 and offers a clear overview for understanding the evidence that is subsequently discussed.

Figure 5-4 Network Map of Social Care for people with learning disabilities in Water District
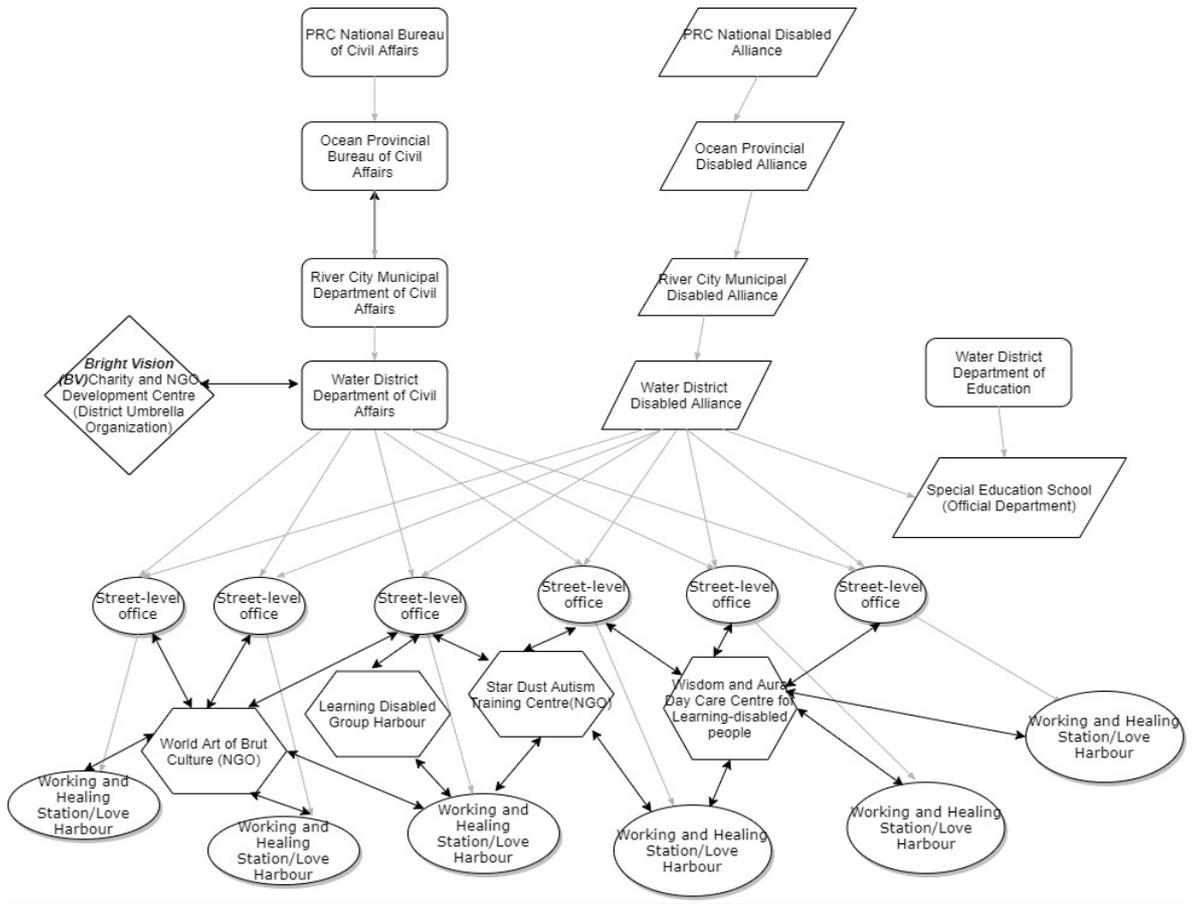
The cost of collaborating with external bodies varies between local government offices. Whatever the minimum cost is, the convenience of cultivating a dependent relationship with internal bodies is nevertheless appealing. In this section, I discuss some dependent organizations, including the official Day Care Centre (the Working and Caring Station or Loving Harbour), the substitute NGO for official Day Care Centres and the special education school. Mrs. Gu Limei is the manager of an official Day Care Centre, Mrs. Ke Yanxia is the daily activity manager of the Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre and Mrs. Yang Liping is the president of the SYN Special Education School. Mr. Meng Shaoyou is vice president of the District Disabled Alliance, an official charity organization.

Hand-made crafts are available to buy at this charity organization, and in the charity coffee shop affiliated with special education school I tasted some of the cakes baked at the Wise Tree Coffee Shop by students from the SYN Special Education School. Mrs. Yang Liping is the president of this well-known school. I was given her phone number at the end of my meeting with Mr. Meng – vice president of District Disabled Alliance – proving that snowballing is an effective method once you have gained the trust of a few people.

Mrs. Yang's office was on the second floor, giving her a view of the first-floor hall. Her office was neatly organized and about 25 square meters in size. The equipment was advanced, including a

large Apple monitor and an iPad. Before our meeting, I browsed her information and details online. She presented herself as a professional and warm-hearted helper for the children with learning disabilities. Mrs. Yang wore a white shirt under a long, light purple knitted sweater. Her hair was tied in a ponytail down her back. She took me to the charity café after we met in the office. There was an internal short cut to the café that took us through many doors and different function rooms. On the way to the café, Mrs. Yang showed curiosity about the Autism education courses in England and asked for my support for her school for overseas resources. I made some general points about the British autism service provision network and suggested offer supportive resources for Mrs. Yang's special education school.

The majority of people with learning disabilities in day care centres or other organizations meet in a safe place to enjoy daily activities. Even in the special education school, educating the students to be qualified workers seeking employment is the main aim. Mr. Meng, the vice president of the District Disabled Alliance, often mentioned the senior level disabled alliances' policy targets for enhancing the learning-disabled group's employability:

> **Mr. Meng Shaoyou (Vice President of Water District Disabled Alliance):** *The district disabled alliance is trying to offer the co-production of professional training with Starbucks, the Shangri-La Hotel other some charity organizations like the Wise Tree Coffee Shop. The annual commitment of each district is initiated by the deputy mayor in charge of disabled alliance. The commitment encompasses the anticipated employability rate and long-term prognosis for people with learning disabilities. Our role in charity organization development is offering general guidance and encouraging organizations to promote the employability and the opportunity of professional training.*

Supplementary employability training is another measure that the Disabled Alliance takes to increase the possibility for people with learning disabilities to be employed in job market:

> **Mr. Meng Shaoyou:** *We have some supplementary employability training institutions like the Wise Tree. A small portion of members can ultimately get involved into the society as common people.*

5.3 The Characteristics of Local Policy Network in England and China

As is analysed above, policy networks exist in both Waterfront City and Water District. The umbrella NGOs' impact on public service delivery, the policy context of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities and local policy networks in both areas of social care at both sites have been elaborated in this chapter. This section will go further to look at the characteristics of local policy network in England and China by following the comparative theme set out in Table 5-9.

Table 5-9 Themes for Comparing Birds' Eye Views of NGO-Gov Relations in England and China

	Themes	Subthemes in England	Subthemes in China
The Characteristics of Local Policy Network in England and China	Interdependence and Reciprocity between Umbrella NGOs, Service Provision NGOs and Local Government	Statutory Responsibilities and Combating Austerity	Whoremaster and Prostitute
	Umbrella NGO Resource Exchange Strategy	Resistance against Recurring Challenges of Financial and Human Resource Shortage	The Flow of Contracts: Chasing Experienced NGOs and Easy-going District Government
			One Team under Double-level Brands: Cutting Cost for Expanding Territory and Lobbying Flexibility

5.3.1 Interdependence and Reciprocity of Local Policy Network in England and China

Although both sites showed similar interdependence in terms of policy network because local governments in both areas need NGOs to help them with statutory responsibilities, the conditions of interdependence vary. In England, austerity is an additional burden, while in China financial support is short-term and limited to the interdependence and reciprocity between local states and NGOs, which I was told resembles a relationship between whoremaster and prostitute.

5.3.1.1 Statutory Responsibilities and Combating Austerity

Both the NGO side and Council side admitted that the policy of austerity imposed by central government has significantly affected social care provision. Austerity has pushed the council to transfer the burden of service provision to NGOs to a greater extent than before. Just as Cllr. Sandra Lunar said:

> **Councillor Sandra Lunar (Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Housing):** *From the perspective of a Labour Councillor, community has always been an important part of the society we want. however, it should be there to complement the functions of the state in caring for the most vulnerable, not replacing them. Austerity imposed over the past 10 years has slowly moved the provision of social care into community organisations, with the Care Act underpinning this in the "strength-based approach"'. There is a concern that due to the funding crisis facing local government that community organisations will be used to gatekeep access to statutory services.*

Waterfront City Council is committed to supporting existing provision, helping new groups to start up and providing information to the citizens on what is available and how to access it.

Most voluntary groups and residents in the city have been impacted by the cuts to funding that have been and continue to be imposed by central government. They have lost grants and financial support to some groups, as well as the provision of social care. Many local charities in the city lobby the council on behalf of the specific community they represent.

> **Judy Tyre:** *I wouldn't describe it as less successful organizations, why it says that every organization at some point or another hit some difficulty. I mean, funding is obviously a really big issue. The organization has some sort of financial requirements to keep it operating however big or small it might be. And the uncertainty and complexity has increased significantly over the years. Obviously in the austerity period that we've been show as a nation has impacted on the voluntary sector because you had a kind of reduction in what's available in terms of funding and an increase in demand for services. So they've got less money to invest in what people call it affordable, but always pay for market rate for the services they want.*

The funding scarcity has been an overwhelming problem for all NGOs in Waterfront. The city council introduced direct payment to service users to give them control over their budget rather than the NGOs who provide the care. This is a reasonable procedure to justify when facing the public because for the City Council, statutory responsibilities will not bring so much criticism if the service users themselves are put in control. However, the proper use of direct payment is not practical for some individual service users as they lack the knowledge of local public service delivery.

> **Yongmei Li:** *The council has applied direct payments in social care delivery, and many service users will be charged more money after this change. Voluntary organizations are always facing this situation, not the council directly. They have to explain the theory of direct payments, which is good, isn't it? I mean, people actually have control of the resources used in their own care and can use it flexibly.*

> **Judy Tyre:** *I mean who can argue with the principle of putting people in control? But what is the reality of being able to do that? Because sometimes people's capacity isn't suitable for them to be able to manage that kind of thing. And secondly, the kind of requirements it takes to find the carers that meet your particular needs at the particular time as you need them is not realistic. There's a finite pool of carers. So, all of those things kind of contrive to make it difficult to come up with perfect solutions.*

Lacking control has brought potential problems for individual social care provision, especially when service users struggle with the system of direct payments. The council transfers accountability to individual care users without considering their capacity to cope.

5.3.1.2 Whoremaster and Prostitute

According to my narrative on contracts, a plausible assumption is that the public service market for contracting out is characterised by choice. Does this choice mean there is an equal relationship between the contractor and the government? I raised this question in the interviews with the umbrella organizations in both countries. I asked my interviewees how they would describe the relationship between the government and the NGOs? Among the answers, Mr. Sheng Jun's answer impressed me the most. His reply was "whoremaster and prostitute". We were all surprised when we heard this graphic metaphor. We had a round of Q&A on the topic. Mr Sheng elaborated.

> **Mr. Sheng Jun (Deputy Chief of Yu Yue Social Work Service Centre):** *We love the government for its funding, but we also hate it for its ill will and for always breaking its word. As a local NGO, we face several possible funding sources, and each district government represents one source. If we maintain a happy relationship, we will enjoy a continuous flow of contracts, but if we do not need each other – if I were to find some other better whoremasters – I will leave this one, because my service could be a one-off. The key point of making this metaphor is that the government always raises some unreasonable and excessive goals for us, and we have to bear their unreasonable requests and bad temper for the poor financial resources they offer us. The government does not make any promises for a long-term relationship, like the whoremaster does not need to remember the prostitute's name. When they need us, they will come back. No matter whether they are a one-time customer or a regular customer, the government requires more from us but is less likely to be held accountable. For example, even if we have declared in the contract that we will only do ten periods of supervision or assessment work, the government can add an extra 20 periods once the project gets going. However, if we are unhappy, we can shift our resources to another district and bid for their funding. There is no responsibility between us. Do they have to take any responsibility? Definitely No.*

Mr. Sheng also showed the same attitude. Mr. Shan Yunxiang and Mrs. Lin also made this point:

> **Mr. Shan Yun Xiang (Chief of Eternal Young Social Work Centre):** *If the officer happens to call us to his or her office and assigns us unexpected tasks, we cannot refuse them. They do not behave according to confirmed rules or contracts. Instead, we have to be very flexible when we work with the government. On the other side of the coin, we can fulfil some criteria to survive the assessment and we will not be strictly checked in terms of the other criteria.*

The transactions between local governments and NGOs reflect the needs of both sides. Government contracts are what NGOs strive to obtain. Local government can therefore assign new tasks to NGOs and request assessment reports from them. However, NGOs' performance criteria can be exchanged for other criteria that are prioritized by local government.

5.3.2 Resource Strategy of Umbrella NGOs

In my experience, umbrella NGOs in England and China adopted different resource strategies. For umbrella NGOs in England, recurring challenges like funding scarcity, volunteer availability and reciprocity with local government need to be dealt with. In China, the convenience of the geographical locations of umbrella NGOs facilitates the flow of contracts between different NGOs and district governments. Umbrella NGOs can expand their territory as widely as possible by registering two brands at different levels of government, but taking service contracts with one team.

5.3.2.1 Umbrella NGOs in England: Resistance to Recurring Challenges

There are two forms of recurring challenges for NGOs in Waterfront. As the last section demonstrated, funding shortages are severe. Meanwhile, volunteer shortages are partly caused by funding scarcity. The reasons for this encompass individuals' time and capacity, availability and the additional responsibility of being carers.

> **Judy Tyre:** *So whichever way you turn, there's a pressure point on resources in terms of volunteering. There's more competition in demand for volunteers across sectors. We've got high employment in the city, but that means people have less time and capacity to volunteer. And we've got more people staying in work longer and having care responsibilities, in terms of children and grandchildren and for older parents and family members. So, you have to kind of squeeze generations. So, competition for time and attention is that much greater than it used to be.*

Competing for people's attention and time for voluntary work is no less easy than seeking extra funding opportunities. Facing more city council restrictions than potential volunteers, many NGOs struggled with balancing critical attitudes to city council and being less troublesome.

> **Judy Tyre:** *It's difficult for organizations that have services and receive funding from the local authority, because you've got to maintain an ongoing working relationship. And at the same time, you're trying to challenge them. And I think it's something that we all kind of struggle to get the balance right. And because of all you do, people actually end up with them. It's not listening to a word you ever decided for anything, because all you ever do is making mistakes rather than coming up with any kind of solutions. But of course, as soon as you enter into that slightly ill-tempered and less strident campaign, funding becomes more difficult.*

Campaigns or other ways of forming critical alliances all come with underlying risks of undermining trust with the city council, unless NGOs are confident about their friendship with the council.

Waterfront Voluntary Services is an established umbrella organization that has been building up a local organization network for voluntary organizations for over 50 years. It functions as a

representative for voluntary organizations in certain service delivery areas like childcare and health care for adults through attending city council meetings and committee meetings.

> **Judy Tyre:** *They were positioned on most of the strategic boards and groups in the city. So we, um, respond and can see both and can articulate on behalf of the sector where problems and issues arise in the context of whatever discussion it might be with her safe city partnership, yeah, safeguarding board or health and well-being board with it. We can identify where there are opportunities for the voluntary sector to add value or contribute.*

5.3.2.2 Friday Forum: A United Platform for Information and Experience Sharing

Friday Forum is a monthly network platform. On the first Friday of every month, Waterfront Voluntary Services (WVS) holds a session focusing on a specific theme. In the session, NGOs and council staff who are concerned with that theme will attend. Normally, there is a thematic presentation, and it is followed by a discussion in the first half. The interval is a social time for networking, and I was able to approach anyone I want and talk to them. In the second half there is an open communication, when people can exchange information, express their needs and leave email addresses. Some ideas may evoke small discussions randomly.

> **Yongmei Li:** *I think that the Friday Forum and other training for specific voluntary services, they function as a kind of platform for activities for helping people.*

> **Judy:** *Yeah, information sharing on relevant topics or issues or whatever. And we do the Friday Forum where we can have a whole variety of different topics on at any time. And then we will do specific one of training as well, if we see this and they … to be honest, the delivery of formal training programs has become more difficult over the years because we can put something on ourselves. But we can't always guarantee, even though we know there's a need out there, we can't always get people to come to it, and that's to do with when people are available. Um, so it is quite difficult putting on formal training, because quite often we have arranged them and then had to cancel them.*

With only limited time to consider local NGO needs, Waterfront Voluntary Services also hosts other relevant activities for NGOs, such as trustee training, and newly elected committee meetings that are not the service provision NGOs' area of expertise.

> **Judy Tyre:** *That's not a terribly productive use of our time to develop a training course then not get to give it because you don't fill up. Yeah, five people signed up when you really need twelve to make it viable. So there's a kind of constant balancing act on what we do, and we've shifted to do a lot more with certain trustee training which is a very regular training slot. We tend to do that with the whole committee of an organization or a cluster of similar types of organizations. I've just started a similar training for one community association that's been through a bit of a rocky patch and they just kind of reformed and regrouped and elected a new committee and saying for their first meeting*

went into sort out the roles and responsibilities of the committee members. So they start off together with some shared knowledge and understanding of what they should be doing and I think that's quite a productive way of doing it because you can pitch it to the level of kind of preexisting knowledge and you can also pitch it to a time slot that fits with them.

Making the best use of the shared and united platforms established by Waterfront Voluntary Services, Judy matches their expertise and time availability with local NGOs' needs, expertise and time slots productively.

5.3.2.3 China: The Flow of Contracts and One Team under Two Brands

The NGO registration system in China allows a working team to register itself as two organizations at different administration levels. For example, the Eternal Youth Social Work Centre is registered as a municipal social work organization, but it is also registered at the provincial bureau of civil affairs as a provincial social work organization. Taking advantage of this system, one working team can expand its contract bidding scale from a single city to other cities within the province. The contractual relationship is also more flexible as a municipal NGO can choose different district governments or street-level offices to collaborate with. A provincial NGO can do this within a province by selecting any contract delivered by different local authorities at the provincial level. In this way, the process of mutual selection between NGOs and local governments facilitates the flow of contracts. Local governments chase experienced and professional NGOs, and NGOs can collaborate with easy-going local governments.

In public service delivery, there has been a vibrant flow of contracts between different district governments and NGOs. Generally, external funding sources for NGOs come in four types. The first and second source are from the government, firstly in the form of contracting out the public service delivery, and secondly public charity innovation projects. The third source is non-government foundations, such as big enterprise and charity foundations.[64] The last source of contracts comes from competitions within the charity industry.[65]

The existing Chinese project system research has deficiencies and the stories I heard in the course of my fieldwork may contribute to a deeper all-round understanding of how things work in Chinese local governance and public service delivery. The contracting-out system is a popular form of governance in contemporary China. I discovered that research on such contracting focuses on one

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[64] Interview with Mrs. Lin, Mr. Sheng and Mr. Shi
[65] Interview with Mr. Qian

particular level of governance, which is the street level office, the lowest level in the entire administration system. This phenomenon confirms the current ideology of pushing public services down to the lowest level of the administration system. No one pays attention to the influence exerted by different target-setting, policy tools and resources across each level of government on governance when contracting-out, although conflict between the different levels of target-setting at provincial, municipal, district and street levels affect the ultimate results of the service delivery.

Previous Chinese researchers have concentrated on higher levels of government and rarely ask what the street-level government offices and NGOs want from the government. When fighting the higher levels, the street level voice is weak, if not silent. Facing the government, NGOs have weak voices, but if this is the case, how does the vertical and horizontal relationship work? Do the NGOs have no independent voice when they face state power? If they do, why do they bow to the government? If they don't, how do they manage negotiations with the government? By pushing, by pleading? How do they achieve their goals?

NGOs are not powerless, nor are they silent. For example, an NGO supervised by the district government can obtain more resources if they go straight to the upper levels of government. Reducing Help was established 10 years ago by a mother with a boy who developed mental health issues due to an illness. The leader of this NGO was able to access enormous opportunities and information through a wide range of national or local social activities and training schemes. I saw no obvious objections to the leader's social activities from the government side. There were no objections from the district-level government or the district disability alliance. However, the NGO members do not believe that their experience can be diffused to other similar NGOs or imitated by them.

The explanation of this view lies in the specifics of the case. There was an intimate association between the local government and the disability alliance, as well as a great deal of mutual trust accumulated over the past decade. The NGO's leader and its members usually meet the officer formally or informally at official meetings of the district disability alliance office, at the conference hall, during quick lunches in the NGO canteen, or wherever they encounter them and get the chance. The preconditions for influencing higher levels of government are dense network links and high levels of trust. But the question is how many NGOs can meet these conditions? The only way to find out is to ask the everyday policymakers in an NGO. When you ask them, they give you a few rules of thumb for managing other levels of government. Apart from the flow of contracts, one team under double-level brands is the second resource exchange strategy in Water District. Working this way can cut cost when expanding territory and increase lobbying flexibility.

In my fieldwork in River City, I noticed that several NGOs – especially the umbrella NGOs' leaders – had business name cards that mentioned two affiliations. I wondered why. So, every time I saw this kind of business card, I asked about the dual identity.

Mr. Shan Yunxiang, the head of the Eternal Youth Social Work Centre, answered:

> **Mr. Shan Yun Xiang:** *We have one provincial brand and one district brand within the one work team. The provincial brand can offer us the flexibility to shift within the province, but we do not get enough support from the provincial government. This means that we need a district brand to build up closer connections with the local government to gain more local support. We have a strong academic background with our initiator and supervisor, who is mainly based in local universities and whose expertise is social work. For example, Mr. Ma, Mr. Chang and Mr. Tang are more familiar with the project bidding assessment process, so we benefit from their working experience as experts in this field.*

This kind of discussion was repeated when I interviewed with Mr. Liao Bo. The difference is that Mr. Liao registered a municipal brand and a district brand, under which he managed one team. The NGOs are adopting a wise strategy for expanding their territory through flexible lobbying.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter mainly offered a bird's eye view of network governance within the circle of umbrella NGOs, service provision NGOs and local government. In so doing, it answers my first research question which queried the existence of policy networks in England and China. There are local policy networks for elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities in both England and China. This means that network governance is a feasible model to explain the local practices of public service delivery in both countries.

This chapter also elaborated on the institutional and policy contexts of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities from the aspects of financial support and policy arrangements. Section 5.4 then focused on two key concepts of network governance: interdependence and reciprocity and resource exchange strategy. The conceptual analysis revealed the characteristics of local policy network in England and China. This chapter has also emphasised the function of umbrella NGOs and their spheres of influence in both countries. The complete picture provides an overall industry context necessary for the next four chapters, which present the view from the ground up. The next four chapters will present a bottom-up view that will explore the theoretical concepts of network governance, including resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building and cooperation, and diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Finally, all the conclusions generated here and from the thematic analysis in the following fieldwork chapters will be revisited in Chapter 10.

Chapter 6: Resource Exchange and Interdependence: Elderly Care in England and China

This chapter compares resource exchange and interdependence between local governments and NGOs in the network governance of elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. In contrast to the bird's eye view presented in Chapter 5, I offer a bottom-up analysis in this and subsequent chapters, unpacking the stories in detail around my comparative themes (see column 1 in Table 6-1 below). This chapter is one of three pieces of the jigsaw that form the answer to my research questions – is network governance feasible in England and China in both policy areas? And what are the differences and similarities between network governance in England and China? Section 6.1 presents the different and similar resources available and the levels of dependence in elderly care policy network in England and China for NGOs. It serves as a starting point of all the subsequent analysis based on mutual needs in Section 6.2 and aspects of interdependence and reciprocity in elderly care in England and China in Section 6.3. Section 6.4 offers a conclusion generated from comparing mutual needs, resource availability, interdependence and resource exchange in both policy areas in England and China. There are 14 actors, 1 project and 12 organizations on the stage. (see Glossary of Terms and Cast of Characters for Chapter 6)

Themes	Elder Care in England and China	Social Care for people with learning disabilities in England and China
Resource Exchange and Interdependence **1. Resource Availability and Exchange: The Face of Power**	6.1.1 Government austerity and NGO independence vs 6.1.2 Resource abundancy and swinging between independence and dependence	7.1.1 It's impossible to reduce resource dependence vs 7.1.2 High degree of resource independence
2. Responding to Mutual Needs: Facing Power	6.2.1 NGOs respond strong to government needs vs 6.2.2 Putting government needs first	7.2.1 Feeding mutual needs vs 7.2.2 NGO needs are seldom met
3. Interdependence and Reciprocity: State and NGO Game-playing Styles	6.3.1 NGOs make local practices bloom, but the government does not vs 6.3.2 NGOs are looking up but practicing locally	7.3.1 NGO game-playing style in state solo dance vs 7.3.2 Submissive NGO players in state-society dance

Table 6-1 Themes for Comparing Resource Exchange and Interdependence in Policy Network of Elderly Care

6.1 Resource Availability and Dependence in England and China

This section elaborates on the different mutual needs and resource availability of elderly care policy network in England and China. Elderly care is an important policy issue in both England and China but developed and matured in England earlier than that in China. In England, due to government austerity and privatization of elderly care, mutual needs between NGOs doing elderly care and city council decreased. In China, public-funded elderly care provision is still dominant while privatized elderly care by market organization is marginalized. Local government and elderly care NGOs in China need each other to a higher extent than their equivalent in England. Risk-adverse and lower cost are the common needs of local government in both policy areas in England and China.

6.1.1 England: Governmental Austerity and NGO Independence

Care for the elderly is preoccupied with problems brought on by national government austerity (Chapter 2). Throughout my fieldwork in Waterfront, I found no committee or panel meetings dealing with elderly care provision, even in the year-round council and cabinet meetings, nor did I hear any discussion around elderly care. It was as if there were no problems that needed to be solved in this field. Was that true in reality? I found differences between the harmonious observations in the council in my interviews and observations of elderly care providers in my interviews. Meanwhile, my later fieldwork in China identified questions I had omitted to ask during my UK fieldwork.

Mary Hugo in Age UK was supportive of my research questions and took me to a day care center when she heard about my project. I texted her and got an instant reply to my interview request. When I pushed the door and got in, there were plenty of elderly people, three of whom sat in a small area on the left while more in the larger common area on the right. A volunteer led me to Mary's office. A gentle piece of background music was playing.

This small office was surrounded by the common area and the canteen which took up 60 to 70 square meters. There was an office desk and two filing cabinets. Mary seated me beside one of the cabinets while she continued dealing with some documents. She was dressed in a long black blouse with white dots on it. She wore tight black trousers and a pair of black sneakers. She had short white hair and black-framed glasses.

Mary responded strongly to elders' universal sense of deprivation as she talked about austerity, especially the uneven distribution of financial support in childcare and elderly care.

Mrs. Mary Hugo, Service Manager, Padwell Elder Day Care Center, Age UK Waterfront:
First of all, when you asked the question, I said, I don't want you to think that I'm being negative, on the contrary, if I was a negative person, I wouldn't be here.

Mary spoke in a helpless tone about the poor provision of elderly care budget but stood by her judgement of the unfair reasons for being lagged behind. I felt her serious attitude.

Mary Hugo: *If you have the boxes there to put the money in for different groups, we are always the last ones, OK? You know, the reason why is that Josephine or Ronnie or Margaret only have five years to live. But they will support a young girl who doesn't work and is taking money from the government to make babies.*

Li Yongmei (Giggled): *Yes, that's very cruel. Sounds ridiculous. So what is the reason or excuse for the funding cut?*

Mary: *Money, money.*

Li Yongmei: *The council? Is it the only reason?*

Mary: *Money. It's about money. Who suffers most? Because if you think about it, and we had a meeting here and no one responded to me. First of all, when they asked the question, I said 'I am not being negative – on the contrary, if I was a negative person, I wouldn't be in here'.*

Annie from Community Wellbeing echoed the reality of the funding cuts.

Annie, Community Wellbeing: *I was sitting with a group of friends just last week and talking about mental health. And they were saying, you know, it's terrible because not enough funding is going into it. And I said that may or may not be the case, but from my point of view, I'm taking it that there is no more money.*

The six-month pilot of direct payment is another action taken by the city council and needs support from local NGOs.

Annie: *We don't get a great deal of support. So for example, the day care service, we've slowly started getting some customers who pay for their service. Yeah, but it's not until the actual families ring up and say, 'well, I think my bill should be more than what it is. I've got this card,' which we know is a dormant payment card. So then we have to look at how much we've been charging them when the direct payment cards came into effect, and then we have to give them a nice big bill and tell them 'you need to pay that now'.*

NGOs in Waterfront are rarely present in meetings or at consultations. I was curious about the reasons for that. Judy told me that she thinks it's because NGOs do not think their voice can make any impact, especially when budget problems are the most decisive factor in policymaking.

6.1.2 China: Resource Abundancy and Swinging Between Independence and Dependence

In contrast, the elderly care industry is growing in China in private retirement apartments and NGO provision. Government-led arrangements do not involve private retirement apartments developed by big companies but mainly focus on public-funded apartments and NGOs. Pilot experiments in elderly care across Ocean Province, from River City down to Water District, encourage local government to reinforce capacity building of local NGOs. The government needs NGOs to secure good performance and risk-averse targets in public service delivery, and NGOs rely on governmental funding at the initial stage of their development. I continued my inquiry into the reasons behind government funding cuts in elderly care.

The first step for an NGO to enjoy abundant government resources is to participate in contract bidding, which is a process growing in River City, including Water District. Initially, existing companies were much more likely to win the bidding, and contract bidding was criticized by some local NGOs until it developed into a normative and more transparent process. Mrs. Hu Yuzhen shared her story about contract bidding that demonstrated this changing process.

I met Mrs. Hu, an elegant woman aged around 60, at a monthly birthday party for elderly people in the YWCA. Ms. Nie nodded to confirm that the lady was Mrs. Hu, the YWCA manager, and introduced me to her. We sat together, and she started telling me her about her career in the YWCA and her motivation for taking the position here. Mrs. Hu invited me to her office, which was just opposite the lift. She made me a cup of hot green tea and seated me on the sofa. The YWCA was facing twofold challenges in terms of the relationship with local bureaucracy: the short-term drawbacks connected to the organisation's Christian background and the unfair grant bidding process a few years ago.

When I asked Mrs. Hu about uncomfortable experiences of collaborating with local government, she recalled a memory from 2015 and frowned as she described it. Mrs. Hu had written letter to report the unfair process to municipal and provincial level governments, expressing her determination not to participate in the grant bidding.

> **Mrs. Hu Yuzhen, Manager of YWCA River City:** *I told them if you do not change this rule, we will stop our participation in lobbying from now on. This complaint then travelled up to the municipal-level and then the municipal department of civil affairs phoned me to reassure me and persuaded me to cancel the complaint. They are afraid of my continuing complaint and of my writing letters to provincial government. The municipal officer said, even if you write to the upper level, the result of this bidding would not change, but we will be affected and annoyed by upper pressure for some*

time. Next time when we run another lobby, you can participate and perhaps will have greater possibility to win.

She looked serious as she told me this story and remembered it made her angry. I asked her why she had decided to participate once more in local government contract bidding.

Mrs. Hu: *Firstly, we are better qualified in elderly care provision and elderly carer training in this city. The district government and street-level offices are aware of this, and they came back to purchase our service provision. Secondly, I found the bidding procedure had become more and more legitimated and normalised, so I didn't think the previous experience would be repeated.*

I showed sympathy for Mrs. Hu's view on the respective merits of elder service provision by charitable organizations and private company. She reviewed the pros and cons of moving from only one provider to more competitors:

Mrs Hu: *At first the lobbying system was not established, so we only had one provider doing elderly care, and we received many complaints. After we ran the bidding system and gained another two providers, the first one was pushed to improve its quality and the number of complaints decreased sharply.*

The lobbying experience is a learning process for any beginner, including YWCA. As the number of competitors involved in the bidding game grew, elderly care service quality was promoted in winning the bid. As an NGO with an international background, YWCA put in bids not only for local projects but also for some international projects, which enriched the organization's project experience significantly. I asked Mrs Hu whether the international foundation gave her some different experiences and how it compared with the domestic scene.

Mrs. Hu: *Definitely different experiences. The international foundation stresses just two points instead of each stage of the performance. Firstly, they trust us more in the process of management, so they don't pay much attention on any particular details of the process, just the final effect that we achieved for the beneficiaries. Secondly, we can draw the government's attention to propel some policy change in the future. The international foundation cares more about our continuous potential in taking care of the affected groups in the project. If we do a three-year project, the foundation will not continue their funding for us, we have to prove we are more able to serve the affected group at the end of the project or they will terminate the support. The challenge posed by our government is that we have stricter regulation for foreign capital infusion in domestic NGOs now. For example, we did a co-production of oral English training with an international institution once, but the censor process started two years ago and was passed to each level one by one. The registration process took so long that we could not start the training on time.*

After our talk, Mrs. Nie guided me to two community residential committees (CRCs) nearby, which worked in partnership with YWCA. When we entered the Youth Road CRC, a lecture on health was

being delivered by a community clinic doctor in the left function room. Mrs. Nie commented that this sort of activity is organized on a regular basis.

In England, governmental resources available for NGOs are decreasing as the privatization rate remains high. Additionally, governmental austerity has been haunting social care actors for more than a decade now, since the 2008 financial crisis. NGOs providing elderly care have been setting up self-regulated networks and transforming social enterprises to reduce their dependence on government resources. In contrast, elderly care NGOs in China can enjoy local government contracts as well as international funding sources.

6.2 Responding to Mutual Needs：Facing Power

Mutual needs influence resource dependence in both countries. NGOs in England respond more strongly to government needs than the government responds to theirs. In China, NGOs put government needs first and then push government offices to meet their own needs.

6.2.1 England: NGOs Respond to Government Needs

The continuing budget cuts year on year caused a significant shrinkage in government investment into elderly care. Local service providers faced both the long-term volunteer shortage and new levels of austerity in the annual budgets, which affected the normal operation of the service delivery enormously.

Mary's daily work includes proving that Age UK is a necessary resource for local elderly people, but this does not stop the council cutting elderly care services, which has led to a tripling of Mary's workload. Age UK could fill the provision gap that the state cannot.

> **Mary Hugo:** *Of course I have to prove every single day's work to Age UK, but the second is to prove to council to let them see that we are needed. I have to prove to Waterfront City Council that we are needed here. And by that I'm always saying to the families, when they say thank you so much, we always say to them to be sure to email the organizations, as that is the only thing we can do to have a voice and show them that we are needed in the community and they need to support us and all the clients here, all the elderly people living around here.*
>
> *I said that to them, and their excuse was that there is shortage of staff. That they had various sections, right? So what they've done is to mix various sessions into, say, three sessions, and then some of the other people were made redundant. So those people are stuck with my job, and I'm doing that three people's jobs. So that's the technique with social services – also they put all these little jobs that they have to do into one, so I'm doing what four people were doing by myself.*

Councillor William Parke's Portfolio includes housing and adult care, and he was responsible to the city council cabinet for these two policy fields. I had met him many times before I booked an interview with him in early March. Our interview took place just after a big storm in Waterfront. Both of us wore winter coats when we met in the city council building. When we reached the conference room, he opened the kitchen door beside the conference room and asked me whether I would like to have a cup of tea or coffee. I thanked him and asked for tea.

I saw an office table with two chairs on each side of it when he pushed the door open. I started with questions on negotiation and discussion around adult care between the council and service providers.

> **Li Yongmei:** *So has the council ever had any negotiations on this or discussions with other bodies around these issues? And how is that going?*
>
> **Councillor Parke:** *Yes, certainly, certainly. When it comes to the provision of social care, an awful lot of that is provided by other organizations. They could be businesses; they could be charities. They could be not for profit organizations. They could be other public sector bodies, say for instance those attached to the NHS. It's increasingly the case that most councils will contract out a large element of their social care.*

A robust local policy network had been in place for the city council, offering it a wide variety of options. Waterfront City Council was also well aware of how to make the most of their own and external bodies' expertise when delivering different public services.

