

Sustainability in a Divided Society: Applying Social Capital Theory to Northern Ireland

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Among other things, to sustain means ‘to support, to keep alive, to keep going continuously or to endure without giving way’. The Latin root of the word means ‘to keep or to hold’. To talk of sustainability is to focus on the quality of keeping going at a consistent level, often in an uncertain climate, and on the search for a degree of robustness sufficient to withstand everything that is thrown at it. Sustainability is the capacity to continue into the future, and even grow and prosper, in spite of visible difficulties.

Sustainability implies the possibility of its opposite: that some things which are successful or dominant in the present might not survive unless underpinned by qualities which secure them into the future. Thus sustainable development is first and foremost an acute concern that simple profit and loss multinational economics are fundamentally short term, environmentally, economically and socially. The undeniable urgency of all of these issues, and the need to address all of them together, was encapsulated in the holy grail of modern public policy: the so-called ‘triple bottom line’ of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The advantage of this kind of thinking is that it places apparently disconnected disciplines – such as business and biology, politics and anthropology – in the context of an interdependent ecology. Linear and mechanical estimates of cost now have to be considered within a wider matrix of relationships, in which the costs and benefits of particular approaches are considered within a series of related frames. Among the results have been the emergence of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility, environmental impact assessments, ethical investment and social capital theory, all of which are concerned with the long run health of organisations and societies which are increasingly understood in organic rather than mechanistic terms. Put at its

most basic, there is an increasing recognition that relationships matter for the success or otherwise of human communities. Or more strongly, the ‘how’ of how things are done matters as much as the thing itself to the health of people, communities and societies.

The fact that relationships matter is an important starting point in thinking about ways forward in a divided and contested society like Northern Ireland. ‘Solutions’ measured as inputs and outputs are likely to go awry if relationships are not taken into account. When relationships have broken down to the degree that they become the structuring principle of politics, residence and conversation, as is the case in Northern Ireland, it raises questions about what sustainability looks like. And yet we are clearly not without resources. John Darby pointed out many years ago that the breach in Northern Ireland is so deep that the more interesting question is why things have not deteriorated more sharply.¹ The key question in moving out of conflict, however haltingly, is how to think about policy and community activity in a way that makes for a sustainable future different to the fragility which has become tragically normative.

In this paper, I have the rather restricted aim of trying to establish a frame for thinking about stability and sustainability in Northern Ireland within fairly narrow confines: after our history, how do we find a practical way into the future together? The use of the word ‘together’ indicates that this is not a value-neutral endeavour. I start from some fairly commonplace presuppositions including a fundamental notion of inclusion: that all of the people currently living here and anyone else who legitimately joins us in the future belong fully to the task. Furthermore, there is a fundamental value attaching to human life: the struggle is to find ways within the norms of human rights, including not only the behaviour of the state but of individuals and groups. Expulsion, genocide and intimidation are ruled out.

But let me try at least to be clearer about what I do and do not mean by ‘a sustainable future in Northern Ireland’. There is a deliberate political fudge in the middle of this paper, about which it is necessary to be explicit, if only to avoid the criticism that it is an issue that has been dodged. What must be sustainable in the long run are the qualities and values implied by the definitions above. Indeed, my attempt here is to suggest that ‘progress’ in this part of the world depends less on the specific constitutional outcome than on the capacity of any given constitutional outcome to protect these values and qualities. At the risk of repeating myself: the quality of relationship matters

as much as if not more than the thing itself.

This is not intended as implicit conservatism (the border should be accepted) or covert revolution (the border must go). Indeed, it is to suggest that the border must be reduced from its current sacred status and treated in an entirely secular and pragmatic way. My interest is not to promote one state or to prefer one state system to another. Northern Ireland is used here as a location, a location which has taken on, for better or for worse, its own political and social distinctiveness. So perhaps North of Ireland or Six Counties or 'this present jurisdiction' or even this part of the UK/Ireland would be as accurate. However 'sustainable' includes the search for the norms which are required to allow us to decide this question and still remain within the confines of the values outlined.

