Researching the maintained Youth Service in Wales: is it drawn in different directions?

By

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This thesis is submitted to the University of Wales in fulfillment of the requirements of candidature for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

September 2006

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed .....

Date 29th March 2007

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to
Grandparents Daniel Thomas and May Phillips, Aunties Iris and Marion Phillips, Uncles Danny and Roy Phillips and to Kenneth John, Caridwen, Gillian, Alan, Gaynor and Liz Rose, all of whom have left a positive mark on my life that can never be explained nor repaid

This work is also dedicated to my daughter Amanda and my grandchildren Rhys and

Amber Rose Jenkins

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There have been throughout my youth work career a small number of colleagues who have given me support, direction and honesty in the appraisal of my work. My grateful thanks go to Bert Jones, a giant in the field of non-formal education in Wales, Dr Anne Donald for her great capacity to motivate and encourage, Dewi Roberts for always being straightforward and consistent with his opinions, Brian Thirsk for being honest, Barry Doughty for his enthusiasm and Fred Davies for his friendship and help. I am also grateful for the opportunities to meet and discuss the Youth Service with colleagues from Northern Ireland particularly Professor John McCormick from the Northern Ireland Youth Council and, in more recent years, Sam McCready from the University of Ulster. I would also like to thank Phil Sebury the librarian at the Wales Youth Agency who was always able to find the things that I could not.

To Professor Mark Drakeford my grateful thanks for understanding that I would never get anything done until it was absolutely necessary and for his supporting and encouraging style

I would also like to recognize the help and support given to me by the maintained Youth Service in Wales including the Principal Youth Officers, full-time and part-time workers, many of whom gave me so much time and information

SUMMARY

The study was carried out at a time when the maintained Youth Service in Wales had become drawn into a political agenda created by the election of New Labour in 1997 and the subsequent setting up of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999. As a consequence of the particular circumstances caused by these two events there was an imperative for the maintained Youth Service to make a rapid transition from its historically marginalised position to one more central within the new young-people agenda. The investigation is concerned to determine if the maintained Youth Service is able to attain this new position and make it secure in the long-term through a strategic approach that promotes an agreed philosophical position and maximises the opportunities presented to it by increased political attention and new resources.

The study found that the maintained Youth Service was generally unable to manage effectively the rapid increase in its staff numbers in a way that ensured the embedding of a collectively understood organisational approach that could be described as discrete. This was because the organisation was both philosophically unsound, because of the lack of a collectively shared understanding of purposes, principles and values, and structurally unsound because of inappropriate levels of resources and the organisation of its staff. Consequently, the maintained Youth Service in Wales remains marginalised because it has been unable to locate its discrete method of practice within the new structures being developed for the delivery of services to young people.

The investigation concludes that a contemporary maintained Youth Service needs to collectively develop persuasive arguments that ensure greater government attention and resources on non-formal community based learning for those between the ages of 11 to 25, delivered in a way that ensures their voluntary attendance. This may only be possible if some key aspects of maintained Youth Service management and delivery are moved away from its current local authority location

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this investigation is to establish if the maintained Youth Service in Wales is concurrently able to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of relevant Government Policy while maintaining its discrete identity as described within its purposes[1] and values[2] statements. Finding an answer to this question is important for those working within the Youth Service which has become increasingly linked to the political decisions arising from the election of New Labour to UK government in 1997 and 2001 and by the setting up of the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) in 1999. As a consequence, the Youth Service in Wales has been given an opportunity, through new legislation, policy initiatives and methods of working, to contribute to the new politically driven economic and social regeneration agenda, underpinned for New Labour by its key priority – education (Blair 1997, Blair 1998). To make the most of the opportunities arising from this new political environment, and to make sure it is capable of meeting enhanced competition from other organisations providing government-funded services to young people, the maintained Youth Service will need to both recognise and respond to the challenges resulting from the election success of New Labour.

A challenge of particular importance both to the maintained[3] Youth Service and to this investigation is the link between the commitment of New Labour to education and the requirement that the expenditure of public money should be based on an ability to demonstrate (through the attainment of measurable outcomes) that specified requirements

[1] To provide equality of opportunity for all young people in order that they may fulfil their potential as empowered individuals and as members of groups and communities- To support young people in the transition to adulthood - To assist young people to develop attitudes and skills which enable them to make purposeful use of their personal resources and time (Appendix 1)

[2] Which recognize: social education as the core process in youth and communitywork; the ability and inability of people to resolve problems and change themselves; the tension and distinction between empowering and controlling people; the rights to self determination; the importance of collective action and collaborative working relationships; and the value of co-operation and conflict (Appendix 2)

[3] The organizational framework (under the direct control of the local authority) within which a discrete way of working with young people is undertaken in accordance with an identified constitutional base (Appendix 3).

are achieved. This stance has continued to be the predominantly accepted way of judging young people's learning in school. Driven by an examination culture, schools have increasingly refined their structures, management styles, teaching methods, monitoring and evaluation systems in an attempt to ensure that young people secure ever-improving examination results (Kendall and Holloway 2001). School-based monitoring systems are used to manage the effective knowledge acquisition of young people; these are concerned with keeping a continuous record of incremental learning of pupils through their involvement in standardised individual testing (ibid).

This stance is having a significant effect on Youth Service practice, which is becoming increasingly concerned with measuring its effectiveness – primarily through the use of school-based methods – in the quantifiable learning of young people involved in its work. This is a situation that cannot easily be avoided or dismissed for two fundamental reasons. First, the maintained Youth Service in Wales is clearly identified as an educational organisation (NAW 2000a). Second, its core funding is obtained from central government grants supported by income raised from the council tax (Young and Rao 1997). This funding situation makes the maintained Youth Service directly responsible and accountable to both local and national government for the delivery of appropriate elements of education legislation and policy. Both of these direct links to government control require the maintained Youth Service in Wales to make decisions about how it can respond to the challenge of new government initiatives while attempting to maintain its predominantly non-formal education[4] approach to learning.

Built on the work of educators such as Illich (1971), Brookfield (1987) Jarvis (1987) and Freire (1996), this non-formal approach challenges the overall effectiveness[5] of formal education[6], including its methods of measuring success, in isolation by offering a broader

[4] Non-formal education is defined as any intentional and systematic educational undertaking (usually outside the structure of the traditional school) in which the content, methods, time periods, admissions criteria, personnel, facilities, and other components of the system are selected and/or adapted to maximise the attainment of the learning mission and minimise the maintenance problems of thesystem (Suhm 1979).
[5] Achieving its stated purpose
[6] A process typically provided by an education or training institution, structured in terms of learning, objectives, time or support and leading to certification. Formal learning is described as being intentional from the learners perspective (European Commission 2001)

perspective of the values of non-formal learning as a complementary method to formal learning systems. Formal learning systems, these non-formal educators claim, offer certain types of arrangements which may not suit the needs of all learners, implying that the formal context offers some, but not all, an opportunity for learning. To overcome this, they suggest systems should be developed to:

> *"provide the learner with new links to the world instead of continuing to funnel all educational programmes through the teacher."*
>
> (Illich 1971:73)

This philosophy has been promoted as the most appropriate approach for the Youth Service, which is described as a community-based organisation involved in a non-formal style of teaching and learning during the leisure time of young people (National Youth Agency (NYA) 2000a, Wales Youth Agency (WYA) 1995). The Youth Service achieves this aim through the use of participative and empowering methods, with the fundamental principle of its work with individuals and groups arising from mutual agreement between practitioners and young people. This basis of negotiation and contract serves as the foundation for a particular style of learning driven by a belief that:

> *"knowledge is assumed to be actively constructed by the learner, not passively received from the environment; and second, learning is an interactive process of interpretation, integration and transformation of one's experiential world."*
>
> (Pratt 1993:17)

The importance of changing attitudes to learning – both in style, location and measurement of outcomes – is increasingly linked, both from an individual and a government perspective, to the need to ensure a competitive ability in an economy increasingly affected by enhanced globalisation, driven by a knowledge economy (Leadbeater 1997). Within this environment embedded assumptions regarding society's traditional economic and social model are being challenged in a fundamental way. In the opinion of Jamar (1996) this will include challenging such notions as:

- Education prepares for a job, that
- This job could last a lifetime, and that

- Life itself is largely divided into a period of education followed by a long period of work, and a period of retirement

Consideration therefore needs to be given to the role of education and training within a reorganising working environment characterised by less certain employment patterns that make the concept of a lifelong career less possible. Individual life plans will need to be considered and will have to contain a combination of working and non-working time, improved management of leisure and a greater personal responsibility for the acquisition of both knowledge and skills appropriate for a changing society. Included within these descriptions would be attributes such as decision making, problem solving, and communication skills which could be used, in both working and non-working situations.

Other questions are also being raised (Jamar 1996) with regard to the reorganisation of working and non-working time, including the future expectations of both employers and employees, how skills, experience and formal qualifications will be measured and recognised and whether work will remain the dominant link to social integration.

In this context non-formal education approaches need to be re-evaluated within a government strategy for education. It is the intention of this investigation to determine if the maintained Youth Service in Wales has the ability to both persuade the government of its role and make an effective contribution to a changing economic and social environment.

1.2 The research framework

As a consequence of the formation of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999, policy for young people became concerned with an entitlement model which promises access to a range of services *"designed to promote their attainment and development as individuals"* (NAW 2000a:6). The intended outcome of this approach is an enhanced contribution by young people to the economic regeneration strategy of the Assembly with its related impact on its defined social regeneration agenda (NAW 2000a, NAW 2001a).

This investigation is concerned, therefore, to evaluate the ability of the maintained Youth Service in Wales to contribute to those political aspirations as a collective national body identified by a commitment to working with young people in a particular way. This approach could be seen as unusual because the limited research into the Youth Service in Wales has usually focused on individual Local Authority provision or particular National Voluntary Youth Organisations. The decision to focus this investigation on the Youth Service across the whole of Wales can be justified because it is recognized that the *"present service is patchy with great variation in quality and coverage across Wales"* (NAW 2000a:47) and because there is a political commitment to ensure young people are not excluded from access to promised services as a consequence of where they live (ibid). For these two reasons, it is felt that any decision to carry out the investigation within a particular local authority or a small number of selected local authorities could result in an inadequate breadth and depth of information on which to base an answer to the research question. This investigation will therefore consider the maintained Youth Service in Wales as a single case from which data will be obtained and analysed in order to determine how effectively it contributes, in a collective way, to the agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the needs of young people. The information from this single case will be obtained from multiple sources of evidence, including a questionnaire survey, analysis of documents, and interviews (Chapter 2).

In an attempt to achieve its purpose, the investigation will be concerned to examine three broad areas: the maintained Youth Service; government policy related to young people; and the needs of young people involved in the Youth Service. Each of these areas provides the opportunity for extensive research consideration in its own right. The justification of the research and its claim to originality is, however, the consideration of the interconnected relationship of the three areas within the Welsh context. Attempts will be made to obtain answers to the following questions, which will be asked of the maintained Youth Service across Wales:

1. How knowledgeable is it of its discreet identity, as evidenced by:
    - the level of collective knowledge and understanding by those working within it of its purpose and associated principles and values?

2. Is it appropriately resourced as evidenced by:
   - the availability of suitable levels of suitably qualified and trained workers?
   - the available levels of financial and physical resources?
3. How is it organised as evidenced by:
   - levels of contact with young people?
   - the age, gender and academic attainment of those young people using it?
   - the methods used by workers to identify the needs of the young people they come into contact with?
   - the identified needs of young people?
4. What does it do and how does it measure the outcomes as evidenced by:
   - the programme it offers to young people?
   - its planned outcomes?
   - its methods for measuring its outcomes?

1.3 Limitations of the research

In developing this broad-based approach, it is recognised that a number of potential limitations of the research need to be considered. First, the investigation is located within the maintained Youth Service with a level of confidence that suggests such an organisation exists with a range of characteristics clearly recognised and understood by those who work within it. The reality for some, however, is an organisation which has treated its history in a cavalier manner and in doing so distorted its identity to a point where it is neither clearly understood by those whom it employs or by those who pay for it or those young people who are potential beneficiaries (Chapter 3). Second, within this uncertain environment it would be those employed within the maintained Youth Service who would be asked how they ensured synergy between the three elements of the research question. There was no intention to question the government directly about their intent for the maintained Youth Service within their overall strategy for young people. Neither was there any intent to question young people about their needs and the role of the maintained Youth Service in meeting them. The investigation would be dependent on the level of knowledge and understanding of those employed within the maintained Youth Service of

its discrete identity, the needs of young people it was in contact with and the requirements of relevant government policy. The quality of this knowledge and understanding would be dependent on the efficacy of local authorities' recruitment and training programmes during a time of potential expansion Third, government policy relating to education, young people and the Youth Service was developing at an unprecedented speed, as was the increase in funding (Chapter 3). The full effect of these developments would have had little time to impact on how the maintained Youth Service would operate, for example, within Young People's Partnerships (YPPs) (NAW 2000a) or its relationship with the new Youth Policy Unit established within the Welsh Assembly Government. This developing relationship would, it was recognised by the researcher, be dependent on the priorities of the new Youth Policy Unit and the choices it would make between, for example, developing strategies focused on a universal non-formal education approach or a social care approach focused on those most in need.

