

Opportunities and barriers leading to the implementation of social innovation; An auto ethnographic case study of Emmeline 4 Re.

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Abstract

Emmeline 4 Re was an upcycled fashion label running from 2003-2009, borne from a KTP partnership with the University of Northampton and the Salvation Army Trading Company. The journey starts by setting up and testing a new charity concept store, which becomes the basis for novel fashion products to be sold. Focusing on the changes that needed to be implemented in the sortation process within the warehouse of the Salvation Army Trading Company, to facilitate a shift in the charity sector, retailing model. The focus then falls to the upcycled product and how and where this was sold on a commercial platform, reaching out from the initial concept store. Defining the impact that this had on the UK fashion market, stretching out in the European market. This review will comment on the journey taken throughout this period, highlighting the key barriers and successes while implementing social innovation. It will suggest different frameworks and define the actions that were tested to develop the business model. It will discuss the diversifications and interdisciplinary approach needed, necessary to maintain a micro business in this niche market within fashion. It will discuss how different people react to change and the qualities that you need to develop in order to become a successful activist for social innovation. Emmeline 4 Re closed in 2009, however the empirical knowledge gained will

construct the basis of key reflections to move forward upcycling and social innovation in the future.

Keywords; *Upcycling, Fashion, Sustainability, Social Innovation, Changemaker*

Introduction

The aim of this study is to identify the key barriers and successes throughout the period of 2003-2009 and to establish the learning outcomes that have led to the implementation of social innovation on a micro and macro scale. Many sociologists concur on the importance of social innovation for societal progress (Schmitt, 2014 p.5). The aim of this paper is to understand the progress that has been made within this sector of fashion and areas that can be developed further for future progress both inside and outside the sector.

In 2003 I undertook a KTP with the University of Northampton, Kettering Textiles and The Salvation Army Trading Company, with research aims 'To develop and implement new manufacturing and marketing processes for the sales of novel fashion products from textile waste' (KTP, 2014). While developing the range I was working alongside the Salvation Army Trading Company (SatCol), the recycling arm of the Salvation Army (SatCol, 2015) to establish areas of potential development for their business model. My initial task identified from observation within the company was to form a separate sorting stream in the UK sortation warehouse based in Wellingborough; to filter Vintage and Retro clothing for sale at higher priced points within profiled stores (and support mechanisms to implement this). The first store called *Re: (Fig. 1)* was set up in 2004 in Newcastle (a vibrant University city, where the Salvation Army at that time had a core market share of the charity sector in the North West), selected due

to being away from the media hungry London, where trials could be made without gaining much press. SatCol were cautious at the time of changing systems and receiving negative press especially while initial tests were taking place.



(Fig.1) Shop front and internal view of Re: 'Charity Store' 2004; Newcastle (own images)

From this I was able to identify the possibilities of raising the value of second hand product, if it was in the right environment. From this pilot, the range was then rolled out to the Princes Street store in London W1, seen as the 'flagship' store within the company due to its prime location and solid footfall. Princes Street became known by designers and vintage lovers as a place to purchase desirable second hand clothing. Meanwhile the Salvation Army saw a rise in sales figures for the related stores. Although this was seen as a success, other regions and their managers that were not targeted for this specialized product felt that this system was unfair. By no longer receiving a mixture of vintage pieces in their deliveries, store managers argued that it was impacting on their sales figures, making it difficult to reach set targets. Despite these selected stores demanding a higher yield for the company overall, there was a nervousness about changing the system, potentially alienating customers from other regions. It was pivotal to the success of this project to listen and respond to these concerns, 'Listening is the key for all

