

OurNet



What
sort of
Web
do we
Want?

Introduction

Have we broken the Internet?

OurNet is an idea originally conceived by CEO Michael Brodie in 2003. Since then the grand promise of the World Wide Web - arguably humanity's greatest recent technological and social achievement - has become increasingly 'darker and muddier' with the advent of such widely-publicised phenomena as cyber-bullying, trolling, 'bad actors', fake news, political interference and the rise of autocratic, unaccountable, data-hungry tech giants.

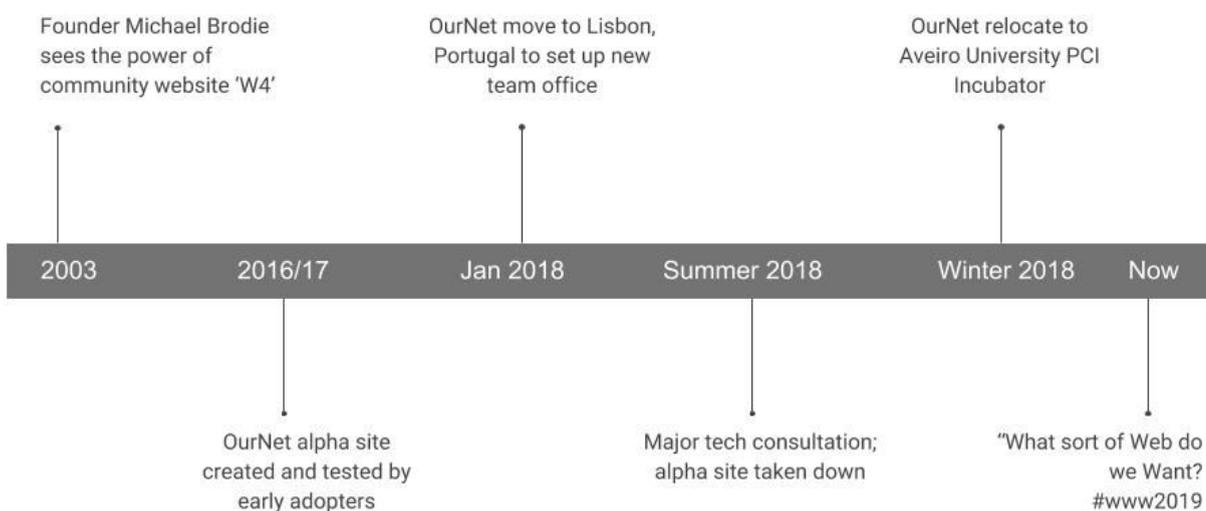
As we turn the historical page that is 2019, we are presented with a reflective and potentially crucial threshold, where we are asking the question: **"what sort of web do we want?"**.

What will web3.0 [1] look like? And what part can we ALL play in shaping the future of this exponential-growing, all-pervasive and incredibly powerful social technology?

This white paper offers some new options and possibilities that can lead us into a new, illuminating context of openness, community and collaboration, and away from fear and control. It is a context that everyone can co-create, and arguably must be involved with, given the dismal prognosis that 'business-as-usual' will predictably deliver to us.

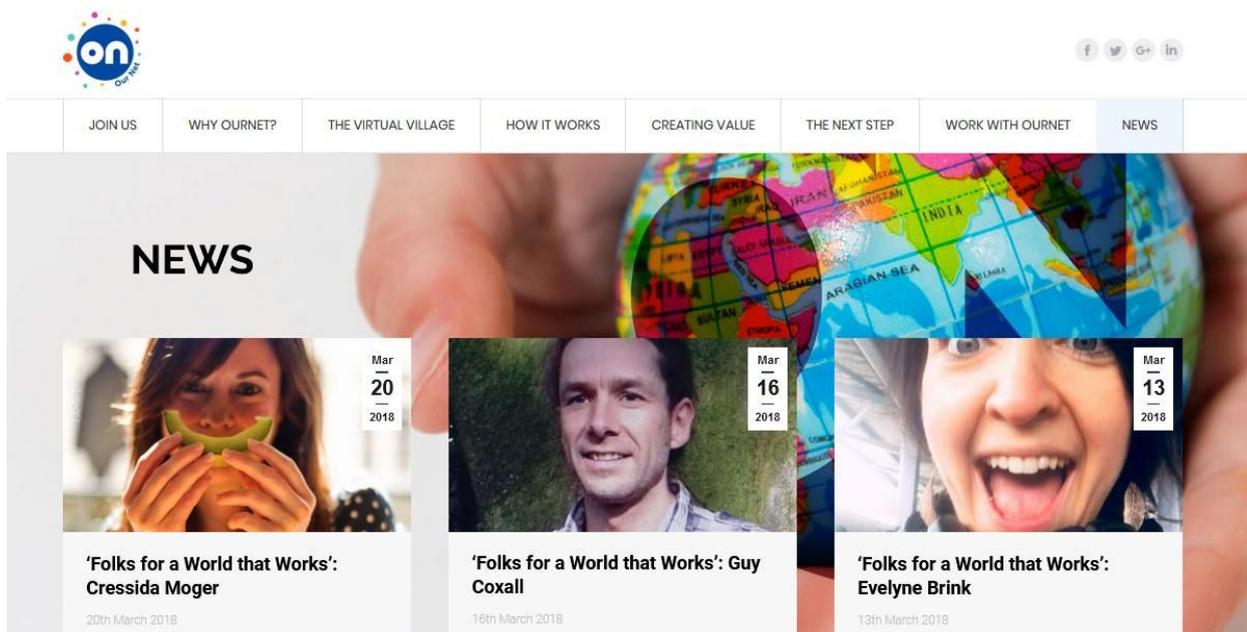
It is after all, OUR net!