However, despite these potential limitations, it is believed that the approach taken will help provide results that could be of use to:

- policy makers within the Welsh Assembly Government;
- those involved in the strategic development of the Youth Service, including Chief Executives of Local Authorities, Directors of Education, and Principal Youth Officers; and
- Youth Service practitioners and other professionals working within related fields, such as Social Work, Education, Police, and Careers.

The investigation is also underpinned by a belief that the results will make a contribution to future Youth Service practice delivered in Wales by:

- suggesting ways in which the potential opportunities presented by the election of New Labour (with its focus on educational priorities) are not missed by the Youth Service in Wales;
- ensuring that the Youth Service is neither misunderstood nor overstated within current developments, but is rightly recognised as an effective contributor to both

the education and learning of young people and the core agenda of central government; and

- providing a foundation for future practice as it relates to meeting the needs of young people and the requirements of appropriate government policy.

1.4 Justifying the research setting

Two particular reasons give legitimacy for carrying out the investigation specifically within Wales. The first is the little-recognised historical differences between the Youth Services in Wales and in England. The second is the setting up in 1999 (as part of the programme of devolution introduced by New Labour following their UK election success in 1997) of the National Assembly for Wales, which resulted in both a 'Made in Wales' approach and the introduction of specific National Assembly initiatives for the Youth Service.

1.4.1 Historical differences

Throughout its history, the Youth Service in Wales has been linked to the Youth Service in England (Ministry of Education 1960, Welsh Office 1984). In taking this approach, a number of opportunities have often been missed to examine a range of differences cultivated, it is claimed (Jones and Rose 2001), by distinctive social, political, and economic variance between the two countries. These include:

- a chronologically short industrial expansion within a narrow range of heavy industry;
- the system of local government in Wales;
- the effects on the Welsh Language as a result of immigration over a relatively short period of time;
- educational developments specific to Wales;
- the comparative weakness of the middle class and the effect of that on philanthropic activity related to young people;
- the importance of the Welsh Nonconformist movement as a working-class religion; and

- the dominance of the Labour Party at local government level.

This is not to claim that each of these elements has an equitable effect on the development of the Youth Service in Wales, but to recognise that each has had an influence that has, to some degree, shaped Youth Service practice in a way that can be described as specifically Welsh. These differences include:

- the setting up of the Wales Youth Work Partnership (WYWP) in 1985, which led to the establishment of the Wales Youth Agency with its specific responsibility to support the development of a Youth Service that reflects the economic and social conditions in Wales;
- the production of a Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales;
- the introduction of an Education and Training Standards Committee in Wales, leading to the development of a training route peculiar to those working in the Youth Service in Wales;
- Youth Service reports and documents specific to Wales;
- setting up of the National Assembly for Wales; and
- a specific agenda for young people in Wales.

These characteristics, identified by the Wales Youth Agency in 2000, were also recognised by the National Assembly for Wales (NAW 2000a:8), who claimed the *"building blocks"* were in place across Wales for the introduction of a strategic approach leading to the development of *"a specific Welsh system for the support of young people"* (Michael 2000:1).

1.4.2 Devolution

The new National Assembly for Wales was created by the Welsh Government Act 1998 (HMSO 1998) and assumed responsibility for a wide range of policies and public services previously controlled by the UK government through the Secretary of State for Wales, including:

1. setting policies to improve the Welsh economy and the quality of life for people in Wales through integrated strategies for the reduction of poverty and the improvement of health;
2. secondary legislation powers as a means of influencing the body of law which governs Wales;
3. developing the policy context within which Welsh public bodies operate, including a reduction in the numbers of non-elected bodies;
4. issuing guidance and directions on a range of issues, including job creation and child care provision; and
5. becoming the forum for national debate on issues facing Wales.

The people of Wales have invested the achievement of these new responsibilities in 60 Assembly Members who are elected every 4 years. Of these, 40 are elected through a simple plurality election reflecting the existing UK Parliamentary constituencies. The remaining 20 are chosen through an additional member electoral system, which reflects the five former European Parliamentary constituencies. Each of these electoral regions selects 4 members. It was intended that this process would improve the *'democratic deficit'* arising from limited UK government accountability to the people of Wales (Welsh Office 1997). To further embed this concept of democracy and to ensure equal consideration to all parts of the political spectrum in Wales, the structure and functions of the Assembly are divided into subject committees, membership of which is in proportion to specific party representation. The chairs of each of the subject committees are drawn from the Assembly Cabinet. There are also 4 Regional Committees for Mid, North, South East, and South West Wales, made up from Assembly Members for the relevant constituencies and regions who represent the interests of those areas. This new political framework was also promoted as a new style democracy, which would:

> *"let Welsh people express their own priorities – for better schools and health services, for bringing the quangos under control and into the open; for directing the £7,000 million of Welsh Office spending where it is most needed. The environment, housing, transport and business would all benefit from a strategic view based on the needs of the whole of Wales."*
>
> Davies (1998:5)

This was a key message delivered by the Labour Party in Wales during the election campaign and the first years of the life of the Assembly. The Assembly would be for the people of Wales, it would be accountable to the people of Wales, and its priorities would be to ensure their economic and social well-being. From its very beginning, the National Assembly was keen to promote a new way of operating, described as 'Team Wales'. This was an approach designed to maximise the relationship between the private, public, and voluntary sectors as a means of delivering its three major themes of sustainable development, social inclusion, and equal opportunities (NAW 2000b). These themes would be linked to new education and training initiatives with their ability, in the opinion of Davidson (2001a:1), the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, to liberate talent, extend opportunity, empower communities, and help create wealth. To achieve this 'Team Wales' approach it was recognised that Wales would need, at times, to develop its own strategic direction from England through developing its own policy direction. This position was reinforced when it was claimed *"we aim to do things differently in Wales – through our 'Made in Wales' approach...as a means to create unique Welsh solutions to Welsh problems"* (Davidson 2001b:1). The 'Made in Wales' theme was continued throughout the strategic plan of the Assembly (NAW 2001b) with the claim that the Team Wales approach would be used to tackle the particular economic and social conditions through greater investment in knowledge generation and exploitation.

1.5 Structure of the investigation

The decisions leading to the choice of an appropriate research methodology are detailed in Chapter 2. An attempt is made in Chapter 3 to identify the collectively agreed characteristics of the maintained Youth Service through an examination of its history and its responses to the political and social contexts within which it has operated. Chapter 4 examines how the maintained Youth Service identifies the needs of the young people it comes into contact with. The requirements that the government places on the maintained Youth Service are identified in Chapter 5. Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 contain an analysis of the research findings. Chapter 10 contains the conclusions and recommendations of the investigation.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

2.1 Introduction

It is the intention of this chapter to identify the data collection and analysis techniques that will be used to provide a reliable[1] and valid[2] answer to the research question (Chapter 1.1). To achieve this objective, it will be necessary to identify and select a research strategy capable of determining both the level of collective knowledge and understanding of those involved in the maintained Youth Service of the three elements of the investigation and the links they make to these in their practice. Within this framework a suitable approach (including the selection of the most appropriate research instruments) must be developed to provide evidence on which a conclusion to the investigation can be based. There is an understanding of the inherent difficulties in achieving this aim because collecting useful or reliable data about the maintained Youth Service in Wales has historically been difficult because managers and full-time and part-time workers have often appeared to be reluctant to contribute (WYWP 1991, Howells 1993, Edwards 1993, Rose 1997). Within this setting, obtaining defendable data of use in answering the research question (Chapter 1.1) would require a broad-based approach grounded in contemporary practice (Chapter 3). As was stated previously (Chapter 1), a consequence of this stance could be to obtain information of a more general nature, to the exclusion of much of the detail of contemporary practice, with its links to the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy. Nevertheless it was believed that given the limitations of previous research projects in Wales, the approach decided upon would result in the availability of new evidence, the analysis and interpretation of which would make an appropriate new contribution to the body of knowledge about the maintained Youth Service in Wales.

[1] Concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable (Bryman 2001)
[2] Concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research(Bryman 2001)

2.2 The role of the researcher

There is, it is claimed, no objective research, only research socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed, with both being affected by language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity (Denzin and Lincoln 1998). This position was emphasised by Williamson (1985:656), who claimed the role of the researcher was an important factor that needed careful consideration because *"no data collection technique, no method of analysis and interpretation can be entirely free from the researcher's own intervention"*. This was a position further supported by Davies (1999:ix), who claimed that it is necessary to *"own up to the subjectivity which is part of the analysis of any human enterprise as this is filtered through the values, feelings and preconceptions of the analyst"*. Consequently, it is claimed, there can be no neutral relationship between the researcher and the researched and it is widely recognised that the social world cannot be studied without the researcher becoming part of it (Hammersley and Atkinson 1990). The level and effect of this becoming 'part of' is seen to be dependent on the cultural influences affecting those involved in the investigation. Considerable attention has been given to the concept of culture: Milner (1991), Alasuutari (1995), Eagleton (2000) and Fuchs (2001), are among many who have attempted to summarise its characteristics. In a broad sense and not to diminish its complexity, it has been described as a collective subjectivity, a way of life or outlook adopted by a particular community or a social class, dependent on acquired knowledge used to interpret experience and generate social behaviour. This concept of culture raises a number of questions related to the role of the researcher within this investigation. What, for example, is the way of life for the researcher; what acquired knowledge has been built and to what level will the effects of this knowledge be used to interpret experience and generate social behaviour; and what are the effects of those answers on this particular investigation?

The reply to these questions is grounded in both my personal and professional lives, which have been interwoven over a period of almost 50 years. I first became involved with the Youth Service at the age of 7 and have, with the exception of a number of short breaks, been part of it ever since. Initially and primarily, the involvement was with the voluntary sector, the 'Boys Club'. The reason for the involvement was simple; it was to

play sport, specifically basketball, at which I became an international player, and football, where I had a trial for Tottenham Hotspur at the age of 15. It was, until the age of seventeen, almost a five-night-a-week commitment to take part in competition and practice. In 1964, I became Assistant Leader to Clive Thomas (Clive the Book), the infamous World Cup football referee whose style of authoritarian refereeing was replicated in his work with young men in the Rhondda Valley in the early 1960s. In 1965, I became, during a two-year period of recovery from a sports injury, Team Manager of the Treherbert Boys' Club under 14s football team. This was to be my first contact with young people in my new role as adult. Despite only winning one game in our first season, that period of my youth work career is, on reflection, filled with the memories of the commitment, enthusiasm and enjoyment of a group of young people who became, like many other young people, lifelong friends.

There was, I believed, little expectation of me achieving academic success. Neither was there any necessity for me to do so during an era of plentiful work in the local mines. Attendance at the local Secondary Modern school, once the 11 plus had been failed, was to be no more than a basic preparation for a working life underground. There is little memory of any learning between 1959 and 1963 involving the formal education system. School was often violent. Corporal punishment was the norm, usually the cane, but fists were also used by teachers, on odd occasions on each other, but most often and most regularly on the pupils. I left school at 15, went down the pit and became a source of a number of problems to both my family and my community through my regular acts of violence and involvement in a wide range of other anti-social behaviour, much of which I still recall with some embarrassment and regret. On reflection, it would be easy to blame my behaviour on my environment. This was a new council estate set on the mountainside in the Rhondda Valley, which quickly developed a negative reputation. It would be more accurate to suggest that I faced no more than the confusion, uncertainty and lack of confidence of many male adolescents raised in what was projected publicly as a male-dominated environment. My anchor point for most of this time was the Youth Service, which recognised my sporting ability and disregarded my lack of social and academic

success. The culture was one of fairness, openness and reward for achievement and the youth workers have generally remained in my memory as positive role models.

Inevitably, I was above all else during this time a teenager of the 60s, driven by music, fashion, the emerging drugs scene and the opportunity for travel. It was also a time of developing political awareness caused by close contact with those associated with the Communist Party and those who had fought in the Spanish Civil War. From these colleagues, friends and associates, I learned an active distaste for the Conservative Party, religion, royalty and the injustice of what has become described as postcode deprivation. This final point is crucial to the focus of this investigation because I have come to believe that the Youth Service, when it is effectively delivered, is capable of challenging social inequalities. It achieves this, in my experience, by introducing young people into a form of education and learning that provides a bridge from the compulsory to the post-compulsory systems, resulting for many in the more effective continuation of learning throughout life.

