



50th Anniversary: Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968

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'50 YEARS OF SOCIAL WORK 1968-2018'

FIFTY 1968-2018 YEARS

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'Social Work and the Community (Scottish Office, 1966) laid down the vision that Scottish social work should effect significant change. Underlying this was an assumption that the key to change was 'not just getting rid of poverty but establishing equality.'

(ADSW Witness Seminar, 2003)

Background

Social Work Scotland is the professional leadership body for social work and social care professions and represents social workers and other professionals who lead and support social work across all sectors including NHS, local authorities, third and independent sectors. The aim of Social Work Scotland is threefold: to support and develop the social work and social care workforce; to provide professional advice on the development of policy and legislation; and to design and monitor implementation of new approaches to delivering social work and social care services. Social Work Scotland has a key objective to promote the value of social work and to champion research that underpins professional practice.

The 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act is considered to be a landmark piece of legislation which brought together social work professionals from different fields of practice within new local authority social work departments to promote individual and social welfare. It consolidated legislation for children and adults in need, and probation. The Act also created the Children's Hearing System that aimed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people through a decision making lay tribunal called the Children's Panel.

The 50th anniversary of the 1968 Act allows the opportunity to reflect and celebrate the impact of this legislation, and to consider the future contribution of the profession to promoting the welfare and wellbeing of individuals in the current context of financial pressures, integration and public and professional expectations.

As part of its aim to promote the value of social work and to champion research that underpins professional practice, Social Work Scotland commissioned Professor Brigid Daniel, Queen Margaret University, and Jane Scott (Researcher) to undertake a review of the literature which draws on previously published research to outline why the Act was introduced, summarise the key developments within social work during the previous 50 years and reflect on the future opportunities and challenges for social work seen through the lens of the 1968 Act. Social Work Scotland has also commissioned several pieces of work to analyse and consider developments in more detail.

Review of literature

The two stages of this small-scale review were informed by an expert consultation panel (see Appendix A) and overseen by Social Work Scotland's Advisory Group for all the projects (see Appendix B). The stages of the review included:

Review of literature: a comprehensive review was undertaken of the literature in relation to the 1968 Act, key policy and practice development since 1968 across adult social work or social care, criminal justice social work, and social work with children and families.

Expert informant consultation: eleven interviews were completed with participants all of whom had social work backgrounds but working in either practice or in academia.

Review of Literature

Search strategy

This review aimed to bring together literature on the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 as well as literature on the development of services in the subsequent years across children's, adult and criminal justice services in Scotland, and the development of the social work profession against a backdrop of changing political and economic climates. This review did not include published material on detailed developments or initiatives in the three specialist areas of social work. A full systematic review was beyond the scope of this project, but the approach did use the guidance on systematic reviews as a framework (Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/>)).

Qualitative and quantitative studies were reviewed and included, but in the main articles and papers were reflective commentaries, background discussion papers or previous systematic reviews of literature. The following terms – social work act, social work, policy, practic*, child*, adult*, criminal justice, prob* AND dev* – were used to explore all journals in the Wiley Online Journals Library and the following databases were searched for peer-reviewed publications available in English and published within the last fifty years:

- Child Development & Adolescent Studies
- CINAHL Complete
- Criminal Justice Abstracts with Full Text
- Political Science Complete
- PsycARTICLES
- PsycINFO
- SocINDEX with Full Text.

Articles from a range of disciplines were also searched: Applied Sciences; Health and Medicine; Life Sciences; Nursing and Allied Health; Political Science; Politics and Government; Psychology; Public Health; Social Sciences and Humanities; Social Work; and Sociology.

From an initial search 1,250 peer-reviewed articles were identified and screened, from which 102 were identified for initial stage of filtering (for full bibliography see Appendix C). Articles were excluded if the focus was on too specific an area of practice, or more broadly on public services rather than social work. This initial stage of data filtering resulted in 53 articles eligible for further screening. The next step of data extraction considered

these articles in more depth. A selection of articles were subject to review by two reviewers. Reviewers rated the articles, for methodological quality (1 very good – 3 poor/doubtful) and usefulness of the paper (1 very useful – 3 not useful) to the review question. Articles which rated 3 for both were automatically excluded, however, articles which may have scored poor for methods, but were highly relevant, were still included. Thirty-six articles were included in the final scoping review through this search method.

The references of these articles together with their individual abstracts were shared with the Advisory Group, the Expert Consultation Panel and colleagues within Social Work Scotland to ensure that key texts or authors had not been omitted from the search. Seven additional reports or articles were identified to include in this review by colleagues.

This brought the number of articles, reports and one thesis informing this review to a total of 44 (see Appendix D).

Expert consultation panel

A group of eleven individuals were approached to take part in the review. Each individual had qualified in social work often as their second or further degree between the 1960s and 1990s. All but one had started as generic social workers and had experience of children, adults and criminal justice with some focusing or specialising in one field later in their careers. Two participants were working when the 1968 Act came into force, most had been or were strategic leaders across a range of organisations and two had pursued academic careers.

The role of the panel was twofold:

input to review of literature (via email): as mentioned, the draft reference list of articles with abstracts was circulated to the panel (SWS Advisory Panel) for comment to ensure there were no gaps in the evidence base to include in the final review.

Participant interviews (face to face): each panel member was invited to take part in an interview to test the key themes emerging from the review of literature and the implications for the future direction of social work in Scotland.

Historical context

In exploring the 1968 Act and its subsequent implementation, it was useful to consider the wider political and economic context throughout the twentieth century and the two predominant schools of economic thought. The first was the huge influence of Keynesian economics (microeconomics) from the 1930s until the 1980s. Central to this approach was that Government (fiscal policy) should have an active role for intervention during difficult times; higher government spending was thought to help stabilise the economy and promote recovery from recession more quickly.

Following the economic challenges of the 1970s, the election of the Conservatives in 1979 led by Margaret Thatcher heralded a new approach to the management of the economy and in stark contrast to the thinking of Keynes, Margaret Thatcher appointed Milton Friedman as her economic advisor. Friedman was considered the most influential contributor to the development of Monetarism (macroeconomics), which is critical of the ability of Governments to stimulate economic growth and placed an emphasis on keeping inflation low rather than prioritising the reduction of unemployment, and that market forces with minimal interference from Governments will re-adjust big fluctuations to the economy.

This review has drawn extensively on some key texts which informed this brief historical context: the work of Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett (2008); Bilton (2008); Asquith, Clark and Waterhouse (2005); and Campbell (1978). Furthermore the timeline developed by University of Edinburgh in its Celebration of 100 years of Social Work at Edinburgh University proved an invaluable source of legislative, policy and practice developments in social work dating back from the 1500s.