All of this taps into the norms outlined in the preamble to the Belfast Agreement, reiterated powerfully in the proclaimed vision of the first Programme for Government of a 'peaceful, stable, cohesive, prosperous and fair society, firmly founded on the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and the protection and vindication of human rights.' It also corresponds to the formal ideologies of the vast majority of shades of Unionism and Nationalism which continue to recognise the citizenship of their opponents. In practice, however, the ongoing rivalry over the ultimate national destination of Northern Ireland has institutionalised deterrence, made segregation the norm and violence the expectation. Tragically, silence has become identical with politeness. The reconciliation now required is between the loftiness of the vision of the Programme and the current reality of our expectations.

Social Capital Theory

In recent years, social scientific attempts to capture the importance of human relationships for the viability and success of societies have circled around the concept of 'social capital'. The idea of social capital was revived in the 1970s in the work of Pierre Bourdieu and of James Coleman. Bourdieu first used the term to refer to the advantages and opportunities accruing to people through their membership of certain communities.² Coleman, while remaining imprecise, used the term to describe a resource of individuals that emerges from their social ties.³ In both cases, social capital was used to draw attention to the fact that individual lives depended not only on individual

characteristics but also on the resources (capital) which resulted from their relationships. In this usage, social capital was used as an analytical tool to describe the added economic and social value of relationships.

In the 1990s, however, concerns about the consequences of the unrestrained market led to renewed political concern with community on the left. At the same time, the collapse of economic centralism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe meant that any notion of state-driven community could quickly be associated with an attack on liberty from the right. The work of Robert Putnam on the importance of dense social networks of trust and reciprocity for the successful functioning of the economies of Northern Italy was highly influential in bridging this division when he drew attention to the 'features of social organisation, such as trust, norms [of reciprocity] and networks [for civic engagement] that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions'.⁴

Putnam's work suggested that core attributes of human relationships – the presence or absence of trust, the expectation of reciprocity and the existence of networks – made a critical difference to both the quality of life of whole societies and to their economic sustainability. "Community connectedness is not just about warm fuzzy tales of civic triumph. In measurable and well-documented ways, social capital makes an enormous difference to our lives".⁵ A sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks brought real and tangible benefits to people and communities including lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement and better economic growth. The norm of trust and reciprocity created social pressure for participation and responsibility, the experience of trust and reciprocity meant that the transaction costs of doing business were reduced to a minimum while the activity of joining encouraged civic virtues like tolerance, less cynicism and more empathy. Perhaps most importantly, social capital in Putnam's use is not an individual possession but an attribute of a culture or group.

"Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals- social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called 'civic virtue'. The difference is that social capital calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital."⁶

Putnam's key measure of social capital was participation in voluntary associations and society. In an exhaustive survey of American trends in 2000 he sounded an alarm about the apparent decline in such activity across the United States since the 1950s. In this he drew on a long tradition in American thought, going back to Alexis de Tocqueville's observation that American democracy was based less on the constitution than on the habits of association and decision making that had developed 'from the ground up' among the colonists. This de Tocqueville contrasted with France, which he said lacked the habit of voluntary association for the common good and hence lacked the fundamental underpinnings for a democracy.⁷

In Putnam's hands, social capital is not simply an analytical description, but an essential characteristic of societies whose presence or absence in any society is a measure of its capacity to provide both economic and social sustainability. The concept was seized upon by others, especially in the field of development and education to emphasise the importance of community as well as economic development. The World Bank produced considerable evidence to show that social capital was a critical factor in the success of education and health programmes.⁸ For the IMF, Francis Fukuyama identified social capital, and the norms of trust and reciprocity that it embodied, as the *sine qua non* of liberal democracies.⁹

At the same time, social capital theory was becoming of increasing interest in social democratic circles in Europe, including the intellectual circles around New Labour.¹⁰ The theory had the advantage of promoting key civic virtues of trust and reciprocity and of asserting the primacy of the group, in whom social capital resided, rather than the individual. The emphasis on the group and of group connectedness also had important implications for political economy by suggesting that real and open communication was critical to prosperity in a modern economy. In economic terms, social capital was understood as the general set of relationships which reduces the transaction costs of information across the whole economy. In contrast to market liberals who asserted that the unfettered market always tended to equilibrium, social democrats argued that the market was subject to imperfect information, and that those who held information held a permanent advantage over those who did not. It was therefore critical to the smooth functioning of any economy, that relationships were open, trusting and reciprocal. Most importantly, it was critical that access to this social capital was spread as widely possible across society.¹¹ Redistribution and investment of economic resources to ensure this

development of social capital was therefore of critical self-interest to all in society and particularly to its government.

