

Exploring Drivers and Barriers to the Real Living Wage Movement in Social Care in Wales

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Summary

Work is no longer a guaranteed route out of poverty (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2004) and one in seven users of foodbanks are from working households (Trussel Trust, 2019). This has raised the question of what needs to be done to break that cycle especially in industries such as Social Care which is persistently low paid. A call for action has arisen. There's no agreement of exactly what can or should be done or who should be responsible for doing it.

The overarching interest of this study was to build understanding of how social change is being done in work related issues. This study explores efforts of the Real Living Wage movement in Social Care in Wales which is led by a civil society Community Organising network called Citizens Cymru Wales (CCW). This work aims to add to understanding on what drives those efforts forward as well as what holds them back.

Academic interest in the RLW is positioned both in the Industrial Relations literature and literature around social justice and change. Drawing on that literature, the following three Research Questions were developed for this exploratory study:

1. Who are the different actors?
2. How does the RLW movement work within Social Care in Wales? How do different RLW actors interact?
3. What are key outcomes of RLW in Social Care from the perception of different actors?

A mixed method research design has been used in order to best capture multiple perspectives from a sample of key actors across the movement. The researcher has embedded with the movement, training as a Community Organiser and has taken part in relevant campaigns as a Participant Observer. Data have also been generated from interviews from a broad sample of key actors within the movement and a dataset of RLW accredited employers.

Key findings include contributions to the discussion around new actors in work related issues and the use of champions in the RLW movement. Additions to the discussion on the degree of collective action and engagement by key actors such as

Trade Unions, Social Care providers, Social Care workers and Local Authorities are also offered. The fleeting nature of political leverage and of importance of involvement of people with lived experiences are also explored. Finally, the perspectives of outcomes of RLW efforts in Social Care in Wales are examined including ownership of success and the fragile nature of “wins” in civil society led movements.

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Abbreviations

CCW	Citizens Cymru Wales
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CUK	Citizens UK
LA	Local Authority
LWF	Living Wage Foundation
NLW	National Living Wage
NMW	National Minimum Wage
RLW	Real Living Wage
SC	Social Care
TU	Trade Union
WGov	Welsh Government

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background, research questions and approach

Work alone is no longer a guaranteed route out of poverty (Kemp et al., 2004). One in seven users of food banks are in working households (Sosenko, 2019). In work poverty is a growing concern in the UK with some industry sectors known as persistently low paid. There is a question of what needs to be done to break that cycle and a call for action, but, there is no agreement on exactly what can or should be done and who should be responsible for doing it. The overarching interest in this study was to build understanding on how efforts to address areas where low pay is a persistent and pervasive issue are being done, what drives those efforts and what holds them back.

The UK and its devolved Governments have developed Fair Work and Decent Work agenda to tackle low pay by developing policy. The UK Government's National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) are aimed to alleviate low pay but are not considered to be sufficient. The introduction of the "Real Living Wage"(RLW) by Citizens UK (CUK) and the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) in 2001 was designed to address this gap. This civil society movement is seen as a newcomer to the world of work related issues.

The Social Care (SC) sector offers a sector ripe for research as both a low pay sector and a priority during the Pandemic with RLW campaign for "Key Workers". SC is an area which has been recognised for needing reform but which has not been sufficiently acted upon. It is a complex and fragmented sector in terms of provision and funding with broad and varied worker roles and service user needs with plenty of scope for exploration.

Discussion around SC reform is fundamentally around funding and that more funding is required. The decision on how to better fund SC (via increase in UK Government, hypothecated tax in Wales) will ultimately be a political one. Policy changes and efforts so far have not been led by people who would be directly affected by reform i.e. SC workers and SC users. Exploration of how to amplify the voice of those

directly affected, care workers and care recipients, is of interest and fits with current work.

Increasing our understanding of how the RLW movement works to tackle in work poverty could help support pay equity within a complex and traditionally low paid sector.

This researcher embedded with the movement, including training as a Community Organiser and taking part in relevant campaigns. A grounded perspective gives a novel insight into the movement and how it works at an individual level.

The following three Research Questions were developed for this study:

1. Who are the different actors?
2. How does the movement work and how do different RLW actors interact?
3. What are key outcomes of RLW in Social Care from perception of different actors?

1.2 Structure of thesis

This thesis is structured in the following way:

Chapter two introduces the distinct features and context of the adult SC sector in Wales using secondary data, including relevant Welsh Government (WGov) and SC industry sector reports, available datasets and also some illustrative quotes from interviews undertaken as a part of this study. Firstly, the fragmented and complex nature of the adult SC market in Wales, its structure, including multiple forms of SC provision and business ownership types, is described. Key issues relating to the procurement system and multiple ways SC can be provided and accessed are introduced from a variety of perspectives. The multiple macro- and meso-level crises are discussed and the impact these have had on the working conditions in the adult SC sector are interrogated. Issues relating to the challenging nature of employment in the adult SC workers will be presented including lack of parity and standardisation with the healthcare sector, perceptions and values held around the nature of SC work. Finally, issues relating to Employment Relations in the sector will

be described including challenges around organising workers, relationships between Trade Unions (TUs) and SC providers and adult SC worker empowerment.

Chapter three reviews the current literature in order to understand what is already known about the RLW and identify gaps in the discussion. The concept of the RLW, its history, purpose and aims is reviewed together with relevant literature around how social change is done including efforts to improve low pay and poor working conditions. Interest in the RLW is positioned both in the Industrial Relations literature and literature around social justice and change. Theories from both positions will be used to help further explore characteristics and position of the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Kelly's Mobilization theory, in particular around attribution of responsibility and transformation of the individual and Bellemare's theory on what makes an Industrial Actor will be used to explore how the Welsh context of the RLW movement in SC fits within Industrial Relations. Key actors connected with the RLW including Civil Society Organisations (CSO) such as CUK and their Welsh chapter, Citizens Cymru Wales (CCW), TUs and how they interact within the traditional Industrial Relations system. Tools and approaches used by different actors are explored. Tattersall's (2018) typology of coalitions is used and extended to a sample of key organisations involved in the RLW movement. Lastly, literature focussing on outcomes of the RLW is reviewed including the growth of the movement, degree of worker empowerment and industry sector reform. Guided by Tattersall's continuum of coalition success which considers degree of change and organisation strength, outcomes for the campaign, for SC workers, SC providers and outcomes for the community are elaborated. This work contributes to the literature by focussing on the RLW, focussing on the SC sector and context of Wales which hasn't had much academic attention. Also this work explores the RLW movement ecosystem of a range of key actors rather than focus on the relationship between two actors to give a grounded and multi-faceted perspective.

Chapter four sets out the methodology and approach used to best answer the research questions introduced in Chapter one with the aim of exploring the RLW in SC movement in Wales. It outlines the pragmatist philosophical standpoint employed

combined with a mixed methods study. Next, data collection tools are introduced and practicalities of each method discussed together with details about the sample. Ethics and issues around reliability and reflexivity are then considered and then finally how analysis was undertaken.

Chapter five is the first of three empirical chapters, sharing findings from quantitative analysis, interviews with a broad range of RLW in SC movement actors and the researcher's own experiences of being a novice community organiser. This chapter relates to Research Question 1 and explores key actors involved in the movement in Wales and their perceived roles. Aided by Bellemare's (2000) theory of what makes a significant Industrial Relations actor in terms of efficacy and influence, this chapter contributes to discussions on Community Organising as "new actors" in work related issues and its influence and impact on other actors in the traditional Industrial Relations system comprising the State, The Market and TUs involved in the movement. This is useful to identify and better understand drivers and barriers to the RLW in terms of the each actor's own organisational, personal and social strengths and constraints specifically in the context of the RLW in the SC sector in Wales.

Chapter six is related to Research Question 2 and focusses on what the actors identified in the previous chapter do within the tools and approaches connected to the RLW in SC movement in Wales. This study finds that CUK have taken a less public and agitational approach to the RLW in SC than in other campaigns. The support and action of Champions in decision-making roles within target organisations such as Welsh Health Boards has had significant success whereas organisations without Champions such as Welsh Local Authorities (LAs) still have not accredited.

The ways and extent actors work together to build strength and drive the movement forward as well as what constraints they face which could be said to hold back the RLW in SC campaign in Wales are discussed. Aided by Tattersall's extended typology of coalitions (2018) which includes other organisations not just TUs and the community, this chapter adds further details to known tensions between TUs and community organisers in RLW activity in the UK. It finds there is a lack of collective action and cohesion between actors regarding the RLW with multiple actors claiming

the “win” as their own organisation rather than as a collective. There was also a lack of trust in the movement and “buy in” from SC providers and TUs in Wales. SC workers were not heavily engaged and only the voices of a few SC workers were heard as part of the campaign.

Chapter seven explores outcomes to the RLW in SC movement in Wales and considers the changes which are perceived to be as a result of the movement. Outcomes for the RLW campaign, outcomes for SC workers, outcomes for SC employers and outcomes at community and societal level are considered. Considering the outcomes of the RLW in SC in Wales movement is important in order to explore the “Low hanging fruit” criticism of the RLW movement. The RLW is not just a financial concept but can be considered a way of “challenging the practices of the market” (Bunyan, 2016) and bring about social change. The Community Organising element has sought to increase the power of the community in seeking change to perceived unfair practices. Using Tattersall’s coalition success criteria, the degree of social change and organisational strength are given attention. This chapter contributes to our understanding of the degree the RLW can be considered a social movement rather than a CSR exercise and the extent it has brought about social change at different levels. Elements around sector reform and deepened democratic participation and the fragility of “wins” are discussed.

Chapter eight brings together all three of the Findings chapters and interprets key findings. Aided by Kelly’s Mobilization Theory framework (1998), empirical and practical contributions are discussed and next steps for the movement considered. Contributions to the literature and final reflections are made.

Chapter 2 Context and Policy

The purpose of this chapter is twofold; firstly to explore the context of the SC sector, its workforce, care providers and perceived issues. Secondly, to understand what has been done historically to improve low pay with examples from around the world as well as specifically in the SC sector in Wales.

Firstly, the fragmented and complex nature of the SC sector in Wales will be described followed by exploration of a key distinctive aspects to SC - the commissioning or procurement process which has an impact of the way SC is provided. Next the impact of recent macro level events such as Brexit, the Covid pandemic and the Care Crisis of the care sector, particularly on SC workers themselves.

Secondly, an exploration of efforts made by different actors to improve pay and conditions in the SC sector. Previous efforts to improve work related issues in the SC sector will be explored including policy development in Wales and TU activity relating to the SC sector. International examples of RLW movements around the world will be described to allow for comparison with the RLW movement in SC in Wales and which actors have driven and influenced policy related to improving the SC sector so far. This will provide some context to the SC sector in Wales and also explore how the RLW movement works within these efforts.¹

2.1 Context

The structure of the SC sector is fragmented and complex. Many of the issues facing the SC sector today are perceived to have been caused by the marketisation of SC, moving provision from a predominantly public sector provision to a predominantly private sector provision.

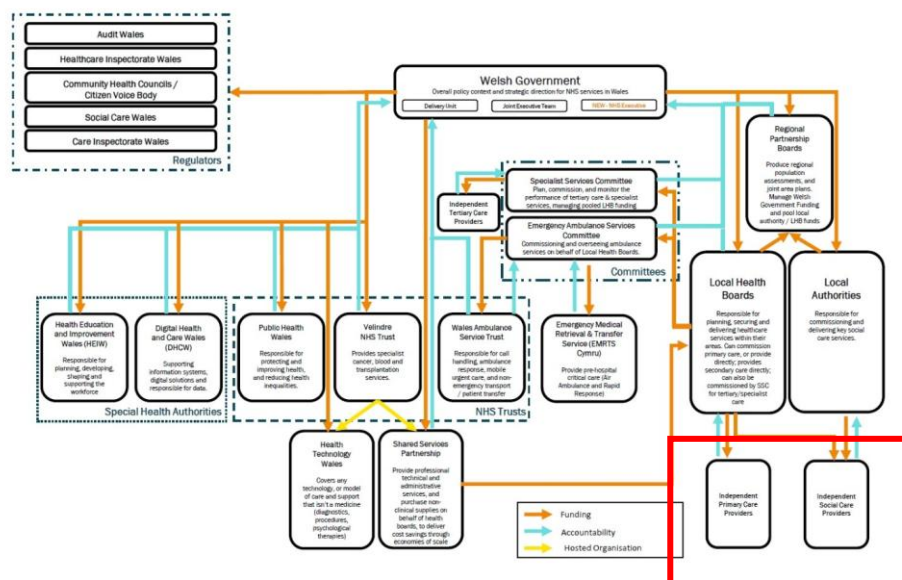
“So up until the early 2000s, most social care was delivered directly through local government...Care workers - homecare workers and workers in care homes were mostly provided directly by Councils. And then WGov..., there was a Social Care Act. Councils were directed to diversify provision, which in effect meant outsourcing care.” (TU 3)

¹ The material in this chapter is based on secondary data including a dataset of RLW accredited employers, publicly available data on the Social Care sector and policy documents and reports relating to the Social Care sector in Wales as well as some illustrative quotes from interviews undertaken as part of this study.

Designed to increase competition between providers and choice for care users, some perceive the marketization of SC and the “personalization agenda” (Hussein, 2017) as the cause of the current fragmented and complex SC system as well as the growing trend of in work poverty amongst care workers (Prowse, Prowse and Snook, 2022). Adult SC provision in Wales comprises options of public, private or voluntary provision (Kessler, et al., 2020; Sion and Trickey, 2020). There is also a lack of parity of pay between different providers resulting in a “Two tier workforce” in relation to pay and working conditions. Lack of standardization is not limited to pay alone but also working conditions with concerns as to the parity between public and private provision in terms of the rights to adequate, paid holiday allowances, less precarious hours and paid overtime (Kessler et al., 2020).

SC has been split legally, financially and administratively since the inception of the NHS. As demarcated in red in Figure 2.1, the SC sector runs parallel to but is separate to NHS Wales. There is a range of adult SC provision adding to the complexity. Some SC is provided by the NHS if there are healthcare needs as well as care needs and there are also third sector care providers. The vast majority of SC in Wales is provided by Local Authority (LA) commissioning and private care organisations. Some large care companies, such as Care UK, Four Seasons and HC-One, are controlled by private equity firms, which poses questions as to whether rather than being world leaders in adult SC, they are “...world leaders in extracting profit” (Kessler et al., 2020 page 13).

Figure 2. 1 Illustration of Health and Social Care structure in Wales



Source: Wales Centre for Public Policy <https://www.wcpp.org.uk/commentary/what-does-the-welsh-health-and-social-care-system-look-like/> [Accessed May 2023]

The private/independent care providers are the market leaders in the SC sector in Wales. The private care provision market is twice the size of the LA or Commissioned care provision in Wales (Social Care Wales 2022, p4). Only 9% of residential care homes are run by LAs (Social Care Wales, 2022, p3), with the remainder privately owned. Each type of ownership has different sets of parameters around cost of care and rates of pay. LAs use financial assessments to decide the amount a care user needs to pay for domiciliary or residential care provision. Private care providers set their own costs.

This complex ownership structure and lack of standardisation makes efforts towards making change difficult. It is difficult to pinpoint decision makers and attribute responsibility to a single person. For example, public sector SC provision commissioned by the LA has a set budget which the WGov control, WGov in turn are provided a budget by the UK Government. Austerity measures taken by the UK Government have led to cuts in SC budgets.

While the majority of care provision is privately run, most care users in Wales have their care fully or partly covered by LAs. Of all residential care homes in Wales only 9% are publicly funded and in three LA areas (Torfaen, Powys and Cardiff) there are no LA run residential homes (Sion and Trickey, 2020). Add to this the NHS care provision referred to as NHS Continuing Care, when the care user has medical complexities and is fully funded by the NHS including the nursing element of care. This could mean that in any one care setting there are a range and mix of funded places and a range and mix of SC workers being paid a range and mix of wages, depending on their employer.

2.1.2 The commissioning system

The LAs' procurement approach, referred to as the commissioning model, is perceived as a key systemic issue which impacts the amount Care providers can pay staff in the SC sector in Wales. LAs advertise packages of Care needed on their online commissioning system. SC providers within the area then bid to undertake those packages.

“It's grim the way the LA commission, it's like eBay. Our work comes out every day and it comes via a system called “sproc net”. They put all the details on to the computer, the information about the individual, and we put a bid in. We put what we can do that hourly care for. Agencies out there, I don't know how they're doing it. They're doing it for £13.50 /£14 an hour. When you think what I'm paying my staff. I will go with £18 an hour. My staff get £9.50 (per hour) during the day.... Out of that £18 then I've got to contribute towards their pensions, their travel time, their holiday pay, their petrol allowance. Well, there isn't much, there's hardly any margin in it.” (SC Employer accredited)

While the system sets to out equally consider both quality and cost, the perception by SC providers is that the emphasis is on showing “value for money” over showing quality care. Smaller SC providers see themselves at a disadvantage to larger agencies in this procurement model who can bid lower because they can bid and take on large numbers of care packages.

Those providers who feel constantly undercut by larger providers make the business decision to avoid LA contracts in order to stay afloat. This is expressed by frustration from providers that they want to provide high quality care in their locality but can't afford to. This is one impact of the marketisation of the SC sector in Wales of relevance to this study. In an industry sector where staff costs account for the vast majority of running costs to SC providers and a tendering or commissioning process which favours the low bids, this incentivises Care providers to keep pay as low as possible in order to maximise profits. In these terms, there is little business incentive for SC providers to pay a decent wage.

Another impact of marketization and the “race to the bottom” in terms of Care worker wages, is the perception of SC providers as inherently “greedy” and profiteering organisations who seek financial gain at the cost of their care users and staff. As expressed in the interview quote below:

“ Care is a big business for middle management. It's very lucrative. I've been involved in a domiciliary care company which has since gone out of business. On the ground workers were being paid a pittance when the owner was driving around in a BMW.” (Care user campaigner)

This is a misconception and not all privately owned SC providers are “bad guys” and profiteers but the commissioning system can be said to incentivise that behaviour

which has led to that impression and drawn more profit focussed organisations to the sector. Similarly with multi-national corporations which follow a shareholder system, where the incentive is to provide dividends for shareholders and this takes priority over paying fair and decent wages.

2.1.3 Care Crisis

The Care Crisis of 2021 was a perfect storm of a culmination of multiple, persistent stresses and strains on the sector from a number of different directions. Care agencies were going bankrupt due to years of austerity measures exacerbated by a cost of living crisis. Demand for care was increasing and staff recruitment and retention were at an all time low. This meant even more strain on existing workers, already exhausted by Covid, needing to do more with less and working longer hours than contracted for to ensure client needs were met. LAs such as Swansea declared an emergency situation (<https://sbuhb.nhs.wales/news/swansea-bay-health-news/community-care-services-are-very-stretched-due-to-high-demand-and-staff-shortages/> [Accessed May 2023]) with Council Leaders saying the WGov UK Governments need to increase funding (<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/fundingcalldec2?lang=en> [Accessed May 2023]).

There's a "we don't do it for the money" trope which claims care work isn't about fair remuneration for workers and also places demands and action to challenge low pay and poor working conditions as less important. This can be said to have been exploited out of necessity during the Care Crisis with reliance on the goodwill of workers to keep things going.

There has been a reliance on attracting international workers to come and work in SC in the UK to help meet growing demand. There is international diversity within the SC workforce with workers coming from within Europe and around the globe. Brexit made some workers uneasy to want to stay in the UK and the increased difficulty getting visas made the UK less of a draw to potential European workers. To help alleviate the staff shortages, the UK Government opened a skilled worker visa programme to help encourage care workers to consider working and settling in the UK.

During Covid, the physical dangers care workers were working in came to the attention of wider society as well as raising awareness of existing persistent problems in the sector including low pay. The key worker category came into everyday usage and described jobs considered essential to keep society running. Despite applauding the work of key workers and showing gratitude, this was limited to short bursts of applause rather than recognising the low levels of pay endemic to many keyworker roles. The Institute for Fiscal Studies report (Farquharson et al., 2020) on key worker pay finds there is a pay gap between “key workers” which includes SC workers and food retail workers and other members of the workforce. The pay gap between key and non-key workers is more prevalent at the lowest end of the pay scale (see Figure 2.2 below).

Figure 2. 2 Distribution of hourly wages among key and non-key employees in 2019



Source: Senedd Research 21st May 2020 “Coronavirus: key workers’ pay and working conditions” <https://research.senedd.wales/research-articles/coronavirus-key-workers-pay-and-working-conditions/> [Accessed May 2023]

The coping strategy used by many SC providers over Covid to deal with staff shortages and increase in demand was by relying on the good will or existing staff to go above and beyond their contracted hours and precarious, zero hour contracts to

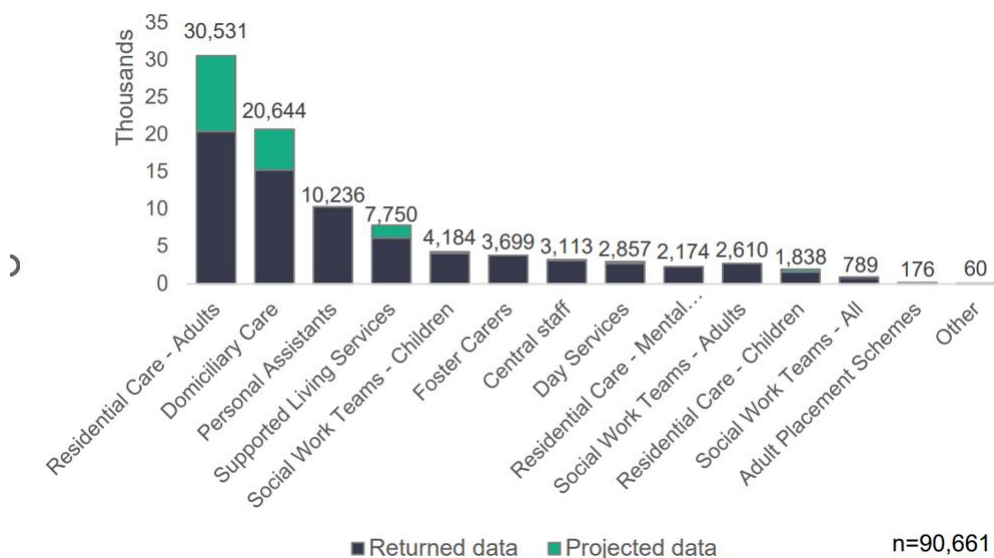
be able to call on workers as and when needed. Exhausted and physically and mentally debilitated following this time, many SC workers have left the sector.

2.1.4 The challenging nature of employment within the sector

SC Wales, the regulatory body for SC workers in Wales, estimated the SC workforce to be around 91,000 workers in Wales as of 31 March 2021 (Social Care Wales, 2022) across all the role types. Adult residential care (e.g. nursing homes) and domiciliary care (care taking place in a care user’s home) make up the majority of SC work types and 81% of the workforce are female (Social Care Wales, 2022 p3). In terms of impact, the RLW movement would reach some of the most persistently low paid members of the workforce and impact on family welfare and standards of living too.

The term SC is misleadingly simple and is an overarching term used for a broad variety of roles and service user type; residential and domiciliary care, childrens’ care and adult care with a broad range of different roles within each of those settings. Adult and domiciliary care make up the majority of workforce roles as can be seen in the graph below.

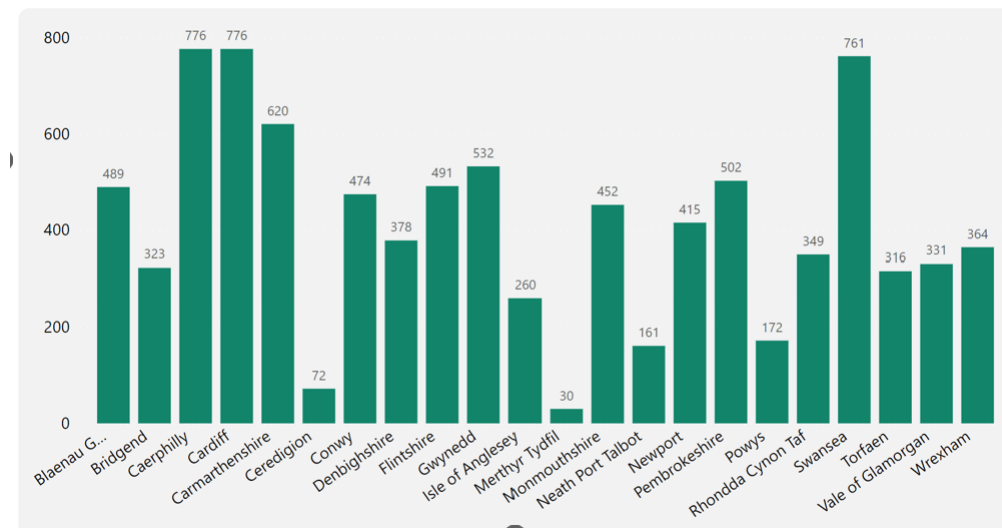
Figure 2. 3 Social Care workforce by service area



Source: Social Care Wales Workforce Data Report June 2021 p10

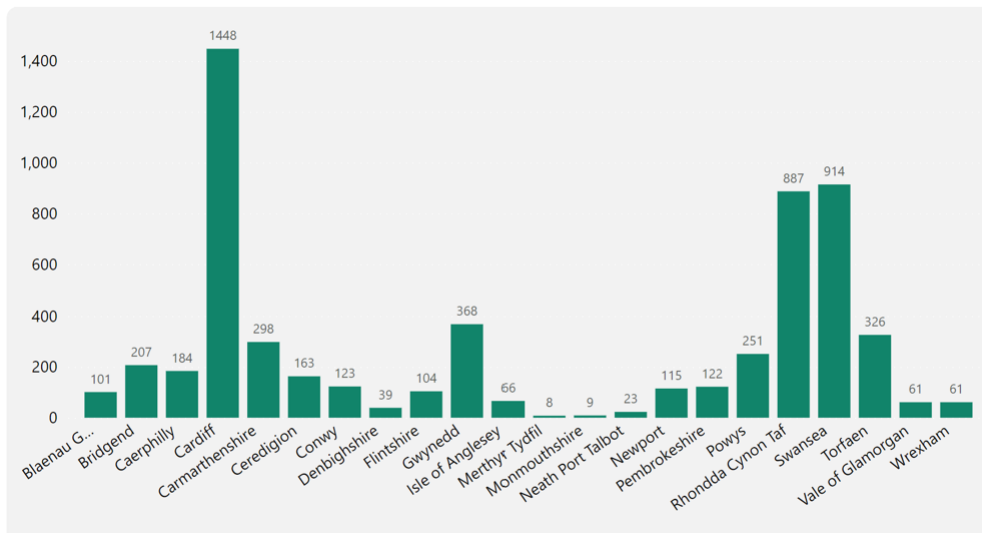
Previous data collected by Social Care Wales, the regulatory body for SC workers in Wales shows the geographical distribution of Care workers across Wales with high numbers of workers concentrated in large urban areas such as Cardiff and Swansea. In terms of campaign locations, much of the RLW movement activity has been based in Cardiff as the capital city of Wales and home to the Welsh Senedd but also in terms of where Care provision is highest, this could be seen as a logical and impactful location for the RLW movement in SC to be based in. It could be argued that Cardiff is not typical of other regions in Wales and that strategies employed in Cardiff may not work as well in other areas.

Figure 2. 4 Number of registered domiciliary care workers working in the private sector in Wales



Source: <https://www.socialcaredata.wales/dataset?c=84&p=8,54&i=19183> [Accessed May 2023)

Figure 2. 5 Number of registered domiciliary care workers working in the third sector



Source: <https://www.socialcaredata.wales/dataset?c=84&p=8,54&i=19184> [Accessed May 2023]

A key goal of the RLW movement in SC is to frame raising SC worker wages not as just a fair reflection of the value of their work but also as a “pre requisite to meeting future demand” (Gardiner and Hussein, 2015), encouraging more people to be able to undertake care work in the future.

These factors are important to consider in order to understand how to encourage worker agency and motivation to engage with the RLW campaign as well as wider societal support.

Low entry barriers to the sector make SC an “easier” route into nursing for some workers. SC does not have the same parity of esteem in terms of the potential career path with pay progression that nursing and other healthcare roles do.

They also find that SC and Food sectors “stand out for the low level of pay and low levels of qualifications” (Farquharson et al., 2020, p2) indicating that low pay is not just a financial matter but has repercussions around working conditions, prospects and other indicators of “Fair work”.

Wallace et al. (2020), in their study on SC in Wales show the variation in pay between different SC settings with public care providers paying a higher basic rate of pay than private care providers as detailed in the quote below.

“For care workers, the median basic minimum value was lower for the independent sector (£8.25) than for the LA sector (£9.74). For senior carers, the median basic minimum value was lower for the independent sector (£8.80) than for LAs (£11.08). For supervisors, the median minimum value was lower for the independent sector (£10.10) than for LAs (£13.37)”
(Wallace et al. 2020 p10)

Low pay in the SC sector is not a new phenomenon yet is still being discussed. Improving pay and working conditions in the SC sector in Wales has been in discussion for 20 years (<https://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/6079#A56122> [Accessed February 2021])! Hesitation in taking action to improving pay, initially came from a perceived lack of funding or agreement how an increase in pay should be supported. Lack of UK Government support from over a decade of austerity led to discussion on other ways to support improvements to SC to cope with growing demands of an ageing population for example, a SC levy or tax (Holtham, 2018) were had in Wales. There are tensions between making care affordable but also needing to invest in workforce and care system.. Taxes have been considered but politicians seem hesitant in thinking the public will want to pay. There are mentions of models from other countries such as Japan and Germany which have a care insurance model but claims this has only been because of public’s “clear acceptance” of costs. (Rebalancing care and support, WGov White Paper, 2021).

There is a growing demand for SC due to the ageing population but high rate of turnover within the sector workforce. It estimated that there are over 5,000 vacant Care worker posts in Wales (Social Care Wales, 2022) and 68% of these posts are in “commissioned care settings”, that is privately owned care providers fulfilling LA commissioned services.

2.1.5 Issues stemming from Employment Relations

From an Employment Relations perspective, the fragmentation of the sector not only inhibits the organisation of care workers by more traditional actors such as TUs but

also poses problems attributing responsibility for other civil society campaigners to target their actions to. It's difficult to identify one organisation or role as ultimately responsible for setting and improving pay and working conditions for the SC sector overall. Understanding the type of care provision has significance in terms of understanding who makes decisions on wages and is therefore the best person to target campaign efforts towards and best strategy to take.

In terms of campaign targets, privately owned care providers would seem to be the most logical choice given their majority of the market. As they are mostly working within UK law and statutory minimum pay rates set by the UK Government, targeting policy makers to increase statutory minimum pay would also be seen as a potential key target. A broad range of targets makes a universal campaign strategy difficult to apply as each target organisation will have different decision making structures and priorities or interests. Also especially in the case of domiciliary Care workers who work from home to home in the community rather than in one workplace setting and there are further complications in terms of accessing and organising workers. Very few private SC providers recognise a Union and some have been described by TUs representatives interviewed as "hostile" to working with TUs and it continues to be difficult to access and work with them. Fear of being portrayed as "the bad guys" and fear of perceived interference in their business operations seem to be key reasons for the hostility.

Even with access to SC providers, multiple business ownership types and business models and lack of standardisation complicate pay negotiations. Therefore implementing the RLW across the SC sector is seen as a simpler and more effective solution to addressing this issue with private care companies a key target but not the only target.

It is also important to understand the context around the wider societal perception and lack of value placed on Care work in order to explore community support and impetus to action as well as campaign strategies to encourage support. In terms of an occupation, Care work is perceived to be a "feminised" occupation, historically done unpaid in the home by family members. Combined with what some see as a

lack of value in society on looking after old people (Hussein, 2017), Care work has, mistakenly, been seen as a low skill, low value and therefore low paid occupation.

This perception is thought to be so entrenched that even Care workers themselves do not question or challenge for better pay and low pay is expected when starting the job (Prowse, Prowse and Snook, 2017). Even during the Covid pandemic, Care workers continued with their behind doors work despite the dangers and were an “invisible” workforce during Covid crisis (Sterling et al., 2020). This “invisibility” and potential lack of recognition that there’s even an issue could be a major challenge in terms of campaign strategy and mobilising support.

It has been reported that as many as 50% of SC workers qualify for welfare benefits and struggle financially (Wallace et al., 2020). These statistics come from food bank usage surveys and there’s very little complaint or discontent voiced directly by SC workers themselves. There is also a lack of access to worker voice. TUs continue to face difficulties accessing employers and low union density in general in the sector mean that worker voice is not being represented or amplified via TUs. This entrenched expectation of low pay in SC sector and feeling of powerlessness would be helped by a win in the Care worker’s favour.

2.2 Efforts to improve pay and working conditions in the Social Care sector

2.2.1 Policy in Wales – efforts by the State

The SC sector in Wales is regulated by the Care Quality Commission and is a highly regulated sector with Care providers needing to comply with numerous legislation ranging from child protection, food standards, drugs and medication, mental health and health and safety and of most relevance to this study the Equality Act (Wales, 2020).

Where devolved Governments do not have legislative powers to change the UK statutory minimum wage, they have instead developed specific policy responses to

tackle issues. A timeline of policy and legislation in Wales aimed at SC sector reform can be seen in Figure 2.6 below.

Figure 2. 6 Timeline of WGov Legislation and Policy relating to improving pay and working conditions for SC sector in Wales



Table 2. 1 Timeline of WGov Legislation in SC

Year	Document title	Key focus
2011	Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action	WGov White Paper. "...which marked the beginning of our transformational journey" Julie Morgan MS (Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services)
2014	Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act	Aims to "...make your care and support personal to your needs, helping you live the life you choose and stay independent for longer". Changes how SC services operate across Wales. Regional Partnership Boards (RPB) created.
2015	Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act	Public bodies such as LAs, Welsh Ministers, Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts have a "Wellbeing Duty". Sustainable Development Principle "...the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p7) Future Generations Commissioner for Wales – Sophie Howe "Coach and critical friend to public

		bodies" (Future Generation Annual Report 2020 p8)
2016	Regulations and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act	Towards professionalising SC work. Act requires SC workers to train to Level 3 Diploma and register with Social Care Wales in order to practice. Also addressed issue of driving time being included in call time.
2016	A Healthier Wales	
2017	Prosperity for All Strategic Plan	SC sector is one of six priority sectors in the WGov National Strategy.
2018	Parliamentary review in to Health and Social Care in Wales	Takes a long term view. "A revolution within" Ruth Hussey.
2019	Fair Work Wales Fair Work Commission report	Recognises SC as a "core industry" (p20) contributing to "...individual and social wellbeing" (p20) and also as sector synonymous with poor pay and working conditions. Recommends: 1) SC Forum to look in to how pay and working conditions can be improved. 2) Welsh Gov work closer with Social Partners towards implementing the RLW.
2019	A Healthier Wales. Our Plan for Health and Social Care	Sets out single "whole" system approach to health AND SC. Take a "Prudent Healthcare" philosophy (p3). Considers RPBs as overseeing and coordinating hubs for LAs, health boards, 3 rd sector providers.
2020	A Healthier Wales: Workforce Strategy October 2020	
2021	Rebalancing care and support. White paper	Consultation on improving SC arrangements and strengthening partnership working (following recommendation by Fair Work Commission) to better support people's well-being. Looks to strengthen RPBs despite criticism. Long term ambition is to have an NHS style workforce terms and conditions and system closer to NHS free at point of need (p32). First mention of "RLW" in Government document.

Policy discussion and SC reform was initially led by fiscal issues, with commissioned research being undertaken by fiscal experts which continues to end in a stalemate of knowing that the sector needs more funding but who should fund it and what is the most acceptable way of funding it. This has caused a stalemate situation causing

lack of progression over the last decade and in terms of introducing improved pay in SC.

A decade of policy change seeking to transform the SC sector began in 2011 with the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan, announcing a WGov White Paper setting out a framework for action. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) focussed on Care service delivery and offering Care users more choice over who could provide their care. This has been criticised by some (Hussein, 2017) as marketizing care provision and creating an even more fragmented market. Regulations and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act in 2016 sought to address issues around lack of status and professionalism by making SC workers register with Social Care Wales the regulatory body. New policy seeking to raise professional standards among SC workforce has recently been introduced and as of April 2020, all domiciliary Care workers must register with Social Care Wales if they work in Wales. (Source:<https://socialcare.wales/news-stories/what-can-we-learn-from-our-first-report-on-domiciliary-care-workers-in-wales/> Accessed April 2021)

Policy development needs to be refocussed onto the key beneficial aspects not just to the worker themselves but to wider society and also the economy thus demonstrating why it's worth investing in. Prosperity for All (2017) included SC as one of six priority areas and economic strategy for Wales as having a key role to play in contributing to the "long term prosperity and well-being for people in Wales" (Prosperity for All 2017, p4). The strategy include integrating SC into the NHS (p12) and expanding the workforce to incorporate more community based activity and "more formal partnerships" with civil society organisations (p14).

A Parliamentary review into Health and Social Care in Wales in 2018 required "a revolution within" but didn't increase funding to do so.

Efforts to link up fragmented structure of SC provision in "A Healthier Wales" which follows recommendations from the Parliamentary review. It sets out ambitions for a single "whole" system approach to Health and SC (p3) with use of Regional Partnership Boards as "overseeing and coordinating" hub for LAs, Health Boards, 3rd sector providers (A Healthier Wales, 2019, p5). It sets out future developments and does include mention of investing in the future skills of the workforce, increasing

funding for “workforce capacity” (p28), investing in digital technologies as a “key enabler of change” (p5) in order to achieve a “motivated and sustainable health and SC workforce” (p5).

At this point there is no mention of increasing pay or improving working conditions or the RLW. This report is focussed more on Care delivery and the health and wellbeing of the community. There is discussion on a “more equitable appreciation (p32) of different roles within health and SC and raised perceived status of SC roles and health care roles. Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) and Social Care Wales (SCW) were tasked to develop a long term workforce strategy (p33) in partnership with NHS and Local Government, the voluntary and independent sectors as well as regulators, professional bodies, and education providers. Future funding for health and SC and the different ways this could happen started to take place, for example a proposed SC tax (Holtham, 2018).

“A Healthier Wales: Workforce Strategy” (2020) and “Rebalancing Care and Support” white paper (2021) followed recommendations by the Fair Work Commission, strengthening Regional Partnership Boards (RBPs) and long term aim of having an NHS style workforce terms and conditions. The White paper specifically mentions the RLW and this is the first mention in a WGov legislative document.

SC workers are often praised and commended for their work but their voices and needs are often bundled together with the other huge reforms necessary to get the SC sector in as good a position as it needs to be. Care workers, Care service users, the overall Care system and processes are discussed as a complete bundle with issues directly related to Care workers’ needs only coming into priority towards the end of the decade with the development of the Fair Work Commission.

2.2.2 The Fair Work Agenda

Issues relating specifically to the SC workforce weren’t addressed until 2019 and Fair Work Commission report and first specific mention of the RLW.

Policies around SC reform hadn’t directly addressed the issue of improving pay until the Fair Work Commission was formed in Wales in 2018. The Commission aimed to tackle the issues of persistent low pay and poor working conditions. A definition of what constitutes fair work was set out as having six key characteristics:

1. Fair reward
2. Employee voice and collective representation
3. Security and flexibility
4. Opportunity for access, growth and progression
5. Safe, healthy and inclusive working environment
6. Legal rights respected and given substantive effect

(Fair Work Wales report, 2019, p18)

The RLW or “Welsh Living Wage” was cited as an indicator of fair reward, but the other characteristics go beyond just financial element and consider wider societal impact and consequence of low pay and working poverty in line with ILO constitution (ILO Declaration of Philadelphia, 1944 <https://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/inwork/cb-policy-guide/declarationofPhiladelphia1944.pdf> [Accessed May 2023]).

Key recommendations from the Fair Work Commission have been accepted by the WGov and incorporated into key devolved legislation such as the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the fairness pillar of Economic Contract between the WGov and the businesses it supports. One more potentially radical impact of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) can be said to be a key part of these “paradigmatic shifts” (Heery et al., 2017) with a change Key Performance Indicators focussed on wellbeing measures rather than traditional profit or growth driven measures. The concept of large corporations giving back to the community they operate in and get their labour from is a key part of policy such as the Economic Contract.

The Fair Work Commission supports Social Partnership working which includes TUs as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and specifically recommends setting up a Fair Work Wales Forum in SC to deliver Fair Work agenda. The SC and Fair Work Forum was set up in 2020 under a social partnership working model with TUs, SC providers and policy makers. The WGov is progressing a Social Partnership bill designed to move forward recommendations set out by the Fair Work Commission and is hoped to strengthen the role of TUs. The Social Partnership Council, a tri-partite council of government, employers and TUs and has been welcomed by TUs as way of amplifying workers’ voices around issues of poor pay and working conditions (<https://www.tuc.org.uk/blogs/wales-social-partnership-bill-chance-change> Accessed October 2021). A Fair Work Duty is also hoped to drive forward

improvements in working conditions. Third sector organisations such as the Bevan Foundation have welcomed the social partnership elements and see the involvement of TUs as key but requiring “new approaches” to collective bargaining (<https://www.bevanfoundation.org/resources/fair-work-through-social-partnership/> Accessed October 2021).

This arrangement has much in common with the LWF’s RLW accreditation which covers not just direct employees but contracted employees ,however unlike the RLW, these will be statutory, not voluntary. While this seems to be a positive step for tackling low pay, the real term impact of Duties such as the Gender Equality Duty almost a decade ago hasn’t eradicated gender pay inequality. Again the commissioning aspect of SC is seen as problematic and “different solutions may be required” (Bevan Foundation, 2020).

Campaigners feel that society comprises more than just workers and employers and don’t feel the social partnership model includes enough of a range of civil society membership outside of the work and labour relationship.

“...social partnership, but it's way too restrictive, because there's more to life than being an employer, or being a representative of organised labour. Social partnership approach doesn't include an opportunity for wider civil society to participate.” (Campaigner 6)

Most recently the Forum is working towards a SC specific model of collective bargaining aimed at the market dominant private sector and is testing an initial voluntary collective bargaining arrangement for SC in Wales (Welsh Government, 2023 p4). This has many similarities to the RLW accreditation model which was aimed at SC providers on a voluntary basis. SC sector actors are being involved and consulted more but with CSOs such as CUK not included. Providers may see this as more industry led than civil society led and with the backing from WGov those providers who haven’t yet accredited as RLW employers may be more inclined to pay. Following on from the WGov commitment to paying the RLW in SC from April 2023, the Forum is also committed to including ancillary workers in SC such as receptionists and catering staff in Care homes. An evaluation is planned to look at how and if the RLW is being implemented (Welsh Government, 2023 p5). There is no consideration on what will happen if the RLW is not been implemented. Will there

be a reward for those SC providers who do pay the RLW , will there be a “naming and shaming” for those who don’t? It will be interesting to see how the LWF or Cynnal Cymru (henceforth: Cynnal) and CCW will choose whether to hold those providers accountable as they are with public sector organisations such as LAs and Health Boards or if they see this as already being “done” by WGov and the Social Care and Fair Work Forum.

A need for greater awareness of worker rights, voice and representation (Welsh Government, 2023 p7) is cited as a key priority for 2023. TUs have said access to privately owned care providers is a key difficulty.

“The crisis in social care is about the care workers themselves because many of them are not paid the minimum wage as they should be. But their work is precarious. Zero hours contracts, temporary contracts and insecure work. They have had very little access to TUs. Very few private sector employers recognise TUs and are positively hostile to TUs seeking recognition.” (TU 3)

An issue is “micro carers” who have up to four care users. Will these be covered by collective bargaining and other protections being put forward by the Forum and how will these be enforced?

There are examples of devolved, more localised employment regulation including LAs working towards “decent work” standards. In Wales, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015, Wales) and Local Councils’ Wellbeing Plans also set standards relating to working issues. CSOs such as TUs and charities are working with employers and building future worker networks and nurturing future leaders. The LWF is one example, working with employers to voluntarily sign up to the RLW, another example Stonewall, provides workplace equality training and TUs have trained shop steward and health and safety representatives in negotiation. Building stronger worker voices from within organisations with links to a wider civil society network is also a key focus of CUK work.

Kearney and White (2018) estimate the formal Welsh SC sector contributes £2.4 billion to the Welsh economy. Interestingly Carers Wales estimate from Census 2011 data the informal Care sector i.e. unpaid Care undertaken by friends and families of individuals was over £8 billion in 2015 (Kearney and White, 2018 p29). This could

further point to the fragility of the SC sector with the reliance on informal Care indicating a much greater demand for Care within the community and wider societal impact of improving pay and working conditions across the whole of the SC sector.

The Foundational Economy concept is particularly strong influence in Wales (Heery et al., 2017). Policy development needs to be refocussed and work on unpicking the key beneficial aspects not just to the workers themselves but to wider society and also the economy and making the importance of this sector and the people who work in it so clear that it's worth investing in. This information is also necessary in order to understand how much a RLW pay uplift would cost to implement. Also the RLW movement is the first effort around pay which requires tangible action to be taken, rather than discussion and proposed strategy.

2.2.3 The Scottish Living Wage in Social Care

The devolved Scottish Government was the first home nation Government to commit to paying SC workers at the least the RLW in 2019. There are some criticisms relating to the selective nature of those who can expect an uplift. For example only those working in adult SC, not child related or other SC are included, also SC workers employed by councils are also not included when third sector and independent SC employees are (<https://www.ccpScotland.org/ccps-news/the-scottish-budget-for-third-sector-social-care-is-it-all-costs-no-value/> [Accessed May 2023]). The cause of a lack of overarching uplift across the whole of the SC sector is purported to be due lack of funds due to austerity (Baluch, 2020).

“...austerity is proving to be a poor bedfellow to their (RLW) implementation”
(Baluch, 2020 p239)

Reflections on the “political spaces” and structures put in place which helps implement austerity. Some say the impetus for introducing the RLW in Scotland was a problem with recruitment and retention of SC workers (Baluch, 2020). Efforts to include paying the RLW in all Scottish Government procurement including commissioning of SC was defeated but the Fair Work Agenda in Scotland is being used and statutory guidance provided for bringing in the RLW into procurement. That guidance is considered to be too vague (Baluch, 2020) in terms of attributing

responsibility to the LA and stating while Government would encourage paying Scottish Living Wage (SLW) they won't necessarily fall within the Fair Work agenda. Different Care providers adopted different ways to implementing the SLW which led to an "uneven distribution of funding" (Baluch, 2020 p247) and variation on including SLW on sleeping in pay as well as including inflationary uplifts. Care providers who did not already pay the RLW weren't penalized for not doing so and were given the uplift payment which left those providers who had already paid to feel hard done by.

In terms of being a form of resistance to austerity measures, the SLW has not improved precarious work and the voluntary sector is facing furthermore instability with "LAs passing their funding pressure on to voluntary providers" (Baluch, 2020 p255). LAs are seen as becoming scape goats and the real source of responsibility i.e. the Scottish Government is seen to have a "waning commitment" to SLW. The Scottish experience throws doubts on the RLW as a suitable tool to tackle the "vast reach of austerity agenda and how robustly its neoliberal roots weaken attempts to improve the working conditions of those who are most exposed to market forces" (Baluch ,2020 p257.)

2.3 Civil Society efforts

The RLW movement has made efforts to implement the RLW across the world.. and the International Labour Organisation has the Living Wage written into its Constitution (ILO Declaration of Philadelphia, 1944 <https://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/inwork/cb-policy-guide/declarationofPhiladelphia1944.pdf> . This section will explore key civil society actors' efforts with a Real Living Wage element in the UK as well as overseas.

2.3.1. The Real Living Wage in the UK

Since its initial success with TELCO in London in 2011, the RLW movement has spread to other regions in the UK and seen a significant growth in accredited employers across all industry sectors across the UK. Focussed on employers, the LWF and Cynnal, the accreditation body in Wales, facilitate accreditation with employers. The majority of employers undertake accreditation on their own steam and the LWF and Cynnal don't target particular industry sectors or particular employers.

SC provider accreditation remains low compared to other industry sectors across all UK nations and all Care provision types that is, third sector, private sector and public sector Care provision. Private sector accreditations are higher than public sector and third sector which is in line with other industry sectors. Most accredited Care providers are private sector providers which aligns with latest available data stating that less than 9% of care homes are run by LAs and the majority of care homes are privately run. According to the Nuffield Trust (<https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/comment-series/adult-social-care-in-the-four-countries-of-the-uk>, 2023 [Accessed October 2024]) there are 1,017 Care homes and 331 Care agencies. Most accredited SC providers are in domiciliary Care, where care is provided in the care user's own home and this pattern holds across all 4 UK nations. In Wales, the difference between residential care and domiciliary care is the smallest of the four nations perhaps indicating a more equal success rate of the RLW standard across public and private sectors in Wales than the other four nations.

2.3.2 Trade Unions – membership density and mobilization in Social Care

TUs represent workers' interests and negotiate improvements of pay and conditions via collective bargaining and striking to show power and solidarity where negotiation with the employer has broken down or been ineffective. With its history in heavy

industry and manufacturing, images come to mind of large protests by industry sectors such as coal mining industry, teachers and higher education but we've yet to see a mass mobilization of SC workers or other industry sectors coming out in solidarity on their behalf.

Legislative changes over the past four decades, most recently the Trade Union Act (2016) have weakened TUs and led to the decrease in union membership and power. Wales is reported to have higher union members than in England perhaps due to its heavy industrial history (Webber et al., 2019). The growing trend of "gig" work and other precarious work and separation between employer and employee which is endemic to neo-liberal business models. This makes it more difficult for CSOs to be visible and recruit members from a place of work with more obvious lines of management and decision making. More precarious types of work are not typically done from a single place of work which makes it difficult to organize workers. In SC workers such as domiciliary SC workers who work from care users' own homes, union recruitment is typically low.

There are a few examples of SC workers striking. In 2014 Care UK workers in Doncaster demanded a pay rise to £7.65 and pay parity with NHS care workers. This case highlights the difference between publicly owned and privately owned pay and working conditions within the care sector. Care UK was NHS owned until bought by a private equity firm and care staff had their wages cut by 35%. Media coverage of the strike was reportedly the catalyst of the Care provider agreeing to an interim pay rise (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/nov/08/care-uk-workers-celebrate-pay-offer-strikes> Accessed October 2021). After a punishing 90 day strike a 2% pay rise was agreed to £7.00 per hour but still short of the RLW rate at the time.

More recently, Covid presented an opportunity for a virtual strike by Care workers from a nursing home in North London where workers were demanding sick pay and annual leave in parity with NHS SC workers which was more than the RLW rate at the time.. They held a virtual picket and raised money online via Crowdfunder for a strike fund.(<https://www.uvwunion.org.uk/en/news/2021/04/care-workers-vote-for-a-second-wave-of-strike-action/> Accessed October 2021).

There are examples of TU led pay bargaining in the Welsh SC sector via collective bargaining rather than strike action. Webber et al. (2019) present examples of TUs achieving enhanced pay agreements with two third sector Care providers across the UK and also a national agreement negotiated by a coalition of TUs and a national health and SC provider between 2017 and 2019.

These examples are few and far between and traditional union activity would not seem to be able to overcome the challenge of lack of workplace presence and access to workers. Alternative union activity which extends outside of a workplace has been seen as essential to revitalise TUs and better protect part time and temporary workers.

One of the tactics discussed is via organising where alliances are built in the community by means of advice work (Wills, 2001). Motivation for forming a Community Union as a way to survive as a union in Wills (2001) example of Iron and Steel Trades Confederation where a group of TUs formed a Trades Council to employ organisers and go out into the community. Community Unionism requires TUs finding another CSO with a common cause and ethos to work with..

2.3.3 Trade Unions – Ethical Care Charter

UNISON, a major TU in the UK, had an Ethical Charter initiative aimed at LAs in the UK and which include a RLW element. Johnson et al. (2021) find there was not a lot of take up among LAs and that the key outcome from the Charter was building better relationships with employers and Care commissioners rather than improving pay and working conditions across the sector. They recognise a number of key challenges to implementing the RLW. The first was a lack of clarity around attribution and who's responsible for wages in the Care sector. The next key issue or challenge to the programme was employers reliance of "on spot purchasing" to fill recruitment and retention gaps. The final key issue was around a lack of enforcement of the Charter commitments with TUs needing to "trust providers to comply" (Johnson et al., 2021). The Charter initiative did see success in "enhancing" overall pay packages, more secure hours and efforts to "professionalise care work" and was more successful in urban areas (London) than more rural areas in terms of recruitment and retention.

The Charter was seen as a "foot in the door" for TUs with Care providers and putting precarious work " in SC sector on the political agenda" (Johnson et al., 2021).

2.3.4 Community Organizers

TELCO in UK is an example of close working between Community Organisers and TUs as a marker of successful campaigning for the RLW in East London. Union participation in Community Organizing has been considered necessary for successful campaigns within the child care sector in Canada (Black, 2018) where there has been a "long standing practice of community unionism where parents, feminist organisations and childcare advocates work with child care worker TUs" (Black, 2018 p119) to improve working pay and conditions. Strong worker and community relationships and strong local organization with local government and other political allies was seen as key factors missing in one campaign failure (Black, 2018). Also considers TUs taking a "behind-the-scenes" role with community allies being the face of the campaign has been considered key to its success (Black, 2018 p122).

In the UK and in Wales it seems that the Care providers still have all the power when it comes to decisions around pay improvements in SC. There is no consequence for providers if they choose not to accredit as a RLW employers or withdraw.. "Hard" or statutory regulation doesn't mean the problem is solved e.g. gender equality duty and legislation has been in place in Wales with the Equality Act since 2010 yet gender pay discrepancies are still ongoing. SC workers' low pay in Wales has been a persistent issue and efforts to reform the Care sector has left pay improvement until last, committing to the RLW in 2021. Accountability is a key role of civil society led campaigns such as the RLW in SC is important to keep the RLW on the political agenda.

The next chapter explores the literature around the RLW and what is already being discussed in terms of its implementation, outcomes and actors involved.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

This chapter reviews academic and grey literature in order to understand what is already known about the RLW and considers discussions already taking place. Firstly literature on the concept of the RLW, its history, purpose and aims are reviewed together with relevant literature around how social change is done including efforts to improve low pay and poor working conditions. Literature of interest to this study is positioned both in the Employment Relations literature and literature around social justice and social change. Readings have been directed towards RLW movement from a UK perspective and also looking at all industry sectors together as well as SC specifically.

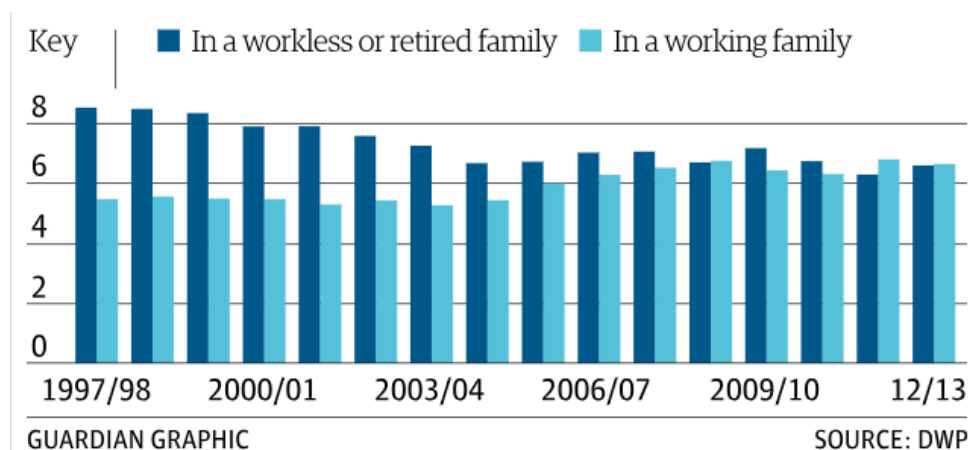
Next, discussions around key actors connected with efforts to make improvements to working conditions and pay will be examined. Actors include the CSO which has led the RLW campaign in the UK, CUK and their Welsh branch, CCW, TUs and how they interact within the traditional Industrial Relations system. Then tools and approaches used by different actors are explored in the literature. Finally discussions on outcomes of the RLW are explored.