> **Councillor Parke:** *So all the money that is left of it comes from central government and goes to local government. An awful lot of that money is then spent by local government with other organizations who then provide the care. So that's one element of the council where we are more of a commissioner than a provider. But there are other elements – say for instance with housing, where we hand on more because we've got our own direct labour organization. So there are some things where the council has already got good expertise, in which case one belief is that we should use it. And there are other areas where we don't have that internal expertise, and therefore we need to commission that expertise.*

The city council is clearly aware of the areas in which they have expertise and where they do not. Believing firmly in their own judgement, they outsourced elderly care to external organizations for service delivery at lower cost compared with being delivered by the council itself. Being a commissioner rather than a provider was more beneficial for city council in this instance.

6.2.2 China: Putting Government Needs First

Government needs are also prioritised in China. Most NGOs became involved in the elderly care business through the government in Water District, which followed guidance from senior levels on developing elderly care locally. The united standard meant that NGOs need to provide better services faster and at lower prices to avoid complaints directly from the elderly to the government.

My initial round of interviews was facilitated by Mr. Teng Shuo, a professor at a local university in Water District. Mrs. Chang Le, the head of elderly care in Water District, was on the initial round of interview list. When it comes to elderly care provision by NGOs and private companies and government-constructed elderly care centres, Mrs. Chang Le pointed out the severe imbalance between these two types:

> **Mrs. Chang Le:** *About five years ago, we began outsourcing government-constructed homes to private companies, and now 70% of government-constructed elderly care centres have been under private operation. The rest remain government operated and were in very poor conditions. Our subsidy is based on the number of consumers in the day care centre. Due to the poor conditions of government-operated elderly care accommodation, they are seldom used and receive fewer subsidies. However, when we turn to private-operated day care centres, the gap between different scales and quality of service widens significantly.*

Mrs. Chang contacted Mr. Zhou Jie, deputy manager of the YWY elderly care centre, on my behalf for a chance to visit YWY and interview him. The difficulty in recruiting elderly customers for a day care centre is that the centre must deal with both the elderly customers and local government. Mr. Zhou was a man of medium height with a round face. After talking with him in his office, he took me to the day centre and discussed the daily management and the cooperation between the district government and the street-level office. Mr. Zhou explained the elder's mindset, which conflicts with the costs demanded from the elderly customers.

> **Mr. Zhou Jie:** *As soon as we told them that the service wasn't free, many elderly people will stop coming and return to relying on themselves. Even if they really need regular assistance with bathing or laundry, they would sooner to bear the hardships themselves than pay for our services. For example, some elderly people can accept help with showering once or twice during the winter when taking a shower is time and energy consuming all by themselves. In terms of laundry needs in winter, elders definitely have duvet covers or bedsheets to wash, but they will not pay 20 yuan for the home delivery service or bring their stuff to our service station. They would rather wash the big stuff slowly or ask their children for help when they visit every month. In order to deal with this problem, I wish I could encourage the day care centre to do some trial service for free at the initial stage to attract more elder consumers.*

The pressure of providing free trials or good quality services at low prices is common to all NGOs. The most common conflict was that the officials' harsh requirements for offering food at lower price conflicted with Mr. Lin Quan's opinion about the minimum cost. Mr. Lin Quan was aged around 45. He wore glasses and always smiled warmly. In a dark blue waterproof jacket covering a white shirt, Mr. Lin looked formal and professional.

> **Mr. Lin Quan, head of Hao Zi Wei Social Work Service Centre:** *The chief of civil affairs in the street-level office asks us to offer a meal deal for under 8 yuan in our canteen that includes one meat dish and two vegetable dishes. I argued with him: 'You must have experience of doing grocery in your daily life, and so you must know what meat and vegetables we can get with 8 yuan. Frankly, one portion of meat and two portions of vegetables for 8 yuan is only possible when we do central assembly and dispatch, but the elderly do not like mass produced food. If we do it in this way, the consumption will diminish significantly. And we both will be blamed or there will be complaints eventually'.*

The blind ambition of street-level officers is no accident; it follows the vertical process of task assignment and the line of contracting from upper-level government to lower-level government. For elderly care NGOs, governmental funding is more about showing trust in them than actual financial support. Mr. Lin showed a very strong sense of self-reliance and persistence as he expressed his opinion on government support:

> **Mr. Lin Quan:** *We started learning from the commercial accommodation development enterprise. As far as I know, the Green City Enterprise's loss has reached 0.18 million yuan since January. I know that we will loss 0.10 to 0.15 million according to Green City's data, which is an acceptable amount. Our merit will emerge as long as the new chain canteens open and the overall costs decrease. So when I reported our development at the last municipal meeting, I declared very confidently that we have survived.*
>
> *We started out with no subsidy from the local government, then gradually build our government subsidies up. In the second year, for example, we received a subsidy of 0.2 million from the WH Street for our four canteens there. Then we opened another new point and still successfully got the 0.2 million annual subsidy. Even though the amount of subsidy remained the same, we can survive as the subsidy can relieve a little pressure on our labour costs. I never anticipate too much from the government. Another government support comes through the convenient and accessible venue and the kitchen facilities provided by the street-level office. In my view, the essence of governmental subsidy is not the exact amount but the trust-building process and the support meaning that comes with it.*

Generally, Mr. Lin was happy with the commercial or social entrepreneur model rather than just relying on the government funding to feed them – although the government funding symbolized the growing trust and flexibility for commercial trials. The community canteen also offered jobs for

people with learning disabilities, and Mr. Lin's social work centre also cared about other groups that had special needs. The pressure from commercial industry has affected local charity organizations, and the Internet era of social networking has encouraged local NGOs to develop their service delivery. The Sheng Ai social work service centre also provides a meal delivery service for the elderly, but it also offers elderly carer training and age-friendly facility renewals including stairlift installation and handles and rails prevention facilities, which were unique to Sheng Ai's service provision offers.

Elderly care provision is prioritized in England and China due to the high rates of aging at similar levels. However, network governance of elderly care in England and China are at different stages. Having been privatized for more than three decades,[66], elderly care was offered in retirement apartments and through care agencies more commonly than via NGOs. Although contractual relationships still dominated, mutual needs between the local government and NGOs have diminished.

6.3 Interdependence and Reciprocity

NGOs in both England and China practice locally and make their social policies succeed within local communities. In England, local government does not hand over local social practices in elderly care to NGOs. In China, the hierarchical benchmarks for performance assessment partly direct NGOs away from the main business target. They not only need to take care of local needs but also keep abreast of the requirements.

6.3.1 England: NGOs Make Social Practices Succeed, But Government Does Not

When I looked at the Mary's everyday life in the day care centre, it was different from the council's expectations. A gap in understanding exists and is growing even wider because of personal experiences in separate workplaces. In general, NGO practitioners make social practices bloom through their local knowledge, but government does not care about them, and does not support them.

> **Mrs. Mary Hugo:** *I've come to know and understand people on the other side, for example the key managers in the City Council. So we've got quite a good understanding and they understand a little bit about what we do here and what is needed here.*

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[66] White Paper *Growing Older* and the consultative document *Care in the community* by Department of Health and Social Security in 1981 and the *Griffiths Report (Community Care; Agenda for Action)* in 1988 forged the privatization of elderly care in the UK.

I'll find a family and ask them if they'd like to come and have a taster session. And this is what we're doing now. The family brings the elderly person here and I assess the person and I'll see if Monday is fine for him, or if it a bit busy day. And then I asked how the premises are, because sometimes the steps and things like that are troublesome. They've told me that the lady can get up and down the stairs, but I don't really believe that one person is able to support her. I have to go with the bus to see what things are like for myself.

Miscommunication or lack of understanding was a common phenomenon. Jemma, a trustee of Age UK, suggested that sayings like "They talk the talk, but they can't walk the walk" and "You can't shake hands with a clenched fist" are unfortunately prevalent in practices across the boundary between NGOs and local government.

> **Jemma (Age UK Trustee):** *It's hard to explain something to the council staff because they don't really get out into the field. We'll remember or be reminded of the gaps in time between operations and strategy. I mean that's partly why I quite like doing this strategic stuff, because I actually knowing what's going on. I mean I personally think it helps enormously to know the forms the project takes in practice because when we talk about it across the city, you know you don't get the full details or the social contract. Any office says it because it just sounds like it's an exercise to improve people's potential. They (the council staff) don't get that picture of people coming in and saying, 'Hello, where were you last week?' or 'Oh, did you know so and so?' I think it can be difficult, and I think that's where the negotiations have to come, the contracts and things where it's very useful to make sure that we collect not only the data they want, but also collect data about the experience itself.*

Almost a year later, I successfully negotiated the access to SCiA through Mary, the service manager of Age UK Waterfront. Mrs. Alisha Fish is the service manager of elderly care for SCiA Waterfront. Alisha walked towards me, stretching out her hand in welcome before leading me into her office. Alisha has straight, light blonde hair, and was dressed in a short-sleeved black and white shirt and dark yellow straight trousers. We talked about the role of NGOs in doing assessments and the local authorities' expectations. She felt that they were expected to do assessment yesterday and start the service today, which is a significantly unrealistic requirement on the part of the city council.

> **Mrs. Alisha Fish, Service Manager of Elder Care, SCiA Waterfront:** *Regardless of everything else, you've got to get the right organization to provide that service for them, not just who comes in with the least money and the quicker start day. So you pick up a package and they'll say can you start on Monday? This might be Friday, but we have to carry out an appropriate assessment to get everybody's individual needs. You can't do that in a half hour. It's not appropriate.*

The problem was compounded by the fact that SCiA had to guess client needs before they met them. Insufficient client information was given by the private sector, and the joint co-production by the city council and the voluntary organization was little better.

Mrs. Alicia Fish: *The difficulty is having social workers that go out and complete assessments on specializations in a certain area. It means they can't just do an assessment like they're looking for. Or you know, so sometimes we have to do a lot of guesswork, don't we?*

It means that until you really have the client in the day care centre, you'll know what you can do. So, she sent council an email saying: "I've done hospitals, care homes and that kind of stuff". You're never going to get the right referral as expected.

Yongmei Li: *What will you do if you notice something isn't right?*

Alisha: *If they're not right, then we'll tell them that unfortunately, we can't take this client because of this, that or the other reason. We tell them. We wouldn't say no to anyone without a trial. If it wasn't successful, then we'd have to say, look, it really isn't working. We had a situation recently: a lady was coming, so I told them our rate, but the lady's health was getting much worse. It was taking three of them (family or friends) to transfer this poor lady. And we just kind of said, look, we can't take her, she's not suitable, which upset the husband because that was his free time to do what he needed to. And we're slowly working now to get her the proper equipment and everything so that she can come back.*

Li Yongmei: *Does every other provider do the same thing?*

Alisha: *I would say so, yeah.*

Alisha and her colleagues are always the ones who work hard to rectify something wrong in practice. This role is called "the middleman" by Bailey (1977: 167), but as the service commissioner, Waterfront City Council does nothing to help maintain any reciprocity with middlemen and does not support the social practices of elderly care. The bond of interdependence between them is weak, and NGOs do not necessarily need the City Council's support for social practices except in terms of the government contracts.

6.3.2 China: NGOs Look Up but Practice Locally

Since the Water District government in China is not being subjected to austerity programmes, NGOs can choose more freely whether to rely on themselves or local government for resources. They are able to swing between independence and dependence as each situation or case demands. However, despite this flexibility, NGOs still need to put government needs first, as all NGOs are more or less dependent on local government for funding or their reputation. This invisible compulsory burden is reflected in NGOs behaviour pattern of looking up to government for assessment while developing local practices. They encourage innovative practices and set them in motion even without support from local government.

Public service delivery is a test for the service providing NGO after it wins the contract bid. Mr. Lin Quan, manager of the Hao Zi Wei elder community canteen, suggested innovative trials in data analysis and achieved benefits both for government supervision and quality management. Meanwhile, Mr. Liao Bo had a common experience with Mrs. Jin Liyuan, who raised the problem of elderly care provision and the family bond:

> **Mrs. Jin Liyuan, Chief of Elder Care, Jin District Bureau of Civil Affairs:** *The government started the minimum care guarantee policy and ran it for many years, but recently, the practice of spreading the care beneficiaries and levelling up service quality has become a local level responsibility. A day care centre supported by the government cannot charge the children higher fees for its service, or the government would be blamed and criticized. The children of these elders take public service for granted.*
>
> *Actually, it's not only the children who take public provision of elderly care for granted, the elderly do as well. The elderly tend to hide their real needs from their children, because they do not want to add the children's burden.*

Mrs. Jin identified another minority issue and proposed an idea for addressing it:

> **Mrs. Jin Liyaun:** *We have to establish a scientific assessment system and subsidy criteria. The physical and mental health check should be outsourced to health care institutions with specialties.*

Facing the elderly care users' consumption behaviour directly was beyond any officers' experience, and they were seldom present to witness many dramatic scenes that ensued. It was Hao Zi Wei's job to build mutual trust and persuade citizens to use the canteen for the elderly and to help change the attitudes of the elderly in the long run:

> **Mr. Lin Quan, Manager, Hao Zi Wei Social Work Service Centre:** *For some extreme minority groups of greedy old people who do not respect norms, we do not force them, but we will encourage them to change their habits of having more rice but wasting some of it. We have to let more and more people know that we are providing this service sincerely and allow them to trust us more gradually. I say this every time when I meet the chief of the department. I saw a vivid example of community and citizen sense among elders. An elderly man was having a meal in our canteen and he saw some old people secretly stealing more rice and taking it away in their bags. He stood up and asked: "Why are you doing this? If you continue doing this, they will be bankrupted and then we will have no canteen for meals anymore".*

For Hao Zi Wei, looking up to official requirements while practicing locally means reaching out to the elderly and building trust between them and the NGOs well as helping to educate service users. It is this process that shapes everyday life, and it does not come from any written policy documents, despite its existence in reality. Beyond the conventional normative rules of seniority and power, the pragmatic rules function more strongly, while local practitioners like Mr. Lin managed to acquire

more resources at street level than local government and mastered the local knowledge that was appropriate to using these resources (Bailey, 1977: 35-36).

I heard many complaints at the local level, so I needed to know what the more senior levels of government were doing. What was their role in the whole policy process? My interviews with Mrs. Zheng Yaping,[67] Mrs. Yan Ling[68] and Mr. Tan Yan[69] showed me the answer from the perspectives of provincial, district and street-level government.

Mrs. Yan Ling, the chief of the District NGO Development Foundation, wore a loose sports sweater when we met. Her face was pink and bright, and her eyes were large and always seemed to be sparkling. I stood outside her office and waved to her to let her know I was there, and she stepped out of the District NGO Development Foundation office to talk to me. She had agreed to talk with me almost without hesitation, and she answered my questions patiently and in detail. She told me that the collective management of annual funding by District NGO Development Foundation was approved at district government meetings.

> **Mrs. Yan Ling, Chief of Water District NGO Development Foundation:** *Every street can still use their allotted amount. For instance, if an NGO applies for a project grant and supervises the innovative charity investment project in three streets, then the amount for each street will be recorded in the project auditing report.*

However, the effects were definitely not ideal.

> **Mrs. Yan Ling:** *I know that some street-level offices are reluctant to do this, for very solid reasons. From our perspective, we can improve NGO development with a total input of 3 million yuan more easily than if each street-level office is given 0.5 million yuan. That 0.5 million is the maximum allocation for each street, and the limited amount of money allows smaller amounts for each project. That means we have a large number of small projects and fewer big ones, which helps individual NGO development, especially at first, and is also easier and cost-effective for the government when supervising the projects. However, some street-level offices are less willing to let new NGOs in when they hold the funding in their hands. After the funding is given to the foundation as a whole, we can ask the NGOs to get approval from the street-level offices with whom they would like to co-produce the public service. This makes it much easier for new NGOs and helps avoid monopolies in this industry.*

The new funding management system also helps to keep spending within the budget without any thing being carried over between financial years:

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[67] Vice President of Civil Affairs Department of Ocean Province
[68] Chief Secretary of NGO Development Foundation in Water District
[69] Chief of NGO Development Department in Water District Civil Affairs Bureau

Mrs. Yan Ling: *Previously, the district department of finance would cut our annual budget for the next financial year if we have any savings this year. After we began the new system, the saved amount can be preserved in the foundation account and used in the following year.*

I took the WeChat account details of Mrs. Zheng Yaping, the deputy head of NGO development in the Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs, from the collective fieldwork WeChat group. In February 2019, I took part in a collective fieldwork programme organized by Mr. Shi Qian, a senior researcher at Ocean Province University. Then I tried twice to contact Mrs. Zheng on WeChat and obtained her confirmation for my interview. She was always on the way to fieldworks in various districts or cities within the province, so our interviews were often postponed. When I finally met her, Mrs. Zheng Yaping was dressed in a formal suit in dark blue covering a white shirt. Her hair was fashionably short. When I knocked her office door, she told me to come in and I watched as she busied herself organizing some hard copy files on her desk. She looked up to me with smile and said: "*Look, my desk is so messy. I am trying to sort out these files.*" After being seated, she boiled water and made me tea, then explained local discretionary power from a top-down perspective:

Mrs. Zheng Ya Ping, Vice Chief of NGO Management, Ocean Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs: *As the Bureau of NGO Management, we do not interfere with many specific service domains. Instead, we focus on guidance for local practices. The Provincial Department of Civil Affairs has separate department for elderly care and charity issues, but our policymaking is sometimes ahead of that of central government. For example, NGO cultivation and the governor of NGO Management was not included in the central government policy when we were pushing this work. In some places, NGOs were governed by the Department of Civil Affairs, while in other places it fell under the governance of village or street-level offices. Before central government policy dictated that NGOs should be governed by street-level offices or rural villages, we implemented this and set the assessment criteria for each urban and rural community.*

Pilot studies enjoy some discretionary power. The reputation that was earned by previous excellent work allows Water District more flexibility in practices and trials. In 2013, when Mr. Yang Guang and the Bright Vision Charity Development Centre arrived in Water District, the provincial bureau of civil affairs released a pilot experiment policy that encouraged local NGO development through annual funding. Mrs. Zheng Yaping recalled a memory from her visit to China Community Development Display Centre in Water District:

Mrs. Zheng Ya Ping: *When I did fieldwork in Water District last year, Mr. Yang Guang shook my hands and said excitedly: 'We really appreciated your work in promoting local NGO development, especially regarding long-term concerns about our district NGOs. Do you know that it was the year I started Bright Vision that you drafted the policy encouraging local NGO development in our province and confirmed the annual funding*

for NGO development as an annual assessment criterion for local government?" That made me realise that my work was meaningful for this group of NGOs.

In the national or provincial assessment, if the ultimate outcome was that the advantages surpassed the defects, the responsibility moved from senior levels to local government, which was then given the opportunity to function in particular policy areas. Furthermore, the opportunity could lead to policy successes that distinguished this area's potential, allowing it to be promoted as a pilot project for the next stage.

Mrs. Tan Yan became upset when she talked about the changing criteria of subsidies for the elderly, which made her and her colleagues' lives harder.

> **Mrs. Tan Yan, Head of Elder Care, XY Street-level Office, Water District:** *Originally, the strict criterion was a monthly income under 3,000 yuan. When the senior management discovered that this only covered a limited number of elderly people, they set a new goal of covering as many deprived older people as possible. But it didn't end there. Senior government managers decided to decrease the number they would provide for due to austerity, so it was our job to convince those elderly people who no longer met the criteria that we were going to stop their subsidy, which was very difficult. As the criteria changed frequently, we felt really stressed because we took all the blame from the older people. The assessment criteria changed for us, while the subsidy criterion remained at a monthly income of under 3,000 yuan. The subsidy criterion prevented us from achieving the annual target number of subsidized older people.*

I asked if we could just stop at the subsidy stage and not entre a self-payment stage? However, provincial and central government demanded more beneficiaries at local level, while only the local bureaucrats and NGOs knew how hard it was to develop older people's awareness of consumption and cultivate the elderly care market.

6.4 Conclusion

In England, elderly care receives a smaller share of overall governmental spending for social care than social care for people with learning disabilities. Elderly care NGOs are therefore less well connected and less interdependent with city councils than NGOs providing social care for people with learning disabilities. In England, outsourcing services to market organizations, in addition to austerity measures, led to a deteriorating level of interdependence between NGOs and the city council.

In China, the reverse is true, and elderly care is less privatized while NGO-government relationships are more intimate. Pilot experiments in elderly care provide a compelling factor for encouraging the investment of more resources, while resource abundance on the side of the government allows

more space for NGOs to swing between independence and dependence. Being bound by local government in a contractual relationship, NGOs performing elderly care in China look up to government assessment while practicing locally.

Given the limited number of connections between NGOs and city councils in England, NGOs always respond strongly to government needs. Similarly, NGOs in China also put government needs first. Making social practices flourish locally is the same mission for NGOs in both countries, while the government cares less about it.

Finally, all the conclusions generated here and from the thematic analysis in the other four fieldwork chapters will be revisited in Chapter 10.

Chapter 7: Resource Exchange and Interdependence: Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities in England and China

This chapter focuses on the resource exchange and interdependence in social care for people with learning disabilities. I conducted a thematic analysis using the same set of comparative themes that I used for care for the elderly (See the column 1 of Table 7-1). Chapters 6 and answered two of my research questions: is network governance feasible in both England and China? What are the differences and similarities between network governance in England and China? There are 20 actors, 1 event, 5 projects and 14 organizations on the stage. (see Glossary of Terms and Table of Cast in Chapter 7, pp.322-326)

Table 7-1 Themes for Comparing Resource Exchange and Interdependence in Policy Network of Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities

Themes	Elder Care in England and China	Social Care for people with learning disabilities in England and China
Resource Exchange and Interdependence **1. Resource Availability and Exchange: The Face of Power**	6.1.1 Government austerity and NGO independence vs 6.1.2 Resource abundancy and swinging between independence and dependence	7.1.1 It's impossible to reduce resource dependence vs 7.1.2 High degree of resource independence
2. Responding to Mutual Needs: Facing Power	6.2.1 NGOs respond strong to government needs vs 6.2.2 Putting government needs first	7.2.1 Feeding mutual needs vs 7.2.2 NGO needs are seldom met
3. Interdependence and Reciprocity: State and NGO Game-playing Styles	6.3.1 NGOs make local practices bloom, but the government does not vs 6.3.2 NGOs are looking up but practicing locally	7.3.1 NGO game-playing style in state solo dance vs 7.3.2 Submissive NGO players in state-society routine dance

7.1 Resource Availability and Exchange

Although NGOs for people with learning disabilities in England are aware of the necessity of becoming more independent and testing different ways of building their strength, they also know that reducing their resource dependence on local government is impossible. In China, apart from free venues provided by governments at district level, there are no additional resources for NGO

service provision and development. Therefore, the existing NGOs for people with learning disabilities sustain service provision by other means, maintaining a high degree of resource independence.

7.1.1 England: It's Impossible to Reduce Dependence on Government Contracts

No matter whether or not NGOs want to be involved in campaigns, they are dependent on the council, and the goal of reducing their financial reliance on local government would be impossible to achieve. As such, they lobby the councillors to convince them that they have a sensible business plan in order to secure more grants.

To set up interviews with Man-ability[70] staff, I began by doing volunteer work for them. During my work there I often wandered outside the activity hall to bump into the manager. One day, I had a short conversation with Mrs. Blake Fielker, the chief executive officer of Man-ability, in her office after volunteering for the Thursday Teens Scheme,[71] and booked a time slot with her in the coming weeks for a proper interview. As it turned out, I met Mrs. Fielker at council meetings several times and we had a short chat in the café beside the council. She had long, red, tightly curled hair and her colourful make-up impressed me immediately. She was in a rose red short-sleeved top the day we talked.

Blake portrayed her organization as a small but client-centred group. They needed funding from the council to build a brighter and more independent future, so self-determination affected Blake's survival strategy when dealing with the local council.

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker, Chief Executive Officer, Waterfront Man-ability:** *I've been in this job for twenty years and can honestly say there's never been a situation where we crossed the line, because the trustees in my role are very aware that we need that business. Our aim is to get contract business down lower and lower and lower so that eventually we can run independently, without council contracts. Our aim is to reduce our reliance on the council. We're running a cafe, but it doesn't generate a steady profit yet.*

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[70] Man-ability is an NGO providing day care for people with learning-disabled people in Waterfront, England. It is a national NGO, so has other local branches across the UK.

[71] Thursday Teens Scheme is a project aiming to relieve the unpaid carers of people with learning-disabled people by involving more volunteers to provide day care for teenagers with learning-disabled people every Thursday during summer vacation. Other NGOs doing social care for people with learning disabilities also run this scheme but at different time slots and in slightly different forms.

Man-ability is a big, long-term contractor with Waterfront City Council, and the Fair Play Projects[72] are all funded by the council.

> **Blake Fielker:** *We have contracts where the council gives us money to run services. So we go through what's called the procurement route, which means we apply openly and fairly. They advertise the services on a portal run by Mario Finch. If you're registered like we are, you can see what opportunities come up. Through that we've run lots of services over the years and usually they're three-year contracts. The most recent one we've got is five years with the possibility of a two-year extension.*

The contract length was extended, as the three years contracting period generated risks for NGO in maintaining employee stability. The increase was a result of bargaining based on local council's understanding of NGOs.

> **Blake Fielker:** *More recently there's been a lot of publicity around the idea that three years just don't work for organizations because in the first year you're usually trying to get the service off the ground, and you just begin to deliver things in the second year. In the third year, you begin to wind down because you don't know if you're going to carry on with the service. So there's a danger that you lose staff in that last year and all sorts of issues. So what they are starting to do now is offering much longer contracts.*

Contracts act as an entry ticket to the playground of network governance in social care for people with learning disabilities. As players, the attitudes and actions vary between different NGOs in different games. All NGOs have problems balancing their desire for independence with the reality of government funding. Blake and her colleagues proposed and enacted some fundraising plans for Man-ability in order to emphasise its independent local influence, but she is also clear about the significance of council contracts.

> **Blake Fielker:** *We've become a business. We said that all our services are going to run from this building. Why not? The trustees agree with us so far, we're not going to start doing things that don't work out in the community. Because actually the beauty of what we do here means we can monitor things more easily.*
>
> *And the carers' service is just across the road. So we have regular contact with them. But once you start expanding lots and lots of stuff out from your main base, it just changes the nature of it. But we extended this building because our services were growing. I'd like to remain small, local, non-bureaucratic. But it's quite hard because when you have a vision, you sometimes have to face a changing environment.*

Blake accepts that Man-ability will remain dependent on the council, and even if it does become totally financially independent, it will not be on the opposite side to the city council. Julie, of the

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[72] The Fair Play Project is a project funded by Waterfront City Council to increase the accessible opportunities of playing games for children with learning disabilities. This is not free. Different NGOs based in communities charge small amounts of money for this service.

Tulip Road Association[73] also encountered a similar problem when balancing NGO independence against receiving governmental funding.

> **Yongmei:** *So how do you feel about it? Because for most monetary issues, you can run it independently. If I were in your position, I wouldn't want to have any more communication with the council because they are difficult to deal with.*
>
> **Julie:** *That's a good point. Yeah. Finding the balance between being completely autonomous and having money from the council. The hand that feeds you is really difficult. What we've done as an organization is look at ways we can generate our own income so we now have day services where people pay us. They choose to come here, and they pay us. There is still a certain element of monitoring by the council, because even if I give you your budget and you say I'm going to spend our own money, the council still has a bit of responsibility to make sure that we're complying.*

Both NGOs, as major contractors with the council, are trying to reduce dependence on government funding, but it is not a target they will achieve in the near future. No matter how they want to defend or object to the council's choice, neither Man-ability nor the Tulip Road Foundation has ever crossed the safety line.

7.1.2 China: A High Degree of Resource Independence

The current venues of Reducing Help[74], Love and Caring Station[75] and Wisdom & Aura Centre[76] were provided by the District Disabled Alliance[77] without cost as soon as the organisations commenced their service provision in Water District. As well as being the manager of the Love and Caring Station in Lake District, Mrs. Wen Qing has many titles, including the National Labour Model (*Quanguo Laodong Mofan*), Excellent CCP member (*Zhonggong Youxiu Dangyuan*), Municipal People's Congress delegate (*Shi Renda Daibiao*), Municipal Political Consultative Committee member (*Shi Zhengxie Weiyuan*), and Successor of Intangible Cultural Heritage (*Fei Wuzhi Wenhua Yichan Chuanchengren*). She was born and grew up in this old central street. Now her NGO, Love and Caring Station, is also located in the same busy street.

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[73] Tulip Road Association is a national NGO in the UK offering social care provision for people with learning-disabilities. It also has a branch in Waterfront.

[74] Reducing Help is an NGO providing day care for people with learning disabilities in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Ning Jing, a mother with a son with learning disabilities

[75] Love and Caring Station is an NGO providing day care for people with learning disabilities in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Wen Qing.

[76] Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre is a day care centre partly funded by street-level office and Water District Government. It provides similar services with the official work and healing centre for people with learning disabilities.

[77] The District Disabled Alliance is an official organization responsible for the wellbeing of disabled people, as well as their welfare and employment. Disabled Alliance is a system that exists at national to street level.

Mrs. Wen Qing, Chief of Loving Care Station and Loving Mutual Support Association: *I have already been offered many cultural resources for our station and I have easy access to different levels of officials. I encountered a venue problem a few days ago. Then I happened to come across Mrs. Xie, a retired official of the district government. I talked the problem through with her and she phoned the official who is in charge of the venue instantly for a prompt solution. That is how I manage the station.*

She told me this story proudly. Even though Mrs. Wen is a successful woman, you would never guess from her experience. No power dressing, and her style is quite ordinary. She has silver hair, hardly any makeup and wears her hair in a casually tied bun. She looked like any other mother.

Mrs. Wen has collaborated successfully with the district government twice. The second day care centre is about to open on the first floor of the district government building.

Mrs. Wen Qing: *We match our needs and the government's needs very well. It is a mandatory task for every CCP member in the district government to do one hour's voluntary work every month. We were also looking for a proper venue for our new day care centre, so we just proposed ourselves as a volunteer service point for CCP members and they gave us this free venue.*

The free venue was most important resource offered by the Water District Disabled Alliance or the Water District Government. In addition to the free venue, a small amount of funding is another form of government support. When I asked Mr. Will[78] about his funding sources, he expressed contempt for the small amount of official funding and the huge set of conditions that came with it.

Li Yongmei: *Do you have any external funding sources to support your idea? For example, government funding or other foundation grant?*

Mr. Will: *We have connection with the Lion Association[79] and the Goat Association[80] through the Disabled Alliance, but I discovered that their resources are far less than mine. The government funding is also way too small to make any difference. To cooperate with the government is not a good deal when you consider the cost of getting accustomed to their way of thinking and working and the little outcome it achieves, especially when we have other sources of funding.*

However, when it came to the strategic development plan for Star Dust,[81] his tone became more ambitious and excited. The ambition came from his previous career experience in teenage English teaching, which enabled him to design the route to successful courses.

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[78] Mr. Will is head of the Star Dust Autistic Children Development Centre
[79] A locally based charity foundation in River City.
[80] A locally based charity foundation in River City.
[81] Star Dust is a local NGO that provides professional training for autistic children in Water District, River City, China. It was started by a Mrs. Ding Ling, a mother with an autistic daughter.

Mrs. Ning of Reducing Help was too busy to keep our original scheduled appointment, so I tried one last time before I left River City and she agreed to meet me. I told her from the outset that I didn't expect her to tell me the story of her life and her tough beginnings. Instead, we focused on the work of her centre, and she began with by discussing her worries about the distance from the Disabled Alliance:

> **Mrs. Ning Jing, Manager, Reducing Help Day Care Centre:** *I was very cautious when I initially started this centre in 2009. I did not register it with the district Department of Civil Affairs for two years because I was not sure how long I could carry on alone. Once I registered as a formal organization, the cost of leaving the field definitely rose. The registration process made me feel that once I was registered, I had to carry on doing it forever. Then this centre got more and more well-known and I became more determined to continue this career, so I registered in the third year and accepted a free street-level venue, which is here. I was very cautious about the distance from local government and the Disabled Alliance. I was really afraid of getting too close to them and losing our independence. My aim is to secure our service users' safety and give them a happy and relaxed daily life and this aim has never changed.*
>
> **Li Yongmei:** *When the government offers you so much [support], does it ask for more visits to your centre?*
>
> **Ning:** *Of course. I try to avoid it but there are still a lot of visits from enterprises and different level of government. I cannot supervise every visit in person.*

In Water District, government resources for NGOs are also scarce. The best NGOs can be offered free venues or venues at a lower rent. In Waterfront City, austerity is still a problem for NGOs, but NGOs are needed to rectify policy implementation on a case-by-case basis in everyday care provision. Even if NGOs already imitate the social enterprise model, it is mission impossible for NGOs to reduce their dependence on government funding and reputation at the current stage.

7.2 Responding to Mutual Needs：Facing Power

Combating the stigma from a broad spectrum of society and working for the greater inclusion of people with learning disabilities are common visions of care NGOs in both England and China. In England, local government and NGOs feed mutual needs while in China, their needs are seldom met by local government.

7.2.1 England: Feeding Mutual Needs

In the absence of any financial pressure, the lack of any inclusive and accurate public service case by case is the problem facing social care for people with learning disabilities in England. From

service users' demands for service quality and accessibility and their need for a consultative and legislative policy discussion process, the local service provider – as a policy mediator – addresses both administrative and political demands. Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle[82] discussed her opinion on consultations about the eligibility criteria and effects of financial budget changes on Jigsaw[83] and Buzz Network.[84]

> **Yongmei Li:** *I witnessed several consultation meetings that mainly revolved around the Jigsaw and Buzz networks. I think it's a relatively big shift for the service users.*
>
> **Julia Honeysuckle:** *Yes, yes, it is. I mean, we find Jigsaw a really responsive service, really responsive, in terms of how they engage with individuals and how they provide the best quality of care needed. I'm not quite sure what response they received from the service user level about that. I know the feedback that we gave, and we actually felt that it was a sensible way of sensing which was the wind was blowing. We were quite pleased that they did it because we should be having more inclusive services at the universal level. I think that's brilliant. It's not easy to do, but we're part of that.*

I was given a list of long-term collaborating NGOs from council consultation event venues (Tables 5 & 6) as well as interviews with officers in the city council's Buzz Network team. Prior to my interview with the NGOs I wanted to know why do they have to rely on each other? Have the NGOs ever struggled for independence? If so, what was the result?

Waterfront City council, as a commissioning body for a wide range of public services, is criticized for its failure to deal with austerity and for manipulating the complex reality of service delivery. However, they also face criticism from service users and the general public. Meanwhile, the motivation for managing the local policy network is to persuade external bodies such as charity organizations to fill the provision gap even though it is the government's statutory responsibility to do this, especially when central government cuts the annual budget, resulting in austerity for local government if the cuts are particularly severe.

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[82] Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle is Chief Executive Officer, Tulip Road Association.

[83] "JIGSAW (Children with Disabilities Team) is a specialist and statutory multi-agency health and social care service that undertakes assessments and provides services at the complex level of needs. The Team supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a complex impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families."
https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=nStqYS7rVXQ

[84] Buzz Network is "a group for Southampton Parents/Carers of Children and young people with a disability or additional needs. It is funded by Southampton City Council who work closely with the Southampton Parent Carer Forum to ensure it is meeting the needs of families."
https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztIRo&localofferchannel=0

From the NGOs' point of view, they need space to survive in which they can address local needs and combine them with their visions for development. The task of an NGO is to prove that it is irreplaceable and competitive in local service delivery. NGOs can work closely with specific groups of service users that may be less approachable from the local authority's perspective. Above all, the actors in the local policy network map have their individual motivations to participate so they can feed their respective needs into the process. Finally, they need the money to pay for services and the legitimacy that is bestowed by recognition by local authorities.

Facing austerity and an increasing local demand for public services, working hand-in-hand with NGOs is a desperate need for the city council if it is to fill provision gaps. Councillor Sandra Lunar viewed the contract with local charity organization as a way of gatekeeping access to the council's statutory services.

> **Councillor Sandra Lunar:** *From the perspective of a Labour Councillor, community has always been an important part of the society we want. However, this community should complement the functions of the state in caring for the most vulnerable, not replacing them. Austerity imposed over the past 10 years has slowly moved the provision of social care to community organisations, with the Care Act underpinning this in the strengths-based approach. There is a concern that due to the funding crisis facing local government, this approach is used to gatekeep access to statutory services. Waterfront City Council is committed to supporting existing provision, enabling new groups to start up and providing information to the population on what is available and how to access it.*

Austerity is an excuse for cutting service budgets from the service user side, but is problematic for the council to implement.