In a literature review undertaken for the 20th century review of social work, Asquith and colleagues (2005) cite and develop Evers' (2003) useful description of the main ideologies over the decades from the fifties to the time they were writing which has provided a useful framework to help structure this report:

- Welfarism – social democratic paternalism

- Professionalism – the ideology stressing the expertise and authority of the professional
- Consumerism – focusing on the power of the service user as a consumer
- Managerialism – privileging managerialist and economic concerns
- Participationism – stressing a more equal partnership between service provider and service user.

Welfarism

The deserving and undeserving poor are words, which have echoed down the centuries, in determining how we as a society should express our responsibilities to its members. As early as the 1500s judicious use of relief for the poor was thought to help those in poverty and encourage self-sufficiency, but throughout the decades there has also remained a marked antipathy to the 'undeserving' poor. This attitude is often characterised by concern that financial support to those in poverty could demoralise individuals and make them thriftless and dependent (Campbell 1978). This tension is neatly expressed in the use of what was termed outdoor relief and indoor relief. The Elizabethan Poor Law (1601) in England and Wales identified outdoor relief as assistance in the form of money, food, clothing or goods, given to alleviate poverty without the requirement that the recipient enter an institution. In contrast, recipients of indoor relief were required to enter a workhouse or poorhouse (Campbell 1978).

The 19th century saw the shift towards charity as the main response to poverty, accompanied by a discourse that monetary relief could serve a function of strengthening character and encourage the development of self-sufficiency. But charity was still for the 'deserving poor' and the Charity Organisation Society, set up in 1869, was instrumental in developing a rigorous approach in dealing with those deemed worthy of its help – in other words, casework and assessment (Campbell 1978).

By the late 1880s, a significant change in thinking was in the creation of the Local Government Board through the Local Government Board Act 1871 that effectively abolished the Poor Law Board, and transferred public health responsibilities to Local Government and the Home Secretary. Public works were undertaken to relieve unemployment (Campbell

1978) thus acknowledging a national responsibility for contingencies like old age, unemployment and sickness. Between the two great wars, a system of means-tested benefits was set up in 1934 and overseen by the Unemployment Assistance Board to widen the number of people who could claim relief due to high levels of poverty.

These developments show that there was a growing sense of a national responsibility to those struggling economically (Campbell 1978). This was the backdrop for the Beveridge Report which proposed widespread reforms to the system of social welfare to address his identified five "Giant Evils" in society: squalor, ignorance, want, idleness, and disease. It formed the basis for the post-war reforms known as the Welfare State, which include the expansion of National Insurance and the creation of the National Health Service. Responsibility for its administration was with a single, centrally-organised Ministry of Social Security in England and Wales and for Scotland it was proposed that local officers were delegated this authority.

Following the second world war, key events continued to shape thinking: the recommendations of the Curtis Committee (1946) in England and Wales, the Clyde Committee (1946) in Scotland and the Monkton Enquiry into the death of Dennis O'Neill while in foster care formed the basis of the Children Act 1948. This legislation established Local Authority Children's Departments and the employment of Child Care Officers to undertake the work. The Act promoted the idea that substitute family care was preferable to institutional care.

By the 1950s, prevention both in respect of preventing children coming into care, but also preventing the abuse of children in their homes (Packman 1975 cited in James 1998) was gaining greater prominence. There was a growing understanding of the financial and social pressures that led to family disruption and the consequent need for public care (Jay 1962). In 1956, the Ingleby Committee in England and Wales was set up to examine the juvenile justice system in relation to the Children Act 1948 and two separate Committees were requested to consider this in relation to Scotland. The McBoyle Committee was set up in 1961 to consider the prevention of child neglect and, in its report published

in 1963, recommended a duty within the Children and Young Person's Bill for local authorities to provide a comprehensive social work service with powers to distribute assistance in cash or kind where necessary. The Children and Young Persons Act 1963 set out preventive measures aimed at keeping children out of care or returning them home safely, and protecting them from abuse in the home and preventing juvenile offending. The work of the Ingleby Committee and the wider focus on prevention was later strengthened by the Seebohm Report (1968) in England and Wales, and the McBoyle Report was to influence later developments in Scotland including the thinking of the second committee: the Kilbrandon Committee.

The Kilbrandon Report (1965) was the catalyst for the reform of social work in Scotland and emphasised the necessity in all cases for treatment of a child's individual requirements. The Committee concluded that the child's needs would best be served by the process of "social education" through family casework. The Kilbrandon Report was significant in two ways: the replacement of the existing systems for dealing with juveniles by panels of 'laymen' drawn from local communities, who were experienced in children's problems and who would determine the appropriate responses to the individual child; and a "field organisation" that would bring together all the services connected with the welfare of children within a Social Education Department.

Professionalism

At this time, social workers in Scotland were a disparate group working across a range of services, but all groups accepted the proposals for children's panels and welcomed the recommendation for a re-organisation of social services, but railed against the delivery of social work services through a social education department. The Institute of Medical Social Workers suggested that family services should be delivered through a Department of Social Work in which social work would be 'the primary function, incorporating all the social work specialisms into one family department. The Association of Child Care Officers also argued for having the separate department envisaged by the McBoyle Report. These views also reflected the thinking of the Association of Psychiatric Social Workers. The Association of Child Care Officers approached the other key social work organisations and proposed the

formation of a Professional Working Party (PWP) to promote the principles of Kilbrandon (Hiddleston 2006 in Bilton 2008), which became an effective lobby in parliament.

In June 1965, the Secretary of State for Scotland announced that the Government had accepted the Kilbrandon recommendations for a panel system but that further discussion was required about how this would be taken forward. To consider the issues, a joint Working Group of Local Authority Associations and a Study Group of three independent advisers, known as the Kilbrandon Study Group, were convened in summer 1965. Each group met separately and together and during this time a consensus began to emerge on the need to develop a comprehensive social work service. During the Group's discussions, Campbell has described that two important inter-related concepts emerged:

the need to promote social work as a service for all; and the need for more co-operation between different professions – architects, planners, doctors and social workers – at both central and local government levels (Campbell 1978, pp35-36).

As Campbell discussed, the need was recognised: 'for the Social Work Department to forestall the necessity for such work by alerting other organisations and bodies to the social consequences of their actions: "The social work, health and education departments should be enabled to contribute to the planning of community projects from the earliest stages, so that changes in environment may be designed with greater appreciation of the influence which those changes are likely to have on the people and the communities affected by them" (1978, pp36-37).