This work contributes to the literature on the RLW by focussing on the SC sector in the context of Wales which has not had much academic attention. Also this work explores the RLW movement ecosystem which comprises a range of key actors rather than focus on the relationship between two actors to give a grounded and multi-faceted perspective.

3.1 What is the Real Living Wage? What does it do and how is it used?

Work is no longer a guaranteed route out of poverty (Kemp et al., 2004). The increase of low pay in the UK is considered as relatively recent and “a product on the attack of predistribution” (Wills and Linneker, 2014, p185) and neoliberal economic strategies under Thatcher. In work poverty (IWP) is a growing concern in the UK as can be seen from Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3. 1 Number of people in poverty after housing costs in millions



(Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/nov/24/record-numbers-working-families-poverty-joseph-rowntree-foundation> [Accessed July 2024]

Increased earnings are one “key ladder” out of poverty (<https://www.jrf.org.uk/routes-out-of-poverty>, 2004). The RLW, at time of writing (2024), is set at £12.00 per hour across the UK except for London where it is set at £13.15 per hour. The RLW is calculated on a “basket of goods” basis and is updated every November, notably taking inflation and other increases in costs of living into account. It applies to all directly employed and contracted workers aged 18 or over and is regulated on a voluntary basis.

Rates are calculated by the Resolution Foundation based on “best available evidence about living standards in London and the UK” (LWF <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/calculation> Accessed March 2021). This figure includes Minimum Income Standards calculated by Loughborough University’s Centre for Research and Social Policy (<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/crsp/mis/> Accessed March 2021). Calculations are based on more than just mere survival and existence and are considered to be “acceptable standards of living”, including housing costs, childcare, groceries utilities, travel as well as unforeseen costs such as car repairs and one holiday a year.

It is not to be confused with (although frequently is) the UK Government’s statutory NLW, which at time of writing (2024) is set at up £11.44 per hour for those over 21 across all of the UK. The gap between the RLW and the NLW, in terms of hourly

pay, has closed over recent years with the NLW “catching up” to the RLW in including workers aged 21 and over whereas formally only those over 23 were eligible. The NLW does not adjust on an annual basis in line with inflation.

Figure 3.2 Minimum wage rates to apply from 1 April 2024

	NMW rate	Annual increase (£)	Annual increase (per cent)
National Living Wage (for those aged 21 and over)	£11.44	1.02	9.8
21-22 Year Old Rate	See NLW	1.26	12.4
18-20 Year Old Rate	£8.60	1.11	14.8
16-17 Year Old Rate	£6.40	1.12	21.2
Apprentice Rate	£6.40	1.12	21.2
Accommodation Offset	£9.99	0.89	9.8

(Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/minimum-wage-rates-for-2024/low-pay-commission-summary-of-evidence-2023> [Accessed July 2024])

Households and people are considered to be low income in the UK when their income falls below 60% of the national median earnings. The NLW is based on that percentage of median earnings and keeps workers just above the poverty line. For this reason, the NLW is considered insufficient and described by some as providing merely a “compulsory top up” (D’Arcy and Kelly, 2015) rather than providing a decent standard of living. This distinction is key to understanding the argument that the RLW is more than just a financial concept and that it is rooted in the idea of “a fair day’s pay” and has dignity and quality of life of working people in mind. This is a persistent struggle, following the call from Schneiderman, “the worker must have bread, but she must have roses too.” (Schneiderman, R., 1912 p288).

The first RLW campaign in the UK was in East London led by a Community Organising group called The East London Citizens Organisation (TELCO) in the early 2000s. This campaign was notable firstly by being the first instance of action

undertaken by the Community Organising alliance, CUK in work related issues in the UK. Founded in the US, by Saul Alinsky, Community Organising is more established in the US. CUK and its Welsh branch, CCW will be described further in Chapter five, which explores key actors involved in the RLW movement in the UK and in Wales.

Secondly, the TELCO campaign is notable for its success in persuading large employers such as hospitals in the area to accredit and pay their lowest paid workers the RLW as well as gaining support from multiple TUs and political support from the Mayor of London. Following this initial success, the RLW continues to be most well known in its connection with cities in politically devolved regions e.g. London, Salford and Cardiff. Campaigns still tend to be based around cities and close to political centres of power. Whilst the RLW campaign initially worked to win over discrete, large organisations such as hospitals in a location, more recent campaigns have cast a broader net on geographic locations, industry sectors and anchor institutions. For example, the LWF's "Living Wage Places" programme uses LAs to link with local employers and regenerate local economies (Howard, D., 2022) through their procurement channels. Place based and city based RLW campaign strategies are still seen as worth pursuing by RLW campaigners. As seen in Chapter two, adult SC workers are concentrated in city regions which could indicate suitability to the RLW's city focussed strategy and it would be of interest to understand to what extent this strategy works in the SC sector in Wales.

Critique of the RLW movement in America has been that success so far has reached only "low hanging fruit" employers in industry sectors where low paid beneficiaries are in the minority and in cities where larger organisations and public sector organisations are located. Take up is much less in industries where the majority of workers are on low pay e.g. retail, SC, hospitality and agriculture. Data from the RLW movement in the UK doesn't support this (Heery et al., 2017).

The next section explores different ways the RLW movement has been positioned to persuade employers and other decision makers to accredit to the RLW standard and drive the movement forward. On one hand RLW is positioned as "business friendly" and attractive to employers and paying your employees a decent wage makes good business sense. This is referred to as setting out the "business case" for the RLW. The second position discussed in the literature as a driver to the RLW movement is

the “moral case” which is values based and uses the argument that paying a decent wage is the right thing for employers to do.

3.1.1 The Real Living Wage is good for business: “The business case”

In one sense the RLW is about paying the lowest paid worker a decent rate of pay which goes beyond survival. Implementing the RLW has obvious financial consequences for employers, therefore using a market based logic to appeal to employers as a counter argument helps persuade more hesitant employers to accredit. Heery et al. (2022) find that accredited employers across all industry sectors and parts of the UK cite recognising staff contribution and improved recruitment and retention as of “great importance” to their decision to accredit as a RLW employer. Reputational advantages such as being seen to be a “good employer” and alignment to the organisation’s values were also reported as being of “great importance” in the decision to become accredited. These are internally driven decisions, referred to as “instrumental motives” (Heery et al., 2023). These are considered important drivers but by no means the only drivers and there are multiple reasons and circumstances behind the decision to accredit.. Improvement in recruitment and retention is considered a key motivation for organisations with significant numbers of contracted workers such as Hospitality, Security and SC workers (Heery et al., 2022).

Pressure and influence from organisations outside of the business, referred to as “Institutional motives”, are seen by accredited employers as less important to their decision to accredit (Heery et al., 2023). This has implications to the RLW campaign strategy and is important to understand for driving the RLW movement forward. The influence of public sector bodies, especially LAs has been discussed as important to driving the RLW movement. Employers who do get involved in RLW campaigning tend to be those who live in a Living Wage City or where the LA has accredited (Werner, 2021; Heery et al., 2022).

Prowse and Fells (2016) seek to understand the decision of four large local government organisations – two in London and two in North of England to take up the RLW. Different forms of positive effects from implementing the RLW are discussed, most relevant to this study “first order effects for direct workers” lifting

mainly female part time workers above starting salary rates. Prowse and Fells (2016) also looked at “second order effects” such as increase of likelihood TUs could use RLW as a platform for adjusting other pay differentials and lift other low paid members of staff salaries. Similar to Grimshaw(2013) the RLW is seen as filling a gap in employment relations due to low union membership in low paid work and lack of collective bargaining. Community Organising could represent a different “way in” for low paid industry sectors with low union membership such as SC. TUs have not used RLW as a chance to recruit more low paid workers and build up their power through Organising which has been criticised by some (Holgate, 2021).

Showing employers that paying a RLW makes good business sense is a key part of the LWF’s programme of work. Accredited SC employers in particular see less spending on recruitment and retention (Heery et al., 2017; Werner, A., 2021) as a key benefit of accrediting as RLW employers. As discussed in Chapter two, this represents only a small percentage of all SC providers in the UK so could suggest that instrumental motives are not as big a pull factor as in other industry sectors.

3.1.2 Remedial action to austerity, populism and neoliberalism – the social and economic justice case

Supporters view the RLW as a construct around social justice, in achieving a fair rate of pay leading to the reduction of poverty, hardship and disease (Snook, 2019). The RLW is discussed in terms of both “fixing” imbalances in society or within industry sectors by offering pay parity in terms of the value of the service they offer or with other industry sectors.

The growth in in work poverty is seen as “a product on the attack of predistribution” and neoliberal economic strategies under Thatcher (Wills and Linneker, 2014, p185). The RLW is seen as a remedial tool for economic and social justice (Bunyan, 2016) aimed at addressing the imbalance of power between workers and employers for the benefit of wider society, starting with improving pay. There is also evidence that re-establishing the responsibility for improving low pay on to employers and the Market and “shifting the burden of low pay” could have significant economic benefits (Wills and Linneker, 2014). The perception that improving pay for the lowest paid has significant economic benefits requires a significant paradigmatic shift away from the

idea that economic growth and making a profit means wages need to be kept low (Hunter, 2018 p3). This change in thought requires the RLW to go beyond being a financial concept to becoming a tool for changing values and perceptions relating to extant business models which prioritise profits over decent pay and wider societal benefit. Skilling and Tregidga (2019) see the RLW as an opportunity to change accounting practices and revalorize worker pay as an investment to society rather than a burden for employers. The RLW could also offer the opportunity of revalorization of low paid workers and their contribution to economic growth. Studies suggest the “leakage” and “multiplier” of benefits to local economies of increasing pay for the lowest paid workers (Hunter, 2018; Werner, 2021).

“There will be induced multiplier effects as higher wages result in additional consumer spending, in turn creating additional economic growth. Such multipliers are likely to be higher if money is directed towards lower income households who tend to spend more than wealthier ones, who tend to save more.” (Hunter, 2018 p13)

The economic and social justice position requires a significant change to current business practices and perceptions of decision makers and employers responsible for implementing those changes. The RLW can be seen as a tool to present an alternative way of practicing business.

Both the “business case” and the “social and economic justice case” positions to encourage take up of the RLW require a change of practice and perceptions. The next section discusses the idea of responsibility and regulation in the literature around the RLW looking at who’s responsible for making changes and who has the power to do something about improving low pay? The traditional Industrial Relations system in the UK consists of the following actors: the State, the Market and TUs (Dunlop, 1958). Literature on the regulation and responsibility of actors within the Industrial Relations system as well as “new actors” such as Community Organising network, CUK will be considered.

3.2 Regulation – responsible actors

A key characteristic of the RLW movement in the UK is the accreditation model. Unlike the statutory NLW, the RLW is a voluntary standard and this has led to discussion in the literature about relevant actors, their roles and responsibilities in relation to pay and working conditions. This is of interest in the case of the RLW in

SC especially given the multiple forms of ownership of SC provision and the distinct civil society led nature of the RLW standard. The idea of barriers and drivers to change is central to this study and the idea of an Industrial Relations actor is their ability to “*make a difference in some tangible process*” and to influence other actors to respond to their action (Bellemare, 2000 p.386). Bellemare states further that to be considered a significant Industrial Relations actor, they must be actively involved at all levels of the Industrial Relations system, using their resources but also hindered by internal and external constraints (Bellemare, 2000 p386). With this in mind, actors will be considered in terms of efforts to tackle low pay and involvement in the RLW movement whether that’s perceived to be as a driver or a barrier.

Firstly, the State’s involvement in tackling the issue of low pay and involvement in the RLW movement will be explored and statutory regulation and legislation considered. Next, civil regulation and private regulation and the actors involved will be discussed.

3.2.1 The Real Living Wage movement and The State – State regulation

The State is the economic manager, making decisions on interest rates and minimum rates of pay and pensions. In terms of where the power lies to do something about improving low rates of pay, the UK Government can legislate and enforce rates of pay. HMRC is charged with investigating unpaid wages in the UK. Coats et al. (2012) consider the historical actions of the State in both driving the growth of low pay and poverty following the dismantling institutions of pre-distribution such as Wage Councils during the Thatcher era and the anti-poverty programmes. This shows that the State can make policy choices which can drive poverty and low pay as well as take action to alleviate poverty. The recent multiple crises faced globally and in the UK, impacting work and pay such as Brexit, austerity measures and Covid show the speed and scale the State can act for example in the case of furlough during the Covid crisis assisting employers and workers while businesses needed to close and alleviate financial pressure. This suggests that low wages are not an endemic part of the economy and that the State can choose to implement measures to alleviate low pay and poverty even in times of “great adversity” (Coats et al., 2012). The RLW movement is perceived to be a successful example of CSOs organising and influencing both the State and the Market (Heery et al., 2012; Bunyan, 2016)

The UK campaign has not been without antagonism between the movement and the State with the UK Government renaming the statutory NMW as the NLW in 2016 as an obfuscating and cursory response to calls for improving pay to a sufficient level.

The State is also a key employer with public sector roles. In the early twentieth century, the State had the role of the “Model Employer”, and seen as the best practice for pay, working conditions and worker representation (Kessler et al., 2020). Heery et al. (2023) note that there is a higher proportion of accreditations among Public Sector bodies than private sector organisations despite austerity measures and Covid and that this is a promising indication of the model employer responsibility being maintained.

At a devolved level, Governments in Scotland and Wales don't have the power to adjust statutory minimum pay rates. This has led to interest in the RLW and “soft regulation” of the RLW standard (Prowse et al., 2017; Heery et al., 2018). Scotland and Wales are seen as having made more progressive efforts (Cunningham et al., 2018) around improving pay and pre-distribution through their support and commitment to the RLW standard. Scotland has had significant growth in RLW accreditations and Wales' First Minister, Mark Drakeford has been publicly supportive of the RLW in SC in Wales. However, the lack of enforcement of the standard and lack of integration into institutional mechanisms such as collective bargaining are seen as key limitations to the depth of impact of the RLW more widely in effectively tackling low pay (Johnson et al., 2019).

Local Government and LAs are seen as important to the RLW movement given their “model employer” role and also their purchaser power via their procurement practices. There is tension between outsourcing which creates a distance between the “model employer” and the low paid worker. It is a business practice linked to neo-liberalism which focusses on profit maximisation over fair pay. LAs have outsourced security, cleaning and SC services in a bid to save money. In the case of the RLW in Scotland, LA implementation of the RLW uplift to SC workers via LAs was “varied” and “complex” (Cunningham et al., 2018). Some LAs decided to use percentage uplifts, others negotiated with individual providers. There were more negatively perceived aspects to the RLW implementation such as not giving payments to some SC providers in Scotland who were already accredited and the need to make

“efficiencies” from other services in order to be able to afford the uplift (Cunningham et al., 2018). This issue of lack of affordability of the RLW and LAs is seen as a result of years of austerity measures (Baluch, 2020) and how deeply systemic issues born out of neoliberalist business practices such as outsourcing have been embedded into SC that RLW efforts merely scratch the surface.

Despite the systemic difficulties, some LAs have accredited which shows it is possible to implement the RLW at Local Government level. Despite the proliferation of financial and systemic reasons for not taking up the RLW, these don't tend to be the final nail in the coffin of RLW campaigns with examples of LAs using innovative methods (Werner, 2021). For example, not using expensive Management Consultants (Prowse and Fells, 2016) and using budgets differently, for example Newham Council (LWF toolkit). LAs are still seen as important to driving the RLW standard and are considered “anchor institutions”, which once accredited create a “ripple effect” of other LAs, public sector organisations and suppliers to also accredit (Prowse and Fells, 2016).

Whilst the use of political leverage is seen as strong when dealing with public sector employers and contractors linked to public sector but foresee further challenges when extending the RLW campaign to private sector employers in retail, hospitality and SC sectors. Coats et al. (2012) see the importance of civil society actors in pre-distribution roles to help drive the pay improvements such as the RLW.

3.2.2 Overseas examples

Efforts to promote Real Living Wage (RLW) standards across different countries reveal varied approaches shaped by political traditions, regulatory frameworks, and social norms. In Europe, the RLW brand is rarely used, with Ireland standing out as the only EU country to launch a Living Wage campaign post-Brexit. Instead, the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) represents a “soft law” approach requiring coordinated engagement from EU institutions, states, civil society, and social partners (Hurley, 2022). These collaborative efforts often pursue low-pay solutions through systemic and social changes, particularly in sectors like social care (SC), where gender pay parity is also a concern.

In Nordic countries, the “voluntarist principle” dominates, placing responsibility on social partners, not the state, for ensuring fair wages. Rather than calculating living wages based on subsistence models, wages reflect a broader aim of reducing income inequality through a fairer distribution of profits (Alsos & Nergaard, 2022). Sweden, with its strong institutional instruments and broad collective bargaining coverage, exhibits the most stable pay gap across sectors. Despite some erosion in union density, Living Wage campaigns have limited traction in these countries due to well-established collective frameworks.

Ireland offers an example of a “bottom-up” approach. The Irish Living Wage is determined through public consultation on what constitutes a decent standard of living. Though it lacks a formal accreditation scheme, the initiative has influenced national policy: Ireland’s 2020 Programme for Government pledged to “progress to a living wage” and narrow the gap between the minimum wage and public expectations (Hurley, 2022).

Collective bargaining in European outsourcing and subcontracting contexts provides an indirect but effective path to RLW-like outcomes. For instance, Spain’s fragmented pay system—similar to the UK’s SC sector—has seen progress through national agreements in the catering industry. These agreements set minimum pay and hours, addressed inflation, and emphasized union involvement in enforcement (Johnson & Jaehrling, 2022). In Germany, outsourcing has moved from ancillary services to core sectors like steel. Unions have responded with sector-wide agreements to deter outsourcing and improve pay security, reflecting a broader strategy for protecting precarious workforces.

Scandinavian countries typically reject statutory minimum wages, relying on industry-level bargaining backed by high union density. Still, gender pay equity remains a central theme: in Sweden, a three-year pay deal adjusted care workers’ salaries relative to male-dominated sectors, and in Finland, equality allowances and gender-neutral job evaluation tools were implemented to close gaps.

Voluntary “labour clauses” have been introduced in several European countries, inspired by the push for socially responsible procurement. These mirror RLW efforts in UK local government contracts, though enforcement remains a challenge down the supply chain. Germany’s 2015 statutory minimum wage, advanced through

social partnership, especially benefited SC workers (Mueller, 2019). The literature supports combining legal, collective, and company-level regulation rather than relying on less democratic, top-down approaches (Johnson & Jaehrling, 2022).

In the US, Living Wage campaigns are often driven by civil society and municipal ordinances rather than voluntary regulation. The “Fight for \$15” campaign, launched in 2012 by fast food workers in New York, demanded not only wage increases but also union recognition. Despite nationwide spread and alignment with movements like Black Lives Matter, unionisation in franchised sectors remains elusive. However, workers have established dues-deduction schemes to fund nonprofit advocacy (Luce, 2022).

In Southeast Asia’s garment industry, initiatives like ACT and the Asia Floor Wage Alliance lobby corporations, governments, and NGOs to establish standardised wage rates. Despite enforcement challenges, these campaigns have raised awareness and placed pressure on multinational corporations, laying groundwork for more binding agreements (Ford and Gillan, 2022).

Overall, combining multiple actors, regulatory levels, and social dialogue mechanisms appears most effective in promoting fair wages across diverse national contexts

Whilst statutory regulation and the State are seen as the ultimate power in terms of implementing change, voluntary regulation is the most common form of regulation around the RLW standard in the UK and internationally suggesting an alternative power and influence worth exploring further. The next section considers forms of regulation other than statutory regulation which is discussed in the literature in connection to RLW implementation and the actors involved in developing and implementing that regulation.

3.3 The Real Living Wage and the Market and Civil Society actors - Civil, Joint and Voluntary Regulation

This section considers actors other than the State who are connected with making improvements to low pay and involved in the RLW movement. The responsible actors include private and third sector employers and CSOs (CSOs) such as TUs

and community group CUK, a Community Organising network. As mentioned previously, the RLW standard is distinct as it is a civil society led standard, calculated independently from the State and the Market and regulated on a voluntary basis. This is referred to as civil regulation is a key characteristic of the RLW standard (Heery et al., 2023). As introduced above, the decision to accredit can be positioned as a “business choice” as well as a “moral choice” for employers (Bennett, 2012). By accrediting as a RLW employer, employers are publicly committing to adhering to a standard devised and regulated by CSOs, external to their organisation. This differentiates from private regulation developed by the employer themselves (Heery et al., 2023), or statutory regulation which comes from the State. For this reason, civil regulation can be described as the effort to rebalance power in the favour of the workforce. Civil regulation and the actors involved namely CUK and the LWF will be discussed first, then other civil society actors, namely TUs. Key actors within The Market section of the Industrial Relations system will then be discussed and what is known about their experiences of the RLW and tackling low pay.

3.3.1 Civil Society actors and Civil Regulation

CSOs are multiple issue organisations and considered to be “new actors” in the UK Industrial Relations system compared to tradition workplace issue organisations such as a TUs (Heery and Abbott, 2012). Following Bellemare’s concept of a significant Industrial Relations actor (2000), Heery et al. (2012) find that CSOs do influence other actors such as employers, the State and TUs. CSOs are also considered “non bargaining agents” which sets them apart from TUs where collective bargaining is a fundamental tool. Community Organising methodology does include a negotiating element as one of its “Five Steps to Social Change” but negotiations tend to be around distinct “worthwhile and winnable” issues rather than broader systemic change. The first UK RLW campaign London RLW campaign run by Citizens London, a Community Organising alliance with a broad base membership of 250 community groups including faith organisations, schools and other community groups. CUK’s Community Organising (CO) follows a five step methodology and seeks to tackle problems identified by the community and get the community members a “seat at the table” to negotiate a solution by directly making “asks” from the person in power who can actually make those decisions. Bunyan (2016) sees

that Community Organising via the RLW movement has been successful in influencing “*both the market and the State in how resources are distributed*” (Bunyan, 2016 p498).

Some CSO success in the RLW movement is down to public support of their altruistic agenda in what they are doing is “good” and “just”. Many CSOs are multiple issue organisations and the RLW is considered by some campaigners as an “entry level” issue which few would disagree with and can act as a “building block toward a movement capable of addressing wider issues” (Freeman, 2005 p27). This brings new recruits, both campaigners and employers on board and drives the movement forward. However the merely morally binding regulation is seen to limit the potential for progressing to wider issues related to social and economic injustice and tackle their systemic causes (Johnson et al., 2019).

Although Community Organising uses a broad base membership which includes a range of actors, Wells and Linneker note specific differences between US and UK RLW campaigns especially in terms of backing or “champions” (Wills and Linneker, 2014) noting that the US campaign focussed on public sector low paid jobs whereas the UK campaign seeks to involve employers especially in terms of the LWF in 2011. The LWF is a sister organisation to CUK and is the “business friendly” accreditation body connected to the RLW movement. The two organisations are said to work to a combined but not always complementary “carrot” and “stick” capacity. The LWF has a more business friendly, facilitative approach and CUK a more agitative approach involving public actions and accountability activities. The LWF’s “business friendly” underpinning includes a Principal Partner network comprising 14 organisations (at time of writing September 2022) including multinational companies such as KPMG and Nestle as well as leading anti poverty campaigning groups the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Resolution Foundation and financial organisations such as Nationwide and Aviva and luxury garment manufacturer Burberry. The Principal Partners aim is to “provide financial and strategic support” to the LWF (Coulson and Bonner, 2015). This can be said to be indicative of the campaign taking a wider social and economic justice stance, broadening the interest and different types of actors involved by providing a business case to employers to accredit and champion the RLW. The involvement of large, multi-national employer organisations also offers a counter argument to the “too localised” (Freeman, 2005; Bunyan, 2016; Johnson et

al. 2019) criticisms, and involves employers as actors who can champion the RLW and potentially tackle the causes of low pay from within the workplace.

The LWF is the accreditation body in England and Northern Ireland, LWF Scotland operates in Scotland and Cynnal is a franchised third sector organisation which includes RLW accreditation together with its broader sustainability and social justice remit across Wales. Literature around the role and activity of RLW accreditation tends to be on a UK basis with more regional contexts less explored. Understanding more about Cynnal's role in the RLW movement in SC could add further understanding to successes and tensions between CCW and the accreditation body within the RLW movement.

The literature discusses Community Organising's founding history, working with communities to improve pay and working conditions in the United States. The Back of the Yards project is an example of Community Organising's founder, Saul Alinsky, working with community leaders to improve living and working conditions in The Back of the Yards, a deprived area in Chicago, in 1939. Alinsky would work with local faith leaders to listen to issues presented by the community and seek to find solutions to them via direct action and is said to be the basis of how Community Organising is done today. Growing activity by CSOs is said to "fill the gap" when the Market (employers) and the State fail to act on persistent issues. Saul Alinsky, considered as the founder of Community Organising and his rallying calls to action either within industry sectors or communities which had been failed. Localised, community based action has had particular success from the TWO and Back of Yards campaigns in the US in the 1930s to TELCO group in East London as the first RLW campaign in the UK successfully persuading hospitals to accredit and then other large organisations in the locality with an alliance of East London faith and community groups in the early 2000s. The RLW in SC movement in Wales can be said to be a departure from this, being a pan Wales, industry sector wide campaign which makes it an interesting case to explore how CO methodology works in this instance as well as between other RLW movement actors.

This form of organising is distinct to Trade Unionism in a number of ways. One being that Community Organising is not based on individual membership but on an alliance of existing community organisations' members working together on a mutual

issue. Community Organising is defined as: “a process that seeks to build powerful, purposeful, coordinated, and disciplined activity by groups of people.” (Walls, 2015). TU’s role as an actor in the RLW movement will be explored in the following section.

3.3.2 Civil Society actors and Trade Unions - Joint Regulation

In relation to the RLW movement, TUs are discussed in three main ways. Firstly as being the “old actor” or the “traditional Industrial Relations actor” (Heery and Abbott, 2012) in the UK, defending workers’ rights and bargaining for better pay and working conditions in their members’ interests across different industry sectors and regions in the UK. Their success and drive depends on the number of individual members whose membership helps pay for action and resources, access to the workplace and workers as well as public support. They can be constrained by national level legislation, lack of support by Government and by a negative public perception.

Secondly, dwindling Union membership is most often cited as a key explanation of growing CSO “new actor” or “non work organisation” activity in work related issues (Freeman, 2005, Heery and Abbott, 2012).

Thirdly about lack of interaction between TUs and CSOs (Prowse and Fells, 2016) or challenges of Union working with CSOs or Community Organisers on the RLW. Bunyan notes that during the first RLW campaign in London in the early 2000s, strong links were formed with TUs which were “..*highly significant albeit not without its difficulties*” Bunyan, 2016 p497). There is evidence of close TUs working with Community Organising efforts with UNISON commissioning the Family Budget Unit at York University to determine the RLW rate for London. (<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/geog/livingwage/chronology/>) and other activities during the TELCO RLW campaign in London.

Less detail is available as to the causes and reasons behind the tensions or whether challenges have been overcome. Johnson et al. (2019) recognise that CO work operates outside of the traditional union structure and this could be a key cause of tension between Cos and TUS. Heery et al. (2020), find that in the case of the RLW in the UK that neither Reinforcement, Replacement or Independence explanations suitably explain the lack of union and CSO cooperation. This could be important to explore further in order to better understand barriers and drivers to the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

In terms of how unionism works, consideration is given to where unionism takes place. Mollona (2009) considers business unionism, taking place in the workplace and community unionism which reaches out “beyond the factory” (Mollona, 2009, p651). Recognising that workplaces “... *are spaces of intersection between personal lives and macroeconomic forces*” (Mollona, 2009, p664) and that workplace issues, especially low pay, spills over to other areas of people’s lives and are therefore issues not only contained to the workplace. This broadening or opening up of workplace issues has seen success with RLW campaigns in America with multi Union bodies, “Community Led Councils” having success in their RLW campaigns and the Justice for Janitors campaign which took place outdoors in high traffic, inner city locations rather than taking place within employers’ buildings.

Similarly to Union activity beginning to expand out of the workplace and into wider community, CSOs are seen to be moving into the realms of work than previously. Compared to traditional TUs where presence in the workplace is more established and expected, CSOs are seen as more “episodic” in nature when it comes to work issues (Heery et al., 2012) and considered as “largely absent” from “workplace and enterprise” (Bellemare, 2000). Given the complex nature of SC in Wales where much Care provision is done in the community, this an important factors to understand better.

Broadening the boundaries of CSO and Union activity in terms of tackling work related issues such as low pay is considered to go beyond just union renewal and to potentially be an important part of a wider agenda. Tattersall (2018) for example, extends coalition of power to organisations other than employers and TUs as potentially a powerful tool for bringing about positive changes to work related issues such as low pay. Broader collective action between TUs and CSOs has connotations for joint regulation and could offer a potentially more powerful way of negotiating and legislating for better pay and working conditions with employers.

3.3.3 The Market – employers and Voluntary regulation

Employers can be said to hold much of the power when it comes to setting pay levels. There are differences between industry sectors and type of employer when it

comes to issues around pay and fair work. This section will cover discussion around employers' decisions to pay the RLW and outside influences on decisions around pay. Finally discussions in the literature around the RLW and SC employers will be explored.

Employers can be said to have much of the power to make decisions on rate of pay above statutory levels. In terms of regulation, voluntary regulation is another form of private regulation where employer organisations develop and operate rules they and others in their sector need to follow to guide best practice and ethical trading.

Freeman (2005) offers the example of Harvard University and the Harvard Living Wage campaign which resulted in the Harvard agreement where directly employed workers and contractors were paid an agreed rate. Freeman sees this as an example of how a private firm can implement Living Wages themselves (p29). The RLW is considered a form of private regulation (Heery et al., 2023 p160) albeit led by and with oversight of civil society. The voluntary nature of the standard means the employer decides when to accredit or withdraw and accreditation can be said to be a decision that employers take themselves. The decision to accredit as a RLW employer in the UK has been extensively researched and found to be more complex than assumed. Heery et al. (2023) find that the decision to accredit is based around three key motivator types: Institutional motivators, instrumental motivators and expressive motivators. Expressive motivators were the most frequently reported by accredited employers to becoming a RLW employer (Heery et al., 2023). These include becoming a RLW employer because they want to act in line with their organisation's values and missions and be seen as a "good employer". Acting as "moral agent" (Dobbins and Prowse, 2024), the CEO of the organisation is seen as key driving force behind decisions to accredit) and the Finance Director as the operational agent.

Instrumental motivators, described as the "business case" reasons behind the decision to accredit by surveyed accredited employers and includes elements of reputational advantages as well as recruitment and retention and commercial benefits (Heery et al., 2023, p132). Lastly, institutional motivators, described as external pressures and influences for an employer to accredit for example from TUs, CSOs such as CUK and politicians were reported by accredited employers as the "weakest" driver to accreditation according to Heery et al. (2023, p133) which does

bring about concerns on how effective the RLW movement is perceived by employers even those supportive of the standard. It is worth noting that these are based on self reported data from accredited employers and there is an amount of bias involved.

Despite this private and voluntary regulation, in seeking to extend the responsibilities of the employer (Heery et al., 2023) has had considerable success with accreditation since 2011 reaching over 15,000 employers. Some employers such as retailers LIDL choose to pay the RLW rate but not to accredit. Referred to as the “shadow living wage” (Heery et al., 2023) this decision is thought to be a compromise by the employer so they are not tied into the standard if sales drop or if there are other impacts on profit margins. While being a driver for extending the responsibilities of the employer, private regulation is also seen as an opportunity for sector wide reform, especially in sectors with persistently low pay. The role of RLW accredited employers in low pay sector reform is “*small but significant*” (Werner, 2021). The aim for campaigners is to persuade decision makers within the business and industry sector to do things differently from the “*usual industry practice of paying as little as one can get away with*” (Werner, 2021). This paradigmatic shift could be considered a key barrier to driving the RLW standard forward as it can require a radical systemic change in business operations. With this in mind, understanding how the RLW campaign navigates this would be a useful contribution.

Not all actors influencing pay are located within the employer organisation itself. Rosenfeld (2021) considers the influence of shareholders and investment funds financing employer organisations which can be said to drive employers’ focus on maximising profits and dividends for shareholders over fair pay. Business reporting systems, for example, show the success of a business is measured and accounting processes where wages are considered more of a burden than an investment (Skilling, 2019). Internal pressures and influence such as these make it more challenging to enforce voluntary standards such as the RLW, when investors in the business have strong commercial incentives but a weak sense of responsibilities towards workers (Graham and Woods, 2006). For these reasons, shareholder capitalism can be seen as a key barrier to voluntary employer accreditations, especially among larger organisations.

Consumer power as an external “market pressure” can be an important driver provide motivators for employers to implement certain code and standards (Graham and Woods, 2006), including fair pay. Consumer power tends to be particularly successful with employers whose services or products are “highly visible and strongly identifiable by branding” (Graham and Woods, 2006 p872).

Procurement systems are also seen as a constraining factor to organisations accrediting and the issue of contracted work in Local Government seen as particularly challenging (Prowse and Fells, 2016) and of relevance to this study given the reliance on commissioned care in the SC sector in Wales.

Despite its success, there are concerns relating to private and voluntary regulation including how to enforce the rules and hold organisations accountable and also the direction of decision making. For example, concerns around the CEO acting as moral agent (Dobbins and Prowse, 2024) and the “top down” direction of the decision to accredit (Heery et al., 2017). The lack of grass roots roles and external influence from campaigners, workers and other civil society groups in improving pay and working conditions has raised concerns. A key concern is that of “woke capitalism” (Rhodes, 2021) where the impetus of change and decision on pay is coming from those who already have power rather than negotiated rates via collective bargaining and joint regulation. The low hanging fruit criticism also partly stems from this issue as it is argued many employers accrediting do so without the need to make much change to their organisations (Heery et al., 2017). Without greater enforcement and oversight there is also a risk of “greenwashing” and “hollow cell CSR” (Johnson et al. 2019 p325). This avoidance of making change and lack of radical change is another key barrier to the RLW standard and understanding perspective from multiple internal and external actors involved in the wider movement could add valuable contributions to all industry sectors, especially those low paid sectors such as SC. Issues relating specifically to the Market and private, voluntary regulation in the SC sector will be considered next.

In discussions on SC specifically, the Market and voluntary regulation is important, especially following the marketization of the sector. SC provision has gone from being mostly publicly owned to mostly privately owned care provision as discussed

previously in the context chapter. Given the typical accredited employer tends to be from small, privately owned organisations as previously discussed, it could be expected to find a large proportion of SC providers accredited. The opposite is true. Only a small proportion of SC providers have actually accredited. Previous research shows that SC workers trust their employers are “good employers” and are paying a fair rate (Prowse and Fells, 2016) and that low pay is expected in the sector and there is a degree of apathy around making pay related change in the sector. As above, the decision of what to pay is not just in the hands of the employer and is more complex and affected by both internal and external pressures. This complexity is heightened in the SC sector where there is a triple threat on decisions made about pay affected by shareholder capitalism, public sector austerity measures as well as commissioning processes and sometimes all three in the same workplace setting. Despite this some SC providers have accredited despite the challenges and understanding more about factors involved could help grow our understanding of issues affecting pay improvement in the SC sector.

In terms of Market pressure, SC is not visible to the wider public and brands are less known. Bellemare’s consideration of the End User (2000) influencing pay improvement of SC services are care users, the end user of the RLW campaign are SC workers. The description of end users as co-producers seems an alien concept in SC sector. SC users have as little power as SC workers despite the Care Act ambition for greater competition within the Market. Marketization, as discussed earlier in the context chapter, has been cited as the cause of problems in the SC sector especially around pay and there is little choice or competition in terms of decent pay and worker empowerment.

Section conclusion

This section explored the role and regulatory responsibilities of key Industrial Relations actors in the RLW movement in general and more specifically in SC in Wales as discussed in Living Wage literature. Discussion on RLW actors has mainly been based on broad scale, cross region, multi industry level experiences with less focus on individual industry sectors, potentially hiding complexities and differences within and between different industry sectors and regions. Understanding more about this could help counter the “low hanging fruit” criticism of the reach of the RLW

standard as well as wider connotations of understanding further ways to counter neo-liberalism to which the SC sector has been particularly affected by.

The Welsh context in SC is not given much attention in extant discussion, and has a distinct context worth exploring for example in terms of devolved Government and interaction with the UK Government. The State has the power to improve pay and working conditions in the UK by legislating but it doesn't work in a vacuum. Power and responsibility are a key part of democratic processes and engagement by diverse groups to change things and highlight issues of importance to their group or the group they advocate on behalf of.

Much of the literature around TU involvement and Joint Regulation in RLW activities describes a lack of continued engagement with RLW activities which goes against what is known about the potential strengths of a combined Union and CSOs movement. Much of this work is from a binary perspective and opening up to more actors involved in the wider movement could shed light on why TUs, especially in Wales don't typically engage with RLW activities.

Voluntary regulation has had significant success in RLW so far with an ever growing number of employers accrediting. Much of what we know about employers' decisions to accredit as RLW employers is self reported. Whilst they spotlight their own role in decision making in the literature, this could mean the impact and efforts of civil society and other RLW campaigners is being underexplored.

The SC sector again has shown complexity in areas around regulation and understanding how multiple actors navigate those in the RLW in SC in Wales movement could add understanding of how to best improve working lives in traditionally low paid industry sectors.

The next section explores literature around how different actors interact as well as their ways of working, the tools and strategies they use within the RLW movement.

3.4 What do RLW actors do and how do they interact?

The previous section explored who the key actors involved in the RLW movement are and what their roles and responsibilities are seen to be. As discussed above, none of the key Industrial Relations actors act alone or in a vacuum when it comes to

making work and pay related improvements. It is therefore important to understand what actors do and how they interact in order to undertake their roles in the RLW movement. Understanding how actors interact in the RLW movement actors persuade and appeal to the interests of different stakeholders is explored in the literature. Of particular relevance to this study is the interaction between civil society actors therefore discussions on TUs and CSOs and TUs and Social Movements will be explored here.

3.4.1 Unions and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

Despite being seen to be led by CSOs, there are examples of Union led RLW campaigns. Union led Living Wage campaigns have been aimed at low paid, contracted workers across local government in the UK, rather than take a “spatial intervention” approach (Will and Linneker, 2014) or target one particular employer. The key campaign which was particularly successful resulted in only two of the 11 cases not accrediting. Prowse and Fells (2016) found that there was more interaction between the Union (the GMB) and Market and State actors than with CSOs or “social movements” despite the obvious interest of such a campaign. They consider the GMB to have benefitted from marketing around the RLW by the LWF, some Labour controlled Councils deciding to implement RLW across all their Councils and the Mayor of London’s office (Conservative) accrediting. Rather than using the LWF calculated RLW hourly rate, GMB (together with UNITE and UNISON) thought it was easier to campaign for a £1 per hour raise (Prowse and Fells, 2016) and that was the start of a broader campaign across local government and then eventually even broader still with a campaign for a £10 minimum hourly rate (Prowse and Fells, 2016).

Two levels of work were carried out which fit the traditional Union toolkit; a national level negotiation and local level direct actions. According to Prowse and Fells (2016) the GMB negotiator secured RLW pay rates higher than the London RLW for workers such as care workers and inclusion in future procurement by using political leverage before an upcoming election by highlighting potentially discriminatory low pay issues of the incumbent Council. This was particularly successful as the Council retained their seat, increased pay and also extended the increase to future procurement contracts. Local level workplace actions familiar to the TU toolkit including working to contract, not working overtime and lobbying local councillors

and “community campaigns”. A domino effect is also described as being a particularly positive driver and is where one Council or employer takes up the RLW and then others follow their suit. Prowse and Fells (2016) use the example of Cardiff Council becoming a RLW employer following the UK campaign in 2012 and then Carmarthenshire and Vale of Glamorgan Councils approving the RLW in 2014. Studies of the RLW across different industry sectors consider the influence of a LA accrediting as significant in driving other employers in the area to also accredit (Heery et al., 2022). In some circumstances, large organisations such as Football Clubs accredited before their local council, suggesting that LA influence in RLW accreditation is dependent on context and worth exploring further in the context of SC in Wales.

Where the GMB was unsuccessful in directly approaching Councils asking them to accredit, pressure was applied by using the media rather than by interacting with local or national CSOs. Key barriers to take up of the RLW also included cost particularly with UK Government austerity measures and Councils saying they didn't have the money for increasing wages. Employers state that approving the RLW at the lowest end of the pay scale results in problems and prohibitive costs further up the pay scale and wage differentials are a key barrier to employers wanting to sign up to paying the RLW.

Many Councils also outsource some work in an effort to save money so a council agreeing to adopt the RLW wouldn't necessarily mean their contracted suppliers would also agree. GMB undertook industrial action against school cleaning suppliers and school caterers and is an example of GMB linking up with another union (UNISON) to strengthen their bargaining power (Prowse and Fells, 2016) rather than seek to increase their strength by interacting with CSOs despite the obvious social issues related to low pay. This example is considered a successful coalition between GMB and UNISON but is unusual between TUs in the UK especially in efforts related to the RLW. Collaborative efforts to improve wages have had success in the UK and potential collaboration is seen as beneficial and even necessary in driving movements such as the RLW forward:

“...neither union or community group can – insofar as wage campaigns are concerned – can go it alone” (Prowse et al. 2017)

Therefore understanding what drives or hinders potential collaborations is important to understand. Extant explanations include the identification of a mutual benefit to each other; TUs with access to the workplace and CSOs with access to the wider community "...complementary and compensating for the failings of the other" (Heery et al., 2018). Discussions around interaction between CSOs and TUs in RLW campaigns fit into either union led or CSO led activity with Prowse and Fells (2017) even adding a "no engagement" category to Tattersall's typology of engagement (2010) to show complete lack of Union and CSO engagement in terms of RLW campaigns.

In terms of analysis on how Civil Society led RLW campaigns have been run in the UK by CUK, the Community Organising alliance. Actions are considered to be less agitational than previously (Bunyan, 2016), with primary tools being testimonies from low paid workers and appealing to employers via the business case or Corporate Social Responsibility argument for the RLW which more aligns to the LWF's campaign style than the traditional Community Organising direct action (Heery et al., 2017).

One key activity is the use of political leverage. CUK runs Accountability Assemblies where political leaders from all parties are invited and presented with "Asks" relating to the RLW and other community issues should they be elected. This activity involves developing good working relationships with public bodies in what has been described as "insider and outsider" methods (Heery et al., 2017). Related to their broad based heritage, CUK's use of a wide range of actors is considered a defining feature of their campaign (Heery et al., 2017) which makes the lack of engagement with TUs unexpected. Analysis exploring the potential of TUs and CSOs working together in the RLW movement find that existing campaigns don't fit existing theoretical models of collaboration such as Tattersall (2010) where collaboration could be considered from a reinforcement/mutual benefit perspective or fear of CSOs taking over and replacing their role or that TUs and CSOs are independent of each other and have little influence on each other. Heery et al. (2018) feel those explanations do not fully describe the relationships between CSOs and TUs in the RLW movement and it could be of interest to understand what it might be about the RLW that makes the relationship between CSOs and TUs as they are.

In the civil society led RLW, TUs are “...typically not heavily involved” (Heery et al. 2017 p319). Lack of significant engagement in community based, work related initiatives like the RLW and the Union “turn to organising” (Holgate, 2021) stops short at actual change and adaptation of traditional activities to include a broader range of working and non-working people. Rather than a radical change to operations outside of the union and change to internal structures and membership model, TUs have undertaken “ a laundry list of organising tactics...an adjunct to traditional trade union practice” (Holgate, 2021, p243) rather than a radical rethink of the purpose and aims of union activity. Holgate (2021) also considers TUs lack of engagement a missed opportunity at building a wider solidarity among workers and non-working community which could have significant impact of fractured nature of work.

In terms of the RLW, neither Union led or CUK led campaigns have focussed on mobilising workers in terms of a strike or used agitational methods as seen by Occupation activists or more agitational online presence but has seen considerable success with over 15,000 employers accredited with the LWF at time of writing. Accredited employers do not tend to be employers where the majority of workers are on low pay such as SC, Retail and Hospitality.

3.4.2 Social movement unionism

RLW as an alternative minimum hourly pay allowing people to live well can be seen as such as “alternative knowledge” (della Porta, 2020). The concept of participatory democracy is also strong with theory of social movements which seek to amend power imbalances in the world of work.

In terms of changing the world of work to favourably impact the worker, social movement unionism would seem to be the ideal partnership combining social movements and TU efforts. Kellys’ Mobilization Theory framework (1998) builds on work such as Tilly and Kelly positions social movement theory into the world of work and employment relations by considering the organisation of workers. Kelly’s framework is used to interpret findings from this work.

Much of the discussion on RLW is based around two actors usually Community Organiser and TUs, TUs and Employers, Employers and the community. Expanding

discussion beyond just two parties and exploring multiple perspectives could offer a wider lens and further understanding of how to realise this form of collective action related to the RLW.

Adding to understanding on how to optimise social movement and TU coalition could have powerful and wide reaching impact to efforts to rebalance power in the world of work especially in undervalued care and home based professions. Mareschal and Ciorici (2021) look to the success of the National Domestic Workers Association (NDWA) for alternative models of collective action. They consider the need for a “reimagining” of Union approaches to working with more of a social justice frame and for other civil society actors such as relevant third sector groups to build alliances relevant to SC workers. Understanding the extent to which this is happening in the Welsh context would be a useful contribution.

The next section considers positive and negative outcomes to the RLW discussed in the literature.

3.5 Outcomes to the Real Living Wage

There are different forms of outcomes discussed in the literature in relation to the impact of a RLW initiative. Outcomes considered in this section include positive or negative as well as “neutral” impact on working conditions, especially pay, which can be said to be a result of a RLW initiative. In the literature “wins” are considered as a number of things such as policy change or a change in business practice (Tattersall, 2018) but generally refer to a change in the status quo around factors related to pay and working conditions.

Discussions relating to outcomes in the different branches of literature drawn on in this study have distinct but complementary foci which help better understand how change is being done in work related issues such as low pay. Literature in the Employment Relations and Industrial Relations fields and also literature from the Social Movement literature are included. Social movement literature considers the degree of community engagement and degree of power to change work related issues with a wider social justice remit in discussion on outcomes of the RLW. Industrial Relations and Employment Relations literature discussion on outcomes including union revitalisation, efficacy of voluntary regulation and effects on the

organisation and the wider economy seen to have happened as a result of a RLW initiative. Outcomes including aspects of change or transformation (Kelly, 1998); change in relationships between actors, change in balance of and degrees of power as well as the extent leaders have had a positive impact on unifying workers are of interest to this study.

3.5.1 Purpose of the RLW

Discussions on outcomes to the RLW in the literature, relevant to this study, relate to the extent in which the RLW has achieved what it had set out to do and this is purported to vary from actor to actor. This section explores discussions on outcomes from different perspectives presented in the literature, from workers, to employers, TUs, the State and the community. It is noted there are contradictory aspects to outcomes yet few explanations as to why this might be.

The first key purpose of the RLW movement is to improve pay for the lowest paid workers. A key striking outcome to the RLW movement in general across the UK and used to drive the movement forward are the growing numbers of accreditations. As discussed in the Context Chapter, the LWF have at time of writing over 15,000 accredited employers in the UK with an estimated 460,000 of directly and indirectly employed workers benefitting from a pay rise since 2011.

In Employment Relation studies, outcomes to RLW accreditation are reported from an employer perspective (Heery et al., 2018) and are predominantly institutional in nature (Cunningham, 2018; Grimshaw, 2019), that is improvement to recruitment and retention issues as well as less absenteeism (Dobbins and Prowse, 2024; Heery et al. 2022; Cunningham, 2018). These are positive outcomes from the employer's perspective and can be seen as drivers, affirming support for the "business case" for the RLW as discussed earlier which seek to encourage more employers to accredit.

Studies focussing on SC sector also report similar institutional benefits after having implemented the RLW but also link improved morale of care workers to increase quality of care (Werner, 2021 p24). The contradictory element here is that although benefits were recognised, persistent undervaluing of care work and constraint of a

“chronically underfunded care system” (Werner, 2021 p25) meant that the “business case” was not perceived as viable to many care providers.

Employers report a concern around narrowing, vertical pay band differentials within the organisation, reducing the difference in pay between workers and supervisors or managers. This is considered a common outcome for minimum wage initiatives (Cunningham, 2018 p54) but is a concern in SC where pay is relatively low at the supervisor level and could present difficulties for recruitment and progression. It is also found that localised adoption of the RLW leads to wage compression and a “broad band” of low skill-low wage jobs.

The impact of the RLW is discussed in terms of wider impact on society in terms of economic and financial benefits. Echoing previous concern around raising minimum wages and the NMWs in the 1990s negative outcomes, for example, claw back from other parts of the business are not supported by evidence (Heery et al., 2017 and Heery et al., 2022). “2nd order effects” such as wage increases further up the scale are limited but this is said to be down to lack of union involvement and slow progress extending LW to contracted staff rather than implementation of LW alone. (Johnson, M., 2017).

Hunter (2018, p3) suggests the scaling up of RLW initiatives offer “significant” potential financial benefits to local economies but requires a change of thought. Employers need to consider, “... wages as an investment rather than a cost to be cut” therefore the RLW movement needs to be able to change the employer’s mindset and attitude towards pay increase.

The literature recognises the potential of TUs to engage in movements such as the RLW movement with potential outcomes including increased solidarity and power (Holgate, 2021). Another outcome within this would also involve a “reorientation of purpose” (Holgate, 2021) for TUs in recruiting members and undertaking activities outside of the workplace and within a wider community setting.

3.5.2 Power

As discussed in the previous section on actors in the RLW movement and how they interact, building support and thereby power. “There’s power in numbers” is a key

part of Community Organising thinking and the concept of scale is discussed in terms of impact as an outcome to RLW activities. Freeman (2005) summarises that although RLW campaigns in America are effective locally they cover too few workers to have a large impact on poverty overall (p25). A key striking outcome to the RLW movement in general across the UK are the growing numbers of accreditations which would seem to contradict this. This study uses Kelly's (1998) framework to better understand conditions in the RLW in SC in Wales movement which help or hinder the development of collective action. As discussed in the Context Chapter, the LWF have at time of writing over 15,000 accredited employers in the UK with an estimated 460,000 of directly and indirectly employed workers benefitting from a pay rise since 2011. Quantitative measures of outcomes to the RLW are also key drivers of the RLW movement in the UK in terms of showing the support for the standard.

There is variation in levels and sources of support in different areas and industries within the UK which is linked to who holds the power. Support or buy in from actors is seen as a key success factor in the Scottish Living Wage (SLW) effort (James et al., 2019) with the Scottish Government "soft" regulation together with values based buy in from care providers in Scotland playing a key role in compliance with and implementation of the SLW. Providers also report a lack of transparency in how LAs costed care packages and didn't feel there was mutual agreement. Providers also expressed concern they wouldn't be able to afford increases in wages.. In this sense care providers in Scotland report a loss in decision making power in regards to implementing the SLW. The SLW in SC was instigated by the Scottish Government and isn't civil society led as it was in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. This could indicate a higher level of civil society power in Wales.

For Tattersall (2010), power isn't just about quantity or number of members but about depth of engagement between actors at different levels. Tattersall notes that coalitions are at their most powerful when they act on an individual, political, local and nationwide level. Greater depth of relationship between actors is considered a key outcome from undertaking activities as a coalition and a foundation for longer term activities relating to social justice and work related issue.

Union power and revitalization

TUs are discussed as traditional actors and community organisers as “new” actors in the IR system. In terms of an outcome, undertaking activities for wider societal benefit, not just economic reasons would be a significant change in traditional TU operations and principles (Holgate, 2021). Community organising actors, new to the IR system have made efforts to organise people and places where the labour movement isn’t there or isn’t visible. Social movement unionism is discussed for the potential for efforts which go beyond the workplace. Criticism that analysis of social movement TUs is seen as “an adjunct” to existing TU practice (Holgate, 2021 p230) rather than a core part of activities.

In relation to the community organising led RLW movement in the UK, there is a distinct lack of union involvement which contradicts ideas around union renewal. Heery et al. (2017) find that LW initiatives don’t fit the replacement, mutual reinforcement or independent explanations of union engagement with community groups. This adds doubt to the positive connection between union renewal and greater community engagement.

Worker power

McAlevey (2003) is an advocate of “organizing the whole worker” (p32) recognising the “experience of class, race, faith and personal liberation” (p32) in the process of negotiating with employers and the State for better pay and working conditions. This level of engagement with the worker leads to the outcome of worker empowerment.

There is some evidence of empowerment of workers as an outcomes of RLW activity. One example being becoming aware of the difference in pay between NLW and RLW rates at Luton Football Club (Dobbins and Prowse, 2024). This is in contrast to prior studies where SC workers were reported to “trust” they were being paid the “going rate” (Prowse, Prowse and Snook, 2017). This could be an indication of a RLW initiative increasing awareness around fair pay among workers.

Understanding change at the granular level is difficult to capture but could be important to understanding in terms of “transforming the individual” (Kelly, 1998) and greater participatory democracy (della Porta, 2020).

Power of the purchaser

LAs and private Care providers shape the market dynamics in SC for example via Local Government procurement activity. Wider systemic change is needed (James et al., 2022). Purchaser power is discussed in the relevant literature in relation to Marketization and contracting process is considered to be detrimental generally to working conditions and pay for workers and are by nature used to make “efficiency gains” (Grimshaw, 2019) for the benefit of the employer. Grimshaw considers employers take up of living wage policies to be more about protecting their reputation and institutional advantages “*protecting the client’s reputation, not resolving problems in the...labour process*” (p91).

In theory the SLW gave more power to care providers in Scotland to be able to negotiate with LAs and come to a “voluntary agreement” one of four ways to implement the RLW. In practice, this wasn’t as mutually agreed as providers would have liked (James et al., 2022) with the LAs maintaining their purchase power and shaping the Market dynamics.

3.5.3 What has changed? Contradictions

The low hanging fruit criticism partly stems from the perceived lack of significant organisational or societal change as a result of the RLW activity. The voluntary nature of the standard could be seen to just be a “good thing to do” for an employer more along the line of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) exercise (Heery et al., 2017; Grimshaw, 2019). Having a socially conscious and altruistic image can be good for business and indicates that taking the “business case” approach and appealing to business owners’ interests, as discussed earlier, can have positive outcomes in terms of driving the RLW standard. The accreditation model and lack of agitational action has led some to see RLW as more Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) exercise, benefitting the organisation alone more than a social movement which has wider societal benefit.

The RLW standard has had significant success in quantitative terms with LWF reaching 15,000 accredited employers across the UK and all industry sectors and over 460,000 workers receiving a pay rise in line with inflation

(<https://livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage> [Accessed July 2024]). Further

analysis shows that fewer typically low paid sectors such as SC, cleaning, retail and hospitality are among those who have signed up (Heery et al., 2017).

Subcontracting or commissioning of work are considered to have a detrimental impact on working conditions and levels of pay in low paid industries including cleaning (Grimshaw, 2019) and SC (James et al., 2022). It distances the employers from the responsibilities and duty of care of the “good employers” towards their workers discussed earlier. One outcome discussed in the literature is the extent the RLW movement has had impact on the reduction of contracted work, thereby bringing about systemic change. Available evidence does not suggest that the RLW movement has brought about changes to business practices around contracted work (Heery et al., 2022), for example bringing services back in house. This was not evenly spread among accredited employers have renegotiated and spread the RLW wage to their contractors thus regulating pay to indirectly employed workers. Heery et al. (2022) found that cleaning, security and catering staff were most frequently mentioned by accredited employers as indirectly employed workers who had benefitted from RLW accreditation but less so retail and SC workers suggesting a difference in impact between different industry sectors and geographic locations. As discussed in Chapter two, contracting or commissioning as it is referred to in the SC sector is a key issue around low pay and understanding if efforts relating to tackling issues around commissioning in SC would be a useful contribution. Dobbins and Prowse (2024) also find evidence in contract renegotiation in connection with “People Strategy” in discrete industry sectors such as Football. This aligns with “Instrumental motives” found in studies across all industry sectors (Heery et al., 2022). These are internal motives based on the organisation’s own needs such as improved recruitment and retention. There is evidence of improved recruitment and retention across multiple industry sectors (Heery et al., 2022) and specifically in SC (Cunningham et al., 2018) where reduced absenteeism led to reports of improved continuity of care and quality of care by care users.