interventions and initiatives in order to develop a sustainable understanding of and commitment to the principles of “Doing good business”.’ (Thomas and Florian, 2013, p.248). Without this it would be very difficult to build success and therefore innovate the company model. It was essential to find methods of innovation that didn’t impact on the primary business model in order to gain mutual support. Osberg and Schmidpeter describe ‘three concepts [of implementation of social innovation] – co-creation, communication, and calibration – which should be applied to existing social innovations as well as to future social innovations’ (Osberg and Schmidpeter, 2013, p.5). If alienation of the stakeholders was to occur then it would be difficult to maintain progress. ‘Finding mutual support is important’ (McDonough and Braungart, 2015, p.201) when implementing innovation. As McDonough and Braungart state, there are seven personality types who can support or hinder your progress. This ranges from number ones; being completely on board with a new idea, through to the six and sevens who ‘find the talk of change disconcerting...they are often in mid management level...and can look to sabotage the project by passive aggressive techniques’ (McDonough and Braungart, 2015, p.203). It was important to make sure that these personality types would not hinder the progress, therefore supportive listening techniques were required skills, a non coercive manner, needed to be able to maintain the supportive environment to flourish. It is clear on reflection that I came across many of these seven personality types. Some of which were really supportive and on board, but others, many who were at managerial level were nervous of the change and fear of rebuke that their existing models had in fact been inefficient. Throughout the project this was one of the key barriers that had the potential to hinder impact and innovation.

Alongside this I was identifying certain fabrics that were left unsold or low value within the main warehouse. These included items that may have had wear or tear beyond re-sale, or fabrics such as soft furnishings that although bulky had little re-sale value. In addition to this, there were

a number of fabric types that through research I was able to identify as 'abundant fabrics' with less desirability in the second country of re-sale, such as Africa (Tranberg Hansen, 2011). These included leather, denim and wool, all of which were vast in quantity, fuelled by the UK's love of casual clothing, while less desirable overseas due to the warmer climates. A system was set up to filter this material away from the existing routes and it was essential to get warehouse staff on board. This was met with various degrees of enthusiasm. I however was able to locate some key members of the team, who were supportive about the prospect of trying something new. The most successful method was to keep it simple. A fabric type, or colour proved more successful than a term e.g. Floral. As designers we take advantage of the tacit knowledge built up over time, which enables us to understand which pattern types are desirable. Without this, it became apparent that secondary sortation was necessary. This was essential for some designs developed, however for ease it meant materials such as 'blue denim' and 'red wool' were easy to access, in high quantity and didn't require any further sortation processes. These factors became key considerations when designing. Simplifying the systems is an effective way of developing efficiency and collaborative take-up. Pictorial information sheets were placed at the workstations to act as a reference point. Much like the Fairtrade initiative 'existing social progress was not addressed by creating a social enterprise or through governmental intervention, but by designing novel market structures' (Fifka and Idowu, 2013 p.315). This novel use had the potential to create a new revenue stream while not infringing on the primary business model, and was therefore supported by all the management levels within the organisation.



(Fig.2) First trial pieces from recycled material (Image: Mike Eason 2005)



(Fig.3) 100% wool scarf photographed in Wellingborough Sortation site (Image: Mike Eason, 2005)

Denim at this time was being sold (at very low value) to be shredded and used as rags, while some wool would be sent to India to be re-spun and died (Gupta, 2013), although this was already being phased out due to the cost of shipping it overseas. Both these methods demanded a low-income stream and not preferable to in store re-sale. Wool, cotton and leather that ended up in landfill would also emit methane (Themelis, 2006), which prompted me to use this as a focus to divert these fabric types (*Fig.2*). Also sticking to mono fabrics meant it was easier to sort and label for re-sale. By Up-cycling otherwise almost valueless stock I found I had abundant material to work with, stores within the Salvation Army couldn't sell this product due to quality control, therefore I was able to establish the brand within an otherwise cautious company without the fear of rebuke. For example, using the best seller of 100% wool scarf (*Fig.3*) made from jumpers or cardigans with large holes, isolated stains or frayed cuffs and hems would retail in TOPSHOP for £55 (in 2005). It would take (depending on size and quality) roughly 3 jumpers to make a scarf. The fabric was otherwise valueless (worth pence only) and would likely end up in landfill. It became a 'win win' situation for both SatCol and myself. We were diverting costly waste, as Landfill Tax for the removal of waste was introduced in 2006 for businesses (Businesslink.gov.uk). In 2014/15 of the 358,156 tonnes of textiles sent to charity shops or recycling centers to reuse and recycle, a saving was made of £35.4 million to the tax payer by not sending it to landfill (LGA, 2014). Shared values with the Salvation Army was key to driving success. Finding and defining these shared values early on can help in maintaining strong relationships and collaborative support.

