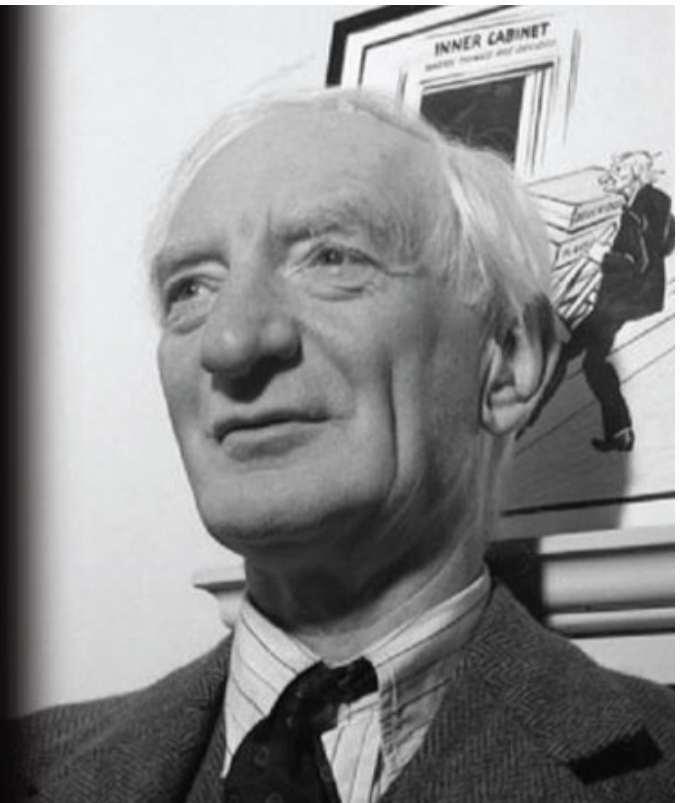


The Best Nest for Asset-Based Community Driven Efforts (ABCDE)

**"The state is or
can be master
of money, but in
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—William Beveridge



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Wednesday, July 20, 2016 -- Cormac Russell

Society is often spoken of as if it has only two important dimensions; namely, individuals on the one hand and formal institutions on the other. What this map of civic space leaves out is everything in between: families, neighbours and friends, clubs, local business, faith communities and associations.

Peter Burger and Richard Newhouse, in their 1976 publication 'To Empower People: The Debate That Is Changing America and the World' viewed these as "mediating structures" and included voluntary and civil associations as being among these.

(T)oday, there is more need than ever to lift up 'mediating structures' that are rooted in the local context as the hosts of asset-based community driven efforts.

Their central thesis: 'Modernisation has created an unprecedented split between public and private life. Public life is dominated by mega structures, institutions too vast and bureaucratic to hold personal meaning or command personal loyalty. While private life has receded into private significance. The way to preserve meaning and confidence would be to reinforce structures that mediate between those realms, of the private and public spheres.'

We (at Nurture Development) agree with their analysis and believe that today, there is more need than ever to lift up 'mediating structures' that are rooted in the local context as the hosts of asset-based community driven efforts.

If Public Sector organisations are committed to promoting citizen-led action, we believe they must work closely with such local associations to relocate authority for community building efforts.

In turn, these mediating structures/associations must support local residents who are keen to promote asset-based community driven efforts.

We believe such associations are the best hosts for paid community builders, and that long term asset-based community building efforts should not be held by the public sector but rather supported by it in an act of humble public service.

This is a view we believe to be supported by one of the primary architects of the modern Welfare State, William Beveridge who famously noted:

“The state is or can be master of money, but in a free society it is master of very little else.”

This blog was originally posted on the [Nurture Development website](#), and appears here with permission.