The football club example also provides evidence that it’s not always public sector organisations who drive RLW accreditation. The football club accredited four years before the LA (Dobbins and Prowse, 2024) and is an example of a private sector “anchor institution” accrediting before a LA “anchor institution”.

From an Employment Relations perspective, some instrumental outcomes are more negative, for example, the narrowing of pay band differentials following a rise in the minimum hourly rate. This is a concern expressed by employers (Cunningham et al., 2018) but there is no evidence as yet that this has been an outcome to the RLW.

In terms of regulation and outcomes of using a “soft” or voluntary regulation in RLW initiatives, James et al. (2019) recognised a “contradictory tension between policy aspirations and business objectives” (p1319) in the implementation of the RLW in the Scottish Government led RLW initiative in SC in Scotland. James et al. (2019) consider the market dynamics and monopsonistic nature of the SC sector a key barrier to positive outcomes from RLW initiatives.

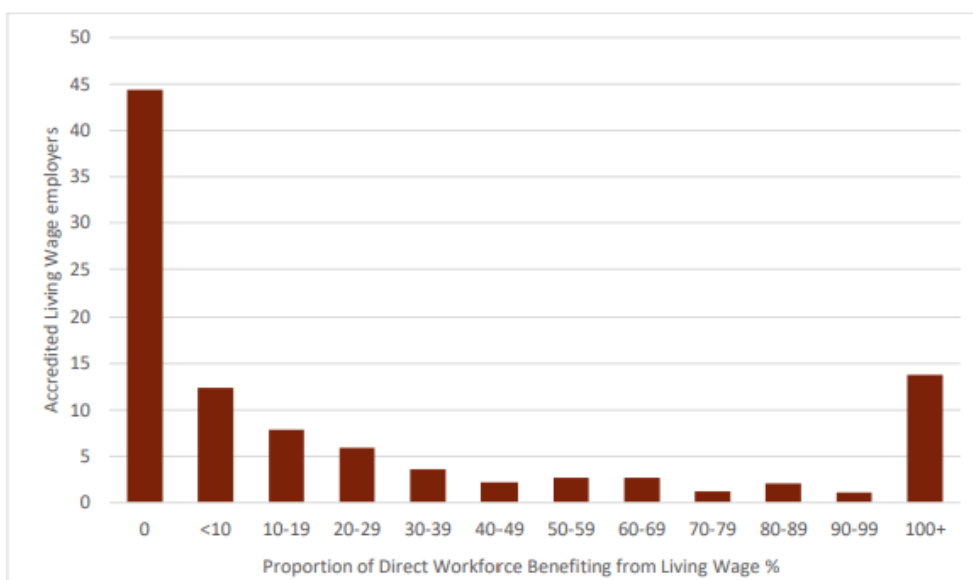
Concepts of “Inertia” (where terms were set and validated before starting the job) and “Mimicry” (the “going rate”) denote a lack of worker power in wage setting. As Rosenfeld (2021) states, “You’re only paid the amount the last people fought for”. More citizen participatory democracy is required beyond the “democracy as electoral accountability” (Della Porta, 2020 p3) and to offer an alternative way of doing things through change. Rosenfeld looks to “high road” practices which “arm the average worker with resources to negotiate greater shares” (2021, p16). Could the RLW be one of these “high road practices” that employers could take up, going beyond the good optics of corporate social responsibility practice and potentially make roads to rebalance the employer/worker power?

This depends on the self interests of RLW actors. Part of the Community Organising methods used by CUK is to seek out the self interests of potential “targets” to their campaign (those who have the decision making power to address the issue).

Some see such “top down” CSR decisions by employers on issues relating to pay terms and wages as a form “woke capitalism”. This is negative concept and has connotations to lack of democracy and letting the people who already have the power and have the most to make from perpetuating wage inequality, set the agenda (Rhodes, C., 2021). Rhodes gives examples of Multi National Corporations (MNC) such as Nike and Tiffany and Co. which take on social movements such as BlackLivesMatter and climate change in their marketing campaigns even when it doesn’t relate to their business practice or, more importantly, change their business

practices. Being seen to “do good” is attractive for consumer goods but less is known about service industries. In the RLW literature, concerns of this nature stem from the high amount of “zero impact figures” reported by accredited employer organisations. These are figures which show no workers benefitting from a pay rise following the employer accrediting. This is concerning as shown in Figure 3.3, there is a high proportion of these and it also indicates a lack of change following RLW accreditation.

Figure 3.3 Proportion of RLW accredited employer workforce benefitting from RLW



Source: Heery et al., 2022 “Distribution of Employee Impact” page 41

Chapter conclusion

Key literature from Employment Relations field and literature around social justice has been discussed in this chapter and a number of gaps identified. Firstly, a lot of work in the RLW has come from the perspective of employers. It would be useful to add the perceptions and experiences of other actors in the movement for example unaccredited organisations, campaigners and SC workers.

In terms of how the movement works, the RLW movement in SC sector in Wales has had little attention academically so far.

Outcomes are “contradictory” (James et al., 2019) with highs in terms of wins in the growing number of support and take of RLWs but then lows in terms of lack of

impact and lack of change around systemic barriers such as marketization of care being a significant barrier to break through. Use of Kelly's (1998) framework has been identified as useful to exposing opportunity structures and barriers and drivers to collective action to better understand the overall impact of the RLW in SC in Wales movement.

Chapter 4 Methodology

This chapter sets out the methodology and philosophical standpoint guiding the researcher's choice of research methods and design. Following an introduction to the chosen methodology and the philosophical standpoint, each method will be described in detail and rationales provided. A reflection on methodology used will then be provided and finally details on the analysis undertaken will be set out.

4.1 Introduction and philosophical standpoint

This study is exploratory and uses multiple qualitative and quantitative methods. Given the exploratory nature of this study, it was decided to follow an inductive logic where themes and understanding will be taken from the data generated. This study captures the experiences and perceptions of multiple actors involved in the RLW movement in SC in Wales in order to build a multi faceted picture of the actors involved, what they do and how they interact with each other and finally what different actors perceive as the outcomes of RLW movement activity. It is not intended to test an hypothesis or to evaluate the efficacy of campaigns in this work, therefore the researcher chose not to follow a deductive logic.

In terms of a philosophical standpoint, pragmatism works well for social research (Morgan, D., 2014), especially those studies seeking to bring about change. This study is applied in nature and it is aimed to provide clarity and understanding to RLW in SC in Wales activities which would be of use to practitioners. Pragmatism is considered an epistemological standpoint which seeks to produce knowledge which values multiple perspectives (Biesta, G., 2010) and help to bring about social change (Fleming and Banerjee, 2016) which again aligns well to the applied nature and aims of this study.

As well as philosophical suitability, pragmatism offers a good methodological fit where a range of different methods can be used and considered as equally valuable. The researcher used a range of quality data sources including a dataset of survey responses from RLW employers, access to the Community Organizing network which was leading RLW in SC in Wales activities as well as their own observations and interviews with other key actors. It was important to take a philosophical standpoint which supports the use of mixed methods in order to capture as broad a range of perceptions and experiences as possible. Pragmatism is considered to

have pluralistic and practical features (Duckles et al., 2019) as well as an emphasis on having those with lived experience participate. This study seeks to capture the perceptions and experiences of actors who have been involved in RLW in SC in Wales activities including the researcher's own experiences. Therefore using a philosophy which places value on experiences and perceptions of individuals (Bryant, 2019).

The agile methodological approach of Pragmatism was an important and useful approach to undertaking research of an exploratory nature where the researcher considered more than one type of data useful to answer their research questions (Hanson, B. 2008). This is important given the broad range of actors the researcher wanted to include in this study and the broad range of quality data sources the researcher intended to use such as the RLW survey dataset, interviews and the researcher's own experiences as will be detailed further below. This study was undertaken during the Covid crisis and having a range of different tools available had significant practical benefits in being able to adapt methodology, for example from online platforms to face to face when restrictions allowed, without compromising philosophical or methodological underpinnings. Pragmatism is also said to support a range of methods as well as different range of analysis and seeks to interrogate a phenomenon using the most "appropriate research method" (Feilzer, M., 2009).

The study consists of three elements of data collection. The first element with observations as a participant observer to experience being a Community Organiser as well as learning more about how the RLW for SC campaign works. The second element involved semi structured interviews with a wider range of actors within the RLW for SC movement to gain a broader range of perceptions and experiences of the movement and how it works from different types of actors involved. Thirdly, in order to consider the movement on an even wider scale, a dataset of RLW accredited employers was explored to understand patterns of RLW accreditation and the RLW's influence, across all industry sectors and parts of the UK. The multi-layered approach taken in this study has provided multiple perspectives on one specific RLW movement activity from multiple actors which has not yet been provided in previous studies where employer or TU perspectives tend to dominate. This multi-faceted but small scale design of this study offers a more granular view of the RLW in SC movement in Wales and more broadly on the RLW in the UK, helping

to add clarity and “illuminate each other” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019) on findings from the literature, left unexplained by other studies in this area such as the “low hanging fruit” criticism of the RLW movement or lack of TU involvement in RLW activities.

Each of the three elements of data collection will be discussed in more detail below, starting with the Participation Observation element.

4.2 Participant Observation

The researcher has embedded into CCW, a Community Organising network. CCW undertake a range of activities (all online under Covid restrictions) with a broad range of stakeholders who have been involved or had experience with a range of activities such as: training events, internal team meetings, large public meetings such as Accountability Assemblies and Summits as well as public actions. Key CCW team members, as well as the broader range of community and faith leaders, SC worker activists and campaigners, care user activists and campaigners, SC employers involved or interested in the RLW campaign as well as Local Government and WGov representatives would attend these activities.

Taking a Participant Observer role, the researcher trained as a Community Organiser and has participated in activities such as campaign planning meetings, public actions as well as attending and taking part in other events used in the Community Organising (CO) methodology used by CCW. The researcher participated in activities relating to RLW campaigns focussed on the SC sector, experiencing activities in practice as a novice Community Organiser. Taking an ethnographic approach, this element of data collection allowed the researcher to “get close” to the everyday activities and people involved in CO work around the RLW in SC campaign. “Embeddedness” is seen as key to gaining deep and empathetic insights in to the context to be studied (Bansal, Smith and Vaara, 2018). Emphasis on the participatory element of the observation activity is important to this study as it is an element that has been missing from previous studies on the RLW. Participation is a key element of Community Organising methodology and it was important for the researcher to experience and be as authentic as possible.

Participant Observation is considered as best suited for description of a process, in this case Community Organising as a process for social change, as it doesn't rely on only one form of data generation and can holistically capture "meaning making and action in situ" (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011) from multiple perspectives.

Participant Observation has a strong link to Community Organising. During his time at the University of Chicago, Saul Alinsky, considered the "founding father" of Community Organising, worked as Participant Observer on projects in Dance Halls and also with juvenile delinquents at Joliet prison (Walls, 2015). The researcher embedded into CCW as a novice Organiser and learnt about the role of the Organiser.

In terms of what CCW do, they undertake a range of activities (all online under Covid restrictions during 2020-2022) with a broad range of stakeholders. The researcher was able to participate, observe and reflect on the following different types of activities as a novice Community Organiser:

Table 4. 1 Types of Community Organising activities observed and participated in

Types of activities	Observations
Training events with Community Organisers	Tactics and methods taught to overcome barriers, autoethnography of the researcher's own experiences of training as a Community Organiser
Internal team meetings	Planning meetings, Chapter meetings, AGM. After event team evaluation (what worked well, what didn't work well)
Large public meetings e.g. Accountability Assemblies and Summits	Attendance, responses and issues raised by different stakeholders.
Actions	Ethnographic account of undertaking an action based on fieldnotes and reflections, description of the action and the role of other participants within the action, <u>CO team post event evaluation</u>

The researcher recorded "in regular and systematic ways" what they observed and learnt while participating observing (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011). Records were taken in the form of written notes and reflections for online activities and audio recorded or written reflections were made directly after or as soon as possible afterwards for an in person event, as detailed in the section below.

4.2.1 Fieldnotes

When participant observation started, Covid restrictions were in place and CCW had moved its meetings and everyday activities online, in line with WGov advice at the time. Therefore fieldwork was undertaken online using Zoom software. Zoom video conferencing software was widely used and supported by Cardiff University with Cardiff University licenses in place and it was Citizen's preferred video conferencing software at that time. Observations included the main discussion and event itself as well as looking at the chat interactions between team members and other participants, looking at where the other participants were from and seeing who the familiar faces were, who was new and who wasn't there. Fieldnotes and reflections were undertaken with the aim of gaining understanding how Community Organising navigates barriers and drivers relating to the RLW Movement for SC sector in Wales.

The researcher took part in a three day, online Community Organizing training which all fledgling organisers undertake and this marked the beginning of the researcher becoming embedded into the organisation. The researcher made reflections on their experiences after each day. Also this experience of online participation was used as an opportunity to familiarise themselves with Zoom software and how they might go about writing fieldnotes at the same time as participating. The researcher also practised introducing themselves online to other participants as a participant who was also a researcher. The training events were used as a pilot field observation to understand more of what was needed in a learning by doing type exercise which many ethnographers undertake (Van Maanen, 2011 p18). Whenever we did "rounds", that is introducing ourselves, at the beginning of meetings, the researcher included her research role in her introduction. The researcher was conscious that she wanted to let people know she was observing as well as taking part but without interrupting our work and relationship building too much. After various attempts, the researcher learnt not to overdo their introduction as a participant as well as a researcher and not to sound overly academic as this tended to make other participants go quiet! "I'm interested in how people go about making social change" and "I'm a research student and want to find out more about Community Organising" worked best. The researcher also used the name "Celia PhD Researcher" in the name field during Zoom calls which was useful in larger events where we weren't introducing ourselves.

The researcher also needed to make their note taking as unobtrusive as possible so as not to interrupt or distract from the activity and discussion. Once Participant Observation was underway, the researcher took notes during the event which worked well with online platform as the researcher had a workstation at home and could angle the screen and position their notebook so it was out of sight. Some events involved greater levels of participation, so the researcher needed to make reflective notes as soon as possible in private after the event. Spradley's (1980) idea of the researcher finding an "observation post" during participant observation was useful here in deciding how to physically position themselves and be able to take part as well as record observations. Finding an observation post was important again as Covid restrictions eased and the researcher needed to think about how to undertake participant observations in real life.

While issues relating to the extent of real life exposure to the activities and "The greater the contact, the better the data" (Small and Calarco, 2022 p18) face to face observations were initially thought to be preferable. CCW and their stakeholders had been using Zoom and it became the new normal for day to day activities. The researcher also had lots of occasion to get used to using the technology and became comfortable and proficient in using Zoom. Fears of only eliciting inauthentic responses (Gregory, 2020) were allayed given how accustomed actors became to online video interaction both at work and with family and friends over lockdown. Remote communication via Zoom was not beyond what any other novice organiser at this time would experience.

As with any research looking into real time phenomena such as the RLW movement, to the need to adapt to any changes or requirements as they arise was required. In the case of this study, most adjustments were due to the global Covid pandemic. From November 2021 with the removal of Covid restrictions, participant observations could take place in real life, starting with an action in Abercynon in November 2021 targeting Welsh Local Health Boards and LAs. The CUK AGM and a second action at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay were also in real life. All other observations were done remotely via Zoom. The researcher noted in their reflective journal that while it was good to see activities in public as they were intended, this could pose some challenges to unobtrusiveness especially in regard to taking notes and recording events. When trying to imagine themselves at the in real life action, scribbling on a

pad during the action this seemed both impractical and distracting to the activities. When considering a suitable “observation post” at this point, the researcher noted finding an observation post was more about timing rather than physical position. The researcher decided to note thoughts and questions before the event, collect any agenda or scripts or other artefacts from the day and then also audio record or note on their phone reflections and key events on the train on the way back from the event.

At this point, the researcher noted in their reflective journal that they felt they were becoming more confident and getting used to the formulaic nature of Community Organising. The researcher also noted in reflections that the action group made up of senior and other novice organisers was becoming more familiar with each other. Conversations were flowing more easily and we were learning more about each other, asking questions such as “How’s your son getting on at school?” and talking about our interests and what we did over the weekend. The researcher’s “unobtrusiveness” is important undertaking participant observation (Spradley, 1980) and to be seen and feel like one of the group was a good indication this had been achieved.

4.3 Interviews

In terms of timings, interviews took place in parallel to observations and were semi-structured to allow for specific questions relating to previous observations to be explored as well as allowing for more open questions.

Online methods are not new to qualitative research (Tarrant et al., 2021) and the challenges and best practice will be explored here to show how the methodology of this study was informed. It was important to understand and make decisions based on how best to generate the most authentic and rich data possible. One key issue the researcher was concerned with was the argument that face to face interviewing was the gold standard and that remote interviewing such as video conferencing participants leads to inauthentic interaction with the participant not behaving as they might do in real life (Gregory, 2020 p4). Telephone interviewing has also been criticised as they are seen to lack the personal approach and create a distance

which is unwanted in qualitative interviewing (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). This was of particular concern during Covid restrictions when most of the interviews needed to take place and would need to be performed remotely.

On reading the literature, there is agreement that there is no evidence of negative impact between remote or in person interviewing whether that's telephone interviews (Vogl, 2013) or Zoom interviews (Archibald et al., 2019). Vogl (2013) finds that for her study involving children where it was important for the participants to feel empowered, that the power imbalance was "less obvious" with remote interviewing in this case via telephone (p164). This was important to understand for the researcher especially with interviews with SC workers, SC providers or with SC users where the researcher may need to build trust before participants would want to share sensitive information relating to pay or their experiences in SC.

Studies relating to Zoom as a interviewing platform prior to Covid were relatively obscure. Zoom software "has a number of unique feature that enhance its potential appeal to qualitative and mixed-methods researchers" (Archibald et al., 2019). Archibald et al. (2019) also include the perspectives of participants as well as researchers to explore the feasibility and acceptability of Zoom as a data collection method. In their study with practice nurses, participants gave positive feedback on their Zoom interview experience placing it above even telephone or face to face interviewing. This is relevant to this study where the researcher interviewed busy professionals during their working day such as care workers, care employers, LA leaders, TU representatives. Archibald et al. (2019) also rate Zoom for its ease of use, cost effectiveness, security options and data management features.

Whilst Covid restrictions left little choice in terms of using remote interview methods, it was important to understand the intrinsic qualities of remote interviewing and its suitability for conducting high quality qualitative interviews. Concerns about whether this would put some participants off wanting to take part were allayed, with Tarrant et al. (2021) finding studies, especially longitudinal studies taking place during the pandemic having fewer participants withdraw. For many, remote communication has become the norm whether for work or for connecting with family and friends whilst in lockdown. The researcher's own experience found that even when Covid restrictions were relaxed, when interviewees were given the option of a face to face interview or

a telephone or video option and the majority chose Zoom for convenience and fitting in to their working days. Only one of the participants chose an in person interview and that was a neighbour of the researcher who preferred to meet at the allotments near the estate we both live in.

Given the broad range of participants, the researcher thought it important to give the option of speaking either over the phone or via Zoom (or face to face once Covid restriction had relaxed), whichever method fitted better with the participant. Tarrant et al. (2021) recommend using “a blend of approaches informed by participant preference” (p12). They conclude that remote data collection is not a “straightforward” replacement for face to face interviews but has its benefits.

Whilst different forms of interviewing platforms themselves are considered equally suitable, it is recognised that a particular skillsets are required by the researcher when moving between telephone, video and face to face interviews. This and other practical issues the researcher faced during this study will be described in the section below.

4.3.1 Practicalities

Whilst “methodological pluralism” (Lamont and Swidler, 2014) of using remote technologies has many benefits, such as being more convenient for interviewees and the researcher, there are issues to consider around quality of data due to connectivity issues or lack of knowledge of how to use technology. There was also a need to consider likelihood of interruptions especially for those being interviewed while at work such as SC providers, researchers and campaigners or those in a domestic setting for those, including the researcher, who were working from home. In order to mitigate against interruption, interviewees were asked to pick their preferred date and time. Again, providing an option of interview platforms provided greater flexibility to the participant.

The researcher sent reminder emails or texts the day before the interview and told participants it would be no problem to rearrange or cancel without explanation. Also the researcher always asked at the beginning of the interview if the participant was still ok to talk. This was a good ice breaker and gave an opportunity for a brief conversation between the participant and the researcher about their day so far and

how things were going in general. Apart from a few parcel deliveries and window cleaners unexpectedly turning up during interviews, there were no significant interruptions to interviews for those working at home! None of the SC providers, all of whom were at work during the time of interview, needed to leave or were interrupted. Giving the participant a choice and leaving them in control of when and how to speak worked well in this study for all participant types and can be said to have minimised interruptions.

The researcher was also mindful that people may not want to use up expensive data allowances to undertake an online interview. The researcher would check participants were still happy to continue at the beginning of the interview and would be prepared to switch to an alternative method of interview (e.g. telephone) if needed. Tarrant et al. (2021) recognise that whereas most people (but not all) have access to a device, access to affordability of data is a much more common issue and something particularly to consider when interviewing low paid workers, such as SC workers.

The issue of accessibility and good quality video and audio connectivity is not just about connectivity in the practical sense but also about building a “visible co-presence” (Weller, 2017 p623) in the absence of physical presence and building good rapport between the interviewer and the participant. The following section describes other issues relating to rapport and the way this researcher sought to build and balance relationships between the researcher and the participant.

4.3.2 Issues around rapport during online interviews

As well as considering the importance of practical issues of connectivity, timings and preferred method of communication, building rapport is considered important in qualitative interviewing. The researcher was aware of the need to consider the impact on interviewees of participating in an interview and the potential to add to people’s “burden” (Tarrant et al., 2021). This was especially important to consider in this study given the difficult circumstances already affecting people in the SC sector

and approaching the sensitive issue of low pay in a sector already impacted by multiple crises: Covid, SC crisis and cost of living crisis. Therefore interviewees were offered options of video calls, audio calls where screen is blank or a phone call.

The researcher's level of cognitive empathy is considered to be a key element to good qualitative research especially with interviews and participant observations (Small and Calarco, 2022 p24) and understanding perceptions, meanings and motivation behind views expressed is key. Being able to understand and show empathy for different stakeholders' perspectives was important for this study given the aim of gaining understanding of a range of perceptions including those which may not align with the researcher's own opinions. Finding and implementing a "working consensus" between the researcher and participant was a key part of achieving this as well as being "essential to ethical practice" (Weller, 2017 p614). Building rapport was about forming a relationship based on respect and is a necessary part of minimizing social distance and building trust.

Much of rapport building can be done prior to the interview. For example Tarrant et al. (2021) shared a video introducing the research team via their project Facebook page and created a video of their project information leaflet on YouTube for participants to see before interviews in efforts to build rapport and for maximum transparency. Given the small scale of this study, the researcher didn't create a video but did produce a participant information leaflet which was distributed prior to the interview. Participants were initially approached by an email requesting an interview, introducing the researcher, the study and why the researcher wanted to include them. Once they responded the researcher would reply with a suggestion of dates and forward the participant information survey to them. When a date had been agreed, the researcher would respond by confirming the date, sending a Zoom link or confirming the telephone number and also sending a link for an online consent form to be completed before the interview. This process meant that by the time of the interview the researcher and participant had already built an initial rapport and there was sufficient time for the participant to ask any questions.

During the interview, especially for video interviews, choosing the location and background for the video was important to consider and again a balance needed to

be found. From the perspective of retaining privacy, Lobe et al. (2020) suggest reminding participants they can add a filter to their background to retain their privacy. Regarding the researcher's own background, Weller (2017) regrets having a very formal and business like background on their study and felt a less formal background might foster better rapport and a more balanced power dynamic between the interviewer and the participant (Weller, 2017 p619).

After having attended some online meetings and events prior to the start of data collection, the researcher reflected on experiences of their own participation and what they thought worked particularly well. The researcher decided to keep her background unfiltered so people could see some of their home, but moderately staged, removing any personal items and general domestic chaos, recognising the importance of keeping their own online safety (Newman et al., 2021) and professionalism. The researcher found this helped with opening pleasantries which are seen as part of rapport building (Weller, 2017 p617). Having a birthday balloon in the background or picture or some Christmas decorations helped break the ice in interviews and allowed for a more flowing start to interviews. A good balance between showing some personality whilst retaining a level of professionalism was found in terms of pre-interview activity and choice of interview location. A balance also needed to be found during the interview in terms of power balance between the researcher and the participant. The researcher's considerations of this is described in the section below.

Power balance between Interviewer and Interviewee and “voice”

Another element of building rapport is about treading carefully and treating the participant's experiences with respect. The participant's feelings after the interview are linked to rapport building and have bearing on the participant's “perceptions of their worth and the researcher's general interest in their lives” (Weller, 2017 p615). The participant needs to feel comfortable in sharing their experiences and perceptions and this is related to the balance of power between the researcher and the participant.

Tarrant et al.'s (2021, p12) recommendation of using “a blend of approaches informed by participant preference” worked well in this study. As well as allowing the

participant to withdraw of their own free will, remote interviews also gave the participant more control over when and where to hold the interview. The researcher offered out of office hours interview timings e.g. in the evenings and on weekends which suited the SC workers involved in the study.

Even when Covid restrictions discontinued, interviewees were still given the option of a face to face, telephone or video option, nearly all still chose Zoom. One accredited SC provider preferred a telephone interview and also took part in a subsequent telephone interview. Only one of the participants, a SC worker chose an in person interview. This participant was a neighbour of the researcher's and we decided to meet at the allotments where we knew each from as this was most convenient and mutually agreeable location.

While it was important to make participants feel at ease enough to have a conversation, it's equally important to make sure the participant or the researcher don't disclose anything too personal, not directly related to the research. Newman et al. (2021) consider this an important issue to include in the researcher's reflective practices which the researcher did and found useful. For example, the researcher found that as well as using participant specific interview questions and schedules to make each interview appropriate to each participant, a different "voice" with different interviewees e.g. care workers or Council Leaders was also used. Consideration was given to the researcher's tone of voice, and found that with care workers, an acceptable tone was less formal, with Council leaders the best tone was more "professional" and with SC providers, it was important to emphasise that the interviewee was the expert and the researcher wasn't there to persuade them about the RLW.

Following each interview, the researcher transcribed the recordings or notes as soon as possible so as to retain any reflections to include. This is described fully in the section below.

4.4 Transcription

The researcher audio recorded and took written notes for the telephone and in person interviews but all other interviews were undertaken via video conferencing and recorded via Zoom. All recordings were undertaken with prior permission from the participants and transcribed.

Online interviews were transcribed using Otter audio to text software and then manually checked through and “cleaned” by the researcher; taking out identifiable details such as names and organisation names, correcting any errors by the automated transcription. and adjusting the font style to make it is clear when the participant and when the researcher were speaking. Telephone and in person interviews were written up from audio recordings and the researcher’s notes used to add reflections.

In order to be able to corroborate or challenge things brought up from observations and interviewees, NVivo software was used to explore key emerging concepts or themes using text frequency queries, word clouds and nodes created to explore themes. First and second level coding will be described in the Analysis section later on in this chapter.

4.5 Recruitment/Sample

The researcher used a mixture of purposive sampling in order to reach a broad a range of actor types as possible and also snowballing, asking each participant if they knew of anyone else it would be good for the researcher to talk to.

Initially the researcher used their immediate contacts of other PhD students to conduct pilot interviews. From undertaking the pilot interviews, the researcher realised that multiple interview schedules would be needed to make them appropriate for each participant type. For example, not asking an unaccredited SC provider why they had accredited! Next the researcher interviewed their supervisory team and Community Organisers they had already build rapport with. At the end of each interview, the researcher would ask if the interviewee knew of anyone else it would be good to speak with. The supervisory team had suggestions from their contacts with TUs and organisations involved in the RLW campaign as well as contacts at some LAs. The researcher had built up trust with the Community

Organisers through participation at training at other events and they acted as gatekeepers to their network and particularly the more “hard to reach” participants with lived experience such as care users and care workers. Through CUK, the researcher was introduced to one care user and one care worker who were part of the network and involved in the campaign. Initially the researcher thought CCW were being careful not to overburden care users and care workers as they were taking part in actions and were a valuable resource to their campaign. It became clear over the course of the study that there were only a handful of care users and care workers involved in the RLW campaign overall and they were a very scarce and valuable resource.

The researcher was also able to ask their supervisory team for contacts it would be good to speak with. Through this method, the researcher was able to speak with TU representatives and contacts within accreditation organisations. The researcher had hoped to be able to reach some more care workers through the Union contacts. One Union representative did say they had a contact who might be willing to speak with but this unfortunately did not happen and the researcher did not have a response following the interview. In the end, the most effective way the research got in touch with Care workers was through their own used personal connections of friends and neighbours.

The researcher attempted to contact SC providers in a number of different ways. The accreditation organisations did not have anyone they could put me in touch with directly but they did have a publicly available database of accredited employers you could filter by location and industry sector. At the beginning of the interviewing stage (Summer 2021), there was only one accredited SC provider in Wales. The provider responded they would be happy to speak over the phone – their daughter was doing a Masters and took pity on the researcher! They were also able to put the researcher in touch with another SC provider who was happy to do an interview. The second provider did say they would reach out to another SC provider but nothing more came of that. The researcher then found a “Top 10 Care Homes in Wales” list to cold call some care homes but had no response from any of these either from an initial email or a follow up telephone call. Returning to the publicly available online database of RLW accredited employers a few months later, there were a few more accredited SC providers in Wales and one of them agreed to an interview.

Towards the end of 2021, the interviews at that point were a little “campaign heavy” with a larger proportion of those interviewed being Community Organisers, or in some way connected to the campaign and supportive of the standard. Part of the wider movement was represented in the TUs and an unaccredited employer but a broader selection of participants was needed. In early 2022, the researcher reached out to several LAs in Wales as well as the SC Commissioning Board. The researcher was also able to contact a SC provider network representative after communicating with them at an online event and this was really useful as they had access to hundreds of SC providers and were aware of issues and concerns across Wales so this seemed an acceptable alternative to keep trying to find singular SC providers to take part in an interview.

All meetings and activities were undertaken via Zoom or telephone until Covid restrictions were relaxed at the end of 2021.

35 interviews were undertaken, comprising the following stakeholder types:

Table 4. 2 Stakeholders interviewed by category

Stakeholder type	Number interviewed
Pilot interviews	2
Academic researcher	3
Care user campaigner	1
Care worker	3
Community Organisers	5
Campaigners	4
LAs	4
Accredited Care providers	2
Care Provider representatives	2
Unaccredited care provider	1
Novice community organiser	2
Welsh Gov	1
Sector regulator	1
TU	4

Table 4. 3 Observations undertaken

Code	Event	Date
Notes	CUK Summit Mark Drakeford	27-Jan-21
Obs 1 (pilot)	CUK training	24-26 March 2021
Obs 2 (pilot)	Accountability Assembly, Birmingham	24 March 2021 1800-1900
Obs 3	Super delegation with Leader of the Labour Party in Wales	27 April 2021 1600-1800
Obs 4	Super delegation with Leader of the Conservative Party in Wales	03/05/2021 0930-1030
Obs 5	CCW Accountability evaluation meeting	19/05/2021
Obs 6	Learning Thursdays "How to win a Living Wage Campaign" 1of4	20th May 1600-1730
Obs 7	Learning Thursdays "How to win a Living Wage Campaign" 2of4	27th May
Obs 8	Learning Thursday "extra session"	10th June 1600-1730
Obs 9	Learning Thursdays "How to win a Living Wage Campaign" 3of4	17th June
Obs 10	Power Analysis Learning Session	6th July 1600-1700
Obs 11	Learning Thursdays "How to win a Living Wage Campaign" 4of4	15th July
Obs 12	Wales Cwm Taf action tem pre meeting for Huw Irranca-Davies	20th July 2021
Obs 13	Huw Irranca Davies delegation	21st July 2021
Reflection of Participant Observation		
Obs 14	1-2-1 with Keith Hebden	6th September 2021
Obs15	LWF Social Care Toolkit event	16th September 2021
Obs16	Citizens Cwm Taf HB action group meeting	22nd September 2021
Obs17	Localis Think Tank Panel session with Keith and Edel as part of Conservative Party Confrence October 2021	04-Oct-21
Obs18	Citizens CwmTaf HB action group meeting	6th October 2021
Obs19	Citizens action at Cwm Taf Health Board	16th November 2021
Obs 20	Preparing to Share - action evaluation pre meeting and nationwide meeting	8th and 9th December 2021
Obs 21	Citizens Cymru AGM, Cardiff	15th February 2022
Obs 22	PVLA student campaigns - RLW groups x4	8th March -29th March
Obs23	Senedd action planning meeting	26th April 2022
Reflection of Participant Observation		
Obs24	Senedd Action RLW	3rd May 2022
Obs25	Collective Celebration of priority campaign LW in Health and Social Care	1st December 2022

4.6 Ethics

As well as giving sufficient ethical consideration to the use of specific methods such as Participant Observation and interviewing as detailed in the sections above, an overall consideration was given as to whether research should be carried out at all during a pandemic. Would any harm be brought to any of the RLW actors (Vindrola-Padros et al., 2021) as a result of the study?

The decision to continue with research during Covid is supported by other researchers during that time, stating that when done ethically, “qualitative research is integral to the pandemic response” (Newman et al., 2021). The RLW movement in SC in Wales was at the time of the study and continues to be, a contemporaneous effort aimed at tackling poverty pay. The researcher considered it important to carry out work which is linked to help tackle the SC and cost of living crisis as well as adding to understanding of how to tackle social and economic injustice, including low paid work across all industry sectors and areas of the UK.

Ethical approval was obtained by Cardiff University Research Ethics Committee and participant leaflets and consent forms can be found in this document in Appendices two, three and four.

An email introducing myself and in some cases phone calls prior to interviews helped build trust and making use of technology such as email, Google Forms and Zoom was particularly helpful (Newman et al. 2021) as already discussed in the section above. Gaining informed consent has been made with both the participant and CCW’s activities in mind. Informed consent remains the “gold standard” across many different forms of research (Newman et al., 2021). The researcher obtained consent by providing the participant with as much time and information as possible but also without obstructing the normal day to day running of CCW’s activities and the RLW for SC campaign itself.

Google Forms was really useful to be able to send consent forms to participants for them to complete and send back to the researcher conveniently via smart phones or laptops in advance of the interview. Google Forms was very easy for participants to use either on their smart phones, tablets or laptops which helped build trust by allowing the participant time to ask questions or change their mind. This method of

gaining consent also eliminated the need to bring out forms to be read and signed during the interview and didn't get in the way of the "conversational partnership" (Rubin and Rubin, 2012) an important part of rapport as discussed in full detail in the section above. Eliminating the need to print off and sign a consent form at the beginning of the interview was also a really effective way of maintaining confidentiality (Newman et al., 2021 p4) as the forms were securely stored online.

In terms of anonymity and observing and writing up observations, the researcher assigned general role descriptions e.g. SC worker 1 or Employer A, Community Organiser B etc). Participants were given the chance to view the researcher's notes and ask to have any identifiable information amended if deemed necessary but no requests were received.

One key benefit of using Zoom software for interviewing was the secure recording facility. Equally important was the facility for participants to be aware that they were being recorded and could give or withdraw consent to be recorded. The researcher asked permission to record via a consent form in advance of the interview and also again at the beginning of the interview. An automated announcement would be heard by all participants once recording had started. If consent to record was withdrawn the researcher would not press record and would take notes during the interview instead. No participants withdrew their consent to record during this study.

Personal data comprising name, organisation and contact details (email address or mobile phone if no email was available) were collected as part of the project admin rather than the data collected for analysis. Consent forms and a coding key were used for anonymising participants and were stored securely on University password protected systems. If a participant chose to withdraw at any time, the researcher would have been able to refer to the coding key and make sure the correct participant is removed. No withdrawal requests have been made. No personal data (e.g. age, address) or information related to protected characteristics was required for the study and was not requested or recorded during this study.

The anonymised data will be retained for up to five years after the end of the project or at least two years post publication, in line with the current University policy.

Ethical considerations have been undertaken throughout this study and are seen as fundamental as providing the necessary rigour to undertaking research of this kind.

The next two sections describe two other important quality assurance considerations to good quality research; firstly reliability and secondly reflexivity.

4.7 Reliability and Reflexivity

Lincoln et al.'s (1985) four "trustworthiness criteria"; credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability is linked to transparency in methodology and analysis. A key aim of reliability in qualitative and mixed methodology is said to be less about replicability (Small and Calarco,2022) and more about allowing the reader to experience the thing being observed vicariously.

Seale (1999) considers the range of different forms of reflexivity in research and the importance of transparency from one end of the spectrum from "confessional tales" in ethnographic writing where authenticity was key (p161), to Whyte's form of reflexivity as "conventional scientific virtue" (p162) where a detailed methodological explanation is provided so the reader can be assure themselves of the work's quality and rigour. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) consider quality in every part of exploration being "documented and retrievable" whereby reflexivity is the process of "turning personal experience and intuition into public and accountable knowledge" (ibid;p191).

The researcher's approach to reflexivity in this study falls somewhere in the middle of that range. More interpretive than a raw transcript but reliable enough to know which actor is saying what and understand why. In order to achieve an acceptable level of transparency, the researcher has written this section of the chapter to set out and justify ways data have been collected and how decisions have been made in the design of this research.

Feilzer (2009 p13) considers mixed methods to require reflexivity and care, asking the questions "what is it for?!", "who is it for?" and "how do the researcher's values influence the research?" (p8). The researcher found these questions useful in their reflections especially in deciding the direction of the research and choosing the sample.

As discussed in earlier sections of this chapter, the researcher reflected before and after participant observations in order to guide and focus the observation and

subsequent observations. The researcher also reflected on interviews immediately or as soon as possible after each interview. These reflections helped the researcher refine methods as well as inspire ideas for further readings, participants to include or directions for the research. These have been described in detail in the section on observations in the form of reflective cycles throughout the study for observations and interviews. Reflection was also a part of the transcription process, where the researcher left comments and thoughts during the initial data cleaning.

Another key aspect to this study is the ethnographical element where the researcher embedded with the Community Organising network and taken part in developing and undertaking public actions relating to the RLW in SC in Wales movement.

Pragmatism allows for the “empirical alongside its “I-witnessing” (Van Maanen, 2011 p156) and makes it possible for “many truths to be found” (Van Maanen, 2011. p157). The researcher needed to trust in the validity of their own experiences, which Van Maanen refers to a “I-Witnessing”. This is important in this study where perceptions from multiple stakeholders are sought, including the researcher’s own. Vignettes relating to specific observed regularities and key events were developed as a form of and trustworthiness as well as the researcher’s narrative interpretation. The use of vignettes allowed for transparency in polyvocality in who has said what so the reader can see how the researcher has arrived at their conclusions and arguments.

The next section sets out how the researcher analysed data generated from participants observations, interviews and quantitative analysis and the theoretical framework used to aide interpretation of findings in line with the study’s three Research Questions.

4.8 Analysis

This sections sets out how data generated from participant observations, interviews and a quantitative dataset were, analysed, integrated and interpreted.

This study collected and analysed the three data components; participant observation fieldnotes analysed as narrative into vignettes, interviews with thematic analysis and quantitative data with descriptive statistical analysis. Data were then converged and interpreted using theoretical framework specific to each of the three research questions.

Firstly, analysis of participant observations will be described.

For data generated by participant observations, the researcher needed to decide how to best present analysis and interpretations of data collected via fieldnotes and reflections. Vignettes were considered the best way to analyse and interpret data generated via participant observations as they kept the richness of the data but were also considered more digestible to the readers and shorter in length.

Vignettes based on particular regularities or key events were developed to breathe life into the researcher's experience of being a fledgling Community Organiser and add a reflexive component and further dimension to the qualitative element of the research (Humphreys, 2005). Vignettes are considered to be a significant part of the "contemporary social researcher's toolkit" (Jenkins and Noone, 2019) and Reed-Danahay (1997) considered autoethnographic vignettes a "both a method and a text" (p9). Vignettes fitted the researcher's aim of capturing their experiences as a novice Community Organiser as well as finding an effective format to disseminate which was shorter than an ethnography but still a narrative in a detailed but digestible format. The quality of ethnography is associated with the richness of data and "thickness" of the description of the things it's describing (Leeds-Hurwitz in Hammersely and Atkinson, 2019). The description needs to be rich enough to convey the complexities and nuance of a situation or event in a way the reader can follow along with.

Although embedded within CUK, the researcher kept a degree of distance between themselves as a researcher and themselves as a fledgling Organiser during participation observations. This was helpful allowing the researcher to some extent have an insider or emic view of what it's like to be a novice Community Organiser but also able to pull out and stand on my "observation post" (Spradley, 1980) and take a etic view of what this might mean to the wider movement.

Ensuring the richness of the data generated was important and so research questions were kept as open as possible to be able to capture meaning, motivation behind their part as an actor within the RLW movement and what they hoped to achieve from different actors' perceptions, which were seen as key elements in good quality ethnographic and interview research methods (Small and Calarco, 2022).

Vignettes are a dextrous research and analytical tool and this adaptability and dexterity aligns well with the pragmatist assumptions the researcher is following "...as compact scenarios designed to elicit data from research participants or to encapsulate themes and findings from the research process." (Jenkins and Noone 2019). Vignettes work well as part of multi methodology, are suitable for academic and non academic readers and also offer a "degree of practical and psychological safety" which can allow for sensitive or difficult issues to be retold and reconsidered without compromising participant anonymity (Jenkins and Noone, 2019).

Ely et al., (1997) consider different types of vignette including the "snapshot" form of vignette which sets out to retell a specific event or moment in time during the research. The use of vignettes also helps with issues of transparency and trustworthiness (Jenkins and Noone, 2019) as the researcher sets the scene and shows their "workings" and thoughts behind what is being shown in the vignette and the reader can form their own opinion and continue the discussion.

4.8.1 Interviews – Thematic Analysis

As well as undertaking Participant Observation, the researcher undertook 35 interviews with a broad range of other actors. This method allowed the researcher to learn other actors' experiences and viewpoints and weave them together in "a web" (Geertz, 1973) to construct a full understanding of how the movement worked. For this purpose Experiential Thematic Analysis was chosen as the most suitable method of analysis for interviews as it puts emphasis on the interviewees perspective and experiences. The process of analysis is described in this section and is based on Braun and Clarke's six step process (Braun and Clarke, 2013) of familiarisation and multiple rounds of coding and is described below.

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and read through multiple times to correct any misspellings, transcription errors and also to remove identifying data from the transcripts. This also allowed the researcher to familiarise themselves with the data and identify initial themes and patterns.

Transcripts were all uploaded onto NVivo data analysis software (version 12) and an initial round of coding was undertaken across all interview transcripts. In the next round of coding, key data where there were particularly strong occurrence of related themes, were identified and categorised into two broad categories of “Barriers” and “Drivers” as shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 – Interviews – thematic analysis first level coding

Drivers

Benefits to employer (improved recruitment and retention, reputational benefits)
Care crisis in Wales
Covid and SC workers deserve more
Domino effect accreditation
Employers can manage extra cost
Issue of low pay
Support from political leader
Quality of Care
Civil society led “grass roots”

Barriers

Burden of RLW falls on SC providers
Lack of engagement by care workers
Limits of RLW movement (degree of actual change, small scale, RLW “not enough”, lack of understanding
Confusion around RLW brand and standard
Lack of funding for dedicated RLW work
Privately owned SC providers (lack of Union access to workers, offshore funding and shareholders)
Commissioning procurement
Wage differentials and value of SC work
Fragmented Social Care sector

The researcher noticed a significant amount of data related more specifically to the campaign rather than the wider movement which also had a high occurrence of repetition and so a third broad category was created to capture these themes, as shown below.

Figure 4.2 – Interviews – thematic analysis first level coding “Campaign”

Campaign

Accreditation process
Access to care providers
Becoming involved in campaign
Covid
Domino effect accreditation
Growth of RLW movement
Influence of movement
Political Support
Different roles of actors
Success in RLW movement
Attribution of responsibility

The next stage of coding sought to refine codes even further and this time decide of key data most relevant to the three Research Questions and which would add useful broader perspective on top of the researcher’s Participant Observations and the descriptive Quantitative analysis. These are shown in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3

RQ1 – who are the actors?	RQ2 – how does the movement work?	RQ3 – outcomes to the living wage movement
Becoming involved	Domino effect accreditation	Lack of worker empowerment
Lack of care worker engagement	Effect of Covid	Growth of movement
Roles of actors	Accreditation process	Limits of movement
	Political support	Perceptions of success
	Targeting LAs	
	Protecting reputation	
	Collective action	

4.8.2 Quantitative data analysis

The researcher also had access to the Cardiff University research team's database of accredited employers. Descriptive statistical analysis was undertaken using SPSS software version 27.

The database contains over 16,000 observations of data which comes from LWF data of RLW accredited employers across all industry sectors and all areas of the UK. Data were organised by industry sector clusters including SC. The existing SC cluster included childcare as well as adult domiciliary and residential care. The researcher decided to focus on employers who identified as providing adult care services rather than including childcare services. This was due partly because data for childcare services seemed to differ from adult care services signifying potential to be studied in their own right. Adult SC services would also better complement interview data which only included adult care providers. The researcher recoded the variable to exclude childcare and only include adult SC.

When exploring SC accreditations by UK region, the researcher discovered there were only a few SC providers based in Wales who were already accredited (n=31). This number was too small to undertake numerical analysis so it was decided to undertake descriptive analysis on SC providers across all regions of the UK and highlight any Wales specific issues in the text.

Descriptive analysis was undertaken on variables by UK region, size of employer organisation (by number of employees), type of ownership (public, private, non-profit). This helps understand the type of SC providers who had already accredited and aligning to Research Question 1 and finding out more about who the actors are, in this case accredited employers and accredited SC providers.

The quantitative data analysis helps answer Research Questions 1 and 3.

Understanding more about the characteristics of employer organisations including SC providers who have accredited helped include aspects of an important actor within the with Research Question 1. The quantitative data also helps add to understanding on outcomes of the RLW, aligning to Research Question 3. In particular outcomes which give an indication of change such as impact of the RLW in particular outcomes relating to how and to what extent the RLW has benefitted

employees was explored. Also the degree to which the RLW can be said to have made changes in organisations was analysed and help add clarity to the low hanging fruit criticism especially in SC.

Whilst these data are useful data and the closest to a full population of RLW accredited employers, there are some limitations. Impact on individual employer's data (i.e. how many employees at an specific organisation) is confidential and therefore individual impact by employer was not possible to present. Data is from the employer perspective only, from what employers have reported plus what researchers have estimated to fill in missing fields or where errors have been detected. Data is not raw from the LWF but is cleaned by the research team and missing fields such as impact of RLW on employees have been estimated by the research team. Quantitative analysis has provided a useful snapshot of characteristics of RLW accredited employers in the UK.

Summary

Using a mixed methodology of participant observations, interviews and secondary quantitative data analysis has provided complementary data at different levels of the overall RLW in Social Movement in Wales. Observations have provided a grounded perspective of a fledgling organiser in the RLW in SC in Wales campaign. Interviews have provided a meso level analysis of a broad range sample of key actors in the RLW in SC ecosystem and their involvement and experiences of RLW efforts. Secondary analysis of RLW accredited employers has provided a macro level snapshot of patterns of accreditation across the UK, giving insight to the type of employers characteristics and influence and impact of the RLW. Using this methodology has allowed the researcher to generate data and gain understanding across all three of the Research Questions from multiple perspectives. The next section show how the researcher has pulled together all the different data to allow for analysis.

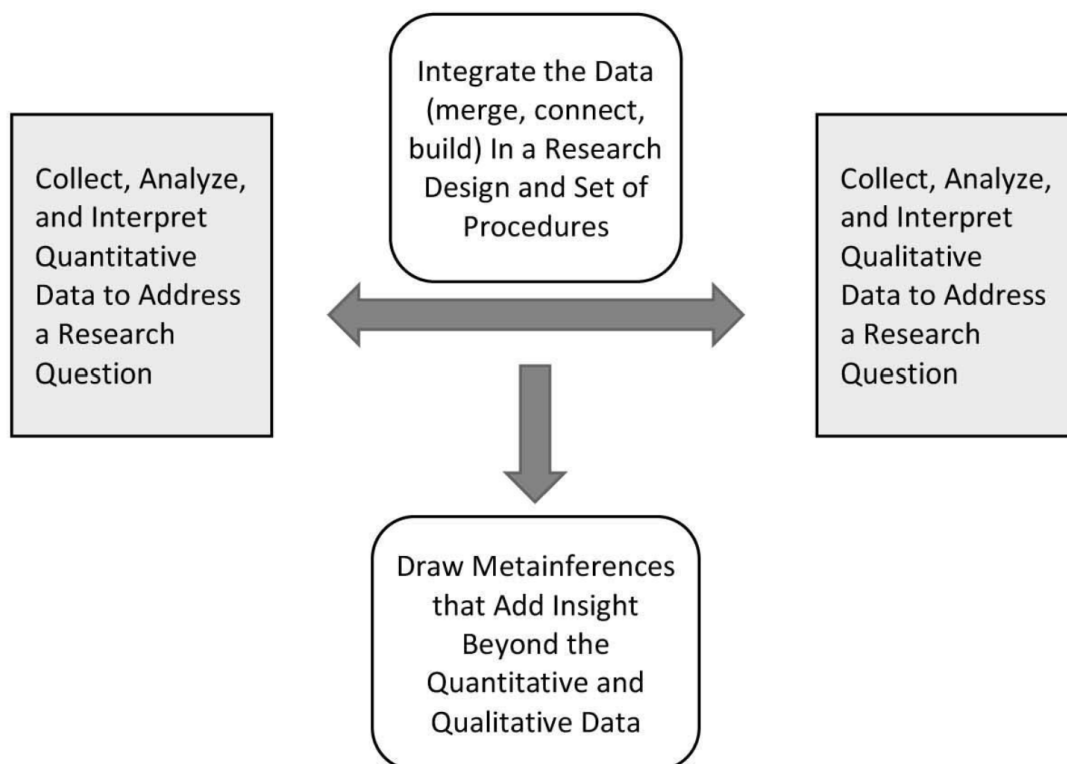
4.8.3 Theoretical Framework

This section sets out how data generated from participant observations, interviews and a quantitative data were integrated and interpreted.

Data from all three data collection methods were merged and integrated into a theoretical framework in order to best answer the research question. In this study integration occurred at the analysis stage.

Integration is the process by which the researcher brings together quantitative and qualitative data in a study allowing for the generation of metainferences (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2023). As illustrated in Figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4 Interconnection of four components of mixed methods research



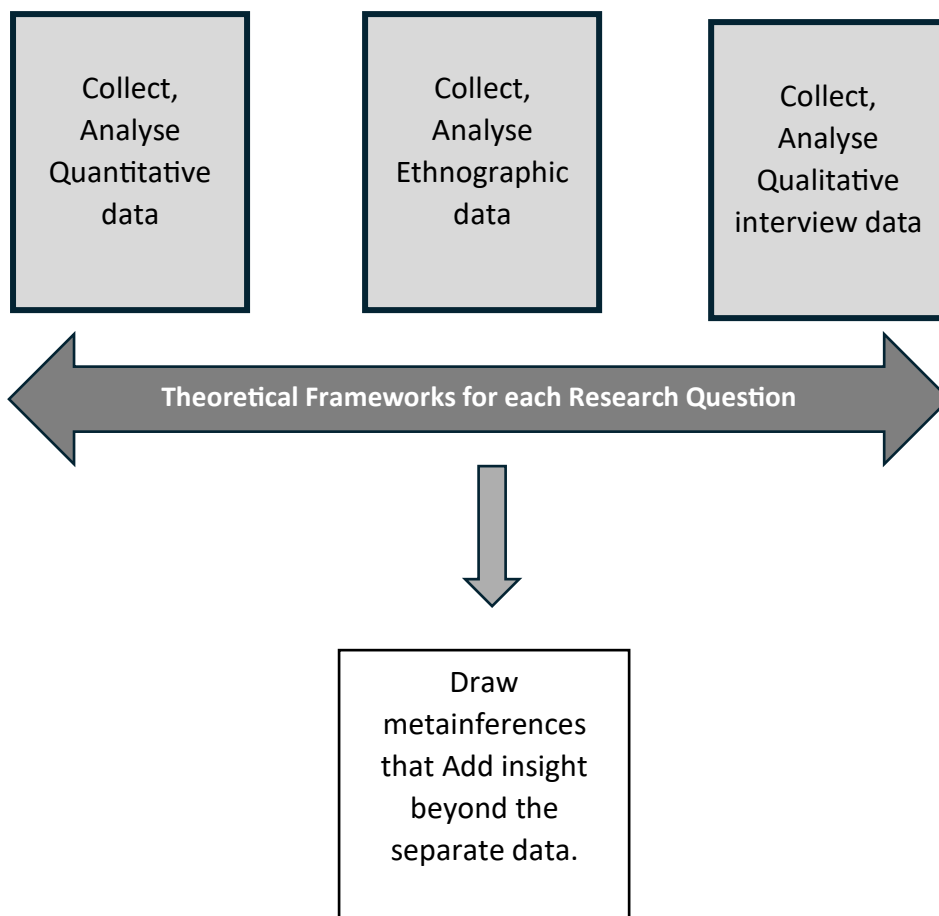
Source: (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2023)

Creswell and Plano Clarke (2023) reflect on terms used in their initial guide on undertaking mixed methods research and terminology used such as sequential and concurrent which emphasised the timings or phases such as integration of different data sets. Terminology such as convergence is now used an a greater emphasis on purpose and intention of integrating mixed data. The purpose of integration of the three forms of data was to use the mix of data generated to best answer each of the three Research Questions.

This study collected and analysed the three data components, participant observations fieldnotes analysed as narrative into vignettes, interviews with thematic

analysis and quantitative data with descriptive statistical analysis. Data were then converged and interpreted using theoretical framework specific to each of the three research questions, as illustrated in the diagram (Figure 4.5) below. Theoretical frameworks are considered “navigational devices” (Evans et al., 2011) used in mixed methods studies such as this one. They help to interpret multifaceted findings into something meaningful and relevant to the Research Questions.

Figure 4.5



To aide interpretation and pull together data generated from all sources, a theoretical framework has been chosen which places findings within what has been discussed in the literature and directs analysis to each specific research question .

For Research Question one, which seeks to identify key actors and understand their roles within the RLW movement in SC in Wales, especially those considered “new actors”, Bellemare’s (2000) theory of what makes a significant actor within the

Industrial Relations system is helpful. Interpreting findings to explore multiple actors' ability to "...make a difference in some tangible process or in the course of events" (p386) from different levels (personal, organisational and structural).

Research Question two seeks to understand how the movement works and how the actors interact Tattersall's extended typology of coalition will be used to assess the degree of power and influence held by actors individually as well as collectively. The extended version will be used to include "new actors", in this case CCW, as Tattersall recognises the importance of civil society actors and broadening the original typology which included only TUs and employers.

Research Question three, seeks to gain understanding of perceived outcomes of the RLW movement in SC in Wales. Another Tattersall model, the coalition success model (2018), has been chosen to aide analysis here. The dual focus on work related issues as well as social change is of interest to this study as well as inclusion of traditional and new actors.

Finally, to add further depth and interpretation of identified aspects across all three Research Questions, Kelly's Mobilization Theory (1998) will be used in the Discussion chapter to consider the overall impact of the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Now that the philosophical standpoint, research design and methodology and analysis have been described in full, the next three chapters set out findings related to each research question. Chapter five explores findings related to Research Question one, on who the actors are in the RLW in SC movement and what their role in the movement is. Chapter six displays findings relating to Research Question two on how the movement works and how actors interact. Finally, Chapter seven answers Research Question three and presents findings related to perceived outcomes to the RLW in SC movement.