#letsmakeitournet



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“Develop technologies that will support the best in humanity and challenge the worst”
- Tim Berners-Lee ‘inventor’ of the Internet



[The beginnings of the OurNet global community: ‘Folks for a World that Works’]

Summary

The #techlash [4] has begun and “something must be done”

"Over these 12 months our relationship with tech has both been darker and more muddy because it becomes increasingly clear that all the bright and shiny positive potentials of tech are at the risk of being darkened by forced misuse of data, manipulation, supervision, no respect of the citizen, no respect of individual rights." - Margrethe Vestager, EU Competition Commissioner

2018 web ‘scandals’ have included:

- Facebook having to apologise for letting 87 million users' details be harvested, many of which were obtained by the political consultancy Cambridge Analytica
- Twitter, Facebook and YouTube facing up to evidence that their platforms had been used by Russia and others to manipulate voters in the West
- the EU fining Google a record €4.3bn (\$5bn; £3.9bn) for using Android to illegally defend its dominance in search [2]

These, as well as a more general sense of growing unease and mistrust are leaving a bad taste in the collective portal. Big Tech is perhaps going the way of big banking: not only *too big to fail*, but too big (and too fast-moving) to challenge?

There are calls for more control. And Big Tech is being asked to control itself.

However:

“The internet is living proof that we can have the benefits of a single platform without it becoming a monopoly, and it stands as a testament to the creativity and innovation that this fosters. It also holds the solution to the present monopoly problem: openness. The fact that anyone can use, implement and build on the internet’s platform is what guaranteed its free and competitive opportunities.” Rufus Pollock, Associate Fellow, University of Cambridge [3]

At OurNet we want *a world that works, for all*. We understand the calls for control and regulation, but ask in all seriousness: can Big Tech control and regulate itself? And will these fear-based methods be the ‘cure’ for these current ills, and furthermore the blueprint for a new world?

We think not.

The future of the Web is best safe-guarded by all us. Openly, with no exceptions.

Issues and Solutions

“...responsibility to help one another grow seems to have been lost on social media (if it was ever even there) ... so often social media can be a platform to prove how wrong others are, rather than a platform of listening and learning.” - Reverend Joe Haward, embarking on a year-long break from all social networks, January 2019

Let’s take a look at some of the challenges the Internet is currently facing and consider OurNet’s alternatives:

Issue	Fear-based, old paradigm	Open, possibility based
Trolling	Censorship & bans	Social Intelligence & Peer Refinement
Cyber-bullying	Police with artificial intelligence	Reform with Social Intelligence
Data exploitation	Big Data	Smart Data - flows, not people
Bad Actors	Ban with algorithms	Refine with algorithms
Fake news	Search for ‘truth’	Creation of ‘trust’
Wealth goes to 1%	Break up monopolies	Reward contribution
Security breaches	Fines, more security	Minimal decentralised personal data
Political Interference	Censor & Ban	Digital democracy

Central to OurNet’s development, its DNA, is ‘Social Intelligence’. We are aiming to transform the way people relate to each other online as the transcendental shift required that takes us beyond polarity politics and division. We all want the same things, are motivated by the things - it’s only our behaviour that differs and enrages others, and we have systems that accentuate that process.

“When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail” - Abraham Maslow

In a sense, the web is working perfectly - the ‘system’ is delivering as intended. AND it could be so much better.

A new system, a new context, is what’s needed, to encourage and evolve human behaviour.

“What Sort of Web do I Want?”



Michael Brodie, CEO of OurNet

My first computer was a Commodore Vic-20 which I bought in 1980, right at the beginning of consumer computing. It was 11 years before my computer finally got connected by a dial-up service to the WWW. They were heady days, full of excitement at the growth of an incredible new technology that was transforming communication in the world, breaking down barriers, sharing knowledge, connecting people in a revolution that showed the promise similar to the invention of the printing press.