There is, of course, a degree of unnecessary complexity in all of this. In 2001 the Cabinet Office issued a discussion paper on social capital, which identified social capital with trust, or rather ‘whether people think other people can, in general, be trusted’.¹² There is a degree to which social capital theory, in this reading returns back to its primary source: what kind of trust, and between whom, is necessary for societies to prosper and grow? In contrast to rational choice theory, which saw society as the sum of economic choices made by individuals, social capital theory drew attention to the importance of the connections between people for the choices which could and would be made.

Social capital theory matters, not because it says something which is unavailable to common sense, but because it constructs a bridge between those who believe that market economics will resolve everything and those who argue that social issues are primarily ethical, about doing what is right. Our capacity to learn to trust is critical to our moral and to our socio-economic destiny. Most importantly, it will determine the quality of life through which we enjoy both.

For those interested in sustainability in Northern Ireland, this is a critical insight. However, the insight itself does not immediately clear a path to policy or implementation.

Some Problems of Social Capital Theory

Arguments about social capital can quickly become overly deterministic. My point here is to elaborate the importance of placing trust-building at the heart of public-policy making and community and political action. However, three questions should be addressed if we ask how relationships might matter in Northern Ireland: first, how do we distinguish between those which build sustaining social capital and those which undermine it? Secondly, who has to act to build trust and how? Thirdly, what acts to prevent trust in any society?

Putnam’s critics accuse him of loading a useful, analytically neutral, term (social capital) with value-laden outcomes: i.e. only those relationships which promote western democracy are social capital. “Only good social capital counts as social capital *ergo* social capital is good.”¹³ To a degree, of course,

this is true. Putnam works back from an understanding of the good life and investigates its critical components. His analysis shows that individuals, neighbourhoods and whole economies all flourish in measurable ways as a result of trust, networks and norms of reciprocity. In this regard he lies squarely within the tradition of Almond and Verba's civic culture with its more or less explicit understanding of civic virtue.¹⁴

However, the critics misrepresent Putnam when they charge him with pretending that all relationships are good relationships. Indeed his critical empirical question is to determine what kinds of relationships underpin successful democratic societies. Putnam explicitly contrasts the open trust and civic norms of Northern Italy with the closely bonded yet weak civic relationships of Southern Italy. In this, he supports Mark Granovetter in emphasising the importance of 'weak' rather than 'strong' ties.¹⁵ Later writers like Woolcock have argued that maximal social capital in any society requires that a balance be struck between embeddedness and autonomy. Overly embedded networks actually act to limit trust outside the networks and so generate mistrust.¹⁶

As the critics of social capital theory point out, it is sometimes important to leave overly embedded forms of relationship behind to establish a civic society at all. More significantly, areas of concentrated poverty are associated with deep and intense ties, such as families or gangs, alongside a virtual absence of connection to wider networks. The middle classes, in contrast, benefit from an abundance of 'weak' networks and multilateral connections and a freedom of association.¹⁷ As Szreter points out "Voluntary associations exist wherever liberal market societies and economies function, whether we like it or not; the only question is what kind shall there be?"¹⁸

Critical to this emphasis on weak ties, is the division of social capital into 'bonding' capital, which connects existing and homogeneous communities and 'bridging' capital. While Putnam sees these largely as archetypes rather than strict categories, he uses the distinction to underline the balance to be struck between close solidarity and linkage to external assets and information diffusion necessary in a modern democracy. "Bonding social capital provides a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40".¹⁹ Research in Sweden and Germany in 1998 found that when people are loosely bound to an association their trust for their fellow-members generalises, but when they are tightly bound, they are more likely to trust only their fellow members.²⁰ Surveys of voluntary group memberships in

Eastern Europe found that the Bosnian Serbs were by far the most likely to belong to a voluntary organisation of any group in the region.²¹

Recent literature has emphasised the importance of trusting and normative relationships between different levels of power and social status. 'Linking capital', as it has been called, recognises not only that trusting relationships at a similar level generate a more open civic culture but that a normative trust between different levels of the system generates the possibility of trust operating on the ground.²² In other words, politics generates society as well as vice versa. Furthermore, the links between traditional forms of organisation and voluntary associations vary from society to society with different outcomes in terms of the general level of trust.