Chapter 5 Findings Who are the actors in the Real Living Wage in Social Care movement?

This chapter addresses Research Question 1 “Who are the actors in the RLW in SC movement in Wales”? It focusses on a sample of key actors within the RLW movement in SC in Wales. First, a range of key actors in the RLW movement in SC in Wales will be introduced individually and their position within the Industrial Relations system generally and then more specifically within the RLW in SC movement. Analysis will be aided by Bellemare’s (2000) theory of what makes an Industrial Relations actor in terms of their role in the RLW movement. This is useful to this study as Bellemare considers non traditional Industrial Relations actors such as End Users and will allow the researcher to consider CSOs included in this study. Firstly each actor’s strengths will be considered in order to explore their capability and agency to make changes. Then constraints each actor operates under will be analysed in order to understand the limitations of each actor’s resources at an individual, organisational and social level (Bellemare, 2000, p186).

To understand how and to what extent actors fit within the Industrial Relations system and to aide understanding for subsequent chapters, actors will be separated into Civil Society, Market and State categories. This categorisation will be helpful for gaining understanding of actors’ roles within the Industrial Relations system as well as interactions and influence which will be explored in the next chapter.

Actors have been observed by the researcher to have played key roles in the RLW in SC movement in Wales whether that’s as campaigners or as “targets” of the campaign, for example a SC employer or LA. Also included are CSOs such as TUs, who are considered “traditional actors” within efforts to improve pay and working conditions in the UK and CCW as “new actors” in work related arena.

Findings draw on data from interviews undertaken with key actors, participant observations of events and actions as part of the movement and secondary data analysis of organisations’ materials as well as a dataset of accredited employers across the UK. First to be introduced will be a sample of Civil Society actors, then Market actors and thirdly State actors.

5.1 Civil Society

The first actor category to be considered is civil society. As discussed previously in the Literature Review chapter, they are considered “new actors” in the Industrial Relations arena (Heery et al., 2012) but in terms of the RLW campaign they are considered the leading actors (Heery et al., 2017).

5.1.1 Citizens UK

CUK, together with their sister organisation the LWF are said to be leading the RLW movement in the UK (Heery et al., 2017). Comprising 18 Chapters in the North and South of England predominantly around major cities such as Birmingham and Manchester and also one in Wales. The CUK network has over 450 community groups within its network (<https://www.citizensuk.org/chapters/> [Accessed September 2023]). The Welsh branch or “Chapter” of CCW, was founded in 2014 by the CUK Deputy Director who has personal links to Wales.

CUK’s mission is to “overcome injustice” and their values include “solidarity and inclusion” (<https://www.citizensuk.org/about-us/our-values/> [Accessed September 2023]). They seek members to join the CUK alliance who share those values.

5.1.2 Members of the Citizens alliance

At time of writing, CCW, the Wales chapter has 24 community groups within its membership network. Membership at time of writing consisted of multiple different faith organisations, two high schools and a primary school in Cardiff, one Further Education institution and one Higher Education institution. There are also several third sector organisations which look at issues relating to welcoming refugees to Wales, education for disadvantaged children and tackling poverty and racism.

In line with the Broad Based Organising (BBO) method discussed in the Literature Review Chapter, CUK seek members from the following range of organisation types.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION?

- Church
- Mosque
- Gurdwara
- Synagogue
- Mandir
- School
- FE College
- University or Students Union
- Trade Union
- Neighbourhood or Residents' Association
- Charity, NGO or Voluntary Organisation
- Other

Source: (<https://www.citizensuk.org/chapters/cymru-wales/> [Accessed September 2023]

CCW membership is concentrated in Cardiff, the capital city of Wales and home of the devolved WGov. Membership is in the early stages of growth outside of Cardiff in areas such as the Vale of Glamorgan, Pontypridd and Merthyr and one member in North Wales. Membership is one source of “hard” funding along with training events and “soft” funding streams are also sought in the form of grants and donations (Observation 21 Annual General Meeting notes). Members pay an annual membership fee depending on the size and nature of their organisation.

There are also currently three strategic partners which are large organisations in Wales, employing over 250 people. Strategic partners have a say in the direction of change and pay a larger annual membership fee each per year (Interview with Academic Researcher 3). Membership is also open to TUs and there is currently one Student Union (Cardiff University) but no TUs within the CCW network. Other CUK Chapters have Union members , for example UNISON are a member of the Manchester Citizens Chapter (<https://www.citizensuk.org/join/join-us-as-a-union/> [Accessed October 2023]), although TUs in membership tend to currently be the exception rather than the norm. At time of writing, there are no Neighbourhood or Resident’s Associations who are members within the CCW alliance or community groups outside of faith, education and charity groups.

Individuals within community organisation types are encouraged to join the network and train as a Community Organiser, and are then referred to as a “Leader” within that member organisation. While membership covers the whole organisation, it tends to be the few key individuals or Leaders within that organisation who take part in activities and maintain the relationship with CUK. All new members undertake training to learn the Community Organising five step methodology explained previously in the Literature Review chapter. This requires significant commitment from both trainees and trainers either online over three days or at a residential course for six days and these are open to members across all chapter in the UK. Not only is this a key income stream for CUK but an important part of an expectation of the level of commitment and engagement of members within the network to actively engage and not merely be passive members.

5.1.3 Remit – what issues are covered and role of the actor

CCW are Community Organisers. Describing CCW as a “Non Work Organisation (NWO)” (Freeman, 2005) would be incorrect as they have run previous programmes such as the Community Jobs Compact (<https://livingwage.wales/community-jobs-compact-citizens-cymru-wales/> [Accessed September 2023]) which persuaded large employers in areas of Central Cardiff to hire more local people. According to Community Organising methodology, issues are identified via “listening exercises” within the community and are voted on by members in terms of which issue to prioritise. They are a “multiple issue” organisation (Heery et al., 2012) and at time of writing have issues which are said to reflect key interests of the current membership:

- 1)The RLW
- 2)Dignity for care workers
- 3) Welcoming refugees

(Source: <https://www.citizensuk.org/chapters/cymru-wales/> [Accessed September 2023])

Issues also align with political events and pressing issues of the day such as:

- Living Wage and Living Hours
- Mental Health
- Welcoming Refugees and a Fair Pathway to Citizenship
- Housing and Homelessness

- Racial Justice in Education
- Climate Justice: retrofitted Homes & Better Public Transport
- Democracy & Devolution (including building up to next UK General Election)

(Source: Citizens Agenda, September 2023)

Leaders are invited to join Action Teams relating to specific causes and take part in the planning and ultimately in undertaking public action.

As discussed earlier in the Literature Review chapter, activities include regular events such as training and planning meetings where Action Groups develop their plans guided by an Organiser in their particular campaign. From the researcher's experience, these lasted about one hour per week and taking place online via Zoom group, members have a chance to get to know each other as well as developing their organising skills, guided by a more experienced Organiser.

CCW would see their main role as building a network of community organisations, to help them tackle issues of social injustice affecting that community by themselves. Recruitment and building up member organisations is another key activity of Community Organising linked to building up collective power to tackle a range of issues. As in Chapter three, the importance of differentiating organising from mobilisation is recognised by Holgate et al. (2018) and stressed by one Community Organiser interviewee. They do not mobilize groups for one specific action but rather organise to build a network for longer term relationships on a range of issues.

"I think [I'm a] Campaigner. We're careful not to call ourselves activists because activists often mobilise, whereas what we do is organise."
(Campaigner Organiser).

The roles of Regulator and Agitator

The RLW standard is an example of civil regulation (Heery et al., 2017) and part of the CUK role is as regulator is to hold employers and people in power to account. They work alongside the LWF and Cynnal in Wales and drive accreditation. This is described by an interviewee as working in a "pincer movement" (Welsh Gov regulator 1) with each other. They use different methods which will be discussed in detail with some examples in the next chapter but it is important to introduce two key roles around regulation of the RLW standard, often described as "carrot and stick" roles among Organisers. The role of "carrot" uses capitalistic encouragement and

reward and the role of pressure “stick” puts pressure and agitates the employer or decision maker. Whilst the RLW standard is not statutory, CUK have to some extent, the role of enforcer to hold organisations accountable. They use public action and also the “threat” of public action to manage and motivate employers. The role of “stick” is important in driving the campaign in terms of accreditations, hold decision makers to account and keeping up interest in the campaign.

“The stick role has been fairly constant across the Living Wage campaign, but ultimately on the big stuff, you do really need to “stick”. It needs to at least be there, even if you're not wielding it. Otherwise, people will find other things to focus their time on.” (Campaigner Organiser 6)

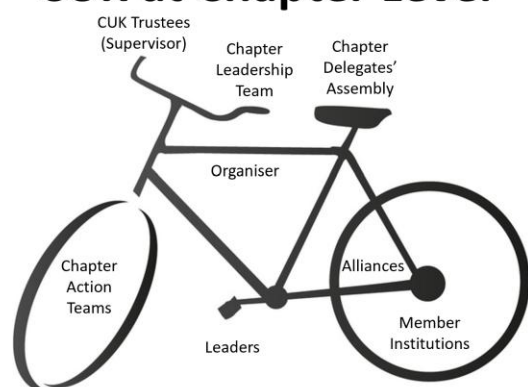
For the RLW in SC campaign in Wales, this role has changed slightly as capitalistic encouragement and reward referred to as the “business case” strategy doesn’t fit with the nature of the SC sector which is less consumer driven than other industry sectors. As discussed in the Context chapter, ethical factors given the nature of SC as well as recognising multiple crises being experienced in the Care sector resulting from Covid and decades of underfunding have called for a more sensitive application of agitation than in previous campaign run by CUK. Examples of methods will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter but it's important to see how campaigners have recognised a need to amend their role within the RLW for SC movement.

“Cynnal obviously, play that role in Wales on the employer facing, carrot waving bit and CUK are the stick. That doesn't mean we're an aggressive stick. But even the celebratory stuff [during the SC campaign] is a stick in disguise, you know, the iron fist and the velvet glove?” (Campaigner Organiser 6)

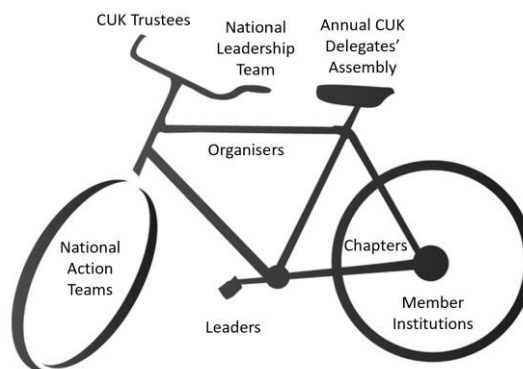
5.1.4 Organisational Structure

The main organising team works in geographical “patches” and there are also nation wide campaigns involving chapters from across the UK coming together to run a wider campaign together. The RLW in SC campaign started as a Wales wide campaign but has recently become a UK wide campaign following the “win” of gaining public commitment by the First Minister in Wales, Mark Drakeford as discussed in the Context Chapter.

CUK at Chapter Level



CUK at National Level



Source: CUK Training materials “Understanding the Structure of CUK: (It’s a bit like riding a bike...)” 2021.

At Chapter levels the “Leaders” or individual members of community groups within the alliance are the “propelling force” and “source of power” behind all action. This aligns with the ethos of being a community led, grass roots organisation. Alliances are member organisations and described as the “links in the chain”. Long term strategy of regional chapters is set by the Chapter Delegates’ Assembly illustrated in the diagram as having the saddle to “spot long range opportunities/obstacles and set the political route”.

The core organisers, represented by the bicycle frame in the illustration above, hold the Chapter’s activities and operations all together. At time of writing, there are three core Organisers in the CCW Chapter who work across all priority areas as well as maintaining existing relationships, continually recruiting new member organisations and Leaders, listening within the communities and delivering training as well as developing and organising actions. The Researcher observed the high level of energy required to undertake the role and likened their skill sets to those of Social Researchers (Observation 24).

In terms of the types of people who become members and Leaders, personal interest in a specific issue as a member of a community group or as an extension of their official role or a combination of both seems to be key. For example the Researcher observed a former Care worker who had Union experience was recruited as an organiser, care users engaged in community organising activities, leaders from Faith Organisations and educational institutions often undertaking

organising work not on top of their “day job” but as an integrated part of their day job. An organiser involved in recruiting new members explains:

“I’m not just going to organise people individually, that’s very hard, takes a long time... but when you have an organised group of people within an institution, you usually have someone in a position or leadership role who wants to do something around social justice, or, you know, that’s why they’re quite interested, which is important, because they can do it as part of their role. So they often, you know, think about [name of Community Organiser in a Faith Organisation] or he’s in so many of our meetings, he’s not doing that just in his spare time, he’s doing it as part of his assignment as [job title], which is important.” (Campaigner Organiser)

In the RLW in SC campaign in Wales, the Researcher was a Leader in Cardiff University, a Member Institution and strategic partner of CCW. The researcher was in the RLW in SC Chapter Action Team which had five core members mainly from faith organisations.

5.1.5 Strengths

CUK perceive their key strength to be their community led approach and ethos and involvement within the community itself. Efforts to build power in numbers and bring disparate civil society groups together to work on issues of mutual importance are a core activity.

Another key strength is the capacity to draw on other regional chapters for resources. Each regional Chapter is thought of as a “link in the chain”, led by a National Action Team on a particular campaign or issue. Some activities are supported by Organisers from other nearby Chapters, who can be called in when support is needed for example in supporting delivery of actions and the Public Value Leadership Academy tutorials to undergraduate Cardiff Business School students.

The dominant faith organisation membership follows the founding ethos of Community Organising in the United States, as discussed earlier in the Literature Review chapter. Having faith leaders as members gives trusted access to the community groups Organisers are looking to organise and also helps operationalise the grass roots listening and action elements which are core to Community Organising. These connections can be important sources of the finding people with lived experiences of a particular injustice or issue.

“But also, then you have access to all these people, some of whom are probably going to be either affected by the issue, or have something they care about” (Campaigner Organiser)

Being the actor with the closest links to the community and to a broad range of people including those with direct experience of the issue they are campaigning for, in this case SC workers experiencing in work poverty is a key quality. Stories or testimonies of people’s lived experiences are important to Community Organising’s public actions and are the public facing drivers of campaigns. This method will be discussed in more detail in Chapter seven which focusses on methods used by different actors in the campaign.

Also a key strength but much less public part of CUK’s resources are the contacts and networks of the senior core Organising team such as Board members and other senior staff members within large, often “target” organisations such as Health Boards and Universities who act as Champions of the RLW from within the organisation. This has had particular success in the accreditations of Universities in Wales and of the Cwm Taf Health Board.

Civil society and voluntary nature of accreditation has meant actors have been able to act more quickly on this than State institutions who may also be unsympathetic to the RLW. The Welsh First Minister at the time, Mark Drakeford, said during the CUK Summit January 2021 that as voluntary regulation was going so well he didn't see the need to step in!

5.1.6 Constraints (individual, organizational and social)

Individual

CCW is a very small team and at time of writing one full time organiser based in Wales, one part time organiser based in Wales and another fulltime, hybrid worker. Despite links to a wider CUK network, there is a risk of staff burn out and potential risk of limiting scope and scale of activities. The researcher has experienced on a much smaller scale how exhausting actions are to plan and deliver. On top of actions, engaging and encouraging people to take part and take responsibility, building new relationships and maintaining new ones as well as delivering regular training is difficult for a small team to maintain especially if growth outside of Cardiff and a greater emphasis on more action is planned (Observation 21).

Community Organising needs to become a part of a Leader's everyday life. The tasks and activities do not seem to change so in that sense participation becomes easier the more frequently you take part and tasks and actions are needed to be kept "winnable" under CUK training so as not to be overwhelming to campaigners who might not be confident or who don't want to be overburdened.

Duality and plurality of roles within the RLW movement can lead to pressures with Leaders recognising the pressures of multiple roles of their ally members. For example, when planning an action involving clergy members considering clergy days off and special religious festival events need to be considered.

Organizational

The CCW team is small but effective team and is reliant on Leaders volunteering their time and funding from training and membership fees as well as "soft" income stream such as grants (Observation 21 AGM meeting). Emphasis is on action and particularly more public action but less about broadening range of membership organisations to better reach parts of the community such as low paid workers and SC workers. The team is supported by the wider UK network of organizers but still remains small which limits the scope and scale of activities. At time of writing, plans to recruit more team members were in the offing.

Whilst the responsive and agile nature of the RLW has its strengths, the voluntary nature of RLW accreditation is seen by some to be a barrier to the long term spread and longevity of the RLW standard across the SC sector.

"Employers just choosing one day and then potentially could just choose the next or not. As a voluntary thing just for SC, given the characteristics of employers in the sector on average. We're really really concerned by that."
(TU 2)

A more binding commitment is considered to be more effective in the long term.

Social

Whilst described as a “broad base” alliance, the main membership in CCW is among a range of faith organisations across the UK and mainly Church in Wales. A few faith schools and the Universities make up the dominant membership organisations in Wales. Whilst this strategy was key in Community Organising history and when communities in Chicago were geographically and faith linked e.g. Catholic areas, finding Leaders in Churches was a key link to the wider community. Their reach is limited when congregations dwindle or when faith organizations are not able to work together.

While engaging those with lived experience of an issue is considered a key strength of Community Organising, this has been a key challenge for the RLW in SC campaign. Engaging SC workers has been particularly challenging and SC workers are considered a “hard to reach” group. This is in part due to the fragmented nature of the SC sector as described in the Context chapter which affects recruitment but also taking part in public action activities is out of many people’s comfort zones. The Wales campaign predominantly used one SC worker actor to provide testimonies at a range of events across Wales and England. Lack of SC worker engagement has some negative repercussions in terms of bringing about social change. For example, the issue of pay improvement is regarded by some as a thorny issue and there is a social constraint among and about care workers “not doing it for the money” and that the care user or client takes priority over efforts to improve care worker pay or working conditions. While there may be SC workers within congregations of existing member organisations, they have been hesitant or have not been able to take part in actions and instead are advocated for via actions which is not ideal in Community Organising methodology.

5.1.7 Summary

CUK and CCW are not one organisation but an alliance of organisations across the UK which has potential to be closest actors to people with lived experience of issues and others within the community which are considered “hard to reach” groups and this could be considered their greatest resource. They are not linked or dependent on funding from the State or the Market which gives them a strong sense of agency and puts them in a position to be a 4th actor in the Industrial Relations system in

terms of the SC sector in Wales. The role of CUK doesn't seem to have changed but the intensity of its approach appears to have been adjusted to account for sensitivities in the context of the SC sector.

They and their members are active every day within the community and are close to the community in terms of congregations of faith organisations member organisations, school and universities. They are constrained to the extent community members can volunteer their time or are willing to take action on issues. This is particularly the case with SC workers who have been hard to engage in significant numbers. This is a notable constraint in terms of the role they play in the SC "workplace" as a potential Industrial Relations actor. They do also have a smaller, less public network of senior members of staff and decision makers within "target" organisations such as Health Boards, some Councils and politicians who are supporters of the RLW standard and so do have some "presence" at some workplace level. Connections are made with employers via their sister organisation the LWF and in Wales, Cynnal.

CUK have a community focussed mission but are adept at using political levers and can be said in the case of the RLW in SC in Wales to have considerable influence at a political level. They describe themselves as non partisan but have notable links in Wales to the Welsh Labour Party with the RLW in SC receiving strong support publicly from the then First Minister. The impact of this support will be discussed in Chapters seven and eight. CUK and CCW have seen success in other campaigns in the role of agitator, holding decision makers including politicians and CEOs of organisations to account by community public pressure. The scale of the reach into communities is constrained in the RLW in SC campaign team, with care workers difficult to access and engage with.

5.2 Living Wage Foundation and Cynnal

Both the LWF and Cynnal are third sector organisations involved in facilitating employers to accredit with the RLW standard. The LWF operates across England and is a sister company to CUK. It started out in 2011 with a remit of spreading the RLW across the UK following the success of the campaign in London. As discussed

in the Literature Review chapter, the LWF has fifteen Principal Partner organisations² who are large employers and support the RLW. At time of writing these do not include any SC provider organisations or organisations who typically have a high proportion of low paid staff which has drawn criticism that the movement is more of a Corporate Social Responsibility exercise (Heery et al., 2018) rather than a social movement seeking to bring about more radical change.

Cynnal has been the RLW accreditation body in Wales since 2016. It is a third sector, multi issue organisation with a sustainability remit in areas in fields of the environment as well as the RLW. The RLW work is Cynnal's only work related issue they currently deal with so they could have previously been described as a "Non Work Organisation" (Freeman, 2005). Their RLW accreditation work is currently funded by the WGov from the Social Partnership portfolio.

5.2.1 Remit – issues covered and perceived roles of actors

Similar to the LWF, Cynnal do not get involved in actions run by the CUK alliance. Their peak public drive of the RLW standard is Living Wage week which typically happens once a year in November around the time when the latest RLW hourly rate is announced. "Celebrations" and other events are held online and in person across the UK with accredited employers telling their story and usually politicians are invited to attend.

Cynnal became the accreditation body specifically for Wales having been directly approached by CCW to take on the role as part of their wider sustainability remit (Welsh Gov regulator 2). The team relating to RLW accreditation is currently made up of a team of four (<https://cynnalcyrmu.com/about-cynnal/our-people/> [Accessed October 2023]) but prior to this with just two people who also worked on the wider remit of the organisation.

Cynnal's key role in the RLW movement is to facilitate the accreditation process for employers and they are described as "business friendly". Facilitation of more complex issues, especially for larger organisations include setting out accreditation

² ABRDN Financial Fairness Trust, AVIVA, Burberry, Everton Football Club, IKEA, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, KPMG, Linklaters, Nationwide Building Society, Nestle, OXFAM, People's Health Trust, Queen Mary University, Resolution Foundation and Trust for London.

milestones for contracted workers. Cynnal see their role as facilitators of accreditation and do not get involved in public actions. They see CUK as the “agitators” in persuading less motivated employers to accredit.

“ We had [name of large Cardiff employer] for ages wouldn't accredit if Citizens weren't doing actions outside.” (Welsh Gov regulator)

Cynnal do not see their role as political advocacy either:

“I kind of leave a lot of the advocacy side on SC to others. We have a role of accrediting and supporting organisations with questions about accreditation.” (Welsh Gov regulator)

This could be to maintain a positive relationship with organisations who want to accredit and do not want to risk antagonising them. This also helps CUK maintain their independence from Government funding.

As a third sector organisation, income stream is not what motivated them to get involved with the RLW but generating income is necessary to continue to be able to tackle issues important to the organisation. As the accreditation body, they do earn a proportion of the accreditation fee but this alone was not considered sufficient or adequate in terms of time commitment and work involved.

“I spent 18 months with councillors and the Council, chasing them in meetings with different departments. When they do finally accredit, can we probably get around £90?” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

This issue of funding goes some way to add clarification to the “low hanging fruit” criticism of the drive of the RLW standard. Accrediting bodies are charities in receipt of public funding to drive the RLW standard. Funding criteria often stipulate certain target numbers of accreditations in order to continue funding, so often the larger, more complex or harder to encourage organisation are chosen over the more complex cases so that funding can be continued.

“If you want to create the income...they get the volume of low hanging fruit, then it gives them an income base to do some of the work of putting pressure on the organisations They need really need to go after where they can make the difference” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

Cynnal’s perceived role is around answering questions relating to the impact of accreditation on employers’ organisations, for example procurement, supply chains and legal issues.

5.2.2 Organisational structure

Cynnal now receive more funding from the WGov for their RLW work and part of their role involves reporting back to Ministers on accreditation figures.

“And one of the conversations I had with [name of campaigner], and becoming the RLW accreditation organisation, even though there was no money attached to doing it, you get a percentage of the fees for everyone that does accredit.” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

This could be described as an “insider” type role (Heery et al., 2017) with Cynnal being seen as the trusted source of information on accreditation.

“And we kind of have that informal lobbying role, I suppose. It's like just the kind of dripping of constant feedback and data to WGov” (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

They could also be considered as the actor in closest proximity to accredited employers and organisations.

5.2.3 Strengths (agency and capability)

Cynnal (and the LWF) in the role of an accreditor would consider their key strength to be their “employer friendly” characteristic. Their role in the RLW movement is to guide and help employers accredit rather than be the public voice of the RLW standard in Wales. As the accreditation body they want to remain neutral and distanced from CCW’s public actions (Observation of latest RLW in SC Action Planning 18/10/23) but assist with actions in terms of contacting accredited employers to invite them to celebratory events such as Living Wage week events.

They see themselves as the quieter partner to CUK in order to remain a friendly and approachable place for employers. This could be a strength to attract employers to the RLW who may be wary of CSOs such as TUs, for example.

“We use it as a bit of a carrot/stick thing. Citizens can go in and say you have to do this, where we will come and do some demonstrations outside, right? So the First Minister says something and then we do a bit of a pincer movement to make it happen. And it does happen, but not as often as it could or should” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

A further strength of Cynnal is the experience of the accreditation team and their ability to navigate complexities which may be off putting to employers such as including contracted workers within the commitment to paying the RLW. They help organisations accredit which for larger organisations can take some time, encouragement and organisation. Cynnal's help with some larger organisations, for example Dwr Cymru was vital in keeping the organisation on track to accreditation and finding ways to ease and continue with accreditation and ensuring directly and indirectly employed workers would be covered.

“With Dwr Cymru obviously, if they're digging up a road in Merthyr, they're there for more than eight weeks, that would count as “on site”. Those contractors would need to at least have had the conversation with you know, are you paying the RLW? And if they say no, you say, Are you willing to pay the RLW? And then if they say, No, there's nothing you can do. But you could say, look, when your contract's renewed in two years time, we will be going to a RLW employer.” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

The civil regulatory nature of the RLW standard is perceived positively by campaigners and organisers involved in the RLW movement in drawing in a wide range of employers including large employers to accredit. When asked if this attracted only a certain type of employer, campaigners didn't see this as an issue.

“I don't think so. Because, we've had some really big organisations, across the UK, become RLW employers.” (Campaigner Organiser 1)

The voluntary nature of accreditation was seen to be working well by those involved in the accreditation process.

5.2.4 Constraints - what constrains their power?

Individual

The accreditation process can be time consuming and very labour intensive for individuals in the accreditation team with little financial reward in terms of fees earned from accreditations especially in the early days of the campaign in Wales. This was a key financial constraint for third sector organisations especially in the early days of the campaign which impacted on the growth of the standard. A lack of

funding meant at the beginning only one or people were facilitating accreditation. Given the complexity of some organisations, especially large organisations such as LAs, this was labour intensive and quite a stretch for a small team.

“For a LA to accredit, I think they pay fees, annual fees, I can't remember what it is perhaps £200 a year. Of that, we've kind of got them over the line, we would get a third. We would spend two years I spent 18 months with Councils chasing them in meetings with different departments. When they do finally accredit, can we probably get at £90?” (Wesh Gov regulator 1)

Organisational

Historically, RLW accreditation in Wales has been constrained by piecemeal WGov funding, a very small team to cover the whole of Wales and the RLW as only part of their multiple issue remit.

The nature of third sector funding and reliance on soft income streams is seen to have limited the reach of Cynnal's RLW accreditation and civil regulation of the RLW standard. This gives insight to the “low hanging fruit” criticism of only most likely organisations will want and be able to accredit rather than the tougher, higher impact organisations. For some involved in the RLW movement this is related to how the movement is being driven by charities who rely on public funding to do their work and which have target number of accreditation the charity needs to reach in order to meet their funding criteria. This means that charities, like Cynnal tend to need to prioritize the easier organisation so they meet their funding criteria. Longer term, more focussed funding was seen as the way around this.

“The easiest job is the low hanging fruit. For the LWF, they get the volume of low hanging fruit in, then it gives them an income base to do some of the work of putting pressure on the organisations they need really need to go after, where they can make the difference” (Welsh Regulator 1)

Despite the positive aspects of the voluntary nature of accreditation as discussed above, there is another more constraining aspect in that they are not enforcers of the RLW standard and do not apply consequences to employers who withdraw or don't comply. CCW are considered the accountability arm and “stick” approach to employers not complying or responding. There is a “whistleblower line” but this is constrained in terms of action Cynnal can take given the voluntary and civil regulatory nature of the standard.

“We don't audit unless there are very complicated milestone.... we had somebody contact us from a GP service in Cardiff, saying that they had just joined as an administrator and they weren't being paid a RLW. And they sent us a link to the NHS site that NHS Wales says “we are a RLW employer”, which then they should be because that's what the government said, but they're not accredited. And then Vale Health Board's response was “GPs aren't managed in Cardiff so it's up to them to accredit.” (Welsh Gov Regulator 2)

Other actors in the RLW movement considered another form of constraint in terms of the voluntary nature of the RLW. The issue of how to ensure SC workers were all receiving the correct rate of pay was raised as a key concern over the voluntary nature and civil regulatory nature of the RLW accreditation.

“How to inspect and enforce them is really complex because it takes Care Inspectorate Wales, which is the service regulator rather than a workforce regulator. it would be really interesting to see not just that there's a commitment to pay the RLW or that there's a mechanism for it to happen, but it is actually happening and that there are implications if you don't.” (TU 2)

The main focus and remit of Cynnal was to drive the movement and facilitate accreditations, not to enforce or regulate and this is seen as a constraint by other actors such as TUs who want more formal, jointly negotiated pay rates.

Social

Cynnal are not as well known as the LWF and were not previously known for work related issues. They don't drive the standard in terms of campaigning, rather they build relationships with organisations who approach them and facilitate accreditation. From interviews undertaken it was clear the RLW brand is not as well known in wider society as it could be. There was confusion among participants between the UK's statutory NLW and the voluntary RLW even among employers who had accredited and SC users. This could indicate a lack of understanding and influence of the brand within the SC sector and at the wider societal level.

Also the unilateral nature of the RLW standard, could be seen as a constraint in terms of stepping on the toes of traditional actors' such as TUs who use collective bargaining and SC industry representatives who would want to lead and be consulted on key issues such as pay rather than comply with standards set from

outside the industry. Tensions have been spoken about during interviews and they have been picked up on by the researcher during observations as “unspoken” issues and will be explored more in Chapter seven which explores the outcomes of RLW movement activities.

5.2.5 Summary

The accreditation body is an integral part of the RLW movement but it’s role is not about persuading employers to accredit but rather to facilitate the process and be a “business friendly” actor for employers who have already made the decision to accredit. They have limited resources and power in terms of capacity to make change but making change is not a key part of their role. As a third sector organisation they rely on a number of funding streams. Historical lack of funding necessitated the need to go for “low hanging fruit” organisations so the small team could ensure work would continue to be funded.

Neither Cynnal or the LWF have an enforcement role in terms of accreditation and neither actively campaign or persuade employer organisations to accredit. For these reasons they cannot be said to have influence at individual or organisational workplace levels of the Industrial Relations system.

At a wider societal level, the RLW brand is not well known among actors in Wales outside of the immediate campaign and accreditation group and this has implications to RLW brand recognition as well as the social justice aspects. The accreditation body can be said to have influenced and be on the radar at a public policy level with an “insider” type role, reporting to WGov on the RLW but as a facilitator not as an agitator.

5.3 Trade Unions

As described in the Literature Review chapter, there has been a successful history of multiple TU involvement in RLW campaigns in the UK, most notably in the TELCO campaign in East London. GMB and UNISON have been involved in the RLW campaigns in England previously and there are studies exploring their campaigns

targeting LAs (Prowse et al., 2017) which were considered successful. The TUC are one of the Principal Partners of the LWF and are accredited. UNISON is accredited as well as some of their regional branches in England and the GMB have also accredited. It is noteworthy that no Welsh TU branches have accredited at time of writing.

Two key TUs actors in the RLW movement will be described here generally in terms of the RLW and then more specifically in terms of the RLW in SC movement; GMB and UNISON. The GMB represents low paid occupations in Local Government and has had a history of representing SC workers being recognised by some SC Providers prior to the marketization of the sector.

“GMB had just become recognised as the Union for SC for Southern Cross Health Care (between 1999 and 2002 when interviewee worked there)... which was a company that went....it crashed in 2011. And then from there, it led to Four Seasons, HC1 these all came from the fall out of Southern Cross healthcare”. (TU 1)

Membership of the GMB includes SC workers working in larger SC providers organisations such as Harbour Healthcare, which has two care homes in South Wales ([https://www.careinspectorate.wales/service-directory?search_api_fulltext=harbour%20healthcare&latlon\[distance\]\[from\]=1.6&field_authority=All](https://www.careinspectorate.wales/service-directory?search_api_fulltext=harbour%20healthcare&latlon[distance][from]=1.6&field_authority=All)) and HC-1 who have 14 care homes located in South Wales (<https://www.careinspectorate.wales/hc-one-limited>) in the Care Inspectorate Wales registry.

TUs post information on their website³ about relevant policy changes, work place issues such as updates on the sale of care homes as well as surveying members on issues of pay and working conditions on online noticeboards. On issues of improving pay, their survey of care workers at Harbour Healthcare cited “pay rise to match inflation” (highlighted in red below) as their top priority which is a key attribute of the RLW standard. The RLW is not mentioned. Instead support for GMB’s SC pay related campaign £15 per hour campaign was highlighted in February 2022 rather than joining in the RLW campaign.

³ <https://www.gmb.org.uk/public-services/social-care-noticeboards/>

Posted on: 11 February 2022

Thank you to all GMB members who took the time to Have Your Say on Your Pay in the recent GMB member pay consultation survey. A summary of responses received:

- 75% do not believe they are being paid appropriately when considering their responsibilities.
- 50% state that they are working short staffed at least a few times per week.
- The top three priorities for GMB members currently are:
 1. A pay rise to match inflation
 2. More paid holidays
 3. Unsocial hours payment / sick pay
- 50% have seriously considered leaving The Huntercombe Group and 54% have actively searched for other jobs, whilst 32% have applied for other jobs.
- 100% support GMBs campaign for £15 per hour as a minimum for social care workers.

(Source: (<https://www.gmb.org.uk/public-services/social-care-noticeboards/harbour-healthcare-noticeboard-updated>) [Accessed October 2023])

UNISON refer to themselves as the “public service union” and the largest TU in the UK with a majority of 70% female membership (<https://www.unison.org.uk/about/> [Accessed October 2023]) which would seem to align closely with the demographics of the SC workforce in Wales , as described in the Context chapter. At time of writing they are running campaigns within the SC sector in Wales, most recently a public action against a proposed privatization of Rhondda Cynon Taf SC services (<https://cymru-wales.unison.org.uk/news/2023/10/care-workers-campaign-against-rhondda-privatisation-threat/> [Accessed October 2023]).

In terms of coverage, the GMB covers the whole of the United Kingdom and has seven regional branches including Wales and the South West and they estimate their membership to be over 500,000 members.

UNISON operates across 12 regions in the United Kingdom including a Cymru/Wales branch and estimate its membership at over 1.3 million (<https://www.unison.org.uk/about/what-we-do/campaigning/> [Accessed October 2023]). They represent workers who provide public services full time and part time workers in both the private and public sector industry sectors. For both UNISON and GMB’s key campaign within SC is for a National Care Service

[\(\(https://www.gmb.org.uk/campaigns/taking-care/go-public-5-asks-in-social-care.pdf](https://www.gmb.org.uk/campaigns/taking-care/go-public-5-asks-in-social-care.pdf)
[Accessed October 2023]; <https://www.unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/lets-make-care-work/> [Accessed October 2023]).

5.3.1 Remit and perceived role within RLW in Social Care movement

There is a history of success in RLW campaigns with TUs collaborating with other CSOs, for example the TELCO campaign in London. TUs mobilize, have organizing arms, provide training to workers as well as represent their members who are experiencing difficulties in the workplace.

GMB and UNISON are traditional actors within the labour movement in the UK and both have a long history of fighting for working conditions and pay improvements. Both GMB and UNISON have also targeted LAs with previous RLW campaigns (Prowse et al., 2017), and UNISON has targeted LAs with the Ethical Care Charter campaign which included the RLW as one of its standards in a pan UK campaign and would have impacted on commissioned SC. The RLW appeals to TUs “normative values and solidaristic nature” (Heery et al., 2018).

The ultimate aim of both of TUs for the SC sector is for care to go back to being not for profit and be publicly owned rather than privately owned.

“We (TU) want a National Care Service, we want to end the commissioning. We want private sector pretty much out of the game, we don't believe that profit has any place in the provision of care.” (TU 3)

This approach has obvious tensions in terms of care providers joining the RLW movement as part of a TU campaign.

5.3.2 Strengths (agency and capability)

Some union representatives used to work in SC so not only understand the SC work and working in environments and systems but also has empathy towards workers and levels of severity of poor pay and working conditions within the sector.

“I was originally a care worker...In one home in England, if one of the staff went off on sick, they couldn't afford to be ill.. A home [owned by] one of the biggest providers in the UK, and was making millions of pounds on investments and money on the back of these people. And my members creating their own food bank.” (TU 1)

TUs unlike CSOs, can have a presence in the workplace, especially where the union is recognised by the employer and have close proximity to workers and any issues. In terms of resources at workplace levels, both TUs have Organising functions and can operate training events within a SC employer as a first step to gaining recognition and access to workers and increasing their membership. TUs also have skilled negotiators who could negotiate better pay not just at implementation of the RLW but also post implementation, reaching agreement on improvement up the pay scale (Heery et al., 2018).

In Wales, TUs have a presence on the Fair Work and SC Forum, a social partnership platform which was formed on the back of RLW movement. Union representatives in this study were glad of the opportunity of a new platform to sit down and speak to SC provider representatives.

5.3.3 Constraints (individual, organisational and social)

Individual

TUs are seen as disruptive by some SC providers and many private SC providers, who make up the majority of adult SC provision in Wales, do not recognise TUs. Overcoming the perception by individual care providers is a key constraint.

“We tell people, we don’t have a union that we go to as a company. If people wish to be in a union, they can and I will always point them in a direction. If they ask for me, it’s not something that I’m big on wanting to have in the workplace here.” (Unaccredited SC provider)

Organisational

Union representatives interviewed described a lack of access and difficulty in engaging privately owned SC providers as a key organisation or workplace constraint.

“They have had very little access to TUs. Very few private sector employers recognise TUs and are positively hostile to TUs seeking recognition.” (TU 3)

In terms of capacity and agency at an organisational level, lack of access to workplaces and lack of recognition by employers are key constraints. Lack of access to SC workplaces to persuade employers to improve pay is a considerable barrier to driving the RLW movement as well as wider improvements to working conditions and SC workers' rights. There are also structural constraints to union membership and the need to build membership. "Dwindling membership" (Prowse and Fells, 2016, p61) is seen as a key issue to address, impacting the power of TUs in terms of resources needed for effective mobilising and collective bargaining. TUs need to be seen to be winning causes for their members which may mean tackling the easier issue first.

While historically TUs have been involved in the RLW movement, the RLW is not prominent in their SC campaigns. The key campaign in GMB and UNISON at time of writing is for a National Care Service which has obvious tensions with privately owned SC providers. The Union campaign seems to tackle systemic issues with the SC sector

Social

There is no history of mobilization, collective bargaining or collective action in the SC sector in Wales. Strikes and SC are a thorny issue and care workers interviewed felt going on strike and threat of a strike would put their clients in danger and would not be something they could engage with.

"You can't go on strike if you're a carer can you? Because you've got to care for the people. How can you not go to that house and look after them? I feel bad that I'm not down there now, working because I'm on the sick." (SC worker 3)

Lack of union activity in the SC sector means there are some ingrained social attitudes among SC workers and TUs which may need to be addressed in order for the RLW movement to make significant progress. For example the solidaristic nature of unionism. SC workers interviewed said they'd use TUs if they had a complaint against them rather than mobilizing for pay and other improvements.

"To be honest with you, I think a lot of people don't join it [the Union] because I think if you need representation, then you can just ask for it and join then." (SC worker 2)

Despite the RLW offering an alternative action to striking, there's a feeling of habituation around low pay in the SC sector with many SC workers not believing anything could change and doubting the effectiveness of union involvement.

"I think you just kind of get on with it to be honest. I'm not gonna go and protest. I think it's been so underpaid for so long that people just accept it without challenging it. You just go into that job expecting a low pay." (SC worker 2)

"I don't know if you know about the sleeping in rate? There was a big court case around that because staff sleep in and they get a basic rate to stay the night.. all night from, say 10pm till 7am, which is the sleeping in hours... that went on for a few years. And I think it went to court and they ruled it and said that no would be the flat rate." (SC Worker 2)

This is a problem for TUs in terms of mobilizing and showing power en masse to employers. SC workers would be unlikely to stop work or walk out, seeing that as unethical. Also there is a lack of solidarity from other key workers or health workers in terms of mobilizing for change in the SC sector and a perception that improvement is not achievable. Recruiting SC workers and encouraging them to engage is a key constraint for TUs in SC.

5.3.4 Summary

TUs also have a successful history with the RLW showing a "compatibility" (Heery et al., 2018) with the RLW and Union work.

In terms of strengths and resources, TUs are the traditional, skilled negotiators, using mobilisation and collective bargaining to agree with employers on improvements to working life including pay. They are considered to be the actor with closest proximity to the worker and their issues as well as having a relationship with employers and have a history of fighting for improvements for the lowest paid workers including SC workers. They do have a presence on the Fair Work and SC Forum and with that an opportunity to engage with SC providers and a presence on the public policy level which they hadn't had before.

There are key constraints - most notably a lack of a good working relationship between TUs and privately owned SC providers who make up the majority of the SC market in Wales. There is also a lack of linkages with CUK and other CSOs especially around the RLW. Whilst TUs have noted a rise in SC workers becoming members since the pandemic, there is a perception among workers that membership is good for dealing with their individual issues or complaints against them rather than for solidaristic purpose such a mobilisation. At a public policy level, TUs have a more outwardly joint strategy, choosing to influence around a National Care Service rather than the RLW standard in their latest campaigns.

5.4 The Market

As described in the Context chapter, the SC Market in the UK is fragmented and complex. It is estimated that there are 17,000 care and nursing homes across the UK and 10,113 domiciliary care providers across the UK. In Wales, it is estimated there are 1,017 adult care and nursing homes and 689 domiciliary providers registered with Care Inspectorate Wales. (Source: <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/news-item/what-does-the-provider-market-look-like-across-the-four-countries> [Accessed March 2023]).

At time of writing, there are 780 accredited SC providers in the UK with only 31 accredited SC providers in Wales which could indicate a significant barrier to RLW accreditation for this group of actors.

Also included in the Market category for this study was a SC provider representative body called Care Forum Wales (CFW)⁴. CFW advocate and lobby on behalf of their SC provider members in Wales as well as offering training and updates on legislation. At time of writing they have over 450 members across different form of SC provision including care homes, nursing homes and privately run independent care providers. Firstly CFW will be discussed in terms of its role as an actor in the RLW movement and then data on characteristics of accredited SC providers will be explored to understand more about SC providers role and potential in the RLW in SC movement.

⁴ <https://www.careforumwales.co.uk/> [Accessed November 2024]

5.4.1 Remit and role in RLW movement

In terms of the RLW in SC movement, SC providers and especially privately owned SC providers as the majority form of SC provision in Wales would seem the obvious choice of “target” for campaign efforts and a key group of actors to get on board. As discussed previously in the context chapter, Chapter two, SC provision is made up of some third sector, some publicly owned but mostly privately owned SC providers.

SC is a highly regulated industry sector where providers feel they take the burden of implementing and dealing with the impact of any changes handed to them mainly from WGov and the regulatory bodies from e.g. training, registration, pay increases combined with LA commissioning low prices and cost of living crises where their costs have risen. Persistent issues around recruitment and retention led to a Care Crisis in Wales.

The researcher became aware of Care Forum Wales from interviews with SC providers who were members, interviews with policy makers who had mentioned them in interviews and also during the researcher’s participation in online seminars and events relating to SC provision in Wales. They also attended and were a part of the CUK Summit in January 2021 with Mark Drakeford and prior to that had run their own campaign related to SC worker pay called “20k by 2020”.

CFW gets care providers involved in Working Groups with LAs in their regions. During the RLW in SC movement they took on the role of protecting their members from the “bad guy” perception and highlighting systemic issues in the SC sector perpetuating low pay.

“It was brought to our attention by Care Forum Wales. Everyone who sits on that with us and that's there's three or four commissioners across North Wales.. So we're just trying to pick and choose move forward of how we achieve a fair price for care. CFW just put it out there. We've got like a north Wales Group, so that she put it out there. Would anybody be interested? So I put myself forward.” (Accredited Care Provider 2)

“There was the sort of work through Citizens and Cynnal that was kind of focusing on the RLW. And again, you know, we very much wanted to be part of that, not least because of the reputational issues and the danger that if we weren’t, it would come across as providers who were the blockage. “ (SC provider rep)

CFW are a valuable resource to SC providers in Wales. They are well respected among public sector bodies and speak regularly at public policy events such as Policy Forum Wales events on SC which are chaired by Members of the Senedd and which tend to have speakers from SC regulatory bodies and other public regulatory bodies attending. They came across as “the voice” of their SC provider members at these events and a trusted source of information on issues affecting the industry.

In terms of the RLW campaign, the researcher met accredited providers but would not class them as campaigners or having a role driving the RLW standard within the SC industry. The researcher noted some accredited SC providers took part in LWF “celebrations” such as Living Wage week but there were no SC providers involved in the RLW in SC Action planning groups or at actions themselves.

5.4.2 Organisation description

This section describes characteristics of SC providers and other employers who have accredited as RLW employers across the UK. This section gives insight into the type of SC organisation which has taken up the RLW standard and adds to understanding around what type of SC organisation is responding to the RLW movement.

Firstly descriptive statistics will be used to explore the organisation, size and type and patterns in accreditation within SC and in comparison to other industry sectors including other low paid sectors such as Cleaning, Retail, Hospitality and Childcare. Secondly, drawing on participant observations, interview data and using Bellemare’s analytical model will be given to the role and agency SC providers as Market actors around strengths and constraints they face with regards to the RLW as well as their role in the RLW movement. This is important to know in order to understand what types of employers could be said to have been influenced by the RLW movement and could add clarity to the “low hanging “ fruit criticism.

As seen in Table 5.1 below, SC providers comprise only a small percentage of all accredited employers across the UK which indicates significant barriers compared to other industry sectors in terms of accreditation.

Table 5.1 Number of accredited employers across all industry sectors in the UK up to December 2023

	Number	Percentage of all accreditations
All Industries other	16309	95
Adult SC	780	5
Total	17089	

This is a pattern seen in all four nations in the UK as shown in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 Number and percentage of adult SC accreditations by UK Country up to December 2023

	All Industries other	Adult SC	% Adult SC of all accredited organisations
Wales	631	31	4.6%
Scotland	3957	157	3.8%
Northern Ireland	83	5	5.6%
England	11638	587	4.8%

Using available figures up to December 2023, 17,089 employers have registered with the LWF as accredited RLW organisations since 2011. Five per cent of those or 780 were in the adult SC sector. England and Scotland have the highest numbers of accreditations overall and a higher number of accreditations within the adult SC sector. This could be explained by the proportionate size of each country as well as different levels of funding and devolved of UK Government support for the RLW. Figures as at December 2023 show Wales had 31 accredited adult SC providers which accounts for 4.6% of all accredited organisations in Wales.

Table 5.3 Accreditations by business ownership type adult SC and all other industry sectors in UK

	Private Sector	Third Sector	Public Sector
Adult SC	513	265	2
All other industries	11057	4779	473
Total	16309	780	475

The majority of accrediting employers across all industry sectors in the UK are in the private sectors with 95% of all accredited organisations being privately owned. Third sector organisations represent 4.5% of accredited organisations and very few (0.5%) are publicly owned organisations.

Among adult SC organisations 66% were privately owned, 34% owned by third sector organisations and only a small proportion, 0.4%, were publicly owned organisations. These figures would be broadly in line with the UK SC Market where the majority of SC provision is now privately owned. The majority (65%) of accredited adult Care employers are private sector organisations which mirrors the SC Market in Wales where the majority of SC providers are privately owned. Campaigners have described efforts to engage SC providers in the movement as “closed doors” and “hostile”. The numbers of public sector accreditations is much lower than the private sector which could justify campaigners’ focus on LAs and WGov as more of an “open door” than privately owned SC providers.

The vast majority (91%) of accredited organisations across all industry sectors, across all areas of the UK were small to medium enterprises with under 250 employees. This mirrors ownership type in the adult SC sector where the majority of adult SC provision is done by small to medium organisations with under 250 employees.

Table 5.4 Number of accreditations adult SC and all other industry sectors by organisation size

	0-9 employees	10-49 employees	50-249 employees	250-499 employees	500+ employees
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Adult SC	147	341	215	40	33
All other industries	5855	6268	2680	541	920
Total	6002 (35%)	6609 (39%)	2895 (17%)	581 (3%)	953 (6%)

There are also a significant number of SC franchises accredited as can be seen in Table 5.5 below, which could lead to a “domino effect” of accreditations within the sector. These tend to be the “higher end” SC providers who cater more to wealthier care users, seeking private care provision and who rely less on LA commissioning care packages.

Table 5.5 Number of accredited care provider franchises

Residential care organisation	Number of franchises/branches accredited in UK	Number of total franchises (from CQC registration)
Home Instead	50	167
Bluebird Care	9	165
Radfield Home Care	12	27
Age UK	13	16

There are similarly proportionately low numbers of accreditations across other low paid sectors. This aligns with the “low hanging fruit” criticism of the RLW where only those organisations with fewer low paid workers make up the majority of accredited employers.

Table 5.6 Number of Adult SC accreditations compared to other Low wage industries across all of UK as of December 2023

Other industries	Adult SC	Childcare	Retail	Hospitality	Cleaning
14044	780	171	778	786	506

Whilst RLW accreditation seems popular amongst small privately owned businesses, the majority of SC providers in the UK have not yet accredited as RLW employers.

Table 5.7 Number of Low paid industry sector accreditations by UK Country as of December 2023

	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	England
Other industries	546	3370	69	10065
Adult SC	31	157	5	587
Childcare	4	87	2	78
Retail	34	157	4	583
Hospitality	31	248	6	501
Cleaning	16	94	2	394

As a proportion of all accreditations SC and Retail employers share a similar pattern across all regions of the UK. Wales 31/662 (4.68%), Scotland 157/4113 (3.81%), Northern Ireland 5/88 (5.68%), England 587/12,208 (4.8%) with Northern Ireland and England with a slightly greater proportion of SC employers, Wales third and Scotland with the lowest proportion of accreditations from the SC sector. Accreditations among the traditionally low paid sectors of Childcare, Retail, Hospitality and Cleaning and adult SC follow similar patterns across all four UK nations. Childcare and Cleaning have the lowest proportionate number of accreditations. Cleaning and Childcare have not had the attention or focussed RLW campaigns that SC and Retail have had so this could indicate a future need for more focussed campaigns in these two industry sectors.

Despite the support from WGov and a focussed campaign from CCW, there are many more SC providers yet to accredit indicating significant barriers to driving the RLW standard.

5.4.3 Strengths (agency and capability)

This section considers the strengths of Market actors Care Forum Wales and SC providers in Wales and the rest of the UK. Actors' agency and resources which could help drive the movement forward will be explored.

Small, privately owned SC providers which make up the majority of SC provision could be seen as more agile and able to make decisions within their organisation. This is important for Community Organisers and campaigners as the decision

makers would be more easily identified and contactable which is an important factor for campaigners.

In terms of strengths, the Market has some good organisation and has some active and effective representation for its members with WGov, regional Commissioning bodies and are well regarded among public policy makers. They already have “a seat at the table” with policy makers which civil society actors do not yet have.

Within the RLW, where employers have accredited they often then take on a peer to peer role for example with the LWF’s Principal Partners. The Cardiff as a Living Wage City and Living Wage Leadership groups in Wales operate in a similar way but at time of writing do not have an SC providers within the group. Given the well organised nature of the SC Market actors and the sense of solidarity among SC providers, having a SC provider on platforms such as these would be a considerable strength in terms of driving the RLW standard in the SC sector in Wales.

5.4.4 Constraints

At an individual level in SC, there are further complexities to pay than basic salary, for example travel time, being paid (or not) only for the time you spend with a client and not for the time travelling to reach clients, or overnighting where payment can be left up to the discretion of individual managers.

“If you've been disturbed for over a certain amount of hours, then we pay you for those hours. And if it's over certain other amount, then we pay for a weekend night. So you get all your hours all night there. And if they've been up, you know, constantly through the night.. Its at the managers discretion really what was going on?” (SC worker 2)

There are only a few Champions within the RLW in SC in Wales movement and there is no vocal support for RLW among SC providers. One interviewee was the sole accredited SC in Wales for a while at the beginning of this study and they chose not to let any other providers know it was them.

“Would I say I'm a campaigner? I don't know, I don't think I'm a campaigner. I mean, in [Meetings with other care providers], I'm not sure whether anybody knows it's me that is paying the RLW. They always say there's one RLW provider in Cardiff but nobody's actually asked who it is.” (SC employer accredited 1)

This sense of solidarity among SC providers could indicate that the issue of low pay and wanting to improve pay is a contentious issue impacting providers and could also explain the lack of SC champions wanting to speak out on the issues of pay in the sector.

Organizational

At an organisational level there are constraints around setting pay. SC providers can and do set different pricing above statutory levels but perceive the commissioning process as particularly constraining.

“It's grim in the way the LA commission.... agencies out there - I don't know how they're doing it. They're doing it for £13.50 /£14 an hour. When you think what I'm paying my staff. I will go with £18 an hour. My staff earn £9.50 during the day, £9.75 after 4pm, £10.75 on the weekend between seven and four and then £11 an hour for Saturday and Sunday evening. Out of that £18 then I've got to contribute towards their pensions, their travel time, their holiday pay, their petrol allowance. There's hardly any margin in it.” (SC Employer accredited 1)

This illustrates the sense of “burden” expressed by SC providers in terms of implementing and being able to afford to pay any increase in pay such as the RLW which would have a significant impact financially on their business.

“Ultimately, every single care home's biggest fear, the biggest part of their costs is staff. Probably 70% of our costs are staff.” (SC employer accredited 2)

The pressure on SC providers to ensure they are complying to everything in a highly regulated area was particularly clear for small providers where often the owner does a bit of every role when needed and this includes bidding for care packages, covering for staff who are ill, training staff and ensuring they are up to date with all current legislative requirements.

“I'm 62 now and I've been doing this for 19 years. But it's getting so difficult. The regulations are so hard. The hoops I've gotta jump through....” (Accredited SC employer 1)

“But when they brought that out [National Minimum Wage], for people, we had to compensate for any shortfalls ourselves, without any uplift being recognised by Councils. So bang, profit gone!” (Unaccredited SC provider)

For small SC providers particularly, the constraints of the commissioning system put them at a disadvantage compared to larger SC providers who have greater staff resources and operate on a much larger scale.

“I’m a very small agency. There’s some big fish [Care agencies] in Cardiff, huge agencies, where perhaps a lot of it is about profits. Whereas I’m not so profit driven. I’m a really small agency in Cardiff. I’ve got 23 carers and we support about 35 people. There’s some agencies in Cardiff, they’re providing hundreds of hours a week.” (SC employer accredited)

Paying the RLW may feel like another burden and pressure on them rather than something which could help support and improve the SC sector, especially for the small providers.

Social

SC providers don’t want to be seen as the bad guys or the blockage in improving the SC sector but want changes to come from within the industry not from actors outside of the industry. This makes SC employers impenetrable to campaigners.

Unaccredited SC employers lack trust in the RLW and see it as another burden and hoop to jump through. Also coming from a source outside of the SC sector and there is mistrust around the impact and motivations of the RLW standard.

“A lot of [SC] employers are hostile” (TU 2)

While peer to peer encouragement has its strengths, as mentioned in the section above, there is also a potential downside in terms of driving the RLW movement. They are careful not to vilify each other and there is a sense of solidarity among SC providers and an understanding of the difficult circumstances they work under.