Once a collection was made, a market was needed. The Salvation Army was one option, however I had already observed that there is a limit to the amount people are prepared to spend in a charity shop environment. Items were sold through the specialist Re: Stores, however this was only two locations and of primarily a student led consumer. It was from here that I decided to approach TOPSHOP along with other boutiques across the UK, in order to increase the

potential sales and awareness (Fig.4). Having met with the buyers, it was decided that a full concession in the Oxford Circus Store would be launched alongside the new store re-fit they were having in October 2005 (Scholtus, 2005). This was as Jane Shepherdson had just overtaken over as brand director and was keen to implement a sustainable brand especially as there was growing ground swell in the media about sustainable and 'eco' clothing as it was then termed.



(Fig.4) Emmeline Child with a garment from the range selling in TOPSHOP (Own photo: 2005)

The Sales were strong in the first instance, however sales slowed primarily due to the lead times of getting the product upcycled through re-manufacture. The Increase in profile and footfall was beyond anything the range had witnessed within the Salvation Army retail outlets. The processing required prior to the make and trim, (outsourced to manufacturers) was expensive. Usually the whole Cut, Make and Trim (CMT) would be completed at a manufacturing site. However in this instance cutting was done in house, both cut and bundled in size and colour order, making it easier to process once at the manufacturers. This was due to the size of the fabric lengths we were working with, too small to do the usual 'lay up' as in the traditional way at the CMT facility. Other areas that added to the manufacturing costs were the

use of vintage buttons, as these took time to select bespoke to the garment we were making. This process had been sped up by colour coding our buttons into tins, which were selected and added to the 'bundles' we were creating. Also due to the range of colours in which we were working with, the nature of working with second-hand material meant once at the manufacturers the process could be slow while threads were continually changed according to colour. Best sellers were definitely the accessories, maybe due to the lack of sizing issues or perhaps because this was profiled on the street level floor, with further increased footfall. It was here I was able to fully understand how difficult it is to upscale manufacturing of 100% recycled products. In addition, the cost implications by staffing a full time sales person in addition to the percentage taken by *TOPSHOP* for the space, made it difficult to make it financially viable. To succeed in this fast fashion environment, you need to be in line with fast fashion, being able to manufacture high quantities with efficient lead times to capitalize on the quick turnaround in sales. With the system I used there was intensive manual labour required preparing the once used material, making it hard to keep up with high volume demand. Despite this Emmeline 4 Re, the first sustainable brand to be sold in *TOPSHOP* was present for just over a year and a half, setting precedence for other sustainable brands to follow suit. The flexibility to adapt to these experiences is imperative, as social innovation often means trying something that hasn't been done before. Learning from these experiences is key to continue to drive visions forward. In spring 2006 the KTP was coming to the end of its contractual two-year project. The project and I were shortlisted for an award, after an interview process I was awarded *KTP Business leader of tomorrow 2005*, due to the innovation and advancements the project had achieved, forging a novel sales revenue from waste (*Fig.5*).