The deliberations of the Working Group and Study Group influenced the White Paper published a year later – Social Work and the Community – recommending a fundamental reorganisation of social services in Scotland, and a fully comprehensive service equipped to deal with all social need through bringing together probation, health and welfare and child care into one profession (Watson 2008) and "giving local authorities a broad statutory duty to promote social welfare." (Bilton 2008, p.10). In addition to this ideological stance, McCulloch and McNeill (2010) reflect that the inclusion

of probation was a pragmatic decision: Probation Officers in Scotland were considered to be amongst the best trained social workers and from only 292 qualified social workers in 1968, 180 were Probation Officers (Hiddleston in Bilton 2008).

After resistance from parts of the medical profession in local authorities and Sheriffs who resented the diminution of their powers, the Social Work (Scotland) Act was passed in July 1968. The Act brought all social work services together into one department under one Director with a Council Committee responsible for its oversight. At its heart was the promotion through Section 12 of social welfare by making available advice, guidance and assistance and the provision in certain circumstances of cash or kind to individuals in need aged 18 or over. It was also recognised that the chief social work official had to have a status comparable to that of other chief officers and the size of departments would have to be adequately resourced and able to attract well-qualified staff (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008).

The promotion of the profession was enhanced through the newly formed Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW 1969) for senior management and the establishment of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW 1970) for the workforce thus giving the profession a voice to influence policy and practice voice. This was a time where there was recognition that social work in Scotland had a vision for social welfare for all and there was a sense that 'things would only get better'. The harsher economic challenges of the 1970s had yet to hit. The profession had found its voice in the wider context of an economic and political culture supportive of intervention as part of the state's responsibility.

The voice of social work was given greater strength through the Royal Commission on Local Government in Scotland in 1969 (the Wheatley Report) resulting in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 which introduced a two-tier system of regional and district councils (except in the islands, which were given unitary, all-purpose councils) replicating similar changes in England and Wales in 1972. Regional structures allowed social work to work across a range of local authority departments and participate in strategic planning

and development, in developing policies and, in some areas, to cross-subsidise community projects (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008).

Regional Councils could also wield considerable political power. In 1979, commitments by the Conservative Government to reform the Children's Hearing System, were successfully opposed by a coalition of social work leaders in local government and social work advisers in the Scottish Office and during the miners strike in the 1980s, Section 12 monies were used in a variety of ways including the provision of financial support to families of striking miners (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008).

The regions, however, could be challenging places in which to work. Many have spoken of cultures, which were both male dominated and bullying, and the power of the Regions could also be seen as fuelling 'arrogance' (Interviewees 2018). Social work budgets started to come under threat during the mid-1970s and by the end of the decade were facing significant cuts (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008).

Consumerism

During the 1980s, several factors came together to challenge social work values and the profession.

In 1979, the Conservatives came into power under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher. Politically and economically there was a pulling back of the state's responsibility in both the economy and society. Low inflation was to be prioritised over low unemployment and individuals favoured rather than communities. The neo-liberal thinking of the Conservatives under Thatcher focused on free markets with a range of suppliers, a smaller role for the state signalled by the extensive programme to privatise state run services and organisations, monetarist approaches to the economy and opposition to trade unions. The Conservative Government's views to the welfare state could be summed up in two famous quotes: Margaret Thatcher quoting St Paul 'If man shall not work, he shall not eat'; and Norman Tebbit's "Get on your bike" statement to the unemployed to find work. The party promised to experiment with a tougher regime on offending with the 'short, sharp shock' for young criminals and to provide more choice for those using public services. The political rhetoric was cleverly crafted and would prove

increasingly difficult for the social work profession in Scotland to challenge.

A second factor was the Government's disregard of the Barclay Report (1982). The remit of the Barclay Committee was to review the role and tasks of social work in England and Wales and subsequently recommended a 'community approach' of devolving power to local communities with social work supporting local informal networks and developing them where they were weak; this called for social workers as brokers of resources, working with informal carers and voluntary organisations to support individual service users as citizens. In direct contrast to the Barclay Report, the 1988 Griffiths Report – Community Care: Agenda for Action – recommended a move to a mixed economy of care through a purchaser (state)/provider (voluntary, private and state) model signaling the Government's desire to pull back on state intervention. The Griffiths Report took a different stance on the role of social care: social work should only step in where the family or community could not provide care and recommended that social service departments managed care packages rather than provide the care themselves.

There was hostility from the social work profession when the Griffiths Report was published, however, it was difficult to challenge the basis for some of its proposals for change. On one hand, it was clear that the proposed mixed economy of care directly challenged the principle of a comprehensive family service, on the other hand, this was couched in the language of progressiveness and empowering individuals to make choices, which is at the heart of social work (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008). As Ferguson writes: "the connotations of keywords are often overwhelmingly positive and they are therefore very hard to be 'against', without sounding mean or curmudgeonly. Who, for example, could be against empowerment or against choice in health and social services?" (2007, p.388). A further and not insignificant change was that for adults to receive support through Section 12, their needs would now need to be assessed.

From the mid-1970s, there were also several high-profile child care cases, such as the tragic deaths of Maria Colwell (1973), Jasmine Beckford (1984) and Kimberley Carlile (1986), and the Cleveland Inquiry (1987) in

England, and in Scotland, there had been much media attention given to the Orkney Inquiry (1991). The impact of these events was to directly challenge children's services and, in particular, child protection systems.

Finally, the re-organisation of local government (1995) from its two-tier structure of regional and local councils to unitary organisations challenged social work in several ways. As previously set out in 1968 Act, all the social work departments in Scotland were headed by a professionally qualified social worker, reporting to a separate social work committee. After the local government reform, councils were no longer required to appoint a Director of Social Work, but rather a 'chief social work officer' and there was no longer a requirement for a separate social work committee. The new and smaller organisations also faced reduced budgets, changes and loss of staff, and a loss of economies of scale with concerns about the impact on local services.

By 1990, the Conservatives had been in power for eleven years and John Major had succeeded Margaret Thatcher as leader. Major may have held different views over the management of the economy, however, his leadership could be characterised as settling for quasi-markets with a strong emphasis on incentives and performance management. This resulted in the emergence of performance indicators across many sectors, and a much stronger focus on customer rights illustrated by the abundance of Charters throughout the late 1990s.

Managerialism

The landslide election victory of the Labour Party in 1997 did not herald a return to traditional views on redistribution, or unquestioning support for the public sector. Instead 'New Labour' brought into power a very different economic and political vision from the Labour policies of the 1960s and 1970s. New Labour continued to focus on the development of performance management frameworks across health, education and social care, particularly with a focus on modernising public services. The principles of performance management, choice and competition, and measuring outcomes were now part of New Labour's approach to modernisation known more widely as Managerialism. The direct challenges to Social Work leaders and

leadership of the profession more widely was now in a context of policies and legislation which was now more complex, uncertain and unpredictable. The nature of social work did not lend itself easily to measurement through quantitative performance indicators. In addition, the public was better informed and there was increasing access to information and knowledge through the internet contributing to greater questioning by the public of services, rising expectations and growing demands for services tailored to individual need and individual spending priorities. The language of patient and service users rights began to emerge within discussions on the public services more generally.