5.4.5 Summary

In terms of the strengths and roles of Market actors in the RLW in SC in Wales movement. The majority of them are small, privately owned businesses and share many of the characteristics of already accredited organisations. Small SC providers

can be more agile and tend to make their decisions in house rather than needing Board approval like some larger organisations and both of these aspects would seem to work in the favour in making the decision to become RLW employers. Pay setting in the SC sector is complex and more than just about an hourly rate. SC providers have some effective representation, ensuring that the voice of the provider can be heard by policy makers which could make them effective allies in the RLW in SC movement in Wales.

Decisions around pay can have a huge impact to their business given that the majority of operating costs are staff costs. They are subject to many regulations as is to be expected in an industry which looks after vulnerable people and they are responsible for keeping up-to-date with legislation and requirements and maintaining their reputations as responsible and caring organisations. SC providers' concern of becoming a campaign target and being perceived as "the bad guys" in the RLW in SC movement is significant barrier to their participation. The RLW has not come from within the industry and therefore is not seen as "provider friendly" which contradicts the "business friendly" aspect of the LWF approach to accreditation and could have implication for future campaign strategies for engaging with SC providers.

5.5 The State

This section considers the WGov and also Welsh LAs as a sample of key State actors in the RLW in SC in Wales movement. Arguably, they are the most powerful of actors in terms of their ability to legislate and funding power. The devolved nature of WGov, LAs and their remit will also be discussed. Finally, the perceived strengths and constraints of the State in the context of the RLW in SC campaign in Wales will be analysed.

As discussed in the Context chapter previously, while the UK Government is responsible for the statutory minimum hourly pay rate, the "NLW" across the UK, Health and some taxation powers are devolved to the WGov. The WGov have put into place legislation specific to Wales with a focus on social and economic justice such as the Wellbeing for Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) to improve the lives of people in Wales in areas such as more evenly distributed prosperity and health and greater social and economic equality across Wales.

Specifically in SC, reform has been called for a long time with numerous policies put in place around issues of increasing choice for care users, increasing professionalism in care work, recognising the SC sector as a “core industry” and making it a priority sector in WGov strategy but stopping short of improving pay for SC workers.

Figure 5.1 Welsh Government Social Care policy timeline



5.5.1 Organisation description

State actors included in this study are WGov, the seven Welsh Health Boards and Trusts and LAs. As well as being large employers, LAs (LA) also have large purchasing power across the 22 LA areas in Wales. The potential impact of getting public sector organisations accredited in terms of beneficiaries makes the State a key target within the RLW movement.

The WGov is a devolved Government and has legislative powers in area such as Health and Education. It does not currently have powers to adjust statutory minimum pay rates and is dependent on the UK Government in Westminster for an annual budget based on a proportion on tax paid by its citizens. The WGov then sets budgets for each of the 22 LAs from that budget. Budgetary constraints and impact of austerity measures have been key push backs from targets of the campaign.

As described previously, the WGov is a devolved Government and does not have power to change or create a new statutory minimum wage (Heery et al., 2018). This means that the voluntary nature of RLW standard and use of “soft regulation” (Heery

et al., 2018) has offered a chance to make change in times when the UK Government were less sympathetic and unlikely to make the necessary changes to tackle low pay such as the RLW standard.

During this study, there were Welsh national elections in May 2022 and this was seen as a key opportunity for campaigners for political leverage. All major parties had pay improvement for SC workers prioritised in their manifestos but apart from the Labour Party all had promised “more than the RLW wage” or a set rate of £10 per hour which was slightly higher than the RLW at that time.

5.5.2 Roles and remit in RLW in Social Care movement

WGov and Welsh LAs have been key targets for Civil Society groups in the RLW in SC campaign. Using political leverage is a key strategy in Community Organising (Walls, 2015) and the various ways this has been done will be discussed in the next chapter. To identify relevance to this chapter which explores the roles of actors, it is useful to analyse the different perceived roles of the State in terms of work and labour and these roles in the RLW in SC movement.

The State has the responsibility to act as a “good employer”, with the WGov accrediting as a RLW employer early on in the campaign (Heery et al., 2017). The WGov has sought to lead by example, setting a good example for other large employers in Wales including those in receipt of public funding and those in their supply chain.

The State is a key target of RLW campaigns due to its decision making power when it comes to wage setting. The State is also a key influencer and important to build a relationship with and hold accountable. Arguably the target CCW have had most success building a relationship with was the WGov First Minister at the time, Mark Drakeford who publicly committed to paying all SC Workers in Wales and RLW and prior to that for all Public Sector organisations to pay RLW in 2019.

At time of writing only two out of the seven Welsh Health Boards and three of the 22 LAs have accredited as RLW employers. This is despite being the targets of CUK and TUs campaigns and WGov public support of the RLW standard and encouragement for other public sector organisations to accredit. This could indicate

significant barriers to implementing the RLW at LA and Health Board levels of Local Government.

5.5.3 Strengths

In Wales there has been an economic focus on the foundational economy and Welsh Economic Contract which emphasises a contributory principle of businesses and society around them. This is considered an encouraging paradigmatic shift (Heery et al., 2018) away from purely profit generation. In Wales, National Wellbeing Indicators have been developed by the Future Generations Commissioner, which include the percentage of people on permanent employment contracts, the percentage paid at least two-thirds of the UK median wage and a reduction in the gender pay gap (WGov, 2016b). (Heery et al., 2018).

The State has a role as purchaser and in Wales this includes the UK Government, WGov as well as the 22 Welsh LAs. A significant amount of work is outsourced to save money and contracted workers are within Council premises as well as in the community, in the case of SC. All indirectly employed or contracted workers would be covered by RLW accreditation.

A key strength in terms of driving the RLW is the State's role as purchaser and the "potential power" of the LAs (Prowse and Fells, 2016). The State's role as "encourager", offering incentives such as Business Rate discounts, putting pressure on by publicly "urging" local large employers to accredit. There is evidence of this in the RLW campaign in SC but limited to Cardiff only where a small financial incentive to accredit was offered to SC providers in Cardiff. Cardiff Council was the first LA in Wales to accredit but notably accreditation at the time did not include SC workers. Getting Cardiff Council "on board" was a key strategy for RLW campaigners, aiming for a "domino effect" of accreditations by other organisations. Outcomes of this strategy will be discussed in detail in Chapter seven.

LAs have been the campaign target of the UNISON Ethical Care Charter, the RLW in SC in Wales campaign as well as the Welsh First Minister's public support and commitment for all public sector employers to be RLW accredited in 2019 yet at time of writing there are only three LAs out of 22 accredited in Wales indicating a significant constraints to implementing the RLW or multiple campaign strategies so far. Findings relating to perceived constraints are discussed below.

5.5.4 Constraints (individual, organizational and social)

Individual

The RLW has had success when the Council Leader has supported the standard, for example with Cardiff and RCT Council Leaders have been public about their spearheading the decision to accredit. The impact of council leaders flags the importance of key individuals within the campaign and the need for key champions in influential roles in target organisations. This has come at some cost to the campaign in SC in terms of perceived “loopholes” and perceived being “let off the hook” from SC providers leading to a lack of trust in the RLW standard by some. This will be discussed in Chapter seven.

Where CCW have maintained relationships with senior staff for example a senior team member who supported Cardiff University accreditation who went on to become a Board member in Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board. This has led to accreditation where other Health Boards have not yet accredited. The use of individual senior level Champions has seen success in driving accreditation in large public sector organisations.

Organizational

Austerity measures and budgetary constraints were cited most often as the key reason for not increasing commissioned SC rates as well as the need for outsourcing in the first place. Austerity measures have “shrunk” the State’s role as social protector (Baluch, 2021 p244), reducing responsibility of providing care to vulnerable people in the community. This is noticeable in SC in Wales where the use of outsourcing and commissioning of Care to private companies by LAs. Whilst intended to save money, outsourcing does seem to be the most significant barrier to implementing the RLW. The few Councils which have accredited have done so but by bypassing SC in order to do so.

“Cardiff was the first LA to accredit in Wales, but they did it specifically on the basis that SC was not included because they couldn’t afford it. We supported that because we also were in agreement that at that time, it was the height of austerity. They were struggling for money, generally.” (Campaigner Organiser 6)

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council accredited as a RLW employer but also sold their publicly run SC services to privately owned care providers due to budgetary constraints within a few weeks of each other. (<https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2023-10-23/council-workers-protesting-as-cuts-made-to-care-services> [Accessed October 2023]; <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Newsroom/PressReleases/2023/October/ChangestohomecareservicetobeconsideredbyCabinet.aspx> [Accessed October 2023]).

This would explain why the majority of Welsh LAs have still not yet accredited and also suggests that the RLW is exposing fundamental systemic issues but is not able to address them.

Another key organisational constraint for LAs is that they are complex organisations. In efforts to cope with austerity measures, Councils have decided to outsource many services as a cheaper option to keeping them in house. Implementing the RLW which covers both directly and indirectly employed workers means identifying all contracted workers which can be a daunting task.

“We’ve a budget of over 400 million (£) and we deliver 800 different services, but we probably have 1000s of different contracts. We’ve got 350 contracts in Transport alone.” (Welsh LA 4)

In terms of driving the RLW standard, LAs operate quite separately and there doesn’t seem to be the same “ripple effect”, domino effect or peer to peer encouragement among LAs as seen in other sectors such as Universities in Wales. There does not appear to be a sense of competition to accredit hoped for by campaigners.

“We wouldn’t mind saying, “Look, we’re [Name of LA], look what we’ve done!” But we wouldn’t necessarily go out and say you [other Councils] should do this [accredit]. If we felt it had success, we would say we’ve done this and it had success and so that would tell people about it. But we’re not going to go out and say, you know, [name of other LAs] you should do this, that’s not the way it works in local government....you start telling someone what they should be doing, you just take them further away from doing it?” Welsh LA 2

Social

After multiple crises and austerity punishments, the extent of reform required to tackle structural and procedural problems relating to low pay in SC is overwhelming. Cost cutting and saving money is perceived by SC providers to be taking priority over reforming the system. The State's role model position is questioned among SC providers saying that LAs just want the cheapest price possible and providing a decent service is not a top priority.

“What the LA has said was that's it's 50% on quality, 50% on price. It's not on quality at all. It's all on the price. It goes to the cheapest bidder. How sad is that?... I wonder these agencies that are going in so cheap, I don't know how they're doing it, and it is sustainable?” (Accredited SC provider 1)

Constraints regarding the role of the State as a role model and “good employer”, encouraging SC providers they should be paying RLW but knowing to have avoided it themselves when accrediting.

“With Cardiff Council, one of our concerns, was the exclusion of SC. And then I think we became aware of the discussions that were going on with Cardiff LA, and the exclusion of SC from their RLW registration.” (SC provider rep)

This has led to feelings of anger and accusations of double standards among SC providers in Wales and also of mistrust in the RLW standard and accreditation process which will be discussed further in Chapter seven.

5.5.5 Summary

The State has many roles and potential ways for making a significant impact in terms of driving the RLW standard in Wales. The organisations which were early to accredit were those organisations which had fewer low paid staff members as recognised in other studies across the UK (Heery et al., 2017). Public sector organisations, including LAs with responsibility for lower paid workers such as SC workers have been much more hesitant to accredit but at the same time cognisant of the voter attraction of such policies especially after the Covid crisis. Cardiff Council accredited but without including SC workers. Campaigners hoped that other large employers and other LAs would follow their lead and accredit. Accrediting as RLW employers but privatising their SC services due to effects of austerity shows similar

constraints as in Scotland and how deep the effects of austerity and neo-liberal business practices have been entrenched into Public Services and Local Government (Baluch, 2021). The importance of having a Council leader or senior decision maker in a target organisation as a RLW champion is important and has had success in Wales. Political leverage is fleeting, with relationships built with a politician needing to change when they step down or are voted out of office. This could be perceived as a “shallow” use of accreditation and driver of the RLW standard and will be discussed further as a campaign strategy in Chapter six and in terms of outcomes in Chapter seven.

5.6 Summary of actor section

This section has described and considered a key sample of actors in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Their roles and remits relevant to the RLW in SC have been described. Drawing on Bellemare’s theory of what makes a significant Industrial Relations actor, this section has analysed how actors in the RLW in SC movement in Wales ecosystem have used available resources and how they are constrained by individual workplace level constraints, Industrial Relations meso level constraints and wider societal constraints.

All actors included in this section have been observed to take action to some degree in the RLW in SC movement in Wales during this study. Noticeably absent, in terms of taking action are SC workers, care users and friends and family of care users. Finding ways to engage these actors is important for future research into improving working conditions in SC and boosting grass roots engagement.

Civil society actors included the CCW Community Organising network, TUs and Cynnal/LWF as the accreditation bodies. CCW is the actor with closest proximity to the community and work with a grass roots ethos. They are a network and can call on members from other branches in the UK to help boost community power in public actions and put pressure on decision makers. Despite being a really small team of core Organisers, CCW has effective links not just with the community but also with decision makers in target organisations and political leaders in Wales. They have had less success in engaging SC workers and TUs.

Cynnal and LWF, the accreditation bodies are the “business friendly” actor, facilitating voluntary regulation and encouraging employers but not taking part in campaigning. Initially they had little funding which meant targeting the low hanging fruit organisations in order to satisfy funding criteria and continue the work. They are skilled at facilitating the accreditation process and especially guiding large organisations which can be a labour intensive process. In terms of influence, accreditation bodies do not enforce accreditation and the RLW brand is not widely known or understood among workers and actors outside the immediate RLW movement ecosystem.

TUs are the actors with traditionally the closest proximity to workers and they are skilled negotiators. Similarly to CCW, they have limited access to SC workers compared to workers in other industry sectors and similarly to CCW are finding SC workers hard to reach. These are significant constraints to using traditional Union activity and could explain why there is little TU involvement in the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

In terms of Market actors which included SC providers and a SC provider representative organisation, Care Forum Wales (CFW). The majority of providers are small, privately owned businesses which aligns with patterns of accreditation in SC across the UK. There is also a pattern of high end franchises accrediting which tend to cater for wealthier Care users and rely less on LA commissioned care packages. CFW membership is small but well organised and close to policy makers, ensuring provider voices are heard. Market actors are reluctant to get involved in the RLW in SC in Wales. They don’t want to be perceived as the “bad guys” or blockage to improvements to Care worker pay. There are currently no SC providers as Principle Partners with the LWF or on any Living Wage City or Living Wage Steering groups in Wales which could be a significant barrier. Also accredited Care providers do not drive or encourage other providers to accredit. This seems to be out of solidarity to other providers in the knowledge of the burden an increase in staff costs can make on top of other regulations and especially for small businesses.

Finally, State actors were considered, especially the WGov, LAs and Health Boards in Wales. WGov is devolved and has been supportive of the RLW in SC. LAs have been important targets for RLW campaign activity in SC. The State has many roles

such as a Purchaser and Good Employer, relevant to improving pay in SC. These roles are perceived to be strengthened via WGov paradigmatic shift in around Economic Contract and principles of business having more responsibility on its impact on society. The First Minister at the time, Mark Drakeford was supportive of the RLW standard. LAs are large, complex organisations and have been tasked with contradictory tasks: the implementation of paying SC workers the RLW via the commissioning process as well being perceived to be focussed on saving money due to austerity measures. In Bellemare's model LAs could be classed as the outcomes dimension actor. They haven't been instrumental in the RLW but have been tasked with operationalising it which could be one explanation behind the low number of accreditations at Local Government level.

The RLW movement does not operate in a vacuum. Wales is a geographically small country and the multiple actors have interacted in different ways and spaces throughout the movement. The next section will explore the interaction using data from semi-structured interviews with a broad range of actors as well as the researchers own observations and experiences and gain understanding of how this movement has worked compared to other examples in the literature.

Chapter 6 How does the RLW movement in Social Care in Wales work?

The previous chapter introduced a sample of key actors from Civil Society, the Market and the State. Actors were described and their roles explored both in general and more specifically within the RLW in SC movement to build an understanding of the role of each individual actor organisation as well as their strengths and constraints. This chapter will explore key approaches and tools used and will consider how actors work together to build strength and drive the campaign forward as well as what constraints they face which could be said to hold back the RLW in SC campaign in Wales. The subsequent chapter will explore outcomes of these actions, including tensions and successes in relation to the RLW in SC campaign in Wales.

The literature on RLW considers interactions between CSOs and TU coalition as both “optimally effective” (Prowse et al., 2017 p831) but also “not a pre-condition” (Heery et al., 2017) of campaign success when it comes to the RLW. This suggests there may be some contextual differences in campaigns around industry sector and geographical location to be further explored outside of the union revitalisation discussion. Key approaches and tools used during the RLW campaign to address social and economic injustice and more specifically how RLW campaigns run in the SC sector in Wales will be considered from the perception of multiple actors involved.

While the last chapter considered actor organisations individually, this chapter explores key interactions between RLW in SC campaign actors in Wales. The degree and extent of cooperation between actors will be analysed aided by Tattersall’s (2005) typology of depth and purpose of collaboration between actors ranging from “Ad hoc” arrangement to “deeply engaged”. The typology has been used to understand more about interactions in terms of shared interests, strategy, “buy in” and scale of activity between CSOs and TUs but in an update to their original typology, Tattersall considers broadening the typology to include interactions between other actors, replacing “union participation” with “organisational buy in” (Tattersall 2018 p78). Capturing a broad range of actors is

pertinent to the RLW in SC campaign given the multiple actors across State, Market and civil society as described in the previous chapter.

Figure 6.1 Tattersall’s framework of union-community coalitions

Table 1. A framework of union-community coalitions.

	<i>Ad hoc</i> coalition	Support coalition	Mutual coalition	Deep coalition
Common interest	Narrow focus Short term	Any kind of issue, may be connected or not connected to members	Mutual interests of participating organisations Union issue framed as community concern	Issue framed as social vision for working people
Structure and strategy	Episodic engagement Tactical	Short term meetings Could be dominated by one party	Leaders of organisations involved Trust, bridge builders Longer term focus	Decentralised coalition Long term strategic plan to build power
Union participation	Limited, instrumental	Staff lead, distant from members	Some mobilisation of union members	Union actively engaging rank and file Significant buy in, financial resources
Scale	Any place	Coalition operates at same scale as decision makers	Long term organisation at site of decision maker	Coalition active at a variety of scales, including local

Changed to “organisation buy in” (Tattersall, 2018)

(Source Tattersall, 2018 p69)

Observations and interviews allowed the researcher to explore differing approaches to actions and interactions referred to in Community Organising methodology as “carrot” and “stick” approaches to taking action and specifically to their use in the SC sector in Wales. Tensions were noticeable around the focus on relational “carrot” type actions as the dominant approach during the RLW in SC in Wales campaign. Relational actions are seen by some as an essential part of “deep” community organising (McAlevey, 2003) but for others risk “domesticating” (Bunyan, 2010) the agitational and radical “stick” type community organising methods.

Secondly, the intended degree of pressure and influence across Industrial Relations (IR) system actors (Market, State and Civil Society) will be explored to understand the degree of “significance” of the actor in matter relating to work (Bellemare, 2000). As discussed in the Literature Review chapter, Bellemare (2000) considers the degree of significance to be linked to levels of continuous presence across all three levels of the Industrial Relations system; State, Market and Civil Society and that significance is “dynamic” and changeable. Approaches and tactics will also be

understood by exploring the direction and purpose of pressure and influence of activities relating to the RLW in SC campaign in Wales.

Combined, this analytical framework will help to extend discussion on coalition between actors on work related matters and union revitalisation and “colonization” (Heery, 2018) of work related issues by CSOs or “colonization” of Community Organising language and more towards a broader social change discussion. This will also add to discussion on power of individual actors within campaigns and collective power of multiple actors in efforts related to making social change “an issue framed as a social vision for working people” (Tattersall, 2018, p78). Shared interests are critical in building a “deep coalition” (Tattersall, 2018) and the aim of a deep coalition is long term, sustainable positive social change.

The key activities to be explored will be:

1. Attribution and Framing
2. Actions on LAs and Health Boards
3. Testimonies
4. Accreditation
5. Political leverage

These key approaches and interactions have been observed by the researcher during her participation in campaign activities.

Each section will include a vignette based on the researcher’s participation observation of an event or a series of events as well as interview data and secondary data to explore perceptions of the multiple actors involved in key RLW in SC campaign strategies and methods used as part of the RLW campaign in SC in Wales.

To set the scene before introducing some of the key RLW in SC movement actions, a key activity which took place just before data collection period of this project is important to understand in terms the trajectory of the movement and the involvement of multiple actors and the point in time this research takes place.

In January 2021, CCW organised an online SC summit, inviting the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford, to hear testimonies and other evidence of the current state of pay in the Welsh SC sector from a broad range of movement and industry actors including care workers, care users, care

provider representatives, TUs and community organisations in the Citizens' network across Wales. It billed the RLW as the "Foundation of a revolution in SC in Wales" and had each actor literally reading from the same script, giving testimony in support of the RLW for SC workers in Wales. As well as being an impressive feat of organising skill, this was a show of civil society collective power aimed to persuade the First Minister if he agreed that the RLW could be a part of SC sector reform, which he did. There were exclamations of "We've won!" among campaigners and there was a real sense of progress and collective achievement in terms of driving the RLW and making a much needed difference to the lives of SC workers. Paying the RLW in SC within the next term in Senedd went on to be one of Labour's six pledges for the 2021 Wales National election. Welsh Labour won the election and charged Welsh LAs and Health Boards to use extra funding provided by WGov to pay SC workers the RLW.

6.1. Attribution and Framing

This section explores RLW in SC campaign actors' perceptions on who's responsible and who's to blame as well as understanding what different actors are seeking to change in the SC sector in Wales in the aftermath of the Summit. For example, TUs want broader systemic change, going beyond the RLW and pay related issues in SC with calls for a National Care Service. CCW aim to build community power and develop "Leaders" and as discussed in the previous Chapter on actors, aim to prioritise issues based on what their community networks see as priorities.

Considering attribution of responsibility (Kelly, 1998) and framing helps understand the degree and direction of pressure and influence as well as the extent of common interest and collective action among actors.

Attribution

A key part of successful work related mobilization is having a mutual target to blame for the issue (Kelly, 1998). For the RLW in SC campaign, attributing responsibility is complex as there are multiple actors responsible for making decisions on pay in the SC sector from UK Government, WGov, LAs and private SC providers as discussed in Chapter five. This makes identifying a "target", a key initial part of undertaking an action, challenging. Below is a vignette based on a collection of observations (Observations 15,16, 18 and 19) during the researcher's participation in developing and undertaking an action as part of the RLW in SC in Wales movement. In Community Organising (CO) terminology the "target" is the key decision maker considered to have the power to make the changes you are seeking. Community

Organising seeks to meet with the people in power and put forward a specific solution referred to as an “Ask”. During Observations this was an initial part of the planning within the Researcher’s Action Group. Community Organising training stipulates that a good “target” needs to be a key decision maker who also has power to implement any changes asked for as part of the action. In the Researcher’s participation and observations this was the Chief Executive of a Health Board and LA Leaders.

In the Autumn of 2021 the RLW in Cwm Taf Health Board action team was formed and the researcher took part in planning and taking part in the action. In line with the CUK Community Organising method, a Power Analysis was undertaken (see below, Figure 6.2) to help the action team understand more about who had decision making power in terms of implementing the RLW in a Health Board and also who could be potential allies and help the team build their power. Initially, the team thought of Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board Board members as potential key decision makers especially one identified as a RLW champion, having implemented the RLW in a previous position. Senior organisers identified the Chief Executive Officer as having more operational authority which made them a more effective action target. This felt more about attributing responsibility to implement a solution to a problem rather than attributing responsibility to causing the issue in the first place and felt less agitational to the researcher in that sense.

Meetings were arranged with politicians within the catchment area of the Health Board who had already expressed support for the RLW to Organisers. These were described as “open door” meetings, with politicians expected to agree to our asks of adding their signature to our letter to Cwm Taf Health Board. The planning team were asked to contribute to the letter, using a CCW headed template and including all the signatures we collected. The template followed a tried and tested CUK format of opening with a “love bombing section” where we show appreciation of the organisation, followed by introducing the problem we’ve identified and letting them know about the action we are planning. The final version of the letter was addressed to both to the CEO and the Board member known to Organisers from a previous campaign with Welsh Universities and had some more agitational wording when it was discovered that the Board was advertising their RLW accredited status without actually accrediting with the LWF. This was the more agitational part of the action from the researcher’s perspective and their first experience of what has been described by interviewees as a “stick” approach to an action. The letter excerpt will be analysed below.

The first part of this excerpt illustrates the how the issue is framed in a way that difficult to disagree with and is designed to hold a mirror to the target organisation, emphasising the importance of the RLW not just to the organisation itself but to the wider community it serves as a public health body. This can be seen as an example of attribution of responsibility and a reminder to the organisation of that responsibility in a way that would be difficult to disagree with!

“We believe that every single worker in the health and SC sector in Cwm Taf deserves to be paid at least the RLW. This is the best way of recognising the contribution of those workers, but also of playing a role, as large local employer, in tackling the high rates of in-work poverty in our local communities.”

The next section shows how the target organisation is then shown how they’re not living up to their own standards and responsibilities.

*We think you agree, because job adverts on your website claim you are ‘A RLW Employer’. Having checked with the LWF, we have confirmed with them that **Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board is not an accredited RLW employer**, and therefore not entitled to describe itself as a ‘RLW Employer’.*”

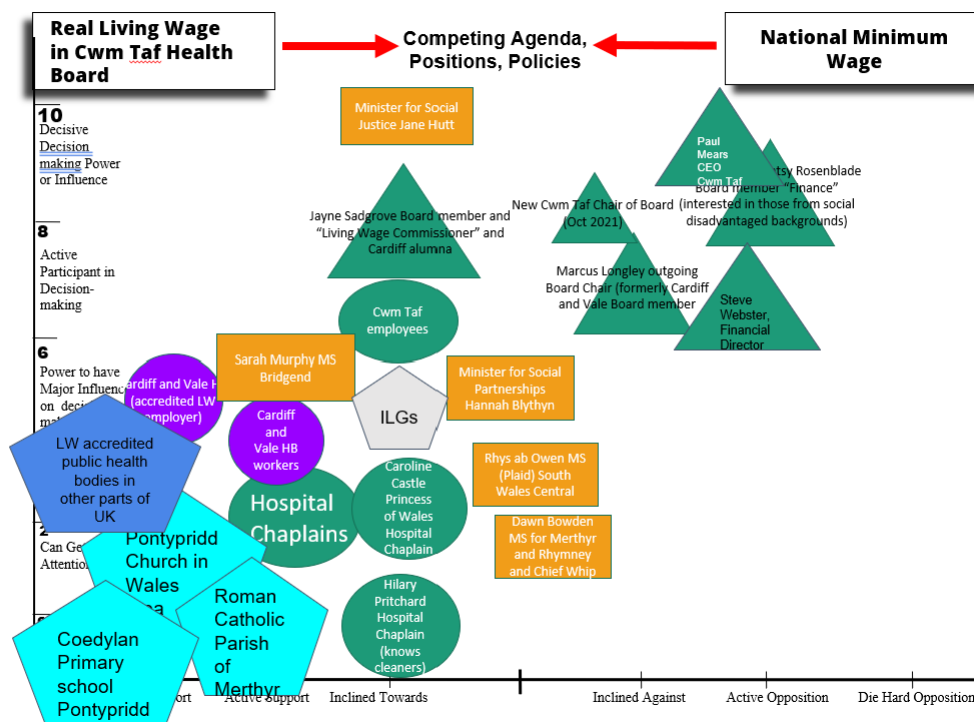
The next section is an example of a comparator approach, designed to appeal to the competitive nature of an organisation. This is an interesting approach to understand with public sector organisations as opposed to private sector organisations where campaigners can appeal to competition for customers. This action put a lot of hope into Health Boards and LAs wanting to race each other to accredit and to not be the last to accredit.

“Our disappointment was compounded when we discovered that our neighbour, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, is a fully accredited RLW Employer!”

The final section of this letter excerpt shows the challenge to the target organisation, a reminder of the responsibility they have to their workers and the call for action.

We really hope that you agree with us that those working in health and SC in Cwm Taf deserve the same assurance from their employer that they will never slip into in-work poverty, just as much as those who do the same work in Cardiff and Vale? If you do agree, the only answer is for Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to accredit as a RLW employer – and that is what we are asking you to do.” (excerpt from letter sent from CUK to Cwm Taf Health Board, November 2021)

Figure 6.2 Power Analysis for Cwm Taf Health Board action 2021



As discussed in the Context chapter, SC is a fragmented and complex sector which poses specific challenges to the RLW campaign. Decisions on pay can be made by the UK Government at statutory NLW levels and for budgetary decisions in non devolved areas, WGov can make budgetary and taxation decisions on devolved issues such as health. Welsh LAs have decision making powers on commissioned care provision but are limited by budget. SC providers can decide pay rates and terms of contract for their staff as long as it meets statutory requirements. Between the State and the Market there’s a trickle down of budgetary responsibility where the ultimate purse holder is the UK Government. There is a circular blaming where each level of Government from UK National to WGov to LAs and Health Boards holds the other responsible rather than finding an answer or a solution.

“...it's a very complicated industry, which makes it very easy for it to be somebody else's fault, rather than something to deal with.” (Academic researcher 3)

“We talked to LAs in particular, why are you commissioning, not on the basis of the RLW, oh, well, we can't afford to, so we need the money from WGov to

do that. And then the WGov conversation is, oh, but we've given LAs money and it's up to them in their discretion to decide how to do that. So it's not in the employer's direct control. ...The commissioners would argue it's not in their direct control.” (SC provider rep)

Outside of the CCW campaign some actors see the ultimate responsibility lying with the State as budget holder and legislative power to improve the SC sector and the fact that RLW campaign being led by civil society as a signal that the State has not done enough to improve working conditions within the sector.

“...this is not the responsibility of some charitable organisation that is funded by £6000 a year from Cardiff Business School and Lottery funding. This should be the role of the State.” (Academic researcher 3)

Market

In terms of attribution of responsibility, the RLW is put forward as a way for the employer themselves to take the decision to invest in their workers and improve pay and tackle the perception of SC providers “just being in it for the money”. From a business perspective, SC providers perceive there to be a lack of benefit to their business in paying the RLW and also a lack of differentiation or penalty for those employers who choose to continue paying poorly. SC providers want to see a change in how the SC system works and how SC work is valued. SC workers have had greater visibility since the Covid crisis, with more of the general public understanding their work and they have been included in “keyworker” status.

“Employers who don't want to pay...have been able to get away with it, essentially. There must also be a whole lot of tax implications that I don't understand. I mean, there's certainly not a push to pay care workers in the same way as there is to pay bankers is there?” (Campaigner organiser 2)

Public perception of profit focus and the shareholder system in SC is perceived as “greed” of employers and managers by some care users. The RLW is an opportunity for some employers to do things outside of that system but others such as Multi National Corporations are restrained by the system and are less likely to be able to see a way to convince shareholders. This links to the view of the RLW as a tool for social and economic justice (Bunyan, 2016) way of countering neo-liberal business practices in all industry sectors where profit maximisation is prioritised over worker

rights, including.

“It (SC) shouldn’t be such a money spinner....” (Campaigner care user)

“There’s a lot of money going offshore, so it’s all about the money for them and unfortunately that’s the barrier we’ve got to break down.” (Union representative Local Gov Caerphilly)

Reports of privately owned care companies showing profit increases during the pandemic would back up this perception of some SC providers being purely profit driven (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jul/24/uk-private-care-providers-profit-rise-covid-report> Accessed Jan 2023) and for some this is seen as directly contradictory to the nature and purpose of SC and has led to some TUs to focus campaign efforts more on a not-for-profit care system to combat this rather than support the RLW.

This could explain some tensions between Community Organisers and TUs and also between TUs and privately owned SC providers.

“We did engage it also at that point with the TUs initially, as well, but they didn’t want to sign up to a campaign that was just about the RLW, because they wanted to go beyond that.” (SC provider rep)

As discussed in Chapter five, wage setting in SC is complex and not all SC providers are purely profit driven. Interviewees explained frustrations from a SC provider perspective that wage setting is not simply a case of setting the price point you want and there are many financial constraints they face especially, for example, from commissioned care provision.

“One of our frustrations. I mean, one of the things that’s different about SC, particularly in Wales is that, you can’t set your own price effectively in very many circumstances, and you are subject to LA and health board fee setting.” (SC provider rep)

“...if you’re a SC provider, and you want to be able to pay your workforce enough to reflect the work they do, and to recruit and retain. But you can only do that, if that’s reflected in the fees you’re paid. And I think for external organizations that’s been quite hard to engage with because we’re up for it [improving pay] but it’s got to be recognized in fees.” (SC provider rep)

The sense of pride among business owners and the community experienced in other industry sectors such as Football Clubs (Prowse and Dobbins, 2022) around accrediting as RLW employers is missing in the SC sector. There is solidarity among smaller SC providers and recognition of significant operational constraints of increasing wages mixed with the frustration of wanting to improve pay. This could be one explanation why SC providers do not drive the RLW standard, even those who have accredited. One interviewee in this study was the only accredited SC provider in their area at the time of being interviewed. They didn't want any other providers to know they were paying RLW even though people were asking who it was during meetings.

It was a dilemma for that provider, wanting to take action and pay their workers the RLW, knowing it would be difficult financially for their business but also wanting to show solidarity with other providers who weren't in a position to do so at the time. There was a perceived risk of paying the RLW which wasn't recognised or rewarded by the LA sufficiently at that time.

Framing

Framing gives an understanding of who an organization is looking to influence and what they think their interests are. Either side of the Summit, improving pay in SC in Wales was a disparate and “noisy” platform with multiple actors running their own campaigns at various rates of pay including the CUK “Can't live on Claps and Rainbows” campaign support of key workers which included SC workers, “£20k by 2020” initiative by Care Forum Wales, multiple political parties in the lead up to the Welsh election included RLW or “more than RLW” pledges in their manifestos, “Pay them Fairly” campaign by third sector care provider as well as UNISON's Ethical Care Charter which were aimed at LAs and contained a RLW element.

The researcher noticed a similarity between Care Forum Wales, the SC provider representative body and TU framing of their organisations' goals relating to SC after the SC summit in January 2021 organised by CCW. They both framed the RLW as a “starter” campaign but that it “isn't enough” and “doesn't go far enough”. It was interesting to see a separation and a differentiation in their interests away from the RLW movement and CCW. This change of framing signified the end of a moment of

collective working of the Summit and a divergence in strategy away from the RLW brand. There was a notion that the RLW in SC had now “been done” and that it’s time for the next step.

Those involved in the RLW in SC campaign in Wales perceive TUs to have not taken part in the campaign and to have separated themselves from the brand, especially that of driving RLW accreditation among employers and their members.

“I’d work with TUs a lot... they just won’t support RLW accreditation. We do have the member of the TUC on the RLW leadership group and Make Cardiff a Living Wage City group, but they’re not quite engaged. I think they still see the RLW as a threat to collective bargaining.” (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

The researcher noticed how TUs separated themselves from the RLW movement. Instead the dominant phrase and framing from TUs was that the RLW “does not go far enough”.

“I’ll talk about RLW increase in pay, but it’s not enough, the RLW is not enough for the SC” (TU 1)

“...it would be a massive step forward. Would it be enough? No, but it’s a starting point.” (TU 3)

One explanation in the literature for this divergence from the RLW brand by TUs is the concern that CSOs are encroaching on TU territory by addressing work related activity, referred to in the literature as replacement (Heery et al., 2017). One interviewee expressed frustration that the RLW undermined previous work they had done on pay scales and standards with employers.

“We went through the job evaluation in 2009, for the LAs and all the suppliers of LAs...and we evaluated all roles. We had a scheme with a pay spine, which we’ve just looked at now and taken out the bottom pay point, because of the RLW, what that did is compress all those [pay points] above the RLW didn’t get an increase.” (Local Government Caerphilly)

There was also a sense of frustration among interviewed providers and other Market actors on the dominance of the RLW in conversations on SC on top of a flurry of other regulations coming in around the same time.

“We had legislation that came in designed to improve paying conditions for like domiciliary care workers. We had Regulation and Inspection of SC

(Wales) Act 2016. *It [the RLW] came in at the same time. And that put an extra burden on us as employers financially to meet other criteria that we didn't have specified.*" (Unaccredited Employer 1)

The perceived burden and frustration of implementing the RLW by SC providers was expressed in an online event the researcher observed and "It's not enough" was the dominant framing among SC providers and TU actors.. There was a sense of frustration by those within the SC sector of having to adhere to the standard which had come from outside the sector and was not part of their own strategy.

Concluding section for Attribution and Framing.

There was a lack of solidarity through mutual opposition and attribution of responsibility (Kelly, 1998) in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. There is a lack of deep coalition interaction between key actors across all levels. This section has considered multiple actor's interests and where blame for low pay in SC has been attributed. WGov, Health Boards and LAs in Wales were targeted in the campaign as key decision makers and wider social responsibilities to tackle in work poverty. Market SC providers are attributed blame by some for being greedy and overly profit driven and the RLW is seen as a choice SC providers could take as action against social and economic injustice. Many small, privately owned SC providers do want to improve pay in the sector but are constrained by reliance on low commissioning fees. The absence of a being able to attribute responsibility to one single actor has led to a lack of overarching solidarity between actors and was a significant barrier to driving the campaign.

Considering framing used by different actors helped identify a divergence in strategies and offer an explanation for the lack of engagement in the RLW campaign in Wales by industry representatives and TUs. After the Summit in January 2021, TUs and SC industry representatives used similar framing around RLW such as "doesn't go far enough". This was interesting as before the Summit, efforts around improving pay in SC were disparate and "noisy".

There was a sense of frustration with the RLW by TUs feeling that prior work on pay scales had been undermined and with SC provider representatives frustrated with a standard which had come from outside of the industry and didn't address financial constraints faced by SC providers. Similar to Heery et al. (2020) the Replacement, mutual reinforcement or independence explanations of lack of Union involvement do not quite fit as an explanation for the lack of Union engagement with the RLW movement in SC in Wales. This study suggests a closer fitting explanation of lack of engagement between TUs and the RLW is Rivalry; rivalry for people with testimonies and those with lived experience, rivalry for closest proximity to workers and the community, rivalry for platforms to speak on and rivalry for the attention of political leaders.

6.2 Actions focussed on Local Authorities and Health Boards in Wales

This section explores the strategy and types of actions focussed on LAs and Health Boards in the RLW in SC in Wales movement. Multiple approaches and strategies are described in the Literature from previous RLW campaigns such as use of anchor institutions given its success in place based RLW campaigns in UK cities as an explanation of why LAs have been a key focus and target of the RLW in SC campaign. Previous literature has seen success citing a "domino effect" following accreditation of one influential anchor organisations as in the Welsh HEI sector where all HEIs have accredited. Where previous studies have discussed these instances in terms of a domino effect resulting from external pressure by campaigners, here the researcher presents perceptions and an example of a Health Board's move to accredit as a result of influence of a senior target organisation member. This can be seen as a successful example of using "Champions" in the RLW movement in SC in Wales. Champions are individuals supportive of the RLW and tend to be senior members of an organisation who can influence from within the organisation and who tend to carry their support of RLW when they change organisations. Anchor institutions, play a key role in driving the RLW standard and form a key part of the Living Wage Places strategy (<https://old.livingwage.org.uk/living-wage-places> [Accessed January 2024]). The idea

being that encouraging one major employer in an area will result in a “domino effect” of other employers in the area or same industry sector accrediting due to influence and reach of the anchor institution with suppliers and competitors or fear of reputational disadvantage.

The domino effect has been seen to have success in the Higher Education Institution sector where all Welsh Universities have now accredited

“...we had a full house of universities.” (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

For some this success is not perceived to be caused by a domino effect of other universities, feeling the external pressure and wanting to keep up. Some perceive the driver in this instance to be senior members of staff within target organisations who are supportive of the RLW and who drive accreditation from within their organisations as “Champions” of the RLW.

“In the case of I'm thinking about universities, Cardiff was the first university to accredit, and then the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor have been very proactive within Higher Education (HE) particularly Wales. We've now got all the HEIs accredited to the RLW.” (WGov Advisor 1)

There is evidence of “quiet campaigning” among senior decision makers in organisations where employers have accredited voluntarily, the Senior Executive or business owner has tended to make that decision. They become champions of the RLW standard and in the case of senior staff when they move jobs, they become champions, driving the RLW standard in a new organisation.

It is also of interest to note that the strategy to target LAs and Health Boards (HBs) wasn't the first choice of target for the RLW in SC in Wales campaigners. LAs were considered more accessible or at least seen as the path of least resistance for campaigners and TUs compared to privately owned SC providers. While this aligns with other studies which note pragmatic and opportunistic nature of RLW in SC campaigns (Prowse and Fells, 2016) it also adds to discussion on the low hanging fruit criticism regarding RLW accreditation.

Firstly to set the scene, this section begins with a vignette based on participant observations of a public action the researcher was involved with in November 2021, 11 months following the SC Summit.

Following on from Community Organising training, the researcher took part in an action on one of seven Welsh Health Boards in November 2021. At that time only one Welsh Health Board (Cardiff and Vale) and one Welsh LA (Cardiff) had accredited and this was nearly a year after the Welsh First Minister's commitment and encouragement for all Public Bodies in Wales to be paying the RLW and the pledge to pay all SC works the RLW. The action was designed to build a continuing good relationship with the Health Board and took place on 16th November 2021.

CUK received a response from Cwm Taf HB to the letter we sent. Cwm Taf have said that they do already plan to accredit as a RLW employer. Therefore the action will be more of a "celebration" and public commitment to accrediting. We would look to get confirmation of a time frame for accreditation and another meeting with them at this action.

This is an example of what was described in Chapter five as relational agitation used by CCW during the RLW in SC in Wales campaign. The aim of the action was not just to hold the target organisation accountable but also to continue to build a relationship.

The researcher was looking forward to seeing the turnout for the action but expected mostly clergy. I didn't feel as nervous as I did on my first Zoom call! We had a run through of the Tina Turner parody song "Nearly the Best!" in St Donat's church and the group was in good mood. We reached Pontypridd Cottage hospital to meet the Director of HR, Hywel Daniels. We had to meet outside the gate due to Covid restrictions. It was a quiet neighbourhood on a dry but sodden Tuesday morning with no passersby or passing traffic to enjoy our singing or to be disrupted by us to that morning! Not that we were an opposing bunch. We were a group of eight with one member in a cassock! Daniels was very courteous, only showing mild embarrassment at letting us sing to him and give him cakes! He thanked us and confirmed that Cwm Taf was already on the journey to becoming accredited and he agreed to meet us again the following year to celebrate the Health Board's actual accreditation.

This felt like a very friendly and joyful action. This was the first action for three of the group members and felt like a good beginner's action.

The researcher noted some positive aspects on the relational nature of the action and thought of Bunyan's (2010) concern around the risk of domesticating of community organising actions. As one of three fledgling organisers, there was a sense of relief that this wasn't going to be an aggressive or agitational action, especially for a first action. This was a positive experience we'd want to do again and is important in terms of building CCW network membership and having people

willing to take public action again. Also the relational aspect felt appropriate given that Covid was only recent and attributing blame on people who had worked in SC through that period would have been insensitive and counterproductive to building a positive relationship.

The researcher observed the lack of contact and visibility of our action with the SC workforce themselves. This was a significant missing component and felt like we had been more successful in engaging with the target organisation's senior team than even being on SC workers' or the general public's radar.

Lots of time was spent taking photos and video for social media. This was important in terms of Cwm Taf making a public commitment to implementing the RLW so they can be held accountable. It was not very visible to SC workers or the public in general though and the researcher wondered if Care workers and other workers even knew what we were doing.

The action on the day was framed as a "celebration" of the Health Board's "journey to accreditation" and was a more relational, cupcakes-in-car-park kind of activity which the researcher felt suited our group as this was a first action for three of us. This felt appropriate given that we were just coming out of Covid. When reflecting on the action, the researcher felt that we weren't visible to SC workers or other low paid workers who would benefit from RLW accreditation and being more visible to those groups might explain lack of engagement with the RLW campaign among low paid workers in a "can't be what you can't see" way.

Whilst the Welsh Health Board's decision to accredit was made with minimal public agitation from CUK it was not a result of one single action. A key influence in this example was the contribution of a board member at Cwm Taf Health Board and who was also a RLW Commissioner and helped bring the RLW to Cardiff University can be said to be key to this decision. Also Mark Drakeford's, the First Minister of Wales at the time, public support of RLW could also be putting pressure on public bodies to accredit. This accreditation can be said to be one example of the successful combination of influence by senior institutional RLW champions and political pressure succeeding in persuading public bodies to accredit rather than public pressure or mobilisation of workers. This aligns with the literature which notes that RLW accreditation tends to be "top down" in an organisation and based on the business owner's decision rather than from outside influence (Heery et al., 2017).

Welsh LAs were key targets for the CUK RLW campaign for SC with accreditation to the RLW as the key “Ask” or main issue for negotiation with LA decision makers. As seen with Cardiff Council accreditation, SC was considered a key barrier to accreditation and perceived by multiple actors as “too complex” and too costly to include straight away. It was decided it was more important to allow Cardiff Council to accredit first and agree on a timeline to include SC after accreditation and continue with the domino effect strategy.

“LAs need to be the ones who are accredited and include the SC agenda. [SC] is too big enough for them to do straight away..., so we just need LAs to accredit, we want to get them over the line first, park the SC thing, so that then we could put pressure on them to include it as we're doing with Cardiff. Otherwise [SC] just becomes a barrier to them accredited in the first place.” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

“Cardiff was the first LA to accredit in Wales, but they did it specifically on the basis that SC was not included is, because they couldn't afford it... And so the focus then was how can we get WGov to fund this, because if we can get WGov funding then it's going to be much easier to get LAs to build it into their commissioning, and then employers to pay it” (Campaigner Organiser 6)

This strategy got Cardiff Council “on board” but has had significant negative impact among SC providers in Wales and this will be discussed in detail in Chapter seven next.

LAs were also the focus for UNISON’s Ethical Care Charter (ECC)

(<https://www.unison.org.uk/care-workers-your-rights/the-ethical-care-charter/>

accessed January 2023) which included a commitment to paying the RLW as well as better working conditions. Both of the Union and CCW campaigns followed the same initial strategy of seeing private care providers in Wales as the key target at the time but not being able to get a foot in the door and so then choosing to target LAs instead.

“It would have apply to all providers, but we wouldn't get any acknowledgement or traction from private sector employers. That's just the truth. So we would go to LAs.” (TU 3)

“We didn't really bother with [approaching private sector SC providers], because we knew what they would say.” (Campaigner Organiser 6)

Far from being the path of least resistance, getting Welsh LAs to accredit as RLW employers has had significant challenges with some campaigners frustrated with the lack of take up from LAs. Here's an example from one Union's experience from the Ethical Care Charter.

"(Name of LA 1) claimed that they were going to do it, (Name of LA 2), at one point said they were going to, (Name of LA 3) may, but none of them did! (Name of LA4) may be the only one. (Name of LA1) did a big publicity thing in the run up to council elections on the steps of the (Name of local venue) with our regional secretary at the time. Big breakthrough moment for us, and they never bloody did it!" (TU 3)

There is some success with three Welsh LAs accredited as RLW employers at time of writing but the remaining 19 not yet "on the journey" to accreditation. At the time of interviews from, September 2021, Cardiff was the only Welsh LA to have accredited but this did not include SC. Two further LAs (Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf) accredited towards the end of this study in 2023 but RCT had sold their SC provision to a private SC provider around the same time. In terms of a strategy this does not align with the hoped for domino effect discussed in the literature.

SC provision was seen as the biggest barrier to getting Welsh LAs to sign up to the Ethical Care Charter and to accredit as RLW employers.

"There's still a real hesitancy is a barrier to LAs accrediting... and SC has really been this, it has been this big barrier....We've done this, but the strategy is not working with LAs" (Welsh Gov Regulator 2)

For some the biggest challenge to a domino effect is persuading the first, usually large, influential organisation to accredit and then this is thought to encourage other organisations to accredit. The biggest step to achieving this is perceived to be having supportive Council leadership to champion the standard and use their influence to encourage suppliers and other partners to accredit.

"...when one employer in a sector makes a change, it has a massive impact on others in that sector. The Role Model or the First Mover is very significant." (WGov Advisor 1)

“I can't understate the importance of having the leader behind it (LW accreditation) is huge. I think it helps to keep other people at the table.” (Welsh LA 1 accredited)

This perception is based on previous success in Higher Education Institution accreditation in Wales where all Universities have now accredited. Success is not perceived to be down to a domino effect but rather more about the influence of senior University decision makers who were supportive of RLW accreditation, transferring to other institutions and continuing to champion the RLW from their new position from the top down.

“We did see a real domino effect there. We do see that direct effect...and we're hoping sort of similar impacts, perhaps in FE (Further Education) and amongst LAs as well. “ (Welsh Gov Advisor 1)

Section Summary

The strategy to target LAs in the SC movement does not seem to have resulted in the deep coalition in Tattersall's typology (2005). Following the Summit, there was a commitment of increased financial “buy in” from the WGov. Buy-in from LAs, Health Board and other publicly owned SC providers has not been as successful with accreditations as in other industry sectors in Wales such as Higher Education.

Cardiff Council was targeted and had a Council Leader supportive of the RLW standard. They were the first Welsh LA to accredit although this was achieved without including commissioned SC initially. A “milestone plan” was drawn up to help include SC but this did little to persuade or influence other SC providers in Cardiff where at time of interviewing there was only one SC provider accredited, rising to 31 at time of writing.

Cardiff has become a “hub” of RLW activity, and is seeking Living Wage City Status along with other cities in the UK such as Dundee, Glenrothes, Salford and Southwark. Cardiff also has the advantage of proximity to the Welsh Parliament Senedd and can be said to be the main hub of RLW activity. For SC, neither the Place “ripple effect”

<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/sites/default/files/LWP%20Low%20Pay%20Local%20Actions%20Report.pdf> or domino effect have been as effective as in other sectors.

There are structural pressures within the Welsh Local Government which could be said to be potential drivers of RLW accreditation among other Welsh LAs. As discussed in Chapter five, the peer to peer competition is not there and therefore the pressure to be seen as a “good” business isn’t the same. People aren’t going to seek their Council services from other places, there’s no consumer pressure in that sense. There also does not appear to be any peer pressure or competition among Welsh LAs as had been hoped by campaigners looking to drive a domino effect of accreditations in the sector.

In terms of scale, the hoped for domino effect has not happened and accreditation is on a one by one basis. RLW in SC in Wales actions are local and targeted at specific LAs and Health Boards and the majority of Welsh LAs have yet to accredit. There was a lack of common interest and social vision in finding a solution to the core barrier to improving pay in SC – the commissioning process. Strategies and activities at Local Government level have lacked depth and long term vision and would fit more with an ad hoc and instrumental description of coalition.

6.3 Testimonies

Testimonies are narratives of someone from the community with lived experience of an issue. In the case of the RLW in SC in Wales, testimonies would be from SC workers describing their experiences of working in SC and what it’s been like living on their current wages. Testimonies are a key direct source of community voice and power in Community Organising and are used as a form of “evidence” to present to decision makers. Community Organising works on a grass roots ethos and model and it’s important that the community have their own voices heard and not have someone represent them. This section analyses strategies relating to testimonies in the RLW in SC in Wales movement.

Starting with a vignette based on the researcher’s own experience of trying to gain testimony from SC workers to use in a public action. Finding testimony is an important aspect for an Organiser to learn but is equally the most difficult to achieve.

Members of the group were predominantly from faith organisations and had good networks in their diocese they could draw on as well as relationships with Hospital chaplains.

The most difficult bit was reaching the low paid workers in the Health Board as none of us had links or contacts to use. Also inviting people we knew to the action referred to as “building up turn out” for the action itself was difficult, partly due to Covid restrictions and lack of every day interactions. I tried emailing student societies with interests in faith and social justice but didn’t receive any responses to emails. The importance of building deeper relationships with groups with potential mutual interests we could offer mutual support to was key here and something the researcher needed to build on.

The use of Testimony puts pressure on decision makers during negotiations and events and can be agitational as it contradicts current policy (Bunyan, 2010) and constitute irrefutable claims of lived experience of an issue. They are powerful and make it difficult for a target to say no or to ignore the issue! Testimonies can be seen as a form of agitation which can be uncomfortable listening, as some interviewees experienced as part of the RLW in SC campaign.

“I would love to see more diversity in terms of ethnicity, mainly, but not to bring in more care workers to talk to ministers in a way that I find just quite uncomfortable sometimes. I’ve been in several meetings where it’s, you know, [name of person giving testimony], who’s absolutely amazing, but it’s good to have other voices in it.” (Welsh Gov regulator 2).

The “voice of the SC worker” is evidence of real life impact of poor pay and working conditions in the SC sector. The researcher noted after several failed attempts at gaining testimonies and engaging with SC and other low paid workers that they are a valuable resource and “like gold” to campaigns, rare and valuable and difficult to get hold of! This was noted throughout several stages of researcher’s experience including after meetings with Members of the Senedd and other politicians who asked us to get back to them with testimony as “evidence” to take our request forward. The researcher noted that testimonies felt like “currency” to the movement.

The first issue was identified in the early stages of training around the importance of testimony and “turn out”, that is bringing people on the day of an action to build up the numbers. There was no set method of engaging with people other than to find someone, engage them and listen to them. This was a particularly delicate skill and we struggled to envision how this would work and how likely someone would be to want to talk to us about their work and pay.

“Myself and [name of another fledgling Organiser] said we weren’t sure what to say to workers when we did find them, especially not to scare them off! “ (Observation 7 Learning for Leaders session 2)

There was no script or set methodology provided for this element of organising and it was a learning by doing situation. The researcher recalls reaching out to friends and family who worked in healthcare settings to ask them if they knew of any cleaning, portering or security staff I could speak to but had no success via that route. The researcher’s mentality was very much of “getting” testimony rather than people approaching the researcher, willingly telling them their stories. It was one thing speaking to someone at an event or a bus stop but an extra step to turn that into testimony or the care worker being willing/able to join meetings. One campaigner explains that while some care workers are happy to chat, they pull back when you ask for a testimony or to join in an action or meeting.

“...there are a few care workers, like in the last meeting you attended. I think one of the care workers pulled out within the first one day...They're happy to talk to you. They're happy to vent with you. But don't call me to come in. "Don't get me sucked in over nothing"”. (SC worker campaigner)

Thinking back on the researcher’s own experiences of feeling uncomfortable with using Zoom and being unsure what was expected of participants and not being comfortable with speaking. These are significant barriers requiring the Organiser to push through and stretch your comfort zone which can be off putting. The meeting format and online format whilst unavoidable at the time during Covid restrictions, could have presented barriers to some low paid workers and an alternative format may be needed. It became clear that our team and the action we were planning lacked links with those with lived experience of low pay in health and SC settings which is a key part of the Community Organising model.

The researcher noted there was no one identifying themselves as a low paid worker in the training sessions (Observation 11 Learning Thursdays)

The majority of the team were members of the clergy who had good connections to the wider community via their contacts and congregation. One of our group was able to find testimony from a contact in the Hospital chaplaincy but this was relayed indirectly as the interviewee was nervous about being identified. The researcher

noted the extraordinary characteristics of the SC worker who had engaged with CO activity. The example below is taken from one of the researcher's observations. It describes care workers as already very active in the community in work related issues as a Union representative and also a volunteer at a local food bank. In this sense they were not your "average" care worker.

"One member of the action group was able to interview a SC worker at a hospital. An audio recording of the interview with a SC worker who is a Unison rep and volunteers in a food bank is shared. They are providing testimony on behalf of a colleague who didn't want to be interviewed. This person is not your average Jane but a Union rep who works in SC and volunteers in a food bank in their spare time."(Observation 18 Cwm Taf action planning group)

After a while it became clear that the majority of testimonies came from only one albeit powerful, voice of a care worker during the RLW in SC in Wales movement.