> **Yongmei:** *Do you think if there's less austerity, the situation will get better or easier?*
>
> **Councillor Lunar:** *I think two things. I think consultation will be viewed better if people are allowed to make decisions about how money is spent – if you've got money to spend. So, it's lovely to say, right, we've got a budget of this, and all the essential stuff is covered. We still got this left. How would you like to see us spend it then? That would be lovely. People can influence you; they can come in with new ideas and they can maybe see some of those ideas become reality, which is brilliant.*

The problems of allocating scarce resources are compounded by double identities in which the service provider is also a service user. This duality brings both challenges and benefits. Prior to our meeting in the café near the council chamber, Mrs. Clark Paignton,[85] replied to my email apologising for the five-day delay in getting back to me because she had been busy with the last round of

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[85] Mrs. Clark Paignton is a co-ordinator of Waterfront Parent Carer Forum.

consultation, as well as another consultation run by Waterfront Parent Carer Forum.[86] When I arrived at the café for our meeting, she was still checking her work email. I waited for several minutes until she finished it.

> **Mrs. Clark Paignton, Co-ordinator of Waterfront Parent Carer Forum:** *I find it is hard to cope with so many parents across Waterfront. The current situation is that a couple of parents will not be eligible for Buzz Network service and personal money anymore and this is a little difficult for them to accept the change.*

What amazed me is Clark's life story. She also has a child with a learning disability, and she was unemployed for a long period as a result. However, when she knew that Tulip Road Association was running a wide range of services for children with learning disabilities, she joined them. Later, the city council decided to collaborate with Tulip Road Association, and needed several coordinators working on both sides. That's how Waterfront Parent Carer Forum was established and how it came to recruit staff to run this forum.

> **Mrs. Clark Paignton:** *From this process, I am able to access more knowledge and information about local service options for my child. Also, I can understand what other parents are thinking about, their emotions and needs and pain much better from my experience with my own child. We had a workshop two months ago where many parents told their own stories. Many of us were crying as we told of our experiences. This is really a great way of capturing the needs and feelings of this special group.*

> **Yongmei Li:** *So that means you have double benefits from this job?*

> **Clark:** *Absolutely, I feel I can handle my child and the parents in a better way. My identity as a parent with a mentally disabled child offers me the perspective of parents when I work as a coordinator. Meanwhile, my role of coordinator can teach me a lot about aspects of taking more prompt and effective measures when taking care of my child.*

> **Yongmei Li:** *Do you sometimes find it is tough to balance between these two roles?*

> **Clark:** *Yeah, definitely. Let's take Amy as an example. She also has twin identities as both a parent of a child with learning disability and a service leader for this group of children in the city council. Sometimes when she faces the parents, she cannot say anything beyond our working regulations about the detailed process even though we are always willing to help them. Amy will also encounter some difficulties as a parent, but she cannot express this sort of feeling to colleagues. She also needs people to rely on in the same way as other parents rely on her. We have to support each other as well.*

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[86] Waterfront Parent Carer Forum is an NGO bridging parents of people with learning-disabled people with service providers. The chief is based at Tulip Road Association. The forum works intimately with Waterfront City Council as well.

Up to this point, the state and its gatekeeper are represented by two separate bodies. However, my encounter with Mrs. Peggy Lewis in SCiA opened a new do for me to glimpse from her perspective both as a previous local authority staff for social care for 21 years and as a new staff in SCiA, which is a service provider. Her career transition is a striking story in discussing the gap in resource for care provision between the council and NGOs. In this instance the shift was not only from the Council to the Voluntary Organization but also to person-centred and open-minded care provision.

Mrs. Alisha Fish shared an office with Becky inside the Social Care in Action (SCiA) building. At the start of my conversation with Alisha, I discussed my questions about the interaction between local government and charity organization. Becky's face lit up in response and they looked at each other and smiled.

> **Alisha:** *Becky is the specialist for answering your questions.*

Becky moved her chair to my desk so that I was facing both of them.

> **Becky:** *Hope I don't interrupt your conversation, but if you need some answers from inside the city council, perhaps my previous working experience can be helpful for you. I worked in the city council for twenty-one years before coming here.*

> **Yongmei (excitedly):** *That's great! I hope we can have a formal talk later when you are available.*

> **Becky** (Giving me her SCiA business card): *My pleasure. This is my card, if you can email me, we can probably arrange a meeting.*

That's how I got in touch with Becky. She replied to my email quickly and we met in her office in early July. The story of her career life engrossed me. As we discussed the journey of her career, she dipped in some previous jobs at the city council. Following up on these small titbits, I asked her why she had suddenly joined the NGO circle after a 21-year career in the city council.

Becky's story of her life as a council staff member and as an NGO leader showed the differences. Her stories were shaped by the different positions she'd held inside the city council and in NGOs. I put the contrasting narrations together to depict the gap in expectations and the different working patterns and practices of local authorities and NGOs.

The salary gap between local authority and NGO struck Becky as unfair. She even joked about her salary, saying "My daughter can be the breadwinner for my family, one high salary for a family is enough." Becky shifted career for a lower income but more job satisfaction and personal contentment:

Mrs. Becky Owen, Service Manager for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems, SCiA: *If you look at pay structures within the local authority, when you compare it to us, I took a ten thousand pound pay cut to come here. My daughter works for the local authority now. She's just left college. She came in as a Grade Six, which is one of the lower grades similar to my support staff that I've got working with me now. My support staff get nine thousand pounds while my daughter gets twenty-four to twenty-six thousand pounds a year…It's not fair.*

Becky's commitment to her job is shown by assessing as many customers as possible, and not just by ticking boxes:

Mrs. Becky Owen: *There is a risk that the placement team don't have sufficient skills within the team to provide relevant support for each individual. I've been able to circumnavigate that because for a lot of my referrals I have a lot more information. Straightaway they ring me, saying that "We've got this individual. We'll send him or her to you. Can you do an assessment?" It's quicker because I know that team really, really well.*

In brief, the NGOs in Waterfront help to fill gaps in the provision of social care for people with learning disabilities, which is a pressing task for the city council. Waterfront City Council provides NGOs with policy information and service delivery funding through personal connections and official channels. This is how both sides feed mutual needs in the policy network.

7.2.2 NGO Needs are Seldom Met in China

In early December, Miss Shen of WABC[87] (World of Art Brut Culture) asked me to attend an art festival aimed at promoting mutual acceptance between people with learning disabilities and local people. Miss Shen kindly connected me with Mr. Huang Xiao, who is a professor and dean of the art school in Jiang City Normal University, and a team leader for the inclusion (*Rong Na*) art project. *Rong Na* means 'Including and Accepting' the disabled group. I added him to my WeChat with Miss Shen in WABC. After he agreed to see me, I briefed him about my research project in River City. Miss Shen told me about the *Rong Na* activities and said that Mr. Huang Xiao is an expert in this field. I could also take a volunteer job in the River City Disabled Culture and Art Week if I wanted to further my understanding. Mr. Huang would oversee the main part of the activity. After introducing my project and displaying my interest in what Mr. Huang and his team was doing, he kindly invited me to visit him at the Powerlong Art Centre.

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[87] WABC is World of Art Brut Culture, an NGO initially established in Shanghai in 2010 which as of 2019 has ten branches across China. WABC runs a series of brut art exhibitions and education programmes that involve people with learning disabilities, jointly with local governments. Brut culture and art refer to raw art that is unrefined and unpolished and based on the artists' instincts.

When Mr. Huang Xiao arrived at the display hall inside Powerlong Art Centre, I had been working with his master's students for half a day as a volunteer for this display activity. The activity had many sponsors but was launched by the District Disabled Alliance and the government. Upon my arrival, I messaged Mr. Huang immediately to inform him that I had arrived. Mr. Huang called me on WeChat. I wandered around the display centre looking at many small retail shops that included different charity group brands, including different craftwork or artwork charities. The Reducing Help day care centre had a stall. Most of them were empty with no staff or goods. Reducing Help stayed until 11:00 am and then left as well.

When I got back to the Wormhole and Mosaic Painting site, Mr. Huang was having lunch beside the Wormhole game,[88] sitting and chatting with his assistant and a master's student. I sat opposite him, on the other side of the long table. Huang has relatively long hair to the shoulder without any special design. His behaviour is unaffected, talking with his colleagues in a relaxed tone. Mr. Huang criticized the local government's work with disdain. His style, like his appearance, is independent, practical and academic. Before I opened my mouth, he asked me about my project and my PhD. He is doing similar work as a part of his research project, including fieldwork in European countries and collaboration with universities there and in Canada. I found it easy to tell him about my research idea. His research mindset helped a lot.

The gap between Mr. Huang's target for lasting effects on behalf of the learning-disabled group and the government's chasing after short-term superficial rewards is obvious:

> **Mr. Huang Xiao Lin, Dean of Art School, River City Normal University:** *Our government's outlook and capacity has not reached a professional or insightful stage. They do not need a team like us. They favour smart teams that can grow and spread the activity positively and universally. I know many charity organizations that post their everyday work excessively on WeChat or public subscription accounts. These organizations enjoy the intimacy with local government because they do not threaten the dominant role of local government.*

Mr. Huang is academically influential on the international stage and had invited charity and research staff from Harvard University and other well-known institutions, effectively upgrading the level of this activity. This is exactly what the local government is looking for.

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[88] Wormhole game: the player puts on an eye mask and enters the white worm setting. There are some hanging obstacles and balls in the wormhole. The player can touch this wormhole full of amazing gifts including dolls, mini car models and water gun and so on. The player picks up one gift and brings it to a desk, the volunteer teacher will teach the player how to draw this gift on paper while putting on the eye mask. If the player can draw it successfully, he or she can take this gift away.

Mr. Huang Xiao Lin: *These are required by the district government and disabled alliance, but simply to create an image without any real effect, nor to say any connection with Rong Na.*

Mr. Huang claimed that their project, including the weekly activity, is not supported financially by any local government. He has tried to convince officials but has so far failed to persuade them to work hand in hand with his team.

The Wisdom & Aura Day Care Centre is in a relatively remote area, although it works in a similar way to the official Day Care Centre. It took me 40 minutes to get there by bus after taking the subway to the bus stop. After I got off the bus, I found myself in a less densely populated area. There were only two bus routes. I went to the address I had been given by Mrs. Ke Yan Xia, and when I arrived at the gate, I texted her. As I was looking into the centre two members of staff came out to ask me who I was. I explained that I was a visitor. They looked apprehensive and cautious about the presence of an outsider. I asked Yan Xia about their caution.

Most of the interview took place during lunch in the community canteen for the elderly that was next to the day care centre. It was approaching the canteen' closing time, and we had the place to ourselves. Yan Xia was cautious about my recording, and I promised that the content would not be accessed by anybody else and that I would anonymise both the staff and the institution.

I was curious about whether my experience outside the gate was a daily norm. Yan Xia said it was because of the uniqueness of their workers, who had learning disabilities and were vulnerable to outsiders. They have had thefts because of the lack of staff and workers' inattention. Apart from that, the workers cannot identify potential threats. If a suspicious person could access the centre easily, without being queried, he or she could cheat the workers out of possessions or money.

After the lunch, Yan Xia showed me around the day care centre. When I asked why the street-level office supported this centre, she replied:

Mrs. Ke Yanxia, Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre for Adults with learning disabilities:
We are strongly supported by street-level government and treated like a relative, because the street office does not have its own Gong Liao Zhan (Working and Healing Station for the Disabled). This centre replaces the street-level working and healing harbour and functions as a local venue for the disabled around this street-governed area.

I bought four hand-made keyrings and a few small money bags from Hui Ling when I was shown around the charity shop. The keyrings and money bags were all designed in the Japanese style with white crane and bamboo on a jujube red cloth or water lilies on a night blue cloth. The delicate

design was classic and attractive. The cloth and material were soft to the touch and the handcraft quality was very good. It would be suitable as a gift or for personal use.

This case suggests that Water District Disabled Alliance in China stresses the employability of people with learning disabilities, while in England, unpaid carers like parents and friends are supported through official policy arrangements.

7.3 Interdependence and Reciprocity

Reciprocity in the policy network of social care for people with learning disabilities in England consists of obligations and duties rather than friendship and loyalty. In China, there are equivalent obligations and duties but friendship and loyalty between policy actors is stronger. The obligations and duties that local service provision NGOs carry suggest that they are subject to powerful normative rules. NGOs in both countries have their own game-playing styles. They employ unconventional and pragmatic rules to acquire power that benefits their collective actions and shapes leadership beyond the state (Bailey, 1977: 35-37).

7.3.1 England: NGO Game-playing Style in State Solo Dance

In England, the loose connection between the state and NGOs is evident in every venue where the NGOs have ineffective communication with the local authority. Local consultations concerning social care for people with learning disabilities ignores service users and providers. However, I witnessed a series of campaigns where local NGOs stood firmly with service users and carers against the local authority. The campaign for and consultations over the Kensington Road Respite Centre (KRRC) Closure are a good illustration.[89] Three girls wearing white curly wigs to resemble Councillor Parke's hair walked in a line from the outer circle of seats in the council chamber to the central part, where the Labour councillors sit on the right and Conservative councillors on the left. These girls smiled politely at the councillors and then threw the fake bank notes the campaigners had printed into the air and said: *Look, this is your money, the money that you're caring about!* The carers and local charity organization members were sitting in the third circle, and they watched and cheered this small group, which consists of teenagers with learning disabilities who enjoy the respite service offered by the KRRC.

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[89] Kensington Road Respite Center, which provided respite services for children or adults with learning-disabled people and then it also served the parents or carers for this group as a communal venue. The ownership belongs to Waterfront City Council.

The demonstration inside the council chamber, as well as campaigns outside the council, are the weapons of the weak (Scott, 1985: 30). Although the ironic and radical role play in the demonstration will not reverse the council's decision, the group still resist and nag the councillors using legitimate means in various social settings to create spaces for discussing alternative action plans or replacement for the respite centre.

Labour Councillor Parke proposed closing the KRRC in July 2017 because of budget cuts. The respite centre has provided a social venue for the users and carers and can accommodate eight users at the same time. A middle-aged lady with long blonde curly hair stood up and spoke of the importance of this respite centre to the council. [90] The fake banknotes they printed had the following words on one side:

> **Westwood Ward Labour Councillor Parke is determined to close down Kensington Road Respite Centre, a vital part in our lives of local disabled community. We say no to cuts against the vulnerable!**

On the other, there was a brief introduction to KRRC along with expressions of strong opposition to the closure of the Centre. A similar protest was planned by the campaigners, and took place on 15th November 2017, once again in the council chamber.

When I entered the square in which the civic centre was sited twenty minutes before the council meeting, I saw a group of people standing on the steps in front of council hall. I discovered they were respite centre carers and service users. Two of them played the role of councillor, wearing wigs, and others including carers and children with learning disabilities were there in their own right.

Figure 7-1 Campaigners Playing the Role of Councillors

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[90] Overview and Scrutiny Management Meeting, 5:30pm on 9th November 2017.
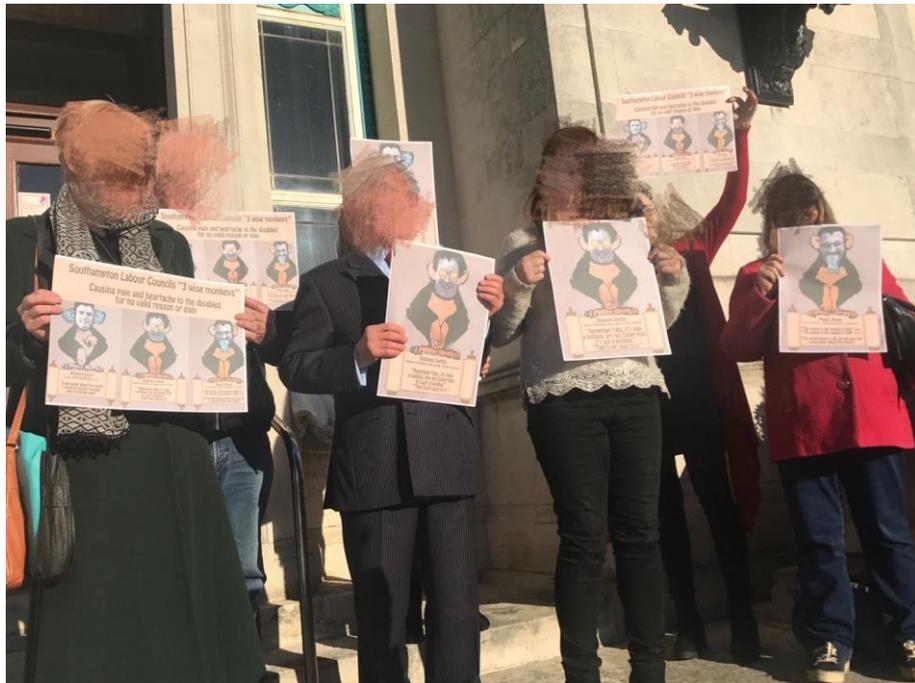
Figure 7-2 Printed Cash for KRRC Campaign

Among these campaigners, two men were holding printed "cash" with their complaint against Councillor William Parke. I entered the public gallery on the second floor with these two men and sat beside them. Today's discussion was relatively short. At the end of the item about the KRRC closure decision, two children with learning disabilities brought the fake banknotes to the centre of the council chamber and threw them in front of the councillors. Eventually, the two men sitting beside me threw the "cash" from the second floor, saying ironically *"This is what you want! Your money!!"* Then they left with other campaigners together.

These events were the first and second occasions on which I saw local campaigns in the city council. The discussion about closing or preserving the KRRC continued at various council meetings for about a year until August 2018. Every time I called into council meetings, cabinet meetings and overview and scrutiny management meetings, the same group was there seeking opportunities to speak against the closure arranged by the Democracy Officers.[91]

Given that the decision of closure was not reversible, the campaigners fought the council from other possible standpoints, such as questioning the practicality of transition plan and the availability of replacement during and after the closure of the KRRC.

A campaigner questioned if there would be a gap period for carers and people who are currently using the respite service. Pierre Jerrim, the service manager responsible for adult care, showed a very positive attitude towards the capacity of the city council to meet people's anticipated needs. According to the words of Councillor Parke, who initiated this closure plan, the likelihood of reversing this decision was small. Councillor Parke and Mr. Jerrim insisted that the KRRC was safe, but it was too big and expensive. The campaigners doubted the availability of a replacement for the KRRC and looked for practical steps that could guarantee the availability of care resources. Prior to the council meetings, these campaigners prepared themselves for more effective communication with the council to make the council more responsive to their needs. Council meetings with NGOs as service providers and representatives for service users were the battlefields on which the following questions were asked:

> *Where are other facilities?*
> *Are they available?*
> *Are these replacements permanent?*
> *Who will get the priority?*
> *How to guarantee that these places are enough and available to the affected group?*

Pierre Jerrim explained that *We have done some good work in transitioning these people*.

> **The Chair:** *Are there any organizers for the next two weeks if the Cabinet decides to close Kensington Road? How many people will be involved in this transition process?*

One of the campaigners required Councillor's response to her individual case:

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[91] Democratic Service Officers are responsible for arranging council responses to communities and citizens. In council meetings and at panels, committees or scrutiny meetings, a democratic service officer is present to organize the meetings, including citizens' speaking order and time length. See a full description of the role of the democratic service officer at: https://www.lgcareerswales.org.uk/careers-a-z-en/d/democratic-services-officer.aspx.

> **Campaigner:** *How would my daughter contact any of you or the helper? She is with learning disability and lacks the capacity to behave independently.*

The Chair of this meeting, Councillor Daniel Fitzhenry questioned the transitions plan and the reasons for closing KRRC.

> **Councillor Daniel Fitzhenry:** *What does Kensington Road Respite Centre have that other alternatives don't have? I'm going to keep on asking this question until you give a straight answer.*

However, Councillor Parke kept claiming that there would be better outcomes after the KRRC is closed and replaced by other choices. Another councillor asked, what better outcomes could there be after closing and replacing KRRC?

> **Councillor:** *The government has chosen to leave this service to the market. But can you guarantee or exert control on market behaviour?*

As far as the consultation and assessment of KRRC that was done by the Council, campaigners complained that they had received no response from Councillor Parke, and there had been no one-to-one dialogue at all.

> **Councillor:** *We should decide what is suitable for us, not someone anonymous. People don't need extra choices; they only need Kensington Road.*

Waterfront City Council would not provide respite service through KRRC anymore. Instead, they would give the affected group a direct payment so that they could purchase the service from the market. The most obvious reason for this plan is to ease the council's financial burden. The campaigners refused to accept this excuse and complained that there was no practical transition plan in place.

Councillor Parke's successor to the position of cabinet member for Adult Care and Housing was councillor Sandra Lunar, who was continuously haunted by the KRRC case.

> **Councillor Sandra Lunar, Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Housing:** *The hardest thing about my role is not so much KR, because it didn't happen under my watch. But the decision to close the residential care centre was really different. So he swept along with both and who knows what would happen this year, but I am under the scrutiny of the full council. When I went there, we had deputation from the public, we had petitions and a lot of questions that were really tough. I was amazed that I did all right. And the boys are really hard to get up and down, and I'm looking down on it like a separate issue, but could you just get to be honest.*

Julie, the service manager of Tulip Road Association, told me how the KR Respite Centre story ended:

Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle, Chief Executive Officer, Tulip Road Association: *It went on for a long time before the decision was reversed. And now I think they've also been forced to decide to keep it open seven days a week in July and I don't know how they're going to solve it, and that will be a real challenge because it's another burden.*

The excuse of austerity was used by city council as a continuous reason for the lack of action in service development. Mrs. Honeysuckle defended the council's actions over austerity by pointing out that the dilemma existed with the normal budget.

Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle: *But in reality, you're always going to have disagreements in the consultation process. It's the nature of the beast. I think it's going to be difficult even if the budget is OK. At least if you haven't got austerity there would be some good choices in that we could either do this nice thing or this nice thing or this nice thing. In times of austerity, we can either take money away from here, here or here and none of them are good things. And I think that makes people feel very burdened by consultation. It was likely due process and people get quite angry.*

Consultation exercises did not help with the KRRC decision. Regardless of austerity, the consultation survey was not properly customized for either the service users or the providers. Both groups believe that it was an exercise in box-ticking that added nothing to individuals' real and complex lives. Consultation was 'tricky':

Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle: *When you talk as well with people with learning difficulties, you've got people with amazing abilities there. But how the information is presented is really important and it's quite difficult to simplify things in a way. Somebody with a learning disability will fully understand and appreciate in the context of quite complicated matters. Take the one about how much busy groups and the sort of coaches at learning disability partnership will be involved in.*

Yongmei Li: *And all the consultation surveys designed by the council, which doesn't necessarily fit the people's understanding.*

Julie: *Online surveys are the easiest and make things quicker. But of course, it then becomes, you know, trying to fit things into neat little boxes with short answers for quite complicated issues. I think it's something we all struggle with because you want to make it open so that people can say what they want to say genuinely and in a way that you can analyze and quantify the data you have.*

Policy often becomes a state solo dance without service providers and users. Nonetheless, the NGOs and the city councils are still meeting mutual needs for public service delivery. Therefore, being critical friends is how NGOs comport themselves when facing the city council.

7.3.2 China: Submissive NGO Players in State-society Routine Dance

Mr. Huang was obviously alienated from local government. He did not believe the local government understood what he was trying to do. Instead, the government was only interested in a good public image. Mr. Huang smiled ironically in disdain when he talked about the local government.

> **Mr. Huang Xiao Lin, Dean of Art School, River City Normal University:** *They only care about the performance effect, not the actual benefit to the children. The district government and Disabled Alliance rely on me to organize this event because I have some connections with Harvard University and a few professional organizations. This is crucial to the official's annual report because it adds value and points when this district government competes with other district-level governments.*
>
> *You can see the display area. There are many shops with nobody inside, but the government still mandates the layout and insists on the existence of the empty shops.*

Then I drew his attention back to this art festival.

> **Yongmei Li:** *If you are doing the same kind of art festival, what is the difference between your art festival and this one?*
>
> **Huang:** *The government are indifferent about specific activities and projects. The government prefer the retail market, which is nonsense and would not trigger any interactions associated with us. As this kind of retail market has been embedded in the administration system for a long time, they tend to invest money into it. The government always prefers icing the cake rather than providing prompt and appropriate help.*

Mrs. Ning criticized the pattern of Wise Tree Charity Coffee for performing in front of the social media and officialdom:

> **Mrs. Ning Jing, Manager, Reducing Help Day Care Centre for Adults and Children with learning disabilities:** *All three families inside the Wise Tree were previously here in our centre and we still have some joint activities, but they run a duty rotation between the families. Every family is on duty for two days and everyone rests on Sundays. We never shut the car washing facility or the convenience store because we run them as a business. If you are running a business, it is unreasonable to shut any time. Every time there will be checks or media reports, all three families will gather there. Additionally, it is only a small, closed circle of three families, how can it benefit more people?*
>
> *I started this centre because I did not want my son to go to the Working and Healing Station to take pills every day and not do anything else. I want to give him, and other special education school graduates a better place.*

It is not Reducing Help's core responsibilities to showcase its members' improvement in such a way. Instead, Mrs. Ning's goal and that of her colleagues is to ensure that every member can become more and more self-reliant.

The submissive status of NGOs appears not only when they play their roles in showing the government's performance but also when their offices are provided by the government free, but not guaranteed permanently. They are also on compulsory rotation as volunteers for an official Charity Station. WABC's experience shows the various roles that are adopted by submissive players. WABC has been working closely with district government, street-level offices and street-level caring and working stations for years. WABC is one of the most frequent collaborators on the list Mrs. Yan Ling provided for me. This local branch of a national organization currently covers the brut healing art training at three street-level Caring and Working Stations. Its service delivery approach is much more flexible in terms of venues and time compared with other day care centres for people with learning disabilities or autism training centres.

Upon our arrival, Miss. Shen warmly introduced me to Mr. Tian Xiang, the head of art in WABC. Mr. Tian wore a pair of black-framed spectacles over his small eyes. He spoke slowly and gently as he showed me around their activity room. There was a teenage boy painting at a table by the window. He was listening to Japanese cartoon music on his earphones. Mr. Tian approached him and praised his painting. We sat on either side of a painting table, where there were pigments and paint brushes. The 4A NGO metal brand[92] leaned on the wall on my left side.

The WABC office was on the third floor of the small building. As I went upstairs, I saw street-level offices and notices outside the offices on the first floor and a university function room for the women and children on the second floor. Miss Shen explained:

> **Mrs. Shen Jing Yuan, Public Relation Manager, WABC River City:** *This painting room and the WABC office are all provided by the street-level office free of charge. This means it is not fully guaranteed, so if the street-level office decides to use this floor for other purposes, we won't have any choice but to look for other venues. We have our own financial support from the national headquarters, but we need to apply for the funding every year. The amount is just enough for the yearly operation, plus the free office venue from the local government, so we can survive. We are also one of the NGOs on the rotation of charity shop in Ancient Walking Street.*

Rotation duties in the district charity shop are not the only pre-condition for government support and trust. NGOs are also expected to purchase personal safety insurance for their members with

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[92] There is a ranking system of NGOs in River City which categorizes the NGOs into five groups ranking from high to low according to their different service delivery performances: 5A, 4A, 3A,2A and 1A.

learning disabilities in the ZY Working and Healing Centre, providing further evidence of the extra workload imposed on NGOs by the government.

After the painting class at the ZY Caring and Working Station, I followed Mrs. Yang and Miss Shen to their office. On our way there, they talked about the difficulty in purchasing insurance for the group of people with learning disabilities to enjoy a long-distance outdoor trip.

> **Shen:** *Mrs. Gu[93] assigned the task of purchasing insurance for the members to us, but it is quite hard to find an insurance company to sell us the specialised accident insurance for this group.*
>
> **Yang:** *So how can we deal with this? If we cannot get the insurance part done, we have to choose some spots for the trip within the city, like parks.*
>
> **Shen:** *I don't know. We can try other ways to obtain the insurance, but let's see what will happen. Anyway, we shall report the result to Mrs. Gu after we've done our best.*

Mrs. Shen told me that she was on duty when I messaged her on Friday. She said there is a compulsory rotation between NGOs that work closely with the district government. Apart from rotation voluntary jobs and risk adverse actions, the WABC annual award ceremony is another way of enhancing mutual trust and cooperation. It serves as both a representation of WABC's influence in Water District and a social venue for the daily collaborators including street working and healing station staff, Water District Social Work Association leaders and the students' parents. Overall, this is a joint event on the part of multiple game players in the policy network of social care for people with learning disabilities. It shows the cohesion and reciprocity that exists between actors within this network.

7.4 Conclusion

In China, free venues are the only resource that local government provides for NGOs undertaking social care for people with learning disabilities. There are fewer contractual relationships between NGOs and local government in China, so NGOs here enjoy a higher degree of resource independence than those in England. Compared with the state solo dance in England, NGOs in China are submissive players in the network governance of social care for people with learning disabilities. Like NGOs in England, they are also everyday providers of care provision in various innovative ways. They rely on themselves to realize targets of getting people with learning disabilities trained as independent people and reducing their reliance on others.

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[93] Mrs. Gu Li Mei, Chief of ZY Street-level Working and Healing Centre, Water District.

With fewer resources compared to the Water District Government in China, Waterfront City Council needs NGOs to help with user communication and rectifying service delivery on a case-by-case basis to lower costs and protect target groups. Policies of austerity have supressed NGOs intentions to get involved in public service consultations, while in China some NGOs efficiently communicate with local officers in everyday practice. The commonality of both services lies in performance assessment and protecting target communities from risk. Officials favour going through the motion to achieve higher marks in performance-based competitions, while NGO practitioners prefer local practicality and user experience.

Facing disparities in resource exchange and interdependence, NGOs and local government in England and China turn to different areas of trust-building and cooperation, the exact meaning and form of which are also transformed in everyday practices. Chapters 8 and Chapter 9 will examine these core concepts of network governance in elder care and social care for people with learning disabilities as the second piece of the jigsaw to answer two research questions raised in Chapters 2 and 3.

Chapters 6 and Chapter 7 have delineated the answer to the second research question: "What are the similarities and differences of interdependence and resource exchange in both sites and both policy areas?" The comparative conclusion comprises a correlation between them and trust-building and diplomacy, which will be the comparative themes explored in Chapters 8 and 9. Finally, the conclusions generated here and from the thematic analysis in the other four fieldwork chapters will be revisited in Chapter 10.

Chapter 8: Trust-building and Diplomacy in Elderly Care

The next two chapters turn to more comparative themes in network governance: trust-building and cooperation, and diplomacy and conflict resolution. These two themes are developed for elderly care (Chapter 8) and social care for people learning disabilities (Chapter 9). The analysis revolves around three subthemes listed in the first column of Table 8-1 and asks whether these three subthemes can help explain local practices in both areas. What are the differences and similarities of trust-building, diplomacy and cooperation in elderly care policy networks in these fields? This chapter seeks to answer these two research questions. By comparing social care for the elderly in this chapter with social care for people with learning disabilities in the next, the chapters will help me answer my research questions about differences and similarities of local public service delivery in the England and China from the perspective of network governance, and how trust-building and diplomacy affect resource exchange and interdependence in different network structures. Chapters 8 and 9 continue to employ a decentred analysis and a bottom-up view of network governance. The analysis encompasses thirteen actors and twelve organizations (see Glossary of Terms and Cast of Characters for Chapter 8.)

Table 8-1 Themes for Comparing Trust-building, Diplomacy and Coordination in Policy Network of Elderly Care

Themes	Elderly care in England and China	Social Care for people with learning disabilities in England and China
Trust-building and Diplomacy **1. Discretion and Regulation**	8.1.1 Small and improvisational discretionary power vs 8.1.2 Negotiable and improvisational discretionary power 8.1.3 The common fate: over-regulation and routinized burden	9.1.1 Small and improvisational discretionary power vs 9.1.2 Negotiable and improvisational discretionary power 9.1.3 The common fate: over-regulation and routinized burden
2. Seeking Negotiating Capital outside the State	8.2.1 Self-regulated voluntary network outside mature privatization vs 8.2.2 Deriving negotiating capital from market model	9.2.1 Building negotiating capital locally vs 9.2.2 Building negotiating capital nationally
3. The Everyday Maker Of Local Practices	8.3.1 NGOs and local government in rare conversation vs 8.3.2 NGOs are striving for government responses 8.3.3 Maintaining everyday practicality	9.3.1 A mixture of partly political lobbying actor and non-political parental activism vs 9.3.2 Partly political parental activism

8.1 Trust-building Affected by Discretion and Regulation

In both England and China, the discretionary power held by local governments are improvisational but in England the discretion is smaller and in China it is more negotiable when facing NGOs. Thus, NGOs' trust in local government is more easily built in China. The common fate for NGOs in local policy networks primarily encompasses governmental over-regulation and routinized administrative burden for risk-adverse and financial accountability as categorized by Moyhihan et al. (2015;2018) as compliance cost (Moyhihan et al. ,2015; Herd and Moyhihan, 2018) in administrative burdens, which obstacle the trust-building between policy actors.

8.1.1 England: Small and Improvisational Discretionary Power

According to the narrative of elderly care NGOs, daily communication regarding routine administrative issues are infrequent, and official meetings are too formal for NGOs to spell out their real needs. Even if the communication is effective, the information gained from the communication is seldom used properly.

> **Cllr. Lunar:** *They do come, and we do have the information, but the problem is that we do not make use of the information rightly or sufficiently. Our strategic thinking is not good enough.*

A voice from a private home care agency echoes the information collection by the council, that insufficient information is passed on from the council to the agency. The imbalance of input and output of service information is a problem of routinization and co-production. This kind of information exchange implies the learning cost exerted by administrative burden (Carter et al., 2018), especially when the information exchange is ineffective.

> **Yongmei:** *Do you have to collaborate with NHS as well, or the Waterfront city council as well? Which county council works for Hookshire here?*
>
> **Becky:** *Um, for Hookshire, we don't have a problem, but Waterfront city is trying to get enough information and correct telephone numbers and things like that, and sometimes that is a problem. Sometimes we have to cancel care packages because it's not what the client wants. Yeah. There's not enough information passed on.*
>
> **Alisha:** *We get a referral through for Waterfront city. So yeah, it's hard. We get the referral, then we have to go out and visit the customer. OK. So let's agree. We're at this table setting out policy for local authority. When I worked in internal services, we'd get a referral through. We would be able to go out, assess, and then say whether or not we could take on that support package. If we haven't got space, then we'll say that we'll have to find somewhere else. But generally, we do the assessment. So that's coming through from the care placements predominantly.*

Becky elaborated on the different standing points of the NGO has, and the council:

> *Becky: You say whether you can take it and then we'll tell you whether or not you've got it. Yeah, which for me counteracts the Care Act completely and its person-centered approach, because you have to know whether you've got the right skills in your staff team in your organization to meet some of these needs, rather than just looking at a figure. We must have different standpoints from both sides. Well, actually you need to look at the bigger picture, how many staff have I got in any centre? Is it viable? Do we have space on the particular days that this particular client needs? As you probably know, some people are just more focused on what they've got today.*

Being distinctively independent from the city council, Anna from Community Wellbeing identified a series of problems caused by routinization and co-production. The heavy administrative burden may generate compliance cost (Wiley and Berry, 2018; Carter et al., 2018) that avoids such independent NGOs as Community Wellbeing. Becoming a statutory provider is not an ideal role for Community Wellbeing, as it would be trapped and lose its freedom to act as the local safety net. Community Wellbeing's criteria for local services are much wider and more flexible than that of local government.