Within the four months of Labour's victory, Scotland had voted for the creation of a Scottish parliament and for this parliament to have tax varying powers. The Scottish Parliament met for the first time on 12 May 1999. Some have argued that the impact of devolution on social work has been muted as social work had had its own legislation with the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, had maintained a working relationship with the Scottish Office throughout 1960s-90s and had maintained a high level of public support although the media coverage of Orkney had impacted on this. The immediate post-devolution impact was thought to be greater in adult services with, for example, the implementation of free personal care for older people (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008).

Prior to devolution the Scottish criminal justice system was thought to have been able to resist the more punitive aspects of UK policy through its geographical distance from London and a greater commitment to welfare. The criminal justice system was not, however, without its difficulties in terms of increasing prison populations, poor conditions and punitive attitudes that permeated the system. The early years of devolution was a period of relatively limited parliamentary activity in this area, but there was a growing discourse that changes to the criminal justice system may be needed and that earlier reforms to community justice had not made a difference to offender outcomes (Mooney, Craoll, Munro and Scott 2014).

The rhetoric and actions of the second Labour-Liberal administration of the Scottish Parliament did take a more interventionist and correctional tone (McNeill

'The late 1960s was a moment when there was recognition of widespread social problems, but also, in marked contrast to later times, a confidence that they could be addressed. Moreover, there was a prevailing assumption, reflected within Harold Wilson's Labour administration, that it was in the newly fashionable social sciences and a reformed and re-energized public sector that solutions could be found.'

(Brodie et al. 2008, p.701)

2004) and appeared to align more with approaches in England (Muncie 2011) with the introduction of anti-social behaviour orders and rising imprisonment rates and longer sentences, however, there was also a recognition of the impact on communities affected by crime, greater focus on the needs of victims, court reforms, innovation in violence reduction and moves to address the crisis in the prison estate. What is less clear was whether this was in response to the Westminster Labour Government or that Scotland now had a raft of local MSPs, who were responding to the concerns and needs of local communities and eager to prove the value of a devolved Parliament (Mooney et al. 2014).

In 2004 and in response to increased media scrutiny of social work and continued inquiries into child deaths, the 21st Century Review was established by the Scottish Executive to: consider the role and purpose of social workers; develop a strong quality assurance framework and culture; strengthen leadership and management; and ensure a competent and confident workforce (Scottish Executive 2006). The deliberations of the Review Group were informed by research reports commissioned specially for the review and consultation events. Almost 40 years after the 1968 Act, the report, Changing Lives (2006), did reaffirm the role of social work as a generic profession underpinned by knowledge, skills and values with a continued commitment of the inclusion of probation within social work and also set out a description of the reserved functions of a social worker.

Following the publication of Changing Lives (2006), the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services was launched in November 2010 to examine how Scotland's public services could be delivered in future to secure improved outcomes for communities across the country. The Commission – often referred to as the Christie Commission – identified that effective services must be designed with and for people and communities and that services need to work closely with individuals and communities to understand their needs, maximise talents and resources, and build resilience. Strategically, there should be tighter oversight and accountability of public services perhaps through reform across all public services based on outcomes, improved performance and cost reduction with better long-term strategic planning, including greater transparency around major

budget decisions like universal entitlements (Christie Commission 2011, p.ix). Thus emerged a vision for public services with greater involvement from individuals and communities shaping their design and delivery.

Participationism

As Labour struggled to reconcile the pull of 'Old Labour' from the Scottish electorate and the push of 'New Labour' within the corridors of power in Westminster, the Scottish Nationalist Party was able to widen its appeal from a single-interest party to offer voters a clear voice and vision for Scotland. The result was the narrowest of victories for SNP at the election in 2007, which was significantly increased in 2011 to allow the SNP to form a majority Government.

During the SNP's second administration, the lead up to the referendum on independence during 2014 the principles of Christie (Christie Commission 2011) were echoed in national conversations about what it meant to be living in Scotland and working with all for a better society. This time, however, conversations were framed through the lens of the participation of those using services to help inform their design and delivery – and not just evaluate their quality or effectiveness – users and social worker as partners (Ferguson 2007). These principles, however, need to be set against a period of continued austerity which individuals, families and communities have struggled with for almost a decade. The extent true participation can exist, while there continued to be limited and reducing resources to meet need, is questionable.

While Changing Lives (2006) may have reaffirmed the role of social work, the recommendations of Christie resulted in a significant programme of public service reform led by Scottish Government focusing on prevention, partnership, workforce development and performance. Two new Acts were passed in which Christie's ethos and recommendations can be seen: the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 placed a duty on social work departments to offer people, who are eligible for social care, a range of choices over how they receive their support. The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 provided the framework for the integration of health and social care services in Scotland with greater emphasis on supporting people in their own homes and communities

and less inappropriate use of hospitals and care homes. The argument was it allowed the legislative framework to allow health and social care to work together. The impact, however, may have been to fragment social work services and for health and education to dominate the local strategic agendas and national government priorities with its focus on delayed discharges and achieving equity in education (Interviewees 2018).

So did the stars align in 1968?

So did the stars align to allow for the passage of the 1968 Act and the more radical thinking that informed its content? The wider economic and political context was clearly advocating that the State had a responsibility to its citizens, perhaps in recognition of what society had lost in both the great wars and the sacrifices made by individuals and communities. The prevailing economic belief was that the economy could be managed through fiscal and monetary policies, and that the state had some responsibility through means tested financial support and large public works to support individuals and communities out of poverty. There was also a sense of optimism that things would only get better.

Writers (Bilton 2008; Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2008) have also reflected that three key factors were crucial in the passage of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968:

First, during the 1960s there was an appetite for radical and progressive change. There was a development of thinking on the undeserving and deserving poor through to greater understanding of the impact of wider structural factors impacting on a family's ability to function. It was during this decade that the vision of social work as a 'generic' profession which recognised the interconnectedness of the individual within their family, wider networks and communities was clearer;

Second, the recommendation of the Kilbrandon Report for services to be brought together within a Social Education Department galvanised the workforce into coming together and lobbying effectively for a social work profession to promote the principles of welfare and social justice; and

Third, was bringing together the progressive thinking

within the social work field and the Scottish Office civil servants and political appointments of William Ross as Secretary of State with Judith Hart as junior minister; all of which was underpinned by the thinking of academics. Hart proved to be an essential lynchpin in both her commitment to and belief in social work as a profession and her established relationship with the Kilbrandon Study Group; Hart was a former student of Richard Titmuss who was considered the pre-eminent voice on social policy and had been campaigning for generic social work departments in England. The two other members, Kay Carmichael of Glasgow University and Megan Browne of Edinburgh University, had good communication with both the profession and with Scottish Office officials.