In 1966, after almost 5 years as a collier with the National Coal Board, I found employment as a labourer in a local company. When I left in 1975, I had become Production Manager, responsible for directing the work of more than 300 men on a three-shift system with a budget of £3 million. This position had been arrived at via the post of Chief Inspector responsible for the quality control procedures for the manufacture of products, many of which were destined for the nuclear power and petrochemical industries. These posts had been obtained without the benefit of academic qualifications and with little in-service training but from experience of learning by doing, which resulted in the development of an outcome-driven approach that was supported by both innovation and risk-taking. These characteristics continued, I believe, in my role as a youth worker. I held a number of other senior positions in local companies before deciding, in 1978, to become trained as a youth worker in the then recently opened course at the North East Wales Institute at Wrexham. The effects on my life of that training and the influence of Bert Jones, a true non-formal educator, were immense.

In 1980, I qualified, was divorced by my childhood love, moved to the Tottenham district of London to help develop an innovative youth project focused on young unemployed people, before becoming a centre-based youth worker in the economically rich area of Stourport-on-Severn. In 1981, I returned to Cardiff, at the invitation of Alun Michael, who later became first secretary to the National Assembly, to become the Project Leader of the City Centre Youth Project. In 1985, I moved to the Ely area as a local authority Community Education Officer. It was here more than anywhere else that I realised how out of step I was with the youth-work philosophy and management style of the largest and richest local authority Youth Service in Wales. My confusion and alienation from my colleagues as a result of my approach was partly explained, I believe, by the fact that I was the first and, for a time, the only qualified worker in a service run by former schoolteachers. Most of these colleagues displayed the same characteristics of control that I had encountered during my brief membership of a local authority Youth Centre in Treherbert. They were also removed, I felt, both intellectually and practically from the value base of the Youth Service with its ability to challenge the social inequalities promoted by the era of Thatcherism.

In 1990, I became Training Adviser for the Welsh-Office-funded Wales Youth Work Partnership (WYWP). This organisation became the Wales Youth Agency (WYA) in 1992, which is where I am still employed, with a core responsibility for training, as well as being responsible for the management of the organisation's programme within my role as Assistant Chief Executive. In 1997, I completed an M. Phil. concerned with examining the link between local authority policy for the Youth Service and practice. Throughout my time with the WYWP and the WYA, I continued as a volunteer youth worker with North Ely Expeditions, a project which involved young people in a number of initiatives as a diversion from crime and anti-social behaviour. Activities have included purchasing and converting a bus that has been used on overland expeditions to Southeast Turkey, Morocco, Austria, Sicily and the Outer Hebrides. Community aid programmes have also been carried out in Kenya and exchange programmes carried out with the USA and Italy.

These personal and professional experiences of the Youth Service formed the basis for the focus of this research by raising fundamental questions related to both the process and the outcomes of Youth Service provision. Even more importantly, it raised questions about its value. An organisation to which I had given a substantial part of my life did not appear to be given the recognition it deserved. Instead, it appeared to be a victim of political neglect both at a local and national level. It has become increasingly important to me to attempt to find the reasons why, because my personal experience is full of the success of young people due to their involvement with the Youth Service. Many have improved dramatically, in an educational sense, while many more have become anonymous, but generally content, citizens living their lives like their peers. For many others, most of whom did not own a passport when they came into contact with the Youth Service, the experience was the catalyst for a life of continuing adventure in places like Canada, the USA, Indonesia and Australia. In the past decade, I have developed a belief that the Youth Service is ineffectively managed within a structure that I see as competitive, underpinned by self-interest, driven by old arguments, old debates, old practices and old divisions. Consequently, it is an organisation often devoid of fresh intellectual debate, underpinned by suspicion and doubt where professional challenge is most often seen as personal dislike.

These aspects of my life, which are in the main unknown to the majority of my professional colleagues in Wales, are linked as potential influences on the investigation, as is my public professional life. I am a senior officer of the Wales Youth Agency and, as such, could be seen as an establishment figure driven by a government agenda. This position could be supported by my recent involvement in a number of developments within local authorities in Wales and with a number of key initiatives, including representative roles on UK committees related to Youth Service provision. I have also been involved as an external consultant to a number of internal reviews of local education authorities and the youth services of national voluntary organisations: in some instances, these reviews have led to major organisational change. These experiences raise concerns regarding my role within the investigation because of their potential to influence both the reliability and validity of the research. The same strategy is used to deal with the issues of

being seen as a possible agent of the local education authority and as a member of an establishment organisation funded by government. It is my intention, within the time available, to enter into a dialogue with those who would be directly involved in the research to confirm both the parameters and its purpose as an academic study. Care will be taken to lay ownership of the study with the researcher and not with individual local education authorities or the Wales Youth Agency. Individual confidentiality will be assured, although those involved in the dialogue would be clearly informed that the research findings would be available to a wider audience than those involved in the investigation. This action would be built on an existing foundation of trust between those in the local education authorities in Wales and me, which has been developed through an ongoing work programme. There is a history of working with colleagues in the Youth Service in a collaborative way within which a *"track record of trust is clocked up just as a log of reliability is recorded"* (Fletcher and Adelman 1982:22). This position has been achieved by working in a participative way with individuals and groups on a number of initiatives, including staff development programmes. Consequently, a style of working has been established that recognises the:

> *"equality of expertise between an outside consultant or researcher and the practitioner, which depended on sharing, cross communicating and cross-fertilisation"*
>
> (Williamson, 1985:632)

It is my assessment that the action taken will minimise the perception among the respondents that the study is being carried out under the direct influence of the organisations involved in the study, the Wales Youth Agency or the local authority. This action would, it is believed, allow the responses to be made within a framework of confidentiality and clear research purpose.

I am also aware of the complex process of analysing the research findings within a context that recognises the *"importance of the subjective experience of individuals in the creation of the social world"* (Cohen and Manion 1989:8). Those taking part in the study, who are in general driven by the underlying principles and values of youth work, would support a balanced (not necessarily objective) report, which explores in an open way a wide range

of relevant issues. This is not to imply that the writer would adopt a casual approach to the investigation or to the interpretation of the results. Care would be taken to develop an understanding of the problems involved in interpreting to the participants the statistical correlation in relation to the meaning of the variables involved (Marsh 1982). By developing multiple methods of measurement and by the use of appropriate research instruments within a framework of triangulation, the results obtained would be both appropriate and credible. In addition, my credibility as a practising youth worker would contribute to the co-operation of other practitioners and enhance my ability to interpret a variety of levels of meanings in the responses.

2.3 Theoretical paradigms and perspectives

The researcher recognises that the investigation is contained within the debate relating to the differences between natural and social science (Patton 1987, Cook and Reichardt 1979, Bryman 1988, Cohen and Manion 1989, Blaikie 1993). It is claimed that this debate focuses on quantitative (positivist) and qualitative (phenomenological) data-collecting techniques not simply as methods but conceptualised as paradigms (Giorgi 1970, Filstead 1970). Paradigms are described (Kuhn 1970) as a set of interrelated assumptions about the social world that provides a philosophical and theoretical framework for the organised study. This framework, in the broadest sense, represents a *"disciplinary matrix"* (Kuhn 1970:181), within which it is possible to develop generalisations, assumptions, values, beliefs and examples of what constitutes the discipline's interests. The outcome of such a matrix is a setting within which scientists view the nature of their reality, the components that it comprises and how they are related as reflected in concepts, laws and theories. This stance is supported by appropriate techniques for investigating their reality, drawing on exemplars of previous scientific achievement that provide the base for further practice and the recruitment of students into a particular scientific community. The issue is further described by Guba and Lincoln (1981:53), who list seven paradigms which they describe as *"models, prototypes"* used by epistemologists in the search for truth. Unable to give a definitive answer to the question of which paradigm provides the most effective guidance

for the conduct of an inquiry or evaluation, they conclude that the most widely used are the scientific (positivist) and the phenomenological (naturalistic) models.

The 'positivist' model can be linked to an approach built on the foundation of Comte's ontological approach of an ordered universe made up of *"atomistic, discrete and observable events"* (Blaikie 1993:72). It is a model focused on phenomena measured by orthodox physical scientific methods such as the classic pre-and post-tests, which produce reliable, hard, and replicable data. This position is underpinned by an epistemological belief that all genuine knowledge is based on sense, experience capable of advance through the use of observation, experiment and comparative analysis. The positivist method is commonly identified by a number of core characteristics related to generating *quantifiable* data underpinned classically by the positivist or neo-positivist philosophy. This approach suggests that members of society define reality in the same way because they share the same meanings, built on an understanding that reality is independent of human consciousness, is objective, rests on order and is governed by strict, natural and unchangeable laws. The approach is seen as empirical, verifiable by observation and evidence, providing data, yielding proof or strong confirmation, in probability terms, of a theory or hypothesis in a research setting, and able to fix the limits of a set of defined procedures clearly described in a way that allows for repeatability. Accordingly, values, metaphysics, philosophical reasoning or speculation cannot be allowed to influence facts because they do not offer reliable and verifiable data with empirical relevance. By accepting these principles, the scientific approach, underpinned by attempts of objectivity and neutrality, sees research objects as scientific objects, which are, as a result, treated as such.

In contrast to the positivist stance, the 'naturalistic' approach is based on the belief that the social world is always a human creation not a discovery and, as a result, tries to capture reality as seen and experienced by those involved. It is a 'phenomenological' approach concerned to study real-world situations as they unfold through the employment of procedures that produce descriptive data through the use of the respondents' own words, views and experiences. Bryman (1988) claims that the most fundamental

characteristic of qualitative research is a commitment to viewing events, actions, norms and values from the perspective of those who are being studied. This, it is claimed, is an appropriate stance because of the complexity of human nature and *"the elusive and intangible quality of social phenomena, which contrasts strikingly with the order and regularity of the natural world"* (Cohen and Manion 1989:12). The phenomenological standpoint is therefore underpinned by an epistemological position that emphasises constructivist approaches, where there is no obvious objectivity or reality, with a definition of social life emerging from the shared creativity of individuals (Filstead 1970). The researcher recognises that critics of this approach claim that qualitative research is a soft option within which there are problems of reliability, caused by extreme subjectivity and relativism. This is a position exacerbated by the collection of what may be viewed as incomprehensible and purposeless information that cause problems of representativeness and generalisability of findings. Qualitative research can also be criticised for its lack of objectivity and detachment and its problems of ethics caused by entering the personal environment of the subjects (Bryman 2001).

The researcher recognises the tensions, differences of opinion and lack of clarity within this debate, which has been plagued by theoretical and methodological controversies between the positivist and naturalistic stances. There is, however, a growing belief that there is no one right way of carrying out research (Robson 1998, Blaikie 1993). Claims are made that both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have the same origin and that the division between the two frameworks fits badly with reality in the sense that all social and scientific research has shared principles (Cohen and Manion 1989). These principles are primarily concerned with the attainment of logical reasoning and objectivity through the use of data rather than reliance on personal views or value preferences (Alasuutari 1995). This position is challenged, however, by the comments of Bryman (1988), who claims that two major barriers prevent the successful integration of qualitative and quantitative research. The first and most fundamental problem highlighted is the conflict between incompatible epistemological positions with differing views about how social reality ought to be studied. This position supports the opinion of Guba and Lincoln (1981:57), who claim that the competing paradigms identify incompatible

assumptions about *"the nature of reality, the inquirer/subject relationship, and the nature of truth statements"*. To further support this position, they describe the scientific paradigm as assuming a reality that is *"singular, convergent and fragmentable"*, with the naturalistic paradigm reality being *"multiple, divergent and inter-related"*. It is not possible, Guba and Lincoln argue, to believe in a reality that is singular, convergent and fragmentable and simultaneously believe that reality is holistic and incapable of being separated into variables. Not only are these beliefs competing, they are also contrary and reinforce the axiom between the scientific and naturalist paradigms.

The obstacles to using quantitative and qualitative methods together are further articulated by Bryman (1988), who repeats the warning of incompatibility of integration as a result of contradictory epistemological positions. Patton (1982) suggests that the data from the two approaches are difficult to integrate and that there is a danger that the qualitative data will be downgraded at times of doubt or conflict, a view shared by Bryman (1988), who also warns of the cost of the approach in terms of reliability and validity. This is a position shared by Cook and Reichardt (1979), who also claim that the approach takes too long and that researchers do not have the breadth of skills to deal competently with both approaches.