"We had a meeting with the Minister of SC last year, and we had [name of care worker] come to speak to the minister as a SC worker, which is at the end of the day, what we can't do. We try to make sure that there is additional voice there but I'd say that's really the only one." (Welsh Gov advisor 1)

Again, the care worker was extraordinary and not your "average" worker. They had a Masters degree and were working towards their PhD. They had worked as a Student Union representative previously, had experience of working with the media and also had international experience. This was interesting to consider as the literature discusses SC workers only as a homogenous "hard to reach" group. The Union experience of both care workers in the examples above was also interesting and extraordinary given the lack of engagement by TUs in other aspects.

As discussed previously in Chapter five which looked at actors in the RLW movement in SC in Wales and their roles, civil society actors were the actors with closest proximity to workers and the community. Both CCW and TUs have found the SC workforce difficult to engage. This is perceived to be because of the fragmented nature of the sector and the multiple work settings including domiciliary care which takes place in the community rather than in a single workplace setting. Interviewees also describe the "hostility" of care providers in granting access to TUs in their SC setting. To navigate this, TUs have developed training and literacy programmes

which some employers seem more open to.

“It's almost impossible to get access to care workers. We like to work with employers. So we've got... several {name of Wales based projects} projects that we run, which are aimed at SC workers.” (TU 3)

Another way for Civil society actors to navigate lack of engagement is to resonate more with the culture of SC workers. The way civil society actors have tried to engage with SC workers has not been as effective as needed. From interviews in this study, an acceptable anger among SC workers is aimed at quality of care for their clients, rather than tackling their own poor pay and working conditions. Seeing SC workers as advocates and framing campaigns on quality of care and continuity of care for care users rather than on pay might resonate more with SC workers. Trying new ways to engage such as the potential of adapting the framing of RLW movement to more appeal to care workers as advocates and highlighting their distinctiveness as a profession (Coke, 2023) was not evident in this study.

Concluding section

Testimonies from SC workers and those with lived experience of poverty pay are like gold – valuable and scarce. Gaining testimony is difficult from two key aspects. Firstly accessing care workers is difficult due to the fragmented nature of the SC sector as well as perceived hostility by SC providers in allowing civil society actors into the workplace. Secondly it's a big step from engaging with a worker to persuading them to give testimony. For these two perceived reasons, testimonies can be said to have been powerful but lacking scale, mostly coming from one powerful but extraordinary source.

In terms of the strategy of using testimonies, the planning group had no care worker contacts and care workers were a continual missing part of our planning and action. No alternative strategies to approach care workers other than via organisers' own networks was explored during planning or following the action and also no alternative structure to the format of meetings was explored to be less off putting to new people.

Neither Community Organisers, TUs or the researcher could claim they were successful in reaching and engaging with care workers during the time period of this study! This has significant implications for the future of the movement as testimonies

are used as evidence to back up the need for action in negotiations with decision makers. During training and in planning meetings, we're encouraged to think of ways to interact with those with lived experience and potential testimonies.

This could be due to a lack of common interests between RLW in SC campaigners and SC workers. Care workers may be more persuaded by arguments framed around effect and impact on care users than on their own pay and working conditions. From the researcher's own failed attempts at engaging with care workers and boosting turn out, there is a risk of being overly transactional in getting people on board getting people on board whether it's for testimony or general engagement. Understanding issues which resonate with SC workers in Wales and framing movement activities around is needed for future phases of the campaign.

In terms of buy in, testimonies can be said to have been limited and instrumental as care workers were hesitant to come forward and campaigners didn't have the time or resources to engage and build deeper relationships with them. Care workers are worried that being critical of their pay and their employers might impact negatively on their jobs. TUs and campaigners share similar experiences of private care providers as "closed doors" and "hostile" to organizing work or engaging with civil society. Campaigners in this group were not sure where to get hold of SC workers or how to get in touch with them. Actions happened in locations not frequented or visible to care workers which could explain lack of awareness and engagement in a "You can't be what you can't see" perspective. Making actions more visible to care workers could potentially encourage more care workers to want to engage and to encourage future role models.

Testimony is a form of representation which requires time and a deeper relationship to achieve. Given time pressures and the need to take advantage of political momentum to drive the campaign, campaigners have needed to take a necessary compromise and to use written testimonies as an indirect direct voice of workers for example on social partnership platforms. They can be powerful in small numbers but can also be "spread too thin" and exhaust the limited supply.

Testimonies are used as proof of issues actually happening and to get decision makers to listen and begin negotiation. The next section considers the ways the RLW movement in SC in Wales holds decision makers to account.

6.4 Accreditation and accountability

This section considers ways the RLW movement in SC in Wales movement holds actors accountable. In particular this section discusses accreditation as a form of regulation for SC providers and the influence Covid has had on accreditations. The voluntary nature of accreditation will then be discussed. Accreditation can be said to be a form of soft regulation aimed at employer organisations which involves an organisation's public commitment to the RLW standard. As discussed previously the RLW is an independently calculated, civil society led unilateral agreement. It is a form of "soft" regulation and focuses on relationship building and facilitation rather than enforcement. In relation to Tattersall's coalition typology, accreditation can be seen as building support within the Market. Accreditation as a public commitment to paying the RLW also works with threat of reputational damage should an organisation not accredit: "Threat of bad publicity can shape corporate behaviour" (Graham and Woods, 2006 p870). This section will analyse the "carrot and stick" element to accreditation from multiple actors' perspectives.

Accreditation is the public commitment to paying the RLW to not just your directly employed staff but also your contracted staff members. This commitment also extends to paying the updated RLW hourly rate when it is recalculated every year in line with the rate of inflation. If you are not accredited you should not be using the RLW employer standard. Commitment to the standard means that both contracted and permanent employees of 18 years old and over are covered and that the rate of pay is reviewed independently every year in line with inflation. Therefore the RLW standard is not just about an hourly rate of pay but about a dignified standard of living for workers. Also by tackling these aspects to in work poverty the RLW can be seen to be a tool for tackling neo-liberalist business practices and accreditation is the process and public commitment to upholding the RLW standard.

Smaller accredited Care providers describe the process as fairly simple mainly because their business practices aren't as complex as larger organisations who also have indirectly employed staff member.

"I just decided to get in touch with the LWF and it was really easy to be fair. Because we're just so little that everything's here. And so we don't have any contractors." (SC employer accredited 2)

To keep the RLW employer status, employers are required to go through the accreditation process every year. This is voluntary and is not enforced or audited from the experience of accredited employers interviewed in this study.

For larger organisations accreditation is more complex and time-consuming process. One participant involved in the accreditation process describes getting large organisations accredited taking upwards of one year.

"Commitment from the organisation can take a long time, for example, [name of large organisation] took about two years commitment to accreditation, and the LAs have been working so hard for me working with [name of Welsh LA] now for 18 months." (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

From their experience, this tends to be after organisations have expressed a commitment to paying the RLW to directly and indirectly employed staff and then they look into the detail of how their organisation operates and are overwhelmed by the complexities of contracted services and suppliers involved.

"That's what it took [name of large organisation] so long, there were so many contractors pan Wales. And then I say, look, you don't have to make a list of them all straightaway. You just need to maybe start with the most important ones like the caterers, the cleaners etc." (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

This is also the point when employer organisations come face to face with the extent of neo-liberalist business practices which have become embedded in the SC sector. The systemic complexities described by interview participants can be seen as barriers in getting employers accredited. For example, contracting out has been seen as a way to cut costs and is a key component of neo-liberalist business practices which focus on finding savings in workforce related costs in favour of other forms of employment practices where holiday pay, pension or other work related benefits enjoyed by directly employed staff do not apply. The RLW accreditation

process reveals this complexity which can be overwhelming in terms of its scale and reach throughout the supply chain. Accreditation bodies such as LWF in England and Cynnal in Wales and have developed ways to facilitate employers' accreditation. For example, the "milestone document" helps employers work through stages and assist with the timings of contract renewal dates and help facilitate the accreditation process over time rather than needing to have all contractors on board at the same time. The RLW standard can be driven one contract at a time.

"Within the last 12 or 18 months, our domiciliary care service came up for recommissioning. As part of the recommission, we said we'll introduce the RLW" (Welsh LA 4)

6.4.1 Covid crisis

Accreditation is one way of measuring support for the RLW as well as a measure of its influence among employers and wider society. As discussed in the Context chapter, the LWF has at time of writing over 15,000 employers accredited. The adult SC sector has also seen significant growth in accreditations with a marked increase during the Covid crisis timeline of 2020-2022.

Table 6.1 Adult SC accreditations by year across all of UK

Year	Number of accreditations	Percentage of all Adult SC Care accreditations
2011	1	0.1
2012	2	0.3
2013	15	1.9
2014	25	3.2
2015	35	4.5
2016	45	5.8
2017	69	8.9
2018	43	5.5
2019	70	9.0
2020	84	10.8
2021	135	17.3
2022	153	19.6
2023	102	13.1

As can be seen from Table 6.1 above, accreditations in adult SC across the UK have continued to grow over the last ten years and particularly so over the last three years. The Covid crisis has drawn the public's attention to SC workers, part of the "key workers" we showed our appreciation to during the pandemic. Campaigns using the increased visibility such as the "Can't live off claps and rainbows" campaign.

"Accreditation has happened in Wales since 2011...but it was fairly slow progress. There was nobody really focusing on Wales." (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

The Covid crisis has brought attention to the work and responsibilities of SC workers, with SC providers wanting to be seen to be "doing right" by their employees and their clients. Having the glare of the public spotlight on SC workers could be said to have increased pressure on private care homes to be seen to improve pay and conditions for their employees which could be a key driver of the growing rate of accreditations.

"What has been so interesting about the pandemic is that we have seen so many private sector care homes accredit, biggest uplifts of any type of employers because of the low pay...We've had over three times the number of accreditations this year in comparison to the same period last year." (Welsh Gov Regulator 2)

The RLW campaign has been marketed as a way for employers to thank key workers including SC workers and giving them the rate of pay "they deserve". Covid has highlighted low pay and poor working conditions of key workers in society. Wider society knows which type of jobs pay less and which type of jobs pay more, yet action in rectifying this would involve a radical disruption to current pay scales and wage setting decisions in the UK.

"Our society is not geared to value people who give care...It's not talked about because no one wants to actually acknowledge it. I think part of the SC campaign is a RLW but what my dream is actually that we raise the value of care in society." (Campaigner Organiser)

The RLW in SC campaign hasn't been driven by public pressure or by SC employers. SC providers who have accredited don't go on to mobilize and call for other employers to accredit. There also doesn't appear to be the same influential, internal Champions, supportive of the RLW in SC as there were in the Higher Education sector discussed earlier.

Accreditation is also seen as a form of regulation. Different forms of regulation can show the direction of power and influence in relation to the implementation of a standard. This will be discussed in the next section in the case of the RLW in SC.

6.4.2 Voluntary Regulation

The RLW standard is voluntary and individual employers decide whether they want to implement it or not. Accreditation bodies are on hand to facilitate accreditation and are the “business friendly” face for employer organisations. Employer organisations are encouraged by “carrot” strategies of doing the right things and positive publicity around their decision to accredit. Individual employers can also decide to withdraw their accreditation whenever they want to. This aspect of the voluntary nature of the RLW is perceived as a limitation by other actors who would prefer to see long term systemic changes in the SC sector where a more binding commitment is considered to be more effective.

“I personally don't think this can be dealt with on a company by company basis. I think it needs a sectoral approach, and I don't think you will get a voluntary sectoral approach, It needs some top down pressure for that to occur.” (Academic Researcher 3)

Other regulatory aspects are questioned especially around lack of consequence and enforcement ensuring how SC workers were all receiving the correct rate of pay. This was raised as a key concern over the voluntary nature of RLW accreditation.

“How to inspect and enforce them is really complex because it takes Care Inspectorate Wales, which is primarily like the service regulator rather than a workforce regulator. It would be really interesting to see not just that there's a commitment to pay the RLW or that there's a mechanism for it to happen, but it is actually happening and that there are implications if you don't do it properly.” (TU 2)

The voluntary nature of accreditation is perceived to be a limiting factor in relation to the “low hanging fruit” criticism of only most likely organisations will want to and be able to accredit rather than the more difficult but higher impact organisations. This

will be analysed and discussed in Chapter seven.

There is evidence of organisational buy in from civil society actors. They were involved for long term societal benefit not for financial gain but in order to do the “good work” they need to be able to continue to operate which involved generating an income stream. This adds some clarity to the low hanging fruit criticism of RLW in terms of the limited scale of campaign due to lack of funding.

Not all employers who pay above the statutory NMW pay the independently calculated RLW rate and instead pay their own rate either just below or above that. This is referred to in the literature as the “shadow living wage” (Heery et al., 2023). One example of this is in the Retail sector where supermarkets pay over £10 an hour (more than the RLW at time of writing) but are not accredited RLW employers. Those employers choose to pay their staff the same rate as the RLW but do not engage with the standard poses some frustration and barriers to the campaign. The public commitment to including contracted workers aged 18 and above and keeping pay in line with inflation element is lost and the organisation retains its decision making power over wages and working conditions.

This is an example of lack of organisational buy in, effecting the cohesion of the RLW which limits the growth of the standard. An example of “shadow living wage” in SC will be discussed in Chapter seven. There is further variance and complexity to pay in SC other than a basic hourly rate for example travel time or “sleeping in” where you stay overnight with your client. These are not standardised rates of pay and it is unclear how these would be treated under the RLW.

This section has discussed the pros and cons of the “carrot” strategy to voluntary RLW accreditation. The next section considers the “stick” aspect to accreditation.

6.4.3 Reputational threat – coercive aspect to voluntary regulation

The “stick” aspect to voluntary accreditation is the risk of reputational damage by not accrediting. This has seen success in consumer driven sectors but less so in SC. For some actors in the RLW in SC campaign, issues around Care providers’ reputation are linked to the profit driven nature of some organisations in the SC

sector. There is a perception that SC should be separate from profit and profit focussed care providers are perceived as being the cause of the problem.

“Care is a big business for middle management. It’s very, very lucrative...on the ground workers, were being paid a pittance when the owner was driving around in a BMW.” (Campaigner care user)

“With SC, all the money that goes in there...you can take 25% off, that goes to shareholders and private companies, and that's what they're in the business of doing...We pay them as low as we can we maximise our profit.” (Union representative Local Government)

This tends to be perceived as a problem with individual employers rather than seen as a consequence of a systemic issue. SC providers are conscious of this perception and are quick to defend their reputation and explain the complexities around financing in their sector as they view it.

“I don't see them just because they're in the private sector they are just a bunch of crooks looking to rip us off and not really caring. Many of them are proper caring organisations.” (Welsh LA 2)

Some actors became involved in the RLW campaign for SC to protect the reputation and image of SC providers who may be painted as the “bad guys” of the campaign as the key targets of the campaign.

“There was the sort of work through CUK and Cynnal that was kind of focusing on the RLW. And again, you know, we very much wanted to be part of that, not least because of the reputational issues and the danger that if we weren't.” (SC provider rep)

Concluding section

Accreditations in SC have continued to grow especially over the Covid years but this hasn't been driven by public pressure or by SC employers. SC providers who have accredited don't go on to mobilize and call for other employers to accredit. There also doesn't appear to be the same influential, internal Champions, supportive of the RLW in SC as there was in the Higher Education sector.

The process of accreditation is facilitated and has low financial cost. Accreditation involves social justice elements of a public commitment to include contracted workers and keeping rates of pay in line with inflation

Accreditation is a form of regulation. In the case of RLW accreditation bodies are “business friendly” and are facilitators rather than enforcers of the standard. There is a perceived lack of consequence for employers who choose to withdraw which is seen as a weakness in the model among TUs.

The threat of reputational damage for not accrediting has had more success in more consumer driven sectors than in the SC sector in Wales. Whilst there is the feeling that profit driven practices are the cause of problems in the care sector and providers can be perceived negatively. Complexities and constraints on the system especially the commissioning system are seen by providers as the real barrier to improving pay in SC. This has led some actors to engage with the movement to protect their reputation rather than a deep engagement with the movement.

6.5 Political Leverage

A key approach and strategy used was to put pressure on political leaders during the ascent of their career or close to an election. A lot of time was spent building relationships with political leaders as they were considered key targets of the campaign. Access to political power was a key way for campaigners to introduce the idea of the RLW standard to politicians in order to try and get their support.

Accountability events were held where political leaders are asked publicly to support issues of interest to the community. It's important these events are public and are part of the “stick” set of CO approaches around holding political leaders to account.

“The idea of the RLW, we did a lot of introducing the concept to WGov and talking with Edwina Hart, who was the Minister for Regeneration at the time. A group of leaders met with her, one of whom had direct lived experience. We had a few meetings with her. And then with civil servants.” (Campaigner organiser 2)

“I've met the First Minister several times, and he can now he knows me by name. It's a good thing.” (SC worker campaigner 1)

Buy-in from Decision Makers

A supportive Government has clear benefits in terms of driving the RLW campaign forward and from the perception of campaigners, the WGov Leader, Mark Drakeford was particularly supportive in comparison to the UK government in terms of support for the RLW for SC workers. He has previously been a Minister for Health in the Welsh Senedd.

“I think Mark Drakeford’s government, as a whole has taken some quite bold moves in lots of different areas. I think if any government in Wales is going to make it happen, then it will be his.” (Campaigner organiser 2)

“I think WGov’s also very important, because we see in Scotland and Wales very clear political leadership around the RLW.” (Welsh Gov advisor 1)

The support of a political leader as a RLW champion can be particularly significant in terms of funding with one participant comparing the situation in Scotland where the Scottish Government had given substantial funding to a charity to do focused RLW campaign work with the aim of getting as many employers as possible accredited as RLW employers. Support seems to depend on the individual values and priorities of the political leader as well as the quality and alignment of the relationship built between campaigners and the political leader. The RLW cause aligned with his background in social policy and work with disadvantaged areas and with those affected by low pay.

“We applied to the WGov, because the Scottish Government gave money to run the RLW and I wrote to Carwyn Jones, and he was First Minister. All we needed is £26 grand for a post, so we can focus on the RLW, and we proposed the agenda would be SC. He just said, No.” (Welsh Gov regulator 1)

“Ministerial commitment political leadership is very important and the WGov support is very important.” (Welsh Gov advisor 1)

Mark Drakeford’s commitment to RLW in SC had potential to put pressure on publicly funded organisations. Also in Local Government, participants recognised the importance in having Council Leaders in support of RLW accreditation. Campaigners to see some hesitance from Local Government Leaders in taking up the RLW commitment.

“I can’t understate the importance of having the leader behind it is huge. I think it helps to keep other people at the table.” (Welsh LA 1)

“Care has been raised, as it as a fear that they (LAs outside of Cardiff) will then be, you know, without walls, Welsh Gov still doing this kind of development work. And there has been like April 2022, raised as a date for staff to pilot it. But there’s not the confidence in that yet I don’t think others just see it as too complicated.” (Welsh Gov Regulator 2)

The fleeting nature of political support and Leaders changing hands presents challenges for the campaign. One example during the Welsh Elections in May 2022 where every major political party included elements of tackling low pay, recognising the public support for improving key worker pay after the pandemic and with the cost of living crisis. The preferred rate was £10 an hour “above the RLW” and while there was support for improving SC workers pay which would offer hope that Drakeford’s commitment to paying SC workers the RLW, no other party included support of the RLW brand or accreditation.

“One of the things that played really well, when we were talking to the public about what we wanted to do, was proper pay the care workers. Proper pay....£10 . In a sense, it’s only marginally more than £9.90. But it’s a figure with a profile?” (Welsh LA 2)

Community Organisers would argue that relationship building offers deeper and less transactional relationships and deep organising (McAlevey, 2003) and their no partisan rule of not favouring one party over another would lessen the risk of fleeting political support. From observations though, some parties were more likely to lend themselves to Community Organising and the RLW and relationship building with Mark Drakeford was much stronger than that of the Welsh Conservative Party Leader and the Plaid Cymru Leader and that ideological standpoint is key factor in a political leader deciding whether to support the RLW campaign or not. Also focus had tended to be on building a relationship with a Leader who then tends to move on meaning any influence and relationship built up risks being fleeting in nature when the political leader’s term in office comes to an end.

Covid as pressure and influence on RLW campaign in Social Care in Wales

The Covid crisis saw a big drive to the RLW campaign and various actors on the campaign side, saying they saw an increase in membership and support. This was not a targeted recruitment drive. The understanding that SC workers put their own health on the line and were left unprotected by State and Market actors during that time could be one reason behind more workers wanting to join a Union.

“We did recruit quite heavily in SC during the pandemic.” (TU 3)

Part of Organising is getting people to agree to attend and contribute to events and navigating people’s availability. Covid didn’t present too much of a barrier to the campaign as moving everything online meant organisers had a captive audience!

“I think it helped, there was a lockdown. There was nowhere to go or nothing to do. I wasn’t doing much else. So I just spent a lot of time and everybody was available, because everybody was locked down.” (Campaigner Organiser)

Low pay is a persistent issue in the SC sector and despite years of step by step policy changes and many discussions, some in the SC sector feel that the Covid pandemic might be the event which forces action to improve conditions in the SC.

“In June, we got to the point because I have been involved with lots of discussions, and I bet they’ve increased over time. You could sit there and say that nothing actually changes. I think that one thing for the pandemic that may go in our favour.” (SC employer accredited 2)

The pandemic has raised the visibility of the SC sector and campaigners and TUs have recognised growth in support of their activities. Campaigns around the issue of low pay in the SC and key worker sectors did not stop during lockdown. If anything, Covid amplified the issues and garnered more support than previously recognised. This was an important time for TUs to show they were working for their SC members.

“We’ve had over three times the number of accreditation this year in comparison to the same period the year before so the growth is there.” (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

“The LWF had a very successful campaign around low pay for key workers in the early sort of lockdown.” (WGov Advisor 1)

Conclusion

The RLW in SC in Wales campaign can be said to be influenced by the actors and the alliances built over the years but also the culture around SC and the type of work involved. The researcher's experience of Community Organising was less agitational and more relational during this campaign. TUs' campaigns are incorporating the RLW less and less and Union influence in the RLW campaign in SC in Wales is isolated and detached, instead focussing on broader working condition issues.

The effect of Summit was seismic among campaigners but not felt by SC workers many of whom are not familiar with the RLW..

In a bid to gain momentum and to be able to drive the number of accreditations, success has been achieved in the scale of the RLW campaign in general but less so in the depth and getting to the core of the low pay issue. RLW is a tool that seems capable of exposing effects of marketisation on the SC sector and the detachment of employer/employee relation and employment benefits through low cost contracted work. The accreditation process is making organisations re-examine their business operation models and reverse the effects of marketisation which have favoured and engineered low pay in the SC sector.

The show of collective power at the 2021 Summit was a stand out moment not just for being a public commitment to paying all SC workers in Wales the RLW it set out to do but also for its show of collective power and collective action in an otherwise "noisy" and disparate platform of multiple campaigns for improvements in the SC sector. Either side of the Summit were many different campaigns led by multiple civil society and industry organisations competing for attention. Despite all the noise, there a lack of cohesion between actors resulting in a of a lack of sufficient power to make the systemic and wider societal changes required within the sector. The next Chapter considers perceived outcomes of actions and strategies used in the RLW in SC movement described in this section.

Chapter 7 Findings related to RQ3 - Outcomes

This chapter explores outcomes relating to the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Recognising that there may be more than one definition of success, this chapter seeks to analyse what has perceived to have been “won” and who has won what? Outcomes to be explored include growth and influence of the movement but also any indicators of social change perceived to be an outcome of the RLW in SC in Wales. Positive impacts considered to be an achievement or driver of the movement will be analysed. Also negative effects and neutral or no change aspects which have been expressed as barriers or tensions resulting from approaches or activities as part of the RLW in SC in Wales movement will be explored. Perceptions of different outcomes are drawn from different actors interviewed, the researcher’s observations and from a dataset of accredited employers.

The previous chapter considered how the RLW in SC in Wales movement worked and key approaches and strategies used by actors, exploring lack of buy in, differing organisational interests and scale to better understand the degree of collective action and cooperation between actors. It was found that after the SC Summit in January 2021, TUs, CUK and Market actors have not continued to work together relating to SC sector in Wales to the degree of cooperation seen at the Summit. This is problematic because social change depends on strength of coalition and also on how coalition has built the strength of the organisations taking part. Considering the outcomes of the RLW in SC in Wales movement is important to understand in order to explore the “low hanging fruit” criticism of the RLW movement. RLW has seen success in building momentum as the growing rate of accreditations show and the brand is well known in political and some work spaces but there are some limitations and barriers and these will be explored in this section too.

Consideration of outcomes is not only a logical next step from the previous chapter which explored approaches and interactions between actors but also an important contribution to the literature on impact and measures of success of the RLW standard and civil society led movements. This work contributes to our understanding of the impact of activities and approaches undertaken as part the RLW in SC in Wales movement but from the perspective of multiple key actors. It

builds on work discussed in the Literature Review Chapter around accredited employers' perceptions of the RLW (Heery et al., 2017) in terms of improving company image, helping with recruitment and retention issues. This work offers a chance to unpick outcomes in a specific industry sector and context, that is the SC sector in Wales and offers insight to any changes resulting from activities and approaches as part of the movement. In contrast to work which has explored outcomes from one perspective such as TUs, outcomes will be considered from the perspective of a number of different key actors: campaigners, TUs, SC providers including LAs, SC workers and academic researchers. This is in recognition that different actors have different roles within the movement and it is important to understand the movement from the perspective of more than one actor in the movement eco system.

Using Tattersall's (2018) framing, outcomes will be considered from two key aspects firstly, that of degree of and types of social change. Tattersall defines a "win" as a policy change, a change in business practice or introduction of an intervention such as an apprenticeship scheme. Here, "wins" will be considered as well as changes more generally within actor organisations which are perceived to be as a result of the RLW movement.

The RLW is not just a financial concept but can be considered a way of "challenging the practices of the market" (Bunyan, 2016) and bring about social change. The Community Organising element has sought to increase the power of the community in seeking change to perceived unfair practices. This thesis explores change beyond financial increases. Bunyan referred to the RLW movement as being "one of the most successful society-led initiatives to reduce poverty and inequality in the UK" (Bunyan, 2016 p500).

One aspect of the Community Organising theory of social change is the motivation and desire for positive social change and to "see the world as it is and the world how it should be". Exploring outcomes in terms of the degree to which the RLW movement in SC in Wales has delivered social change or any change more generally is key to understanding this. This work explores impact and change

relating to the RLW in SC movement from the perspective of multiple key actors and at different levels of society from the individual to the SC system.

It is important to understand what outcomes or changes can be said to have occurred as a result of the movement in order to add clarity to the “low hanging fruit” criticism of the RLW standard. For example, to what extent can it be said to have shaped opinion and relationships between key actors in the pursuit of collective action to tackle social injustice? To what extent has the RLW movement in SC in Wales been able to tackle the injustice of persistent low pay in SC?

In order to frame this analysis, Tattersall’s coalition success criteria (2018) will be used and extended to include this study’s sample of key actors involved in RLW in SC movement in Wales.

Social change includes issues relating to collective power and impact. Elements to be explored in terms of strength of individuals involved in the movement, for example the empowerment of care workers and campaigners. Secondly, the level of cohesion among RLW actor organisations and empowerment of individuals within the movement described by Tattersall as “sustained relationships” (Tattersall, 2018). In terms of this work organisational strengths will include types of relationships between key actors.

Figure 7.1 Tattersall’s Coalition success criteria

Social change		Organisational strength	
Social change win	Shift in the political climate	Sustain relationships between the organisations	Leadership development

Source: Tattersall, 2018 p 79

As well as quantitative measures of growth of the movement such as number of accredited employers, qualitative measures of outcomes such as empowerment, building trust and the building of power in terms of being able to address those in power will be explored. With regards to the RLW movement in SC, empowerment will be analysed from two aspects; empowerment of the worker and empowerment of the community.

Outcomes of the RLW movement in SC in Wales following the WGov's commitment to paying the RLW to all SC workers will be explored from the perspective of different key actors.

Firstly, campaign outcomes will be discussed in terms of the key outcomes during the observed time period. Next, organisational outcomes in terms of any impact or change which could be attributed to the RLW movement in Wales or the key actor organisations introduced in Chapter five. Thirdly, outcomes will be explored from the point of view of SC workers and the extent the RLW movement has impacted their lives. Following on from this, outcomes from the perspective of SC providers will be examined. The degree to which the SC sector in Wales can be said to have changed as a result of the RLW movement is important to understand from the perspective of each of these key actors. This is important because it will add to understanding on the impact of pressure and influence on different actors and the extent of change within the movement.

7.1 Outcomes at campaign level (including influence and pressure)

Key quantitative measures of the outcomes to the RLW campaign include the percentage of a workforce receiving a pay rise as well as the number and growth rate of accreditations.

One key outcome of the RLW movement is the significant and growing number of accreditations overall. Over 15,000 employers (at time of writing) across the UK and in all industry sectors have accredited at a "rapid pace" (Heery et al., 2017). 250,000 employees have received an uplift and "conservative estimates" gauge £2billion on pay uplift amounts (Heery et al., 2024). Quantitative measures such as these, show the accreditation model as having had significant and continuing success improving rates of low pay. This can be said for accreditation in Wales too.

"There was a lot of big wins (accreditations) last year for Cardiff....there's no doubt that the RLW has been incredibly successful." (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

“And we said I’ll get 150 [accreditations] So it was at between 2012 and 2019. So we sat over the next three years to double that- ish. We have doubled it we’re at 263.” (Welsh LA 1)

There are also criticisms that the RLW movement is only reaching the “low hanging fruit” organisations, that is those organisations who already have a social and economic justice ethos or owners of organisations who take it on themselves to improve working conditions and thereby more likely to volunteer to improve pay.

“If you dig into who is actually signing up, it isn’t the organisations that really need to sign up. It’s the real low hanging fruit, it’s the ones that don’t actually need to do huge amounts to do it. It’s those with Ethical Charters in the first place.” (Academic researcher 3)

“There is this paternalist current amongst employers, which the campaign has tapped into, and, you know, they’ve been able to exploit that opportunity quite effectively.” (Academic Researcher 2)

Growth of accreditations hasn’t been universally successful across all industry sectors in Wales and especially not in adult SC. Since the WGov commitment to paying all SC workers the RLW, more SC providers have accredited as RLW employers and at time of writing there were 31 adult care providers accredited in Wales (<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/accredited-living-wage-employers> [Accessed March 2024]). Understanding the extent to which a growth of accreditations can be perceived as a “win” is an important contribution to discussions in the literature.

Below is a table showing the growth of accreditation in the SC sector across UK since accreditation began in 2011. These figures show a slow but growing rate of accreditations in the early years of the movement but a marked rise since 2021 showing greater support for the RLW.

Table 7.1 Number of RLW accredited adult SC providers across the UK by year

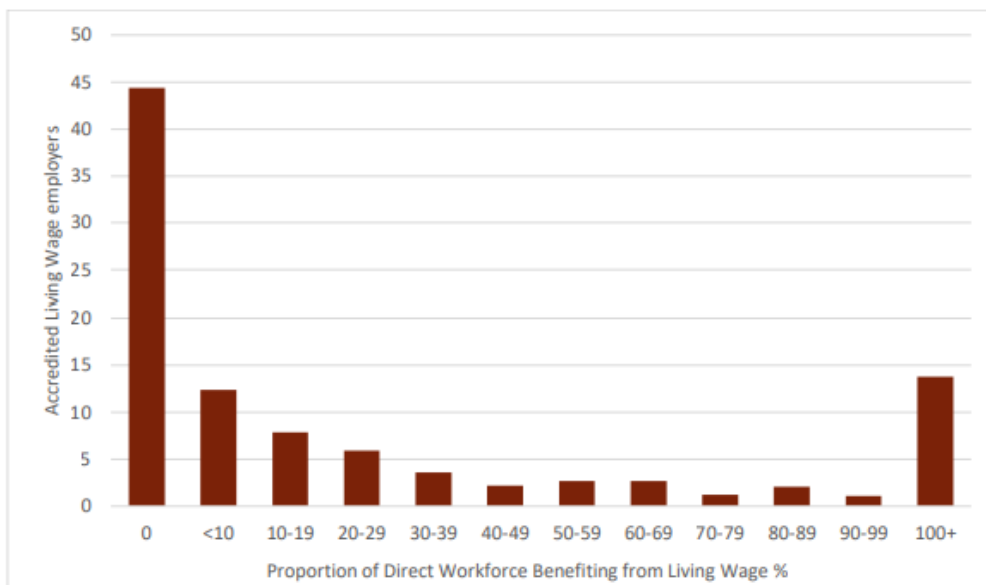
Year	Number of accreditations	Percentage of all Adult SC Care accreditations
2011	1	0.1
2012	2	0.3
2013	15	1.9
2014	25	3.2
2015	35	4.5
2016	45	5.8
2017	69	8.9
2018	43	5.5
2019	70	9.0
2020	84	10.8
2021	135	17.3
2022	153	19.6
2023	102	13.1
Total	779	

Source, Living Wage Dataset from Heery, Nash and Hann, December 2023.

Accreditations don't always result in low paid workers receiving a pay rise. As Figure 7.2 below shows nearly 45% of employers across all industry sectors who accredited and took part in a survey reported no uplifts to employees. This has led to some criticism of the RLW movement as reaching the "low hanging fruit" organisations who don't need to make as much organisational change in order to implement the RLW or who have fewer low paid workers. This is a significant issue to discuss in terms of outcomes to the RLW movement in SC in Wales and thinking about the degree of positive change resulting from the movement. Accreditations resulting in a high number of zero uplifts could therefore be an indication of limited or no change within the organisation. There are fewer reported zero uplifts for the adult SC sector only across all of the UK. This could be explained by the high percentage of low paid workers within the SC sector. So while numbers of adult SC providers accreditation

are lower than in other industry sectors, the impact is significant and indication that accreditation is bringing about change to low paid adult SC workers and other low paid workers in the Retail, Hospitality and Cleaning sectors in Wales and across the UK. This indicates that the RLW standard is reaching a significant number of workers in persistently low paid sectors.

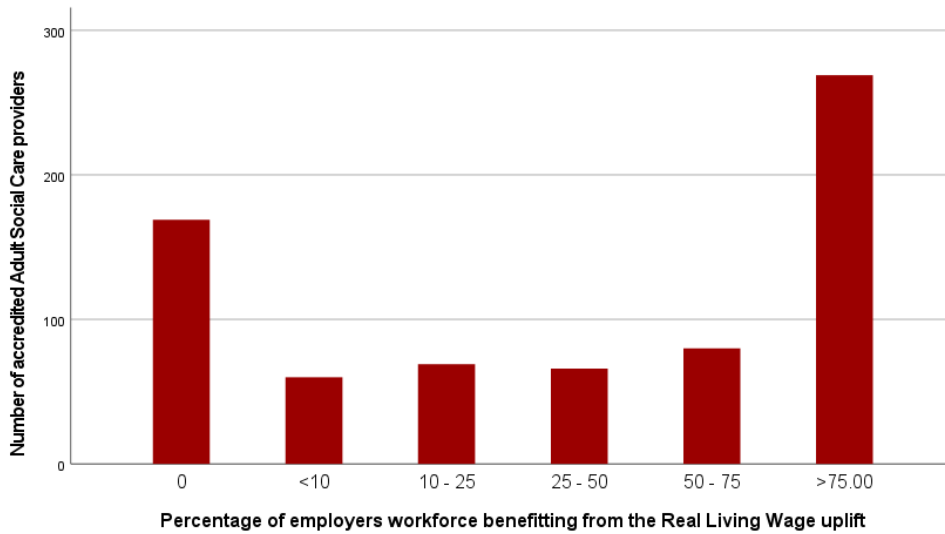
Figure 7.2 Percentage of Employer’s Direct Workforce across all Industry Sectors in the UK



Source: Heery et al., 2021. Twenty Years of the Living Wage: The employer experience. Living Wage Foundation

<https://livingwage.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/LWF%202021%20Living%20Wage%20Employer%20Experience%20Survey%20Report.pdf>)

Figure 7.3 Percentage of directly employed workforce within Adult SC providers benefitting from a RLW uplift



This is different to other low paid sectors such as Retail, Hospitality and Cleaning sectors as shown in the Figures 7.4 , 7.5 and 7.6 below.

Figure 7.4 Percentage of directly employed workforce within the Retail sector benefitting from a RLW uplift

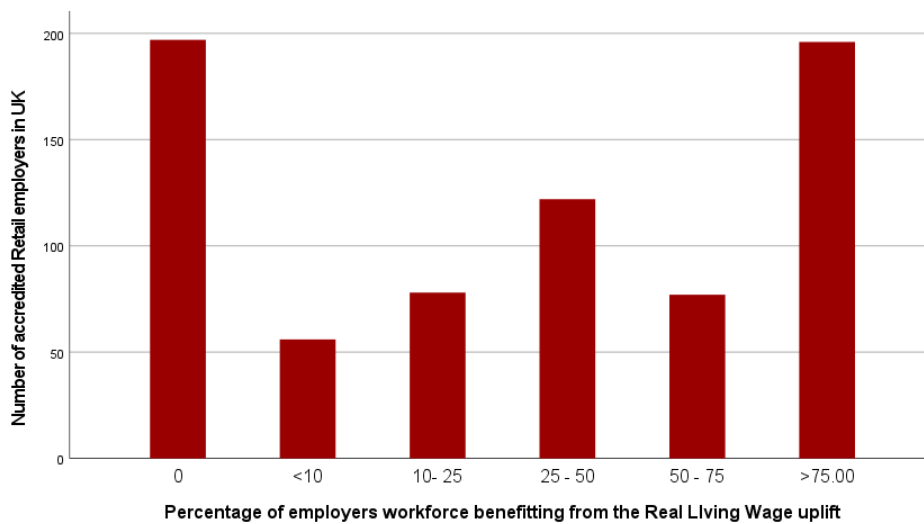


Figure 7.5 Percentage of directly employed workforce within the Hospitality sector benefitting from a RLW uplift

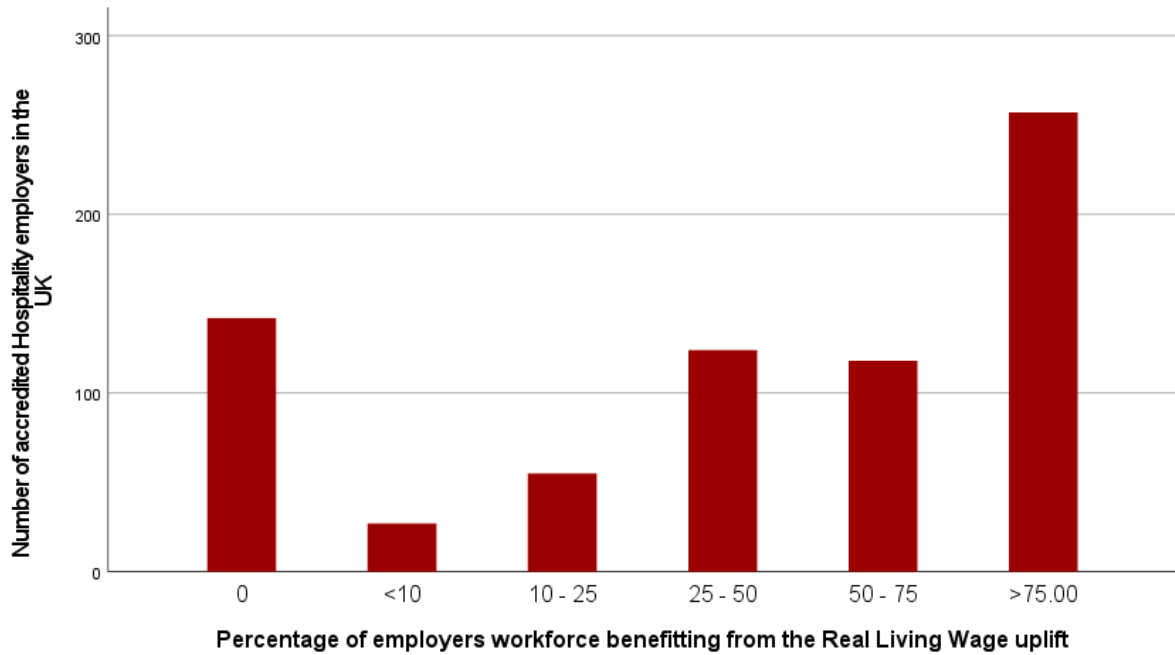
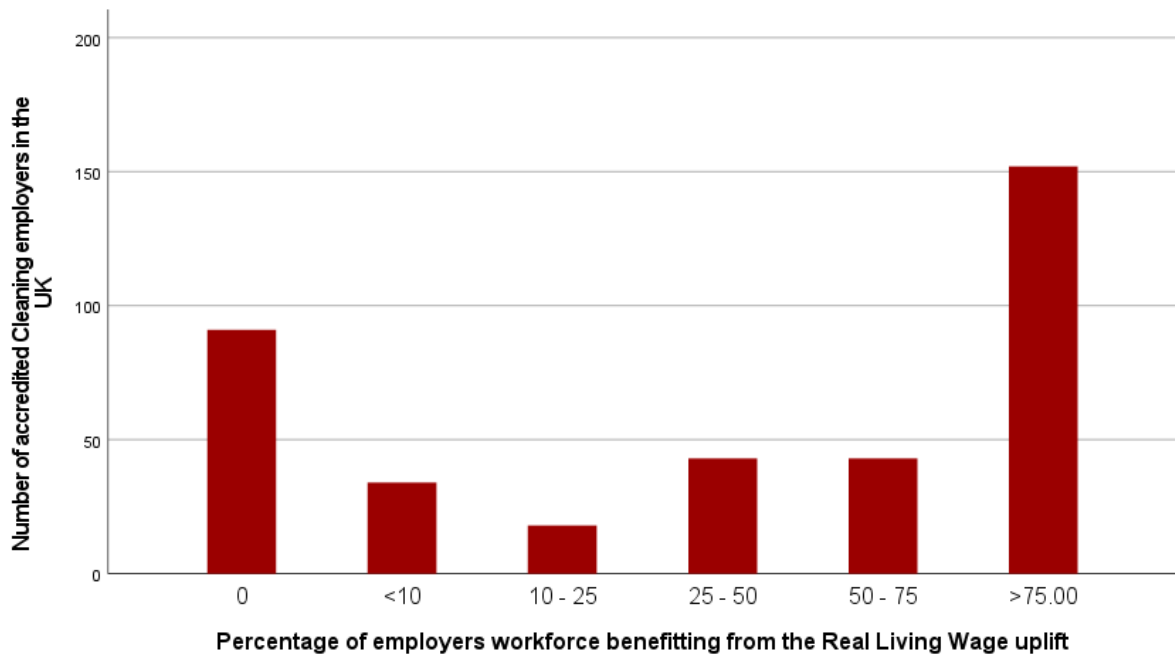


Figure 7.6 Percentage of directly employed workforce within the Cleaning sector benefitting from a RLW uplift



In terms of a movement, actors have seen a growth in their own membership networks, especially the Community Organisers who are seen as relatively new actors in the UK and in Wales. Growth and scale are perceived to be linked to funding and resources such as dedicated staff which the RLW campaign in Wales hasn't had so far and could explain why there hasn't been the growth seen in other countries such as Scotland where there has been more dedicated funding and resulting high numbers of accreditations.

“When I was first there, we [Community Organisers] described ourselves as a faith-based organisation. And that's what we were essentially with maybe one or two community groups and we had schools as well. It's really grown and developed. So we've had nine or 10 new groups in the last year alone. We had funding from the National Lottery community fund. And we're able to employ two new organisers, increasing our membership.” (Campaigner Organiser 2)

“So accreditation has happened in Wales since 2012...but it was fairly slow progress. There was nobody really focusing on Wales” (Welsh Gov regulator 2)

Increased funding has been a driver of the growth of organisations involved in the RLW movement and the movement itself. Other influences perceived to be key drivers to the movement such are political support, the RLW brand and relationships between actors and these will be discussed in the next section. Whilst these elements have positively impacted the RLW in SC movement in Wales, some tensions and more negative outcomes have also been perceived.

7.2 Campaign outcomes

This section will firstly discuss the political influence involved in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. The movement has been particularly successful in getting on the political agenda and calendar in Wales. Using a combination of forming a relationship with a political leader sympathetic to the RLW cause and also choosing timing of Drakeford's ascension into leadership. A good, public relationship with the former Welsh First Minister, Mark Drakeford was developed, as described in the previous chapter and became a key driver for the movement. Another key outcome of the campaign is Living Wage Week every year on the political calendar attended

by Ministers of the Senedd. Having the support of the sitting First Minister in Wales is seen as positive among RLW in SC campaigners.

“We’ve [CCW] been involved with it [RLW] for a long time....And it was kind of on getting the policy traction....we did a lot of introducing the concept to WGov...I think Mark Drakeford’s government, as a whole has taken some quite bold moves in lots of different areas. So I think if any government in Wales is going to make it happen, then it will be his.” (Campaigner Organiser 2)

There is some tension between CCW’s use of political leverage and their non-partisan status. In the build up to the Welsh elections in May 2022, the researcher took part in some online meetings referred to as “Superdelegations” organised by CCW. The senior organising team had worked to set up meetings with leaders from all the major parties in order to build relationships and set asks in some key priority areas including the RLW in SC. CUK aims to be non partisan and are open to building relationships with all political parties if relevant. In practice and especially at election times where parties seek to differentiate themselves and compete with each other, the RLW has become seen a Welsh Labour party cause.

The use of political leverage is a pragmatic and opportunistic tool with great potential as a driver but also comes with its risks. The RLW in SC in Wales being used as a political vehicle shows the changeable and temporary nature of political leverage. Following the Summit in January 2021, the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford agreed the RLW was the start of a revolution in SC. Paying the RLW to all SC workers was one of six pledges in the Labour Manifesto for the Wales National Election in May 2021. Paying the RLW wage can be said to have become a Welsh Labour party pledge and one outcome of this was the other main political parties in Wales decided to differentiate themselves and create their own distinct pledge rather than join in and collectively support the RLW in SC. For example, the researcher had leaflets through the door from all the main parties addressing the low pay in SC issue but all in different ways. The Plaid Cymru Manifesto in 2021 mentions the RLW but only to illustrate that nearly half of all care workers are paid below that rate (£9.90 at the time) and they put forward a £10 per hour “starting” wage for care workers (Plaid Cymru Senedd Election Manifesto, 2021, p10) as well as tackling broader pay related issues such as sick pay. The Welsh Conservatives do not refer to the RLW at all in their 2021 manifesto, instead putting forward a “Welsh Minimum

Care Wage” of £10 per hour (Welsh Conservatives Manifesto 2021, p21). There is no mention about accreditation and the key aspects to the RLW standard that is keeping in line with inflation year by year and including contracted workers which as discussed earlier has negative connotations to the degree of change taking place. The use of RLW in SC as a vehicle for political gain in a similar quick win or “shallow” use of the RLW standard not dissimilar to Cardiff Council’s accreditation excluding SC workers. This is a surface level use of the standard reaps the reward of public support but without recognition of the longer term commitment of keeping pay in line with inflation and payment of contracted workers as well as directly employed workers. This cannot be described as a positive outcome as it does not address or invest in the key operational elements of implementing the RLW which make the changes to business practices which perpetuate low pay.

A year later in the run up to the 2022 Welsh Local Government elections, the Cost of Living crisis was the latest crisis we faced and high on the political agenda. The RLW which and been strongly aligned to improvement in SC work was not being aligned as a solution to the cost of living crisis. There was no mention of the RLW in any of the main political parties in Wales’ manifestos and improvements to the SC sector were framed as “National Care Service” - the same as the TU framing as discussed in the previous chapter and Welsh Conservatives “Welsh minimum Care wage” of £10ph (with RLW rate at £10.90 at that time). There was the sense that the RLW in SC in Wales at least was a Labour Party cause which had already “been done” and political focus had turned its attention elsewhere.

7.2.1 Influence of the RLW brand

The observed time period included influences from multiple macro level crises including Brexit which impacted recruitment and retention of SC workers from overseas, the Covid pandemic which highlighted care workers and the difficulties and conditions many of them work in, the Care Crisis the result of lack of funding and lack of staff and most recently the Cost of Living Crisis. The Covid crisis raised the plight of care workers in the public consciousness as well as key worker campaigns such as the “Can’t live on claps and rainbows” campaign by CUK. From observations and interviews during this research, the RLW brand is less known among the general

public including SC workers themselves. Even accredited employers are hazy in recollecting where they heard about the RLW and there is still confusion between RLW brand and the UK Government NLW which is the UK's statutory minimum hourly rate.

“Well I’ve been aware of the National...[stumbles] the... RLW for a long time...So I’ve been aware of it. I’m sure it was probably an email, or something I’d seen somewhere and then I go “I’ll look into this” (SC Employer accredited)

This is problematic as the RLW brand is not perceived to have been influential or memorable even to those who have accredited. It is another indication of the lack of wider societal knowledge and buy-in to the social justice element to the RLW.

7.2.2 Tensions and barriers around the RLW brand

As seen in Table 7.1 above, accreditations have continued to grow and the “carrot and stick” pincer movement approach between LWF/Cynnal and CUK as “sister organisations” has had considerable success. There are some tensions in relation to these roles and in the RLW brand recognition which suggests a less positive relationship. As discussed in the previous chapter on strategies and approaches used in the RLW movement, the LWF and Cynnal in Wales are the accreditation bodies and take a business friendly approach rather than a community led action approach like CUK. Although LWF and Cynnal both present themselves as “business friendly” organisations, adopting a “carrot” approach in order to encourage and facilitate potential new organisations to accredit, they are different in terms of their relationship to CUK. LWF is a “sister organisation” to CUK and they share an organisational strategy. Cynnal is independent of CCW and are funded by the WGov for their RLW activities. LWF protects their RLW logo from use in public actions and do not lend their logo to campaigning organisations, even CUK who undertake public actions in support of the RLW. The researcher experienced this while preparing for an action looking to persuade a large employer in Cardiff to accredit as a RLW employer. We wanted to see if there were any logos or banners we could use but were informed this was not contractually allowed.

“Unfortunately the LWF doesn’t take part in actions like this, and doesn’t allow its branding to be used for these purposes – it prefers a ‘carrot’ to a ‘stick’

approach and to leave this sort of campaigning to other organisations such as CUK. Our contract with the Foundation specifically prevents us from using the branding for events such as this – so we won't be able to provide anything.” (Excerpt from email from Cynnal in response to the researcher's request for Living Wage logos, banners in preparation for an action).

This was a new development as the researcher remembered using RLW logos in a SC action in November 2021 and this could be an indication of tension or development of new strategy between the two organisations' "carrot and stick", that is business friendly versus public agitational ways of working. From a campaigner perspective, the researcher felt frustration with the "business friendly" approach previously and its impact on actions, when planning for an action on RLW in SC. For example, the researcher suggested inviting accredited organisations in the town the action was taking place in, to join the action and boost "turn out" and names of accredited organisations are available on the LWF website. Usually there's enthusiastic encouragement to get on and do something but organisers were less enthusiastic but didn't say yes or no to the idea, instead saying they would contact Cynnal and ask them but nothing further came of that.

Not inviting already accredited employers creates tension with Community Organising methodology where community power is built up with allies in support and also building solidarity between accredited organisations. Public actions are not considered a business friendly approach. As noted in the previous chapter on observations during Living Wage Week events, accredited organisations don't lobby or pressure other organisations to accredit and they don't tend to display their Living Wage logos prominently on their websites or at their premises. Also mentioned in the previous chapter, accredited SC providers don't let themselves be known as having accredited in meetings with other providers. Outcomes of this approach include lack of solidarity between accredited SC providers and lack of visibility of the RLW brand in SC in Wales among businesses and in the general public. These are significant barriers to the growth of movement and a significant limiting factor in the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

As described in Chapter six, another tactic and approach used as part of the RLW in SC movement in Wales was to encourage large anchor institutions to accredit with the aim of using the anchor institution's influence and create a "domino effect" of

other organisations accrediting. Sometimes compromises were taken when it came to getting an employer “over the line” and accredit in order to act as encouragement to other large employers and keep driving the RLW standard. A key example of this is Cardiff Council who were the first Welsh LA to accredit as a RLW employer. As described previously, accreditation means that employers commit to paying all their directly employed and indirectly employed workers the RLW but in this instance Cardiff Council were able to accredit without including commissioned or contracted SC services. Whilst Cardiff Council’s accreditation was seen as an important first step and big “win” in Cardiff becoming a Living Wage City it did come at a cost in terms of support and buy-in from SC providers.

SC providers perceived Cardiff Council had been given a loop hole and “let off” by excluding SC workers in their accreditation. This had reputational repercussions from the Care providers’ perspectives in that the RLW standard gives a “good employer” reputation and Care providers are conscious of being seen as the “bad guys” by not paying care workers the RLW. Cardiff Council were able to reap the reputational benefits of being an accredited RLW employer and SC providers felt they were left as being seen as not wanting to pay their workers the RLW. Care providers felt this was unfair and offloaded the problem of continuing low pay from the Council on to SC providers. This led to a lack of trust and anger around the RLW standard among SC providers in Cardiff at that time.

“Cardiff [Council] became accredited as a RLW employer...which I had quite a beef about because the criteria for becoming accredited is that all of your contractors as well as you pay the RLW that you ensure that the people you contract with pay the RLW, and Cardiff don’t and can’t contract with people who pay the RLW because they don’t pay us enough money. So there you are, there’s the thorny issue out in the open!” (Unaccredited employer 1)

“And right now all you’ve done is look for a way of getting [accredited] instead of improving things for my staff, you’ve looked at a loophole to get you [Cardiff Council] off the hook.” (Unaccredited employer 1)

This has led to a lack of trust in the aims of the standard and concerns around reputation could be one explanation of the lack of appetite by adult SC providers in Wales to accredit.

7.2.3 Relationship building

Building and maintaining organisational strength is key to a successful coalition (Tattersall, 2010). Organisational strength and the power of a movement such as the RLW in SC in Wales movement is done by building and sustaining relationships between movement actors. Tattersall sees sustaining relationships between movement organisations as a key signal of success in a movement for social change. As in the previous chapter on interactions between RLW in SC actors in Wales, following the Summit in January 2021, collective action was not sustained. Understanding the outcomes to approaches and tools used within the movement to build relationships from the perspective of multiple actors could help add clarity as to why this happened and what can be done in future to strengthen relationships.

In terms of SC workers' relationships with TUs, workers now have the convenience of becoming members online but for many SC workers do not have any other contact with TUs. While this risks a lack of solidarity and a connection between workers, it does have its benefits especially where employers are hostile towards TUs. Prospective members can join without any workplace agitation or targeted recruitment drive and crucially without their employers needing to know.

“People just came to us, and they joined online, because you can join online now. In the old days, we'd turn up with application forms. And, you know, most people join online now. If they hear or see stuff in the news about [name of TU], they can just Google it, and go straight to a page and they can just join.”
(TU 3)

Education and training went to online provision during Covid which was a softer way to gain access to care homes and other SC work settings and gain the trust of SC providers and the workforce. This tactic is used to a way to get a foot in the door with “hostile” employers and build a working relationship. It is not known if the training and education have actually led to any new memberships and therefore has a limited impact on building the power of the worker.

“That's been very successful in its own terms. I don't have any evidence to say that that has made any difference in terms of our recruitment.” (TU 3)

For one campaigner, being recognised as a key actor of the campaign and the feeling that someone in power is listening to you was a positive outcome.

“I’ve met the First Minister several times, and he can now he knows me by name....it’s a good moment for me” (SC worker campaigner 1)

Some have seen the positive reputational and relational effects as benefits to accrediting as a RLW employer with one Welsh LA recognising improvements to both employee relations and popularity with voters as a key successful element to accrediting as a RLW employer!