(Fig.5) Emmeline 4 Re catwalk show at the KTP award ceremony, The Savoy Hotel. (Own Image: 2005)

Throughout this process the Salvation Army Trading Company (SatCol) were going through a structural change in order to reduce costs. This was in response to the growing popularity of value chain stores in the UK market, and the impact this had on the charity sector. In addition the 'mass of fast fashion clothing, flooding the charity sector, meant product had little re-sale value' (Farley-Gordon, 2015. p.58). SatCol responded by closing down the UK sortation site in replace of sending all unsorted product straight to Africa, (some to Eastern Europe) through Kettering Textiles (bought out by SATCol in 2011). This dramatically reduced the on-sight costs and with second hand un-sorted material holding a high value per tonne, it became financially beneficial to ship directly over-seas and rely on shop donations to stock their retail outlets, resulting in more money for the Charity that benefits. This meant that the high volumes of materials were becoming less accessible from the location in Wellingborough without creating different sortation systems or buying in from remaining UK sortation sites. I had resolved this by stockpiling a quantity of material that would easily see me through the next couple of years of

trade. Despite not being a long-term solution it did give me time to be able to test out other models for success and find other waste streams if needed.

Having started to establish a name and gaining passion for the concept, I concluded that the business should continue after the research project, where it was set up independently. By this time the label was being sold in approximately 15 boutiques across the UK, and employed two staff. The UK at this time didn't have a formalized fashion event directly for environmental design as Ethsetica was established in 2006 (BFC, 2015), so decided that *Ethical Fashion Week* in Paris (Fig.6) was the best Launchpad 'as international buyers stay on at the end of Paris fashion week' (Child, cited in Carter, 2007). At this time it was the largest gathering of environmental designers internationally, a yearly event, for press and public. The collections were showcased here for two years and led to sales in boutiques in Paris (Fig.7), Switzerland, Milan and Holland. In addition the brand was gaining profile, which led to inclusion in publications such as '75 Green Businesses' (Coston, 2008) and 'Green Fashioned' (Bierhals, 2008) along with national and international press. This enabled me to understand geographical locations both in the UK and Internationally more likely to buy in to sustainable product and brands. Sales continued along with specialized events such as the Clothes Show live where I delivered a focused lecture on Sustainability in Fashion, on the seminar stand, something I was now increasingly engaging in. All this was carried out to help increase the profile of the brand and the awareness around sustainability in fashion. 'Moreover, social innovation is argued to benefit in an economic, social, ecological or political way and is thus considered a better solution to known problems' (Schmitt, 2014. p.8). It was important to cross these parameters in order for the two-way dialogue to take place and increase the awareness and impact overall.



(Fig.6) Left: Emmeline 4 Re at the 'Ethical Fashion Week' 2006. (Own image: 2006)

(Fig.7) Right: Emmeline 4 Re on sale in 'Dupleks' Boutique Paris. (Own Image: 2006)

It was also at this time that I started to lecture at Schools and Universities. I had in my time of working with recycled textiles come across a 'caution' around wearing and buying secondhand product. Many of the sales in *TOPSHOP* were by shoppers buying because they liked it, not due to its environmental or sustainable credentials. In the boutiques, many of which were specialized Ethical Boutiques, buyers were sustainably minded, so were therefore already on board. However a large part of the population didn't like the idea of wearing secondhand clothing, especially when new clothing could be bought so cheaply. As part of this observation I became a 'Science, Technology and Engineering Ambassador' part of the *STEM Network* (Stemnet.org.uk), as I was aware that re-education was an effective way to see sustainable clothing becoming more widespread. This channeled my focus into school age children as they have the potential to shape the views of the future, one with sustainable fashion as a key part of

it. By leading Key stage 3 and 4 workshops on environmental design, student work surrounding sustainability was produced with an exhibition of students work showcased at the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery (Fig.8) and the NEC schools exhibition in Birmingham. This then contributed to environmental design being added to the GCSE syllabus. Although this wouldn't necessarily increase sales to the brand short term, it had the potential in raising awareness overall while having an impact on changing social values moving forward.