Many people would say, after recent online debacles, after the storm of controversies, that our new technology is broken and is destroying us. I don't believe that for a second. Human beings seem to be able to learn only from the mistakes we make. We are moving to a fully interconnected world where we shall make mistakes, which I believe will allow us to manifest the best in human beings, rather than the worst.

The www that I want (and the world that I want) is one where openness, responsibility and trust are the currency in which we are dealing rather than a world where the only real (sic) thing of value is this artificial thing that we have invented, called money.

Please join us and realise this vision for a web, and world, that works - for all.

At this point in the OurNet journey, we need to invest in the technology team behind this big idea. After deep and diligent consultation, we're clear about the makeup of that team and what it will cost. I have committed a significant amount of personal wealth to the idea and look now to others of a similar mind and intention to fund OurNet's next steps.

I have detailed these costs in this whitepaper and invite your involvement in our first public fundraising round. Whilst cash is clearly our fundraising priority, we of course welcome other forms of investment - of time and expertise.

Please reach out to me if you feel in any way moved or inspired to invest: michael@ournet.co

The OurNet Platform

How it works

Key Concepts

Social Intelligence (Peer Refinement)

OurNet has developed a digitised version of the social feedback mechanism to encourage contributory behaviours, rather than self-aggrandizement, abuse or opinion splurging.

Augmented Locality

Being physical beings, humans have a need for interactions based on locality as well as interests. OurNet hyper-links people based on these two key criteria.

The 'Virtual Village'

OurNet creates a personalised virtual village 'magazine' for each user, combining news, opinions, forums and events to give a virtual village notice board. All filtered by locality and interests.

Check Yourself (Reputation Meter)

Your reputation level will only be visible by you. However, your reputation will affect the impact your contributions have.

Economic Ecosystem

OurNet will be developing our own cryptocurrency, the OurBit. Earn through contribution, commentary and curation.

Me, Myself & I (Multiple Personas)

Express yourself in many ways and forms. Social intelligence still applies as you road test various versions of yourself

Basic Functionality

- Posting
- Groups
- Messaging
- Events
- Classified Advertising (contextual)
- Forums

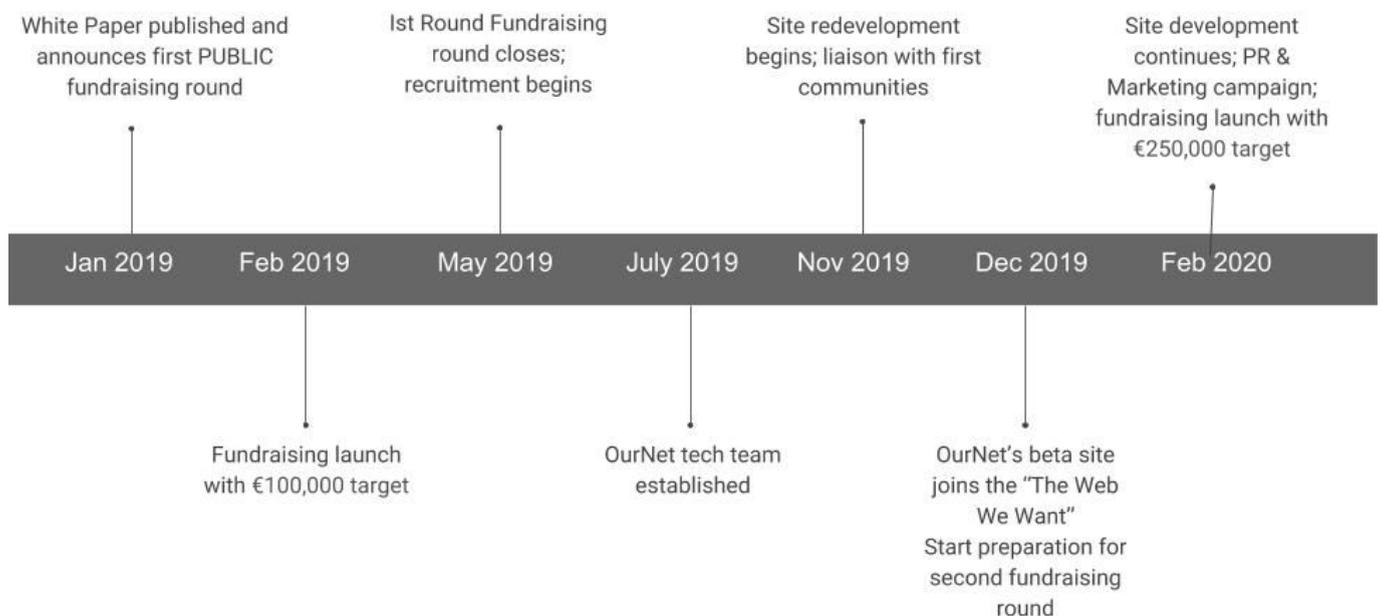
Development Strategy and Road Map

The road to the web we want and a world that works

This whitepaper is something of a manifesto, a peaceful call to arms and the basis of a fundraising request.