Fifty years on, social work professionals are delivering services through more local integrated arrangements in a decade of austerity and budget cuts, but with increased understanding within society of the rights of its individuals and perhaps increased expectations of services provided. The values, however, that underpin social work have not changed and the skills developed by practitioners working with individuals and families can also be applied to the wider changing structures of the 21st century.

Reflections...then and now

Reflecting on fifty years of social work in times of economic turmoil and political change is a vast task and to offer an overview can be in danger of being too shallow to be meaningful. It would not be possible to summarise all the information; instead the data gathered through the literature review and from the interviews can be examined with a view to answering the question: what would a Social Work (Scotland) Act 2018 look like?

The time: 1968 - 2018

The 1960s was an era of fundamental change for UK social work. What began the decade as a number of separate services, created in piecemeal fashion to meet the increasingly specialized demands of the expanding welfare state, would end it as a unified profession. This was the vision of social work reformers across the UK—a 'generic' profession which recognised the interconnected and complex nature of social problems and, crucially, the underlying similarity of core skills that

all those working within the personal social services should possess. However, for social work reformers in Scotland, the 'vision' was broader. Here, the vision would extend beyond organisational restructuring into something more significant: the belief that social work could be a positive and radical force for social change. (Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2006, p.699)

It is easy to stereotype the 1960s, especially in relation to the real depth of the challenge to traditional values and the extent of a radical shift and shake-up of established accepted values. As the literature has reflected and the interviews suggest, all was not rosy:

'...in a time where organisations and unions were sexist, racist and no equal pay act in place. Day to day life was still hard.'

'...perhaps took the babies of single mothers into care more readily, but different times and different attitudes to single mothers.'

'Downside to the Regional Councils was their male-dominated and bullying cultures.'

As suggested earlier, perhaps the stars somehow aligned in the 1960s to spark the birth of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. What has emerged are two interconnected themes or tensions that continue today: have we resolved our attitudes to the poor; and do we have the same optimism about being part of the solution to social problems?

Deserving and undeserving poor

Allied to notions of being deserving or undeserving are issues of distribution of resources, including rationing of scarce resources in times of austerity or when demand seems greater, and associated concepts of eligibility. As discussed earlier, these concepts, the dilemmas and discourses found as far back as the 15th Century, endure today. There was some understanding that some people could not help being poor (Campbell 1978). In fact, the use of outdoor relief continued (especially in Scotland) and the concepts of undeserving poor endured:

Although the deterrent effect of the Poor Law was gradually diminishing as the incidence of outdoor relief increased and a more sympathetic understanding of the

causes of unemployment developed, there nevertheless remained a marked antipathy to the 'undeserving' poor, an attitude which had been propagated by the belief that the public relief of destitution demoralised the recipient and made him thriftless and dependent. (Campbell 1978, p.4)

The following decades in the run-up to the Kilbrandon Report were characterised by increased recognition of the effects of unemployment, accelerated by the impact of the two world wars, and the need for state involvement to ameliorate or mitigate the effects. But the 'undeserving poor' aspect was still evident:

...social insurance was to be seen as one part only of a comprehensive policy of social progress: while freeing people from Want, there remained to be tackled the other giants of Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness; and finally, the state was not to deprive the individual of personal initiative but should expect 'service and contribution' in return for security. (Campbell 1978, p.9)

It could be argued that the deserving/undeserving strand waned a little during the following period where there were a number of key reports and pieces of legislation, especially in relation to children, characterised by increased attention to the impact of financial and social pressures on the family and the role of the state. More recently, the University of Coventry led research in detailing the relationship of deprivation, policy and other factors to inequalities in key child welfare intervention rates through comparative studies in the four UK countries. The research found that social workers rarely discussed poverty or included anti-poverty strategies in case planning, although when prompted could describe in the abstract the relationship between poverty, deprivation and child abuse and neglect. Many staff felt overwhelmed by the level of need they saw in families (Bywaters et al. 2017).

Interestingly a key tension emerged from case studies with social workers in six areas of the UK, which echoed the deserving and undeserving debate of earlier decades: social workers recognised the impact of stress and deprivation on the capacity of parents to care safely, and some of the consequences for children. There were strong narratives acknowledged multi-generational

deprivation and failing communities, however, in some cases there was a sense that families were being held responsible for their circumstances and choices, and the risks they created (Bywaters et al. 2017).

Optimism

A second theme to emerge was optimism. Throughout the literature it was clear that the profession felt – and still feels – that it can be a vehicle for change for individuals, for communities and for society. The potential for finding solutions from within research and social science, and increasing attention to prevention also emerged. Interestingly the Beveridge report was influenced by social surveys in the 1930s that showed the impact of unemployment on poverty:

‘The late 1960s was a moment when there was recognition of widespread social problems, but also, in marked contrast to later times, a confidence that they could be addressed. Moreover, there was a prevailing assumption, reflected within Harold Wilson’s Labour administration, that it was in the newly fashionable social sciences and a reformed and re-energized public sector that solutions could be found.’
(Brodie et al. 2008, p.701)

‘Here, the description of social enquiry and of the significance of quasi-diagnostic reports again reflects the ‘scientific’ discourse of offender-oriented treatment ... presaging the Streatfeild Report’s (1961) high tide of optimism about the supposed potential of social science in informing a more effective and rational approach to sentencing.’
(McNeill 2005, p.30)

The influence of social sciences can be seen in the attempt to analyse the causes of problems in both the report of the McBoyle committee on the Prevention of Neglect of Children and the Kilbrandon report. The former showed that financial difficulties ‘can cause stress in a family and consequent neglect of children’. Note the ‘consequent’ – not ‘association’ as has frequently been argued subsequently. Kilbrandon also placed much emphasis on the need to understand the causes of delinquency and the impact of the wider circumstances.

As mentioned earlier, the radical thinking in Scotland

was embraced by William Ross, Secretary of State and, in particular Judith Hart, junior minister:

‘Above all, the process in Scotland was driven by a government minister (Judith Hart) and leaders of the social work profession who worked together on the basis of shared values.’
(Bilton 2008, p.10)

‘Social Work and the Community (Scottish Office, 1966) laid down the vision that Scottish social work should effect significant change. Underlying this was an assumption that the key to change was ‘not just getting rid of poverty but establishing equality’ (ADSW Witness Seminar, 2003).’
(Brodie et al. 2008, p.702)

Not since the 1960s has there been the same sense of plenty, apart from some sections of our society who benefited from the financial boom of the late 1980s. This, coupled with the increased recognition of structural issues coalesced to produce an optimistic act with an unashamed emphasis on monetary relief. And the issues of deserving and undeserving poor and eligibility have continued to be played out as can be seen with just two illustrations from the subsequent period – Section 12 and reforms to Community Care. In Section 12, there is resonance with ‘outdoor relief’, as well as a move away from ‘indoor relief’ from the original poor law.