The importance of this debate in relation to this research is the assumed link between paradigm choice and research methods. Conventionally, quantitative research is seen as hard, objective and hypothesis-testing, encompassing techniques that enable the researcher to know the world being studied, and includes methods such as participant observation and in-depth interviews supplemented by the analysis of documents (Finch 1986, Miller and Dingwall 1997). Conversely, positivist epistemology is concerned to search for causes using quantitative measurement and statistical analysis through such techniques as the social survey. There is, however, significant opposition to determining the choice of research methods by allegiance to an arbitrary paradigm polarised between the quantitative and qualitative debate (Cook and Reichardt 1979, Guba and Lincoln 1981). This position is supported by Cohen and Manion (1989), who claim that the real choice for social scientists is not the spurious choice between qualitative and quantitative

paradigms but one of determining at which points they would use one and at which the other. Difficulties relating to particular epistemological positions have been identified and described earlier (Bryman 1988). It is also claimed, however, that qualitative and quantitative techniques are not naturally related to particular epistemological positions, resulting in confusion when *"different techniques are used symbolically to represent different epistemological positions"* (Finch 1986:9). This claim would perhaps suggest that there is not an automatic or necessary need to link techniques and epistemologies and that there are reasonable arguments to suggest quantitative and qualitative techniques are interchangeable between epistemological positions (Silverman 2000). Punch (1998) suggests this describes a shift away from the paradigm conflict of either qualitative or quantitative analysis (Bryman 1988, Hammersley and Atkinson 1990) towards an integrated approach to research.

Within this milieu, the decision for the researcher is related to how best to construct an appropriate process, which may involve the use of either or both of the positivist and phenomenological epistemologies as a means of achieving an *"enduring truth value, that is essentially unchanged from context to context"* (Guba and Lincoln 1981:51). To achieve this goal it is important, to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the research traditions associated with the described epistemological positions.

2.4 Research strategies

There is a need in any investigation to consider both a variety of options and alternatives with regard to the selection of methodologies and methods and to make explicit the reason why certain choices were made. In an attempt to describe the process used to determine the choices made here, it is useful to attempt to give a definition to both methodology and method. Hall and Hall (1996) summarise methodology as the *philosophy* or general principle behind research, and methods are described as the practice of research in terms of *strategies and techniques.* For Melia (1996), the distinction between methodology and method is that the former describes the study of method, and the latter is related to the research procedures actually employed. Both of these positions support the view of

methodology expounded by Kaplan (1973), who stated that its aim was to provide an understanding in the broadest of terms not of the products of the investigation but of the investigation process itself. Cohen and Manion (1989:41) contribute to this debate by defining methods as a range of approaches used to gather data, which are to be used *"as the basis for inference and interpretation for explanation and prediction"*.

The issues described so far in this chapter have been useful in the sense that they have helped the researcher to consider some of the debates related to paradigm choice and epistemological stance which are helpful in determining a favoured methodology. Additional help was given to this choice by Morgan (1988:19), who linked the selection of method to a view of the *"situation being studied, for any decision on how to study a phenomenon carries with it certain assumptions or explicit answers to the question 'What is being studied?"* As an example, Morgan suggests that a tennis racquet is chosen before a golf club to play tennis because of a *"prior conception"* of what the game of tennis involves. This, Morgan claims, is also the case when selecting a particular kind of methodology because of the implicit or explicit conceptions of what the research is attempting to achieve.

Because of the complex and disparate nature of the Youth Service (Chapter 3), with its potential for variable interpretations of purpose/values, process and outcomes across its interrelated occupational strands, the preferred stance of the researcher would be driven by an anthropological ethnography approach. The purpose of this approach would be the attainment of *"richly textured description that can only be gained through extended residence in the field"* (Britan 1982:51). This approach is supported by Williamson (1985), who claims that through living, working and talking with people in a variety of settings on a day-to-day basis, ethnographers begin to understand social systems from the inside out. This stance allows the researcher to conduct observations in their natural context through a process that does not rely on "*what people say they do or what they say they think. It is more direct than that. Instead it draws on the direct evidence of the eye to witness events first hand"* (Denscombe (1998:139). This can be described as the most natural method for gathering knowledge about social events and human interactions,

especially in an organisational context. Classic examples of this approach, within the context of this investigation, include research among street corner boys (Whyte 1981), the Glasgow gang observation (Patrick 1973), the study of Liverpool adolescents (Parker 1974), and the evaluation of inter-agency approaches to working with young people (Williamson 1985). A common theme of these studies is that they were all concerned to paint a picture of the way of life of some interacting human group by obtaining information through the use of participant observation, often supplemented by the use of informal interviews. The outcomes of this approach were used to describe and analyse the culture and behaviour of humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied (Garfinkel 1967, Bryman 1988). This outcome is achieved, it is claimed, by adopting an approach that sets out to:

> *"treat practical activities, practical circumstances, and practical sociological reasoning as topics of empirical study, and by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded to extraordinary events seeks to learn about them as phenomena in their own right"*
>
> Garfinkel (1967:32)

The ethnographic approach is concerned with the close investigation of the everyday reality of a social context and consequently could be described as being more concerned to emphasise the process which takes place rather than the before-and-after emphasis which is more readily associated with experimental research designs. The methodology is also less likely to be based on a variable-centred approach and more likely to relate to meaning-centred qualitative data collection and analysis. As a result, it is claimed (Denscombe 1998) that the stance allows researchers to use their perception about what is happening in the situation being investigated through a process of reflexivity, resulting in ecological validity as a consequence of the natural setting of the investigation.

Pragmatic decisions needed to be made, however, linked to how the researcher might find both the time and the financial resources to become immersed in the practice of the maintained Youth Service across Wales. Because of these two fundamental issues, the conclusion was reached by the researcher that it was not possible to conduct the

investigation in this way and alternatives had to be found that would ensure the investigation was concluded using the means available.

2.5 Decisions

The first decision made, therefore, was to use as the research strategy a case-study approach, using the maintained Youth Service in Wales as a single case, which would be concerned to carry out an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple methods of gathering evidence (Yin 1994, Robson 1998). It can be suggested that the adoption of this strategy cannot be defined through its research techniques but by its theoretical orientation, which may not be substantive theory in the first instance but would emphasise understanding processes alongside their (organisational and other) contexts. It is recognised (Guba and Lincoln 1981, Yin 1994) that some concerns have been levied against the case-study model, including:

- lack of rigour;
- limited basis for scientific generalisation;
- the process takes too long because of the amounts of data produced by case studies; and
- over-dependence of the interpretation by the researcher on information that the researcher has also selected, within which biases or errors in judgement cannot easily be detected.

However, case studies are also recognised as having many significant attributes, including the ability to provide a thick description (Geertz 1973, Lincoln and Guba 1985) as well as being able to present grounded data (Glaser and Strauss 1967) that emerges from the context itself. Case studies are also described as being able to present a credible description, recognisable to the actual participants, through the simplification of available data into a focused, conversation-like format rather than by using complex technical tables (Guba and Lincoln 1981). This process is further described as being capable of focusing the attention of the reader as well as illuminating meanings. Most importantly,

however, the case-study approach is able to *"communicate more than can be said in propositional language"* (ibid:376) by building on the tacit knowledge of its readers by assuming the role of a reporting vehicle appropriate to the understanding and language of its audience (Platt 1983).

The second decision made was to locate the investigation within an evaluation research framework. Suchman (1967) describes evaluation research as a method for determining the extent to which a planned programme of activities achieves its desired objectives (Chapter 3, 4, and 5). Smith (1975) builds on this position by suggesting that evaluation research is concerned with the assessment of the effectiveness of existing social programmes developed and delivered as tentative solutions to contemporary social problems. For Smith, this approach is seen to be a quality control responsibility, concerned to determine the efficacy of agreed courses of action and the attainment of appropriate organisational outcomes. Weiss (1979) agrees with this stance by suggesting the purpose of evaluation research is to examine the effects of policies and programmes on their target(s) in achieving the intended outcomes through the use of objective and systematic methods. This is a position further supported by Rossi and Freeman (1989:18), who claim that evaluation research is concerned with:

> *"the systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualisation, design, implementation and utility of social intervention programmes"*

In contrast to the attempts at clarity by the previous statements, Williamson (1985) claims that evaluation is a frequently used but rarely clearly defined term, particularly when used in relation to research attempting to determine the value of social care and human relations. At best, Williamson states, evaluation research only offers opportunities to draw various conclusions from the benefits and constraints that appear to arise from such processes and relationships. Within this environment, analysis is *"likely to rely heavily on considered interpretation. To use a legal analogy, conclusions are likely to be based on the balance of probabilities rather than beyond all doubt"* (ibid:602). This supports the position of Cronbach et al (1980), who suggests that the results of evaluation research

rarely rely on the empirical evidence alone because there is a necessary compromise to be made between precision and the broad picture. Cronbach et al also warn that evaluation theory has been developed from the concept of managerialism supported by what is described as the inaccurate assumption that both policy makers and managers are in control of decision making (ibid). To overcome this posibility, it was suggested (Scrivens 1967) that those involved in an evaluation process should proceed with a veil of ignorance regarding the perceived outcomes of programme managers or other stakeholders. Driven by an outcome-free evaluation approach, Scrivens claims the evaluator would seek out all the outcomes rather than be biased by the views of managers or workers. This position has also been put forward by Cronbach et al. (1980:133), who are opposed to both goal-setting models and the close association of evaluation with accountability, which, it is claimed, often *"becomes an incantation and one that can cast a malign spell"*. This goal-setting environment was of growing significance to the Youth Service which could be seen to be increasingly pressurised by government, through the promise of greater organisational security, to introduce more formal curriculum activities and accreditation mechanisms to its work with young people. These politically determined outcomes, linked to government agendas, appear to discount the more difficult-to-measure outcomes related to the more specific needs of young people making the transition from interdependence to independence.

However, for the researcher, the term evaluation is broader than an attempt to measure the effects of an existing and particular government agenda. In the context of this investigation, evaluation research will be concerned with what Finch (1986:158) describes as a process concerned to:

> *"understand the real effects of policies, to compare the assumptions upon which policies are based with social experience and to assist in a considered assessment of their viability and appropriateness."*

To achieve this outcome, it will be necessary for the investigation to move away from a process driven by a hierarchical approach concerned with management-defined problems to one concerned to involve group discussion, negotiation and consensus. It will be a

process of identifying the value of a complex context through the collection of a range of evidence from individuals and organisations with a relevant interest and making judgements about this evidence in relation to specific criteria that have been formulated beforehand (Chapters 3, 4 and 5).

2.6 The selected research instruments

Within this framework, the decision of the researcher was to adopt an integrated quantitative/qualitative approach utilising a range of appropriate research instruments. These instruments would consist of an analysis of appropriate documents, the analysis of the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award applications between 1997 and 2002, a questionnaire survey and individual and focus group interviews. The process which makes use of multiple methods in a single study is described as triangulation (Reinhortz 1992) and is a process which attempts to map out or explain complex situations in greater detail by examining phenomenon such as human behaviour from a number of different positions. It achieves this by using information that is both quantitative and qualitative and is a process that allows comparison of a wide range of data, including interviews, observations, documents and surveys (Whyte 1981) and Fielding and Fielding (1986). By using a multiple method approach it is believed that the two key issues of reliability and validity will be addressed.

2.6.1 Document analysis

The justification for using document analysis is that it would allow the collection of information from a secondary source that would provide a range of background information on the maintained Youth Service which would be used to support the evidence obtained from the analysis of the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards, the questionnaire survey and the interviews. This analysis would be more than a literature review but would be concerned to extract from appropriate documents existing evidence of relevance to the research question It was recognised that care would be needed when analysing existing documents to ensure that the quality of the process would meet the four criteria identified by Scott (1990). First, the documents would need to be authentic as a

means of ensuring their evidence was genuine and of unquestionable origin. Second, they would need to be credible insomuch as their evidence should be free from error and distortion. Third, they would need to be representative, the evidence contained within them being typical of its kind. Fourth, they would need to have meaning in the sense that the evidence contained within them should be clear and comprehensible.

Within this framework, four groups of documents will be analysed. These will be:

1. Historical and contemporary publications that help to describe the purposes, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service in Wales. Consideration of these in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 will help to define the framework within which this investigation will be carried out;
2. Local authority Youth Service Strategic and Operational Plans;
3. Estyn[3] Inspection Reports of the Youth Service carried out between 2000 and 2002 which contain a range of relevant maintained Youth Service indicators and comments on the standards and quality of work being delivered, the efficiency of the service, the management of quality, factors contributing to the effectiveness of the service and key issues for action, plus the response by the Youth Service inspected. The Reports examined included the local authority Youth Services of Caerphilly, Pembrokeshire, Conwy, Neath Port Talbot and Gwynedd. The Annual Reports of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for 1998-1999 (HMSO 1999), 1999-2000 (HMSO 2000a), 2000-2001 (HMSO 2001) and 2001-2002 (HMSO 2002) will also be analysed; and
4. Relevant reports and papers published by the Wales Youth Agency between 1994 and 2002 including:
    - Building the Future (WYA 1994a)
    - Practical Co-operation to Promote the Successful Transition of Young People from School to Adult and Working Life (WYA 1995)
    - Wales Youth Agency Response to 'Learning is for Everyone' (WYA 1998a)

[3] Estyn has a statutory base, which at the time of the investigation was located within section 55 of the Further and Higher Education Act (FHE) Act 1992. This Act identifies the purpose of the inspection process as being to "identify strengths and weaknesses so that the quality of education can be improved and the standards achieved may be raised" (Estyn 1998:2).