> *Anna Johnson, Service Manager, Community Wellbeing: They are getting more and more likely to become a statutory provider, effectively an extension. But I've been very, very careful not to go down that line. It could be that it's easy to fall into that trap and to start behaving as if you are a statutory body to provide a box-ticking exercise and make people jump through hoops. Yeah, the great thing about Community Wellbeing at the moment is that when people say why don't you cut down what you do or what you offer when you got such a massive waiting list, one of the reasons is that I don't want us to lose that ability to act as a safety net.*

In Anna's view, the city council comes up with excuse after excuse for not exerting its discretionary powers. This means that city council actions are limited to a safe area where no more money is spent and no further risks are accepted. This moves away from the central value of community charities as helpers for more people. The competition for local community support and participation in elderly care provision is never only about the resource itself, it also involves the struggle for NGOs' own ideologies or value. (Scott, 1985: 295-297)

> *Anna: So what happens at the moment is that a lot of people fall through all the cracks because they can't tick all the boxes – they're the wrong age or live in the wrong place; they've got the wrong condition. They haven't been diagnosed with this at all. Or, you know, whatever, they aren't poor enough – none of which is actually a good excuse not to help anybody, not really – and they fall through those cracks. And then they wind up with us. And we've got the privilege of being able to say to them 'if we can help you, we will'.*

The Council's actions are confined to its statutory responsibility and accountability in terms of risk-adverse policy and money saving for the local authority. If NGOs also accept this set of rules, they will

also become trapped. These additional burdens add no further value to what Community Wellbeing does but keep it away from the council's responsibility. The trust-building between them is negative.

> **Anna Johnson:** *And there will be times when they have to say actually, what they're asking us for is not something a good neighbour can do, and this is beyond what we can do. But at least there's a chance that we will be able to do something. Um, how I see us fitting into the world is specifically with regard to the statutory providers. Actually, the statutory providers are there to allow people to exist. They keep body and soul together. They do the things that might keep people alive.*

The gap that exists between Community Wellbeing as a locally based supportive NGO and official statutory providers of elderly care also makes trust-building between Community Wellbeing and city council more difficult.

8.1.2 China: Negotiable and Improvisational Discretionary Power

In China, the boundary between local government accountability and NGO responsibility is blurred in the co-production of public services. In practice, NGOs' behaviour is relatively independent but are still related to local government in service users' eyes, compared with unitary delivery by the local government administrative system. Previously, direct service providers were front-line public servants, including street-level officers or community resident committee members. This situation changed as various NGOs became involved. Only a minority of residents view NGOs as dependent bodies closely attached to the government because of their resource dependency on local government. The service delivery arena thus becomes an open playground for NGOs, in contrast to the street-level offices' previous dilemma posed by inconsistencies between power and responsibility. NGOs autonomous power functions to help trigger local innovation.

NGOs have sufficient autonomy to initiate change. Lin Quan spent a large amount of money on purchasing the Er Wei Huo smart online order system to improve data collection and offer a clearer picture of official subsidy data:

> **Lin Quan, Manager, Hao Zi Wei Social Work Service Centre:** *We connected our order system to an online database so that we could efficiently collect consumption data for the elderly, including food preferences and portion size from every canteen, as well as discount information. I was previously involved in shopping centre management, so I take the establishment and management of databases very seriously. We bought the well-developed Er Wei Huo order system and applied it extensively. In so doing, we could understand the data and use it to improve our food and service. For instance, we can assume the amounts in every chain canteen according to the previous consumption figures for those canteens. Meanwhile, the government can check subsidy data more easily when we submit it.*

We turned the previous subsidy form of paper-based discount vouchers to the current elder pass electronic discount voucher. When the customer swipes his or her card, the cashier staff can see directly what category of discount this person can use and calculate the total bill on this basis in the electronic system.

This system shows Mr. Lin's determination and the effort he is making to enhance mutual trust between his private company and local government. As part of the service delivery system, HZW uses its informal discretionary power to improve service delivery. Operating an online order system helps street-level official without having to get their approval in advance.

However, even if Mr. Lin approves of BST's smart commercial operating pattern, there could still be difficulties. He told me this war story between HZW and BST:

Lin Quan: In 2016, HZW applied for the municipal non-smoking healthy canteen with us. This was proposed by our charity issue department, but BST won the contract. What's more frustrating and annoying is that in the end they only covered three canteens, while we did ten as stipulated in the project. Our team felt apart due to this competition because the bid only made sense in the initial stage. Luckily, our team recovered and remained in contention. BST's chief executive is a member of the Municipal Political Negotiation Committee, so they won the WM community project recently. Officer C chose BST because there are frequent investigations from other cities or upper-level government in that community.

Mr. Lin told this story in a very angry tone. The informal power of NGOs cannot affect performance outcomes outside their specific area. When it becomes a competition against external competitors, local government's improvised discretionary powers represent a source of uncertainty, which is beyond the control of NGOs, and this kind of uncertainty undermines trust-building between local government and NGOs.

My conversation with Yuan Wen Hua, chief NGO manager in district department of civil affairs, steered me in a new direction. His account of the restructuring of funding resulted in weakening the street-level office's discretionary power and shifting power back to district-level.

Yuan Wen Hua, Chief of NGO Development, Water District Department of Civil Affairs: The annual funding of 0.5 million RMB was originally issued by the district department of finance to each street-level office. In 2013, we launched a charity innovative investment scheme that required each street-level office to have an individual annual funding level of 0.5 million to qualify for this scheme. Later, we noticed that the individual scheme operation at street-level caused a partial waste of the money because each street-level unit has to pay the expert for his or her evaluation work. So we organized a joint meeting for six street-level offices and some pertinent district departments and listened to their opinion on the collective use of the annual funding.

Another district government discretionary power applied to NGO development covers the idea of adjusting the entry standard for NGOs according to each NGO's development stage.

> *Yuan Wen Hua: We do have some space for execution and practice. For instance, the provincial and municipal government encouraged local innovative practices in NGO development and public service, and we enabled an NGO observation point in 2013 and released a series of policy documents as an experiment. A very important rule is to lower the entry standard for NGOs – to be specific, we ask no registration fee for charity NGOs, but this policy changed after 3 to 4 years, when we increased the registration fee from zero to 10 thousand RMB. This is because we had to selectively cultivate some NGOs after attracting sufficient NGOs that showed great potential.*

The periodic change of registration fee criteria illustrates the discretionary power that lies in the hands of the district department of civil affairs. The department can adapt its criteria to tighten or relax the discretion of local NGOs as they like, so NGOs have some limited discretionary powers and can negotiate additional ones, but they are dealing with a risk averse local authority.

8.1.3 A Common Fate: Government Over-regulation for Avoiding Risk, and Financial Audit

When comparing local networks in England and China, it is not always a matter of differences. NGOs in both countries face risk averse authorities. To manage risk, local governments impose regulations and audits – a problem that is common to NGOs in both countries.

Judy Tyre works for the only umbrella NGO in Waterfront responsible for regulations and seeks to avoid risk and for financial audit. Any policy changes involve more and more regulations applied in the voluntary sector. Red tapes exacerbated NGO actors' resistance against administration system and were condemned as extra burden. (Wiley & Berry, 2018; Moynihan et al., 2014)

> *Judy Tyre, (Deputy Manager, Waterfront Voluntary Services): Change in the public sector is enormous and represents a constant change. We all suffer from this and they've just got used to one thing and then other people move on. The structures have changed the policies slightly so that you've constantly got to keep up with that in the sector. There are just more and more regulations that apply, and the voluntary sector has to respond like everybody else, and I think for committees that pressure has increased considering people get involved in things because they want to be doing something positive.*

> *Yongmei Li: You also talk about how there are more and more regulations applied – I mean by the city council.*

> *Judy: You know, it's just we live in a very risk averse and protectionist kind of environment, so every time something goes wrong there's a tendency to put more and more regulations and requirements in place to protect whichever inspection or agency or sector has been criticized, but sometimes to local level staff that can feel quite disproportionate to, you know, spontaneity. I understand the rationale for that, but*

equally it becomes a bit of barrier on people. It's trying to get the proportionality in the balance right there.

In specific terms, DBS checks and risk assessment reports are the two prime examples of how the city council have added more procedures and regulations.

> **Yongmei Li:** *So, do you have some examples of regulations that suppress people's appetite for risk?*
>
> **Judy:** *It's a slightly controversial one, but I think the…um…you know, some of the safeguarding stuff... When that started coming through – and don't get me wrong, I am absolutely in favour of organizations having good safe practices and procedures for obvious reasons – I'll issue a thing that says every organization that provides children and young people services must all be CRB checked now, especially as we were running family projects here. Now every one of our staff and volunteers and senior managers that works delivering that service has the appropriate level CRB check.*
>
> *But new guidance came out saying every trustee must have, say, a B check. So, we put out to all committee members that you must not have, say, an A check. It just became a nonsense, so I think things like that, you know, the kind of 'everything's got to be written down and risk assessed' kind of becomes the bit that puts people off, when an organization is bent on doing things like that.*
>
> **Yongmei Li:** *Do you feel that there's just loads of paperwork in that? There's a lot more paper than there used to be.*
>
> **Judy:** *Yeah, that's the government style.*

Another burden that has appeared is keeping the council updated of daily performance in NGOs. As the commissioning body of public service delivery, the council is held accountable for monitoring the effect of every penny spent on contracting out services. However, it becomes very difficult to account for every detail for NGOs.

> **Judy:** *Yeah, yeah... and then you know funders are monitoring, they want to see everything you did, including your mistakes. But I'm not sure that counting numbers for this or that activity is the best way of telling people what the impact of what you're doing is. It's difficult to demonstrate.*

These difficulties result from different factors. Personal preferences and disparate interests can all be reflected in a subjective and inaccurate performance report.

> **Judy:** *Actually, as you get into it with them, you might find three or four different things that kind of interconnect, and some of it might be personality politics by the people involved. Some of it might be trying to unravel poor practice in the past and rectify it, and some of it might be that people have got incomplete views or a partial knowledge about what they should be doing, or very fixed views about what they should and shouldn't be doing so you have to go there and navigate the right way around it. Some of it may be that people are just overloaded, so they've made a few shortcuts that perhaps they shouldn't have.*

The situation in China is similar to that of England in terms of local government overregulating NGOs to avoid risks, and the financial audits of NGOs to prove accountability. From top to bottom, the administration system is extremely sensitive to any upheavals at the local level, and the street-level office, without exception, is therefore scared of any accidents in the service delivery process. The power in the hands of the street-level offices is not consistent with the weight of responsibility that sits on their shoulders. They may dare to excel in service delivery, but at all times they remain within safe confines within boundaries set by senior management. This is how the national context shapes the perceptions of street-level bureaucrat when they face the burden from upper level. (Stanica et al., 2020) The result is that street-level offices will informally devolve their responsibility to NGOs without official approval. This does not affect the discretion the NGOs take because it is invisible and must remain so.

Safety issues and account auditing are the priorities set by municipal and provincial government, and this accountability trickles down to district government and street-level offices. Weekly investigations are carried out by different departments such as the fire safety, food quality and civil affairs bureaus, to which the day care centres must hold themselves to account.

I was curious about the supervisory function of the department, so I asked Mrs Wan How she checked the quality of elderly care centres?

> *Mrs. Wan Fang, Chief of Elder Care, HB Street-level Office: We do not have much time and or enough workers to check the quality of the work. Usually we focus on fire safety and food security checks. We also stress all-round security issues in many meetings and training sessions. These security criteria are also included in quarterly and annual assessments.*

I was told about a three-day municipal training course for elderly care centres covering all public welfare accommodation for the elderly, private elder day care centres and NGOs that provided elderly care services, so I attended the course in the grand conference hall in River Hotel on 26th of January. I sat at the rear of this hall, making it easier for me to observe the whole scene. Many of the participants next to me were talking softly on the mobile phones or swiping at smart phone screens. I looked around and in front of me, and noticed that most participants were not looking at the stage, where the head of care for the elderly in provincial government was delivering a speech on promoting the quality of care services for the elderly. He made several brief points and shared the findings of his investigations abroad. Some participants raised their smartphones and took photos of the slides projected on the wall. The conference hall held 5-600 people, and the chief officers of various district departments were seated in the first row. The head of the civil affairs bureau made an unannounced visit to investigate YWY (Yuan Wai Yuan). Mr. Zhou still remembered the morning of the visit:

Mr. Zhou Jie, Manager, YWY Elder Day Care Centre: *The bureau head officer just appeared in our courtyard suddenly; I was doing a cleaning job with some elderly residents at the time. I realized that this was an unannounced visit aimed at seeing the true daily life and management of the centre.*

The unexpected visit and regular check all aim at guaranteeing the compliance by NGOs to the government rules and regulations. However, when the rules focus on many trivial details, they beome red tapes and NGOs may get pissed off as they deviate from the heart of public service delivery. (Hattke, 2020) Tian Wei, Manager of the Hu Bai Sui (HBS) Elder Medical Care Company, was criticized by street-level officers for dust on the table of their store in that street:

Tian Wei: *There are many large- and small-scale official checks throughout the year. For instance, we installed an air-conditioner facing north and the officer came and said: 'This air-conditioner is not in the right place, why don't you move it somewhere else?' I know that they are planning to host an official check soon, but the requirements are so precise and harsh that we cannot conform to all the requirements. All we can do is make a pragmatic strategy for elderly care provision, rather than conform to all the tiny and useless details to pass official checks.*

Assessment Table 8-2 and 8-3 provided by Mr. Wen Feng, manager of a street-level NGO office, shows that the first and second priorities are project progression and financial issues, which were assigned scores of 5 and 8 in 2017 and 2018 respectively. The rise from 5 to 8 points reflects the government's growing emphasis on project supervision and financial auditing. These monitoring tasks come in the form of assessment forms, which are also red tapes set by the government for service delivery NGOs. (Herd and Moyhihan, 2018)

Table 8-2 Section of NGO Supervision and Financial Auditing in 2017 Annual Assessment Table for Street-level Office[94]

(i)Community NGOs participate in community affairs; (ii)community NGOs take part in democratic negotiation and local governance	5	Score 2 points if the subsidy for community autonomy and neighbourhood mutual help projects is made best use of, and financial auditing is passed; score 3 points for obeying foundation project use regulations; deduct 1 point for breaking each rule until score reaches zero.	5
(ii) Reinforcing NGO charity service project supervision	5	Score 1 point if street-level office assists the district NGO service centre to supervise municipal government funded projects in daily practices; score 4 points for obeying foundation project supervision regulations; deduct 1 point for breaking each rule until score reaches zero.	5

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[94] This table was translated from the Chinese version. It is one of three sections covering the annual assessment of street-office civil affairs management. For full table see Appendix F.

| (iii) supervise the actual progression of NGO projects, enhance financial auditing and supervision, prevent abuse or misuse of charity funding | 5 | Score 5 points for 100% passing the project assessment by the community NGO supervisor, district NGO service centre random check and independent assessment; score 3 points for an 80% pass; score 0 if less than an 80% pass. Score 0 points if the NGO is reported to be working illegally. | 0 |

Table 8-3 Section of NGO Supervision and Financial Auditing in 2018 Annual Assessment Table for Street-level Office[95]

(i) Community NGOs participate in community affairs such as overcoming conflicts, community support and education for special groups and voluntary services; (ii)community NGOs take part in democratic negotiation and local governance	8	Score 1 point if the subsidy for community autonomy projects and neighbourhood mutual help projects is made best use and financial auditing is passed; score 2 points for obeying foundation project use regulations; deduct 1 point if breaking each rule until score reaches zero. Score 2 points if submitting monthly data and reports on time; score 1 point for every activity report or success as accepted by municipal working brief, (3 points maximum).	8
(ii) Reinforcing NGO charity service project supervision	3	score 1 point if street-level office helps the district NGO service centre to supervise municipal government funded projects in daily practice; core 2 points for obeying foundation project supervision regulations; deduct 1 point for breaking each rule until score reaches zero.	3
(iii) supervising the actual progress of NGO projects, enhancing financial auditing and supervision, preventing the abuse or misuse of charity funding	3	Score 5 points for 100% passing the project assessment by the community NGO supervisor, district NGO service centre random check and independent assessment; score 3 points for an 80% pass; score 0 if less than an 80% pass. Score 0 points if the NGO is reported to be working illegally.	3

NB: Government checks are not always important in the NGOs' professional view.

This sort of evaluation forms reflects the state's formal power as the principal when the original state intentions need to be secured during the process of delegating the task of public service delivery to NGOs. (Peters, 2010; Héritier and Lehmkuhl,2008) Apart from the core tasks in public service delivery, a great deal of the regulations deviate from the heart of local service delivery from NGOs' perspective.

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[95] This table was translated from the Chinese version. It is one of three sections covering the annual assessment of street-office civil affairs management. For full table see Appendix F.

Shan Yun Xiang, Chief, Eternal Young Social Work Centre: The upper-level requirement usually conflicts with the street-level practice. The management level only checks the use of funding, while the street-level office takes out their accounting record to complete the check. In fact, some street-level officers know nothing about NGOs or charity innovative investments. To some managers, NGOs are just small groups of people playing the game together informally, and charity innovative investment is just a waste of government money. But if you were to talk about charitable business, social service dissemination, social influence and the innovative use of charity funds, they would soon sit up and take notice.

Like many other elderly care providers, HZW must accept monthly official checks and report their daily work to district and street-level government offices. Sometimes, random checks also take place.

Lin Quan: Our food security check results always rank highly among the canteens. I prioritize sanitation and food security from the outset. In a regular check Mr. Peng, head of the market supervision department, praised our sanitation: "I have never stepped into the kitchen of some restaurants because there is no clean space for me to step into. I will definitely tell them to learn from you'. As a social enterprise, HZW's healthy and low-cost meals do not attract complaints about the way it conducts itself or unfair competition strategies from other commercial canteens nearby.

It is frustrating having to put up with frequent checks and annual assessments, not only for NGOs but also for street-level officers, but if a street-level or district government wishes to excel in the assessment, exceeding baseline levels for safety and accounting is not enough. (Stanica et al., 2020) Almost every government officer highlighted this financial security risk.[96]

Mrs. Tan Yan, Chief of Elder Care, XY Street-level Office: Elderly people are a high-risk group. According to my previous experience as community resident committee chief, we can see risks in several areas. The most obvious problem is theft of health care products and medicines belonging to the elderly. A growing number of elderly people are also being cheated out of their money by fraudsters, who take advantage of their anticipation for a long life and good health.

The service delivery process is contracted out by local governments to NGOs, so there should be a division of the specific responsibility. However, the normal perception is that if there are any service issues, it is the NGOs' fault, while street-level offices only care about safety risks.

During my fieldwork I noted that street-level officers and NGO staff kept mentioning the overwhelming level of regulation that transferred by the upper-level government in the form of frequent checks, annual assessments, extra workloads. The overall feeling summed up by one of the service managers was *"They don't have to put up with what we have to put up with, so they increase their requests and targets to the point where they only exist in their imagination."* The NGOs for

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[96] Interview with Mrs. He, Mr. Liao, Mrs. Chang, Mrs. Tan.

vulnerable groups such as elderly care are too weak to resist the over-regulation. Once they are not independent enough, they have to comply with red tapes to survive. (Carter et al., 2018; Wiley and Berry, 2018)

Another example of the asymmetry of discretion and regulation at different level of government comes from the lack of cooperation between street-level offices, community committees and the NGO that have to bid for the district-level or municipal-level projects. Why do some street-level offices refuse to let NGOs participate while others are happy to provide services alongside NGOs?

The assessment procedures require the lowest level to guarantee security and stability at the grassroots level. this means that their first priority is not the quality and efficiency of the public service project. A street-level officer responsible for the co-production of public service provision within the communities sent me a copy of the office's performance assessment requirement form, which demonstrates the point. In the Water District, there are six street-level offices in total, each of which has the responsibility of community governance innovation, NGO development, community organization and infrastructure maintenance. Every street-level office takes 0.5 million Yuan per year (about £55,000) to develop its public service delivery, including contracted-out projects. So once the security and stability of the office has been secured, street-level officer have to encourage and support their partnerships with local NGOs, co-producing public services with other NGOs from different districts within the city.

Discretionary powers in England tend to undermine trust-building between NGOs and city councils while negotiable discretionary power in China fosters such trust-building. Meanwhile, similar levels of overregulation exercised by local governments in both countries keeps NGOs away and discourages their participation, discouraging trust-building between NGOs and local government.

8.2 Seeking Negotiating Capital outside the State

In order to accumulate negotiating capital, NGOs in England and China deploy different approaches and techniques. In England, NGOs providing elderly care set up a self-regulated voluntary network supported by community voluntary spirit. In China, the market model encourages NGOs to become a strong partner of local government. The elderly care industry is at different stages in England and China. English market models have matured, and with privatization of public services city councils outsource elderly care to private companies, and NGO provision is a much smaller part of the whole picture. Due to the restrictions and controls implemented by city councils, NGOs in England build up internal capacities for service provision. Conversely, NGOs in China ask for more learning resources from market organizations. Opening chain stores, brand marketing, offering good quality services at

reasonable prices are the strategies employed by NGOs to resist external interventions from local government and customers.

8.2.1 England: Self-regulated Voluntary Networks and Mature Privatization

Community Wellbeing is a voluntary organization that focuses on the community care. Their services are not limited to age care, but the elderly within the community represents an increasing demand for community care. As a non-political voluntary organization, Community Wellbeing does not provide personal care and does not give any legal advice or similar services.

I got in touch with Mrs Anna Hicks, the vice-deputy of Community Wellbeing in Waterfront, when I asked Waterfront Voluntary Services (WVS) for more snowballing participants after my interview with Mrs Judy Tyre, the chief of WVS. My interview with Anna looked at many non-governmental practices in the community.

> *Mrs. Anna Johnson, Service Manager, Community Wellbeing: But ultimately, we were fairly um, flexible about what we will do because people need different things. We have over three hundred people on our waiting lists, so you can see that we have a huge challenge being able to handle the increasing demand.*

Community lunch clubs, tea parties, Community Patch for groceries or other mutual help, intergenerational toddler experiments and hospital homecoming are five main activities promoted continuously. Tea parties are the most conventional projects and are funded by local government. For hospital homecoming, the funding comes from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Community Wellbeing also accesses other social foundation funding sources rather than relying on government funding. Overall, government funding does not occupy a large portion in the entire external funding sources.

> *Anna Johnson: Probably about seventy percent of what we've got coming in is coming from grants and from that, seventy five percent comes from Big Lottery grants, which is the biggest.*

External funding is not stable, which negatively affects not only the project itself but also the employment of staff.

> *Anna Johnson: We have hospital homecoming money, which is about the same sort of amount as the big lottery, but that is a peak that will disappear. That's another challenge, of course, because we are only employing staff at the moment on short-term contracts, because we know that we can't guarantee anything long-term. And we think that it's more open and honest and transparent for people to know from day one that if they give*

up another job to come to us, we can't be certain that we can keep that going in subsequent years.

One of the key values of Community Wellbeing is what many other NGOs strive to do: helping community residents build up intergenerational connections in their daily lives. Sometimes these kinds of connections last longer than expected and develop into long-term friendships.

Anna Johnson: Ah, this is very definitely, um, to the end-of-life support. When it works, then it works really well. And people forget how they became friends, it becomes a part of their life. when you get that matching right, you really get it right.

I'll give you a good example. We had one lady who was visiting someone who got to the stage where she needed to go into a care home. So her family moved her into a care home. And it was quite long way away. And then the volunteers stopped being a community care thing. And then the volunteer moved to where I am in Dorset. So, it's a minimum two-hour drive. She still visits her. She only goes once a month now instead of once a week. But she still visits her. Because once people have made that sort of proper friendship, they don't abandon them just because of minor things – minor inconveniences like a two-hour drive. Yeah, because they think it's worthwhile.

Intergenerational toddler work is a local experiment within a self-regulated network initiated by Community Wellbeing. This is more than an official public service promoted by local authorities and their contractors. The intergenerational toddler work shows the power of initiatives that self-regulated network governance grounded in the locality can produce.

Anna Johnson: And when I took that intergenerational project, a lot of people think that automatically means putting the oldest with the youngest. I don't believe that's the case. I actually think in our society we're dreadful at putting people in care homes where even next-door generations don't mix. So I'm very keen on us looking at, uh, intergenerational work, which is maybe generations who are not so far apart as well as generations who both matter. We did. Um, we did a really lovely little project which we haven't followed up on. If you got time and anytime look around the website. It's called the toddler model.

It was a pilot study for running an exercise class with old people. And of course, there were three generations involved. And the older people will work with under-fives and the under-fives' carers. So, parents and grandparents, the whole mix. And that was so successful. It was so much fun. But we haven't had the opportunity to roll that out on a regular basis. It's unfortunate, but we'll do it eventually. But that video is on the website. You will see it.

Even if all the trials and progressions of Community Wellbeing are not n by the council, they still perform well by making many little differences and keeping their belief in providing a safety net. They don't need to be seen by the state and follow what they believe in practice. They do not attempt to

resist anything, but their everyday practices resist the state power under the radar (Bang & Sørensen, 1999).

8.2.2 China: Deriving Negotiating Capital Locally from the Market Model

There are problems for NGOs in terms of negotiating with business and local government. When Mr Lin talked about competitors in providing meals for elderly residents, such BST (Bai Sui Tang) and HS (Happy Stomach), he identified problems. He admits that he learns more from the commercial enterprises in catering for the elderly than the grassroots charity organizations, who are also his competitors:

> *Lin Quan: If I must have or collaborate with my competitors, I prefer to do so with Bai Sui Tang than Happy Stomach. Although BST is our competitor as well, we appreciate their catering model very much. BST can do 6-yuan meal that we cannot do, because they have a complete business chain where the extra cost for the 6-yuan meal can be supplemented, but we do not have that. They do not rely on meal provision for income, instead they subsidise it through making money from other elderly care services. We also aspire to be a social entrepreneur like that, taking advantage of commercial patterns and attitudes to be socially and charitably influential.*

Mr. Lin interprets the idea of negotiation and compromise when facing conflicting interests between local government and NGOs thus:

> *Lin Quan: it is because their standpoint is different from ours. Some officers are really talented; we normally see our small field of care but they have to consider the bigger picture. Conflicts do happen because of different viewpoints, so we both have to negotiate and compromise.*

The negotiation process takes time. From different standpoints, encounters with different local officers with various attitudes can affect the specific process.

> *Lin Quan: I believe that the Department of Civil Affairs and elderly care committee leaders are willing to work towards some goals together and we can achieve these under their management and guidance. We cannot achieve these on our own without that leadership.*

Given that mutual trust has been established between HZW and the Water District government and street level officers, conflicts should be resolved diplomatically. As well as diplomacy, accumulating negotiating capital locally is a second tactic for conflict resolution and achieving a better outcome from communication with local government. HZW's approach is to adopt the commercial model of elderly catering provision and learn to improve their ability to provide good quality healthy food at lower cost.

HZW also learns a great deal from commercial patterns applied by private accommodation providers. Mr. Lin explained their motivation for doing this:

> *Lin Quan: This is the information era. That means that elderly people's horizons and their perception of what they eat are changing faster with the advancement of information dissemination and infrastructure. An elderly resident's son or daughter can arrange travel abroad very easily, and a wider range of information is available. If we, as a service provider, do not pay attention to the quality of food and what they would like to eat in advance, we will soon find ourselves left behind.*

The ability to learn offers NGOs a form of sustainable development, broadens their horizons and helps them to accumulate negotiating capital when dealing with local government officials. Keeping up with service providers and the changing status of elderly people is a continuous task. Commercial organizations are more customer-oriented, so they can sense trends more quickly, which is why HZW decides to follow their lead.

> *Lin Quan: We really want to help slow the pace of aging and treat elderly people as consumers. Nowadays, a wide range of elderly care provision is free, which can cause negative effects. The free service leaves an impression in people's minds that all the services the government provides should also be free – or at least very cheap. I remember once when a regular customer complained about the price of our meal because they heard that another canteen provided a 5-yuan meal for elderly residents. I went to that canteen in person and discovered that they really do provide a 5-yuan meal, but only for the first ten customers, not for all. The reports are wrong. It's fake news! but some residents don't see the truth and demand that we do the same thing. We do not have any other choice but to stand our ground and continue daily operations and management costs by refusing to match this offer. Local government is blamed more harshly and more frequently, so they are more prone to put pressure on us.*

Elderly customers can form a pressure group when the relationship between them and service providers is not purely a commercial transaction, like their relationship with private developers in commercial models. The ethical and moral pressure from the 5-yuan meal case above puts an extra level of pressure on NGOs. HZW faced not only elderly customers but also local government because the company's officers are not the day-to-day directors of canteen services. Mr. Lin's commercial background tells him that meals cannot be provided continuously at 5 yuan each. His concept of fiscal independence also derives from using the commercial model as negotiating capital when HZW faces customers and local government.

Negotiating with local government is an inevitable test of NGOs' diplomatic skills, and success depends on their daily accumulation of local knowledge about development and service provision, as well as the degree of mutual trust established between individual NGO and local government.

Lin Yan: All in all, when we want to propose something new, we never say it in a serious way, like writing a proper proposal and submitting it. Instead, we wait for their unofficial queries. When leaders trust you, they will ask you casually 'what do you think about this program?', and we will reveal our ideas. Take the implementation of the PWIIP as an example. The officer drafted the plan and asked us whether we would like to have a look at it and raise some questions. They are also concerned about their reputation, so we reminded them a little about it, instead of denying it entirely. We never let them lose face or embarrass them by making them feel foolish.

Apart from negotiating capital, informal communication and a sympathetic attitude also matter. Respecting local government officers' dignity and professionalism underpins effective communication.

8.2.3 Communication Skills in Diplomacy

During our interview, Mrs. Lin took two calls from an NGO and a leader in Water District Department of Civil Affairs. This gave me the opportunity to witness her everyday working life, which was busy and episodic. Ms. Lin did not leave the room to take the phone call, so I heard what she said on the phone. After she finished the call, I did not resume the interview immediately. I asked her if she had to deal with this kind of business call often and what the main topics discussed were. Did she talk to district-level officials? How did she feel when negotiating with them?

One of the phone calls that interrupted our conversation came from Officer Wen, who oversees investing in new charity projects in Water District (which is where BV is working) and helping other NGOs perform specific service delivery. To take more opportunities for BV, Mrs. Lin must cooperate with government officers and follow their instructions, adapting to their behaviour and preferences. Sometimes great patience is needed to wait for the feedback from the government officers. Mrs. Lin explains:

Lin Yan: Receipts for the project are requested by the government and need to be signed off by Officer Wen. However, the young lady who interrupted our talk 10 minutes ago cannot deal with this independently. I must make several phone calls to confirm Officer Wen's exact available time slots. The signatures for the receipts are urgent for the NGO, and Officer Wen is sometimes not in his office until 10 days later. This means that unintended tasks are distributed to me.

I asked her whether other staff at Bright Vision interacted with the government officers. Mrs. Lin replied firmly that interaction and communication with government officers demands special communication skills and confidence. Junior female staff feel particularly nervous about talking with the officers, who tend not to express their opinions explicitly, challenging the ability of junior staff to

understand the meaning of their words. Mrs Lin view has become familiar with their mannerisms and she realises exactly what they are saying

> *Lin Yan: Never be frightened by the officers' attitude, they are not that difficult to cooperate with. Some senior officers speak to young female workers as if they were their daughters. We can overcome their paternalism by showing them we can deal with problems.*

She offered some examples of communicating with the government as an NGO and as a collective, rather than as an individual.

> *Lin Yan: Overall, communication is unfair and uneven because it varies enormously between NGOs of different sizes and with different degrees of influence. Smaller NGOs will not pass the problems they spot in the course of their daily work to the government executives. If the leader is annoyed, he or she ignore these NGOs. As a more influential umbrella organization, we have more opportunities to communicate due to our stronger contractual relations. We can subtly influence government leaders' thoughts gradually. For instance last year we noticed that the labour investment proportion of the public charity innovative investment programs (PWIIP) was too low, say only 30 percent of the whole cost. So we did a bit of indirect persuasion in our daily communications to nag the government into motion. Subsequently, the percentage rose to 50 percent and then 60 percent of the whole cost.*

The power of diplomacy is demonstrated here, where the use of diplomatic skills when facing external bodies is tailored Chinese style to fit with the setting and the personality of local government officer.

8.3 The Everyday Maker of Local Practices

Few political activists in England are able to solve their own practical concerns by setting up a local self-regulated network. They stand outside the official public service delivery system and do not mind being ignored by this system (Scott, 1985: 242-243). Trust is low but the relationship is comparatively unimportant. In China, however, local practitioners in elderly care are incorporated and routinized as part of the public service delivery system. Trust-building is reinforced by local practitioners' pursuit of daily practicality, as local government officials trust these NGOs more when they observe a positive outcome. Rather than keeping eyes on the state's performance, local practitioners redefined their new identity as the Everyday Maker by coping with the daily common concerns and solve concrete practical problems. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999) The second step is to communicate as often, and as openly as possible once local government has decided to trust the NGOs. Mutual trust-building and practicality reinforce each other in daily cooperation.

8.3.1 England: NGOs' Voices Are Not Significant in Rare Conversations

When discussing trust in networks, there is a presumption that non-state actors want to trust and be trusted by state actors. In England, a more realistic presumption for elderly care is that the NGOs simply avoid dealing with the local authority whenever possible. They are self-reliant and capable of handling the local differences, diversity and disputes when state arrangement conflict with elderly care reality. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999) Responsiveness might help, but it is often too much like hard work, so in the rare conversation that do take place, NGOs do not think their voices are significant.

> *Yongmei Li: Do you think they have effective communication with the council regarding some services, service users or delivery?*
>
> *Judy Tyre: No, I think most of the consultations or communications are fairly flawed, to be perfectly frank. I think there's a tendency to ask people's views and listen what they say, or at least what people want to be hearing, and dismiss the rest. And the term often covers the usual suspects where they are articulating something that doesn't fit with the overall view or good case that they're trying to pursue.[97]*
>
> *Yongmei Li: I seldom see any voluntary organization members participate in council meetings or attend open committee meetings to express their views.*
>
> *Judy: Well, that's because I don't think many of them believe it would have any impact whatsoever to do so. The decisions are taken in closed rooms behind doors. You know, by the time anything gets to any kind of public meeting, they pretty much know their options with a few bits around the margin, but you're not going to change the general sense of direction because those are primarily budgetary decisions.*
>
> *Yongmei Li: Yes. Yes.*
>
> *Judy: I mean, you know, they might be couched in language of "it's going to improve", "the service is going to modernize" etc. And I'm sure in some cases that is part of the thinking as well. But a good seventy five percent plus of what's driving decisions is at least budgetary. And then everybody knows there's no point pretending anything otherwise. And of course, more people are consulted about things and say what they want to see happen – and then the more cynical everybody is about being consulted on the next thing that comes around.*

For umbrella NGOs and other service provision NGOs, being critical demands a certain degree of mutual trust and honesty in their long-term working relationships. Having private conversations with the officers is a sensible way to do it, but not an ideal pattern for the sufficient disclosure of a wider range of information inside the local NGO circle, which becomes alienated with the council.

> *Judy: And then you can be criticized for being a bit wishy-washy on things as opposed to going full out on a particular issue and getting that balance right is quite a tricky thing*

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[97] Interview with Mrs. Judy Tyre (Deputy of Waterfront Voluntary Services) on 19/06/2019.

for established organizations, for us as much as anybody else. I mean, we take the view that we try to be critical friends with all public sector partners. We have fairly robust ideas, but often not in public. So we will often have private conversations with officers about things. Well, you're not going to be quoted on the record or whatever, so you say things very bluntly and fairly honestly. But it's done in a way that they will listen because you've got mutual respect, longstanding working relationships, a degree of trust and honesty.

However, Judy sees the bigger picture when she talks about NGOs who have run campaigns to make the council reverse their decision to cut services. Small sector interest will always sacrifice another organization's interest so that the size of the cake remains unchanged.

Judy: So that campaigning versus influencing agenda is quite hard to get right, I think, for groups – or to be seen to be getting it wrong. Some of them just represent their people and challenge the council when they feel they can be challenged. But If you protect that little group, what are the consequences for other people around? That means somebody else will inevitably lose.

Finally, the NGOs are in an embarrassing position when they take part in campaigns, protests or consultation meetings, particularly when they are an established NGO with long-term contracts. So the best option is to remain critical friends with the council, but in acceptable ways.

For example, due to governmental funding cuts to parking services for elderly care service users, the scarcity of parking permits outside the Age UK day-care centre has become a particular problem which has received no positive response from the city council. From Mary's attitude (and her anger), I can see her exhaustion over this issue.