“It’s enabled us as an organisation to retain staff and grow staff. Like I said earlier, we’ve seen how the turnover through all of this in the sector’s massive. Politically, it’s very popular right now.” (Welsh LA)

As well as external influence from political leaders and large anchor organisations to drive forward accreditations, membership organisations involved in the movement also had their own internal pressures driving forward positive outcomes. The need for actors to show their members a positive outcome was competitive and multiple actors retold the success in their own framing. As one interviewee put it:

“Success has many parents...” (SC provider representative)

This is discussed further in the next section and aims to add clarity as to why actors have not continued to work collectively on improving pay in SC in Wales. It builds on previous explanations on tension between TUs and CSOs and the RLW in terms of revitalisation, mutual reinforcement and replacement (Heery et al., 2018) theories, also discussed in the Literature Review Chapter. It begins by looking at how previous explanations fit with what is known about SC in Wales and draws on interviews and observations of perceptions of CUK and TUs.

7.2.4 Tensions between Citizens and Trade Unions in Wales

This section explores what the RLW movement in SC in Wales reveals about the well documented lack of engagement between TUs and CUK in RLW activities

(Prowse and Fells, 2016; Prowse et al., 2017; Heery, Hann and Nash, 2018). The situation with RLW in SC in Wales is similar to Heery et al.'s (2018) broader assessment of RLW across all sectors in UK in that TUs "typically were not heavily involved" (p319) and Prowse et al.'s (2017) "no engagement" categorisation of the Union/CSO relationship in their study of the RLW movement in local government. There is discussion in the literature of three possible explanations for the lack of engagement between TUs and CSOs regarding the RLW were posited as mutual reinforcement, replacement or independence from each other (Heery et al., 2018) in a wider union revitalisation theme. As discussed in the previous chapter, there is evidence of a "noisy platform" of multiple third sector organisations all jostling for attention on behalf of their members and those they represent around the issues of low pay in SC. There is a sense of competition and threat of encroaching on territory or overlapping issues and resources especially in a small geographic area like Wales. In the case of the RLW for SC movement, CSOs and TUs were competing for political support, competing for testimonies from those with lived experience and competing for "wins" to show their members. The explanation of rivalry fits better as an explanation following discussion in the previous chapter with evidence of actors making efforts to differentiate themselves from each other and frame their campaigns differently. They had different goals for example a single minimum hourly pay rate and winnable issue for CUK and a broader working conditions tackling systemic issues for TUs. The researcher saw no evidence of CUK actions influencing TUs actions other than wanting to be independent of each other. In terms of who's winning the 'competition', it could be argued that neither CSOs or TUs have succeeded in engaging the adult SC Market with providers and therefore do not complement or compensate each other in that respect. This builds on Heery et al.'s (2018) relationship categories between TUs and CSOs, adding the category of "rivalry" as a fitting description of interactions. Similarly in terms of workers, neither TUs or CUK could be said to have successfully penetrated the workplace and empowered SC workers in a significant number or given them a voice other than widely sharing powerful testimonies from one or two care workers.

The initial "We've won!" jubilation following the SC Summit in January 2021 was not only a positive outcome but a much needed "win" for campaigners. A movement needs a few wins to boost the morale of campaigners. Making iterative progress

drives the movement on by encouraging and empowering campaigners to stick with it. This aspect is especially so in SC where issues relating to “sleep over time” had been a drawn out and ultimately unsuccessful bid to improve pay and working conditions in SC (<https://minimumwage.blog.gov.uk/2022/01/27/sleep-in-shifts-in-social-care/> [Accessed April 2024]) which could be said to have had a negative impact on SC workers feeling they do not have the power to make positive change in their sector.

Tensions between RLW actors and TUs were noticeable in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. It does not seem that TUs and CCW have seen the value of a continuing relationship with each other following the Summit in January 2021. As discussed in the previous chapter, CSOs’ approaches and tools in the RLW in SC movement did not change or alter from their traditional approaches and some of their organisational structures and procedures did not fit well together.

One explanation for the rising prevalence of the CSO led RLW movement is thought to be reduced union activity (Freeman, 2005 and Heery et al., 2017). The SC sector does not have a history of collective bargaining and SC workers are not typically unionised so a civil society led initiative could be expected under this explanation. Mutual reinforcement is not a “pre condition” to driving the RLW standard (Heery et al., 2018). There is no evidence of CSOs acting as a replacement to TUs in tackling work related issues in SC in Wales.

A more fitting explanation and element of the “low hanging fruit” criticism, supports elements of institutional motivation where organisations with greater union density are more inclined to accredit as RLW similar to Stonewall, Athena Swann badges values already aligned to standards like the RLW (Heery et al., 2017). Lack of Union recognition and lack of Union access to privately owned adult Care providers aligns with this explanation. Neither work place (TUs) nor community based (CCW) efforts can claim to have reached and engaged with significant numbers of adult SC workers or brought on board adult SC employers in the Market especially those in the private sector.

So whilst exploring numbers of accreditations and attributes of accredited employers supports the “low hanging fruit” criticism, it doesn’t offer insight into why tensions exist between TUs and CSOs in Wales, particularly in relation to the RLW in SC.

The next sections aims to add insight into different actors' perceptions of this issue, drawing on data generated from observations and interviews of this study.

7.2.5 Rivalry between Unions and CSOs in Wales

While there is a history of successful Union and Community Organising collaboration for example in the TELCO RLW campaign in London in the early 2000s, there are widely perceived tensions between CUK and RLW activities and TUs in Wales.

From those interviewed in this study, tensions range from the perception of campaigners that TUs are not reaching care workers effectively enough.

"They're (TUs) not visible, they're not doing their job. That's, that's what I told them, you're not doing your job. Because when you send leaflets, if you send information on email to the home [the adult care home], it's reaching the managers..., they're not employees. And what time do you think I have to go through the leaflet...explain to me what you have to offer." (SC worker campaigner 1)

On the one hand this quote illustrates a care workers' perception of the lack of Union engagement with workers like them. On the other hand as a RLW campaigner, this quote also shows a degree of competition, pitting their campaigning work against Union efforts.

Different groups claim all or partial success relating to this outcome and making sure their actor organisation was associated with the SC Summit outcome rather than maintaining a collectively shared sense of achievement. Campaigning actors needed to reassure and empower their members and show that their methods were working well and they have the power to change things.

"We ended up with all four parties that are now represented in the Senedd have had signed up to at least the RLW commitments. I think that there was the community movement, there was the movement from providers, there was the movement from TUs, I think there was a kind of, you know, a coming together." (SC provider rep)

"The best bit for me is that it [the RLW in SC campaign] has not been between a politician and another politician, or a politician and a civil servant or a politician and a trade unionist. It's been between the politicians and care recipients, care workers, and ordinary citizens. And that they've been the ones with a seat at the table, negotiating directly with the panel." (Campaigner 6)

"No, it [Welsh Government commitment to paying the Real Living Wage] was a milestone...and, you know, let's not take it away. That was from perseverance, you know, persistence by the Union that we got that, you know,

and lobbying Mark Drakeford [Former First Minister of Wales] and Julie James [Former Cabinet Secretary for Local Government].” (Union Representative Local Government)

Studies on the RLW have, on one hand recognised the benefits and success rate of union and CSO cooperation, sometimes referred to community unionism, yet on the other hand recognize that in practice there are often tensions between CSOs and TUs (Heery et al. 2018; Holgate et al. 2005 and Prowse et al. 2017). In the RLW in SC movement in Wales, actors involved in the movement were frustrated by the lack of perceived involvement by TUs in Wales and the feeling that TUs in Wales *should* want to be part of this movement and would be a key driver. Similar to Prowse et al.’s (2017) experience there was little to no engagement in the RLW in SC in Wales movement and TUs in Wales.

“I think they’re (TUs) the real weak link. They should be all over this and we struggle to get engagement on our city group (Cardiff Living Wage City). If I’m honest I’m super disappointed in terms of what they’ve done, what they’ve contributed, what they brought to the table. Hand on heart I don’t think any have bloody accredited.” (LA 1)

Whilst this quotes shows a perception of a lack of buy in by TUs in Wales to the RLW standard, it also passes over the Council’s that did not include SC to get their accredited status which did not sit well with many providers and could have impacted TUs’ decisions to get involved.

7.2.6 Different ways of working

The difference in ways of working between TUs and CUK can cause tension in terms of organisational structures and procedures.

Community Organising methodology is led by community led issues and long term relational networking which in the case of the RLW in SC would include workplace networks, the traditional space for Union activity.

“(Have I worked with Community Organiser?) A little bit with CCW but not a lot. I think I’ve caused us a bit of conflict...We always make sure it’s within our remit and sometimes the other community groups, it just doesn’t fit in with our rulebook and our ethos. But where we’ve got mutual views and needs, I’ll work with anybody as long as my members get a deal.” (TU 1)

Whilst this indicates a recognition of the differences in procedures and activities between TUs and CSOs which can cause conflict and a willingness to work collectively in the interests of their members, there does not seem to be a willingness on either side to change or adjust activities in order to make collective activity work.

There's a wariness of CUK's motives and activities among some Union representatives with one interview participant concerned the researcher's interview with them was a CUK Listening exercise or 1-2-1.

"This isn't a CUK survey thing [referring to a 1-2-1 interview] you're doing is it?" (TU 3)

This adds clarity to the discussion on replacement and pressure felt by individual organisations to meet member expectations and show success rather than be part of a collective. Wales is a small place and competition for membership is more intense than elsewhere in the UK. As discussed in the previous chapter, neither CUK or TUs in Wales have adjusted their approaches or methodology in order to work with one another. As noted in the previous chapters, organisations also compete for access to workers with lived experience and it tended to be the same worker giving testimony at multiple events.

A key success for CCW in the RLW in SC campaign and for other areas of RLW movement in Wales has been the support of the First Minister who has "encouraged" public sector bodies to accredit. Due to its devolved nature, the WGov cannot change the statutory NLW so there's limitations on aspects of autonomy and reach of encouraging RLW. Civil society and voluntary regulation have been able to act more quickly on this than WGov. Drakeford said during the CUK Summit in January 2021 that as voluntary regulation was going so well he didn't see the need to step in. This could be perceived as another frustration by TUs.

Concluding section

In terms of outcomes for the campaign, CCW have had significant success building alliances with political leaders as part of the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Political agenda setting is considered an outcome and the RLW is part of the political year

now with Living Wage Week. This can be seen as what Tattersall (2018) refers to as a shift in the political climate. The price of political success is the short term nature of political leverage and continuing need for civil society led pressure.

The RLW brand is recognised and understood within the immediate RLW campaign but has been less understood more widely. It is confused with the statutory NLW and open to interpretation from actors taking a more shallow approach or quick win in relation to RLW accreditation rather than driving the social justice element of the standard. The financial element of the standard has been more widely recognised than the social justice element.

The drive for anchor organisation accreditation and in particular Cardiff Council's accreditation without including SC workers was not successful in terms of building support among SC providers in Wales who saw this as the Council passing the buck of low pay in the sector on to providers without addressing the issue of commissioned work.

Internal to the campaign, there is evidence of diverging strategies between CUK and the accreditation bodies. The RLW logo was not permitted to be shown during public actions run by CUK and accredited employers are not encouraged or invited to join in on actions. This is considered a more "business friendly" strategy which has had significant success but comes at the cost of building solidarity and driving the wider movement. An example of this strategy is the voluntary regulation which has built momentum but not necessarily critical mass or tackled "tough nuts" like Multi National Corporations and the shareholder system involved in SC.

TUs have used similar "business friendly" approaches to gain access to perceived "hostile" SC providers but are critical of this approach as it has not involved collective bargaining or secured long term, contractual commitments from employers. Unions are concerned by employers initially agreeing to accredit or sign up to voluntary charters which include the RLW and then pulling out with little to no consequences to the organisation. This could be one explanation why there is no Union involvement in the RLW in SC movement in Wales.

CCW can be said to have increased their power and reputation as changemakers in Wales which will help them tackle other issues in their broad remit but have not succeeded yet in building momentum among SC workers.

The lack of collective action between RLW in SC movement actors is an indication of the competitive nature of campaigning in small geographical areas such as Wales and the need for actors to “win” for their members. There is also a lack of willingness to change the way they work are both related to a lack of trust in that collaboration with each other would strengthen their organisations.

The ultimate aim of the RLW is to the benefit of workers and community members effected by low pay and in work poverty. The next section considers outcomes for workers as a result of RLW in SC activity in Wales.

7.3 Outcomes for workers

This section considers outcomes from the RLW in SC movement in Wales for adult SC workers. Organisational strength will be considered in terms of levels of empowerment of individual workers and the degree of SC workers’ collective strength and voice. In terms of social change, the degree of sector reform and any changes in outlook among adult SC workers which could be said to be an outcome of the RLW in SC movement in Wales will be explored.

7.3.1 Tackling in work poverty

Firstly, to be recognised as a key outcome to the RLW in SC movement affecting adult SC workers in Wales is the WGov commitment to paying the RLW to all registered SC workers. £70million was given to LAs and Health Boards to distribute to care workers. The WGov expected all care workers to “feel the benefit” by June 2023 (<https://www.gov.wales/social-care-workers-in-wales-to-receive-real-living-wage-uplift> [Accessed April 2024]). This is a real, tangible outcome effecting SC workers in Wales which will be noticeable on a day to day basis. As illustrated in Chapter two, the last decade of policy and legislation in SC has tackled issues around professionalisation and the standardisation of the SC sector but stopped short of action on persistent rates of low pay in the sector.

Latest estimates find over £2billion of pay uplifts across all industry sectors and all areas of the UK since 2011 (Heery et al., 2021). Latest available figures from the Cardiff University Research team show that across the UK, the RLW has benefitted 112,838 SC workers (Figure 7.7). Nearly 4,000 SC workers in Wales have been uplifted with an overall pay increase of over £10million (Figure 7.8).

Figure 7.7 Measures of Living Wage Impact in SC (UK and England) as of March 2024

Organisation Type	Accredited Employers	Uplifted Workers	Wage Transfer (£2023s)
<i>United Kingdom</i>			
Residential care	289	25,254	94,193,110
Home care	375	20,304	56,452,905
Childcare	144	2,300	9,660,312
<i>UK Total care</i>	<i>808</i>	<i>47,858</i>	<i>160,306,327</i>
Local Authorities	170	69,237	818,388,218
with Social Care Remit ¹	85	64,980	776,353,700
UK Total	893	112,838	936,660,027

Source: Nash, D Real Living Wage Impact on Social Care March 2024

Figure 7.8 Measure of Living Wage Impact in SC by UK country as of March 2024

Adult Social Care	Accredited Employers	Uplifted Workers	Wage Transfer (£2023s)
England	486	28,046	110,748,946
Northern Ireland	3	775	1,489,574
Scotland	146	13,083	28,322,584
Wales	29	3,654	10,319,374
<i>UK Total</i>	<i>664</i>	<i>45,558</i>	<i>150,880,478</i>

Source: Nash, D. Real Living Wage Impact on Social Care March 2024

7.3.2 Tackling worker apathy/despondency

Equally important, the WGov commitment was a much needed “win” for SC workers in Wales. The perceived lack of engagement of care workers in efforts relating to improvements in pay and working conditions can be explained by a lack of history in collective action in the sector as well as a lack of confidence or expectations by workers that things could change for the better.

“No, I think just kind of get on with it to be honest. You know, me, I'm not going to go into protest or, you know, because I think it's been so underpaid for so long that people just accept it without challenging it basically. Same with the nursing homes in the care staff in nursing homes. Their pay is quite low as well. So you just go into that job expecting a low pay anyway.” (SC worker 2)

Similarly, Union efforts around improvement to pay in the SC sector such as in Ethical Care Charters, focussed on LAs which included a RLW element, did not bring about as much actual change as hoped compared to the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

“..It (Ethical Care Charter) has been successful in terms of raising awareness of the issues in care, it's not been successful, so much in delivering real change is the reality. But we haven't given up on it. The stuff that's in our future SC Coalition is a lot it's kind of taken on board a lot of the stuff that's in the Ethical Care Charter.” (TU 3)

Therefore another positive outcome of the RLW in SC movement in Wales could be to encourage SC workers and at least show that it is possible for things to change for the better within the sector. This has the potential to help tackle apathy and lack of engagement among care workers.

Whilst as described above there have been some significant and tangible positive changes following the RLW in SC movement, there are some more negative outcomes. Tensions have arisen and barriers have remained in relation to outcomes for SC workers in Wales. These will be discussed in terms of the degree of change for SC workers, for example changes to systems and attitudes relating to low pay in SC and also explored in terms of organisational strengths, which in relation to outcomes for SC workers will be around worker voice and empowerment.

7.3.3 Tensions and barriers as outcomes relating to Social Care workers

“Hard to reach”

SC workers are perceived to be a “hard to reach” group in relation to engagement with the RLW movement from the perspective of TUs and CCW campaigners as well as the researchers’ own experience of attempts to boost turnout for actions and gain testimony from SC workers. Also as discussed in the Methodology chapter, the researcher also found it difficult to recruiting SC workers for research interviews. In terms of change, greater involvement with and engagement by care workers in efforts to improve pay and working conditions cannot be said to be an outcome of the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

“It's almost impossible to get access to care workers.” (TU 3)

As discussed in Chapter five, CCW as a CSO actor has close proximity to the community. RLW in SC work is concentrated in Cardiff and mainly within faith organisations, schools, Cardiff Business School and other community groups which could provide access to SC workers via members’ contacts. Even they have found it difficult to engage with Care workers as much as they would have liked.

“We're actually very lucky in the work that we've done recently because our main member group for [name of church in North Wales) ...they've been a member group for ages and they've worked with us on other things. So we already knew that there was there's a leader there who has been a care worker, and is now a student nurse.” (Campaigner Organiser 2)

“What I would say is, with the SC campaign, the hardest bit of it, unsurprisingly, has been organising the care workers, because they don't fit into that they're not part of an institution. They're not often unionised. “ (Campaigner Organiser)

The potential of access does not always lead to engagement and it could be because campaigning efforts are not visible to those who work in SC. Exploring and building further networks in places where SC workers have access to or undertaking actions in public places more visible to SC workers may help put efforts relating to RLW more

on the radar of SC workers in Wales.

“You think the movement to get more people would be well known but not many people [SC workers] know about it.” (Campaigner care user)

Lack of engagement can be said to lead to a lack of voice of the worker and this is a significant negative outcome given the community led ethos of CCW and worker empowerment aim of TUs. The next section considers lack of worker voice.

7.3.4 Lack of worker voice

As discussed in Chapter five, CCW's ethos and approach is about being community led. Chapter six discussed the use of testimonies as key tools used within the movement, to hear the stories told by those with lived experience of issues. As described in the previous chapter, CCW consider the use of testimony as an agitational tool, done face to face with decision makers to explain how their decisions have impacted on worker lives. In the case of the RLW in SC in Wales, there was really only one key SC worker who gave testimony at multiple events relating to the RLW.

This reminded the researcher of something another participant said during CUK's Community Organising training at the beginning of this study. When asked what it takes to address injustice and start to actually do something and they said: *“You've got to stick your neck out”*. There is a lack of anger about persistent low pay in the SC sector particularly among the Care workers themselves and according to Community Organising training it's often that feeling of anger at injustice which precipitates taking action. Also as the researcher learnt themselves, it takes time to build up the trust with someone and build your confidence to be willing to stick their neck out and try something they've not done before. Add to that the fear of losing your job for speaking out given how hostile to TUs some Care providers are, it's clear to understand that there are lots of barriers to SC workers to engage with the campaign.

Considering those barriers, having someone representing concerns of your behalf would seem beneficial. Having someone who already has union experience, has spoken in meetings and presentations at University or work previously is a big help in

taking that step to “sticking your neck out” on behalf of others. Industry sectors such as SC historically have fewer workers joining TUs. Interestingly, the RLW in SC movement does not appear to have changed the majority of Care workers’ attitudes to joining or becoming more active in TUs for collective action or bargaining. SC workers interviewed in this study could see themselves joining a Union for individual representation if they faced a problem at work but there was less recognition about joining a Union for solidarity with other Care workers for collective action or to potentially mobilize on issues. One key reason being that they don’t want to withdraw their labour and leave their clients without care.

“ [TUs] speak on your behalf. You're not letting down the people and the clients that you're looking after but you still got somebody fighting your battles that could understand. If there's no carers, who's going to look after them?” (SC Worker 3)

TUs recognise this as one explanation for low membership among Care workers which would suggest a need to campaign more for SC workers and get involved in the RLW movement in order to boost membership.

“There's definitely more people (who) want that individual support, rather than joining a union for that collective representation.” (TU 2)

A negative outcome is a lack of change in culture around how SC workers perceive representation or that they have become more engaged or interested in collective action and collective bargaining. There doesn’t seem to be the levels of collective anger among Care workers or a collective sense of attribution of responsibility of what is causing low pay in SC to persist.

Referring to Tattersall’s typology for coalition strength (2005) an operational element is needed to be added to the RLW. Understanding how the RLW is going to be implemented requires genuine organisational change and changes in procurement which the accreditation model addresses. Worker empowerment and voice can be said to be lacking from the RLW standard.

Concluding section

In terms of outcomes of the RLW movement in SC in Wales, workers in publicly owned and commissioned care work have received an uplift in pay which will go up in line with inflation every year. This is a much needed “win” for the sector showing that positive change can happen in the SC sector. This could have been a catalyst for worker empowerment but a lack of engagement signifies this has not resonated as a victory among Care workers themselves. SC workers were difficult for actors to reach and engage with. The direction of change was not from SC workers mobilizing but rather other actors representing on their behalf. Those with lived experience who are willing to provide testimony on multiple occasions were an incredibly valuable but scarce resource to the campaign and wider movement.

There has been no change yet as to where or how SC worker representation happens for example the SC and Fair Work Forum does not include community members or workers although TUs and employers have a space to represent them. A platform to encourage SC workers to discuss work related issues has not been created as a result of the RLW in SC in Wales movement. Lack of SC worker involvement also led to lack of visibility of efforts and actions relating to RLW in SC with care workers not aware of the movement which could threaten the authenticity and grass roots ethos of the movement.

The next section considers outcomes of the RLW movement in SC in Wales related to SC providers.

7.4 Outcomes for Social Care employers

7.4.1 Wins/successes

The majority of accredited employers across all industry sectors in the UK report their business has benefitted from accrediting as a RLW employer (Heery et al., 2021) Reported benefits include improved recruitment and retention of staff, reputational advantage and even commercial gains (ibid.). Accredited SC providers in this study have also seen benefits to recruitment and retention since accrediting as RLW employers.

“There's an agency that we go to and at the moment recruitment has been incredibly difficult. So the ability for us to stand out [as a RLW employer] in that sense as well, when we are looking to recruit, we have seen a difference of people coming in for interviews than before.” (SC employer accredited 2)

Improving pay is important to SC providers who have led their own campaigns to improve pay for Care workers, for example Care Forum Wales' “£20,000 by 2020” campaign. As described previously in Chapter five, Care Forum Wales is the representative organisation for SC providers in Wales which lobbies and campaigns in the interests of its members. The RLW movement in SC in Wales was perceived as a temporary loss of control of changes to the sector and having a pay rate from outside of the Market thrust upon them to operationalise.

Following the WGov commitment, providers and their representatives have gained back influence in matters relating to the SC sector. One key outcome of the RLW movement for employers is the development of the SC and Fair Work Forum, the formal social partnership platform for care providers, TUs and WGov and they have a place to directly influence the fair work agenda in SC.

TUs representatives interviewed have welcomed this opportunity for collective bargaining as Care providers often do not want union agitation of their workforce. Also TUs support the development of a not for profit SC provision, a “National Care Service” which threatens the current model of private care provision. SC employers' negative attitudes towards unionisation in the workplace for SC workers has not changed as a result of the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

“They (SC workers) have had very little access to TUs. Very few private sector, employers recognise TUs and a positively hostile to TUs seeking recognition. They also say the least discouraging of their staff joining and TUs.” (TU 3)

Union representatives interviewed experience less access with employers in the private SC sector, compared with providers in public and voluntary sectors.

“Once you look at the majority of the sector, and Wales is independent, I think the majority of that is private sector rather than not for profit. LA and NHS

direct employees all covered by collective bargaining....a lot of (private) employers are hostile. “ TU 2)

Although relationships in the Public sector are not described as universally close:

“Most definitely we do not exclude them from anything, but we don't tend to have that. I don't know. We don't tend to have as close a relationship with them.” (Welsh LA 3)

The SC and Fair Work Forum could provide a more preferable platform away from the workplace, for collective bargaining where SC providers feel they have sufficient influence and which could improve relationships between TUs and SC providers.

7.4.2 Tensions/barriers

While the WGov's commitment to paying all SC workers the RLW can be seen as a significant “win” for campaigners. The impact of a unilateral civil society led standard on the SC industry sector had a significant effect on SC providers and organisations representing SC providers' day to day remit, superseding their own Market led priorities and solutions. A SC provider representative describes the time shortly after the WGov commitment as taking over their day to day discussions for a while and having a significant but not altogether positive influence on their day to day activities. While SC providers see pay improvements in the sector as broadly positive, the RLW standard is considered as something created outside the sector but left to them to carry the “burden” of implementation. At one point in the RLW in SC movement in Wales, the RLW discussion in the sector felt overwhelming and overtook all other issues in the sector as illustrated in the quote below.

“But then we were tasked by WGov with sort of coming up with proposals around the implementation of the RLW. And therefore, you know, I don't want to use the phrase “bogged down”, it doesn't sound quite right because it was positive. But we became... there was a whole period where we were having very, very regular meetings, and they were very focused on the RLW and being able to deliver responses to the WGov deadlines in order to get

something implemented for this financial year...And it affected, you know, it did sort of take over the work of the [organisation].” (SC provider rep)

This feeling of “colonization” (Heery, 2018) by the RLW movement was felt by providers and provider representative organisations. The researcher attended an online event focussed on the next steps for SC in Wales. This was an opportunity to see how the RLW in SC was discussed on a different platform from the seminars and online events run by CUK or the LWF. This event was more industry led and policy focussed. There were a range of Senior SC professionals speaking and the event was hosted by a Member of the Senedd. Below is an excerpt from the researcher’s observation of this event.

The first speaker begins and discusses issues relating to recruitment and retention of the workforce, difficulties resourcing, parity for SC with NHS workforce in terms of conditions and pay. I’m just waiting to hear mention of the RLW or effects on recruitment and retention since the First Ministers’ commitment to paying the RLW but there’s no mention in her segment.

The Chair asks for questions to be added to the chat, there’s a pause and I see this as my chance to ask if the speaker thinks the RLW would help with the workforce issues she was concerned with. The Chair notes the question with the proviso that there’s not a lot of time and paraphrases it without using the term “RLW”. The speaker agrees that implementing the RLW would help with parity of pay and recognising and valuing the role of care workers but sees the “financial system situation we are in” is a major issue in enabling care providers to be able to pay the RLW. She ends there as a SC Provider representative adds to the chat “I will address RLW in my contribution later – but RLW is not enough!”. This is followed quickly in the chat by a Union representative agreeing with that comment.

I feel a bit subversive and sense a frustration at the mention of the RLW like it’s a guest that has out stayed their welcome and shouldn’t be here.

When the SC provider rep’s segment arrives they open with discussion on the cost of living crisis and how this has a “double whammy” effect on Care Providers with increased utilities as well as staff costs to deal with. They address the issue of RLW saying that extra funding provided by WGov went

to LAs' and Health Boards' general budgets has not reached all frontline workers.

They finish discussing RLW by saying that "It's not enough" and "isn't sufficient in terms of respecting" the job care workers do. The rest of the segment is fast paced, impassioned and, I feel, defensive. They are saying that pay needs to be increased and workers need to be properly rewarded but without mention of RLW or any other rate as a solution. The speaker is congratulated in the chat at the end of their segment by the union representative "Spot on" and makes me wonder if this is a good platform for building partnerships between different actors and are campaigners missing out on opportunities such as these or have other actors had enough of the RLW movement and want their space back?

The vignette above illustrates the frustration of the influence of the civil society led unilateral nature of the RLW. It all so shows an agreement between providers and TU actors re-framing of the issue of low pay and separation from the RLW standard.

Concluding section

Having born the brunt of multiple crises including Brexit, Covid and the Care crisis, SC providers have needed to respond and implement changes to their practice multiple times and these crises have brought SC work to the attention of the general public.

RLW accreditation has been shown to benefit SC providers especially in recruitment and retention and the creation of the SC and Fair Work Forum could provide a more preferable platform for SC providers for collective bargaining with TUs.

SC providers in Wales have some good organisation and effective representation but on a small scale. There is a feeling of frustration that their work was overtaken by the RLW for a while and that the responsibility of implementing change had been thrust upon providers. There is an indication that SC providers and TUs have started to use similar framing around the RLW which could show both actors want to separate from the movement.

Outcomes at a wider community and societal level will be explored further in the next section.

7.5 Outcomes at community/societal level

This final section of the chapter, explores outcomes of the RLW in SC movement in Wales at community and societal level. This section aims to add to discussions identified in the Literature Review around who is responsible for improving perpetually low pay and to what extent change has actually happened. Again, using Tattersall's framework of coalition success to assist in analysing outcomes from the perception of the multiple actors involved in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Firstly, elements of change happening at community and societal level including levels of participatory democracy will be examined. Secondly, organisational strength in terms of leadership development illustrated by the researcher's own experiences as a novice Community Leader will be discussed. Understanding this is key to the social justice core of the wider Fair Work agenda. Considering to what extent change has happened is important at this stage in the RLW in SC movement. Holding the State and other decision makers accountable was successful and the key example of multiple actors working visibly together is the Summit. The collective action of the movement at the Summit should equally be considered as a key positive outcome of the RLW in SC movement in Wales not just necessarily the commitment to pay the RLW alone.

Heery and Williams (2020) note the aim of CSOs is to empower community members to learn to solve their own problems as a group. To what extent has this been an outcome of the RLW movement in SC in Wales?

"We're (Community Organisers) careful not to call ourselves activists because activists often mobilise, whereas what we do is organise...I think where we would differentiate it a little bit is we're not doing the thing. We're organising other people to do the thing themselves and have the agency themselves."
(Campaigner Organiser)

As discussed in the Literature Review Chapter there is discussion around whether the RLW is a social movement which results in actual social change or is it more of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) exercise for employer organisation's instrumental benefit? At the heart of that discussion is the degree of democratic deepening and participatory democracy (Della Porta, 2020). The RLW wage itself can be said to be a democratic deepening tool itself in that it alleviates the constant pressure of poverty and just getting by and allows members of the community to think about other things that matter to them the community they live in.

“What we would also argue is that the RLW campaign is a vehicle relieving the pressures of people so they can care about other things, and get involved more in their community get active on the campaigns. But if you're working multiple jobs and you're not being paid a RLW, it's very probable you're going to be too tired to care about much else.” (Campaigner Organiser)

These things take time. Fledgling organisers, such as the researcher, build experience and are encouraged to use democratic pathways to drive issues such as the RLW forward. Before being involved in this research and with Community Organising, the researcher had never made contact with their local or national politicians outside of voting in elections. The researcher noted in an observation that despite being able to see their LA offices from the end of their street, they had never been inside in the last ten years except to pick up food waste bags mainly due to being at work during the Council opening hours! The researcher recognises the lack of participatory democracy in their own life.

The process of becoming a Community Organiser facilitates deepened democracy for individuals. Community members start by attending events and then go on to taking scripted speaking parts written and provided by the Senior Organising team with parts assigned and an agenda decided. As you become more used and practiced to how things run, you're provided with more and more responsibility from setting up and arranging meetings with politicians or other decision makers, writing more in the script. Confidence is built up and the feeling of capability and power is developed over time.

Care workers have been represented during the campaign by Community Organisers and TU representatives who were previously Care workers as well as local government workers who have worked in the care industry. They are not part of social partnerships born from RLW movement such as the Living Wage City Steering Group and SC and Fair Work Forum. Community Organisers are concerned about the lack of community representation in Social Partnerships, arguing that society is made up of more than just employers and workers.

The next section analyses the degree of actual change achieved as an outcome of the RLW in SC movement in Wales. The researcher's own experiences of campaigns and holding those in power to account.

7.5.1 Accountability

As well as running the large Accountability Assemblies to show community power and leverage political support as discussed in Chapter five, CCW run smaller actions, led by members of the community referred to as Community Leaders aimed at holding those in power to account.

There is a difference between making a commitment and actually implementing the change. Attributing responsibility and accountability are key aspects to making social change (Kelly, 1998) and a form of relationship maintained between campaigners and decision makers is a key concept which overlaps in Industrial Relations and Social Movement literature.

CSOs are described in the literature as intermediary organisations "holding corporate power to account and establishing social norms about fairness" (Coats et al. 2012, p119). Accountability actions are used as a form of regulation in the absence of legal or other consequences for non compliance for voluntarily accredited employers. Market pressures may motivate some employers to accredit and risk of reputational damage may dissuade some organisations from withdrawing accreditation. Market pressures and consumer led pressures are different in the SC sector and this could be what differentiates the RLW movement in this sector compared to other sectors. Accountability activities are essential tools of Community Organising as discussed in

Chapter seven. CCW undertook accountability activities in the aftermath of the WGov commitment to paying the RLW in SC. Whilst the WGov commitment to paying the RLW was a significant win, understanding to what extent that has led to positive change in social norms around fairness or business practice changing is important to understand in terms of impact in social justice.

The following vignette gives the researcher's account of undertaking an accountability activity from the perspective of a beginner Community Organiser.

7.5.2 Vignette relating to accountability – learning to stick my neck out

This section illustrates the perception of politicians and SC providers that RLW in Care has been "done" and the importance of civil society accountability efforts to address this.

The extract below is taken from participant observations and shows the researcher's involvement in accountability activities, growth in democratic participation and confidence in undertaking actions in the aftermath of the WGov commitment to paying all SC workers in Wales the RLW.

CUK provided an email template for beginner Organisers to use and edit as they wish and then send on to their Member of the Senedd (MS) as constituents ahead of the action at the Senedd, requesting a chance to speak with the MS on the day of the action. On the day of our action at the Senedd with Undergraduate students from Cardiff Business School, one of the Senior Organisers asked me to call the MS and let them know we were outside of Senedd and would like to speak with them about our action. I left a message with them and received a response back acknowledging my request shortly after the action and that they would get back to me about supporting the RLW. A few days later I received the following email.

"In response to the points you make below, I am pleased that NHS Wales (and therefore all Local Health Boards and NHS Trust sin Wales) have paid the RLW since September 2014 and as of last month, all SC workers will also receive the RLW. This is, of course, irrespective of where they are employed (by a LA or in the private sector) as it is specific to the care-giving role. The WGov is committed to leading by example as a RLW employers and is

working in social partnership to increase RLW adoption. It has announced a funding commitment to the RLW in SC and is working more broadly to motivate employers towards the RLW.”

(Part of email response from office of Hefin David MS on 4th May 2022 following my letter of 28th April 2022 and my phone call on the day of the action., 3rd May 2022.)

This response gave the researcher the impression that from a political perspective, the RLW had been “done” and that no further action was needed. This was frustrating to the researcher knowing that only two out of 22 Welsh LAs and one Welsh Health Board at that time had accredited which was the point of the action at the Senedd. This response seemed to miss the point that despite the commitment and encouragement sufficient action had not been taken. This also ran the risk that no action would be taken and there would be little consequence for not doing so.

The day after receiving the email, the researcher noticed two examples of Care work on the Caerphilly Council jobs page advertised at below the RLW hourly rate at the time of £9.90 an hour: Domestic Assistant (Grade 2) at £7,506.49 when it should be £7,722 at the RLW rate at the time and Shared Lives Carer at NLW £8.91 hourly rate (see screen shots below Figures 7.9 and 7.10). The fear of lack of implementation was realised and was disappointing to the researcher as a beginner Community Organiser after all the work. The win of the Summit seemed more fragile at this point.

Figure 7.9 Screen shot of first Local Authority recruitment advert below RLW

Domestic Assistant

Would you like to be part of a team that promotes a homely, warm atmosphere where people are respected as individuals? Are you sensitive, supportive and non-judgemental? And can you make a difference to people's lives?

"Being in control and involved in our own lives is very important to us...[\[more details\]](#);

Location: Blackwood	Salary: Grade 2 £7,506.49 (SCP 2) pro rata, per annum	Job reference: REQ0007061	Application closing date: 05/05/2022
Package: Part Time, 15 hours, Permanent	Contractual hours: 15	Basis: Part time	

[Job profile](#) [Send to a friend](#) [Apply online](#)




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Figure 7.10 Screen shot of second Local Authority recruitment advert below RLW

Shared Lives Carer
Sharing home, family and community life

The South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme offers a unique community based service for adults who need care and support in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. Individuals are matched with compatible Shared Lives ca...[\[more details\]](#);

Location: Various locations in the Borough	Salary: Longterm and respite arrangements will be paid between £348.26 and £605.48 /week Day support will be paid at £8.91/hour Telir rhwng £348.26 a £605.48 /wythnos am drefniadau tymor hir a seibiant Telir £8.91/awr am gymorth dydd	Job reference: REQ0005679	Application closing date: 31/12/2022
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Screen shots of SC role vacancies seen on Caerphilly Council webpage taken 5th May 2022.

This demonstrates the continuing need for accountability activities in the aftermath of the Summit. Also it tells us that despite focussed campaigns and WGov commitment the trickle down of RLW to where it matters most is patchy in terms of actual implementation of the RLW. Overall, there's the sense that the RLW in SC has "been done" where in practice this wasn't the case with Care roles still being advertised below the RLW which at that time was £9.90 per hour. It also shows that it was civil society actors who took responsibility for addressing this.

As a next step, the researcher was encouraged by Senior Organisers to respond to the initial email from Hefin David's office, highlighting there were still SC roles in Wales being advertised below the RLW and to ask for a meeting and to ask for support and to push for accreditation in Caerphilly LA and Aneurin Bevan Health Board which were both within the MS' constituency. The researcher did this more confidently than previously and felt the necessity of taking it further.

During the online meeting, Hefin David agreed to bring up paying the RLW in meetings he would be at both in the LA and the Health Board. He was able to add

the RLW to an agenda talking about budget restraints and cuts to services in light of cost of living meeting! The Council Leader agreed to a meeting with our alliance and we are arranging a time to meet at time of writing. Hefin David also brought up the RLW with the Health Board who have said they are “on the journey” to accreditation with the sticking point being procurement and contracted workers. Responding to the follow up email from Hefin’s office the researcher has put them in touch with Cynnal the accreditation organisation. The time span of these activities was from May 2022, the time of the action at the Senedd to December 2023, the timing of the online meeting with Hefin David. The researcher completed data collection at the end of December 2023.

The accountability activities undertaken by the researcher are examples of a slow burn, gentle agitation technique which aimed to reignite interest in RLW accreditation where it had dropped down the list of political priorities. This shows the importance of accountability and continued pressure albeit a light knock on the door rather than a more confrontational method. This also gives an indication of the tenacity required by civil society actors to keep driving for positive change. It could be said that support from the Member of Senedd and LA, Health Board leaders has been due to the relational style of action used. In our meeting with the MS he wanted reassurance that our group wouldn’t haul him over the flames if accreditation didn’t happen. He recalled attacks on Twitter/X he received when a Senedd vote about continuing free school meals was happening. He wanted us to remember he was human and had a family. Less agitational methods were welcomed in this instance.

The researcher noticed jobs posted on the Caerphilly Council webpage, not in SC, but which were described as RLW jobs. The Council has still not accredited at time of writing but are using the RLW standard on their website.

Figure 7.11 Screen shot of unaccredited Local Authority using RLW brand on Jobs listing

Assistant Cook
 We are recruiting an assistant Cook at Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Working hours: 15 Hours – (3 Hours Daily Monday – Friday)
Contract Type: Permanent/ Part Time/ Term Time Only -38 weeks
Location: Ysgol Ifor Bach, Abertridwr

This is an exciting opportunity to join Team Caerphilly and provide supp...[\[more details\]](#):

Location: Caerphilly	Salary: £12 per Hour Real Living Wage	Job reference: REQ0009339	Application closing date: 04/04/2024
Package: Pension Scheme, Living wage employer	Contractual hours: 15	Basis: Part time TTO	

[Job profile](#) [Send to a friend](#) [Apply online](#)

Breakfast Club Supervisor - Pupil
 Are you looking for morning work with children?

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Package: Pension Scheme, Living Wage Employer Employee assistance programme	Contractual hours: 5	Basis: Part time TTO	

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Source: screenshots taken of Caerphilly Council jobs webpage March 2024.

Section conclusion

This section considered outcomes of the RLW at a societal or community level. The degree of change as a result of a movement is considered an indicator of the success of a movement in bringing about positive social change. Using Bellemare’s terminology, the community are the end users of SC but given all the crises, there has not been a societal shift in attitudes regarding rates of pay and working conditions in SC.

The social justice element of the RLW has been focussed on in this section where an indication of a positive outcome is linked to the extent of or degree of positive change achieved as a result of the movement. Deepened democracy is at the heart of social movements and positive social change and accountability activities are tools used in Community Organising to hold decision makers to account. The example of the researcher's own deepened democracy albeit at an individual level shows empowerment and the importance of building community power.

This example also shows the fleeting nature of political leverage and the fragility of "wins" and the continued tenacity needed by civil society groups such as CCW.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has considered positive and negative outcomes to the RLW in SC movement in Wales from the perspective of SC workers, SC providers and finally from the perspective of the community and societal outcomes of the RLW movement. In particular the social justice element of the RLW movement which has had less attention in the literature has been analysed. This has been analysed in terms of the degree or extent of change brought about as a result of the RLW movement.

There are highs and lows in terms of outcome of the RLW movement. Many workers are reported to have benefitted financially from their employers accrediting as RLW employers. Also the "win" of the WGov commitment to paying the RLW showed that change in the SC sector was possible and may help in terms of reducing worker despondency. This was not a result of a swell of SC worker unrest and they remain a "hard to reach" group. There's a lack of solidarity among workers and there's no change to the culture in SC around collective action or worker empowerment.

SC providers have reported benefits to their business from accrediting especially in recruitment and retention. There is a feeling that the RLW was an outside invader to discussions within the industry. Also a platform for collective bargaining with TUs has been created as a result of the RLW in SC movement in the SC and Fair Work Forum which may be more preferable to providers than work place based negotiations.

Examples here show the responsibilities at all levels of society in play from the commitment of the First Minister to an individual constituent exercising their democratic rights. Political wins seem more fragile and short lived and have a continuing need and tenacity of the community to hold decision makers accountable.

Chapter 8 Discussion

Introduction

This thesis explored barriers and drivers to the RLW movement in SC in Wales. The purpose of this study has been twofold. Firstly to understand what drives and inhibits the RLW in SC movement in Wales and secondly to add to understanding of how social change, particularly in work related issues, is being done in Wales.

While the RLW Movement has had significant success across the UK, critics point out that it has only reached the “low hanging fruit” organisations, that is the easy to reach organisations whose values already align with the RLW or where little organisational change is required. Gaining understanding on efforts to improve pay in the SC sector where low pay has been persistent within the sector despite a range of previous calls for reform in the sector helps add clarity to the “low hanging fruit” criticism.

Increasing our understanding of how the RLW in SC movement works is important to understand as it contributes to tackling in work poverty across other complex and persistently low paid sectors.

Bringing about change in an industry sector such as SC where pay has been persistently low for so long it has been normalised, is a significant challenge. Understanding drivers and inhibitors to making a social change from the perspective of multiple key actors, is novel and can help inform practitioners in the next phase of the RLW movement.

The following three Research Questions were developed to help explore the RLW in SC in Wales:

- 1) Who are the different actors? This research question explored the roles and characteristics of key actors involved in the RLW movement in SC in Wales.
- 2) How does the movement work and how do actors interact? This research question explores how key actors interact and the tools and approaches used.
- 3) What are the outcomes of the RLW movement in SC in Wales? This Research Question explores quantitative and qualitative outcomes from the perception of multiple actors related to the RLW movement.

This work is novel as it is the first Wales only based study on the RLW movement focussing on the adult SC sector and includes perceptions from multiple actors including TUs, Community Organisers, adult SC workers, adult SC providers, LAs and academic researchers including a ground level perspective from someone involved in the movement.

8.1 Benefits of chosen methodology

The mixed methods design of this study has been beneficial in meeting the aim of this study which was to capture the perceptions of multiple actors in the RLW in SC in Wales movement eco-system including the grounded experiences of campaigners themselves. Mixed methodology has been used to explore as many forms of data relevant to this study: quantitative datasets have been explored to understand more about SC employer organisations who have already accredited, ethnographic elements comprising participatory observations of relevant CCW campaign activities and also semi-structured interviews with a key sample of the wider movement actors.

This work has been exploratory in nature and followed an inductive research logic and pragmatist research philosophical standpoint. This approach supported the use of a broad a range of tools. The chosen methodology has helped expand knowledge about the RLW beyond dichotomous relationships between movement actors, adding the perceptions of campaigners and care users alongside TUs and employers as well as LAs and SC workers and add understanding of the RLW in SC in Wales movement ecosystem.

Hearing first hand from SC providers was useful to add balance to the researcher's understanding as a campaigner about what happens once employers have accredited and challenges of implementing the RLW. Data includes firsthand experiences of actions and how they were developed. Finally the chosen methodology was beneficial as it allowed the researcher to hear perceptions of other actors who would have been targets or had other roles in the movement the researcher couldn't experience themselves.

The chosen theoretical frameworks used to integrate and interpret the data are drawn from a combination of Employment Relations and social justice literature. This was novel in studies on the RLW and beneficial to our understanding of the RLW,

allowing for analysis not just of the financial outcomes but also the social justice element.

This is in contrast to much of the research undertaken on the RLW so far which has only focussed on dichotomous relationships between RLW movement actors; TUs and CSOs (Heery et al. 2018;), experiences of accredited employers (Heery et al, 2017), endusers and organisations (Bellemare, 2000), civil society versus the Market (Bunyon, 2016). This work includes the perspective of the new campaigner and community member and a broad range of a sample of key actors from a variety of levels within the SC ecosystem in Wales.

8.2 Limitations

This was a small scale, explorative study and it was not the aim to generate generalisable data but rather to provide a grounded view of the RLW in SC in Wales movement from multiple perspectives. The sample size of 35 participants interviewed and 26 participant observations could be considered small. The combination of a broad range of participants on top of observations have generated rich data and from a novel perspective. The interviewee sample is well balanced with the same number of participants in each group; academic researchers, SC workers, accredited and unaccredited adult SC providers, TUs, LAs, campaigners including one care user.

Participant recruitment occurred online or over the phone due to Covid restrictions which was a significant challenge on an already “hard to reach” group of people in the case of SC workers. The researcher was able to access one SC worker via their work on the campaign and other SC workers were found via the researcher’s friends and neighbours. SC providers also proved to be a “hard to reach” group even among RLW accredited providers and only one unaccredited provider was happy to speak candidly with the researcher about their experiences of the RLW movement. The researcher was able to learn more about the SC provider experience via one of the representative bodies for SC providers, Care Forum Wales, who have access to and

advocate for hundreds of care providers in Wales and have an oversight of the issues and perceptions of many SC providers across Wales.

As a campaigner, the researcher recognises that they have potential biases in relation to the RLW and have been careful to balance any of their observations with the experiences of a broad range of other actors interviewed. Despite the many difficulties the Covid crisis presented to the study, embedding mainly online helped create a useful distance for the researcher as a participant observer which may have been more difficult to demarcate if they were based in the CCW office and been seen as a member of the team rather than a Community Leader. Also being new to organising gave the researcher something in common with other new organisers and a perception of campaign activities from a clean slate and a similar level.

This work is not replicable and was not meant to be. It is a contemporaneous exploration of a current campaign and represents a record of activities and includes the perspectives of multiple key actors involved at the same time. The aim is to provide a multifaceted picture of the movement and provide the reader with an in depth understanding of the movement from multiple perspectives. This study offers a unique perspective to the RLW discussion and an insight to a campaign aimed at a specific industry sector which has had persistent low pay issues.

The next section sets out the empirical contributions of this study.

8.3 Empirical contributions

The researcher has captured the following novel insights on barriers and drivers to the RLW movement in SC in Wales which so far have not had much attention academically. These empirical contributions add to our understanding of how the RLW in SC movement has worked as well as adding clarity to the low hanging fruit criticism of the RLW movement generally. Contributions relating to Employment Relations as well social justice elements of the RLW will be set out.

8.3.1 Employment Relations

This section focusses on original evidence from this study related to the Employment Relations aspect of the RLW. This includes worker empowerment, private regulation and the accreditation model of the RLW standard.

A grass roots movement?

A lack of SC worker empowerment was evident in this study. SC workers were advocated for, represented, regulated for and some are now being paid the RLW but not from their own "request". These are actions being undertaken for workers by other actors. The RLW in SC movement in Wales cannot be said to be an example of social movement unionism or community unionism involving community groups and TUs. Neither actor is engaging SC workers or SC providers to a significant extent in Wales. Care workers have not engaged with the movement in any significant number and the RLW movement cannot be said to have come from a swell of worker unrest or anger.

This is significant on two levels. Firstly, lack of worker involvement threatens the authenticity of the grass roots movement which has community empowerment at its core. Secondly, both CCW and TU representatives involved in this study said Care workers were almost impossible to reach. This indicates a need for a change in strategy and tactics which steps away from the homogenous "hard to reach" description and recognises the diversity of SC workers. The few SC workers the researcher was able to engage with for this study would have fallen through CCW's net as they were not members of faith organisations and did not have connections to schools which are two of the key community organisations CCW seeks to engage with. They did attend gyms, belong to rugby or other sports clubs, they also shopped locally and were members of community groups such as the Allotment Association which so far are not on CCW's membership list.

Success has many parents

CCW are referred to as "new actors" in Employment Relations as opposed to TUs as traditional actors. A lack of collective action between actors following the successful

SC Summit in 2021 was evident in this study. There were multiple claims of success by different actors including CCW, TUs and SC provider representatives. This indicates a rivalry among civil society and Market actors especially in a small geographical location such as Wales where there is increased competition for membership and influence. The Summit was a brief peak of collective action in the movement and then actors felt a need to differentiate themselves from each other and claim the “win” for their members and their organisation. This rivalry could explain the lack of solidarity and trust between actors for example, between CCW and TUs in Wales. Again it was noticeable that whilst some SC workers have received a pay rise, this was not widely celebrated or hailed as a “win” among workers.

New actors in IR

In the duration of this study (October 2020 to December 2023), changes in power dynamics and influence over time were apparent, particularly between RLW campaigners and political power in Wales which was based on building strong a relationship with the First Minister of Wales. CCW were significant Industrial Relations Actors up until the Summit, influencing the actions around RLW by State and Market actors.

TUs, as traditional actors, have tried new tools and tactics related to the RLW in practice, for example using elements of fusion (Kelly, 1998) in Ethical Care Charters aimed at LAs, developing Organising arms and in the case of TELCO and the first RLW actions the UK working with other TUs as well as Community Organisers. TU representatives interviewed claimed increased membership among SC workers especially over the Covid crisis. This has not translated into becoming more collectively engaged though. Similarly, CO has had some success considering the small nature of the Wales based organisation and has seen some growth in its membership in Wales. Neither TUs or CO can claim to have reached SC workers to the degree they've accessed other workers in different sectors.

Constraints and contradictions to accreditation

There is evidence in this study of employer organisations, namely LAs not adhering to the full accreditation criteria but publicly using the RLW brand or hourly rate. The lack of regulation and consequence of not complying fully with RLW standard weakens the RLW brand and leads to feelings of mistrust among other employer organisations. Equally important is the lack of public commitment to the elements linked to making systemic changes such as paying contracted workers and takes away the opportunity for radical change. There was lots of celebration of Cardiff Council when they accredited as a large employer and local anchor institution. Cardiff Council accredited without including SC which led to anger and feelings of mistrust among SC providers in Cardiff. Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Council was celebrated by CUK during Living Wage week for accrediting but in the same timeframe RCT had also made the decision to privatize their care offering! The SparkSbarc building at Cardiff University was heralded as Cardiff's first RLW building where all tenants pay the RLW (Twitter from 24/10/2023). The cafe on the ground floor which at time of writing remains unaccredited! Caerphilly County Borough County were still advertising SC roles below the RLW nearly a year after the WGov commitment and were advertising roles outside of Care work as "RLW" but at time of writing still have not accredited. Having so many exceptions to the rules for accreditation especially for large public sector organisations has led to feelings of mistrust in the RLW brand by SC providers and passing the buck for someone else to solve the problem of low pay in SC. Is it enough to say you pay the RLW without being accredited or is public accountability and commitment important? Allowing organisations to reap the reputational benefits and claim the moral status of a RLW employer without the commitment to make organisational changes which perpetuate low pay. This can be seen as example of "Woke Capitalism" (Rhodes, C., 2022) where large organisations show public support of progressive causes but with underlying private, mostly profit driven interests. This is an interesting and novel connection to make regarding public sector organisations which poses a significant threat to the prospect of positive radical change in SC. Implementing the RLW does require changes to day to day running of an organisation. Including contracted workers and keeping pay in line with inflation is a direct challenge to neo-liberal processes which prioritise profit over decent work. The RLW has potential to bring

about positive change in tackling persistent low pay but not publicly committing to taking this step indicates an unwillingness to change which threatens the radical change and social justice element of the standard.

The impact of accreditation exceptions will be discussed further in the next section on the RLW as a tool for Social Justice.

8.3.2 The RLW as a tool for Social Justice

This section sets out the empirical contributions of this study into how social change is being done in the RLW. These contributions focus on the social justice element of the RLW. The use of champions to drive the movement and politicisation of the RLW have led to a lack of worker empowerment and solidarity between actors and in the community on issues relating to low pay and the call for radical change. They have been both initial drivers of the standard and then barriers. This is interpreted in terms of the dilemmas facing movement actors in regard to driving the RLW forward in SC given the constraints of their organisations and resources.

Champions

This study has shown the effective use of “quiet campaigning” and leveraging support of senior team members within target organisations as shown in this study in the case of a Welsh Health Board’s accreditation. This is where Community Organisers have reached out to contacts who have been previously involved in the RLW and who are supportive to drive the decision to accredit within their organisation. In the case of the Health Board there were also two public actions undertaken. The use of champions in Higher Education Institutions and the Health Board example was successful in accreditation but are missing in the SC sector. The researcher found no evidence of SC champions within organisations such as Councils, the Cardiff as Living Wage City or the Living Wage steering groups do not have any SC provider participants. This has been a barrier to getting further large organisations in SC to accredit.

RLW has become politicised in Wales

The earlier days of the RLW in Wales where the third sector accreditation body was only in receipt of piecemeal funding which needed to satisfy funding criteria and meet target numbers of accreditations in order to keep the funding. This was restrictive in terms of driving the RLW and tackling the more difficult organisations. CCW then built a strong relationship with Mark Drakeford, the former First Minister of Wales and this relationship was instrumental in the key “win” of the WGov’s commitment to paying the RLW in SC in Wales. There are two key down sides to having used this tactic. Firstly the First Minister’s support resulted in the RLW being perceived seen as a “Welsh Labour cause”. This was evident from the Welsh election literature from other parties who chose to differentiate themselves on the issue of SC pay improvement with different rates and names rather than join the RLW movement. This contradicts CCW’s preferred non partisan political position. Also Drakeford’s term has ended and there is a new First Minister meaning a new relationship will need to be built. This is evidence of the fleeting nature of political support and the fragility of “wins” achieved in this way.

The use of Champions and leveraging political support have initially been significant drivers to the RLW in SC in Wales movement. Those initially successful tactics present significant barriers and undesired outcomes in the long term of the movement especially around lack of worker empowerment and a wider sense of solidarity as discussed above. This is illustrative of the dilemma facing campaigners: do you go for short term high impact over long term sustained lower impact as a strategy? Is it better given your small team and limited resources to leverage political support and ride the wave of societal support following Covid and the rise business owners’ sense of paternalism towards their workers and risk more transactional and fleeting support? Or would it have be better to take longer roads in and build deep organising with other actors such as TUs or SC workers themselves which may not have resulted in the WGov commitment?