‘Section 12 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 represented an expansion of the principle of prevention in social work practice to embrace a more active promotional approach to social problems, and also sanctioned a much broader and more generous application of cash assistance to all kinds of individuals and for all types of difficulties.’
(Campbell 1978, p.1)

There followed what has been described as the ‘golden age’ of social work underpinned by the power of local authorities, but the close alignment with the policies of the left, which was initially a strength, was also a vulnerability:

‘Moreover, the distinctive vision for social work in Scotland, enshrined in the 1966 White Paper and

1968 Act, assumed that a community-based and a traditional leftist approach would fit within the political mainstream. Scottish social work as developed in the 1960s particularly was vulnerable to changes in the political climate.’
(Brodie et al. 2006, p.704)

The Thatcherite policies of 1980s could not have been more at odds with the aspirations of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, individualism replaced community characterised by survival of the fittest, social science was ridiculed as soft on crime, optimism ebbed in Scotland and, as mentioned before, there were few who were considered to be deserving:

‘Thatcher years and New Labour, and the split between public/provider suppliers. No longer a community response – coinciding with a demise of the welfare state. Back to a greater focus on deserving poor and aspects of eligibility criteria made things more prescribed.’
(Interviewee 2018)

The previous alignment of state and social work was further challenged by the new right agenda to restrain public expenditure, to extend accountability for spend and to introduce greater consumerism within a mixed economy. The Griffiths report and subsequent community care legislation cut across concepts of social justice and structural explanations of need. Social Work, and the more left political forces in Scotland lost their hold on the underpinning defining concepts to inform eligibility. They were still required to police eligibility, but on the basis of new right ideology, thus social work in adult services was projected down a pathway of tension between political and professional ideology which remains today.

So, where are we now with poverty, the undeserving and deserving poor and with the optimism of the 1960s? Poverty has thrived in recent years – but social science has regained some ground, at least in Scotland, and has highlighted the extent to which the truly pernicious impact is from inequality – for example Wilkinson and Pickett’s Spirit Level (Wilkinson and Pickett 2009) is extensively cited and has been very influential – not just in social work but across the professions. Indeed, it could be argued that the impact of poverty and inequality is so all-pervasive that dealing

with it is not in the gift of any one profession and is perhaps why there is an increased interest in public health approaches, especially in Scotland (COSLA and Scottish Government 2018).

This is all quite pessimistic, and reflects some of the literature on austerity, on neo-liberalism and on managerialism, but it was clear from all interviews that the belief in social justice is strong, as was the notion that all are equally deserving and that our communities need compassion. Respondents had a clear sense of the 1968 Act and what it was trying to do:

‘More than welfare – about empowerment, direct assistance and for society to take responsibility for most vulnerable.’
(Interviewee 2018)

‘Welfare was at its heart and promoting welfare ... It was optimistic, about equity and equality, and preventative – your outcome was not prescribed by birth. A genuine view about all achieving their potential... Captured some of the optimism of the time ... it being the state’s responsibility to deliver services through a responsibility for social justice. If the welfare state was about a safety net then the 1968 Act was a springboard for people to achieve their potential – and about the whole person.’
(Interviewee 2018)

‘Intervene rather than just pick up the pieces and Section 12 gave the freedom to use resources to help, especially debts and a license to talk about money.’
(Interviewee 2018)

‘Recognition of impoverished communities and strong focus on social justice.’
(Interviewee 2018)

‘The 1968 Act saw crime in social context and social inequalities were recognised as profoundly important such as structural inequalities and the need for individuals to work within the context of social, environmental and relationships that really matter ... Philosophy of Kilbrandon into adult criminal justice was probably a positive unforeseen consequence – that was quite radical.’
(Interviewee 2018)

'...the holy grail or bible for social workers, a set of guiding principles particularly around issues of social justice.'

(Interviewee 2018)

It is also encouraging to see the findings from recent research for the SSSC (Grant, Sheridan and Webb 2017) in which NQSWs gave their reasons for choosing social work as:

Supporting service users (57% said 'major influence')
Empowering people (55% said 'major influence')
Social Justice (50% said 'major influence')

And when asked whether they could 'Promote equal opportunities and social justice', 85% responded 'Always' or 'Often'. So, we need to ask ourselves whether we can re-connect with these values, which clearly still resonate and endure.

The Place: Scotland then and Scotland now

'Social work in Scotland has been so dynamic in its structures, so sensitive to shifts in social and political ideology, so wide-ranging in its responsibilities, and, more recently, so controversial in terms of its public role that any short account must be highly selective. A recurring theme will be the Scottish dimension itself, for social work here always was, and remains, significantly different from social work elsewhere in the UK.'

(Brodie, Nottingham and Plunkett 2006, p.698)

Two themes emerging of Scotland then and Scotland now can be seen in the development of policy and legislation, and also the expectations of society.

Policy and legislation

There are a range of views in the literature about the distinctiveness or otherwise of Scotland, policies in Scotland and social work in Scotland. One argument is that the differences are not as great as some believe. The same social problems that social work is trying to address are shared across the UK:

- Entrenched poverty and inequality
- Damaging effects of drugs, alcohol, mental health issues, domestic abuse
- Social and media concerns about crime, child protection, the ageing population

- A context of dispersed families and changes in the nature of communities
- More informed and consumer-oriented users of services
- Limited resources.

It is, therefore, not surprising that at day-to-day level practice may not look that markedly different. But there is no doubt that the legislative and policy response to these social problems is different. And this distinctiveness pre-dates devolution:

'Scotland's criminal justice system has long been recognised for its distinctive nature, traditions and practices ... Typically, commentators draw attention to two fundamental features. The first relates to the common law nature of Scots criminal law – a term used to refer to a body of law developed through successive decisions of courts and similar tribunals, rather than through legislative statute. The second feature relates to the pivotal and discretionary role played by prosecutors (or procurators fiscal) and judges in the criminal justice process ... most agree that each brings a level of flexibility and discretion to Scottish justice which sets it apart from the judicial practices of many other jurisdictions.'

(McCulloch and McNeill 2010, p.22)

This pre-existing distinct legal and social system was important and as Eileen Younghusband stated that Scotland:

'...stole a march on England and Wales and achieved more revolutionary change with less turmoil.'