Mrs. Mary Hugo, Service Manager, Padwell Elder Day Care Centre, Age UK Waterfront: I do believe even though they might not do anything, you know, like we spoke about the, parking outside. All we asked for was some permits, because we used to have permits, but now there's no money for it. How are we going to get people in here if we can't park outside? What they're saying is that we have to pay £60 for I think, thirty permits.

There was an opportunity to raise the urgent demand for parking permits during a politician's Christmas visit to the day-care center, but getting any response was a problem. In the end it is up to the government whether it responds to the voluntary organization or not.

Mary: We had Alan Whitehead or whatever his name was, one of the men here from the council this year. He was a young person. So he came here one Christmas because it's when they first took over and smiled. "Yeah, you're so wonderful. Aren't you doing absolutely wonderful job? What would you like to have?" "We'd like to have some parking permits." I'm still waiting for them.

Li Yongmei: So can you nag them in some ways?

Mary: No. I mean they know what we do, but it's up to my superiors to do that. You know, we need the issue here, but it's up to them to sort it because I mean, you know, who am I? I just work here. If anything goes wrong, then of course it's all my fault. But anything else is just a statement.

The one-sidedness of the NGO's communication with city council caused Age UK deep frustration. Persistence is useless if the city council does not listen to NGOs. There are no effective measures by which to force the city council to listen, and no established means of communication, which resulted in conversations between policy network actors becoming rare. For NGOs, the big problem with trust-building stems from the one-sided nature of their relationship with the state.

Unlike Age UK, which is a locally influential NGOs with a history of long-term cooperation with city councils, Community Wellbeing keeps its distance from the city council. Campaigning is too aggressive and is of little use for Community Wellbeing's business development.

Li Yongmei: Does that mean you also have more freedom when you campaign against some council decisions, or don't you get into campaigning?

Anna: Not really, and I would be very, very reluctant to get into campaigning. I don't think it's helpful. I don't think it's what we're about. Oh, that's very different from campaigning. Pressurizing, that's not what we're about. We shouldn't be aggressive. Yeah, definitely not, stay positive and pathetic. Think about what you have got that no one has. That's a lot of people's problems. You need a can-do attitude.

The issue of responsiveness is less relevant factor for Community Wellbeing because they seldom communicate with the city council, but simply rely on it and the community residents for a sustainable development. These common people's life are profoundly embedded in the elderly care service users. They are taking non-elite actions in a non-compliant mode of political engagement. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999)

8.3.2 China: NGOs are Striving for Government Response

In China, collaboration and negotiation with local government is like a plant that grows slowly, with trust-building taking the role of fertilizer, helping to accelerate the growing process.

Lin Quan: In terms of siting, compared with the first two years, we have moved from disadvantaged marginal spots to central locations along the streets, and we can do hot fries in this round of the catering project. Local government has opened more space for us and as long as we put a little effort into negotiating and discuss terms with the officers, we can do what we proposed in terms of meal provision, even if our final plan has revisions. The latest example is our new canteen in WL street. Originally, the street-level office promised a single hall of 15 square metres, but I told them that this scale is too small to make a larger canteen. Then we discovered that there was an illegal

building next to the hall, so we suggested that the street-level office dealt with that building and combined the two buildings together for our new canteen. We managed to persuade them to do that.

This provides clear evidence of success in negotiating with local government. But as ever, real life is a mixture of successes and failures. More unreasonable requirements have been raised by the street-level office:

Lin Quan: Today the secretary of Youth Road Community Resident Committee phoned me to confirm if I can check their plan for a 20 square metre venue. He asked me whether this size is practical to open as a community canteen and I said it wasn't, but I said we would consider if we could work with our current pattern and I would check with the venue tomorrow. In fact, I do not have extra capacity, so I do not plan to open new canteens this year. We already have four new ones waiting to be opened next year. The time is urgently approaching when every Community Resident Committee should be eager to realize its goals and make some breakthroughs through meal provision. To be more accurate, the Community Resident Committee is striving to persuade the elderly to adapt to paid services gradually. Meal provision is obviously a very promising breakthrough area for realizing an all-round paid service.

HZW's reply to the unrealistic requirements raised by local government balances the practicality of the action plan with showing a more positive attitude in terms of allowing more space and staying optimistic about unrealistic requirements. Striking a balance between expectations and reality requires a responsive outlook. Continuing to strive for positive responses during negotiations lets local government see and understand HZW's difficulties. The trick is to keep talking.

8.3.3 Similarity: Maintaining Practicality in Everyday Practices

Local practitioners in England and China seek practical support in their everyday delivery of services, which is something that local governments don't always prioritise. NGOs must therefore play the service delivery game on their own while simultaneously seeking practical support from local government.

Unlike other private sector providers and big voluntary organizations for age care provision, Community Wellbeing remains small. Anna is content with this status as their ideology is to remain "small and beautiful". Even though Community Wellbeing is small, it is still strong and effective in responding to local community care needs by adopting the most common measures from common people's perspective in informal network. That's what makes it beautiful. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999)

Anna Johnson: It's no good having it carved down so small that they aren't interfacing with the stuff that's going on around them. But if you get too big, it's just, you know, it's going to be unmanageable really, and people stop caring. Small is beautiful again,

people care about people; they don't care about populations because they're not real people. That's not how our psychology works, isn't it? We connect with people who we recognize as actual people.

And definitely if we start going down the line of contracts, we would almost certainly not be big enough to take that risk. But we probably wouldn't want that sort of control over us either, because we don't want to get ourselves into a situation where they give you a new neighbour, you bake her a cake, and you say 'welcome to the street. Here's a cake, and by the way, this is my food hygiene certificate saying that it's safe.' We don't want to be doing that. And that is the way that a lot of charities and organizations are going, particularly the bigger ones who have become so tied up with what happens at head office they have no idea what's going on at the grassroots.

Anna does not believe that being part of a pressure group can make any difference to the service delivery process. Being a pressure group is more like going through the motions without affecting reality t any great extent. The only exception is when the city council can do something that is practically significant – and this is where the strength of Community Wellbeing lies (Bailey, 1977:75). By comparing radical actions as a pressure group with what she has achieved, Anna clarified the vision of Community Wellbeing as to make the best use of the resources they have to make as much difference as they can.

Anna Johnson: I'm just interested in that resource I have. Have we got this? Think of it from that point of view. What can we do with what we've got? Don't worry about what we haven't got. Let's get on with what we have got and see what difference we can make. And then we will be able to say, 'this is a bit we're not currently able to address'.

The difference between England and China is that even when the government's enthusiasm and ambition appear to be blind, Mr. Lin's mind is always awake and clear, and he keeps talking.

Lin Quan: We only do the sites we are able to manage. For some very troublesome situations, we would prefer to abandon the collaboration rather than make trouble for the local government. One of the vice presidents talked with us about the complete coverage of elder canteens in each street. In order to convince the chief of our judgement, we investigated more than thirty sites and replied that we would not suggest a complete coverage due to our limited delivery capacity. We also knew the true thoughts of many Community Resident Committee chiefs of civil affairs. They were mostly from village communities and were busy with demolishing old buildings, so they did not have time to spare for canteens for the elderly.

When NGO practitioners consider how to reduce the gap between the targets set by local government and what NGOs and local government can actually offer, the evidence of everyday practices plays an important part.

8.4 Conclusion

In England, providing care for the elderly is not easy for many NGOs. However, a few persisting independently in this field using their own approaches. Though elderly care is a prosperous resource in China, representing a more promising ground for the development of NGOs than England, there are problem areas. Speaking from different vantages, seeing different viewpoints and absorbing different approaches, policy actors achieve or lose mutual trust, promote or damage cooperation and use up or abandon diplomacy when conflicts arise.

This chapter has compared NGOs and local governments' performance in England and China in terms of trust-building, diplomacy and cooperation in elderly care. Relying less on government can relieve NGOs from the constraints that government imposes on statutory providers. This is often the choice made by NGOs in England. A small amount of discretionary power can be helpful, but state regulations demand that risks must be avoided, and money must be saved, preventing the participation of NGOs in bilateral or unilateral dialogues. This means that for NGOs as government contract holders, trust-building between NGOs and city councils is hard. For NGOs that choose to steer clear of involvement with city councils, trust-building is less important as they choose not to depend upon the city council, care to a lesser extent whether or not the council trusts them. The contractual relationship and the obligations that go with it show government distrust in NGOs, so self-regulated networks are often set up that exclude the council. Meanwhile, NGOs in China enjoy much more negotiable discretionary powers with local government and can flex their muscles by imitating market models. As the discretionary power of local government are negotiable and daily communication can be achieved by NGOs using different means, the space for trust-building is much larger in China than it is in England.

Aversion to risk and lowering cost are the common burden for NGOs as service providers in both countries. Local governments seldom realise how hard or how easy it is to deliver elderly care at local level given this dual burden, but NGOs are well aware of the problems they bring. This chapter looked at elderly care, but are there similar differences and similarities in social care for people with learning disabilities in England and China in terms of relative trust-building, diplomacy and cooperation? Chapter 9 will examine this question in greater detail.

Chapter 9: Trust-building and Diplomacy in Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities

This chapter parallels Chapter 8, discussing trust-building, diplomacy and cooperation in social care for people with learning disabilities, my second policy area. There are four sets of comparative subthemes: trust-building and cooperation and diplomacy and conflict resolution (see Column 2 in Table 9-1) The chapter's conclusion covers not only the individual conclusion generated from comparing trust-building, diplomacy and cooperation in social care for people with learning disabilities, but also an overall conclusion after the comparison of these themes in both elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. There are 21 actors, 1 event and 10 organizations on the stage (see Glossary of Terms and Cast of Characters in Chapter 9)

Table 9-1 Themes for Comparing Trust-building, Diplomacy and Cooperation in Policy Network of Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities

Themes	Elderly care in England and China	Social Care for Learning-disabled people in England and China
Trust-building and Diplomacy **1. Discretion and Regulation**	8.1.1 Small and improvisational discretionary power vs 8.1.2 Negotiable and improvisational discretionary power	9.1.1 Small and improvisational discretionary power vs 9.1.2 Negotiable and improvisational discretionary power
	8.1.3 The common fate: over regulation and routinized burden	9.1.3 The common fate: over regulation and routinized burden
2. Seeking Negotiating Capital outside the State	8.2.1 Self-regulated voluntary network outside mature privatization vs 8.2.2 Deriving negotiating capital from market model	9.2.1 Building negotiating capital locally vs 9.2.2 Building negotiating capital locally and nationally
3. The Everyday Maker Of Local Practices	8.3.1 Rare conversation vs 8.3.2 Striving for government responses	9.3.1 A mixture of partly political lobbying actor and non-political parental activism vs 9.3.2 Partly political parental activism
	8.3.3 Similarity: maintaining everyday practicality	9.3.3 Similarity: parental activism's informal power

9.1 Trust-building and Diplomacy in Discretion and Regulation

As explained in Chapter 7, NGOs worked with the district department of civil affairs and its higher level of government, while both deal with local service users who persuaded them to practice locally. This balance was tricky for local NGOs and district government. There existed an asymmetry of discretion and regulation in hierarchical relationships. The excessive workload attached to local government discretionary powers gave local NGO agencies the taste of success as well as failure. In England, lack of discretionary power and the rigidity of local government has supressed NGOs autonomy, while state over-regulation for risk-averse policies and financial cutbacks have added extra burdens for service delivery. In China, NGOs conducted innovative local practices in many more ways, but only if they could guarantee risk management and financial audit, which represented an important level of accountability for local government.

9.1.1 England: Small Improvisational Discretionary Power and Over-regulation for Risk Aversion and Money Saving

Waterfront City Council found itself confronted by the same dilemma of lack of discretionary power and over-regulation of risk-aversion as its equivalent in China. In achieving service equality among families with children with learning disabilities, the city council could only change the financial structure as it had no extra money, which was not what the service providers and users wanted. Meanwhile, for the NGOs as service providers, money saving and the burden of paperwork that arose from risk and impact assessment suggest that mutual trust is not enough on its own to reduce the cost of cooperation. My group interview with Mrs. Julia Marshall and Mrs. Betty Carter and my individual interview with Mrs. Becky Owen as insiders and outsiders of the city council revealed a lack of trust-building and obstacles to cooperation between the city council and NGOs and more innovative trials.

Julia and Betty are service managers of the city council who are responsible for customer contacts in Buzz Network[98], Jigsaw[99] and Short Break[100] schemes. I booked a group interview with them.

Julia and Betty both wore official suits. Julie was in a black cashmere sweater and suit trousers, wearing flower earrings. Betty was more fashion conscious, with short curly hair, two calamite rings and jewellery and a blue camisole under a black cardigan. When I arrived at the council reception, Julia and Betty were there on time. We spent ten minutes looking for a venue for our talk and finally we took three seats opposite the reception. Julia and Betty moved the chairs so that we could sit together closely.

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[98] Buzz Network is "a group for Waterfront Parents/Carers of Children and young people with a disability or additional needs. It is funded by Waterfront City Council who work closely with the Waterfront Parent Carer Forum to ensure it is meeting the needs of families."
https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztlRo&localoff erchannel=0

[99] JIGSAW Scheme "Children with Disabilities Team is a specialist and statutory multi-agency health and social care service that undertakes assessments and provides services at the complex level of needs. The Team supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a complex impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families."
https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=nStqYS7rVXQ

[100] Short Breaks "provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends. They offer parents and carers a break from their caring responsibilities and time to spend with other family members or to catch up on other daily tasks."
https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztlRo&localoff erchannel=0

Yongmei Li: *Every time the scheme is restructured and redesigned, how do you protect minority groups? For example, autistic children cannot accept a stranger or non-family member to accompany them, so the voucher system is useless for this group.*

Julia stressed that the inequality between different families commonly existed:

Mrs. Julia Marshall: *Some families obtain personal allowances as well as Buzz Network services, perhaps plus other local offers, while other families with severe problems get nothing at all. According to a survey done with parents, 79% of them agreed that equality should be guaranteed.*

So to change the structure of the scheme in order to cover a wider range of families would be evidence-based policy-making. The city council applied small discretionary powers to restructure the financial support for each level of families, but the overall budget remained the same. Meanwhile, the city council was also held accountable for alleviating the inequality among different levels of families and run consultations to make sure policy changes were acceptable and consensus was achieved among the service users.

Yongmei Li: *The problem is that the use of the voucher is much less than that of cash, but this group of autistic children are not eligible for cash support.*

Julia: *Although the minority group's personal benefit can be used instead.*

However, the policy rearrangements could not be instigated by city council alone. Parent forum as a collective board, Tulip Road Association as a representative service provider and other charity organizations and schools all work in cooperation with city council.

Yongmei Li: *How about the supporting network for the parents and carers?*

Julia: *The city council works hand in hand with the parent forum, Tulip Road Association and other charity organizations and schools. Waterfront Parent Carer Forum is a body worth mentioning, which comprises parents whose children have needed special care in the past or need it now. Eight parent representatives discuss special needs regularly and then meet council staff to convince the council of their opinions. The unassessed Buzz Network is based on parents' ideas and the results of consultation. Ideas are then passed to the service providers and the council for further consideration, then the draft is submitted to the Cabinet for final decision. If it is approved, the transition period will be one year before it is eventually introduced and put into effect.*

Betty: *The level of services will not be degraded too much, and that means we are controlling the negative impact on some degraded families.*

Julia took the lead during the interview, with Betty adding points every so often. At the end of the meeting, Julia explained that she would be out of the office until the first week of April, so if I had any further inquiries, I could contact Beth via email or telephone. In contrast to Betty and Julia,

Becky chose to leave the council as she felt less supported when trying to realize the value of helping more people with learning disabilities. She found problems with trust-building between the city council and service providers which were not mentioned by Betty and Julia. As an outsider of the council, Becky is more aware of council's problems and is less reserved in spelling them out. Becky experienced cases of service termination before leaving the council. The exercise of state power in this case disappointed Becky and left her feeling alone and working without support.

> **Mrs. Becky Owen, Service Manager for People with Learning Disabilities and Mental Health, SCiA Waterfront:** *I was doing project management work asking managers to close services. I was dealing with serious issues myself at the time too. Towards the end of the closure process, if I'm brutally honest, there was a lack of accountability and senior management took little responsibility and it got to the stage where I didn't feel I was being supported.*

This event was the catalyst for Becky's move from the council to an NGO position, and it reflected the government's priority of putting security and financial issues first, which did not fit in with Becky's personal priorities. *"I kind of thought I need to do something now for getting back to my core values of why I came into the job in the first place,"* she said.

Meanwhile, any attempt at creative policy network management and service delivery was constrained by the local authority's everyday practices.

> **Mrs. Becky Owen:** *And let's be honest, they're worried. They are risk averse. Every project they do the impact assessments, risk assessments. The assessments are humungous. They are worried about publicity impact. If something is radical, takes risk, if you're risk-averse, that's a challenge.*

Bill Evans, senior director of Voice for Carers, declared a positive judgement on the interaction between his organization and Waterfront City Council.

> **Mr. Bill Evans, Senior Coordinator, Voice for Carers:** *And again, I think Waterfront City Council does really well in maintaining their relationships with us. The commissioner is excellent. We have a really open dialogue with her. She is very helpful and that's important. When I've gone to cluster meetings, representatives from the council have been there. So I think we are very good at keeping their eyes on what's going on in terms of acting as gatekeepers.*

Bill's attitude to the city council is much more positive than Blake's and is similar to that of Julia, showing different distances that these three service providers kept with city council. Voice for Carers and Tulip Road Association[101] are closer to the city council than Man-ability.

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[101] Tulip Road Association is a national NGO in the UK doing social care provision for people with learning-disabled people. It also has a branch in Waterfront.

Voice for Carers is a government-funded NGO that supports various unpaid carers across the city. I went to an afternoon tea organized by Voice for Carers and chatted with the carers and volunteers for an hour. I also showed them my research brief and asked if I could book an interview with some of the staff after the tea break. The only reply I received was an email from Bill querying if I approves their use of my data for setting up their data pool. There was no response to my interview request. After my fieldwork in China, I popped into their office again, and this time I was invited to a lunchtime session for carers and talked informally with Bill and Tessa Bella, a volunteer. I volunteered at the free lunch session, taking a place opposite the office. There was a reception outside the lunch hall, where I sat with Bill and welcomed the carers coming for the lunch. When I stepped into the hall, there was a long table on the right, with many leaflets of various NGOs providing social care. This was for any information that interest the carers coming here.

> **Mr. Bill Evans, Senior Coordinator, Voice for Carers:** *Unpaid carers save the British economy billions in support under the radar. That means that no one really knows the problem exists. The problem with the word "carer" is it is a completely ambiguous term. People don't always associate their actions with this term. A lot of people just go. "I'll just help mum. I just look after my brother." You know, they don't say "Yes, I am a carer." So that's just ten percent of people saying "yes, I have a carer". There are probably hundreds of people who are doing it. But don't count themselves as such.*

Unpaid carers are the target group that Voice for Carers aims to provide with support services and information. Bill further explained how Voice for Carers had worked in collaboration with Waterfront City Council in terms of getting funding and additional support from city council CCG team and social workers based at Voice for Carers.

> **Mr. Bill Evans:** *In terms of advice, sign-posting guidance and carers' assessment, we are funded by Waterfront City Council to deliver the service. It's worked quite nicely for us because it means that for the next couple of years we have a guaranteed income to keep the service going. We know what we can do. We weren't really close here at the council. So as I mentioned earlier, we have a commissioner. He comes in from Waterfront City Council CCG and we have to show him what we've done. I think we have got a really dedicated following in terms of additional support from the council, we work quite closely with their adult social care team. So we actually have a social worker based on site. You can find extra information and advice and also take on more challenging cases. We often refer back to the council. If we had someone referred to us, you can't just say, "I'm really struggling. Things are really hard and challenging".*

At the end of this lunch session, and Asian lady arrived, asking if we were the staff of Voice for Carers. She handed us a leaflet and explained that she was based at a social care agency and wanted to see if Voice for Carers could promote this agency among their registered carers. After the lady left, Bill commented on her visit and intention.

Bill: *That woman came here to market a social care agency. We can't become an advertising agency. We can't advise on them.*

Yongmei Li: *Um, is it regulated by the council?*

Bill: *Uh, yeah. There are some private providers. I mean, this one sounded like she was from a GP.*[102]

Although Bill accepted the leaflet, he refused that lady's request because this is not what a government-funded charity organization is supposed to do. The governmental regulation of NGOs is invisible in daily life but comes into play at the critical moments like the lady's visit.

9.1.2 China: Negotiable and Improvisational Discretionary Power and Over-Regulating NGOs

In China, discretionary powers are similar because they are also improvisational, but the process is more negotiable between district governments and local NGOs than it is in England. The other similarity is governmental over regulation for NGOs. I made an appointment with WABC staff and met the manager of the ZY Street-level Working and Care Centre at 2:30 pm in her workplace. Mrs. Yang Bei was about to do art therapy training for the members. Mrs. Gu Limei, the manager, is a street-level social worker who was assigned to this position four or five years ago. Her appearance is deliberately modest, which is seen as suitable for everyday encounters. She was discussing the working and care centre members' holiday outing activities with WABC staff when I arrived. She raised some detailed questions for WABC, looking for solutions to the problem of insurance:

> **Mrs. Gu Li Mei, Chief of ZY Street-level Working and Healing Centre, Water District:** *Hmmm, all right, you two can check the possible way to get the insurance done and then we can confirm the specific activity venues and forms later. Some of the other activity plan details should also be ready for our final decision in due time. The safety of our members is the first priority, so we cannot just take the risk anyway.*

Miss Shen, the public relation manager of WABC, and Mrs. Yang nodded and smiled.

After being shown the various activities around the centre for 2 hours, I left with Miss Shen and Mrs. Yang. On the road back to the WABC office, they talked about their possible plans for the outing, given the conditions of the disabled group. Safety issues were most important, so they had to look for insurance for the centre members if the traveling distance exceeds 20 to 30 kilometres, like the suburban area outside the central districts.

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[102] GP refers to General Practitioner, which is a profession based locally at surgeries and belongs to NHS (National Health Service) in the UK.

I visited this Working and Caring Station another two times and had a longer talk with Mrs. Gu Limei and Mrs. Zhou Yuan, whose responsibility is to keep an eye on members' behaviour. This time, Mrs. Gu stressed the importance of safety issue inside the station:

> **Mrs. Gu Li Mei:** *We are going to attend municipal training for securing a safe environment on the 31st of this month. The government puts a lot of effort into emphasizing safety awareness from the municipal level to district level. Perhaps this is related to an upcoming international event. The municipal government sends staff here to run random checks but not regularly. They normally check what the daily routines of our members are and whether the patients' illnesses are stable. The government has guaranteed the members minimum medicine and living costs.*

Mrs. Zhou proudly stated that:

> **Mrs. Zhou Yuan, Staff, ZY Street-level Working and Healing Centre, Water District:** *Our station is the most advanced facility and the best station in this city or even across the country. We have been visited several times by officials from central government. Some of them are really clever and talented in some fields. Every time WABC staff come to do the training, I have to accompany them and help the teacher to complete their teaching tasks. WABC staff only listen to my words. If I were not sitting aside or walking around, they are very likely to misbehave themselves and make trouble.*

To guarantee safety and avoid any potential risks in the working and caring station as well as in collaborative courses with NGOs such as WABC is the core task for Mrs. Zhou and her colleagues. As an outstanding station, ZY is also accountable for official checks at different government levels. Discretion is seldom seen in practice, as the staff invest almost all their energy and time in risk control and routine tasks.

9.1.3 The Common Fate: State Over Regulation and NGO Routinized Burden

Project impact assessments and risk assessments are not the only obstacles to saving costs in cooperation. The interdependence and resource exchange between local government and NGOs shows that local authorities trust NGOs' professionalism and capacity for service delivery. However, project impact and risk assessments suggest that local authorities distrust NGOs in the daily management of risk, performance and finance.

Apart from financial assessment, local government' sensitivity to financial issues can also result in the unpredictable withdrawal of funding. When the social care NGOs organised care and prepared to release care packages, the local councils can destroy plans in an instant by withdrawing the funding for the prepared service.

Mrs. Becky Owen, SCiA Waterfront: *Again, this is another example of how we work in almost collaboration with the council. Carers sometimes find it very easy to confuse who's funding what, so we had a service here that ended because the council withdrew the money. It was supporting children to go into mainstream activities. The council then decided on what we would deliver. It began really successfully, and we ran training sessions for mainstream staff. We did a report on it and they said that it wasn't our responsibility anymore.*

Becky contended that it was not an easy task for the local authority to balance saving millions with maintaining the customers at the heart of the service provision:

Mrs. Becky Owen: *And although they say the customers are at the heart, that's very difficult to balance when you're trying to save millions. Due to the local authority's expectations – you know, the amount of people requiring support and the complexity of packages of support – there is no longer a quick solution. They look for voluntary organizations to pick up. So our demand is greater. But if I'm brutally honest, what they do is practice crisis management. How can we fix this? How can we make these savings now, without looking at the long-term implications of those changes?*

Whatever reasons there are behind such improvisational discretionary power, NGOs' trust in the city council is undermined as they are not allowed any extra space for a Plan B. Without instant and constant flow of information exchange, trust-building is a difficult task.

With NGOs bearing the losses brought by insufficient trust in city council, the council raised another request for subcontracting the young carer service, putting additional responsibility onto Man-ability as a main contractor to keep an eye on the subcontractor.

Mrs. Blake Fielker, Chief Executive Officer, Waterfront Man-ability: *And they added a lot more stuff in there. They said, we want you to work with the young carers and you can subcontract it. We work with no limits, and they deliver the young carer with the idea that we will work together seamlessly. And young carers who then become older carers can transition across to the service. But because we hold the contract, it's our responsibility to make sure that they meet their targets.*

One typical example of government control and routinization is the carers' review that comes with the contracts. NGOs are muddling through reviews because the online carers' assessment portal was not user-friendly, but it just made carers' and voluntary organizations' life much more difficult.

Mrs. Blake Fielker: *They said the Care Act placed a responsibility on us to undertake care assessments. So because we didn't do them very well in-house, how would you feel about us giving you a little bit of extra money and you employ someone and you can focus on that. So we went with it. It covers all sorts of issues, because we didn't start the service with that in mind, although we agreed that carers' assessments were important.*

The city council attached the assessment as part of the responsibility for NGOs' bid for carers' monetary awards as well as the service contracts.

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *It could lead to a small monetary award of the maximum of forty pounds per month. That was to be spent on purely the carer doing something that made them feel well, so as we know, some carers were going to get their nails done or have a massage. However, it was never about spending it on the person because it wasn't a large amount of money, so because of that, they [the council] then decided they were going to put the contract back out to tender, and we had to rebid for it. And then they added the carer's assessments as part of the objectives.*

Blake introduced online carer assessment system driven by the local authority and the difficulties that Man-ability and their users confronted in feeding this local authority needs.

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *They developed an online carers' assessment process with the idea that carers could go online, fill out information about the caring role and the people that they commission. So, carers started to fill out the form and then they found it is not being saved or they got stuck and it wouldn't let them go any further.*
>
> *We have a huge target to meet based on the number of carers' assessments each year, but because of the systems the council put into place, we can't achieve the target. A lot of our dialogue with the commissioners is "yes, we can promote this". We can tell carer that they can do it online. But if your system isn't working properly, then people will just be put off.*

In Water District, the governmental over-regulation of financial auditing is caused by a severe case of NGOs misusing government contract funding. In a group interview, Mrs. Yan Ling described this case in detail.

> **Mrs Lan Ying:** *There was an NGO doing after-school casual sessions in our district which had signed contract with the District Bureau of Education for two years. However, after a year had passed this NGO did not continue its work as before and generally it disappeared. We hadn't been cheated before, so we gave all the funding to this NGO at the initial stage. This NGO left this district with the money for the two-year contract, and since it registered in our district as a new organization, even if we could find the personal ID information of its leader, we could not really trace him and discover where he was.*

This severe case significantly affected the district government, which designed a three-stage check of governmental contract similar to the evaluation forms in Water District (see Section 8.1.3). The auditing checks were aimed at preventing the actual practices of NGOs from deviating form plan and reasserting the state's attempts to save money while guaranteeing the quality of service provision (Peters, 2011; Héritier and Lehmkuhl, 2008). Keeping service provision on the right track and at the centre of service design is part of steering in public administration.

Mrs. Lan Ying: *Now we just put the three-stage auditing and checks in place for every contract. The street-level office needs to check the preparation done by each NGOs for the contract at the initial stage. The first half of the funding will be given to the NGOs once the preparation is done. In the middle of the contract, the district government will check the quality and quantity of the accomplished contracted tasks, and if the NGOs' work reaches the check criteria, they can be allocated two thirds of the funding for the second stage. Finally, when they pass the check after finishing the contract, the rest of money will be paid.*

The deterioration in government trust of NGOs has resulted in tightened criteria and a stricter system of contract invigilation at a wider scale.

9.2 Seeking Negotiating Capital outside the State

As well as communication skills, NGOs needed to obtain negotiating capital for better dealings with local government. NGOs on both sites acquire negotiating capital locally, and NGOs in China also acquire it nationally. Both sides maintain close connections with local service users, which enhances local knowledge and evidence of public service delivery, and becomes the source of volunteers, funding and local support. If divergent opinions appeared, NGOs convinced local governments of more practical action plans. If there is a shortage of volunteers and supporters for NGO development, these local connections can always back NGOs up.

9.2.1 England: Building Negotiating Capital Locally

The strong bond between local service users is the main source of a charity's negotiating capital when entering the playground of local council offices, other charities, private sector organisations and occasionally local elected councillors.

As a locally based charity organization for people with learning disabilities, Man-ability knows its customers well and takes every possible opportunity to sit on committees across the city and give voice to their clients' needs. This sort of public expression, as a typical form of resistance against the resource holder, at least keeps the city council alert to the existence of collective opinions, and the practical perspective of NGOs.

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *Locally we can actually support people in voicing views and think about links with the council. We try to sit on committees and forums. My role is to link with the Learning Disability Partnership Board. There's been a steering group for direct payment and it's really good to be involved in those things because we can often bring that sort of voice to what is a fairly marginalized group of people. When you're talking about people with learning disabilities, perhaps there are two thousand in Waterfront, and not all of them are known to social services. So of course, when budgets have been*

decided, it's often not very much. There is a small proportion of people taking a large part of the budget, so we have to put our argument across.

The sustainable options for carers in the future was another issue that Man-ability encouraged people to consider. It is essential for carers to be cautious about their response to any future risks.

Mrs. Blake Fielker: *The other thing we get hooked into quite a lot is encouraging people to think about the future. We have a lot of people here who are in their eighties, still caring for someone maybe in their sixties. That is not a good combination. Wereally help them think about what would happen and find an accessible sustainable option. Some people have good family support, but actually what they need is more input from social services at that point, and often these families have been used to managing on their own. If social services kept on top of an annual review of people, they would notice the changes, but we still spoke to people for five or six years because no crisis had happened, and social services tended to respond to crisis situations. But I would say the council is getting better.*

From the standpoint of an NGO as a local service co-producer that enjoys much intimacy with service users, co-production is not only an external task with local government but also an internal one with service users and service managers. Man-ability does not only rely on external committees and has set up an internal fair review and social care work review panel to guarantee service provision quality from every institutional arrangement.

Mrs. Blake Fielker: *I would like to promote something that is more like a genuine co-production, so I need to go to places that are doing these things really well and find out how we can learn from them. But my first thing is more of a longer-term ambition, because I need to make sure we've got the basics right. We did this literally just last week; it's called a fair review. We had a team of experts on social care, and as part of that they talk to me, they talk to politicians, they talk to services, but they actually also went and spoke to community groups that we're working with to gain their views.*

Waiting was the big difficulty for a lot of people. But it was a very, very good bit of work. We will be reflective, getting what you are doing. This is what you want, and it is not working very well. So how do you change it? Working on operative rights and feedback, critical friend stuff is useful because the pay is very small. And I think when I started, there was a desire to give excuses or blame someone else.

In order to keep everything on the right track, the first step is to make sure that internal operations function properly and are double checked by the internal fair review.

Although internal reviews are in place to secure process management, NGOs have always felt unable to give what the city council promises to the service users. The professionalism from NGOs in everyday service delivery, coupled with the local government's lack of knowledge – perhaps even innocence – can in some circumstances lead to conflict. Because it is more difficult for individual

service users to get along with the council than NGO staff, NGOs like Man-ability find themselves having to act as middlemen between the two when something goes wrong in individual cases (Bailey, 1977: 167).

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *The council staff do not always have the work experience of practitioners in, say, Man-ability, so they sometimes give the wrong idea to the carers about what the service providers like us can offer. When facing a family with a child with a learning disability, the difficulty for the family to get through the council is particularly significant, so Man-ability can step in at this time when the council gets it wrong in individual case.*
>
> *When we work with people here, it's generally children, and we have to make sure that what we're offering meets their needs and that any referrals they make to us are appropriate, because we often get referrals through the council. Making sure the message they give to carers and parents is accurate, when sometimes they will give them the wrong idea of what we can offer. It's just a matter of making it to clear what we can do for everyone.*

The everyday practices are never one size fits all, so disputes may arise if the general rules of governance cannot offer person-specific solutions and different groups support conflicting opinions. In most cases of social care for people with learning disabilities, it is usually service provision NGOs that make more effective decisions. This is how they build up their influence and reputation locally (Bailey, 1977: 59-61; 63-65). Man-ability and the Tulip Road Association are two local service providers for people with learning disabilities, but they tell very different stories about their roles when facing policy changes.

Man-ability is more prone to voice its clients' needs, and challenges the council when it feels the council can be challenged in council meetings, in campaigns and consultation meetings, while the Tulip Road Association tends to perform as the voice for the council when they deal with their client group.

> **Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle, Chief Executive Officer, Tulip Road Association:** *I think we do it quite well. Here we have the play scheme game. The play scheme games are funded by the council, but people see us as being independent. So that's one way to do it. But there are times we couldn't go to the press and there are lines we can't cross. So we would never be negative about the council publicly.*

Although NGOs feel unable to cross the line by saying anything negative about the council, it still sticks to a nuanced principle of being a critical partner: NGOs challenge councils when they feel they can be challenged. This was a tacit agreement between big contractors and Waterfront City Council. Even though NGOs never cross the line, their invisible power deriving from their

pragmatism born of experience sustains a necessary tension between NGOs and local government, more or less forcing local government to respond (Bailey, 1977: 35).

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *We challenge them when we feel they can be challenged, and I think they accept that approach. If they run a consultation and it's not done completely, but very sneakily, it's almost like "yeah, we've done this. We had so many meetings, only three carers came, but that's not our fault." We saw tick box here, so it feels to us sometimes that we're just ticking boxes. And when we challenge that, it stops them and makes them think. If you get the right people in the job, they will agree. I don't think we haven't done anything blatantly, because we're very aware that we can't be a troublesome organization. I've been in this job for twenty years and can honestly say there's never been a situation where we crossed the line, because the trustees are my role, and we're very aware that we need that business.*

Blake not only says this, but she also practices the principle of challenging the council when she feels the council can be challenged, which was the case in the council meetings that dealt with the case of the KR Respite Centre. In a set of observations, I witnessed how Blake stood together with the respite service users and their carers to challenge the councillor and service leader.

Conversely, Julie Honeysuckle talked about the council's responsiveness in the KR Respite Centre case in a more positive way, in sharp contrast to Blake's narrative:

> **Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle:** *They're pretty good. And I think a big consultation went on around the KR case. That was a really difficult one because I actually think the council did listen and they did wonder whether or not they made the right decision in such a tough case. Perhaps it was the way in which it was made, but I think they've been unfairly criticized for not listening to the voices of people. And the individual council officers responded individually to some very very angry people who were communicating their views in a very inappropriate way. But all the responses I saw from the council were polite and courteous. They were sympathetic and understanding and I think they ended up getting caught up in a dodgy decision, but this difficult decision-making process probably ended up with the wrong outcome, and they got nothing but criticism along the way, but honestly I didn't see any individual acting in a way that was non-consultative.*

Rightly or wrongly, given that the hard decision was made by the council, the council responded to what it considered the inappropriate anger and other criticisms from the public in an 'appropriate' way.