We have tested and shelved our *alpha* site, knowing that we need to re-develop and re-release OurNet2.0 with 'social intelligence' at its heart, fully developed and ready for testing by the very communities we want to serve.

It's clear, after much philosophical enquiry and prolonged consultation, that the next phase of realising OurNet's vision for a more profoundly connected and compassionate world is technological and practical. We shall launch an initial fundraising drive of €100,000 to support the development of the Beta version and to prepare for a larger fundraising round for the second major round of €250,000, timed to coincide with the official launch of the live version.



Team & Advisory Board

Core Team



Michael Brodie

Founder, former community architect and transformational consultant. Michael understands the power of context and narrative.



Carl Munson

Community Builder and 'Town Crier' at OurNet, Carl brings together experience from community transformation, publishing, media and marketing.

Michael Brodie - michael@ournet.co

Carl Munson - carl@ournet.co

Advisory Board

- David Schofield - Organisational Development
- Mark 'Lenny' McCoy - Technical Development
- Chukemeka Maxwell - Community & Social advisor
- Sue Haswell - Marketing & Communications advisor
- Alistair Hopkins - Technological Consultant (Alpha review)

Community & Outreach

OurNet aims to be *the* network for communities, with a **we-centric** rather than **i-centric** approach to social networking.

Community migration is part of our strategy to manage the impact of the 'day one' and 'empty playground' challenges.

There seems to be an endless stream of new social media sites that are offering an alternative to the biggest and least trusted players in the market. Few, if any, are aimed at the power and energy of the community collective. Most are focused on the atomic, personal profile.

OurNet shares its value proposition and intentions in the following ways:

- Social Media: Facebook group, page; Twitter, YouTube
- A weekly 'ONversations' podcast
- Hosts of the 'Grandfathers' project, bringing elder wisdom to the incubator environment
- Hosts of monthly talk: '*What sort of Web do we Want?*' - Aveiro University PCI Incubator
- Hosts of weekly lunch discussions: '*What sort of Web do we Want?*' - Aveiro University PCI Incubator
- Occasional press releases
- Very occasional newsletter

"Do we want to organise ourselves in a way that encourages people to push the boundaries and succeed extremely well by manipulating and using each other? Or do we want to start to reconsider the fundamental rules that we have?"

For us at OurNet it's back to the basics of 'social intelligence'. We need to change the way our system currently works to reward us when we misuse each other. We need a systemic transformation that deals with our 'split personality' of competitiveness and communality. We need to address how and why our sense of competitiveness undermines our wish to care for, and support, each other.

What we know gives us satisfaction is connection with, and support of, other people. I would rather see a 'cult of care and support' than the Internet's pervasive cult of egocentricity, individualism and polarised opinion."

- Michael Brodie #letsmakeitournet

Disclosure

OurNet has not generated any revenue.

Investment to date: circa £100,000

The information in this white paper is presented as a guide to our intentions and is in no way intended as a guarantee of financial gain or return.

Potential investors are asked to carry out their own due diligence.

The information presented in this document has been written and shared in good faith and does not imply any binding agreement or commitment with any third parties.

References & Recommended Reading

[1] We are thought to be in 'Web2.0' AKA the 'participatory' web - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0

[2] Tech became 'darker and more muddy' in 2018 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-46675680>

[3] 'Facebook and Google need fewer controls, not more' by Rufus Pollock -
<https://theconversation.com/facebook-and-google-need-fewer-controls-not-more-95237>

[4] 'techlash' from 'Together we can thwart the big-tech data grab. Here's how' by John Harris -
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/07/big-tech-data-internet>

[5] A Year Without Social Media - Revd Joe Haward -
<https://www.patreon.com/posts/year-without-1-23840491>

Recommended Reading & Viewing:

'The Blockchain and Us' Documentary - Manuel Stagars -
<https://manuelstagars.com/blockchain-documentary/>

Sir Tim Berners-Lee launches new 'Contract for the Web' -
<https://internetofbusiness.com/tim-berners-lee-launches-better-web/>

'I'm Leaving Patreon: Ask Me Anything' - The Rubin Report -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EoGWR4mr1k

'The Way Ahead' - Stephen Fry lecture transcript - <http://www.stephenfry.com/2017/05/the-way-ahead/>

'What Happens Next?' Series of future-focused films - <https://qz.com/is/what-happens-next-2>