The result of this emphasis on linking capital has been the emergence of different schools of thought on social capital, crudely associated with the political centre-left and centre-right. Both left and right agree, that the benefits of trust apply to businesses, to voluntary and community associations and to all classes. For the left, social capital theory suggests a vital role for the state, including deploying resources to empower the disadvantaged and connecting them into social networks and a vital role for participatory local government as a civic leaders in active partnership and responsive negotiation with local communities and businesses.²³ Furthermore, the primary task of government is to optimise the levels of trust, networks and communication across society and to maximise the level of information and participation available. Thus in order to promote the efficiency and productivity of its market economy, government should act systematically to correct the tendency towards income, wealth and power inequality which the liberal market economy produces. All of this has clearly had an effect on the thinking at the heart of New Labour in Britain.²⁴ For the right, represented by figures such as Francis Fukuyama, social capital is primarily the product of religion, tradition and long historical experience. The state in this view cannot replace religion because it cannot be a source of shared values. The primary role of the state is to promote the rule of law, including the provision of infrastructure, the regulation of property rights and the promotion of public safety, and to provide quality education up to professional level, including passing on central transcendent tenets: 'Doctors learn not just medicine, but the Hippocratic oath; one of the greatest safeguards against corruption is to give senior bureaucrats high-quality professional training and to create an *esprit de corps* among this elite.' Fukuyama regards religion as an ongoing source of

real social capital in many settings, although he concedes that this depends on the degree to which religious institutions allow for bridging capital. More controversially, he regards globalisation as a potentially important bearer not just of capital but of new networks, ideas and culture. Thus activists from environmentalists to labour activists stand to gain as much as bankers.²⁵ What both are edging towards is a new compact between the state, community and individuals in which change will affect all.

It is when we turn to the obstacles to trust building, however, that we can see the challenges posed for us in Northern Ireland. Since the 1950s, research into approaches to civil liberties and public order has shown that the key determinant of a willingness to withdraw liberties was a perception of threat.²⁶ Work in the 1980s and 1990s, undertaken in societies much less threatened by systemic collapse than Northern Ireland, have overwhelmingly confirmed this insight. “More recent work has confirmed both a chronic short-term dispositional role for threat perceptions, and a short-term effect due to current information. Some people have a predisposition to be easily threatened and are thus very sensitive and responsive to potential threats in the political environment”.²⁷ Tell that to the Housing Executive. In an international study, researchers found a strong link between the perception of threat and any capacity for tolerance.²⁸ What is clear, is that civic culture is not an attribute of economic development but of the quality of relationships. “Interpersonal trust is important because it lends credibility to the concept of a loyal opposition. When people do not trust their fellow citizens, elections and transitions of power appear to be far more dangerous. Citizens may fear that losing an election will mean losing all access to political power.”²⁹ Sound familiar?

The importance of believing in the value of civic engagement was underlined by research by Brehm and Rahn in 1997. While they discovered that there was a real correlation between interpersonal trust and civic engagement they found that the path from civic engagement to interpersonal trust was much stronger than the path leading from trust to civic engagement. Thus civic engagement builds trust more than interpersonal trust leads to civic engagement.³⁰ The difficulties associated with this conclusion are multiplied if we reflect on Rustow’s analysis that the only prior condition for successful democratisation is national unity. “This does not mean that everyone has to trace his ancestry back to the same clan, nor does it mean that everyone has to speak the same language or even practice the same religion. Instead it means that nearly everyone must accept that they belong together in a single political

community.”³¹ In cross-national surveys of trust, members of previously dominant elites, specifically Russians living outside Russia, have the greatest difficulties in establishing trusting relationships after the transition.

The Northern Ireland Context

All of this sounds worryingly familiar in a context like ours. Communal divisions have deep roots in the North of Ireland, but they crystallised in the modern period through what Frank Wright calls a crisis of assimilation in the early nineteenth century. Until that point, those Catholics who went to school did so in the only available, largely Protestant institutions. Going to school was understood as a largely economic transaction, not a question of identity. The growth of new industries with their requirement for mass labour and literacy changed all of that. Suddenly Protestants began to fear being overwhelmed by migrant Catholic labour. Attempts to assimilate this group through education became much more aggressive, deliberate and interventionist in the so-called Second Reformation. Sections of the Protestant middle classes took the stance that Catholicism should be eradicated though education threatening directly the bond between parent and child. In doing so they set in motion a response from Catholic society. The most significant first step was the systematisation of denominational schooling. After the famine, as the education system started to produce its own middle class, there was an increasing move to affirm native culture and to develop interdependence not between the groups but between the Catholic middle classes and the masses. The same process in Prussian Poland was called the development of organic work.³² In terms of social capital development, social capital was overwhelmingly focussed on bonding capital. The boundaries in Northern Ireland are just as well described as the boundaries in our capacity to trust as they are by any more tangible measure. The result was increasing segregation, parallel political mobilisation and hostility and a demand from Catholics that bridging social capital depended on full recognition. Even more importantly, Catholics in the North consolidated their relationship with their stronger allies in the rest of Ireland.