(Fig.8) Student Prize giving evening, collaboration of Emmeline 4 Re and SETNET (Own image: 2006)

Having worked at the *Salvation Army* and through the workshops developed with *SETNET*, I was one of the attending members of the Sustainability Roadmap events now run by *WRAP* (*WRAP*, 2015). Through this I was asked to present at the houses of parliament, a fashion show, the first of it's kind to showcase and highlight the possibilities of environmental design in Fashion (Fig.9). *SAINSBURY'S* were also in attendance, showcasing jumpers they were trialing made from PET plastic bottles. This was representing the different market levels and outcome possibilities of sustainable fashion within the UK retail market.



(Fig.9) Emmeline on the balcony of the Houses of Parliament.

(Own Image: 2007)

I was acutely aware from my experience and reflections, that education is a key factor in increasing the sales of environmental textiles/fashion, which was one of the driving factors behind my involvement in these events. Gaining government support where they are able to introduce legislations was also a focus, although attendance at these event made me aware how much more there was to do, in order to gain support from the top. The nervousness of disrupting the existing systems was apparent, despite the fashion event being well received. It was clear that further ground swell and consumer take-up was needed to drive change overall.

When running a business, adaptability is key to seek out opportunities in order to drive revenue. This encouraged me to diversify my skills into other areas, to act as an income stream while increasing profile to the brand. One of the many projects I undertook was with *Axon Automotives* (Axon, 2015). Initially a research project from Cranfield University, they had

established a method of recycling carbon, and had decided to develop this into a full concept car and commercial business idea. My assistance was in developing a range of customized upcycled car seats and some marketing material to help profile the car at the *Sexy Green Car Show* at the Eden project (Fig.10 & 11). My primary goal was to reduce the amount of waste that was ending up in landfill, and if this had potential through other methods than my specialism in fashion, then it was still successful. Flexibility and entrepreneurial qualities were helpful in developing outside of the fashion arena.



(Fig.10) Left: Model dressed in Emmeline 4 Re while leaning on a recycled carbon manifold

(Photo by Stelianour Sani: 2007)

(Fig.11) Right: Finished recycled car seats (Own Image: 2007)

Emmeline 4 Re also became the fashion contributor for the grass roots sustainable magazine *Sustained_* (2010); founded in 2006 this magazine was funded by the creative co-op and brought together like-minded individuals covering topics relating to Sustainability. This opened up opportunities to visit events such as *London Fashion Week (Esthetica)* and Press days run by

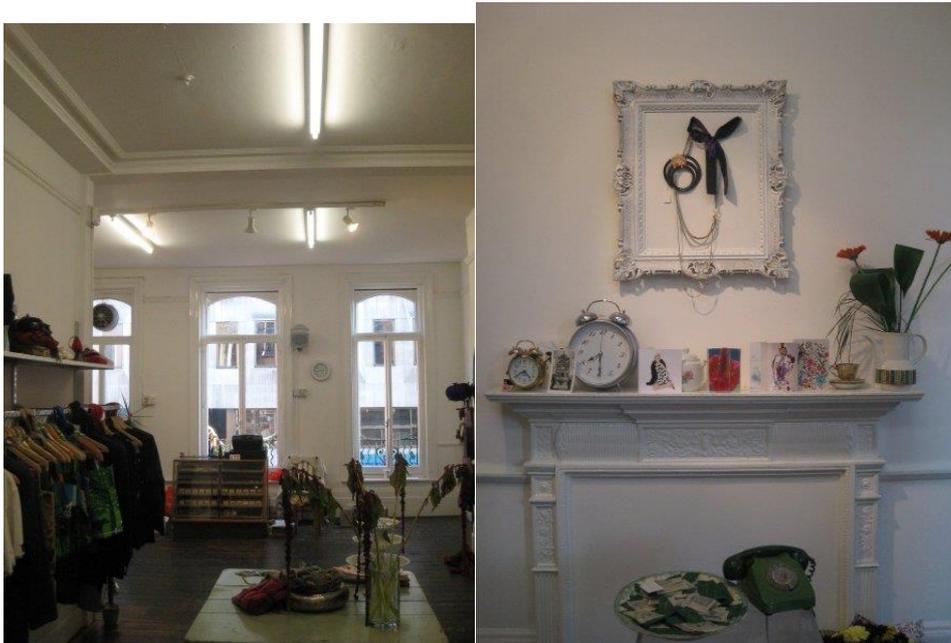
competitors, enabling me to see how other established, and the emerging sustainable designers were operating. Attendance at these events was essential in keeping current in a rapidly developing market. These projects were excellent in broadening my experience and networks within the broader sustainability field, as well as building knowledge overall.