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *We try to influence the consultations that they do. And we say to them, do it this way, come and engage with people here or go where they feel comfortable. Don't have meetings in the civic centre where people feel intimidated and not sure where to park; go and see them on their own territory. And we are really successful with that. I've been in this job a long time so it's easy for me to build on*

relationships and talk to people at that level and encourage them, and usually when you engage with people even at the highest level, they want to get it right. I've never met anyone who works in the council who actually just intended to cut money without caring what the impact was on people. They care but they haven't worked with that level of bureaucracy.

Julie Honeysuckle defended the council's position when she saw the council being criticized by service users for cutting money. As a bridge linking both sides, Tulip Road Association tried to communicate the difficulties that the council was experiencing to service users whom it knew better than the council.

> **Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle:** *They said they wanted to be able to access universal services, or was it just more convenient that way? They probably said that it would be quite helpful for us to have seen that because then we would know it really was a direct response to what the need is rather than just the council getting criticized because people thought they were cutting costs. It's not really fair. They have to cut costs because the government is cutting their money. So if we maybe sometimes try to understand the background behind why some of these decisions are made, then we could actually defend the council to other people.*

The common ground for Tulip Road Association and Man-ability is they both are long-term partners of the city council and provide local services on its behalf. However, they take different strategies when facing the state power. Man-ability is more strategically aggressive and remains unsatisfied and sceptical about the council's efforts to reach out to service users.

9.2.2 China: Building Negotiating Capital Locally and Nationally

Although the Reducing Help Day Care Centre was offered a free venue and official policy information from the district disabled alliance, the centre itself still looked for development and negotiating capital at a universal level, for instance by setting up networks across administrative levels and through the charity industry. Mr. Zhao witnessed many instances of government officers, university students and hospital staff volunteering to work in Reducing Help.

> **Mr. Zhao Yi, Photographer, Reducing Help Day Care Centre:** *We have a wide range of volunteer groups across different government levels from the provincial female leaders to district leaders. The Sunshine Mother volunteer team consists of the Vice President of the Provincial Political Negotiation Association as well as many other provincial female leaders and municipal government female leaders. They come to join in with our activities on a regular basis. We have a volunteer team from the municipal branch of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, four universities based in the city and the First Affiliated Hospital of Ocean Province Medical University. The chief doctor of urology department in the First Affiliated Hospital of Ocean Province Medical University also has a child with autism, so she is keen on volunteering here.*

As the current leader and initiator of Reducing Help, Mrs. Ning is in charge of all diplomatic events, including the annual training session organized by Shenzhen Charity College, visiting and training courses by Kennedy School of Government at the University of Harvard, the River City Marathon Competition and the Award Ceremony for the Most Beautiful River City Residents. These national and cross-regional diplomatic events tend to impress a wider audience and attracts their attention nationally or even internationally. As part of this process, Mrs. Ning herself has accumulated a great deal of knowledge and experience in the charity business and has acquired more resources from governmental or non-governmental actors. Negotiating capital has been built gradually at national level. Reducing Help has been gaining publicity and influence widely through a variety of regional and national activities.

> **Mrs. Ning Jing, Manager, Reducing Help Day Care Centre for Adults and Children with Learning Disabilities:** *I was deeply touched by one small donation when I attended the Award Ceremony for the Most Beautiful River City Residents. Even if it is just 200 yuan for me to top up my phone, the way that guy expressed his appreciation for my work really impressed me. I asked his name for further contact, but he wouldn't tell me.*

The driving force did not just come from individual volunteers caring for Reducing Help on a regular basis. Reaching out to international and national audiences enhanced Mrs. Ning's ability to locate the role of Reducing Help more precisely. In an annual training session organized by Shenzhen Charity College, she accessed the officials working for the Charity and Rescue Section of the Department of Civil Affairs in the State Council of the PRC and consulted them on key issues related to Reducing Help's foundation for generating stable profit. Activities like the River City Marathon Competition were performed to showcase the organization to outsiders and act as a bridge for insiders to connect with other groups inclusively. The regular outreach activities function in a similar way to the Reducing Help Car Wash Station and the Convenience Store. The Car Wash Station distinguished itself as an insider member and realised it could be rendered mobile in different venues while the latter provided them with a permanent base.

> **Mrs. Ning Jing:** *We haven't increased the car wash prices for the past 8 years. Most customers are regular customers. During peak hours like the Spring Festival Eve, the children's parents come to share the workload.*

The convenience store was opened recently, and Mrs. Liu Lu played the role of manager and tutor inside for two members in case they needed any assistance and teaching them how to guide customers around the store. I went with Mrs. Ning to visit Reducing Help's convenience store in October, when it had been refurbished with paintings by the members.

Mrs. Ning turned to Mrs. Liu and suggested that[103] that they should show me around the store, saying that Fang Fang can add something if Xiao Kai leaves anything out. Mrs. Liu agreed and introduced me to Xiao Kai[104] and Fang Fang[105] and asked them if they remembered how to give customers a tour of the store. Xiao Kai nodded, although he looked a little confused, then he started his demonstration.

> **Xiao Kai:** *Hi, Miss Li. Welcome to our Reducing Help convenience store. Today, I will show you around and help you choose any product you want.* [he paused]
>
> **Mrs. Liu:** *Which area would you like to introduce to Miss Li first? Probably the snack section?*
>
> **Xiao Kai:** *This is the snack area. We have Wang Wang pancake, Qia Qia sunflower seed, spicy bean curd and peach candy. Now we come to the stationery area, where we have pencils, erasers, notebooks and ink.*

This convenient store had two small rooms connected by an internal door. Mrs. Ning led me to the other room with Xiao Kai and Fang Fang, where we used the selfie machine to take a group photo. The wall next to it was lined with many smiling faces of Reducing Help members with customers or visitors. Mrs. Ning suggested that I offer a few words of encouragement for Xiao Kai and Fang Fang.

I saw and many official visits by different levels of government to this small convenience store and heard about others. It was also partly supported by a nationally famous Chinese Internet Retail Company which has invest more time into charity work over recent years. Staff from the District Disabled Alliance could pop into the car wash station and the convenient store very easily. Meanwhile, the reducing Help Day Care Centre canteen was another important venue for daily diplomatic liaison with the District Disabled Alliance. Dinner talks efficiently facilitated mutual communication and policy updates.

In England, bottom-level dialogues are a small part of council officers' and politicians' everyday lives, in which the demands for implementation and the biased preferences among different participants are the stage on which officers and politicians play small roles. The fragmented views and interests of lobby groups challenge the politicians' diplomatic and communication skills. In China, however, local government does not handle political interests but conducts administration, meaning that diplomacy and communication skills are at a premium for NGOs.

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[103] Tutor in Reducing Help Convenience Store.
[104] Service user in Reducing Help Day Care Centre.
[105] Service user in Reducing Help Day Care Centre.

9.3 The Everyday Makers of Local Practices

Are NGOs necessarily always the weaker side when we compare their strengths against those of the state? If they are weak, how do they sustain themselves when facing the stronger state? If they are strong, how did they become strong? Building mutual trust is related with resource exchange, equality during exchange and cooperation. Scott (1985: 241-243) concludes that the weapons of the weak are their many different forms of resistance against the stronger interest distributors. Weapons such as collective resistance, private campaigns, theft and mutual support between poor sectors of society all make themselves visible through stronger interest distributors, or the stronger group will easily ignore the weak group's existence and eliminate it. NGOs in England and China that perform social care vary in capacity and levels of equality when they establish connections with local governments. Political activists and a mixture of partly political activists and non-political activism both take advantage of their identities to ensure that local innovative practices bloom through the joint provision of public service with local governments. (Bang& Sørensen,1999) As the everyday makers, these activists place policy before politics but at the same time also represent specific interest groups in local democratic governance. Mutual trust is built and enhanced by more negotiable discretion and supressed by restricting discretion and over-regulation in both England and China.

9.3.1 England: A Mixture of Political Lobbying and Non-political Parental Activism

In England, NGOs providing social care for people with learning disabilities need to lobby the council for government contracts and express their political attitudes to state arrangements. Meanwhile, specific local public service delivery has nothing to do with standing with or against political parties but is more strongly related to parental activism. Each NGO is therefore a mixture of political lobbying and non-political parental activisms.

The problems for Man-ability[106] are almost the same as those that face Reducing Help[107] and similar NGOs in China. They operate in an indifferent social environment; their clients are stigmatised and it is hard to win public sympathy and support. The need to step out of the closed sphere of people with learning disabilities propels these NGOs to face more diversity, differences and disputes in a wider scale. (Bang & Sørensen,1999)

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[106] Man-ability is an NGO providing day care for people with learning-disabled people in Waterfront, England. It is a national brand of NGO, so has other local branches across the UK.

[107] Reducing Help is an NGO providing day care for people with learning-disabled people in Water District, River City, China.

Mrs. Blake Fielker: *Man-ability was started by a group of mothers who felt that their children were being excluded, largely by location. And then of course over the years different acts came which supported that sort of inclusion. Here we used to be like what they called, it's almost like taxing intellectual abilities. You might want to have a look and see what kind of tax-free amounts we used to get. And It was a large place where people with disabilities that would be identified years ago. It would be stupid reasons, or they might not even have had a disability. And then over the years it turned into the sort of place where people with learning disabilities would go. But there would be lots of people living there and there was a lot of campaigning to close what people saw as an institution. People were institutionalized when they went in there and had to eat at the same time. And there was a lot of campaigning going on to close the beautiful grounds.*

Man-ability did some trials in developing their clients' inclusive abilities, such as starting a café, and gardening group. The chief executive officer of Waterfront Man-ability, Mrs. Blake Fielker, also claimed a target of financial independence and collaboration with the council in these trials.

Mrs. Blake Fielker: *We're running a cafe which doesn't generate a steady profit. It really is all about giving people the sort of work skills that they need. We don't charge, but eventually we want to. We've applied to the lottery so that we can have some money to develop more things, like the cafe, maybe a gardening group, maybe a car wash group. I'm thinking about how we can engage people, and then we're working to our own agenda rather than the council's. But I like to think that our agenda and the council's go hand in hand. It just means our funding is not coming from them.*

But you've got money for the military and it can be just as difficult and complicated to report back to them. So I suppose the bottom line is that they see that we're trying to work with them rather than against them. I feel as if I haven't been in this job for very long, but that's often the best way.

Dual identity as a member of the council and an NGO official helped Becky to target the right people inside the council to meet SCiA's[108] specific aims. For instance, when you are an unimportant presence at a council meeting, the situation becomes better when you start to recognise some faces there.

Mrs. Becky Owen: *I think if you haven't got that experience, you're suddenly faced with the fact that you've got to go to this meeting and you've never ever done it before. It's scary, but I'll go to a meeting and there'll be at least two or three faces that I know anyway, because people with learning disabilities have quite a small group of service providers. I've been with housing. I was involved with social work teams. I was involved with policy writers and legal teams. And then you understand what each different department does.*

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[108] SCiA is a national NGO in the UK doing social care provision for the elder and people with learning-disabled people. It also has a branch in Waterfront.

There is a sharp contrast between the formal structures and procedures of the city council and the fluidity in the voluntary organizations, which are task-oriented and person-centred.

> **Mrs. Becky Owen:** *If we're trying to provide true person-centred outcomes focused on individuals and you just get a postcode, it doesn't help … I do miss the structure, so you have very, very clear teams, policies and procedures. I like boxes. they are really neat. There's a lot more fluidity with a voluntary organization. It means that I have more autonomy. I've probably personally struggled with that – obviously, again, I like my boxes. They let me know I've followed processes through.*

The discretionary power in the hands of council staff and the autonomous power in the hands of voluntary organizations lead to different service design and delivery processes. Becky had her council position, but the social care network underpinned it, helping her solve service designs and delivery problems that SCiA was confronting. The SCiA's position pushed Becky closer to clients, enabling her to continue with her previous person-centred mind-set and made it function better using the autonomous power that was in her hands as a voluntary organization.

Even if NGOs can benefit from more flexibility and autonomous power in service design and delivery, they are still dependent on council contracts, which come with conditions. There were always additional burdens, such as the council's strategy for carer assessment and data sharing.

Man-ability had no other choice but to follow and keep up with the council's regulations on data sharing and protection, even though the security of their sharing system was not funded.

> **Mrs. Blake Fielker:** *So there are some real issues about our independence in the light of the new data protection acts that have just come in. It's a real problem. I think we've moved from the days when we were just carers doing good work in the community to becoming providers of services and having to keep up with regulations. We have to comply with the training that staff have with things like police checks and DBS checks.[109]*
>
> *If the council funds us, who owns all that information? Because we tell people they can come to us in confidence. We are having a trial to work out exactly what we do share with the council. And how do we share it? Because they're saying that it needs to be done securely. So we need to have a secure system for sharing emails, but they haven't funded us for that. If they need it, they need to put the system in place for us.*

Blake had a couple of questions about the extent and volume that the user information should be shared with the council, primarily from the service users' perspective.

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[109] The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is now a mandatory part of the recruitment process in the UK: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-checking-service-guidance--2 It checks for any criminal record of staff and volunteers to confirm they are not potentially dangerous, especially to the vulnerable service users in some charity organizations.

Mrs. Blake Fielker: *And then how much information do you share with them? What should I do if you come to me and tell me that you're looking after your mother, but you're worried about social services being involved in your life because you never had any dealings with them before?*

The control and routinization that comes with the governmental funding is paralleled by authentic social movements and local social capital accumulation. Staying connected and standing together with local communities has nothing to do with the administrative burden and political disputes around service provision. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999)

Acting outside the Man-ability building is also something that Man-ability did to connect their community with other communities in the wider society. I accompanied Man-ability members to the local NHS Hospital for a campaign advocating the equal rights of people with learning disabilities in medical treatment. Senior volunteers who are familiar with all the clients with learning disabilities and took part in the daily work of Man-ability led the way to the hospital and taught the members how to express their needs when they require medical treatment from the doctors and nurses. We had a tour around several departments. The members greeted the doctors and nurses they met and handed them leaflets introducing specific information about people with learning disabilities and how the doctors and nurses could best help them. Doctors showed our members how they did basic physical checks for patients and even offered a taster session for our members.

This trip was a sensible way of letting the hospital staff as outsiders of the daily lives of people with learning disabilities know them better. It was also an interactive activity that benefited members of Man-ability with learning disabilities by connecting them to other groups in society and expressing their authentic medical needs to relevant people. Making this special group more widely influential and securing their connection to other social groups showed Man-ability's determination to combat the stigmatizing effect if disability and gain a better understanding and more sympathy for people with learning disabilities.

9.3.2 China: Partly Political Parental Activism

In China, NGOs are partly bound to local government as a source of their reputation and for publicity. However, NGOs providing social care for people with learning disabilities are also involved in parental activism and fostering local practices with service users in the social realm. That is how partly political parental activism defines itself in terms of public service delivery. Except the common interest and value, like governmental reputation and publicity, shared by these NGOs and

local government, local practices are to the central of network governance. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999)

If NGO development in the district has a stage, Mrs. Ning, who established the Reducing Help Centre, is obviously the leading actress among many other NGOs. She told me that the centre's vision was to reduce the need for help for members with learning disabilities from other groups. Evidently, this is achieved through parental activism and has become an outstanding example of a governmental supported business, so it is therefore seen as being partly political.

> **Mrs. Ning Jing, Manager, Reducing Help Day Care Centre for Adults and Children with Learning Disabilities:** *What I am really into is promoting their capacity for getting involved in society. I would like help and care from society, but the aim is to reduce the need for help.*

I visited the Reducing Help Centre on 25th January 2019 after making an appointment with Mrs. Ning on WeChat. As I went upstairs to the third floor of the residential building in Pick-up Lotus Road, I saw many photos of Reducing Help's outdoor activities. The smiling face of Mrs. Ning appeared in many of them. I pressed the doorbell and a girl aged around 20 came to open the door for me. My trip into the parental activism's story started from this point.

There were many newspaper cuttings framed nicely on the wall, and prize medals and trophies on the small tables in the waiting area. They told the developmental story of Reducing Help, especially Mrs. Ning's life experience, which was closely bonded to Reducing Help. She stepped out of the inner hall of the centre and seated me politely, holding a mobile phone in her hand. She asked me to wait for a while. I nodded and started browsing and scanning newspaper reports for more details.

Mrs. Ning invited me to join her for lunch in the day care centre, and after lunch she took me to the Reducing Help Car Wash Station 200 metres away from the centre and the Reducing Help convenience store. Xiao Ming and A Juan were sorting out products when we arrived. Mrs. Ning encouraged Xiao Ming to guide me around the commercial product shelf. Xiao Ming patiently introduced the shelf section by section and we took a selfie.

Figure 9-1 The Reducing Help Car Wash Station

Figure 9-2 The Reducing Help Convenient Store

When I entered the Car Wash Station, the staff were writing diaries, overseen by their supervisor. I looked at the diaries they were writing and saw that each diary entry normally consisted of three or four lines. Their supervisor assigned a girl to show me around and make me a cup of hot tea. I was treated as a customer. The staff all wore the uniform of red jumper and blue overalls with their names embroidered on the red jumper.

The Star Dust[110] was begun by Mrs. Ding Ling, but she transferred it to Mr. Will two years ago. Although not as used to communicating with the government and tackling official documents as Mrs. Ding Ling, Mr. Will's approach broke the deadlock of Star Dust's business development.

> **Mr. Will, Chief, Star Dust Autism Children Development Centre:** *I had been working in the English training industry for seven years before I came here to pick up the relay baton from Mrs. Ling. I felt unsatisfied when I was in the English training school and because I had accumulated a great deal of experience in the education industry, so I did not want to waste my experience. I just needed a new area of inspiration to relaunch my career.*
>
> *I was fed up with the government reports although they can provide templates. I don't think the government was providing us with much in the way of resources, and what they can offer does not reflect our effort in coping with their workload. My own resources are much more than the government or other social foundations.*

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[110] Star Dust is a local NGO doing professional training for autistic children in Water District, River City, China. It was started by a Mrs. Ding Ling, a mother with an autistic child.

In addition to frequently complaining about official report writing, Mr Will was annoyed about the different standards for fire regulations as well.

> **Mr. Will:** *This new centre was a project we reapplied for after moving from the previous district. Our fire control facilities did not meet the standards of the previous district after their reform, sand we would have had to spend 200,000 yuan to renew the facilities if we wanted to stay there. Eventually, we chose to give up and reapply for the current location.*

In River City it is not rare for the mother who has a child with learning disability to start a day care centre or social organization to help her child as well as those of many other families in the same situation. Mrs. Ding has a daughter with autism, so she started Star Dust Autism Training Centre. Mrs. Ning Jing has a son with a learning disability, so she started the Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with children with learning disabilities. Mrs. Ning showed me around the day care centre in a skilful and experienced way. She has done this many times for different levels of officials and peers not only from the city but also from other provinces. She appears trained and performs the task as a very organized manager.

Once I stepped into the waiting area outside the activity hall, I saw supportive newspaper and social media reports about this day care centre. Most of them focused on Mrs. Ning Jing herself, as the project's initiator. She had a tough life at first, and she had to fight for the development of her centre. According to the newspaper report, Mrs. Ning's ex-husband left her and their son after their son was confirmed to have a learning disability. Mrs. Ning had to give up her job and put all her effort into her son's daily care.

Such commitment can create outstanding results, but does the story end here? Exposure to different levels of government might have reduced some of the unhappiness from this tough woman's life, but it also generated some extra burdens. The propaganda for publicising Reducing Help's social impact was promoted by exposure to the charity industry and different levels of government, which acted as a platform for Ning's personal influence as well as Reducing Help's positive image (Bailey, 1977: 37). When we had a private chat on the way to the Reducing Help Car Wash, she expressed her willingness to keep her distance from the local government and the District Disabled Alliance. However, a few minutes before our chat, she showed me around the District Disabled Alliance offices and hall. She spoke to an officer based there about their marathon preparation, and the arrangements to pick up uniforms later that afternoon. So, even if she prefers to have a more distant relationship with other agencies, she still has to deal with them on a regular basis.

When I paid a third visit to the Reducing Help Day Care Centre on 25th December 2018 for an appointment with Mrs. Ning, she was occupied by a heavy workload, so introduced Mr. Zhao Yi who was sitting outside her office in the hall, saying it was would also be informative to talk with Mr. Zhao. Mr. Zhao had been a photographer for the Ocean Province Daily News for several decades, and after his retirement, he maintained his profession as a photographer. For the sake of promoting its public image, Mr. Zhao recorded everyday life in Reducing Help and offered photographic training for the members in the centre.

> **Mr. Zhao Yi, Photographer, Reducing Help Day Care Centre:** *I kept up with my hobby of taking photos, but and expanded my repertoire from the previous assigned scenes to more different corners across the city. I finally stayed at the Reducing Help centre because of its appealing everyday life as a good source of photographs. I noticed that my photographic skills could be useful for recording and promoting the public image of the centre. This group of people is very special but should not be alienated from common people. Their parents are well aware of the actual situation, but they feel they cannot let outsiders know what their children are like. Whenever I take photos (because the events and activities here take place very often), I post electronic copies onto our site, printed them and hang them on this wall.*

As our conversation continued with the topic of photo-taking, Mr. Zhao led me to the photo wall (Figure 9-3) at the right of the centre's entrance to show me the activity photos he had taken.

> **Mr. Zhao Yi:** *These children are really active in guiding our visitors around the centre. They always volunteer to be the ones who present our daily life here. Some of them are interested in photography, so I trained them to take photos. These are very precious windows open to the public for further understanding of this special group.*

Figure 9-3 Photo Wall in Reducing Help Centre

Stigma is a long-standing issue with this special group, one of many problems that makes the road tougher. During my third visit to Reducing Help on 25th of December, the imminent closure of the current car wash station venue still bothered Mrs. Ning and her colleagues. After dinner in the kitchen of Reducing Help, Mrs. Ning hosted a meeting and raised the problematic situation they found themselves facing with the new venue for car wash.

> **Mrs. Ning Jing:** *The first issue for discussion in this meeting is our new venue for the car wash station. As all of you know, our tenancy will expire in February. I have tried to negotiate the new venue with the municipal government because the district government could not make the decision. The status of the municipal government's decision is still pending, and I do not know whether they will approve it or how long will it take to get a new venue. Meanwhile, we do not have any transition plans for the car wash station either.*

Mr. Will, the deputy manager of Star Dust Autism Training Centre, talked about the autism service industry in a non-committal way, indicating a dissatisfying feeling about the other centres' service provision:

> **Mr. Will:** *There is an autism training centre nearby, just inside the tall building in the corner. A lot of training centres like that charge very high fees for the course but provide poor quality service. They charge double the amount of training fees for half of our training activities. Autism training is very time-consuming and demands qualified and patient teachers. Every class in our centre takes half day, because only when the teacher spends that much time with a small group of three or four autistic children can the effect of the teaching be felt. I was doing English training in a private education institution, and when I knew the salary in this centre, I was astonished and decided to increase the teacher's salary.*

The stigma effect, the additional burden of coping with the administrative system, the low-quality service provision from other competitors and the difficulty in retaining the current venue, all needed strength to cope with, but this tough mother was a special everyday maker for this special group. The diverse members and their respected situations appear at more micro-level and require everyday makers' dedication case by case. (Bang & Sørensen, 1999)

9.4 Conclusion

Here I present some overall conclusions on the differences between my two field sites in both elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities.

Trust-building has different meanings and takes different forms in China and England. In China, all NGOs except those with minimal influence at local level are registered with government. For long-term contractors providing services, local governments trust their professionalism and their

capacity to provide high quality services, but distrust them when it comes to security risk management and financial issues. Some NGOs have misused and abused funding which is not for service delivery, and even when these cases were resolved, local government became more sceptical and cautious in its dealings with other NGOs. Local government protected itself by instigating various security checks, performance checks and financial audit work.

Discretionary power and regulation affected trust-building in both of my field sites. The unusual comparison between England and China turned up similarities in stringent government regulations over NGOs. Although England is more committed to local level democracy than China, Waterfront City Council still over-regulates its local practitioners. In China, negotiable discretionary power has made NGO service provision more flexible and innovative locally, although the hierarchical government also over-regulated local activism. In England, local government's exercise of discretionary power eroded NGOs' trust because the demands for constant and instant information exchange limited NGOs' flexibility. There appeared to be little respect or understanding of NGOs' situation, while regulation for risk aversion and financial audit constrained NGO-government trust building in both sites.

The mechanisms of trust building vary between countries. In China, distrust starts from a small group of NGOs misusing government funds and then spreads on a wider scale between NGOs and local government. In England, mutual trust is more significantly affected by NGOs than by local government. There are different models of public service provision which are not confined by government contracts but involve purely voluntary networks or a mixture of both. There are two other reasons for NGOs' distrust in local government. First, austerity is an excuse that is overused everywhere for local government's non-consultative consultation. Second, local government shows that it cares more about the results of box-ticking exercised on consultation forms and statistics than it does about how well local practices are actually performing.

Although trust-building is difficult, some NGOs still strive to accumulate negotiating capital for everyday diplomacy with local governments. As explained in Chapter 7, the picture in China differs with that of England in terms of the NGO's performance when facing state power as well as when facing service users. Instead of feeding mutual needs at the same time, Chinese NGOs are more likely to feed the government's needs first and then try different means of diplomacy to push the government to feed theirs. Building negotiating capital and using suitable communication skills are the NGOs' tactics to maintain cooperation and resolve conflicts. In England, NGOs do not necessarily need to acquire negotiating capital because some of them can be purely responsible for service users. Larger NGOs that have set up networks with local government can easily obtain negotiating capital and achieve their own goals.

Chapter 10: Comparative Analysis and Conclusions

I spent one and half years undertaking fieldwork in England and China, during which time I conducted 65 interviews and 319 hours of participant observation. After spending four months writing up the first draft of the fieldwork, followed by four rounds of revision, I have arrived at the final destination of the thesis journey. What did I discover? This chapter will look at the comparative conclusions about the political regime, institutional and policy contexts and network governance. The goal of this thesis was to answer the core research questions initially raised in chapters 2 and 3: Is there network governance in England and China? What are the differences and similarities between network governance in public service provision practices in both sites? The answer to the first question is yes. There is network governance in both countries, which means that network governance is a feasible way to explain local practices of public service delivery in both England and China. However, the extent of network governance practices in both sites varies. Overall, government-led and self-organized network governance is developed to a higher extent in China than it is in England. Section 10.2 examines the characteristics of network governance of each policy areas in both locations and Section 10.3.3 presents the strengths and limitations of using network governance as a theoretical model to explain practices in both countries. Section 10.3 identifies six similarities and five differences I discovered during the course of my fieldwork. I will also summarise the different uses of central concepts of network governance – namely resource exchange, interdependence and reciprocity, trust-building and diplomacy.

There were four surprising findings from this ethnographic study of network governance, which centre around the differences and similarities of individual actors' contributions, the interplay between resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building and diplomacy, the existence and collapse of network governance, and the cross-cultural meaning of key concepts. In brief, I suggest that:

1. Individual actors play essential roles in local practices of network governance in both countries.
2. Decentred thematic analysis unpacks the practices of austerity to show that it undermines network governance in England.
3. Decentred thematic analysis unpacks the practices of the highly centralized Chinese state, to reveal unexpected and diversified practices at local level. Below, I discuss six similarities and five differences in resource exchange, interdependence, trust-building, diplomacy and governance structure in network governance between England and China.

4. The forms of core theoretical concepts such as trust and diplomacy vary between national settings because they are transformed by local practitioners in their everyday practices.

Finally, I discuss the limitations of this thesis and propose an agenda for future research.

10.1 Comparing Elephants and Mice

I did not realize that I had travelled so far from my starting point of comparing two countries that are commonly seen as two completely different political regimes. Existing discussions on China's political regime describe the country's political and policy processes as authoritarian. Terminology varies, with scholars talking of fragmented authoritarianism (Liberthal, 1992; Mertha, 2009), responsive authoritarianism (Heurlin, 2016; Chen et al, 2016), democratic authoritarianism (Brancati, 2014), consultative authoritarianism (Teets, 2013), and decentralized authoritarianism (Landry, 2008; Myšička, 2009). There is a potential paradox surrounding the notion of the non-authoritarian nature of authoritarianism when scholars apply such notions as responsiveness, resilience and deliberative democracy to provide possible explanations for what goes on within an authoritarian state. In the eyes of Chinese scholars, authoritarianism can be envisaged as an umbrella term covering diversified policy practices. For the purpose of this thesis and the analysis of local public service delivery, the key difference lies in the extent of the fragmentation of service delivery (Chandler, 2000; Zhu & Zhao 2018; Whaites, 1998). Either way, focusing on high-level abstractions such as democracy and authoritarianism is not helpful in teasing out the everyday practices of public service delivery. Focusing on policy contexts, levels of government, policy networks and the extent of the fragmentation of implementation generates further research questions – which is what my thesis has set out to demonstrate.

What is the extent of fragmentation in England and in China? Any sensible answer has to go beyond system level generalisations and explore the workings from the bottom-up. Party politics in England provides the context for a fragmented system of policy implementation. This fragmentation occurs at every level: between the national political parties – Conservative, Labour and Liberal-Democrat, as well as between central government departments. Similarly, in China, although there is a single national party and an entrenched national bureaucracy, closer examination reveals fragmentation in political and policy processes at the local level. In other words, the means and the ends are laid down from the top but within the guidelines and boundaries there is discretion for locally based implementation to modify general rules and norms to fit community, family and the individual. This leads to fragmentation at the local level. In general terms, fragmentation occurs at different levels

in England and China. Fragmentation takes place at all levels of government in England due to its democratic political system, while in China fragmentation is more common at local levels.

My fieldwork showed that there are limits to the mechanisms of representative democracy in English local government. It is hard to hold commissioners, service officers and councillors to account outside the council chamber and other meetings. It is also impractical and often meaningless to give the public and stakeholders a greater role in council, committee or consultation meetings. The agenda is set by public officials, and public opinion is at best selectively absorbed into the decision-making process. Consultation practices do not lead to the anticipated solution of responsive decision making. Instead, the cost of consultative efforts is considerable and time-consuming, with rounds of consultation normally taking several months to a year.

NGOs and local government are actors in a darkened room. At one end, there is a flashing light representing NGOs alerting public officials to the deficiencies in service provision and trying to get them to pay attention to potential risks when cooperating with charitable organizations. At the other end, there is a white light of hope: an ideal representing efficient cooperation with charitable organizations. From the NGO side, the process is a balancing act. NGOs have different motivations and priorities, but they too must find a balance between complaint and cooperation. Variations exist at local level when pilot policy experiments are conducted, and these variations are derived from inadequate institutional incentives, top-down lobbying processes that are affected by patronage, and isolated and fragmented local practices (see Chapter 2, 2.1.2 and 2.2.2).

Political regimes set the context for actors and their motivation. First, there are constant political debates between the parties in the House of Commons, but these are only tangentially relevant to the real world of public service delivery and usually centre on ideology or money-saving. Second, the government often shows a defensive and reluctant attitude at various meetings and events in which the opinions of local governments and NGOs conflict. This limits the usefulness of such venues for interaction between policy actors. Third, the government's attitude to public co-production with NGOs varies, and the mood swings between alarm and hope, according to the NGOs' attitudes to cooperation and whether or not they campaign alongside government initiatives. The extent to which policy issues are pressing, the need for resource exchange and the degree of interdependence are decisive factors for both sides.

10.2 Comparing Institutional and Policy Contexts

In England, in sharp contrast to China, caring for the elderly and for people with learning disabilities also involves caring for the carers of this client group. (see Table 2-2 and page 201-205) Both groups

have become increasingly problematic in England over recent years and represent a concern for local and national government. The problem arises in part from the shift from extended family networks to nuclear families.

Social care provision in contemporary China does not have the same degree of carer problems because the extended family network persists. This means that social care can focus on the disadvantaged group itself, rather than on the family bond that plays an essential role in social care provision. The question arises, of course, as to whether these bonds will survive the growth of the Chinese economy and the massive migration to China's huge and growing urban areas. But for now, the bonds persist, and distinguish English and Chinese approaches to social care provision.

10.2.1 Elderly Care in England and China

The government's efforts and investment into elderly care differs significantly between England and China. In China, elderly care is prioritized as a major policy area from central government to the lowest level. It has become a topical issue for both the voluntary sector and private estate developers. The comprehensive system involves a full set of services, covering community elder canteens, community home care centres, street-level elder activity centres, health care workshops and so on. The construction and operation of these services or facilities are written in government policies and checked through annual performance assessment criteria. Since this is a growing industry, a great deal of elderly care provision has sprung up in River City.

In England, caring for the elderly is a well-developed industry, widely distributed to cover elderly accommodation, private agencies for day and night care, care homes and NGOs for supplementary free or low-price services. England's system relies heavily on the private sector, leaving less space for negotiation and adjustment. Therefore, although we look to NGOs for free or low-price services for the elderly, these NGOs are reluctant to participate in policy-making discussions. For their daily operations they try to secure routinised relationships with little government support and few resources. The day-to-day basic communication between the government and NGOs has in places broken down. In contrast, the most prominent service in China is the community elder canteens, where interaction between officials and NGOs is more frequent and effective in making small differences to service delivery.

Chinese NGOs rely mainly on the government for their resource provision, but grants are less meaningful than the authority and reputation given by official acceptance. NGOs in elderly care seek solutions to their sustainability or funding crises either by following the market model or through international funding from their headquarters. In England, funding comes mainly via the

social enterprise model, including personal consultancy services, charity shops, fundraising events in communities and so on. None of my respondents believed that their interactions with national or local government enhanced their status. This indicates that there are sharp differences in funding and status between the two countries.

10.2.2 Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities in England and China

In China, the Bureau of Civil Affairs and the Disabled Alliance oversee learning disability support groups and look after the service provision network from the top down. In England, the NHS Clinical Care Group works together with city councils for social care provision for people with learning disabilities. In China, disabled people are registered in the national disabled alliance system and people with different categories of disability will be eligible for subsidies from the Disabled Alliance. The Bureau of Civil Affairs primarily brokers services contract with NGOs providing social care for group providing care for people with learning disabilities.

In England, the stigma of disability propels carers, mainly the mothers of the disabled people, to establish their own shelters instead of relying on the public disabled school system and government support. Man-ability in England and Reduce Help and Star Dust in China were all set up by individual mothers or groups of mothers.

10.2.3 Social Care for the Elderly and for People with Learning Disabilities in England

Austerity and government cutbacks are common problems facing both areas of social care, dampening care providers' appetites for taking part in the government-led initiatives or networks. Austerity becomes a repetitive excuse in various situations. Meanwhile, policy networks represent clusters of service contractors – but not necessarily actively negotiating policy actors – who have established mutual trust and a consensus with the government. Umbrella NGOs that act as a shelter for smaller NGOs delivering different services are leading actors. In this study, the Bright Vision Charity Development Centre and Loving Youth Social Work Centre are the umbrella NGOs in Water District in China, while the Waterfront Voluntary Services is the umbrella NGO for Waterfront City in England (see Chapter 5, 5.1.1 and 5.1.2).

NGO service providers are the second group of main actors. In general, most service providers are not interested in the communicating with local city council. Elderly care attracts less attention from the government than social care for people with learning disabilities in England. Elderly care NGOs have a lower profile than private care agencies, retired and care apartments and NGOs providing social care for people with learning disabilities. The private sector is dominant.

10.2.4 Elderly Care and Care for People with Learning Disabilities in China

The standing of social care for the elderly is reversed in China. Elder care is prioritized at all levels of government and the performance of service delivery is always highlighted in official reports. National arrangements for elderly care cover all aspects of older citizens' daily lives and local response is prompt and effective. Pilot experiments and performance-based competitions foster a blooming and prosperous policy network. Conversely, the policy network of social care for people with learning disabilities is organised and run by NGOs. Performances vary significantly between different clusters of network actors as they are all autonomously self-motivated.

10.3 Similarities and Differences in Network Governance in England and China

My conclusions regarding the differences and similarities of network governance in England and China answer the research questions I raised at the end of Chapters 2 and 3. The general question relates to whether network governance adequately describes policy practices in England and China. This general question can be broken down into more specific questions:

> **RQ1: Are there policy networks in elderly and social care for people with learning disabilities in England and China?**
>
> **RQ2: What is the extent of network governance practices in England and China?**

The answer to the first question is yes. For the second question, the extent varies in each site. State-led network governance in England has collapsed to a great extent, but the everyday makers of self-organized network governance have helped practices to survive and thrive, albeit in altered forms. In China, diversification in local practices is blooming, but the extent of network governance essentially depends on individual everyday policymakers' commitment.