- Lifelong Learning: a Youth Service Response (WYA 1998b)
- Implications of the Welsh Assembly for the Youth Service in Wales (WYA 1999a)
- Youth Service Audit (WYA 1999b)
- Youth Work Training Conference (WYA 1999c)
- Review of the Youth and Community Service of Denbighshire County Council (WYA 1999d)
- Review of the Youth Service of Blaenau Gwent (WYA 1999e)
- Attitude, Attendance and Achievement (WYA 2000a)
- Securing the Future, Social Policy and the Re-emerging Youth Service in Wales (WYA 2000b)
- Response to 'Extending Entitlement' (WYA 2000c)
- Review of the Youth Service of Ceredigion (WYA 2002a)
- Response to 'Consultation to the Draft Direction and Guidance for Extending Entitlement' (WYA 2002b).

These specific documents were selected because they had been identified by the researcher (who had a direct link to both the Welsh Office and the National Assembly for Wales and the library of the Wales Youth Agency) as the most relevant documents written from a maintained Youth Service perspective either shortly before, or during, the period of the investigation.

2.6.2 Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards

The Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award was introduced in 1994 by the then Minister of State for Wales to give national recognition of quality youth work practice contained within a specific project or piece of work undertaken as part of a youth work programme (Appendix 4). 193 applications had been made by the maintained sector between 1997 and 2002, each one required by the criteria for entry to demonstrate recognition of the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales. All entries were considered as examples of excellent work as defined by those who made the application; no added consideration was given to those determined as winners of the award by the judging panel which remained

unknown to the researcher. By adopting this approach the analysis became an interpretation of Excellence Award entries of equal status each one entered as a piece of work determined as excellent by the applicant. The importance of the application form (Appendix 4) in the context of this investigation is that it required applicants to give specific details of the project being submitted with a request to link its purpose to the elements of the Youth Work Curriculum Statement (Appendix 1). The application form also asked applicants to identify the benefits of the work for the young people involved and, in doing so, provided a valuable source of information of relevance to this investigation. Applicants were also asked to supply quantifiable information including how many young people were involved in the project together with their age. Details of the applications examined in this investigation can be found in Appendix 4. A description of the applicants can be found in Appendix 5

2.6.3 Questionnaire survey

The purpose of a survey has been described as being either descriptive or explanatory, through the production and interpretation of information to provide explanations of a particular phenomenon(s) Moser and Kalton (1989). Cohen and Manion (1989) support this position by the claim that the survey gathers information at a particular point in time for the purpose of providing data, ranging from simple frequency counts through to relational analysis. The strengths of the survey methods are their potential for generating volumes of data that can be statistically analysed within a limited time and their cost-effective time frame (Denscombe 1998). These benefits are achieved through obtaining information at a specific point in time and are based on the notion of measuring and recording tangible incidences. A survey is seen as an appropriate approach to the study of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives and the more respondents that participate in a study, the more likely it is that the results can be generalised to the wider population within the sampling frame (Robson 1998). The weakness of the survey method is related to its focus on empiricism, which, in the opinion of Denscombe (1998), questions the significance of the data, as it sometimes has to speak for itself rather than permitting relevant issues, problems and theories to be developed from it. Questions are also raised about data being

affected by the characteristics of the respondents, with particular reference to their memory, knowledge, experience, motivation and personality (Robson 1998).

Despite these limitations, it is the intention of this investigation to obtain data generated through a questionnaire survey to obtain information of a factual nature, including biographical information, through closed-response (tick box) questions. It is also intended to obtain data, through open responses, about both the opinions – how individuals feel about a programme or experience – and attitudes of respondents about perceptions with the potential to influence behaviour in a range of specific circumstances (Oppenheim 1992). The questionnaire was designed with the knowledge that it was a method with a history of limited success when used to gather information from those working in the Youth Service in Wales (WYWP 1991, WYA 2000d). The reasons for this, within the maintained Youth Service context, have not been researched but based on experience, including an involvement in the 1991 survey and my MPhil research in 1997, it is my contention that two key issues, complexity and length, affect response. Accordingly, the questionnaire was restricted to a single double-sided sheet that would focus on seven main elements considered to be of importance to the investigation (Appendix 6).

Section one of the questionnaire asks for personal details related to gender and age. Section two asks for information about respondents' current Youth Work, which includes naming their employing authority, listing their current job title, number of years employed in the Youth Service, location of their employment, whether they work weekends and school holidays, number of hours per week employed in the Youth Service, and the percentage of that time they spend in face-to-face work with young people. Both of these sections are concerned to provide information that would lead to a greater level of understanding of the profiles of those working within the maintained Youth Service. Much of this information has never been previously collected. Using open-ended questions, section three asks respondents to describe both the main activities they carry out with young people and whether the activities are planned to achieve specific outcomes. Answers to these questions from the perspective of both full and part-time workers are fundamental to this investigation because they would provide evidence of the

types of curriculum activities being offered to young people and the outcomes that are planned. Section four asks for details of the respondents' qualifications measured against national and local qualifications criteria as well as questions related to their involvement in in-service training opportunities within the Youth Service. Significant anecdotal information was available which suggested the maintained Youth Service is increasingly being managed and its curriculum delivered by a growing number of inexperienced and unqualified workers. It is the intention of this section to obtain information to determine if this is the reality. Section five asks for information about the main occupation of part-time respondents not simply to gain knowledge of its structural aspects, including numbers employed within occupational strands, levels of qualification and experience, or current working practices, but also to determine the potential effects of external influences on youth work practice. The purpose of asking this question is to discover if the maintained Youth Service has developed the *"social and phenomenological uniqueness of a particular organisational community"* (Beare et al. 1989:173) or if it is being adversely affected by sub-cultures as a consequence of its employment and induction training strategy. Section six asks three specific questions. The first asks respondents to detail the age of the young people they work with during their Youth Service employment. The second asks them to calculate the percentage of female and male users of their Youth Club or Youth Project. The third asks respondents to describe the academic ability of those young people they have come into contact with during their Youth Service employment. To facilitate the answering of this question, they are offered four choices: *Academic achievers*, defined as young people with 5 GCSEs or more; *Academic underachievers*, defined as young people with fewer than 5 GCSEs; *academic non-achievers*, young people with no academic qualifications; or the fourth option is for respondents to indicate that they do not know the academic status of the young people they work with in the maintained Youth Service. To complete section six, respondents are required to categorise young people within these classifications by percentage, which is expected to total 100%. Section seven uses open-response questions about how respondents determine the needs of those young people they come into contact with, to indicate if they target particular groups of young people and, if they do, to describe their characteristics.

The survey was conducted between April 2001 and December 2001 with the questionnaire distributed through three main sources in an attempt to include all those working within the maintained Youth Service in Wales. These included:

1. distribution by post through the Wales Youth Agency database, which contains the contact details of approximately 2,300 workers across the identified occupational strands;
2. distribution through the local authority Youth Service to those it employed; and
3. being made available to students in training at the North East Wales Institute (NEWI) Wrexham and the University of Wales Newport (UWN) Caerleon.

The questionnaire was distributed in this way because of the perceived difficulty in obtaining a representative sample across what was seen to be a very diverse workforce. Although four main occupational strands had been identified there was recognition by the researcher that within these strands there were an unknown number of sub-occupational strands, each with the potential to see themselves as belonging to a different organisation. It was also done because the resources were available to the researcher to carry out this process and the results would produce, for the first time since 1984 (Welsh Office 1984), a range of fundamental information about the contemporary maintained Youth Service in Wales. In total 2,462 questionnaires were distributed and (24.7%) 608 were returned. The details of those taking part in the survey are contained in Chapter 7.

2.6.4 The pilot study

The pilot study was perceived as an opportunity to test the instruments, methods and data-processing techniques that would be employed in the main study. It was regarded as part of the training of the researcher himself because the pilot study helps to establish the reliability and validity of the instruments and processes.

Throughout the development of the questionnaire, the researcher had been aware of the need to check certain assumptions at the earliest opportunity. Involvement in three major surveys of the Youth Service (WYWP 1991, WYA 1994b, Rose 1997) had given the

researcher some insight into the sensitivity needed in the use of language, particularly at part-time worker level. With these considerations in mind, a draft questionnaire was presented to 37 workers employed in the maintained Youth Service across the occupational strands. Included in this process were two Principal Youth Officers, five regional/specialist officers, 10 full-time workers and 20 part-time workers. The two Principal Youth Officers and five regional/specialist workers (5 male, 2 female) completed the questionnaire during a national conference organised by the Wales Youth Agency. The full-time workers completed the questionnaire during their involvement in their third year Youth and Community work training programme, six (4 female, 2 male) at University College Newport and four (2 male, 2 Female) at University of Wales Institute Cardiff. The 20 part-time workers were involved at three separate in-service training courses, nine (5 female, 4 male) at Ferryside Training Centre, five (4 female, 1 male) at the Elan Valley Hotel and six (4 female, 2 male) at the YMCA Rhayader. The full-time and part-time workers were employed within 14 different local authorities and were employed in a variety of capacities and locations. They included centre based workers, detached workers, information workers and specialists working with young people primarily through sport, drama and outdoor activities. All of the workers involved in the pilot survey were qualified in accordance with the requirements of the Joint Negotiation Council (JNC) (Chapter 3).

Prior to the completion of the questionnaire, those taking part were informed of the purpose of the Pilot Study and that they would be asked to comment on its content. They were also encouraged to make a critical assessment about the process involved in completion, which could include such things as time spent, comprehension of question and knowledge of the worker in relation to the questions being asked.

All of the workers involved completed the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher but isolated from each other as a means of avoiding influencing responses. This method also had the advantage of allowing the researcher to give immediate answers to questions there were raised. On completion of the questionnaire a process of evaluation was conducted with the respondents. In general, the layout of the questionnaire was considered

to be appropriate; positive comments were made about both its length and the time it had taken to complete. As stated previously, language was a sensitive issue, particularly with the part-time workers, and care had been taken to use a form of language that would be seen as appropriate. This care appeared to be worthwhile as no major comment was made about the language used. Of most concern across all the occupational strands were the questions requiring a baseline of factual information regarding the young people they were in contact with, which many respondents had difficulty in completing because of the lack of effective record keeping. Consequently, it was decided to ask respondents to indicate by percentage the age of young people they were in contact with rather than ask for actual numbers; the same decision was made for the questions related to the academic level of the young people workers were in contact with. A reminder that the total figure should add up to 100% was also incorporated. Following the comments of a number of those involved in the pilot it was also decided to give respondents the opportunity to list not only the academic status of the young people they were in contact with but also to make a judgment on the academic status they were likely to attain. This was felt necessary because significant numbers of young people using the maintained Youth Service had yet to sit their GCSEs.

2.6.5 Interviews

Central to the creation of a research framework that reflects the value base of the Youth Service is the recognition that to:

> *"understand other persons' constructions of reality we would do well to ask them and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms and in depth which addresses the rich contexts that is the substance of their meanings"*
>
> (Jones 1985:46)

This process of asking, which is to be one of the central research methods used in this investigation, is carried out through the use of individual and focus group interviews (Appendix 7). The use of interviews is designed to encourage those taking part to interact in a way that generates data about a specific set of issues (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999)

and is concerned, in the context of this investigation, to establish the level of collective understanding by those working in the maintained Youth Service of its organisational role and their resultant responsibilities. It is recognised that the use of focus groups creates a process with some important differences from the individual interview, with the focus group being described as synergistic (Stewart and Shamdasani 1990) resulting in group interaction being explicitly used to generate data and insights. As a consequence:

> *"The focus group presents a more natural environment than the individual interview because participants and influencing and being influenced by others – just as they are in real life"*
>
> Kreuger and Casey (2000:11)

The findings from both types of interviews will be used to construct a picture of the commonly held fabric of meanings of those operating within the organisation, which can be described as a particular social context (Turner 1971). Smirchich (1983) claims that determining this common ground is important because organisations depend on shared interpretative purposes expressed in language and other symbolic constructions such as rituals, ideologies and myths. These are developed through social interaction as a means of ensuring that routine actions become embedded in day-to-day activities (Pondy et al. 1983). The outcome of this process is a more detailed understanding of the meaning system used by the maintained Youth Service, which can be discovered through a process of analysis concerned to describe symbol systems and associated meanings and by the articulation of recurring themes (Smirchich 1983). It is these themes that provide the context *"against which symbols have meaning; they specify the links between values, beliefs and action"* (ibid:163). The interviews also set out to identify how programmes are constructed, both to reflect the purpose, value and unique characteristics of the maintained Youth Service and to meet the needs of young people and government policy. Questions will be raised to determine the educational philosophy and learning theory related to the programmes being delivered, particularly their epistemological and ontological perspectives. The purpose of these questions is to discover what, in a collective sense, lies at the heart of maintained Youth Service practice in Wales

determined by *"the way in which people being studied understand and interpret their social reality"* (Bryman 1988:8).