In 2007 Emmeline 4 Re also took part in *Alternative Fashion Week* held at *Spitalfields Market* (Fig. 12). This was an excellent way to increase awareness with the target market in the area. Emmeline 4 Re was already selling items in the Junky Styling store in Brick Lane and felt that it would be good marketing to capitalise on this interest. From the sales seen it was clear that particular demographics sought out individual product. East London was one of these areas.



(Fig. 12) *Alternative Fashion Week 2007* (Image courtesy of AFW)

Emmeline 4 Re was now being sold nationally and internationally through boutiques, pre orders and on a sale or return (SOR) basis. After looking at some of the lead competitors (*Junky Styling, Red Mutha, From Somewhere*) they all had their own stores as a main income stream and 'base' for the company. Having worked with the Salvation Army and continued to showcase in conjunction with them at the RWM (Resource and Waste Management) (RMW, 2012) events held at the NEC Birmingham, I approached and asked about their now redundant space at the Princes St store, W1 (Fig.13). Here we came to an agreement on profit share and I launched the *Emmeline 4 Re Boutique* in 2008.



(Fig.13) Internal shots of *Emmeline 4 Re Boutique* (own images: 2008)

The store was open for a year and a half, selling both *Emmeline 4 Re* and a number of other leading ethical labels such as *Beyond Skin* and *Red Mutha*. By creating a shop in a central location I was attempting to profile environmental design to a wider market, while gaining primary customer feedback. The location was also one of the main downfalls. Being just off

Oxford Circus, customers were expecting fast fashion. I was selling commercial fashion in the store but at a higher price than the surrounding outlets. In addition, the recession had just hit. 'Late July/early August 2007. The credit crunch begins in earnest.' (Telegraph, 2009) Oxford Circus responded by all season sales, which the sustainable brands couldn't compete with. Also shoppers coming to Oxford Circus, many of which are tourists wouldn't necessarily go off the main streets and would stick to Oxford/Regent Street areas. Additionally the boutique shared a main door with the Salvation Army store, which meant it lacked its own identity. This was problematic, as we had already established that there was an upper limit to the amount people would be willing to spend in a charity shop environment at that point. Although they were separate spaces, the customers would often mistake the two especially as its former life was selling the vintage clothing within the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army was also very nervous once the recession hit, as they had already seen a decline in UK sales due to the flood of low quality fast fashion garments with little re-sale value into their store. (Which had already led to the mass redundancies within the UK based warehouse where sortation was now completed exclusively within the retail stores). Middle and senior management became anxious that the charity market could be seeing harder times yet to come in the sector and that nervousness focused them on doing what they do best, which didn't include the bespoke set up that had been created. We came to the conclusion that it would be best to close the boutique a year and a half later.

Challenges when innovating social change

Some of the key challenges that were faced throughout this period were;

- Getting people on board with the idea of new systems. Along the way, there was fantastic support that was integral in building momentum. However some negativity with key stakeholders took a lot of time and energy to dispel and held back progression.
- Crossing over in to different fields in order to have a wider impact. This often tested skills and meant developing new expertise quickly. It meant flexibility was a key skill needed to drive social innovation.
- As with any start-up business, time is needed to develop momentum, however when working in novel areas that require societal shifts, it becomes even more time intensive as you need to take on an activist role and spread the word.