Before I began my fieldwork, I expected to find more differences than similarities when looking at the two systems from a top-down perspective. I thought that authoritarian China would be centralised, while democratic England would be decentralised. In practice this was not such a simple matter. If you look at the micro-level, or examine service delivery from the bottom up, there are some striking similarities. Both policy systems are fragmented and a bottom-up or decentred perspective shows a great deal of local diversity. Network governance is not uniformly established in England, but it is taking root in China. Below I identify six similarities and five differences in local public service delivery.

10.3.1 Six Similarities

The six similarities fall into four categories covering policy motivation and needs, interdependence and resource exchange, trust in consensus and coordination, and the diplomatic skills used in resolving conflict. The first similarity emerges from policy motivation and local needs, which forms the foundation of interdependence between the government and service providers. The second and third stem from the concept of resource exchange and the fourth is based on issues of trust-building and coordination. The fifth and sixth similarities arise from diplomatic skills and conflict resolution.

Firstly, both countries have similar policy motivations and local community needs (see Chapter 2, 2.1.3 and 2.2.3; Chapter 5, 5.2). In the field of elderly care, England and China both face the challenge of aging societies, although England has been experiencing this challenge slightly longer than China (Chapter 2, 2.1.3 and 2.2.3; Chapter 6, 6.2). The stigma and social exclusion caused by disability, coupled with employability problems facing people with learning disabilities are challenges both countries face. (Chapter 5,5.2.3 and 5.2.4; Chapter 9,9.3).

Second, service providers always seek state responses when dealing with the state, but these often fail, limiting or stopping explicit criticisms of the government (Chapter 5,5.3; Chapter 8,8.2). As the degree of trust and diplomatic skills vary between different group of actors, communication outcomes and the effectiveness of service delivery also vary. (Chapters 8 and 9)

Thirdly, even though NGO reliance on government funding varies in both countries and both policy arenas, resource interdependence and exchange are usually followed by routinization between policy actors. This happens because government actors are risk-averse in both countries and seek to transfer or minimise risk by monitoring and regulating other service providers (Chapter 8, 8.1.3; Chapter 9,9.1.3). In both countries, this leads to a substantial administrative burden, including form-filling and regular reporting and meetings.

Fourthly, trust-building between commissioners, government service managers and service providers is undermined by improvisational government-led regulation, which is constantly changing and unpredictable, especially when communication is limited and inefficient. Consensus and coordination are also undermined, and in such cases network governance withers and becomes a solo dance by the government on the stage rather than a group dance (Chapter 8, 8.1)

Fifthly, NGOs possess greater levels of local knowledge and show their mastery of service delivery practices, thereby constituting their negotiating capital. Local knowledge encompasses not only how services should be delivered but also the communication skills that should be in place

regardless of who has to negotiate with the users. NGOs have diplomatic skills that are also part of their negotiating capital, and there are dysfunctional consequences when such skills are absent (Chapter 8,8.2.3; Chapter 9,9.2.3).

Sixthly, governments in both countries set ambitious targets without considering the NGOs concerns (Chapter 6, 6.2; Chapter 7, 7.2) As a result, chains of communication can be disrupted or even broken. Most NGOs are reluctant to deal with the government even if they are professional in their local service delivery. A small group of NGOs play the role of the resistance against the government (Chapter 6,6.3; Chapter 7, 7.3; Chapter 8,8.3; Chapter 9,9.3).

10.3.2 Five Differences

The service delivery practices in both countries also differ in five ways.

Firstly, in elderly care provision, food supply and healthcare services are the main tasks in China. In England, such care services have mostly been privatised to care agencies and retirement homes. NGOs mostly cover lifestyle services such as physical exercise or computer training. Additionally, unpaid carers' health and wellbeing are a priority for English government. In England, carers' wellbeing and the social inclusion of people with learning disabilities are prioritized by the government and service providers (Chapter 9, 9.2.1). They also pay a great deal of attention to the overall inclusion of people with learning disabilities into daily life via activities such as access to hospital, cafés and cinema. In contrast, the main goals of Chinese government and practitioners' is reinforcing vocational education and creating more positions, turning more students in special education schools into employable workers (Chapter 5,5.2.4). Only a minority group of NGOs emphasize daily life and communicative skills (Chapter 9,9.3.2).

Secondly, in these settings, England and China have different models of public service provision that are not confined to government contracts but also involve purely voluntary networks or a mixture of both. Individual actors play essential roles in local network governance practices in both countries. Under these circumstances, long-term contractors with professional levels of local knowledge of public service delivery adopt different styles and strategies of diplomacy. They either choose to be critical friends with the city council or defend the council's policy rearrangements. Other network managers within the self-regulated network rely on themselves to obtain negotiating capital locally and establishing social enterprises. Despite highly centralized power, unexpected locally diversified practices do exist in China. Some NGOs use their diplomatic skills to build negotiating capital by using more means to maintain their relationship with local government.

Meanwhile, the improvements in equality and practicality enhance local government's trust in NGOs while securing NGOs' flexibility in terms of innovative solutions to dilemmas.

Thirdly, the amount of resources and their distribution are different in England and China. The British government has implemented a policy of austerity over the last ten years across many policy arenas, and public funds for social care have shrunk significantly. For local government and NGOs, austerity has been an insoluble problem (Chapter 5,5.3.1.1) Financial issues are more severe in elderly care than in social care for people with learning disabilities in England (Chapter 5,5.2.1 and 5.2.3) Although the overall amount of government funding is enormous in China[111] due to economic growth (West & Wong, 1995), funding for individual NGOs remains insufficient. NGOs in both policy areas have constructed their own resource networks by building their own muscles (Chapter 7,7.1 and Chapter 9,9.1). Building muscles is a less well-established practice in China than in England. In summary, the contrast is between social entrepreneurship and government funding. Government funding is important for Chinese NGOs not only in terms of the resources they provide, but also because it is symbolic of each NGO's official reputation as an intangible resource. The amount is less important (Chapter 6,6.1.2). Meanwhile, the novel transformation of some NGOs from government agency to social entrepreneur happens on a much smaller scale in China than it does in England. When the government is difficult to cope with one way or another, or when financial support is limited, English NGOs can rely on themselves and choose not to work with the government. Meanwhile, NGOs in China can choose to work with a different local government by looking for another contract (Chapter 5,5.3.1.2 and Chapter 8,8.2.2). In China, government funding for both services remains enormous and is increasing, especially for elderly care. Some NGOs are exploring the social entrepreneur model used by English NGOs. For social care for people with learning disabilities, public funding goes directly to personal bank accounts. NGOs are at best provided with funds for venues, and resource distribution depends on the official ranking of the NGO's annual performance and its local social impact as well as public relations management.

Fourthly, trust-building is a problem commonly faced in both countries, because facing power is a difficult task for all NGOs. Trust building is more secure in China than in England, where most NGOs are unwilling to take part in government or public meetings because they are seen as meaningless and useless in practice. Consultation and dialogue with local NGOs became a state solo dance (Chapter 6, 6.3.1) In China, some NGOs have built up mutual trust through regular communication, facilitating consensus-building and coordination. However, all NGOs tend to tread carefully when

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[111] Zhejiang Province subsidized 3.9 billion Chinese yuan for elderly care facility supply and improvement. Zhejiang Province also got 0.21 billion from the central government to support pilot experiment of home elderly care and community elderly care reform. *The Home Care Service Centre has Covered Urban and Rural Areas in Zhejiang Province.* http://sn.people.com.cn/n2/2020/0921/c378296-34307430.html

facing power. Contractors can be critical friends in private but do not criticize the government publicly (Chapter 8,8.3.1). Mutual trust is negatively affected by the improvisational exercise of discretionary power by the state and its regulatory regimes for security and financial risk in both England and China. In China, negotiable discretionary power allows government regulations on NGO service provision to be more flexible and permit local innovations. In England, improvisational discretionary power corrodes NGOs' trust in local government because it does not allow the NGOs' flexibility. There is not constant and instant information exchange.

Fifthly, diplomatic skills function differently in different policy areas in England and China. In England, some NGOs that provide social care for people with learning disabilities use their diplomatic skills to manage their relationships with local government. This is not the case in elderly care, where NGOs do not find negotiating skills useful because the elderly represents a neglected group when compared with children and other vulnerable adult groups. In China, elderly care NGOs and NGOs representing people with learning disabilities use their diplomatic skills to achieve consensus with local government officials on a case-by-case basis. As long as the NGOs focuses on the practice of service delivery in everyday communications, and as long as they remain obedient to the government, good relations will be maintained (Chapter 8, 8.2.3; Chapter 9,9.3.1)

10.3.3 Strengths and Limitations of Network Governance Theory

The strength of network governance as a theoretical approach lies in its explanatory power to identify features of network governance in England and China. The limitations lie in the drawback of generalization, because fieldwork shows varying forms of key theoretical concepts in practice, and these are beyond the generalization.

10.3.3.1 Features of Network Governance in England and China

In England there are policy networks that set clear limits on network governance. The meta-governor is not the government, so the government-led network in elderly care is unable to unite various policy actors or persuade them to join in with the game. Most service providers avoid the government-centred network. There is more of a network between NGOs and the private sector. Age UK set up the network with the Saints, combining the needs of the elderly for body balance training with the Saints' expertise in various training regimes. But in general terms, elderly care attracts less attention from the government than social care for people with learning disabilities. In other words, elderly care providers are relatively detached from the government, and there is great emphasis on self-reliance, the private sector and other network actors.

An exclusive policy network exists in China, based on negotiable resource exchange. The network is governed by a minority of state-society actors. In elderly care provision, RWJ ranks first in taking a preeminent part in interactive governance with local government. The YWCA ranks second as a partly policy network actor. In social care for learning disability groups, Reduce Help is an actor of mixed governance networks with different levels of government, and manipulates the resources beyond state provision through the charity organization system, representing a classic example of a network operating in the shadow of hierarchy (Héritier& Lehmkuhl, 2008; Peters, 2010).

In England, network governance in social care has collapsed, as the individualism of each policy actor undermines any interdependence that might have existed between them. As resources shrank, the negotiating capital withered along with it, and interdependence grew weaker. In China, network governance practices also vary between elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities. With more government funding invested in elderly care, the interdependence between NGOs and local government has increased sharply and is stronger than that of individuals NGOs delivering social care for people with learning disabilities and local government. The degree of autonomy is higher in self-organized networks of social care for people with learning disabilities.

NGOs for social care for people with learning disabilities in both countries play a role that is independent of government. A small number of elderly care NGOs and street-level authorities in China help establish a policy network, while the majority of elderly care NGOs in England are reluctant to interfere with government arrangements, while local authorities also pay much less attention to elderly care compared to other aspects of adult care and childcare. Private sectors involved in elderly care provide a role model for NGOs and the commercial pattern of elderly care provision has sparked innovative ideas for NGO development and the pooling of resources (see Chapter 6, 6.2.2).

10.3.3.2 Varying Forms of Key Concepts in the Fieldwork

Some key concepts fit but others do not. Austerity has meant that resource dependence on the government has decreased. Financial survival strategies and self-marketing skills outweigh ever decreasing government funding, which means that resource exchange has lost much of its significance in everyday service delivery practices in England.

Negotiating capital is also problematic in terms of network governance practice in both countries. A minority of NGOs in China strive for more negotiating capital in their everyday practices with service users and other competitors as well as everyday communication with local government officials. When facing the state, the negotiating capital of English NGOs is no longer useful because the interdependence between policymakers and service providers has weakened. Meanwhile,

negotiating capital adds less value to diplomacy in England than it does in China. In England, the channels and platforms for negotiation and diplomatic activities function less and the lack of interdependence demotivates policy actors from acquiring negotiating capital.

Moreover, the same basic concept covers different things in different contexts. Resource exchange and trust-building have been redefined in both countries. In China, resource exchange refers to an officially sanctioned reputation rather than any kind of financial incentive or power. Venues for service delivery are the priorities for most NGOs in China and this has more to do with governmental policy support than money. For NGOs in England, government reputation is less important – and sometimes not important at all, and irregular policy update information exchange between actors is often the best NGOs can hope for. Trust-building and diplomacy vary in the two settings and are often transformed by local practitioners into other forms. In China, local government shows its trust in NGOs by including them in public service delivery contracts. However, there are elements of distrust, mostly involving cases of NGOs misusing funding, which means that local government becomes sceptical when dealing with other NGOs later. The overregulation of financial auditing is one form of state distrust in NGOs. In England, mutual trust is more significantly affected by NGOs than by local government. Building muscles and setting up self-regulated networks represent forms of NGO distrust in local government, while some contractors show their trust by defending the government policy.

The mix matters much more than any individual approach to delivering services. Network governance is never strictly separated from either bureaucracy or the market. Policy networks relating to public service delivery in China and England can be divided into highly self-organized, partly hierarchical and partly self-organized, and fully hierarchical. The current local policy networks for social care for people with learning disabilities and for the elderly in China are partly self-organized and fully hierarchical, respectively. The first is more popular as evenly distributed government funding is insufficient for the long-term development of NGOs or for public service delivery. A small group of NGOs providing social care for people with learning disabilities in China and a small group of NGOs doing elderly care are shifting towards a more self-organized policy network. In England, the network structure of elderly care provision is more self-organized than China's fully hierarchical network. The network structure of social care for people with learning disabilities in England shows a very different picture. Enjoying more benefits than elderly care NGOs from intimacy with local government, NGOs in England providing social care for people with learning disabilities avoid criticizing the government publicly, although policies in that area vary from one organization to the next.

10.3.3.3 The Theoretical Contributions of This Thesis

First, this thesis expanded the meaning of key theoretical concepts in different cultural contexts by identifying different forms of them. For example, trust-building, diplomacy and negotiating capital vary in England and China in forms but the essence and nature remain the same. Defining network governance in different context, as a long-lasting task in governance research, becomes easier after my exploration.

Second, the abundant and solid empirical data narrowed the gap between theory model and the reality. Specifically, practices in both countries can be located more precisely in the three waves in the theory model with the empirical data. With supportive data, we can conclude that there is network governance in China.

Third, the actor-centred approach and decentred analysis in ethnography rectified the institution-centred approach in Chinese network governance research. Policy actors' belief, behaviour and the interpretation of the meaning of their belief and behaviour demand further investigation and contribute more to understanding local policy practices than institutional analysis.

Fourth, some contextual factors, such as austerity, party politics, different policy arrangements and motivation and the usefulness of consultation in England, and state power, different policy motivation and local needs and the informal diplomacy in China, resulted in the similarities and differences of network governance in both sites. Grand context factors are also worth scholar attention in the future.

Fifth, this thesis confirmed that it is the mix that matters more than functions of individual governance structures in network governance practices. Fusion is a key word in network governance research.

10.4 Strengths and Limitations of Research Methods

The strengths and limitations of the research methods employed in this thesis are illustrated by comparing them to other methodologies, such as normative qualitative comparative analysis, statistical analysis or naturalist epistemology and the "anything goes" approach to qualitative study. Generally, the research method used in this thesis is a compound of normative joint methods in qualitative comparative analysis, the bottom-up interpretive approach to an unlikely comparison, decentred and actor-centred policy analysis and partial immersion in political ethnography and thematic analysis.

10.4.1 Strengths of Research Methods

My approach has three strengths over naturalistic methods of inquiry. Firstly, a bottom-up ethnographic approach provides an in-depth idiographic analysis that identifies complex specificities in their context. It therefore reveals a great deal of diversity in the practice of service delivery in England and China. Secondly, the unlikely comparison offers comparisons between authoritarian and local democratic government, which on their own tell us little or nothing about

this diversity. Thirdly, it focuses on individual actors. It moves institutions and formal organisation to reinstate people into networks and identifies agency in even the most hierarchical structures.

10.4.2 Limitations of Research Methods

There are five limitations to the research methods used in this thesis. My reflexive thinking began with a self-portrait that refers to the ten virtues identified by Fine (1993), which provide a check list for my roles in the fieldwork. The first limitation stems from my fieldwork roles as a native in China and a foreigner in England. The second concerns my choice of the confessional voice in writing ethnography. The third stems from the lack of diversity in my respondents due to snowball sampling. The fourth challenge I encountered in the fieldwork is how to manage a wide range of informants and acquire useful data, especially in the elite interviewees. Fifthly, there is the question of whether I can generalise on the basis of an idiographic research project.

Referring to Fine's article on the categories of ethnographers (1993), I checked through the list of categories and drew a portrait of myself by answering whether I belong to each category and how I presented myself when face to face with my informants in the field. I needed to define my role within the ethnographic fieldwork and put myself into one specific category of those defined by Fine (1993) and Adler and Adler (1987). I was a peripheral member in China and an active member in England during the course of my fieldwork (Adler and Adler, 1987). As well as categorizing myself, some other personal features should be counted for a more precise definition and position (see Table 10-1) Overall, I played all the roles during the ethnographic fieldwork.

Clusters of the category	Categories	Do I belong to this category?	My Self-portrait
Classic Virtues	Kindly Ethnographer	Yes	Being sympathetic but not a friend
	Friendly Ethnographer	Yes	Social interaction during and after the work. I liked some respondents. They liked me.
	Honest Ethnographer	Mostly	I followed all the university's ethical practices I kept some informants' accounts secret to elicit more truths from the new informants
Technical Skills	Precise Ethnographer	Yes	Systematic fieldwork practices
	Observant Ethnographer	Yes	
	Unobtrusive ethnographer	No	I was an employee for some NGOs

Ethnographic Self	Candid Ethnographer	Yes	the presentation of one's own role is inescapable.
	Chaste Ethnographer	Yes	I avoided/rebuffed inappropriate sexual interactions
	Fair Ethnographer	Yes	In the field I did not take sides in any dispute. I did not act as an advocate for any party. Detachment was greater after leaving the field.
	Literary Ethnographer	Sometimes yes	

Table 10-1 Reflection on My Ethnographic Roles in the Ethnographic Fieldwork

As a kindly and friendly ethnographer, I maintained a continuous good relationship with most of my informants so that data could keep coming in when I asked for it. In this case, I was able to guarantee the thoroughness of the data. Meanwhile, I tried my best to avoid personal interaction and exposure except that which was attached to my role, affiliation and contact information. This enabled me to keep a distance and not get attached to any specific party during the fieldwork, which is also enhanced by my role as a fair ethnographer. My role as an unobtrusive ethnographer opened up my access to the internal systems of NGOs for data acquisition and improved the balance of my data from government and NGOs as the balance of my acquired data favoured the government more than NGOs. As a precise ethnographer, I reflected on the fieldwork I conducted every week and adjusted my plan accordingly to achieve a systematic organization of the overall fieldwork.

I encountered several possible biases during the fieldwork concerning my nationality, age and gender.

My nationality was the first potential issue in two ways. Firstly, my patriotism tempted me to defend Chinese practice and minimise the differences between the two countries. Secondly, I discovered a latent prejudice among the British about the Chinese that became more manifest during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first factor, I needed to be on my guard, and I found it easier to maintain my detachment during the writing up. For the second, the problem was not so much with my respondents but with strangers when travelling to and from work. I learnt quickly to adopt safe working practices, such as not going out at night unaccompanied.

My familiarity with China and England affected my role in the field. One advantage is that I was more sensitive to nuances of language and behavior when undertaking fieldwork in China because I was more familiar with the context and with the normal behavior of the actors in that context.

However, given my familiarity with the local environment, some details may have been ignored when writing fieldwork notes because I took them for granted. I was an insider who spoke standard mandarin and also mandarin in the local dialect. I knew my way around. The problem I found was that the mainstream NGOs' voices were dominant. This meant that there was the danger that I would not explore more deeply behind their public facade. So I sought in-depth talks with marginalized insiders who knew not only the bright side of the situation but also the darker aspects (Bu, 2006:214-221).

In contrast, when I conducted my fieldwork in England I was an outsider, so I had to spend some time on a pilot study to increase my familiarity with the English context and to improve my language skills for the subsequent more formal fieldwork. I could speak and understand language school English, but the local accent was challenging. There was little danger of "going native" (Delamont, 2004: 209). I steeped myself in the local English fieldwork setting. Keeping my distance was rarely an issue. I could keep my distance because even my appearance made it clear I was not one of the locals. In short, I was more curious about the English context and more skillful in the Chinese equivalent. In order to manage this balance between curiosity and skill, I lived a local life as a local citizen. In my second year, I did not live with fellow Chinese students but in a boarding house. I also worked for an NGO. This learning curve helped me with participant observation and in terms of relating to my informants in everyday settings. I became more and more sensitive to the British context as I became more and more of a local. For the fieldwork in China, I raised new questions in new areas because I approached the work with both my experience of the English fieldwork and the outsider viewpoint provided by western social theory. Both helped me to see Chinese practices afresh.

The credibility of my ethnographic work might be undermined by my level of immersion in the fieldwork and by adopting a confessional style in writing up the thesis. First, I only allowed myself to become partially immersed in the informants' lives, so I did not see the full picture of their lives (Chapter 5, Section). My partial immersion in fieldwork was also site intensive. That didn't necessarily mean that I frequently returned to some sites; it means I remained sensitive to whether the people and activities in one site were useful in answering my question (Marcus, 2007). Later I shifted between different sites, so when the time I spent on the fieldwork across all the sites offered me no more fresh insights and information, I just stopped. Moreover, moving in and out of the field allowed me to seek help from my supervisor and other colleagues in the department.

The drawback of confessional writing is that style can obscure substance due to over-packaging and over-constructing the imagined world (Van Maanen, 1988:75-76). This thesis is written from my personal standpoint, based on the knowledge of NGOs and local authorities I acquired in my

fieldwork. My tone is mixture of advocacy for NGOs and my own reflexive thinking on the state of social care provision in both national contexts. On the top of these reflexive thoughts and acquired knowledge, my thesis presents a constructed world of limited discretion and overregulation; of disintegrating networks and committed parental activism. Overall, I have presented my interpretation of other people's stories (Van Maanen, 1988: 77).

Meanwhile, the informants' indulgence in allowing me into their everyday life generates has no doubt generated illusions in the research. Such illusions were more or less absorbed by me as a researcher. One of the truths about the practices is the degree to which practitioners will accept the logic and mindset of conducting the practices in the first place. The acceptance of one methodology implicitly exaggerates its strengths rather than admitting to its drawbacks and blind points which has a knock-on effect into subsequent areas of research. The practitioners' indulgence in the micro-environment motivates them to keep their eyes open for the strengths they have and turn blind to their drawbacks, leading to the creation of biased illusions. Acceptance and indulgence make a perfect justification, but do not represent a step forward in terms of the pros and cons of the existing methodology. I therefore raised questions relating to the practitioners' experience of failure or possible difficulties in identifying blind points and drawbacks they perceive themselves.

Not all interviewees are accurate or honest. Some inflate their own importance, others hide some aspects of the topic being discussed. Behaving cautiously is a common social rule in both England and China. People can be conservative in their replies to my questions. It can be hard to get past this caution and below the surface to find out what they mean. None of the local government officials in either country was prepared to contradict official policy. NGO's attitudes to public policy and government behaviour in public service delivery also varied greatly. Consistently defrosting and warming up the interviewer-interviewee relationship was a pressing task. I tried to identify shared interests or hobbies, starting with everyday life topics and then shifting back to the interview questions rather than going straight into the formal interview. Intimacy in the personal connections built between the researcher and informants can be a positive factor, encouraging informants to tell the full and authentic story in informal venues (Reny, 2016). When I got close to informants, we were able to talk more privately about scandals or anecdotes which are not likely to appear in official records, but which are transferred by word of mouth. Such information can pose problems. Should I reveal this critical information? How do I reveal it and maintain the confidentiality of the informants?

I interviewed extensively within local elites in NGOs and local governments. Some of them were talkative (Harvey, 2011; Lilleker, 2003). For some, their self-importance took up most of the time in the interviews. The challenge was to see the wood through the trees of self-inflation. I always

expressed my sincere appreciation for their help. I tried to focus on my interviewees' working performance and their detailed knowledge of public service delivery process.

"Let's be honest…" or "If I'm (brutally) honest…" are expressions that turned up regularly in my fieldwork interviews in England. For me, this a sign of interviewees excusing themselves for making critical comments. In China, people use ambiguous words like "probably" or "highly likely" when they are convinced by what they are saying. If they are going to offer critical comments, they say "You must be aware…" or "You probably know…". Obviously, interviewees contradicted one another. The truth comes in varied forms. I therefore triangulated the informants' oral accounts, policies and working documents, as well as my own participant observation.

There could be no systematic sampling in the fieldwork. I just grasped every opportunity I was offered with to acquire information. I could not abide by the strict rule of sampling representative cases and respondents before or during the fieldwork. I relied primarily on existing fieldwork networks and those I developed with a wider range of informants. This reliance on networks could lead to an unbalanced set of informants but I tried my best to filter out invalid information by snowballing as comprehensively as possible. (Goldstein, 2002; Reny, 2016). It is the danger of any snowballing. To ensure that snowballing did not result in like-minded people telling the same stories, I regularly negotiated access to different people and different data sources. For example, I approached critics at public meetings to get a wider range of views. I found that people gossiped and often came up with conflicting opinions during such meetings and events. The accuracy of gossip is always a problem, but it did at least provide clues for chasing after a more varied selection of informants and stories. My snowballing network led me to many local government officials, and their views eventually became repetitive suggesting that talking to another 20 interviews with official would be pointless. This is a sure sign that I had reached saturation point in my research.

Interviewing occasionally becomes fraught because the time scale is relatively uncontrollable. It also became a problem when I returned to China for only a few months. The difficulties in approaching informants in England and China also varied. For instance, I got fewer rejections from the local government officials in England than in China. NGOs in both countries responded to my request for interviews and observation equally positively, and during my early weeks in China I wondered who I was going to see and when. I dealt with these uncertainties in various ways. I went to public forums and meetings, where the connections I made provided me with additional respondents. Given the limited time scale, I employed multiple routes simultaneously – emailing the potential informants, physically visiting them informants in their working venue also open to the public, chatting with a variety of people during their coffee breaks, and volunteering to work in NGOs.

Finally, the conventional critique of idiographic research is that detailed stories cannot be generalized. It is clear from my discussion of snowballing that I did not have an ideal sample, so statistical generalization would be impossible. However, I knew that I could make general statements based on my detailed comparison; these statements were my plausible conjectures of what we could learn from unlikely comparisons. These small details can speak to big issues, and I can invite the reader to consider their general relevance in other places and at other times.

10.5 Future Research Agenda

My findings and methods suggest several directions for further exploration.

Firstly, theoretical concepts such as trust and diplomacy were redefined in different cultural contexts by a variety of beliefs and actions. Coordination, being fundamentally driven by trust- and consensus-building, is also a concept that required cautious assessment by stepping in and out of the fieldwork sites. All the concepts analysed in this thesis – trust-building, coordination, diplomacy, consensus-building, resource exchange and reliance – appear in different forms when the researcher adopts a cross-national approach. There are no one size fits all solutions in this complex and changing world. However, a pragmatic researcher does not confine his or her step to defining and redefining theoretical models and concepts. The actual effects of the policy on its actors and the interplay between beliefs and actions are also worth academic attention when measuring the gap between intentions and results and between theoretical models and practical strategies. (Chapter 5 and Chapter 9, Section 9.4 Conclusion) As a social science researcher, I need to learn lessons about the strengths and weaknesses of public policies.

Secondly, this comparative research into network governance in England and China provide at least one such lesson. It reinforces the notion that "it is the mix that matters" (Rhodes, 2017: 173-189). It develops this account further by involving and revealing greater levels of complexity and more variations in the mixture of governance network structures in a wider range of network governance practices in different countries. The theory is not just paper-based. Instead, it remains alive not only when people trust and apply the core value and conceptual tools flexibly, intentionally or unintentionally, but also when people challenge it by envisaging and enacting more variations on the same theoretical tools or exploring and trying other theories in practice.

Thirdly, actor-centred ethnographic research into local practices in public policy and public administration showed its methodological strength in unpacking and uncovering more vivid individual actor stories that are socially constructed in specific policy arenas. With these stories, a bigger and more complete picture is presented in greater detail.

Fourthly, the possible policy arenas for theoretical exploration in the future include classical topics like environmental protection (Klijn, 2002; Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004), pandemic control (Hu & Kapucu, 2016; Dong & Lu, 2020; Christensen & Lægreid, 2020), community affairs (Keast et al, 2006) and other policy issues where significant and complex problems involve cross-boundary or transnational location collaborations in the fast-changing global community.

In a world full of changes and complexities, some dilemmas appear indifferent to location, class or social structure, such as the COVID-10 virus, which does not distinguish between races, nations and classes. The dilemmas in public service provision will probably challenge some countries more than others from a long-term perspective. However, these changes and complexities act like a mirror, reflecting straight into every network sooner or later without need for disguise. These changes act like a dagger, piercing the invisible layers of any political regime or administrative system, or like a stone plunging into calm water revealing the diversified nature beneath the surface. This indifference is rooted in the common nature of humankind, although it presents itself in different forms. The degrees and varieties of the changes and complexities vary due to the differences in resource exchange and interdependence among the game players, but the resolutions to the dilemmas essentially require the involvement of mutual trust, reciprocity and diplomacy in constant and sustainable interactions until all actors are satisfied with the outcome or quit the game.

Researchers in different fields had better to stay pragmatic, positive and opportunistic, they are supposed to feel no fear in their hearts once the adventure has been accepted. A seemingly incomparable comparison, a remote and strange country, or the conventional and established wisdom in the ethnographically constructed world should not prevent anyone from stepping into an unknown field.

All the past is prologue, and the prologue ignites our way forward.

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Appendix A: Research Introduction for Interviewees

A Letter to Potential Interviewees

Dear NGO member based in Waterfront,

Local Service Delivery and Policy Network in Comparative Perspective

I am a second-year PhD student based at the University of Waterfront, doing a research project on community participation which uses interviews and observation to collect data.

I am from China and this research is a comparative study of England and China. My fieldwork in Waterfront is part of a larger programme of fieldwork.

The aim of my project is to explore how the Chinese and UK governments promote community participation at local levels, and the outcomes of these initiatives. Furthermore, I want to explore the similarities and differences between Chinese and English practices and why?

Generally, the UK is seen as essentially democratic, and supportive of community participation. China is considered as an authoritarian state with top-down power control and strictly hierarchical system, meaning there is little scope for local participation. However, recent studies in both countries show that they are confronted with similar problems when community organizations interact with the public sector and its development. Understanding this basic puzzle motivated me to conduct this research. Here is a brief introduction to my research project.

Research Aims

This research in England is part of my PhD project, which sets out to explore community participation in England and China between 1997 and 2017. Specifically, my PhD aims to explore the interaction between local authorities and community organizations by comparing two policy areas in England and China. Case studies will be analysed by taking account of their different contexts – the political regimes, the development dilemmas facing community organizations, the relationship between local authorities and community organizations and reforms in public service delivery. How can consultation help improve performance of community organization and the quality of public services? Despite the differences in political regimes, China and England have introduced many strikingly similar reforms at the local level, and have encountered similar problems in community governance.

Research Questions

After my literature review on community participation in both countries, I identified several specific comparative questions relevant to my fieldwork in UK. If possible, please think about the questions below in the light of your working experience in social care or social housing.

1. In England, party politics influences community participation in many ways. However, are shifts in community policy always the councillors' main consideration? How do you feel about the commitment of councillors and city council staff to community service provision?

2. How are policy changes implemented? Do you feel your organization is affected by policy changes? Has your organization ever made effort to influence any policy changes?

3. In the UK and China, interaction between government and community organizations provides many opportunities to meet various objectives through community governance. So:
   (i) How do community organizations negotiate with local government? Do you or your colleagues have any experience of working or communicating with councillors or city council staff?
   (ii) How do community organizations establish connections to negotiate and cooperate within the same policy area?
   (iii) What do politicians and council staff do when working collaboratively with community groups or individually to promote the quality of social care service delivery?
   (iv) Do you have any stories about the innovative practices in community social care services?

4. In your opinion, what are the causes of the development dilemmas of community organizations?

I hope that the outcome of my project will offer a better and deeper understanding of the interactions between local government and community organizations in the field of community participation in England and China. I believe that practices in both countries can provide different perspectives to viewing successes and failures in each country and may even shed some light upon trends and features for the future.

So whenever it is convenient for you, will you help me by allowing me to interview you sometime in the near future? If taking part in an interview is not possible, it would be helpful if you wrote down your thoughts about the questions listed above and send them back to me via email (Yongmei.Li@soton.ac.uk). Please see my short biography.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
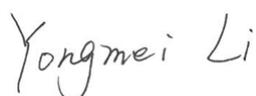
Yongmei Li

Miss Yongmei Li, PhD candidate
Email: Yongmei.Li @soton.ac.uk
Department of Politics and International Relations
Faculty of Social, Humanity and Mathematical Sciences
University of Southampton
SO17 1BJ

Biography

Yongmei Li is second year PhD student in Politics and International Relations at the University of Waterfront. Previously, she studied in China for her bachelor and master's degree in Public Administration, researched community governances and homeowner associations in China. She has several publications in Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index source journals and a book review article in English which was published in Cambridge Journal of China. After finishing her master's degree, she passed the scholarship selection of China Scholarship Council successfully and was granted full funding from the CSC to continue her study in Waterfront. Currently, she is researching community governance and local government. In this phase, she is particularly interested in how local governments deal with community participation issues and their relationships with local community organizations. For a full CV and more information, please see:

https://www.Waterfront.ac.uk/politics/postgraduate/research_students/yl17u16.page?