8.3.3 Interpretation of findings

This section seeks to reflect on what has been “won” for SC workers in Wales and offer explanation for key barriers and drivers identified from this study. In order to

add further depth and interpretation of findings and to consider the overall impact of the RLW in SC in Wales movement, Kelly's Mobilization Theory (1998) will be used to aid discussion, in particular the notion of leaders and opportunity structures. Kelly (1998) offers a framework which seeks to add understanding about what transforms and empowers workers to take action towards positive change in work related issues. Mobilization Theory helps better identify structures, conditions and power balances which can help or inhibit collective action. This has been useful in adding complexity to discussion around the decline of unionism, exposing opportunity structures and the role of leaders as key explanations rather than considering it as a general "decline in collectivist values" (Kelly, 1998). Opportunity structures are not drivers of collective action but are essential conducive factors to worker mobilization from the viewpoint of worker agency and the roles of leaders in developing worker agency. Kelly's framework is used in this study to expose barriers to collective action in the SC sector in Wales beyond merely noting it is lacking and also to help analyse outcomes to efforts around the RLW in SC in Wales.

Leaders in the context of this study, refers to CCW and TUs around the RLW in SC in Wales. Kelly considers leadership in collective action as complex and that understanding the process of how workplace activists become leaders with engaged followers beyond merely building up membership of their organisations is essential to understand what drives or inhibits collective action (Kelly, 2018). The role of leaders under this framework includes defining collective grievances, building collective identity, legitimizing workers' struggle as well as encouraging action.

"...effective leadership, particularly in voluntary organizations such as trade unions, is the willing and active support of followers..." (Kelly, 2018 pp705)

In this framing, the lack of engagement of SC workers can be explained as a result of incohesive leadership by CCW and TUs in the RLW in SC in Wales movement which resulted in the "top down" approach of the growth of the RLW standard in RLW rather than the empowerment of SC workers in Wales.

Adding to this, consideration of constraints in the environment of the SC sector CCW and TUs were working in during movement activities can be explained in terms of opportunity structures. A viable opportunity structure shapes the environment for mobilization and empowerment of workers but is not a driver itself. This is a useful explanation to consider the relative success of the SC Summt in 2021 which was a

peak moment of collective action in relation to tackling low pay in SC in Wales. The Summit can be described in Kelly's framework as an open opportunity structure with direct access to a decision maker, combined with worker grievances. This combination was a fertile ground for collective empowerment which wasn't continued following the Summit. The lack of transformation and empowerment in the context of the SC sector in Wales can be explained as stemming from the isolation of SC workers which undermined the development of a collective identity and the closed opportunity structure of the SC sector indicated by a lack of history of collective bargaining, contributing to low levels of efficacy and agency of SC workers.

The next section provides a summary of key findings and how they link to the Research Questions.

8.4 Summary of Findings

This section provides summaries of findings organised by the study's research questions.

Research Question 1 – Who are the key actors in the RLW in Social Care in Wales movement?

Chapter five focussed on the characteristics and roles of a sample of different key actors within the RLW movement. The chapter was framed by Industrial Relations literature around actors involved in work related issues such as pay improvement. Actors were categorised by their position in the traditional Industrial Relations system of Market, State and Civil Society but given the changes to the way we work there have been calls for broadening this out to involve new actors and the wider community. Bellemare's (2000) framework of what makes an Industrial Relations actor was useful to explore more closely the strengths and constraints around resources on different levels each actor faces in efforts to make change within the SC sector in Wales. It also allows some further perspective on how new actors such

as CCW fit within the Industrial Relations system on the more specific platform of the Welsh SC sector.

The RLW in SC movement has presented barriers to civil society actors' usual ways of working. Firstly, CCW's grassroots approach and community led ethos is a key strength. Building power and bringing disparate community groups together for a mutual cause is a fundamental aim of their work. CCW are a multiple issue organisation which has experience of engaging in work related campaigns as well as the RLW. Their engagement with work related issues puts them beyond the boundaries of Freeman's idea of a "Non-Work Organisation" (2005) as they seek to be community led on any issues of the community's choosing including work related issues. CCW position themselves as the actor closest to the community which is of key importance in relation to SC workers who tend to not be unionised and "hard to reach" in terms of the nature of domiciliary SC which takes place within the community. Their existing Broad Base network including faith organisations, schools and community groups membership does not appear to be reaching this "hard to reach" group which may have implications on CCW's future membership strategy. Also many Care workers are put off about talking about pay in public for fear of losing their jobs. Public action and community power are the key strengths of CCW. Using RLW champions who are senior decision makers in target organisations, supportive of the RLW has been a successful addition to the traditional method.

Considering the End User concept (Bellemare, 2000) in relation to SC, the end users of the SC system are care users in the community. The end users of the RLW campaign are SC workers. The description of end users as co-producers seems an alien concept in SC sector. SC users have as little power as SC workers despite the Care Act ambition for greater competition within the Market. Care users and friends and families of care users could have a similar power to consumers and are so far untapped as co-producers. They are as absent from the movement as care workers and could be a potential pool of community based actors to get involved.

Cynnal Cymru and the LWF are the RLW accreditation bodies. They are the business facing organisation helping to facilitate accreditation for organisations. Cynnal do not participate in public actions and describe themselves as the "business friendly" part of the campaign, whereas CUK are "the agitators" pressurizing employers to accredit. Cynnal are experienced in facilitating accreditations with

large organisations, helping them navigate more complex but important aspects to accreditation for example including contracted workers in the standard.

Cynnal have been successful in gaining WGov funding to support their RLW work and report on accreditation rates to the WGov in what can be described as an “insider” type role (Heery et. al, 2017), being considered the actor in closest proximity to accredited employer and organisations. Cynnal run a celebratory event every year in Living Wage Week which is on the political calendar and attended by members of the Senedd.

TUs are considered the traditional work related actors who mobilise and advocate for their members. There is a history of union engagement in the RLW movement, for example with TELCO in East London, who ran the first RLW campaign in the UK in the early 2000s. In England, the TUC are one of the Principal Partners of the LWF and are accredited. UNISON is accredited as well as some of their regional branches in England and the GMB have also accredited. There has been very little engagement by Welsh TUs in the RLW movement. Rather than supporting the RLW movement in SC, TUs in Wales are focussing their efforts on wider systemic issues in the SC sector and a National Care Service. This adds a potential explanation for a lack of engagement by TUs in the RLW movement in Wales.

The majority of accredited SC organisations are privately owned and have less than 50 employees. 779 SC organisations across the UK are accredited but only 31 of them are in Wales out of thousands of care homes and hundreds of homecare agencies which operate in Wales. There are also a significant number of franchises of large SC providers such as Age UK, Home Instead, Bluebird Care and Radfield Home Care. These are higher end care providers who tend to rely less on LA commissioned care packages. The Market has some effective representation with a professional representative body called Care Forum Wales showing a strength of ability to influence decision makers, guide discussion and effectively voice issues affecting SC providers.

The WGov has made legislation changes in order to improve working conditions within the SC sector in Wales over the last decade. Legislation has centred around standardising working conditions and professionalising and regulating the sector which has become so fragmented and complex since marketisation. Policy changes

have stopped short of pay improvements, showing limitations of devolved Government's legislation powers. Instead "soft" regulation relying on public support for the RLW and encouraging suppliers and those organisations in receipt of WGov funding have been used. Creation of the Fair Work and SC Forum has helped create a potential platform for collective bargaining between TUs and SC providers although new actors are not included in membership of this platform.

The next section considers the constraints of each of the key sample of actors included in this study.

Constraints Personal, organizational and societal resources for each IR system category.

CCW is a very small team with only one full time team member based in Wales at time of writing and another three part time Organisers. Whilst the wider CUK network can be drawn on, this still needs to be operationalised and organised at a sustainable level so as to avoid burn out and exhaustion. A small team limits the extent new connection can be maintained and built on. The work of CUK is voluntary and many network members have full time jobs such as clergy members and teachers where Organising work is considered part of their pastoral work. The limitations to the time members can dedicate to organizing where term time and religious festivals take priority.

CCW relies on a hard income stream of membership fees, training fees as well as soft income such as grants such as the Youth Endowment Fund. A dependency on grants and funding could lead to tensions between the CO ethos of being led by issues the Community issues raises rather than rely on funding the Government considers a priority.

The RLW brand is not well known outside of the campaign and confused with the UK Government's NLW even by accredited employers. This limits the growth of the RLW standard. For SC workers a lack of visibility or understanding of the RLW means it doesn't resonate with them as an option of something to engage with to improve their lives.

Cynnal are a third sector organisation in Wales, focussed on sustainability issues with a small dedicated team looking after the RLW accreditations. They operate in

Wales only and are based in Cardiff. They are not an enforcer of the RLW accreditation, it is a voluntary standard. They have not been involved in work related issues before the RLW. The accreditation body is an integral part of the RLW movement but its role is not about persuading employers to accredit but rather to facilitate the process for employers who have already made the decision to accredit. They have limited resources and power in terms of capacity to make change but making change is not a key part of their role. Cynnal's role in the RLW movement is to guide and help employers accredit but not to enforce or campaign for the RLW standard in Wales. As the accreditation body, they want to remain neutral and distanced from CCW public actions (Observation of RLW in SC Action Planning 18/10/23). This can be a barrier to driving the RLW movement in terms of drawing on support from each other for actions and weakening the "threat" of reputational disadvantage to organisations hesitating to accredit.

No Welsh TU branches have accredited as RLW organisations at time of writing. This is notable because movements such as TELCO have been particularly successful in driving the RLW standard. A lack of TU support in Wales can be considered a barrier to the growth of the RLW movement in SC. Both UNISON and GMB have launched their own campaigns focussed on SC, calling for a National Care Service and look to be focussing solely on this rather than choosing to engage with the RLW. Also while the TUC are one of the LWFs' Principle Partners indicating a significant buy-in to the standard, similar support is not used in Wales with Cynnal.

While SC providers are well organised and well represented at policy level, having good links and access to Local and WGov, they are less present on RLW platforms such as the Cardiff as a Living Wage City and Living Wage Leadership Group where, at time of writing, there were no SC provider members. This is significant as it intimates a lack of buy in among SC providers and a lack of RLW Champions within adult SC employers. The effect of "quiet campaigning" of internal RLW champions within organisations such as Universities and Health Boards has had positive impact on RLW accreditation rates within industry sectors and not having representation or a champion within the SC sector can be seen as a barrier. We have yet to see any vocal champions of the RLW within the SC sector.

The SC sector is a highly regulated sector and SC providers need to adhere and report on multiple standards set by the industry. Implementing the RLW is seen as yet another “burden” coming from outside the industry which is left to the providers to implement and make work. There’s also a lack of trust of the RLW standard and providers tend to take part as they don’t want to be seen as the “bad guys” or the blockage to improvement in pay in the SC sector. There has been a lack of reputational or economic incentives to encourage SC providers in Wales to accredit. SC providers interviewed perceive the RLW as a way for the WGov and LAs to shift the blame on to providers rather than addressing key issues such as the commissioning system.

The perception by many of those interviewed is that the State has the ultimate power to improve low pay by bringing in better minimum wage standards enforceable in law. The WGov does not have the power to change statutory minimum hourly pay. At the beginning of this study, the main pushback or barrier to the RLW movement was the concern of how the extra funds would be generated to implement the pay increases as a result of the RLW. The WGov receives a budget from the UK Government and LAs receive a budget from WGov from a proportion of that. While they both claim to be bounded by budgetary restrictions beyond their control, finding money to improve low pay seems to be a political decision. SC workers have been given the uplift without the need for taxes and the discussion around lack of funds has dissipated.

Whilst there are new performance indicators noticeable in Wales with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales (2015) and metrics on the levels of in work poverty as well as tackling the continuing gender pay gap the commitment to paying all SC workers the RLW is the first actual change to tackle low pay although slow in the take up with only three out of 22 LAs accrediting as RLW employers at time of writing and two of these (Cardiff and RCT) didn’t include SC provision.

Where/How comfortably does CCW fit within the Welsh IR system?

At the time of the Summit in January 2021, CCW could be considered a significant IR actor with influence over the actions of TUs, the Market and State actors on work related issue, namely improving pay. Following the Summit this has changed and it

seems that traditional actors have closed ranks and the RLW movement's influence has dwindled. This is evident from the lack of "seats at the table" for new actors on platforms which have been created as a result of the RLW movement in SC in Wales.

Noticeably absent from the RLW in SC movement in Wales are multi national corporations and privately owned, large care providers which operate on a shareholder. Also absent are other relevant 3rd sector organisations such as Help the Aged.

This section has summarised strengths and constraints of the sample of key actors in the RLW in SC movement in Wales. The next section summarises key findings related to the tools and approaches used by each actor and the extent actors have interacted.

RQ2 - How does the RLW movement work within SC in Wales and how do different actors interact?

Overall it was noted that there is a lack of cohesion between movement actors despite seemingly similar recognition that SC sector needed a "revolution" or a reform. This section will summarise findings relating to key tools and approaches used as part of the RLW in SC in Wales movement.

1. Attribution and Framing

We can see that different actors attribute blame to different targets and that there is a lack of overarching solidarity (Kelly, 1998) in opposition to one actor. Framing gives an understanding of who the organization is looking to influence and what they think their interests are. Either side of the Summit, improving pay in SC in Wales was a disparate and "noisy" platform with multiple actors running their own campaigns at various rates of pay including the CUK "Can't live on Claps and Rainbows" campaign support of key workers which included SC workers, "£20k by 2020" initiative by Care Forum Wales, multiple political parties in the lead up to the Welsh election included RLW or "more than RLW" pledges in their manifestos, "Pay

them Fairly” campaign by third sector care provider as well as UNISON’s Ethical Care Charter which were aimed at LAs and contained a RLW element.

The researcher noticed a similarity between SC provider and TU framing of their organisations’ goals after the SC summit in January 2021 organised by CCW. They both framed the RLW as a “starter” campaign but that it “isn’t enough” and “doesn’t go far enough”. This is no framing on SC workers (e.g. “help me do my job” rather the SC service and SC sector.

Framing of the action on Cwm Taf Health Board was directed at the Health Board. Based on their organisation motto “Cwm Taf, At Our Best”, was a gentle ribbing and the action itself was designed to be “relational” not agitational, although Community Organising method would state that the threat of action is always there. We held up a mirror to their own public image they presented and gently questioned if they were living up to their own standards. This framing both suggests a diversion in strategy, away from the RLW brand and the notion of the RLW as a “starter” and that it’s time for the next step.

Considering multiple actors’ diverging interests, there was a lack of deep coalition between key actors. TUs are the traditional actor expected to be involved in issues relating to pay improvement, their interests are framed more in making broader systemic changes and involvement in RLW is more instrumental. While there is a clear defence and recognition that many SC providers are decent and trying their best to pay fairly against multiple constraints. Influence from RLW champions at senior levels within the organisation has been an important driver for the RLW.

The researcher noticed a similarity between SC provider and TU framing of their organisations’ goals after the SC summit in January 2021 organised by CCW. They both framed the RLW as a “starter” campaign but that it “isn’t enough” and “doesn’t go far enough”.

The issue of low pay in SC has not been framed from the perspective of SC workers for example “Help me do my job” but has rather been framed from the perspective of the target employer organisation. For example, the framing of the action on Cwm Taf Health Board was directed at the Health Board, based on their organisation motto “Cwm Taf, At Our Best”, was a gentle ribbing and the action itself was

designed to be “relational” not agitational, although Community Organising method would state that the threat of action is always there.

2. Actions on Local Authorities and Health Boards

LAs were key target organisations in the RLW in SC movement and were previously the focus of UNISON’s Ethical Care Charter which contained the RLW. The ambition was to cause a “domino effect” of accreditation of all LAs in Wales but this has yet to be realised with only three of 22 Welsh LAs accredited at time of writing and two out of seven Welsh Health Boards. In terms of the SC campaign the domino effect has not worked as well with LAs as it did with Higher Education. One explanation for this is perceived to be the presence of senior members of staff within organisations who are supportive of the RLW and drive the accreditation from within their organisations as champions of the RLW.

The strategy to target LAs and Health Boards wasn’t the first choice of target for the RLW in SC in Wales campaigners. LAs were considered more accessible or at least seen as path of least resistance for campaigners and TUs compared to privately owned SC providers. Private sector providers were seen as “closed doors” and “hostile” both by TUs and Community Organisers. Overall actions were more relational than agitational and described as “celebrations” to get SC provider onside and the aim was to build good working relationships with them. This worked as an approach in the SC sector as a more aggressive approach would not have been appropriate given the difficulties during the Covid pandemic.

There have been two key “wins” that of Cardiff Council as the first LA in Wales to accredit and Cwm Taf Health Board. The majority of Welsh LAs and Health Boards have still yet to accredit. Cardiff Council was an key anchor institution target and had a Council Leader who was supportive of the RLW standard. Their accreditation was achieved without including commissioned SC initially. A “milestone plan” was drawn up to help include SC but this did little to persuade or influence other SC providers in Cardiff to accredit and was a contentious decision.

The Welsh Health Board’s decision to accredit was made with minimal public agitation from CCW but equally was not a result of one single action. A key

influence in this example was the contribution of a board member at Cwm Taf Health Board and who is also a RLW Commissioner and helped bring the RLW to Cardiff University can be said to be key to this decision. Also Mark Drakeford's public support of RLW added pressure to accredit. This accreditation can be said to be one example of the successful combination of influence by senior institutional RLW champions and political pressure succeeding in persuading public bodies to accredit with minimal public pressure and no pressure from the workers themselves.

The pressure to be seen as a "good" business isn't the same with LAs. People aren't going to seek their Council services from other places, there's no consumer pressure in that sense. There also does not appear to be any peer pressure or competition among Welsh LAs as had been hoped by campaigners looking to drive a domino effect of accreditations in the sector.

3. Testimonies

Testimonies are a key tool used in Community Organising. They are the voice of those with lived experience of an issue and the idea is for that testimony to be delivered directly to decision makers. Whilst there was powerful testimony used, it lacked scale and most testimony came from one key SC worker campaigner. Gaining testimony is difficult and reaching Care workers and persuading them to give testimony is a key challenge. The researcher experienced the difficulty themselves in reaching out and building a relationships with SC workers. With campaign time pressures, there's a fine balance of reaching out to new people in time to take part in the action and risking a transactional relationship and allowing enough time to build a deeper more reciprocal relationship.

There's a danger of overburdening those with lived experience. The researcher observed the RLW Care worker providing testimony at multiple online events at one point in the campaign often needing to leave early to switch to another event. Also during a student action looking to get a Football Association to pay their workers the RLW. Organisers had contact with a female referee who would be great to give a testimony at the action. The contact was a student and unable to make it on the day

but was also at risk of being overloaded with requests. The Football Association representative already knew the student and worked with them on other actions “*We love [name of student]*”. This illustrates the scarcity of those with lived experience who are also willing to speak in public. It’s a big step from engaging with a worker to then persuading them to give testimony. Those the researcher has observed giving testimony during the timelines were extraordinary in this sense and can be said to have already had previous skills, experience and confidence prior to being involved in the movement.

Neither Community Organisers or TUs or the researcher could claim they were successful in reaching and engaging Care workers in a significant quantity. Finding ways to better engage with SC workers is crucial if the aim of worker empowerment is to be realised.

One way of engaging better with SC workers would be to better align with their interests and priorities. SC workers are more likely to be persuaded by effect and impact on care users than improving their own pay and working conditions. There is reticence from Care workers to engage with activities relating improving pay and working conditions for fear of losing their jobs given the “hostile” nature of some privately owned care providers described by TUs and other interview participants.

Testimony is a form of representation used across a range of events which requires time and a deeper relationship to achieve. They can be powerful in small numbers especially as the RLW in SC in Wales has shown but again there’s danger that demands of the campaign mean workers can be “spread too thin”. Workers are represented on social partnership platforms such as the SC and Fair Work Forum by TUs representatives and other meetings via written testimonies. Given time pressures and the need to take advantages of political momentum to drive the campaign, campaigners have needed to take a necessary compromise and to use testimonies sometimes as an indirect voice of workers. This is an important issue because it signifies a distance between workers and issues which impacts on empowerment.

Testimonies are used as proof of issues actually happening and to get decision makers to listen and begin negotiation. The next section considers the ways the RLW movement in SC in Wales holds decision makers to account.

4. Accreditation

Accreditation involves an organisation's public commitment to the RLW standard. It is a unilateral agreement and form of "soft" regulation. The accreditation model is described by campaigners interviewed as a "carrot and stick" tactic where CCW and Cynnal work in a "pincer movement". Cynnal take "business friendly" role, focussing on relationship building support among employer organisations and facilitating accreditation. They are not enforcers of the standard and they do not take part in public actions related to the RLW. The "carrot" model has had success with over 15,000 employer organisations accrediting at time of writing. The RLW standard is voluntary and individual employers can decide to implement or withdraw their accreditation whenever they want to. This is perceived to be a barrier to the spread and scale of the RLW standard across the SC sector where a more binding commitment is considered as most effective.

Within the accreditation model, CCW takes the "stick" role which plays on an organisation's need for reputational advantage. "Threat of bad publicity can shape corporate behaviour" (Graham and Woods, 2006 p870). The threat of public action is used as a way of holding employers to account if they have made a commitment to paying the RLW but have not acted on it. In this study threat of reputational disadvantage has also put off actors, especially Market actors, from engaging fully in collective action. One key part of a SC provider representative's engagement with the RLW was to prevent their members being seen as the blockage to pay improvement for SC workers rather than fully engaging with the social vision of the RLW standard. SC providers also lack trust in the accreditation model and perceived Cardiff Council to have been "let off the hook" by accrediting without initially including commissioned SC. SC providers are conscious of the perception of providers as the "bad guys" and have focussed their energy on defending their reputation and explaining the complexities around financing in their sector rather than engaging in the social vision of the RLW standard.

There are other examples of Public sector organisations such as LAs "getting away with it", that is reaping the reputational advantage of RLW accreditation but avoiding addressing the issue of SC. Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Council sold their SC provision to private SC providers in the same month as accrediting as a RLW employer.

The newly built Sbarc/Spark building at Cardiff University prides itself on being the first Living Wage building in Cardiff, part of the wider Cardiff as a Living Wage City but not all occupying employers actually accredited. At time of writing, the café which out of all the organisations in the building would typically have lower paid workers is still "on the journey to accreditation" three years after the opening of the building.

This is important as the accreditation aspect is the part of the RLW movement which tackles the embedded neo-liberal systems and practices which maximise profitability over fairness. This is a key and novel aspect to understand around the "low hanging fruit" criticism of the RLW.

Neither the Spark/Sbarc Building, Cardiff Council or RCT Council were held accountable or had public actions targeted at them for becoming accredited without including SC. This questions CCW's role as agitator in these circumstances where the organisations have not been held accountable and no public actions were taken to highlight the issues. A more relational approach to campaign targets has been taken in these instances and an emphasis has been put on getting key anchor organisations to accredit to drive the movement forward. This could be in recognition of the size of the challenge and degree of systemic change required. Equally it could be said that SC around the time of a global pandemic required a more sensitive approach given the extreme difficulties faced by those in the sector during the pandemic. An agitational approach aimed at SC providers would have been counterproductive and seen as insensitive. In order to garner more trust and support within the sector the majority of actions relating to the RLW in SC in Wales were relational and "celebratory" rather than agitational.

RQ 3 - What are the outcomes of the RLW movement in SC in Wales?

Positive and negative outcomes from the RLW movement in SC in Wales have been identified in this study. These will be discussed across three main areas; worker empowerment, benefit of the RLW to SC providers and outcomes to wider society.

Worker empowerment

Many workers are reported to have benefitted financially from their employers accrediting as RLW employers. Also the “win” of the WGov commitment to pay the RLW showed that change in the SC sector was possible and may help in terms of reducing worker despondency. This was not a result of a swell of SC worker unrest and they remain a “hard to reach” group. There’s a lack of solidarity among workers and there’s no change to the culture in SC around collective action or worker empowerment. There is no effective platform or mechanism for SC workers to discuss work related issues.

Social Care providers have benefitted

SC providers have reported benefits to their business from accrediting especially in recruitment and retention. Also a platform for collective bargaining with TUs has been created as a result of the RLW in SC movement in the SC and Fair Work Forum which may be more preferable to providers than work place based negotiations.

There is a feeling that the RLW was an outside invader to discussions within the industry. SC providers and TUs have started to use similar framing around the RLW which could show both actors want to separate from the RLW.

Societal level

Examples from this study show the responsibilities at different levels of society in play; from the commitment of the First Minister to an individual constituent exercising their democratic rights. Political wins seem more fragile and short lived and have a continuing need and tenacity of the community to hold decision makers accountable.

The degree of change as a result of a movement is considered an indicator of the success of a movement in bringing about positive social change. Using Bellemare's terminology, the community are the end users of SC but given all the crises, there has not been a societal shift in attitudes regarding rates of pay and working conditions in SC.

The example of the researcher's own deepened democracy albeit at an individual level shows empowerment and the importance of building community power. This example also shows the fleeting nature of political leverage and the fragility of "wins" and the continued tenacity needed by civil society groups such as CCW.

8.5 Contribution to discussion in the literature/theory

This study draws on literature from Employment Relations and Social Justice literature. This section will highlight contributions this study makes to extant discussions.

Firstly in terms of Employment Relations, using Bellemare's model, this study has been able to analyse the extent and significance of CCW and the RLW movement roles in the Industrial Relations (IR) system. CCW and the RLW movement qualified under this model due to taking action on work related issues and also by influencing other actors in particular the WGov to respond to their ask to pay the RLW in SC in Wales. Market actors can be said to have been indirectly influenced to pay the RLW due to actions taken. The Summit in January 2021 was the peak of significance of CCW as an IR actor. This was a brief position and following the Summit, CCW and the RLW became much less significant as an IR actor due to a lack of a permanent platform to take part in work related discussions and collective bargaining such as the SC and Fair Work Forum and other Social Partnerships platforms which do not tend to have community membership.

Endusers were important in Bellemare's transport example. Those endusers were active on a number of platforms within the transport service's workplace which aren't

available to endusers of SC. Platforms aren't available or engaged with by endusers of RLW movement, that is SC workers.

Broadening the boundaries of the traditional IR system and considering “new actors” more was a key element of Tattersall’s 2018 coalition typology. Tattersall’s typology was used to analyse how the RLW movement in SC worked and the extent actors interacted. This was useful as a theoretical framework in this study and looking beyond union renewal discussion and focussing on positive social change and recognising the dual role of workers as citizens.

SC sector is highly regulated sector as it should be given that it looks after some of the most vulnerable members in society. There has been a concentration on regulation which protects service users but not workers rights. Pay and conditions aren't set by collective bargaining and over the last decade, improvements have been put in place in the interests of care users, less so not in interests of the workers.

It is also of interest to note that the strategy to target LAs in the RLW in SC campaign does not seem to have resulted in the deep coalition described in Tattersall’s typology. Following the Summit, the commitment by WGov to pay SC workers the RLW fits with Tattersall’s idea of “buy in”. Buy-in from LAs, Health Boards and other publicly owned SC providers has not been as successful with accreditations as in other industry sectors in Wales such as Higher Education two years on from the WGov’s commitment.

Whilst the 2021 Summit was an impressive act of Organising and pinnacle of collective action relating to improving pay for SC workers in Wales, collective action was short lived. Using Tattersall’s typology and considering data collected from multiple actors involved allows us to see that the 2021 Summit fits more with Support type coalition category which is a shorter term coalition with less shared social vision.

In terms of common interests between actors it can be said that there were similar interests of participating actors but not mutual interests. There was agreement that SC workers pay needed to be improved but less alignment with the longer term social justice vision. For example SC providers agreed that pay needed to go up but were concerned about the feasibility of raising pay year on year in line with inflation that RLW accreditation required. Providers were more compelled to engage with the

movement so as not to be seen as the “bad guys” blocking improvements to pay. TUs engaged with the Summit to show they had played a role in improvement and protect their significance as IR actors but have otherwise not engaged with the RLW in SC movement in Wales. Their interests were not just about raising pay but strengthening collective bargaining for wider systemic changes. For political actors including LAs engaging with the RLW was seen as being a popular stance to take with electorate rather than a deeper commitment to systemic change in the SC sector, particularly with the commissioning system.

In considering the structure and strategy of the RLW in SC movement, the degree of coalition between actors also fits more within the Support category. Coalition was short lived and dominated by RLW unilateral standard rather something which was negotiated between actors. There was a lack of trust between actors and lack of longer term mutual strategy which could have better supported implementation of RLW and even more radical changes within the sector.

There has been a lack of worker and community engagement and this can be analysed in terms of “Organisation buy-in”. The RLW was distant from Provider and Union member interests and organisation interests. Also the movement can be said to be more staff led rather than wider membership exerting pressure or influence. An example of this is accredited SC providers not actively engaging and recruiting other providers. Similarly looking at the “Scale” element of the movement and the direction of pressure and influence can be said to be at the same scale as decision makers and efforts by RLW Champions rather than from pressure from SC workers and the wider community.

Tattersall’s typology has been useful to examine strengths and weaknesses of the RLW in SC movement in Wales. It also highlights the dilemma of movement leaders and campaigners. Given the constraints of resources, do you go for short term/high impact approaches such as the Summit or go for slow burn deeper relational coalition work to bring about longer term and more radical changes?

It may also be useful to add other elements to consider to Tattersall’s typology namely “level of trust” and “willingness to change” have been important elements of the RLW in SC movement affecting interactions between actors and depth of coalitions.

Similar to Heery et al. (2018), the reasons why the RLW hasn't brought TUs and Community Organisers together don't fit the mutual reinforcement, replacement or independent explanations. This study suggests that there's a lack of trust between TUs and CCW and that in the case of the RLW in SC movement in Wales, CSOs are rivals, competing for funding, engaging with workers whether for membership or testimony or attention especially in a small geographical area such as Wales.

This study also contributes to discussion around deepening democracy (della Porta, 2020) and the engagement of the community and workers in making positive change from the researcher's own experiences of being a campaigner/organiser. Lack of engagement by community members and workers in the campaign element of the movement can be said to be not apathy necessarily but a lack of confidence that things can change for the better. Also skills around working as a group, taking part in meetings and public speaking can be nerve wracking. The formulaic nature of Community Organising activities helped in the researcher's own experience, eventually leading on a negotiation with a politician but it also requires sustained and regular commitment which fits around other aspects of your life.

SC workers are advocated for, represented, regulated and some are being paid the RLW but not as a result of a groundswell of discontent by workers or wider society wanting better for SC workers, these are things being done on their behalf. "Social norms" (Wills and Linneker, 2014) around need for solidarity, right to strike and collective bargaining have not been created by the movement as yet. Care workers interviewed were not willing to strike as they thought it would put those they care for at risk. There is also a fear of negative consequences of "sticking your neck out" including losing your job.

Tattersall's coalition success criteria (2018) has also been useful to explore the outcomes of the RLW in SC movement in Wales. In order to analyse the degree of progressive change in the interests of workers and the wider community, the model was extended to include Market and Public sector as well as individual community members relevant to the RLW in SC in Wales movement. In particular, it has been useful to explore the extent of change as a result of efforts from the movement which has helped identify the "low hanging fruit" or changes which have been simpler to make and the "hard nuts to crack" or more complex and radical changes needed. From this study, adding "creation of platform to enable relationships" would be an

important criteria to add, related to the inclusion of community members and workers development of individuals and the power to make positive change.

8.6 Non-academic contributions

This section considers implications of findings for practitioners including benefits to actors involved in RLW in SC movement efforts in Wales. This section includes ideas for applications of this study to real world problems related to efforts to making positive social change. This is not intended to be an evaluation of efforts undertaken so far but is intended to highlight insights from multiple relevant actors' perspectives which may not have been known about previously and help guide future efforts of the continuing movement. Elements have been drawn from activities the researcher has been involved with including public actions related to the RLW in SC, the development of public action by Business School undergraduates, building power including turnout and finding testimony.

The potential of the community to bring about positive social change has been shown during the RLW in SC movement in Wales. As discussed earlier, there has been a decade of legislative step changes in SC but none which directly tackled the issue of low pay. For those who have been working in SC for a long time the RLW movement was the first real action or change to make improvement in the sector for as long as they could remember.

"I'm really excited about the level of change that's happening. I've worked in SC since 1997. And I think more has happened in the last three years than I can remember." (Welsh LA 3)

The "carrot and stick" approach between Cynnal and CUK seems to work against each other in terms of driving the movement forward with CCW trying to get more people involved and build power in the community but not being able to involve or call on the community of already accredited employer organisations was frustrating and counter productive. One of the actions to celebrate RCT Council accrediting included a walking tour through the town, ending at the hospital. Contacting accredited employers especially those within the location to display the RLW logo or

provide them with balloons or something to show support would have been powerful and help to raise awareness of RLW and solidarity in the area.

Community Organisers would argue that their work is not about mobilizing workers or the community in general but in building power through community organisations. Broadening the type of organisation membership might open up Community Organising to a wider range of people.

Membership remains mostly faith organisations and schools in the Cardiff area.

Diversifying membership has implications on the reach of organising and engagement of SC workers. In the case of SC workers where the majority of workers are over 40 years old, white and female (Social Care Wales, 2022).

Understanding potential ways to better connect with this group would be helpful.

Sports clubs, local shops, and allotment associations are all examples of organisations which may be more likely to be part of SC workers lives outside of work but which are not yet part of the CUK network.

Public interest and support could be exploited more. There is a need for greater visibility of actions so that SC workers can see in action and potentially want to know about it and get engaged. This reminded the researcher of the saying used to tackle gendered work; “you can’t be what you can’t see”. The researcher noted that had they not had the opportunity of this PhD, they would be unlikely to know anything about CCW’s work. A way in and especially if Community Organising is to expand outside of Cardiff, via connected individuals or champions rather than organisations which has been the dominant strategy and model so far. Small Business Groups, community or Parish councils which tend to have socially active, local individuals who are deeply connected to their area may be a way in to other locations outside of Cardiff. Finally, family and friends of care users could be a powerful source of solidarity and community pressure.

CUK methodology does not change across different issues and contexts although a more relational than agitational approach has been the dominant approach in the SC campaign in Wales. This is perhaps due to the nature of SC and the timing around both the Covid and the Care crises. Other than this, the researcher did not see much deviation from Community Organising “rule book” during this study.

Approaches and tactics of Community Organisers (or TUs for that matter) did not change despite the distinct context of the SC sector and there could be an

opportunity to develop a bespoke approach specifically for the SC sector in Wales which could translate to other low paid sectors in Wales.

Some suggestions for approaches which do not fit within the traditional Community Organising way are suggested.

Firstly as well as public actions, the traditional “loud” campaigning there could also be a place for “quiet campaigning”, using champions RLW supporters at decision maker level these have been successful in RLW in SC in Wales. This tactic wasn’t highlighted as it strayed from the grass roots ethos of CCW’s work. It was one of the more successful approaches in the RLW in SC in Wales and drove the movement when other approaches had not worked. Also the potential for a SC provider champion to sit on Cardiff as Living Wage City groups or similar groups and drive the standard forward within the sector could be worth exploring.

Another suggestion for CCW as well as TUs would be a greater involvement at SC worker training, similar to Public Value Leadership Academy sessions run with Cardiff Business School undergraduates presence. Concepts of social justice and decent work be introduced to “caring” industries who typically provide the care to receive it themselves. Including content such as understanding what the minimum wage is, worker rights as part of University training in Health and SC courses as part of their professional aspects could be an important step to normalising fair work in the sector.

SC workers’ voices are heard via testimony and via Union and other representatives. Empowerment hasn’t been felt among Care workers in a significant number but has been felt at an individual campaigner level including the researcher’s own increased democratic participation as described in Chapter seven. SC workers and CSOs and TUs could set up a community/worker platform which inform TUs and SC providers to feed into social partnership groups such as SC and Fair Work Forum which doesn’t currently have a wider presence.

Finally, there is a lack of trust in the RLW and a feeling that some large employers have been allowed to “get away with it”. Driving accreditation at any cost has broken some of the trust of the RLW among SC providers and the wider community. The decision to award and celebrate accreditation of Cardiff Council who didn’t include SC workers and also the Spark/Sbarc building at Cardiff University where all tenants

pay the RLW (Twitter from 24/10/2023) except the café and RCT Council's accreditation within weeks of the announcement its selling its SC provision to private providers weakens the brand and has been perceived as a double standard especially by SC providers. The business friendly approach has come at a cost and the domino effect of LAs accreditation has not yet happened and is an important lesson to learn from this experience.

Brew Dog is a recent example of an organisation which presents an image of being a progressive modern organisation with modern progressive worker initiatives such as "pawternity leave" but which decides to withdraw their RLW accreditation rather than add £1 to the lowest hourly rates of pay. There has been little consequence for the company in terms of reputational damage. There were some rumblings on Twitter/X but nothing from LWF or CUK. Exploring the development of a digital action function might be useful for CCW to explore develop and get more people involved with.

The next section considers next steps for the RLW in SC movement in Wales.

8.7 Future or evolution of RLW

This section includes element about next steps for the RLW in SC movement in Wales and the evolution of the RLW standard. Findings from this study show that collective action can have impact but needs to be sustained. Findings show that while social change is possible, employer organisations still hold more power than workers and the community.

The RLW is perceived as a start but not enough. It has began to untangle effects of marketisation which were initially so embedded and invisible it was difficult to unravel.

There is an opportunity for the RLW standard to be reignited for the cost of living crisis, targeting in work poverty and working with anti poverty organisations.

What does it take to have a revolution in SC?

Individual level

The level of agency is important and why and when you choose to use it or not. The ethnography of the researcher's own experiences of becoming more active in RLW

movement was useful and less explored. Further work on understanding beginner campaigners which go beyond brief evaluation might highlight key points in time or activities which put off people from wanting to continue. Encouraging people to keep a reflective journal or audio journal of their experiences as part of their Community Organising training could offer novel insight.

Meso level

What does it take to have a revolution in SC and tackle neo-liberal business practice? Where does RLW fit within this? In SC in Wales, there has been a concentration on regulation which protects service users but less so workers' rights. Pay and conditions aren't set by collective bargaining and improvements are set by the sector in the interests of employers and public bodies not in interests of the workers. Systems and process especially in SC still benefit large employer organisations who have more power than workers. One example is Brewdog withdrawing from their RLW accreditation. Brewdog decided to keep their "profit sharing scheme" and "pawternity leave" benefits for employees but seeing increase in wage as direct threat to growth and making a profit. There is still a perceived connection between business growth at any cost – generally cost of keeping pay low.

More work focussed on improvements to systems and processes around quality and continuity which benefit small to medium sized SC providers could be useful and potentially find an alternative to the commissioning process which benefits mainly large SC providers.

CUK and the LWF have developed Living Hours and Living Pensions programmes of work which aim to break down systemic issues and tackle a suite of causes shown to lead to in work poverty and persistent low pay. There's a need to explore benefits of worker empowerment to employers or at least dispel some of the hostility perceived around worker empowerment and its impact on business operation. There could be potential here for a Living Working Contract programme of work to follow on from the RLW work.

Macro/ societal level

More work towards a collective Social Change typology and the creation of open opportunity structures to collective action in the SC sector could be useful to explore. Further research is needed around how a collective Social Vision can be formed in particular around valorizing Care work and more broadly to “keyworkers” can be formed.

The recent example of Amazon deciding not to unionise in the Summer of 2024 shows that movements such as the RLW and organisations such as CCW are still needed. There is still an imbalance between worker and employer power which current systems have not been successful in changing. Systemic changes are needed where employers are penalised for low pay and precarious work as well as disempowering workers outweigh profit maximisation benefits would bring about radical change to the way we live and work.

Tattersall’s coalition typology goes beyond community unionism and brings in wider community organisations into discussion around work related issues. Work which highlights wider society as end users of work related issues and who therefore should have a say would be important to bringing about positive social change for workers and citizens collectively.

8.8 Final Reflections

This study has built understanding on how social change is being done in Wales in work related issues.

It is the responsibility of the State, employers and wider society/the community. This study finds that actors have not tended to work together in any deep form of coalition or collective action. Neither traditional actors or new actors have been able to engage Social Care workers in a significant number. This study finds that RLW has not resulted in any systemic change in how rates of pay are decided. For these reasons the RLW movement in Social Care in Wales cannot be said to be an example of social movement unionism or community unionism.

Kelly's theoretical framework has helped to expose systemic and structural explanations to these findings. This is important to understand to make necessary systemic change and rebalance of power around wage setting decisions more in favour of the worker. Future efforts related to tackling low pay needs to be focussed on the worker empowerment pillar of the Fair Work agenda.

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Appendix 1 Interview schedules

1) Interview schedule for Academic Researchers

Question 1: Could you tell me a bit about your background and your interest in tackling low pay and the Real Living Wage movement in general?

1a)Have you worked on other Living Wage or work tackling low pay and poor working conditions campaigns previously?

How do they differ/are similar to current RLW work (industry sectors, locations, workers, employer types)?

1b)What drew you to the Real Living Wage movement in Social Care in particular?

Question 2: What have you learnt about how the RLW movement in social care works?

When did you get involved or see the movement in Social Care take off?

How have discussions and debates evolved?

2a)Could you tell me about your current role/interest in the campaign for Real Living Wage?

2b)What would you say the main tools and approaches you are involved with Social Care industry are?

Same tools and approaches used for other LW campaigns? How does it compare?

2c)Who do you see as the key actors/stakeholders in the LW movement for SC in Wales?

How do they tend to be involved?

How do they tend to engage with each other?

2d) Low pay in Social Care is a persistent issue. What are your experiences of the LW movement for Social Care in Wales now?

Does it tackle issues which haven't been addressed before, involve people in a different way or who haven't been involved before?

Is there different political support?

Questions 3: Does the LW in Social Care differ in any way from other LW work you've been involved with?

Questions 4: Thinking of your work around LW in Social Care campaign in Wales, what would consider as key barriers or challenges in terms of:

4a) issues (have some issues been tougher to crack than others, prioritised over others and why?)

4b) strategies (example of a strategy which didn't work as planned and reflection of why)

4c) tools/approaches used (has a particular approach or tool worked particularly well or not well at all and reflection on that)

4d) allies/stakeholders (relationships yet to be built or allies which haven't been formed yet)

Question 5: From your perspective, what have been the key highlights of the campaign? (not just outcome based, process based e.g. relationships formed, issues highlighted,)

Question 6: Looking to the future of the LW movement, what do you think the next key barrier and opportunity is for Social Care sector in Wales?

Question 7 : Is there anything you'd like to say or to add about your role and research in the LW movement for Social Care in Wales which we haven't covered?

Thanks for your time

Stop recording.

Ask if there's anyone else they think would like to speak with me on this.

2) Interview schedule for Campaigners

(employee, community organiser, care user or organisation)

Question 1: Background a lead up to involvement in LW for Social Care campaign

Would you describe yourself as an activist or campaigner in general?

Other LW campaigns or low pay an inequality campaigns?

Why Real Living Wage in Social Care in particular?

Question 2: (For Citizens Team) How did Citizens Cymru start?

How did you start building up membership? Strategic or organic? Can you remember your first campaign?

How did Living Wage for Key Workers start? Has network grown during campaign?

(For interviewees external to Citizens) How did you come to know of LW for Social Care workers campaign?

What's it like working with a CO network? (Different to other relationships, How? What works well, what works less well?)

2a) Could you tell me about your current role/interest in the campaign for Real Living Wage?

2b) What would you say the main activities/tools and approaches you are involved with are?

actions, accountability assemblies, social media, membership recruitment, worker testimonies, training?

Same tools and approaches used for other LW campaigns? How does it compare?

2c) Thinking of everyday activities, who are you key or regular contacts (examples)?

Frequency of meetings, who's involved, who chairs?

2d) (For everybody) Low pay in Social Care is a persistent issue. What do you think your activity as a campaigner/CO brings to the LW movement for Social Care in Wales?

Does it tackle issues which haven't been addressed before, involve people in a different way or who haven't been involved before?

Questions 3: Does the LW in Social Care differ in any way from other LW work you've been involved with?

(If no previous experience) Would you say its' working well at the moment? Which elements? And Why?

Which elements of the LW movement do you think are working well?

Questions 4: Thinking of your current role in the LW in Social Care campaign in Wales, what would consider as key barriers or challenges in terms of:

4a) issues (have some issues been tougher to crack than others, prioritised over others and why?)

4b) strategies (example of a strategy which didn't work as planned and reflection of why)

4c) tools/approaches used (has a particular approach or tool worked particularly well or not well at all and reflection on that)

4d) allies/stakeholders (relationships yet to be built or allies which haven't been formed yet)

Question 5: Thinking about your role/part you play in the LW movement for Social Care, what have been the key high points of the campaign from your perspective?

Personal highlights (not just outcome based, process based e.g. relationships formed, issues highlighted, progress)

Question 6: Looking to the future of the LW movement, what do you think the key barriers and opportunities for Social Care sector in Wales?

Question 7 : Is there anything you'd like to add about your role in and experiences of the LW movement for Social Care in Wales which we haven't covered?

Thanks for your time

Stop recording.

3) Interview schedule for Employers (Adult Social Care)

Question 1: Could you tell me a bit about your background and how you came to be involved with the Social Care sector?

What other work/industries have you worked in?

What drew you to social care sector in particular?

As an employer, how does SC sector compare to others?

Question 2: (For accredited employers) When did you learn about/come to know of the RLW movement? How did you get involved?

Have you been involved with work tackling low pay and poor working conditions or other LW campaigns previously?

Who approached you (workers, Citizens, Living Wage foundation, other?)

What information or persuasion did you need?

What doubts did you have or benefits did you see?

2a) Could you tell me about your current role/interest in the campaign for Real Living Wage?

Could you describe the process of accreditation to me? (Easy/difficult?)

2b) What would you say the main tools and approaches you are involved with are?

What activities are you involved with?

2c) Who are your key or regular contacts (examples)?

Other employers? Community Organizers, workers, trade unions, MS or MPs, care users?

Frequency of meetings, who's involved, who chairs?

(For unaccredited employers) What do you know of RLW movement and how does it relate to you as an employer in the social care sector?

Have you been contacted by anyone in relation to RLW or attended any RLW events?

How aware are you of low pay issues and how does this effect your day to day work and running of the business?

How relevant do think RLW movement is to the social care sector?

2d) (For everybody) Low pay in Social Care is a persistent issue. As an employer, what do you think LW movement brings to the Social Care sector in Wales?

Does it tackle issues which haven't been addressed before, involve people in a different way or who haven't been involved before?

Questions 3: What do you think the RLW movement can do for the Social Care sector in Wales?

Can it make a change for the better?

Questions 4: (For accredited employers) Thinking of your current role in the LW in Social Care campaign in Wales, what would you consider as key barriers or challenges in terms of:

4a) issues (have some issues been tougher to crack than others, prioritised over others and why?)

4b) strategies (example of a strategy which didn't work as planned and reflection of why)

4c) tools/approaches used (has a particular approach or tool worked particularly well or not well at all and reflection on that)

4d) allies/stakeholders (relationships yet to be built or allies which haven't been formed yet)

(For unaccredited employers)

What do you consider to be the key barriers facing the Social Care sector in Wales in terms of:

4a) issues

4b) strategies

4c) tool/approaches

4d) allies/stakeholders

Question 5: (For accredited employers) Thinking about your role/part you play in the movement, what have been the key successes of the campaign from your perspective? (not just outcome based, process based e.g. relationships formed, issues highlighted)

(For unaccredited employers) In terms of the barriers you've mentioned above, to what extent do you think the RLW movement might have in helping to make the necessary changes?

Question 6: Looking to the future of the LW movement, what do you think are the next key milestones for Social Care sector in Wales?

Question 7 : Is there anything you'd like to say or add about being an employer in the Social Care sector and the Living Wage movement?

Thanks for your time

Stop recording.

4) Interview schedule for Local Authorities and other Public Sector bodies

(Social Care Fair Work Forum, Social Care Wales, Regional Partnership Board, Local Authority, Health Board)

Question 1: (start more generally) Could you tell me a bit about your backgrounds and the Council's involvement in programmes aimed at tackling low pay more generally across all sectors?

Successes or outputs?

Question 2:

From your time with the Council, does the LW in Social Care differ in any way from other LW work or work tackling low pay you've been involved with? in SC sector such as Ethical Care Charter and Real Living Wage?

2a) What were key drivers?

Same tools and approaches used for other LW campaigns? How does it compare?

How did you come to be involved, who instigated?

Pressure/influence from campaigns, Welsh Gov policy? Other lobbying e.g. Unions, Citizens Cymru or care workers themselves?

Covid?

2b) What were key barriers? Have some issues been tougher to crack than others?

Accreditation or Charter registration process?

How did these barriers show up? E.g. in meetings with Legal, Financial

Need to do things significantly differently? Internal changes required?

Lack of funding? Structural challenges?

Why do you think there are more English and Scottish LAs signed up to ECC and RLW than Welsh LAs? Wales specific issues? Individual LA specific issues?

2c) Who were/are you key allies or contacts?

How would you describe your relationship with Unions/Citizens Cymru/LWF/Cynnal Cyrmu?

Any assistance sought from Unions, Living Wage Foundation, Cynnal Cymru other accredited Councils (e.g. toolkits)?

How much contact do you have with social care workers themselves or care providers?

(good current relationships or relationships yet to be built or allies which haven't been formed yet)

Questions 3: Criticism of RLW movement only reaching the "Low hanging fruit" type organisations. Do you think that's fair?

Ethical Care Charter aimed at LAs, RLW aimed at employers

Voluntary regulation – what's is your experience of this – incentive to accredit?

What were initial reactions to Welsh Gov's announcing their commitment regarding Social Care workers receiving RLW uplift

To what extent (if any) do you consider yourself/your organisation to be part of the RLW movement?

Question 5: Overall, how successful do you think the RLW movement in Social Care has been?

"Domino effect" in Higher Ed and Health Boards not seen in Local Authorities. Why?

Any best bits relating to your experiences (not just outcome based, process based e.g. relationships formed, issues highlighted)

Question 6: Looking to the future of the LW movement, what do you think the next key barrier/milestone for Social Care sector in Wales?

How do you see your organisation being involved in that?

Question 7 : Is there anything you'd like to say or add about your role in the LW movement for Social Care in Wales which we haven't covered?

Thanks for your time

Stop recording.

Ask if they know of anyone else they think would be good to speak with on this.

5) Interview schedule for Trade Unions

Question 1: Could you tell me a bit about your background and your involvement in the Real Living Wage movement in general?

1a) Which other Living Wage or work tackling low pay and poor working conditions campaigns have you worked on previously?

How do they differ/are similar to current RLW work (industry sectors, locations, workers, employer types)?

1b) What drew you (and your organisation) to the Real Living Wage in Social Care in particular?

When did the campaign begin and how did it come about?

Question 2: How big an issue is Social Care in terms of the priorities of your overall membership? Has membership of social care workers grown during campaign?

2a) Could you tell me about your current role/interest in the campaign for Real Living Wage?

2b) What would you say the main tools and approaches you are involved with are?

Same tools and approaches used for other LW campaigns? How does it compare?

2c) Who are your key or regular contacts (examples)?

Frequency of meetings, who's involved, who chairs? Involved with Community Organisers, Social care workers themselves, other trade unions, MS/MPs, other groups?

2d) Low pay in Social Care is a persistent issue. How well do you think the current LW movement for Social Care in Wales is doing to tackle the issue?

Does it tackle issues which haven't been addressed before, involve people in a different way or who haven't been involved before?

Questions 3: Have you (individual and organisation) needed to work differently on LW in Social Care campaign compared to other LW work you've been involved with?

Questions 4: Thinking of your current role in the LW in Social Care campaign in Wales, what would consider as key barriers or challenges in terms of:

4a) issues (have some issues been tougher to crack than others, prioritised over others and why?)

4b) strategies (example of a strategy which didn't work as planned and reflection of why)

4c) tools/approaches used (has a particular approach or tool worked particularly well or not well at all and reflection on that)

4d) allies/stakeholders (relationships yet to be built or allies which haven't been formed yet)

Question 5: Thinking about your role/part you play in the movement, what have been the key successes of the campaign from your perspective? (not just outcome based, process based e.g. relationships formed, issues highlighted,)

Question 6: Looking to the future of the LW movement, (from your experience/perspective) what do you think the next key barriers and opportunities for Social Care sector in Wales?

Question 7 : Is there anything you'd like to add about your role in the LW movement for Social Care in Wales which we haven't covered?

Thanks for your time

Stop recording.

Ask if there's anyone else they know involved with LW in Social Care who they think it would be worth talking to. OK to use their name?

Appendix 2 Participant Information Sheet



Cardiff Business School

Aberconway Building
Collum Drive
Cardiff
CF10 3EU

Telephone: 029 2087 4674

Research Participant Information Sheet

My name is Celia Netana and I'm a PhD research student at Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University. My email address is NetanaC@cardiff.ac.uk.

I am currently studying for my Doctorate degree which requires designing and undertaking my own research project in an area I think is important and that will make a difference in society.

I am interested in finding out more about the Real Living Wage movement in the Welsh Social Care sector.

What is the project about?

Civil organisations such as Citizens Cymru can be said to be leading the movement on the Real Living Wage. Increasing our understanding of how the Real Living Wage movement works to tackle economic inequalities and social injustice is important and could help us better understand how to improve poor working conditions and pay for workers in Social Care as well as other sectors.

I'm looking to increase our understanding of how the Real Living Wage movement promotes better pay and working conditions for Social Care workers.

What does the project involve?

There are different parts to the project which are designed to capture different elements of Real Living Wage movement in Social Care.

One part of the project is desk based and involves me reading about and understanding different Living Wage programmes around the world, another is action based and involves me taking part in activities and this part involves me speaking to people about their experiences by means of an interview.

I'd like to ask you questions about your own experiences relating to the Real Living Wage for Social Care campaign.

Interviews will take place either over the phone or via Zoom whichever is more convenient for you and shouldn't take any longer than 1 hour.

What will happen to my information?

My notes will be kept on my password protected University folder and will only be made available to myself and my supervisor, Dr Debs Hann (email: hanndj@cardiff.ac.uk).

Any audio recordings (e.g. recorded Zoom meetings) will be typed up by myself and all identifiable information (e.g. names, locations, organisation names) will be taken out at this point and codes used instead (e.g. Participant 1 or Organisation A). Once all information has been transcribed and anonymised, I will save it to my password protected University folder, ready to analyse.

Please note that under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules, anonymised interview transcripts and field notes will be securely retained for up to 5 years.

If you would like to read and comment on my notes from your interview, please email me at the address below.

Is it confidential?

Yes participants will be anonymous at every stage of the research process. Your real name and/or organisation name will not be used and a pseudonym or code will be used instead (e.g. Participant 1, Organisation A).

Do I have to take part?

No. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary; you can withdraw at any point in the study or let me know (using email below) without having to give a reason.

If you would like to take part or if you have any questions, please contact me at the following email address:

Netanac@cardiff.ac.uk

Appendix 3 Consent Form



Cardiff Business School
 Aberconway Building
 Collum Drive
 Cardiff
 CF10 3EU

Telephone: 029 2087 4674

Consent Form

Research project title:

Exploring drivers and barriers to the Real Living Wage Movement in the Welsh Social Care sector.

Name of Researcher: Celia Netana

Email: Netanac@cardiff.ac.uk

Please complete and return this form to the researcher at the email address above.

	Please tick (✓)
1. I confirm I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above project.	
2. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered to my satisfaction.	
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, or ask to be excluded from observations without giving a reason.	
4. I agree to being recorded for this study.	
5. I understand my information will be anonymised.	
6. I agree to take part in an interview for this study.	
7. I do not agree to take part in an interview for this study	

Signed by participant:

Date:

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Appendix 4 Ethical approval confirmation



Cardiff Business School

Ysgol Busnes Caerdydd

Celia Netana
Cardiff Business School
Cardiff University

30 March 2021

Dear Celia

Ethics Approval Reference: 2021027

Project Title: Exploration of drivers and barriers to the Living Wage Movement in the Social Care sector in Wales

I would like to confirm that your project has been granted ethics approval as it has met the review conditions.

Should there be a material change in the methods or circumstances of your project, you would in the first instance need to get in touch with us for re-consideration and further advice on the validity of the approval.

I wish you the best of luck on the completion of your research project.

Yours sincerely,

Electronic signature via email

Dr Carmela Bosangit
Deputy Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee
Email: CARBSResearchEthics@cardiff.ac.uk