Although these broad areas of questions could be identified at the research design stage, the final questions, both in terms of their content and use of language, will not be determined until after the questionnaire survey and document analysis have been completed. The findings from these two methods will be used to determine the focus of the planned semi-structured interviews (Sarantakos 1998), which was identified as the most appropriate type of interview within the context being examined. A semi-structured interview has a series of questions in the general form of an interview schedule but the interviewer is able to vary the sequence of questions and to ask further questions in response to significant answers (Bryman 2001). The problem of recording respondents' answers to ensure distortion is avoided and to eliminate error was overcome by the Wales Youth Agency agreeing to pay for the taped recordings of all of the interviews to be transcribed. As a result, all of the interviews were recorded on tape using high-quality recording equipment and supplemented by the notes of the interviewer (Cohen and Manion 1989).

2.6.6 Interviewees

Given the characteristic of the maintained Youth Service including the numbers of workers employed (WYA 1999b), consideration needed to be given to the possibility of sampling within the four occupational strands identified. Robson (1998:155) makes the claim that any consideration of sampling needs to recognise that *'real life'*, including the constraints of *'real time'* and limited access to and availability of relevant people, will provide a range of logistical problems with the outcome being *"whatever sampling plan is decided upon it will be impossible to complete it in full"* (ibid:155). Nevertheless, these thoughts with respect to sampling are regarded as important because they require consideration to be given by the researcher to the particular characteristics of those involved in the sample. The decision was therefore made to involve in the interview process the four broadly defined groups – Principal Youth Officers (PYOs), regional and

subject managers, full-time workers and part-time workers – identified by the Youth Service audit (WYA 1999b). Further decisions were also taken about the numbers of workers within each of these four categories. The audit had identified 76 managers within the 22 local authorities, each of which had a designated Principal Officer responsible for the delivery of the Youth Service; the remaining 54 managers were responsible for a designated geographical area or subject area within each local authority. The decision was taken to interview individually a minimum of eight (32%) Principal Youth Officers selected to ensure a balance between rural, urban and old industrial locations and between Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) qualified youth workers and youth workers who are teacher trained (Chapter 7). The decision was also taken to interview 14 (26%) regional/subject officers in two focus groups. These focus group interviews were carried out at a series of national events related to curriculum development and training organised by the Wales Youth Agency. The audit also identified 132 full-time workers, 23% of whom were unqualified to JNC national qualification standard. The researcher decided to interview 48 of this group (36%) divided into six focus groups. Interviewees were selected to include both qualified and unqualified workers working in rural, urban and old industrial locations. For pragmatic reasons the focus group interviews for the full-time workers were managed around times and events when groups of full-time workers had come together for a particular reason, which included their involvement in local or national training events or during their qualifying training time. The part-time workforce consisted of 2273 workers, of which 1129 (49.7%) were unqualified. The researcher decided to interview a maximum of 340 (15%) of this group divided into 34 separate focus groups. These were selected to include both qualified and unqualified workers working in rural, urban and old industrial locations. These interviews were planned to take place when groups of part-time workers were coming together for a particular reason which included their involvement in local and national training events.

Concern was felt by the researcher about the amount of time required to carry out this process with the limited resources available. Consideration was given to involving a smaller number of participants for an extended period of interview involving more than one session. This option was considered inappropriate, both because the researcher

believed that the probability of bringing the same group of people together, particularly the part-time workers with their other commitments, for a number of separate sessions was highly unlikely and because it would reduce the numbers involved in the process. The decision was therefore taken to hold one interview session for each individual or focus group scheduled for a minimum of 1.5 hours, which would result in a total interviewing time of 84 hours (8 x 1.5-hour individual interviews, 48 focus groups x 1.5 hours). Being able to carry out an interview schedule of this size was made possible both by the generosity of my employer, who fully supported the investigation, and by the requirements of my job, which gave me regular access to workers within all the occupational strands, including at Wales Youth Agency sponsored events, where it was possible as part of a training programme or seminar to invite selected workers to take part in semi-structured interviews concerned with the focus of the investigation.

Although the figures given previously were the intended sample sizes, consideration was given during the interview process to the concept of *"theoretical saturation"*, when additional analysis no longer contributes to discovering anything new about a category (Strauss 1987:21). Part of the principles of grounded theory, this concept suggests that there is no need to specify at the outset how large a sample should be. The process of obtaining information should continue until new data seems to confirm rather than add anything new to the investigation. The interviews were carried out between April 2002 and December 2002. The details of those involved in the interview process are included in Appendix 8.

2.7 Limitations of the selected research methods

It was recognised by the researcher that the selected research methods have a number of potential limitations. First, the document analysis was restricted as a consequence of a lack of documents produced from independent sources. As a result the documents available for analysis were restricted to official publications produced by organisations such as Estyn, the Wales Youth Agency and local authorities. Second, the analysis of the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award applications would require a judgment to be

made by the researcher of the outcomes of the submitted projects and how these were able to make a contribution to the focus of the investigation. This would be necessary because of the open-ended questions in the application which asked applicants to identify the most successful aspects of the project submitted and the benefits of the project to young people. To ensure consistency in the analysis responses in these sections were coded based on a specified interpretation of key words or concepts. Third, the distribution of the questionnaire coincided with a period of time when the numbers of workers were expanding significantly (Chapter 7). There was a clear recognition by the researcher that within this environment there was the possibility that many of those recently employed would be unable to complete the questionnaire from a position of knowledge because they were isolated from both the policy and decision making process of the their employer and by the use of the specific language of the maintained Youth Service. Fourth, the decision was taken to distribute a common questionnaire to both full-and part-time workers in an attempt to obtain a consistent range of evidence across the occupational strands. This decision was taken with the recognition that many part-time workers might have some difficulty in answering all the questions and, as such, could affect the reliability and validity of the data. Fifth, it was recognised that the issues related to the questionnaire survey also affected the interview process although it was also recognised that this process would be supported by the interviewer within a semi-structured process.

2.8 Analysis of data

The evidence obtained through the use of the selected research instruments will provide a pool of information from which conclusions to the four questions described in Chapter 1 will be reached. By adopting this integrated approach, a particular research instrument will, in some instances, be more appropriate in answering certain of the questions than others. As an example, part of the questionnaire survey will provide a range of quantifiable information of use in answering elements of question two which relate to the characteristics of those employed in the maintained Youth Service. Evidence from the questionnaire survey will, however, be supported through the use of some or all of the other selected research instruments.

It was recognised by the researcher that the data collected from the methods described previously would be in two forms. First, quantitative data would be provided through the relevant sections of the questionnaire survey, which would be of a quantifiable nature. This data will be analysed through a system of pre-coding and the use of a suitable computer-based program, which will provide statistical data that can be represented most effectively in the form of pie charts, line graphs, bar charts and tables. A similar process will be used to analyse the information contained within appropriate sections of both the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards and the Estyn Inspection Reports.

Second, qualitative data produced from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, the analysis of documents, the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards and the interview process will require a different method for its analysis than the quantitative data because of its propensity to generate a *"large corpus of unstructured textual material"* (Bryman 2001:387). Having considered the options available for qualitative analysis (May 1996, Denscombe 1998, Silverman 2000), the decision was taken to use the approach promoted by Glaser and Strauss (1967:5) during their discourse on 'grounded theory', which claims that the process of qualitative analysis should be driven by *"guidelines and rules of thumb not rules"*. It is an approach described by Strauss (1987) within which it is not possible to impose a set of methodological rules that suit every occasion, where a *"standardization of methods (swallowed whole, taken seriously) would only constrain and even stifle social researchers' best efforts"* (ibid:7). This position is further supported by Denscombe (1998), who suggests that qualitative social researchers should start their enquiry with an open mind, with the investigation conducted without a rigid set of ideas that could shape its focus and so becoming a true voyage of discovery. The consequence of an approach open to new factors suggests that the elements of the research, that is people, instances or location, cannot be predicted at the start of the investigation, with *"each new phase of the investigation reflecting what has been discovered so far, with new angles of investigation and new avenues of enquiry to be explored"* (ibid:216). It is recognised by the researcher that there are inherent difficulties in adopting this approach and obtaining trustworthy answers to the research questions (Chapter 1). To ensure such trustworthy answers are achieved, a significant amount time will be invested by the researcher to read, sift, order,

synthesise and interpret the data. The purpose of this procedure is the effective management of the data through a process of review, labelling and synthesising, leading to the identification of descriptive and illustrative accounts within which explanations are developed about why the data take the forms that are found and presented. The analysis of qualitative data obtained will be managed through the development and use of pattern codes which will follow the guidelines presented by Strauss (1987:81) and adapted by Robson (1998:386). These codes will be used as appropriate devices to *"label, separate, compile and organise data"* (Charmaz 1983:186), although it is recognised that coding in qualitative analysis is often in a state of revision and change. The process of coding will allow the identification of portions of the transcripts as a means of reducing the raw text, which will assist in making sense of the evidence. Care will be taken to ensure that the analytical ideas and concepts that develop are grounded in the data, which will require, in the opinion of Spencer et al (2003:210), a *"structure that allows emergent ideas, concepts and patterns to be captured and revisited."* By adopting this approach and by taking note of the concerns related to the analysis of qualitative information (Robson 1998, Bryman, 2001, Silverman 2000), it is believed that the interpretation of the data made available to the investigation will determine both the level of collective knowledge and understanding by those involved in the maintained Youth Service of the three elements of the investigation and the link they make between these in their practice.

2.9 Conclusion

It is acknowledged by the researcher that the methods used to obtain information relevant to this investigation will provide a number of substantial challenges because of the significant amounts of data that will be generated through the methods selected. The management of this information could also be problematic because of the possible complexity of the data from across the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service and from external scrutiny of documents. The reason for choosing this challenging and complex process is, however, deliberate, as it attempts to replicate as closely as possible the preferred choice of method - the anthropological ethnography approach - described earlier in this chapter. Because of logistical difficulties, employment

of this method is not possible but it is believed that the selected methods will offer an opportunity to gain an understanding of the essence of the maintained Youth Service. It is recognised that this will not be a quick process but one that will require careful planning and execution to ensure the data is understood and interpreted in a way that ensures the findings are reliable, valid, capable of replication and able to provide a sound foundation for further research.

CHAPTER 3

The Maintained Youth Service in Wales

3.1 Introduction

The next three Chapters set out to provide a foundation on which an answer to this investigation will be built. This will be achieved by considering the three elements of the research identified in Chapter 1. It is the intention of this Chapter to attempt to identify the core elements of the maintained Youth Service through an examination of its historical development. Chapter 4 will describe the requirements placed on the maintained Youth Service by the government during the period of this investigation. Chapter 5 will consider how the needs of young people are identified and responded to by the maintained Youth Service. Throughout this process, the opportunity will be taken to review the literature relevant to this investigation.

3.2 The maintained Youth Service in Wales

There is a need, if an answer to the research question is to be determined in a reliable and valid way, to make an attempt to identify what makes the maintained Youth Service in Wales a relevant organisation able to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy in a way that enables it to be seen as:

> *"a clearly bounded group (or groups) of people interacting together to achieve a particular goal (or goals) in a formally structured and co-ordinated way."*
>
> Gallagher et al (1997:24)

This will not be an easy task because the purpose and outcomes of the Youth Service are often described in a number of different ways, resulting in the development of contrasting interpretations of its work. Jeffs (1982) claimed that the Youth Service is a vague, imprecise collection of organisations and individuals who are blissfully unaware that they are part of some larger organisation. Similar comment was made by Watts (1990:21), who

described the Youth Service as *"organised anarchies, staffed by an assortment of fugitives from other trades and professions, who share no particular ethos or ethic about what the objectives of youth work should be"*. This was an opinion shared by Williamson (1996), who described the Youth Service as an amorphous organisation identified by a lack of collective understanding of agreed purposes, principles and values, and outcomes, resulting in both organisational complexity and confusion.