(Younghusband 1978, p. 250)

Devolution had a somewhat paradoxical effect because it should have led to more distinctly Scottish developments and, on the face of it, with a labour/liberal coalition there was a return to social work and political alignment. However, initially in criminal justice social work got pulled along with the New Labour 'tough on crime and tough on the underlying causes of crime' narrative which was trailed by Tony Blair in an article for the New Statesman 1993 when he was still shadow Home Secretary.

'Section 12 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 represented an expansion of the principle of prevention in social work practice to embrace a more active promotional approach to social problems, and also sanctioned a much broader and more generous application of cash assistance to all kinds of individuals and for all types of difficulties.'

(Campbell 1978, p.1)

'Post-devolved 2000s almost saw a 'detartanisation of penal reform' in that Scottish Government followed New Labour's approach through the lib/labour pact. There was a shift once SNP's came into power back to social justice, and reducing the prison population – to some extent a 'retartanisation' of penal policy.' (Interviewee 2018)

That said, it was this regime that introduced the Scottish key divergence from England – the introduction of free personal care with the Scottish Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002. Another crucial divergence from England was the retention of probation activity within criminal justice social work teams. Since devolution, there have been a slew of distinct policy and legislative developments, but more recently developments can be seen to continue many of the themes underlying the 1968 Act.

First, there are a number of high level initiatives focused on social justice, inequality, poverty, early intervention and prevention. There may be a huge gap between aspiration and execution, but together they represent a markedly different narrative from that in England and the alignment with social work values is striking.

Second – and whilst the integration and participation agendas of GIRFEC, Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 and the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 may cause social work challenges – the focus is on the role of public services rather than privatisation, and on making public services work for people:

'...the SNP government has outlined an equally progressive approach to public service reform, centred on principles of participation, prevention, partnership and performance, as detailed in the Christie Commission report (Scottish Government 2011). Though most observe that government ambitions are yet to be fully realised across these areas, the shift towards a more progressive and participatory politics in Scotland, driven in part by a broader politics of national autonomy and nation building, has made for a more collaborative approach to social service development and reform in Scotland.' (McCulloch and Taylor 2018, p.3)

GIRFEC, in particular, cuts right across notions of eligibility or 'deserving and undeserving' families:

'Certainly, the holistic element inherent in GIRFEC can be traced back to the whole-child approach of the Kilbrandon Report, which recommended bringing agencies together to assess the needs of the child and his or her personal and family circumstances.' (Coles et al. 2016, p.340)

Rights and expectations

The distinctiveness of Scottish systems has also had its disadvantages as perhaps can be seen with the Children's Hearing System. As noted above, at the time of the 1979 general election reform of the Hearing system was in the Conservative manifesto and not surprisingly there was fierce opposition. However, it was not a perfect system (Barry 2014), and there were, rightly, some concerns about whether it was meeting the needs of some young people who were persistently involved in crime:

'CHS [Children's Hearing System] has almost developed as a form of incipient nationalism – and those involved can easily lapse into tartan tinted eyes. Kilbrandon was progressive, but has almost been heretical to criticise it, but there were flaws.' (Interviewee 2018)

It could be suggested that if there had been greater willingness at the time to review its working it would have been possible to introduce reforms more in keeping with the original Kilbrandon principles than the parents' rights-based reforms that were later imposed, that many believe have allowed the adversarial aspect to over-shadow the non-adversarial needs based approach with:

'...the increasing challenge to the hearings system through the involvement of legal representation and legal appeals by parents in relation to decision-making, particularly around permanency decisions which are almost to the detriment of the child. Children, themselves, are rarely legally represented.' (Interviewee 2018)

Similarly in adult services, the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 was a key marker for the subsequent

development of thinking in relation to personalisation, but was also reflected in Changing Lives (2006) which reported that we should build on the capacity of individuals to find their own solutions and to self-care rather than creating dependency. Ferguson (2007) charts the progress from consumers or those who may make choices about services through to personalisation where individuals are active in making changes to their lives within the framework of public services. It leads finally to the writing of Charles Leadbetter (2004) on co-production where individuals using services eventually become co-producers and designers of services for the wider good of society. As Ferguson argues, however, this may depend on individuals who are confident and resilient and does not fully take into account the impact of poverty, discrimination, and those with little available emotional and social capital to make choices about their lives. Despite the introduction of Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013, many of these challenges are present today.

The outcome is that social work is working across services where there may be a mismatch of expectations from social worker to individual users about the extent individual choices and priorities can be met within the current range of services restricted by budgets and austerity. The issue of choice alongside a rights based agenda, particularly within adult services, is not without challenge for the profession; people today want to decide about the services they need which may not be shared with the professional assessment of need and as technology advances, individuals are likely to have a more direct relationship with services.

Social Work: the move to integrated services

'Two paradoxes: specialism has been positive for the individual but perhaps not for the profession; and social work has all the skills for integration which is positive and profession should be proud, but has been a challenge to retain identity.' (Interviewee 2018)

The term 'social work' in the 1968 Act captured notions of a profession and professional leadership, with the establishment of Directors of Social Work. It signalled a continuity across a range of settings and was underpinned by a set of values and principles: echoes of the 'knowledge, skills and values' trio so beloved

of social work education. Two issues illustrate the developments in the profession since 1968:

- generic to specialist social work
- social work in the context of integrated services.

Genericism to Specialism

'Prior to this Act social work had been practised under the auspices of three different organisations—probation, health and welfare, and childcare—as well as a plethora of voluntary organisations. The 1968 Act brought the statutory agencies together into generic social work departments, with a view to dealing more effectively with the full range of people's social problems from within one agency.' (Watson 2008, p.319)

The 1968 Act established generic departments. However, having generic social work departments need not necessarily entail every individual social worker practising generically, as long as a generic service is offered as a whole to service users. There was always some specialism, for example, with a split between short term work and long term casework, and specialism by service user category is not an absolute. Vickery argued in 1973, that there will always be a need to divide tasks into 'manageable packages' but that this division should not be based upon 'administrative convenience'. She proposed that social work carefully consider 'spheres of knowledge and skill' that are required and the need for these to be linked with the concept of advanced practice in that area of skill. For example, there could be specialists in assessments, specialists in particular interventions and so on, with all providing services across the lifespan. However, in the event, specialism has been increasingly driven by service user categorisation, with several streams of separate and parallel policy and legislation for different stages of the lifespan. It seems unlikely there would be any way back from that particular form of specialisation, but it was a source of reflection by the interviewees:

'Work was much more diverse in the early days, and specialisation seemed to be discussed far more in England before a 'specialisation creep' in Scotland; feel as though a move towards this began in Scotland in 1980s, but no widespread debate or discussion.' (Interviewee 2018)

'Perhaps we can't be generic as each discipline is now littered with a range of policy and legislation... but all workers need to see individuals within systems.'
(Interviewee 2018)

'Intentions of the Act have remained in areas where the professional discipline has remained strong and particularly the principle of working with people and social change not social control. Need to keep at forefront the principles of social work as workers, managers and leaders. In this way, not too worried about the move into specialism as core principles the same and importance and value of social work supervision retained.'
(Interviewee 2018)

Another potential outcome of both specialisation is that social work is pushed downstream with practice reserved to the exercise of statutory powers. However, the knowledge, skills and values of social work are eminently suited to upstream, preventive work, as intended in the 1968 Act. Therefore it is crucial that social work asserts its role in prevention and early intervention, including community engagement (Scottish Executive 2006; Turbett forthcoming).