As a consequence, parallel and hostile national unity projects accompanied democratisation. In a context of violence, both communities grew up with the presumption of endemic threat. Unsurprisingly, the tolerance for all sorts of reasons for inter-community violence grew accordingly. Given the chronic

nature of this relationship, deterrence and the need for deterrence became ingrained as common sense. Furthermore, where the state could not provide protection, which was the starting point for many Catholics and nationalists and could easily emerge for less protected working class protestant communities, especially at interfaces, there was an enormous reservoir of understanding for extra-state violence. The conditions for an overwhelming preference for intra-community bonding over inter-community bridging social capital were perfect. Anyone who suggested building relations with the enemy (bridging capital) could easily be shown to be naïve once inter-community violence broke out. Even worse for those building bridges, such violence could be provoked by those seeking to destroy the rationale for relationship. The double bind in Northern Ireland was that while 'hopes for peace through decisive acts of violence in Northern Ireland are hopeless and productive of chaos, they are not unreasonable.'³³

The predicament of this endless circle, whereby expectations of an absence of trust are constantly reinforced by experience, is well known. In the absence of a civic framework for engagement, the only evidence of trust is acts of faith by small groups and interpersonal relationships. This was the role of reconciliation groups and attempts at bottom-up bridge building. But bottom-up efforts are always vulnerable to renewed violence, until a new transcendence can be established.

In this regard at least, the recent history of Northern Ireland challenges Fukuyama's assertion that the state cannot be a carrier of values. The establishment of coherent authority in Northern Ireland depends on two key features: overt and institutionalised co-operation between the British and Irish governments, which provides the minimum in terms of a single national unity project and a substantial degree of internal compromise.

For that to happen on anything other than an instrumental basis, both states had to prioritise a peace settlement over national egotism. We can rely on the politics of realpolitical interest to outline the rational calculus behind British and Irish policy. However, co-operation of the kind which has developed over the last twenty years in Northern Ireland also depends on underpinning presumptions and values about what democracy looks like, what represents acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and on the existence or possibility of sufficient interstate trust, norms and networks to establish robust institutions. In this regard, Britain and Ireland are endowed with international social capital which is highly unusual.

Internal forces can only develop the detailed rules within this framework, while the framework itself can only be overturned by an agreed alternative produced by both communities. What was certain was that the first steps in this direction would be greeted with cries of betrayal. But 'if betrayal means the abrogation of undivided claims to sovereignty, it is hard to see how it could have been otherwise.'³⁴ It is also predictable, having established the framework and even embedded it in local referendum, that the remnants of the deterrence relationship, including the future of all non-state arms and the unpicking of elements of deterrence that had been institutionalised within the law, would provide the most serious evidence of ongoing threat preventing bridging.

Northern Ireland therefore finds itself at an interesting cusp: internally, it remains a society characterised by communalism and a strong preference for bonding capital over bridging or even linking capital. Externally, however, the economic and social resources of western liberal democratic states have maintained a degree of expectation about what 'normal' looks like which is akin to the features of western democratic society everywhere. In the aftermath of September 11 and given the huge international consensus supporting the British-Irish compromise, it seems unlikely that the external environment will change significantly in coming years.

Implications: Sustainability after division

There is no such thing as benign apartheid in Northern Ireland. There is deterrence and there is moving away from deterrence. The only apartheid that is benign is one that removes the threat. For that to happen, Northern Ireland would have to be 'ethnically cleansed' in toto, and internationally patrolled borders erected in contradiction of everything which the European Union stands for. The building of bridging capital and the slow erosion of the need for deterrence is the only other sustainable model. In the interim is a slow and sullen peace, in which people are glad to emerge from the past but deeply sceptical of the future. Political parties which exist to deter one another will find this dilemma difficult to resolve. But the predictable result of a refusal to invest in real bridging is a return to deterrence and the collapse of any possibility of internal government. The result, provided the British-Irish consensus remains, will be a holding operation awaiting the further outbreak of a commitment to building bridging social capital. The degree of our

commitment to trust-building will be the single most important factor in determining the social, economic and political life of Northern Ireland over the next few years.