To bring some order to this uncertain position and to enable the investigation to achieve its goals, there is a need to discover the level of collective knowledge and understanding - shared between those working within the maintained Youth Service in Wales - of its purpose (what it intends to do), its processes (how it intends to do it), and its outcomes (the results of its purpose and processes). The reason for doing this is to try to determine the collectively agreed purposes and processes amongst those working within the maintained Youth Service in Wales, which contribute to them being seen as a clearly bounded group in pursuit of similar organisational goals (Gallagher et al 1997). Without this information, any effort to evaluate the ability of the maintained Youth Service in Wales to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government will prove futile because judgements will need to be made against an unknown number of variables. However, in making the attempt, it is recognised that the identification of organisational objectives – no matter how broad – are likely to be seen by those with the responsibility for managing and delivering the maintained Youth Service as inadequate, inappropriate, and open to objections and perhaps some hostility. Nevertheless, there is a belief that this does:

> *"not much matter provided that (the conclusions reached) have the prime philosophical virtue of being clear enough to be obviously mistaken. The important thing is that it should be there for others to criticise. It will only develop as a rigorous field of study if a few philosophers are prepared to plough premature furrows which run more or less in the right direction."*
>
> Peters (1972:91)

To identify the essential characteristics of the maintained Youth Service, an attempt will be made to extract information of use to this investigation from an examination and

analysis of the history of the maintained Youth Service. This will be done by seeking answers to three questions: what are its foundations, what were the key influences on its developing organisational culture and, where is it now in terms of its philosophy and contemporary practice? This action is considered crucial because the Youth Service is, in the opinion of Davies (1999:ix), a *"service without a history – and therefore, if it is not very careful, without an identity"*. It will be from this point of the investigation that relevant evidence will be collected that will construct the identity of the maintained Youth Service in Wales and, as a consequence, enable the research question to be answered in a reliable and valid way.

3.3 The foundations of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

Like the Youth Service in England, the maintained Youth Service in Wales was founded on the work of the voluntary sector, which was made up from a range of individual organisations that can be identified by a number of common characteristics. They were, at the time of their origin, overwhelmingly controlled and managed by those with their headquarters located in England and were firmly rooted in the culture of English middle-class philanthropic society (Davies 1999). Membership of these youth work organisations was generally for those under the age of 14, and the work was primarily gender specific, with few opportunities for mixed association (Evans 1965, Butters and Newall 1978, Jeffs 1979, Smith 1988). There was little, if any research into the needs of young people, who were subjected to the decisions of their betters, adults motivated by Christian ideals of control, deference, and the maintenance of the existing social order (Evans 1965, Davies and Gibson 1967). This approach was purposeful and concerned to promote within young people habits of obedience, discipline, punctuality, citizenship, and religious commitment (Springhall 1977, Smith 1988, Davies 1999 Young 1999). Driving this approach were growing concerns about how young working-class people were to be appropriately prepared for their subservient role in society, for the challenges of the growing competitiveness in industry, and for the possibility of armed conflict. The response of the State was the introduction of a range of social policy strategies to control the leisure time activities of young working-class adolescents as a means of maintaining the status quo of

class division (Smith 1988). All of these were achieved through a programme of activities to promote discipline, self-reliance, self-sacrifice, and patriotism as a means of helping the rising generation find the right road to good citizenship, which the middle classes were keen to see happen, as they were well aware that the safety of their lives and their property depended on having around them a peaceful, happy, and moral population (Davies and Gibson 1967).

The government, through Circular 1486 (Board of Education, 1939), promoted the need for a comprehensive Youth Service involving both the voluntary sector and local authorities. This expeditious intervention was driven by government concerns that, at the outbreak of the Second World War, 80% of young people left school at 14, with less than half being attached to a youth organisation, resulting in their isolation from adult control and influence (Powell 1962). This situation, unacceptable to those in power, particularly at a time of crisis, was overcome by the decision of central government to assume a "*direct responsibility for youth welfare*" (Board of Education 1939:1) through the creation of a government-maintained Youth Service, which would become part of a national system of education focused on those beyond compulsory school leaving age (between 14 and 20 years). This government decision had an obvious and immediate effect in the sense that it identified clearly the age range of the emerging Youth Service; it also described the reason for the intervention, which was to give protection to young people because:

> "*the strain of war and the disorganisation of family life have created conditions which constitute a serious menace to youth.*"
>
> Board of Education (1939:1)

Circular 1486 did not advocate a significant shift from the historical way of working with young people detailed previously; rather, it was concerned to make an impact by introducing new funding arrangements and by developing locally determined priorities. As a result, the perception of young people (specifically, young working-class people seen as needing adult control) remained, as did the philanthropic, controlling approach used previously (Butters and Newell 1978, Jeffs 1979, Smith 1988).

The next government publication relating to the Youth Service, Circular 1516 (Board of Education 1940), suggested the linking of all youth organisations to each other and to schools for the general aim of providing social and physical training for young people. Such training would provide a means of building the character of young people through their participation in social facilities, physical recreation and continuing education.

There is little evidence from this time, however, to suggest a strategic or collective approach linking Youth Service outcomes with emerging social policy initiatives. Radical and far-reaching plans were being prepared, however, for the development of a new society within which those involved in the Youth Service hoped to find a secure purpose and role. Social policy changes were being introduced from 1941, with the new Interdepartmental Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services clearly indicating the coalition government's intent to ensure that a society was to be developed to assist all of its weaker members in their time of need. The Determination of Needs Act (HMSO 1941) supported this principle and set out to promote a society within which there would be no second-class citizens (Bruce 1968). Underpinning this approach was a White Paper (Committee on Reconstruction Problems 1942) recommending the introduction of a holistic social security system covering all ages and conditions, administered by a single Ministry (Monk 1976). Action was also being taken to address pre-war concerns about their poor health through the promotion of a national milk scheme, and subsidised and free school meals became available, leading to significant improvements in the health of young people (Bruce 1968). This focus on young people was further reinforced by the comments of the Board of Education (1943:5), which claimed that if young people: "*can be offered as careful and thorough a training for citizenship as they are now given for battle.... they would grow up to be individuals physically, mentally and spiritually capable of playing their part as adult members of the kind of society we wish to see*". Further action was also being planned to combat the poor health of the nation through the provision of comprehensive health cover for all through (Ministry of Health and Department of Health for Scotland 1944). These initiatives provided a foundation on which it was planned to build a number of key social policy developments with the potential to significantly affect the lives of young people (Sked and Cook 1984).

Disquiet was being expressed by those working within the Youth Service, however, about the uncertainty of the organisations future, particularly in regard to the possibility of compulsory National Service and the potential effects of the unpublished Education Act (HMSO 1944). This new educational legislation was expected to include the introduction of County Colleges, which would see much of the leisure-time activities of young people moved into their domain. This was anticipated to be at the expense of the Youth Service, because the Colleges were expected to develop facilities such as residential accommodation, swimming pools, concert halls, and playing fields (Evans 1965). It was also anticipated that the new Education Act would raise the school leaving age with a resultant upward change in the age range of Youth Service members (Peters 1967).

Despite these concerns, the Youth Service gained some recognition within the 1944 Education Act. This recognition was of only a limited nature, however, and was contained within Clauses 41 and 53 of the Act (HMSO 1944). The weakness of the legislation and its potential for increasing a culture of uncertainty within the Youth Service through the use of the term 'adequate' to describe the level of provision to be provided by the Local Education Authority (LEA) have been well analysed and recorded (Evans 1965, Smith 1988, Williamson 1996, Davies 1999). These accounts recognised the vulnerability of the Youth Service as it emerged from the war period with its associated set of unique social requirements. From having a specific and high profile during the war years, the Youth Service would become increasingly abandoned within a declining post-war environment.

In Wales, the Youth Service expectation of expansion was supported by the Report of its Youth Committee who had been asked to consider *"what should be the position of the Youth Service after the war"* (Ministry of Education 1945:2). The final Report was produced in 1945, but the Committee had been set their task and obtained much of their information between 1943 and 1945, which was a much more optimistic time for the embryonic Youth Service. In attempting to achieve their purpose, the Committee endeavoured both to map the progress of the Youth Service and to define the responsibilities of the Local Education Authorities. The significance of an expanding role for these organisations was simple pragmatism because they were seen to have both

permanent structures able to ensure continuity of policy and appropriate financial resources to provide security and status for salaried workers. They were also within the control of publicly elected bodies, able to account for public expenditure for the Youth Service and promote the ideals of democracy. These ideals would be achieved by the promotion of a methodological approach based on the voluntary commitment of young people within an environment that promoted *"variety, freedom, self government and easy relationships between members and young people"* (ibid:5). The outcome of this approach was the inculcation of young people into what was described as a preparation for the responsibilities of *"adult citizenship"*. The Youth Committee also confirmed that the purpose of the Youth Service was to:

> *"provide young people of both sexes...with the opportunity of employing their leisure time in a healthy, useful and congenial manner, and to make that provision part of the normal education service of the community."*
>
> Board of Education (1945:5)

The focus of this post-war Youth Service provision would be on those between the ages of 14 and 20 who had ceased to be in full-time education (ibid). The Report described the purpose of the Youth Service as being to provide young people opportunities and facilities for voluntary leisure activities related to their needs as developing citizens in a modern social setting. To ensure this right, it was suggested that the Youth Service would need to offer young people places to meet, such as Youth Centres and Clubs, opportunities for acquiring communal experiences and training as a preparation for full citizenship, opportunities and facilities for holiday experiences of the richest and most varied types, including foreign travel, and opportunities for guidance to enable young people to acquire a personal philosophy of life. The principal recommendations of the report clearly identified the Youth Service as providing *leisure activity for all young people as an integral part of the National Education Service* (Board of Education 1945:11) delivered through a partnership arrangement between the maintained and voluntary sectors. Structurally, overall responsibility for the Youth Service would be the statutory duty of the Ministry of Education devolved to local education authorities, who would devise procedures to ensure the maintenance of existing resources while progressively increasing the provision of facilities.

What was being set down at this early stage in the life of the maintained Youth Service were a set of principles intended to become the foundations on which a vibrant all-Wales service for young people could be built, which included:

- Identifying the relationship and funding arrangements between the Ministry of Education and Local Education Authorities;
- Promoting the concept of partnership between the local authority and voluntary youth organisations;
- Detailing the target age range as between 14 and 20 years;
- Describing the Youth Service as a community-based leisure-time provision for those who had left full-time compulsory education;
- Confirming the importance of citizenship;
- Recognising it was a service dependent on the voluntary attendance by young people;
- Setting the standards for what young people should expect from the Youth Service; and
- Giving examples of the sorts of outcomes such an organisation needed to achieve.

Despite this work, the emergent LEA Youth Service continued to struggle to develop an identity that would both assist those working within it to recognise their responsibilities and inform government and the wider public of its value (Barnes 1948). As had been anticipated, the economic circumstances halted all youth welfare expenditure and the government avoided making a statement on a national policy for youth work (Evans 1965, Cantor and Roberts 1972). What did result was a pressure for economy, and the cessation of Youth Service building work, savage cuts in grant aid, and a reduction in the numbers of workers in training continued for the rest of the decade. The further consequence of this action was the departure of many experienced workers and the decline of the Youth Service in what became described as the *"the years of doubt and indecision"* (Evans 1965:36).

3.4 The developing culture of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

There was no optimistic outlook for the Youth Service following the election of the Conservative Party in 1951, which claimed it would *"cut out all unnecessary expenditure"* (Butler 1952:45). This statement appeared to spell danger for the Youth Service, which, by 1953, was identified by a shortage of both accommodation and youth workers as a direct result, it is claimed, of government neglect (Peters 1967). The period between 1951 and 1964 was nevertheless a pivotal time for young people because of rapid and significant social change, which raised the standards of living for the mass of people (Monk 1976). Supporting these fundamental changes were technological advances resulting in an increase of 1 million white-collar workers and the decrease of 500,000 blue-collar workers that further blurred the traditional class structure (Lipset and Bendix 1959). Underpinning many of these developments were the outcomes of the Butler Education Act of 1944 (HMSO 1944), which had improved the opportunities for secondary education to a point where there were significant increases in the proportion of young people staying on in school beyond the school leaving age (Butler and Rose 1960).

However, by the second half of the 1950s, both the public and government felt uneasy about what they perceived as the growing threat of juvenile delinquency, with a specific moral panic generated by the appearance of "Teddy Boys". There was also a growing recognition of the possibility of new challenges associated with the significant increase in the school leaving population caused by the post-war baby boom (Cantor and Roberts 1972). These public concerns led to criticisms of central government intransigence in dealing with these perceived threats. Government's response was to set up, in November 1958, a committee under the chairmanship of Countess Albemarle. The general effects of the Albemarle Report (Ministry of Education 1960) have been well recorded (Davies 1999, Smith 1988).

The conclusions and recommendations within the Report led to a significant expansion of the Youth Service in Wales, as there was in England (Peters 1967). Between 1957 and 1967, there was an increase in youth officers in Wales from 14 to 38 (171% increase),

with only one authority, Carmarthenshire, having no designated officer. Full-time workers increased from 10 to 53 (430% increase), although 4 authorities (23.5%) still had no full-time workers. Part-time workers increased from 959 to 1153 (20%) in maintained youth centres that had expanded in numbers from 300 to 385 (28%) with budget increases of 324% from £280,901 to £911,110 (Department of Education and Science 1969). There was also significant growth in the Youth Service building programme. Pembrokeshire Youth Service constructed ten purpose-built centres in the most populated areas of the authority. Merioneth opened four purpose-built youth centres; Caernarfonshire opened two new youth centres, a specialist outdoor and residential conference centre, and three full-time community centres. Denbighshire opened four new youth and community centres, 13 separate youth centres, and the flagship Queens Park Youth and Recreation Centre opened in Wrexham in 1965 at a cost of £64,500 (Youth Service Information Centre (YSIC) 1970).