Conclusions

From my background and primary research, I am able to reflect on the past eight years, and use my knowledge as a foundation to the work I am now about to undertake. There were two main areas in which I identified as key developments in moving environmental fashion forward. The first is Education; without people understanding the consequences and outcomes of the processes in fashion, they will continue to make decisions based on price or brand over environmental principles. Once this shifts I believe consumers will view environmental design in the same way as luxury brands.

The second is upscaling; it is the key to making a considerable change to the UK clothing/retail sector, otherwise I believe it will continue to be niche. Once upscaled, governments will be forced to take notice and will be more inclined to support movements that already have public support and ground swell.

The key areas in which I implemented positive change to the sustainable movement in my time as a practicing designer are;

- Developing a 'brand' that wasn't obviously recycled. High finish was pivotal for the success in TOPSHOP and led to other sustainable lines being sold by the retailer, of which continues to this day.
- Testing out systems from a designers perspective within a warehouse environment.
- Working with schools to raise awareness, which contributed to the inclusion of upcycled textiles in the GCSE syllabus.
- Implementing 'remanufacture', developing systems that overcome the barriers involved with using waste textiles.
- Recycling wool through re-manufacture, through overcropping I was able to cut and remanufacture without fray or unraveling.

Some of the reflections on where improvements to the business model could have been made

By being more flexible in the way product was recycled. I maintained my philosophy of recycling everything, trying to be the most sustainable fashion line available. However this stopped me from taking a step back and considering the bigger picture. My strong morals meant

I continued to be a purist resulting in time intensive barriers, which as a consequence meant designs cost more to make than that of some of the emerging competitors. These emerging competitors were making this sector of the fashion market more competitive and Emmeline 4 Re struggled to compete. Upcycling was the main ambition for the business and exploring methods to divert waste from landfill. Seeking alternative methods of upcycling such as mixing post-consumer and virgin materials or utilising pre-consumer waste, may have been more effective at achieving these outcomes. At the time I felt it was more important to have a fully upcycled product, however it was the quantity of material that was reused that will have greater impact overall. This could have enabled me to use existing manufacturing CMT processes, which would have led to greater efficiency with both time and money, leading to reduced lead-times while allowing the business to capitalise on buoyant sales. If the supply chain was streamlined, then working with outlets with high turnover such as *TOPSHOP* could have continued.

Working in partnership with another company can cause it's own issues. Although very supportive, they can be bound by the philosophies of the organisation. If that is one of caution, then it is difficult to strive forward into a new area. When setting up a business you cannot be risk adverse, however charities need to be cautious and careful as they are custodians of public donations. Although there was a clear cross over in values by both parties, I was keen to push forward and make changes, where as they were keen to maintain a more constant persona. When working in partnership with someone, make sure that not only are your goals aligned but the overall philosophies are too. It is essential that each party is moving in the same direction otherwise internal pressures can arise.

The Boutique was a pivotal learning curve, it enabled me to understand the product range from the consumer's perspective, however in my haste to have the central premises the rest of the business suffered. It became increasingly hard to drive the business forward with events and shows, when

time and resource was needed to develop the shop. Having the retail premises could have paid off, but fundamental issues like the demographics of the consumer became a barrier to the success. The knowledge gained will now aim to act as a foundation of knowledge to which new directions in upcycled fashion can take place today.

How you can implement social change in the future.

It could be said that social innovation has taken place, however the next stage is to use this knowledge and experience to drive the sector further forward in the future to have wider impact for societal gain. It became very clear that having the right team on board to support and collaborate with is key. However good an idea, it can only be as good as the team involved. At the core of social innovation are the people. Innovation was found early on in the project with the additional revenue stream in vintage and retro clothing. However it was very difficult to have lasting impact if all stakeholders in the project are not supportive with the ideas that are being tested.