Predictably too, however, the development of real trust, networks and norms of reciprocity will be a long process, subject to repeated false starts and failures. Naiveté probably doesn't help here. However, it may help to outline a few of the key features which will shape progress:

1. The British-Irish transcendence will remain the ultimate backstop of political stability. Any efforts to 'renegotiate' the Agreement will have to accept the fundamental untouchability of this axis.
2. If trust is to grow, political groupings in Northern Ireland must learn that the political transcendence of Northern Ireland as a whole will be bigger than the transcendence of either or any single group. This is true whether the six counties are part of Ireland or of the UK in juridical terms. The keynote is a move from the politics of ourselves alone, which is incompatible with reciprocity to a politics of 'nothing about us without us' which is the key to networks.
3. Western society provides clear transcendence on goals. Among these, key freedoms could be agreed by all political parties including freedom of movement, freedom of expression and freedom of cultural expression. While these run the risk of being overly visionary, they allow a transcendent policy agenda to emerge which enables practical measures of success.
4. Social Capital based on voluntary association and civic networks can only flourish over time. Litigation is, however, always a sign of a weak voluntary practice. Basic minima of equal treatment and human rights need to be enforced until agreement is reached across communities on their abolition.
5. Trust can only emerge if there is a rigorous and growing adherence to the ballot box and diplomacy. Good Relations cannot be built on anything other than a removal of the fear of killing. Reserving a threat 'just in case' is incompatible with the removal of threat that is the key to trust building.

6. The quality of social networks must become a key concern of all public policy. The delivery of public services must be 'bridged and linked' at all possible levels. In this regard, the partnership model for the delivery of local strategies could be extended and developed. Even so-called single-identity matters like education should have clear bridging structures. (In schools, this includes policy development, sharing of facilities, curriculum issues, admissions policies etc.) The extent of these networks should grow measurably over time, so that networks become the norm of civic leadership and public service.
7. There should be a preference for cross-community and inter-community delivery of services where possible. This does not mean that those who have the deepest and most recent scars of threat should be forced into counter-productive work. However it does involve an active assessment of when and where services should be delivered on a cross community basis by all public services
8. Social Capital can only flourish where trust is seen to be real. Northern Ireland needs to support a culture of pilots, where bridging capital can be demonstrated and sustained. There will be no quick fix or instant solutions. Housing development, workplace initiatives, policing, education, community development, environmental changes, agreements on town centre use, arterial routes free from intimidation all provide medium-run possibilities for experiment. Many of these experiments will only be possible away from the worst intimidation and fear. This should be accompanied by a political debate about speed.
9. Northern Ireland is challenged to become a learning society, learning to do what we don't know how to do. The learning groups (funders, policy makers, and local communities) need to establish networks which can learn as part of the emergence of a new partnership culture. The necessary result is an acceptance of a degree of risk in public policies, where the outcomes are measured in learning rather than only in targets. There will also have to be a high tolerance of mistakes made in good faith and the development of a culture of forgiveness of genuine error.
10. Trust consists of an underlying consistency (promises made, promises kept) which generates a capacity to take risks and forgive mistakes. At the interfaces of Northern Ireland, there is a need for inter-community stability in terms of threat and the values outlined above. However,

interfaces, like everything else, are organic and dynamic. The dream of segregated harmony is just that, a dream. Therefore, discussions about interface policy should engage people over the long term, not just in the crisis. The building of real social capital at the interface will require investment. Networks should include cross-community representation, links to developments elsewhere as well as appropriate government and funding bodies. Social Capital depends not only on inter-community bridges but also on investment in real relationships in marginal areas. Social policy should be woven into social capital policy. Trust building should be a visible theme of social services, healthcare and education.

11. Bridging Capital must include but cannot be restricted to deterrence communities. The principle that trust, reciprocity and open networks reduce transaction costs and build a sustainable society should inform all that we do. Thus there is a strong interest in ensuring that many issues of social policy, and all those who are potentially marginalized, are actively included in the development of networks of this nature.

Notes

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