Integration with fragmentation

The final significant theme to emerge from interviews and the literature is the implications for the social work profession of integration of services – in particular in the light of GIRFEC and the public bodies act. Ironically, the strengthening of subject expertise that comes with increasing specialism can also be associated with a fragmentation of the profession, thus rendering it potentially more vulnerable in integrated service environments.

Other professions seem to be able to retain their unified identity despite the specialism – for example, the medical profession drives intense specialisation, but there is a sense of a transcendent identity of 'doctor'. But identity comes though as source of anxiety for the future of social work.

'The increased integrated approach towards children and young people is good for children, but perhaps this has impacted on maintaining a focus on community and generic, and fragmented the profession...'
(Interviewee 2018)

'Promotion of social justice and values still in place in the profession, but not shared across other professions as we don't have social workers at senior levels so voice not loud enough ... a voice muffled by universal services...'
(Interviewee 2018)

'Status of social work is seen as less compared with universal services and the massive budgets within health and education. Within health and social care integration, health dominates the agenda of the Integration Joint Boards. The governance of IJBs means that the majority of KPIs relate to health and education which drive the discussions and debates and there are far less for social work.'
(Interviewee 2018)

'The original philosophy got lost; social work is invisible and by its nature is not seen or reported on much at the strategic level.'
(Interviewee 2018)

Interestingly, however, the NQSWs that were surveyed appeared more relaxed about the integrated environment – 64% they were confident about working with other professionals and agencies, and 30% said somewhat confident, and

'...the project team were left with the impression of a workforce who appeared – on the face of it – confident and able to engage in complex work at this stage in their career.'
(Grant, Sheridan and Webb 2017, p.28)

And, a couple of respondents said:

'Feel that the social work profession is here to stay and foundations in place, but we need to re-visit our authority.'
(Interviewee 2018)

'Social work has the ability to re-define itself which means that it can look forward.'
(Interviewee 2018)

This has to be a testament to the fact that we, in Scotland have retained generic social work education and not engaged with recent fast-track and specialist training programmes:

'...findings from recent review activity across the UK suggest that there is little to be gained and much to be lost by hasty investment in untested models of learning that threaten to distance and divide professional communities that need to unite...'
(McCulloch and Taylor 2018, p.3)

There is a danger of a self-fulfilling prophecy if social work focuses on the dangers of integration and articulates a self-perception of being the junior partner. Again, the knowledge, skills and values of social work ensure that the profession is well-placed to be highly effective in collaborative arrangements. There is a need, therefore, for the social work profession to feel and project confidence as an equal partner in an integrated environment, and be the key voice and driver for public health approaches and moving resources from acute services to social care and prevention.

Act: the golden thread for leadership

Along with strong initial and ongoing social work education, a key aspect that came through from the project was the importance of leadership for unifying the profession and ensuring a strong presence within integrated services to ensure 'Integration not assimilation' (interviewee). As Asquith et al., put it very presciently in 2005:

'From the leadership perspective there are clearly threats to the future of a distinct role for the social worker. The role of the social worker and indeed the distinct identity for the work undertaken social workers may well be threatened by increasing integration with other services ... However, this need not necessarily lead to the position that professional social work will cease to exist. Rather, conversely, it could be argued that the need for social work to clarify and consolidate its professional identity is all the greater given the need to work more closely with other agencies and professions...'
(Asquith et al. 2005, p.35)

Leadership needs to be exercised at all levels and all need to pull together to ensure a strong Social Work profession for the future:

- Chief Social Work Advisor provides leadership through advice at Government and national level
- Chief Social Work Officers exercises leadership

through the Integrated Joints Boards and other integrated settings

- Social Work Scotland provides leadership across all sectors – statutory and voluntary – and enable links with academia
- Scottish Association of Social Workers provide a collective voice for all social workers at any level and establishes link with the rest of the UK and beyond
- Scottish Social Services Council ensures regulation and standards of the profession and pre- and post-qualification education
- Registered Social Workers across all sectors and specialisms maintain their core knowledge, skills and values and champion social work
- Social Work academics focus on contributing theoretical and empirical research that focuses on the strengths of social work and re-connects it with the optimism of the 1968 Act.

Social Work (Scotland) Act 2018

Finally, interviewees were asked what they would like to see in a Social Work (Scotland) Act 2018, and their responses form the following vision:

The 2018 Act keeps Social Work in the title, protects a generic profession working in statutory and voluntary sectors supporting people from cradle to grave. It is rights and values based and addresses the root causes of inequality with an emphasis on social justice rather than social welfare. It enshrines human rights, equalities and the compassion that anyone would want for themselves and their family. It includes principles of prevention, redistribution, representation and recognition. It will be bottom-up legislation, with a focus on people, networks, compassionate and integrated communities and professionals as facilitators in the service of people rather than doing services to them.

It supports social work skills including empowering people to find solutions, advocacy and avoidance of blame for lifestyle and choices. It reinvigorates the role and authority of social work in the integrated landscape and builds on social work's expertise in collaborative working with families, communities and other professions. It facilitates integration of social work services with those of education, health and justice to ensure a rounded and personalised service. Leadership within social work and within the integrated

professional landscape is supported by suitable powers and status.

In reality, there is no need for a new Act; much can be achieved within current Scottish policies. This review does not suggest that this is a post-social work era, rather it suggests that 2018 is the ideal time to hold tight to the golden thread from 1968 of commitment to the value base of social justice, prevention and the power of the community and ensure that that thread can be woven into the integrated contemporary landscape.

The spirit of the 1968 Act is alive and well, current policies in Scotland align with the value base, so the challenge is for the Social Work profession is:

'Re-engage the optimism and do not leave anyone behind.'

(Interviewee 2018)

'Social work has the ability to re-define itself which means that it can look forward.'

(Interviewee 2018)

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