'This application or adaptation process is a difficult one, as social innovation will be most effective when many different actors from different sectors of society participate' (Fifka and Idowu, 2013 p.314). As a designer, activism, is an important element to social innovation and can look to facilitate change on a wider scale in the future through more collaborative workings Chapman (2005) feels that the 'grossly outmoded notion of the specialist, who deals only in parts is rejected' (Chapman, 2005, p.98). Being flexible and building collaborative workings with different stakeholders was key at having wider impact both inside and outside that of the Salvation Army. This was important if these changes are going to benefit all. 'Society in its entirety should be the benefactor of social innovation and not private individuals' (Fifka and Idowu, 2013, p.311). Therefore by going outside the fashion parameters and crossing over in to

education, journalism and design, greater impact was reached. Flexibility and emotional intelligence were key skills needed to maintain the success and drive the project once the initial vision was developed. 'The beautiful outcome can serve as a seed for change across all sorts of industries' (McDonough and Braungart, 2015, p.191) which is where impact on scale can begin to take place.

By being applied, this project has been useful in enabling us to monitor and reflect on the barriers that were faced while implementing change. It has also given a relative period of reflection in order to understand the wider impact if any, has occurred. The benefits of reviewing this over a number of years is that we are able to see how the impact has matured. When innovation of any type takes place it can be difficult to measure it in real time, especially when close to the project in hand. By looking at it from both a micro and macro level we can see that it has fostered change on a wider scale. Sustainability is now on the GCSE Textile syllabus, impacting and embedding sustainable issues for generations to come. This is imperative if we want to see societal shifts in perspective. The government are producing action plans through DEFRA and SCAP (Sustainable Clothing Action Plan), (SCAP 2020, 2016) of which 'Signatories represent 65% of clothes sold in the UK by volume and 54% by sales value and include a number of collectors, recyclers and charities'. This is due to innovation from a number of different individuals who have all worked hard in building awareness and change within the sector. Wood (2007) believes that to succeed in sustainable design, we should not focus on the main theme, but encourages the proliferation of many 'micro-utopias' developed by individuals and in co-operation rather than one 'Utopia'. This idea of collaborative design, and frameworks to aid working in this nature, can build into cross-collaborative innovation, leading to impact on a much larger scale. Working in this nature is important to the field, as it implies changing inherent systems, which requires joined up relationships with different members within the chains. This can then foster a more sustainable supply chain both at point of sale and through to end of life.

On a micro level within the Salvation Army, my initial reflections were that I had little impact within the company, and that the impact was felt greater on an external scale. However with time this innovation has had an impact on both the business and the individuals within it. Currently as an organization they have implemented a number of boutiques very similar to that of the Emmeline 4 Re model, to develop outlets for premium product for sale. Moving forward there is also opportunity to build on the developments that took place through the studied period, that has the potential to lead to wider reaching social innovation moving forward. 'Companies must bring business and society back together' (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p.64 and Schmitt, 2014, p.28), with this in mind there is now the potential for the Salvation Army and myself to develop on from the ideas initially tested and build new models for success. The aim will be to work collaboratively to seek opportunities for pre and post consumer waste, while driving forward the message of innovation for the Charity Sector, an area currently struggling to deal with the volume of fast fashion waste (Simpson, 2016). This will have the potential to re-shape, innovate, up skill and educate leading to truly embedded social innovation for the future.

Despite challenges throughout the period, it can be confirmed that Social Innovation has taken place. The impact of a clear vision can plant the seed of change to make a more sustainable future. Through cross-fertilization and careful nurturing, the impact can be wider than anything you initially intended. 'The path to a more beautiful world can come from vast plans and small gestures... as long as the strategy bears the needs of future visitors in mind' (McDonough and Braungart, 2015, p.180). It can be insightful to seek outside the social innovation paradigms for tested examples that can inform models for success in the future.

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