Appendix B: Interview List in England

1. 3:30 pm 20/10/2017 Mr. Zack Cooper (Service Lead, Customer Experience and Insight, Waterfront City Council)

2. 3:00-4:00pm 07/12/2017 Councillor Judy Cart (Cabinet Member for Community, Home and Culture, Waterfront City Council)

3. 3:00pm 11/12/2017 Dr. Brian Marshall (Service Manager, West Avon Community Trust)

4. 11:00am 19/12/2017 Mr. Mala Sanneh (Community Engagement Officer, Waterfront City Council)

5. 3:30 pm 19/12/2017 Mr. Russell Goodwin (Deputy Chief, Waterfront Voluntary Services)

6. 1:00 pm 26/02/2018 Councillor William Parke (Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Housing, Waterfront City Council)

7. Mrs. Sandy Johnson (Senior Commissioning Manager, Integrated Commissioning Unit, Waterfront Clinical Commissioning Unit and Waterfront City Council)

16/11/2017 Council Meeting

18/01/2018 SEND Team Meeting

8. 2:00pm 13/03/2018 Mrs. Julia Marshall and Miss. Betty Carter (Short Breaks and Personal Budget Officer/0-25 SEND Service, Waterfront City Council)

9. 2:30pm 23/03/2018 Councillor George Barns (Family and Children Scrutiny Committee, Waterfront City Council)

10. 11:00am 26/04/2018 Mrs. Clair Paignton (Co-ordinator, Waterfront Parent Carer Forum)

11. 3:00pm 01/06/2018 Jack Smiths (Service Lead of Council Housing& Neighbourhoods, Waterfront City Council)

12. 10:30am 06/06/2018 Mrs. Anna Brooks (Housing Development Officer, Capital Assets, Waterfront City Council)

13. 30/07/2018 Mrs. Kaveri Bose (Service Manager, Waterfront Age UK)

14. 01/08/2018 Councillor Pearl Diamond (Family and Children Scrutiny Committee, Waterfront City Council)

15. 08/08/2018 Mrs. Rose Matthews (Land and New Business Manager, Crown Housing Association)

17. 16/08/2018 Mrs. Alex Fielker (Chief Executive Officer, Waterfront Man-ability)

18. 14:30 17/08/2018 Mrs. Jemma Wilson (Waterfront Age UK Trustee)

19. 14:30 31/08/2018 Mrs. Robin Pearl (Strategic Planning Manager, Waterfront City Council)

20. 03/09/2018 Mrs. Stephanie White (Development Manager, Spring Water Housing Association)

21. Mrs. Hilary Faulkingham (Service Manager, Mayflower Home Care Agency)

22. Mrs. Eunice Rosemary (Service Manager, Apex Prime Care)

23. 2:30pm 05/04/2019 Mrs. Mary Hugo (Service Manager, Padwell Elder Day Care Centre, Age UK Waterfront)

16. 23/05/2019 Councillor Sandra Lunar (Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Housing)

24. 12:00 pm 28/05/2019 Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle (Chief Executive Officer, Tulip Road Association)

25. 11:00 am 29/05/2019 Mrs. Helena Carter (Service Director, Children and Families, Waterfront City Council)

26. 3:00pm 10/06/2019 Mrs. Alisha Fish& Mrs. Becky Owen (Elder Home Care and Day Care Centre, SCiA Waterfront)

27. 11:00 am 18/06/2019 Mr. Thompson Boswell (Junior Warden Co-ordinator, Adult, Housing and Communities, Waterfront City Council)

28. 11:00 am 19/06/2019 Mrs. Judy Tyre (Deputy, Waterfront Voluntary Services)

29. 2:00 pm 25/06/2019 Mr. Thompson Boswell (Junior Warden Co-ordinator, Adult, Housing and Communities, City Council)

Mrs. Rachel Jennings (Service Manager, Supporting Local Groups)

30. 9:00 am 08/07/2019 Mrs. Anna Hicks (Service Manager, Community Wellbeing)

31. 2:00pm 10/07/2019 Mrs. Becky Owen (Service Manager, Learning-disabled people and Mental Health, SCiA)

32. 12:00-14:00 24/07/2019 Mr. Bill Evans (Senior Coordinator, Voice for Carers)

Appendix C: List of Events Attended in England

No.	Cabinet/Council/Committee	Time	Venue
1	Children and Families Scrutiny Panel	5:30 pm, 28/09/2017	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
2	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 17/10/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
3	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 09/11/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
4	Governance Committee	5:00 pm, 13/11/2017	Committee Room 1, Civic Centre
5	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 14/11/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
6	Council	2:00 pm, 15/11/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
7	Children and Families Scrutiny Committee	5:30pm, 16/11/2017	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
8	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:00pm, 29/11/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
9	Cabinet	10:00 am, 30/11/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
10	School Forum	3:30 pm, 06/12/2017	Cantell School, Violet Road, Waterfront, SO16 3GJ
11	Governance Committee	5:00 pm, 11/12/2017	Committee Room 1, Civic Centre
12	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 14/12/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
13	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 19/12/2017	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
14	Schools Forum	4:00 pm, 10/01/2018	Regents Park Community College, King Edwards Avenue, SO16 4GW
15	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 11/01/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
16	Officer Decision Making	10:00 am, 15/01/2018	Room 204, Civic Centre
17	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 16/01/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
18	Children and Families Scrutiny Panel	5:30 pm, 25/01/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
19	Governance Committee	5:00 pm, 12/02/2018	Committee Room 1, Civic Centre
20	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 13/02/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
21	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 15/02/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
22	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 20/02/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
23	Council	2:00 pm, 21/02/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
24	Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	6:00 pm, 22/02/2018	Conference Room 3 and 4, Civic Centre
25	Children and Families Scrutiny Panel	5:30 PM, 01/03/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre

26 Paper notes	Health and Wellbeing Board	5:30 PM, 14/03/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
27	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 15/03/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
28	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 20/03/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
29	Council	2:00 pm, 21/03/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
30 Paper notes	Children and Families Scrutiny Panel	5:30 pm, 22/03/2018	Conference room 3, Civic Centre
31	Schools Forum	4:00 pm, 28/03/2018	Regents Park Community College, King Edward Avenue, SO16 4GW
32	Health and Wellbeing Board	5:30 pm, 04/04/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
33 Paper notes	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 12/04/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
34	Cabinet	4:30 pm, 17/04/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
35 Paper notes	Governance Committee	5:00 pm, 23/04/2018	Committee Room 1, Civic Centre
36	Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	6:00 pm, 26/04/2018	Conference Room 3 and 4, Civic Centre
37 Little Paper notes	Council (Annual General Meeting)	11:00 am, 16/05/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
38	Officer Decision Making	10:00 am, 23/05/2018	Room 204, Civic Centre
39	Children and Families Scrutiny Panel	5:30 pm, 07/06/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
40	Governance Committee	5:00 pm, 11/06/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
41	Joint Commissioning Board	9:30 am, 14/06/2018	Conference Room, CCG HQ, Oakley Road Waterfront
42	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	5:30 pm, 14/06/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
43	Health and Wellbeing Board	5:30 pm, 20/06/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
44	Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	6:00 pm, 28/06/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre
45	Children and Family Scrutiny Meeting	5:30 pm, 26/07/2018	Conference Room 3, Civic Centre

46	Overview and Scrutiny Management Meeting	5:30 pm, 16/08/2018	Council Chamber, Civic Centre
47 Paper notes	Health and Wellbeing Board	5:30-7:30 pm, 05/09/2018	Conference Room, NHS Waterfront City Clinical Commissioning Group HQ, Oakley Road, Waterfront, SO16 4GX

1. 14/02/2018 Family Fun Day, YMCA Youth Support Centre

2. 18/02/2018 West Itchen Community Trust Community Festival, Northam Community Centre

3. 23/02/2018 Free Lunch Club, Northam Community Centre

4. 16/03/2018 West Itchen Community Trust volunteer meeting

5. 23/03/2018 Carers Get Together, Freemantle Community Centre

6. 06/04/2018 Friday Forum, Waterfront Voluntary Services

7. 17/04/2018 Age UK volunteer training

8. 12/06/2018 Man-ability volunteer training

9. 14/06/2018 Making the End Meet Building 38, Highfield Campus, University of Waterfront

organized by Southern Policy Centre and Political Ethnography Centre

10. 15/08/2018 Dragon's Den Event the Third Age Centre on Cranbury Terrace

11. Man-ability outdoor Campaign in RHS Hospital

12. 08/2019 Friday Forum, Waterfront Voluntary Services

13. March 2019-August 2019Age UK volunteering in Fallen Revolution project 2-3 times a week. The internal reorganization of Age UK was a special period for this professional and influential NGO in England. Ann, an elder volunteer for Age UK, talked about it in the kitchen of Basset Green Community Centre when we are doing the washing up after the Fallen Revolution Friday session.

18/08/2018 Mrs. Jemma Wilson, Age UK, is now managing with fewer resources but more tasks. This is the general climate at current stage.

14. June 2019-August 2019 Man-ability volunteering in Adult and Teenager Day Care sessions, 2-3 times a week. They are always short of volunteer for the Adult and Junior day care sessions. I have received several emails calling for more volunteers for some dates from their activity manager Ille.

Appendix D: Interview List in China

1. Time: 3:30 pm 20/01/2019 Office Building of Water District Department of Civil Affairs. Mrs. Chang Le (Chief of Elder Care Section, Water District Bureau of Civil Affairs)

2. Time: 10:30am 23/01/2019 Location: Conference Room, China Community Development Display Centre. Mrs. Lin Yan (Secretary, Bright Vision Charity Development Centre)

3. Time: 10:00am 26/01/2019 Location: Garden Court, YWY Day Care Centre. Mr. Zhou Jie (Manager, YWY Elder Day Care Centre)

4. Time: 10:00am 28/01/2019 Location: Eternal Young Social Work Centre. Mr. Shan Yun Xiang (Chief, Eternal Young Social Work Centre)

5. Time: 2:30pm 29/01/2019 Location: ZY Street-level Working and Care Centre. Mrs. Yang Bei (Art Tutor); Mrs. Shen Jing Yuan (Public Relation Manager)

6. Time: 4:00pm 01/02/2019 Location: WABC office, Level 3, Caixialing Street-level Building. Mr. Tang Shan (Chief of Art, WABC)

7. Time: 9:00am 04/02/2019 Location: Café, M Building, Z Campus, Ocean University Mr. Sheng Jun (Secondary Chief, Yu Yue Social Work Service Centre)

8. Time: 2:30pm 05/02/2019 Location: YH District Marriage Registration Office. Mr. Liao Bo (President, River City YJR Social Work Service Centre)

9. Time: 11:30 am 08/02/2019 Location: Community Canteen and Wisdom & Aura Day Care Centre Ms. Ke Yan Xia (Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre for Mentally Disabled People)

10. Time: 10:00 am 18/02/2019 Location: Star Dust Autism Children Development Centre. Mr. X (Teacher, Star Dust Training Centre for Autistic Children) Mr. Will (Chief, Star Dust Training Centre for Autistic Children)

11. 20/02/2019 China Community Development Display Centre. Mr. Cheng Rui (Chief, Loving Youth Social Work Service Centre); Mrs. Zhu Xiao Yun (President, Water District Social Work Association); Mrs. Yan Ling (Chief, Water District NGO Development Foundation)

12. Time: 10:00am 23/02/2019 Location: Reducing Help Day Care Centre for Mentally Disabled Adult and Children. Mrs. Ning Jing (Manager, Reducing Help Day Care Centre for Mentally Disabled Adult and Children)

13. Time: 9:30am 28/02/2019 Location: YWCA River City. Mrs. Nie Hua (Vice Chief, YWCA in River City)

14. 04/03/2019 Location: YH District Marriage Registration Office. Mr. Liao Bo (YJR Social Work Service Centre)

15. 10:00am 07/03/2019 Location: HBS Elder Medical Care Company. Mr. Tian Wei (Manager, HBS Elder Medical Care Company)

16. 2:30pm 10/03/2019 Location: Hao Zi Wei Social Work Service Centre. Mr. Lin Quan (Chief, Hao Zi Wei Social Work Service Centre)

17. 2:30pm 19/03/2019 ZY Street-level Working and Healing Centre. Mrs. Gu Li Mei (ZY Street-level Working and Healing Centre)

18. 10:00am 21/03/2019 Xiao Le Wei Xiaoying Community Elder Canteen, XY Street. Mr. Teng Liang (Manager, Happy Stomach Community Elder Canteen)

19. Time: 12:30 pm 27/03/2019 Location: Powerlong Art Centre. Mr. Huang Xiao (Chief of Inclusive Art Project for Learning Disability; Dean of Art School, River City Normal University)

20. 30/03/2019 YWCA River City. Mrs. Hu Yu Zhen (Chief, YWCA River City)

21. 31/03/2019 Reducing Help Day Care Centre. Mr. Zhao Yi (Photographer, Reducing Help Day Care Centre)

22. 03/04/2019 HB Street-level Office, Water District. Mr. Wen Feng (NGO Development, HB Street-level Office)

23. 10/04/2019 HB Street-level Public Service Centre. Mrs. Wan Fang (Elder Care, HB Street-level Office)

24. 12/04/2019 Water District Public Service Centre. Mr. Yuan Wen Hua (Chief of NGO Development, Water District Department of Civil Affairs)

25. 15/04/2019 XY Street-level Office, Water District. Mrs. Tan Yan (Elder Care, XY Street-level Office)

26. 20/04/2019. Mrs. Jin Li Yuan (Elder Care, Jin District Bureau of Civil Affairs)

27. 22/04/2019. Mrs. Yan Ling (Chief, Water District NGO Development Foundation)

28. 29/04/2019 Office Building of Ocean Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs. Mrs. Zheng Ya Ping (Vice Chief, NGO Management, Ocean Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs)

29. 05/05/2019. Mr. Meng Shao You (President, Water District Disabled Alliance)

30. 07/05/2019. Mrs. Ning Jing (Manager, Reducing Help Day Care Centre)

31. 3:00pm 10/05/2019 Location: River City Yang Ling Zi Special Education School. Mrs. Yang Li Ping (President, River City Shao Yong Nian Special Education School and Smart Tree Bakery Training Centre)

32. 9:00am 12/05/201 Location: River City Municipal Elder Activity Centre. Mr. Liao Bo (Chief, River City YJR Social Work Centre)

33. 3:00pm 015/05/2019 Location: Café and Charity Shop, Loving Care Station and Loving Mutual Support Association. Mrs. Wen Qing (Chief, Loving Care Station and Loving Mutual Support Association)

Appendix E: List of Event Observation in China

1. All Day 2:30 pm-5:00 pm 25/01/2019 Official Training for Elder Care Centre Leaders (Host by River City Municipal Bureau of Civil Affairs). Conference Room, River Hotel

2. Voluntary Day in YWY Day Care Centre. 2:30 pm-5:00 pm 29/01/2019

3. WABC voluntary painting activity. 10:00 am-12:00 pm 03/02/2019 River City Municipal Children Welfare Care Centre

4. Rong Na Barrier Free Art Festival. 10:00 am- 3:00 pm 05/02/2019 Powerlong Art Centre

5. International Volunteer Day Activity, Caihe Street-level Office. 9:00 am-12:00 pm 08/02/2019 Caihe Street-level Square

6. YWCA Monthly Elder Birthday Party. 9:00 am-12:00pm 20/02/2019 YWCA River City

7. Reducing Help dinner and management board meeting. 6:00 pm-9:30 pm 25/02/2019 Reducing Help Day Care Centre

8. The psychological training of Social Work Capacity Building, BV Charity Development Centre. 2:00 pm-4:00 pm 03/03/2019 China Community Development Display Centre

9. 2018 WABC Excellent Member Reward Ceremony. 2:00 pm-5:00 pm 11/03/2019 The Home of Cherishing Kindness

10. District Departments, Street-level Office and NGOs Joint Meeting. 2:15 pm-4:30 pm 25/03/2019

11. WABC Painting Training Class in ZY and XY Caring and Working Station. 10:00 am- 12:00 pm Every Monday and Wednesday from 26/01/2019 to 18/02/2019, totally 6 times

Appendix F: Tables of Annual Assessment in Water District

2017 Annual Street-level Office Assessment Table (NGO Development Section)[112]

Section	Dimension	Basic Score	Criteria	Score Gained by Each Street-level Office		Reasons for Arguing the Score
				HB Street-level Office		
NGO Development	Assist the District Government in (i) NGO registration, (ii) capacity training, (iii) annual assessment and (iiii) integrity and self-discipline	3	Get 2 points if achieve (i), (ii) and (iiii); get 0 if not. Lose 1 point if NGO did not participate in annual assessment or failed annual assessment.	2	HB Street-level Office Social Work Association and Time Bank Volunteer Association did not participate in annual assessment in 2016	
	(i) Developing professional social work, accelerating the establishment and activation of street-level social work associations and supervising the normative operation of community social work centre; (ii) selecting excellent social work cases	4	Get 1 point for (i); get 1 point if facilitating district social work association; take part in municipal and district excellent social work case selection, get 1 point if winning municipal selection, get 0.5 point if winning district selection, get at most 2 points regardless of the winning times.	4	2 municipal social work excellent cases	
	(i) Compelling NGOs governed by the street-level office to enhance integrity and branding; (ii)	3	Get 1 point if (ii) is done and awarded by district government or municipal	2	2 Award-winning NGOs	

	Cultivating at least 3 NGOs that are influential within the district		government, can get at most 3 points.		
	(i) Cultivating and developing street-level NGOs and social work; (ii) submitting at least one propaganda report related to (i) every week	3	Get 1.5 point if (i); get 1.5 point if the annual number of (ii) reaches 48 and accepted and more than half of the reports are published by social media at district level or above. If one target in (ii) is not achieved, lose 0.5 point.	2.5	Less than half of the reports are accepted and published by district level social media, so lost 0.5 point.
	(i) Community NGOs participating in community affairs; (ii) community NGOs take part in democratic negotiation and local governance	5	Get 2 points if the subsidy for community autonomy projects and neighbourhood mutual help projects is made best use and financial auditing is passed; get 3 points if obeying "foundation project using regulations"; lose 1 point if breaking 1 rule until score reaches 0.	5	
	(i) Reinforcing NGO charity service projects supervision	5	Get 1 point if street-level office assist district NGO service centre to supervise municipal government funded projects in daily	5	

			practices; get 4 points if obeying "foundation project supervision regulation"; lose 1 point if breaking 1 rule until score reaches 0.			
	(i) supervise the actual progression of NGO projects, enhance financial auditing and supervision, prevent abuse or misuse of charity funding	5	Get 5 points if 100% passed the project assessment by community NGO supervisor, district NGO service centre random check and independent assessment; get 3 points if 80% passed; get 0 if less 80% passed. Get 0 point if NGO is reported to conduct illegally.	0		
	(i) Encouraging and supporting NGOs to run charity service projects at street and community levels; (ii) attracting excellent NGOs, innovating PWIIP to facilitate community service provision	4	Get 2 points if 5 charity service projects or above are jointly completed with street-level office annually; lose 0.5 point if 1 project less until 0. Attracting 2 or more than 2 municipal PWIIP, get 2 points; lose 1 point if 1 project less than the target.	4		

Table 8-3 2018 Annual Street-level Office Assessment Table (NGO Development Section)[113]

Section	Dimension	Basic Score	Criteria	Score gained by HB street-level office	Additional Information
NGO Development	NGO China Communist Party organization development	3	Get 2 points if founding Street-level NGO CCP branch; get 1 point if choosing CCP organization development contact or supervisor.	3	Completed
	Assist the District Government in (i) NGO registration, (ii) capacity training, (iii) annual assessment and (iiii) integrity and self-discipline	2	Get 2 points if achieve (i), (ii) and (iiii); get 0 if not. Lose 1 point if NGO did not participate in annual assessment or failed annual assessment.	2	Completed
	(i) Developing professional social work, accelerating the establishment and activation of street-level social work association and supervising the normative operation of community social work centre;(ii) selecting excellent social work cases	2	Get 0.5 point for (i); get 1 point if facilitating district social work association; take part in municipal and district excellent social work case selection, get 0.5 point if winning municipal selection, get at most 1.5 points regardless of the winning times.	0.5	Award information hasn't arrived
	(i) Compelling NGOs governed by the street-level office to enhance integrity and branding; (ii) Cultivating at least 3 NGOs that are influential within the district	5	Get 1 point if (ii) is done and awarded by district government or municipal government, can get at most 3 points. Get 1 point if at least 1 NGO	5	

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[113] This table is translated from the Chinese version. It is one of three sections for the annual assessment of street-office civil affair management.

			competed for municipal brand NGO; get 1 point if at least 1 NGO is awarded 3A class NGO.		
	(i) Cultivating and developing street-level NGOs and social work; (ii) Submitting at least one propaganda report related to (i) every week	3	Get 1.5 point if (i); get 1.5 point if the annual number of (ii) reaches 48 and accepted and more than half of the reports are published by social media at district level or above. If one target in (ii) is not achieved, lose 0.5 point.	2	Annual number of reports submitted to district social media is less than 48.
	(i) Community NGOs participate in community affairs such as solving conflicts, providing community support and education for special groups and voluntary services; (ii) community NGOs take part in democratic negotiation and local governance	8	Get 1 points if the subsidy for community autonomy projects and neighbourhood mutual help projects is made best use and financial auditing is passed; get 2 points if obeying "foundation project using regulations"; lose 1 point if breaking 1 rule until score reaches 0.Get 2 points if timely submitting data and report monthly; get 1 point for every activity report or success lessons accepted by municipal working brief, can get at most 3 points.	8	
	(i) Reinforcing NGO charity service project supervision	3	Get 1 point if street-level office assist district NGO service centre to supervise municipal	3	

		government funded projects in daily practices; get 2 points if obeying "foundation project supervision regulation"; lose 1 point if breaking 1 rule until score reaches 0.			
	(i) supervising the progression of NGO projects, enhancing financial auditing and supervision, preventing abuse or misuse of charity funding	3	Get 5 points if 100% passed the project assessment by community NGO supervisor, district NGO service centre random check and independent assessment; get 3 points if 80% passed; get 0 if less 80% passed. Get 0 point if NGO is reported to conduct illegally.	3	
	(i) Encouraging and supporting NGOs to run charity service projects at street and community levels; (ii) attracting excellent NGOs, innovating PWIIP to facilitate community service provision	4	Get 2 points if 5 charity service projects or above are jointly completed with street-level office annually; lose 0.5 point if 1 project less until 0. Attracting 2 or more than 2 municipal PWIIP, get 2 points; lose 1 point if 1 project less than the target.	4	

Appendix G: Glossary of Terms by Chapter

Chapter 5 Bird's eye View of NGO-Government Relations and Policy Context

Waterfront Voluntary Services is a local umbrella NGO in Waterfront. The services it provides include fundraising guidance, capacity building training and a monthly forum for issue discussion and social life.

Bright Vision Charity Development Centre (*BV Gongyi Shiye Fazhan Zhongxin*) is a local umbrella NGO in Water District. The services it provides include fundraising guidance and capacity building training sessions.

PWIIP (Public Charity Innovative Investment Programs), is a different type of government-funded project for public service delivery projects. PWIIP works for community cultural life and leisure activities.

JIGSAW Scheme "Children with Disabilities Team is a specialist and statutory multi-agency health and social care service that undertakes assessments and provides services at the complex level of needs. The Team supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a complex impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families."

https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=nStqYS7rVXQ

Buzz Network is "a group for Southampton Parents/Carers of Children and young people with a disability or additional needs. It is funded by Southampton City Council who work closely with the Southampton Parent Carer Forum to ensure it is meeting the needs of families."

https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztIRo&localofferchannel=0

Short Breaks "provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends. They offer parents and carers a break from their caring responsibilities and time to spend with other family members or to catch up on other daily tasks."

https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztIRo&localofferchannel=0

Chapter 6 Elderly Care in England and China: Resource Exchange and Interdependence

FRP Falls Revolution Project is a joint project organized by Age UK Waterfront and The Saints Foundation in Waterfront city for elderly people who had difficulties balancing while walking or standing. This project sets up weekly sessions that last for one year and charges service users £5 quarterly. Each user can sign up for the next round of services after finishing a quarter.

Waterfront Voluntary Services is the only umbrella NGO in Waterfront City. It covers all kinds of service type, organizes monthly forums and offers training sessions for NGO fundraising and capacity development.

YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association). This charity body with international background and history has been established in China for over half a century.

Sheng Ai (Holy Love) is a social work centre for service provision established by YWCA River City. It is a long-term contractor of government project located in Water District, River City.

CRC (Community Residents' Committee) is a quasi-official community organization made up of community residents. The committee members are all elected from community residents and the funding comes from the government.

Hao Zi Wei Community Elder Canteen is a chain of elder canteens strongly distributed across River City. In cooperation with street-level offices in Water District, Hao Zi Wei runs three community elder canteens.

Age UK Waterfront is a local branch of Age UK in Waterfront City. This is a national charity brand with a long history and great influence in elderly care provision.

SCiA Waterfront is a local branch of SCiA in Waterfront City. The main services it provides are elderly care and social care for people with learning disabilities.

Chapter 7: Resource Exchange and Interdependence: Social Care for People with Learning Disabilities in England and China

Man-ability is an NGO providing day care for people with learning disabilities in Waterfront, England. It is a national NGO with many other local branches throughout England.

Thursday Teens Scheme is a project aiming to provide relief for unpaid carers of people with learning disabilities by involving more volunteers to provide day care for teenagers with learning-disabilities every Thursday during the summer vacation. Other NGOs doing social care for people with learning disabilities run similar schemes at different time slots and in slightly different formats.

Fair Play Project is a project funded by Waterfront City Council to increase accessibility of playing sports for children with learning disabilities. This is not a free project. Different NGOs based in communities charge small amounts of money for this service.

Tulip Road Association is a national NGO in England providing social care for people with learning disabilities. It has a branch in Waterfront.

Reducing Help is an NGO providing day care for people with learning-disabilities in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Ning Jing, the mother of a son with learning disabilities.

Love and Caring Station is an NGO providing day care for people with learning disabilities in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Wen Qing.

Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre is a day care centre partly funded by street-level office and Water District Government. It provides similar services to the official work and healing centre for people with learning disabilities.

District Disabled Alliance is an official organization responsible for the wellbeing, welfare and employment of disabled people. The Disabled Alliance is a system that exists from national level to street level.

Star Dust is a local NGO providing professional training for autistic children in Water District, River City, China. It was started by a Mrs. Ding Ling, a mother with an autistic daughter.

JIGSAW Scheme "Children with Disabilities Team is a specialist and statutory multi-agency health and social care service that undertakes assessments and provides services at the complex level of needs. The Team supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a complex impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families." https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=nStqYS7rVXQ

Buzz Network is "a group for Southampton Parents/Carers of Children and young people with a disability or additional needs. It is funded by Southampton City Council who work closely with the Southampton Parent Carer Forum to ensure it is meeting the needs of families." https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztIRo&localofferchannel=0

Short Breaks "provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends. They offer parents and carers a break from their caring responsibilities and time to spend with other family members or to catch up on other daily tasks." https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/service.page?id=0ovhp5ztIRo&localofferchannel=0

Waterfront Parent Carer Forum is an NGO linking parents of people with learning disabilities with service providers. The forum's leader is based at the Tulip Road Association. The forum also works closely with Waterfront City Council.

WABC is World of Art Brut Culture, an NGO initially established in Shanghai, China in 2010 which as of 2019 has 10 branches across China. WABC runs a series of brut art exhibition and education programmes that involve people with learning disabilities with local governments. Brut culture and art refer to 'raw art' which has little polish or refinement and is based on the artists' instinct.

Home of Adoring Kindness is a collective activity centre and charity shop created and operated by the Civil Affairs Bureau of Water District Government. It is located on a busy ancient commercial street within Water District. It is run by a rotation of NGOs who are government contract holders in Home of Adoring Kindness.

Water District Social Work Association is an official organization in charge of and supporting all the social work centres in Water District.

Wisdom Tree Charity Café is a social enterprise created by Shao Yong Nian Special Education School whose staff inside the café all come from special education schools. They work with people with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

Working and Healing Station is an official organization that provides day care and security protection for people with learning disabilities within the community. The geographical scale that each working and healing station is responsible for is the same as the street-level office.

KRRC (Kensington Road Respite Center). The centre provides respite services for children or adults with learning disabilities and also served the parents or carers of this group as a communal venue. The centre is owned by Waterfront City Council.

In **KR Respite Centre**, or **KR** also refers to Kensington Road.

Chapter 8 Trust-building, Diplomacy and Cooperation in Elder Care

None

Chapter 9 Trust-building, Diplomacy and Cooperation in Social Care for people with learning disabilities

WABC is the World of Art Brut Culture, an NGO initially established in Shanghai, China in 2010 which as of 2019 has 10 branches across China. WABC runs a series of brut art exhibition and education programmes that involve people with learning disabilities with local governments. Brut culture and art refers to 'raw art' which has little polish or refinement and is based on the artists' instinct.

Man-ability is an NGO providing day care for people with learning disabilities in Waterfront, England. It is a national NGO with other local branches across England.

Reducing Help is an NGO providing day care for people with learning disabilities in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Ning Jing, a mother with a son with learning-disabled people.

SCiA is a national NGO in England doing social care provision for the elderly and for people with learning disabilities. It also has a branch in Waterfront.

Voice for Carers is a local NGO in Waterfront covering the services of unpaid carers, offering support and information for better care provision for the people they take care of, respite services for unpaid carers' health and wellbeing; carers' assessment and reviews for identifying more invisible unpaid carers.

Tulip Road Association is a national NGO in England offering social care provision for people with learning disabilities. It also has a branch in Waterfront.

Star Dust is a local NGO offering professional training for autistic children in Water District, River City, China. It was started by Mrs. Ding Ling, a mother with an autistic daughter.

Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre is a day care center partly funded by street-level offices and partly by Water District Government. It provides similar services to the official work and healing centre for people with learning disabilities.

KRRC (Kensington Road Respite Center) provides respite services for children or adults with learning disabilities and serves parents or carers for this group as a communal venue. It is owned by Waterfront City Council.

Appendix H: Cast of Characters by Chapter

<u>**Chapter 5 Cast of Characters (In order of appearance)**</u>

Name	Affiliation	Position	P.S.
Mrs. Judy Tyre	Waterfront Voluntary Services	President	Umbrella NGO in Waterfront
Councilor. Sandra Lunar	Waterfront City Council	Cabinet Member, Adult Care and Housing	Successor of Councilor. William Parke
Mrs. Lin Yan	Bright Vision Charity Development Centre	Deputy Manager	Umbrella NGO
Mr. Cheng Rui	Loving Youth Social Work Centre	Manager	
Mr. Yang Guang	Bright Vision Charity Development Centre	Manager	Umbrella NGO
Mr. Yuan Wenhua	Department of NGO Management, Bureau of Civil Affairs, Water District	Manager	
Mr. Liao Bo	YJR Social Work Centre	Manager	
Mr. Shan Yunxiang	Eternal Young Social Work Centre	Manager	
Mrs. Mary Hugo	Age UK Waterfront	Service Manager, Day Care Centre	
Mrs. Kaveri Bose	Age UK Waterfront	Service Manager	
Mr. Brian Jacobs	Age UK Waterfront	Service User	
Mr. Anthony Simpson	Age UK Waterfront	Service User	
Mrs. Pearl Grey	Age UK Waterfront	Service User	
Mrs. Claudia Ryan	Age UK Waterfront	Service User	
Mr. Bruce Green	Age UK Waterfront	Service User	
Mrs. Romney Robert	Age UK Waterfront	Manager	
Mrs. Jemma Wilson	Age UK Waterfront	Trustee	Replaced Sarah to be the FRP Supervisor
Mrs. Chang Le	Civil Affairs Bureau, Water District Government	Head of Elder Care Department	
Mrs. Clark Painton	Waterfront Parent Carer Forum	Chief Executive	NGO for parent carers of people with learning disabilities in Waterfront
Mrs. Amy Marks	Short Breaks		
Mrs. Debora Jacques	Short Breaks		
Mrs. Maria		Parent	
Mr. Huang Xiao	Inclusive Art Project for People with Learning	Dean and manager	

	Disabilities, Department of Art, River City Normal University		
Mrs. Gu Limei	ZY Work and Care Centre, Water District	Manager	Street-level Officer
Mrs. Ke Yanxia	Wisdom & Aura Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Manager	
Mrs. Yang Liping	Shao Yong Nian Special Education School, River City	President	
Mr. Meng Shaoyou	Water District Disabled Alliance	President	

Chapter 6 Cast of Characters (in order of appearance):

Name	Affiliation	Position	P.S.
Mrs. Mary Hugo	Age UK Waterfront	Service Manager, Padwell Day Care Centre	Elder Care NGO
Mrs. Judy Tyre	Waterfront Voluntary Services	President	Umbrella NGO in Waterfront
Mrs. Hu Yuzhen	YWCA, River City	President	Elder Care NGO
Mrs. Nie Hua	YWCA, River City	Vice President	Elder Care NGO
Councilor. William Parke	Waterfront City Council	Cabinet Member, Adult Care and Housing	
Mrs. Chang Le	Civil Affairs Bureau, Water District Government	Head of Elder Care Department	
Mr. Zhou Jie	YWY Elder Care Centre	Deputy Manager	
Mr. Lin Quan	HZW Hao Zi Wei Community Elder Canteen	Manager	
Mrs. Jemma Wilson	Age UK Waterfront	Trustee	Replaced Sarah to be the FRP Supervisor
Mrs. Alisha Fish	SCiA Waterfront	Service Manager for Elder Care	
Mrs. Tan Yan	XY Street-level Office, Water District Government	Head of NGO Management	
Mr. Liao Bo	YJR Social Work Centre	Manager	
Mrs. Jin Liyuan	Department of Elder Care, Water District Government	Manager	

| Mrs. Zheng Yaping | Department of NGO Development, Ocean Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs | Vice President | |

Chapter 7 Cast of Characters (In order of appearance)

Name	Affiliation	Position	Other
Mrs. Blake Fielker	Man-ability	Chief Executive Officer	NGO for Social Care for Learning-disabled people
Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle	Tulip Road Association	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities	NGO for Social Care for Learning-disabled people
Mrs. Ning Jing	Reducing Help Day Care Centre	Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Wen Qing	Love and Caring Station; Loving Mutual Support Association	Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mr. Will	Star Dust Autism Centre	Manager	Successor of Mrs. Ding Ling
Councilor Sandra Lunar	Waterfront City Council	Cabinet Member, Adult Care and Housing	Successor of Councilor. William Parke
Mrs. Clark Painton	Waterfront Parent Carer Forum	Chief Executive	NGO for parent carers of people with learning disabilities in Waterfront
Mrs. Alisha Fish	SCiA Waterfront	Service Coordinator for Elder Care	NGO for Adult Care
Mrs. Becky Owen	SCiA Waterfront	Service Manager for Social Care for people with learning disabilities	Previously a Service Lead for Adult Social Care in Waterfront City Council
Miss Shen Jing Yuan	WABC, River City	Public Relations	NGO doing brut art painting education
Mr. Huang Xiao	Inclusive Art Project for people with learning disabilities, Department of Art, River City Normal University	Chief, Dean	
Xiao Ming	WABC, River City	Top ten excellent learners in 2018	service user of the joint service provided by WABC and ZY Working and Healing Station
Mrs. Ke Yan Xia	Wisdom & Aura Day Care Centre for people	Chief	

		with learning disabilities		
Councilor. William Parke	Waterfront City Council	Cabinet Member, Adult Care and Housing	
Mr. Pierre Jerrim	Waterfront City Council	Service Manager of Adult Care and Housing	
Mrs. Judy Tyre	Waterfront Voluntary Services	President	Umbrella NGO in Waterfront
Mr. Tian Xiang	WABC River City	Chief of Art	NGO doing brut art painting education
Mrs. Yan Ling	Water District NGO Development Foundation	Chief	
Mrs. Yang (Bei)	WABC, River City	Painting Training Coordinator	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Gu (Limei)	ZY Work and Care Centre, Water District	Chief	Street-level Officer

Chapter 8 Cast of Characters (In order of appearance)

Name	Affiliation	Position	Other
Councillor Sandra Lunar	Waterfront City Council	Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Housing	Successor of Councillor William Parke
Mrs. Becky Owen	SCiA Waterfront	Service Manager for Social Care for people with learning disabilities	Previously a Service Lead for Adult Social Care in Waterfront City Council
Mrs. Alisha Fish	SCiA Waterfront	Service Manager for Elder Care	
Mr. Yuan Wenhua	Department of NGO Management, Bureau of Civil Affairs, Water District	Manager	
Mrs. Judy Tyre	Waterfront Voluntary Services	Manager	
Mrs. Anna Hicks	Community Wellbeing	Deputy Manager	
Mr. Lin Quan	HZW Hao Zi Wei Community Elder Canteen	Manager	
Mr. Zhou Jie	YWY Elder Care Centre	Deputy Manager	
Mr. Tian Wei	HBS Elder Care Facility and Services	Manager	
Mr. Wen Feng	NGO Management, HB Street-level Office	Manager	
Mrs. Mary Hugo	Age UK Waterfront	Service Manager, Day Care Centre	

Mrs. Lin Yan	Bright Vision Charity Development Centre	Vice Chief	
Officer Wen	Financial Department, Bureau of Civil Affairs, Water District	Chief	

Chapter 9 Cast of Characters (In order of appearance)

Name	Affiliation	Position	P.S.
Mrs. Julia Marshall	Waterfront City Council	Short Breaks and Personal Budget Officer	City Council Staff
Miss Betty Carter	Waterfront City Council	0-25 SEND Service Officer	City Council Staff
Mrs. Becky Owen	SCiA Waterfront	Service Manager for Social Care for people with learning disabilities	Previously a Service Lead for Adult Social Care in Waterfront City Council
Mr. Bill Evans	Voice for Carers	Senior Coordinator	NGO for unpaid carers
Mrs. Tessa Bella	Voice for Carers	Volunteer	
Mrs. Yang Bei	WABC, River City	Painting Training Coordinator	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Miss Shen Jingyuan	WABC, River City	Public Relation Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Gu Limei	ZY Work and Care Centre, Water District	Manager	Street-level Officer
Mrs. Zhou Yuan	ZY Work and Care Centre, Water District	Staff	Social Worker
Mrs. Ke Yanxia	Wisdom and Aura Day Care Centre	Deputy Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Blake Fielker	Man-ability	Chief Executive Officer	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Ning Jing	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
A Juan	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Service user	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Xiao Ming	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Service user	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities

Mrs. Ding Ling	Star Dust Autism Training Centre	Starter	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mr. Will	Star Dust Autism Training Centre	Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mr. Zhao Yi	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Activity Coordinator, Photography teacher	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Julie Honeysuckle	Tulip Road Association	Chief Service Manager	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Mrs. Liu Lu	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Tutor in Reducing Help Convenience Store	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Xiao Kai	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Service user	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities
Fang Fang	Reducing Help Day Care Centre for people with learning disabilities	Service user	NGO for Social Care for people with learning disabilities