Unfortunately, the explosion of new buildings and the training of large numbers of new workers did not appear to be matched by a collective, strategic view of the role of the Youth Service in Wales: little attention was given to the development of a process to link what it did to the requirements of government, who were its main source of funding. During the early years following the publication of the Albemarle Report, little attention seems to have been given to constructing a collectively agreed purpose or value base for the Welsh Youth Service. What appeared to be happening was uncoordinated growth involving significant numbers of recently qualified workers (many trained for one year under emergency powers) operating in new neighbourhood youth centres without the benefit of local knowledge or the support of robust management systems. Within this environment, programmes were underpinned by stereotypical attitudes and low expectations: boys were seen as only being interested in sport and girls only interested in boys (Tash 1963). This position was identified by an analysis of youth club activities carried out three years after Albemarle, which revealed that peripheral youth work issues, such as physical activities, had been expanded, while association, the central philosophy of the Report, was neglected (Salter Davies 1963, Youth Service 1963).

The 1960s were potentially a period of great importance for the Youth Service, affected as it was by both the explosion of resources and political attention following the publication of the Albemarle Report, and by significant changes in the social and economic conditions experienced by young people. Youth culture became more easily identified as young people became the architects, active participants, and consumers of new styles of music, art, fashion, and literature (Marwick 1999). Unfortunately, this period of time also marked, once again, the decline of the Youth Service, caused, it can be suggested, by what could be seen as an inability to respond to contemporary circumstances related to either government policy or the needs of young people. The Labour government elected in 1964 laid the blame for this position on the Youth Service with the claim that it was living in a policy vacuum unaware of either government or young people's needs. What was required, in the opinion of the Labour Party, was a broad-based curriculum, including hostelling, camping, environmental service, social service, and the appreciation of arts and recreation (ibid). This advice appeared to be discounted and it was claimed by Howells (1968:3) that the Youth Service continued to be a disparate organisation and *"that after more than three years as the Minister for Youth and Sport he was still trying with very little success to identify its role"*. Advice was once again offered by government, who said that the Youth Service had a simple function, which was to enable the development of the individual and the individual personality by providing a wide variety of opportunities for young people to enjoy their leisure and recreation. The Youth Service was an informal service that needed to move away from the concept of the youth club or risk losing its appeal for young people, particularly those over the age of 16. Its work, including guiding and counselling, should be carried out in a wider variety of settings, including leisure centres, sports clubs, cultural clubs, and further education institutes, and the focus of youth work would be those unattached to community provision. Central to this vision was the introduction of a method of working that involved young people in activities that caught their imagination, utilised their natural interests, and gave them positive rather than negative reputations within their communities. This work would be delivered in the context of a growing community responsibility that would blur the age ranges of those using the service and would more fully utilise resources such as school buildings. The failure of the Youth Service to

respond to this advice resulted once again in it becoming trapped within a negative spiral of reduced resources and its gradual abandonment from the policy making process.

By the end of the 1960s, the government's commissioned reports on the relationship between the Youth Service and schools and between the Youth Service and the community, a consistent theme of Howells' rhetoric (Howells 1968), were published in what became described as the Milson and Fairbairn report (Department of Education and Science 1969). Central to these reports was a new philosophy for the Youth Service, advocating an education and experience-based approach to its work promoting membership of an active society underpinned by the premise that social change is inevitable and individuals within this context should be empowered to contribute to the effects of those changes as they affect their lives (Etzioni 1968).

As this decade came to a close, the local authority Youth Services in Wales were contributing to a UK-wide survey (YSIC 1970). An overview of the survey revealed that at the end of a decade which had started with such great promise, the Youth Service was an organisation that appeared to be identified by a paucity of creative practice, divorced from the contemporary needs of young people and the requirements of government policy. This issue of polarised positions was again becoming obvious and appeared to be built on three interrelated characteristics that were recurring themes for the Youth Service:

1. the inability of the Youth Service to convince politicians and sufficient numbers of young people of its potential;
2. the lack interest in the Youth Service by too many politicians; and
3. the reluctance on the part of local authorities to appropriately fund what was developing into an organisation built on general statements and poorly defined philosophical concepts.

Driven in many ways by these issues, from the early 1970s, the Youth Service adopted some of the recommendations of the Milson and Fairbairn report, particularly those which advocated links between Youth Work and Community Development. This was done as a means of repackaging the Youth Service with sufficient enthusiasm to bring about a

change of name and organisation location. Many 'Youth Services' became 'Youth and Community Work Services' contained within a Community Education Department, rather than within Further Education (Jones 1992). There was, it appeared, an apparent inability to take a systematic approach to the strategic development of the service, to provide adequate and appropriate systems for the support of managers and workers, and to promote its work to either politicians or the public. In developing what were to become deeply embedded cultural characteristics, the ability of the Youth Service to link its practice in a clearly articulated and coherent way with both the needs of national government and young people was seriously diminished within an ill-defined Youth and Community framework and another round of local authority reorganisation (Davies 1999).

An analysis of the 1970s reveals a difficult time for the United Kingdom. Neither the Conservative government of Heath nor the Labour governments of Wilson and Callaghan were able to devise strategies to reduce public expenditure and to develop and manage the economy. By 1973, there was an unprecedented £1.12 billion balance of payments deficit, resulting in draconian action to immediately reduce public spending by £100 million in 1973/4 with further cuts of £500 million planned for 1974/75 (Davies 1999). The actual cuts to public expenditure between 1973 and 1975 were calculated as £1,800 million (ibid). Labour, led by Wilson, was returned to power in 1974, but following Wilson's shock resignation as Prime Minister in 1976, Callaghan became leader. Faced with the continuation of economic difficulties, the government attempted to maintain a wage policy restricting increases to 4.5% and reduced government expenditure. Government borrowing to fund the agenda which won them the election in 1974 eventually led to a weakness of sterling on the foreign exchange markets and even more substantial cuts in public spending in 1977-78, when interest rates were raised to record levels. On the 28 March 1979, the government was defeated in a House of Commons vote of confidence by 310 votes to 311.

The effects of this period were catastrophic for the Youth Service in Wales, which had been affected by numerous cuts in resources and in opportunities for training as a result of both the economic crisis and the effects of local government reorganisation (Welsh

Association of Further Education and Youth Service Officers 1986). On an all-Wales basis, it was estimated that the planned expenditure for the Youth Service in Wales had been reduced by 9.5% (Smith 1980). Within this environment of continuing political and economic crisis, the Youth Service in Wales, weakened initially by the repercussions of local government reorganisation in 1974, continued its downward spiral. Increasingly marginalised and unable to develop a collective identity, it consistently appeared to fail to contribute to the government's agenda or to the needs of those young people caught up in the volatility of the time. On reflection of this period in the evolution of the Youth Service in Wales, it is possible to identify characteristics that were to become embedded in the culture of the Youth Service, including the continuing marginalisation of the service and a devaluation of its potential. External funding sources became more important as a substitute for core funding and the decline in both full-time qualified staff and a reduction of in-service training opportunities led to the de-intellectualising of much of the Youth Service provision in Wales. The consequence was an organisation described as *"a bewildering mosaic of commitments and activities: an uncoordinated hundred-ring circus"* (Butters and Newell 1978:27), and the Youth Service in Wales became weakened to a point where it was effectively defenceless against the approach of the radical administration driven by the Thatcher government when it came to power in 1979.

3.5 Recent influences on the maintained Youth Service in Wales

Margaret Thatcher was elected to power on 4 May 1979 as Leader of the Conservative Party, which remained in power until 1997. The effects of this radical administration resonated in a powerful way well past the period it was in office and, as a consequence, had a significant influence on the maintained Youth Service during the period in which this investigation was carried out.

Thatcher's government, driven by what it saw as both economic necessity and political ideology, was committed to reducing the culture of welfare dependency encouraged, they claimed, during the previous Labour administration at enormous financial cost to the public. It had also resulted, the government stated, in a culture that:

> *"encouraged illegitimacy, facilitated the breakdown of families and replaced incentives favouring work and self reliance with perverse encouragement for idleness and cheating."*
>
> (Thatcher 1993:8)

The response of the Conservative Party was underpinned by a belief in individual enterprise and in a private sector-led economy, concerned to produce both a dramatic retraction of state involvement and the promotion of a philosophy that advanced the state as an enabler of welfare rather than a provider (Prentice 1993). This approach was planned to result in a new culture of financial stringency within the public sector with annual reductions in expenditure becoming the norm. These reductions would be offset by improved organisational efficiency and by improved management systems, central to which were explicit standards of performance, strict output control, greater competition in the public sector, and improved resource use (Hood 2000).

The effect of this political doctrine and the apparent inability of the Youth Service in Wales to respond to it was revealed by Smith (1980), who claimed that the average reduction of the maintained Youth Service in England and Wales between 1979/81 was 9.9%, with 31% of authorities cutting expenditure by more than 10% and 14% cutting in excess of 15%. Smith further claimed that these reductions, which were on top of those made during the previous political administration, could not fail to damage the fabric of the Youth Service – particularly the one-third of authorities reducing expenditure by more than 10%. Drained of resources, and too often removed from any sphere of influence with regard to social policy development affecting young people, the Youth Service became even less effective in delivering what was, in many instances, seen as no more than a low-level leisure service. In order to survive, the more entrepreneurial youth workers in Wales began to diversify into other areas of work funded from a wide range of sources (Nichols 2001). As a result, the maintained Youth Service began to lose its shape even further as it became involved in government-preferred areas of work. These included Youth Opportunity Projects and Intermediate Treatment, both of which required the compulsory attendance of young people – a position contradictory to the agreed approach of Youth Service (Chapter 3.3). Consequently, and despite growing social and economic disadvantage caused by massive increases in youth unemployment (Williamson 1993) and

increasing tensions in the inner cities, the Youth Service appeared to have no recognisable role (HMSO 1982).

Within this climate, Education Survey 13 (Welsh Office 1984) was published as the only specific Youth Service report carried out in Wales. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate Youth Service provision to ensure that it could meet its potential. The conclusions of the report were highly critical of a service that was seen to suffer from a lack of systematic planning characterised by a lack of clear objectives a sense of direction or an overall purpose. This was identified as being more prevalent within the maintained service, with few workers being able to articulate their aims due, it is claimed, to a lack of *"empathetic interest in their work"* (Welsh Office 1984:13). Concern was also expressed about the financial cuts affecting the service which, the report claimed, had been taking place since 1976, with the majority of local education authorities having to seek alternative sources of funding. This reduction of core funding had a significant effect on the duties being carried out by the 165 full-time workers in post in 1982 (Welsh Office 1984). Out of this number, the Report claimed only *"63 can be identified as youth workers per se"* because of the other non-Youth Service duties full-time workers were expected to carry out (ibid:27).

The Report gave some guidance on the role of the Youth Service, which it described as providing *"supportive relationships with adults, learning and doing by a person-centred approach"* (Welsh Office 1984:40). The reasons for young people's involvement in the service were also clearly described and included: somewhere to go to meet friends and socialise; something to belong to; relaxation and enjoyment; and the opportunity to do things that would not otherwise be possible. The immediate and short-term effect of the report on practice is difficult to measure due to the paucity of written information and analysis by practitioners and Youth Service managers in Wales, who were critical of the generally negative tone of the Report and, as such, appeared keen to dismiss its findings (WYWP 1986). However, in hindsight, the long-term effect could be seen to be the traditional approach of the Youth Service in Wales following the production of a

significant Report - a flurry of instant activity followed by a lapse into what could be described as its normal exhausted state.

Information which helped to identify the maintained Youth Service in addition to that provided by Survey 13 was also being published at that time within a number of Reports by Her Majesties Inspectorate (HMI) of visits to individual youth centres and projects. One claimed that a local authority Youth Service was identified as providing programmes that were in *"most cases ad hoc and lacking the necessary careful forethought and organisation* (Welsh Office 1983:33). The Report further concluded the *"the absence of clearly defined LEA aims and objectives, strategies and priorities left districts without a framework for its operation"* (ibid:2). Reductions in expenditure were clearly identified as contributing significantly to a downward spiral of provision, which affected the morale and motivation of staff and subsequently the quality of work, and to a lack of overall development (ibid). Core activities in another local authority Youth Service were described as being focused around table tennis, pool, and darts, or heavily biased towards sport (Welsh Office 1984). An outcome of this focus on sport was that programmes became male-dominated, with twice as many male members as female members (ibid).

The lack of government support for the work of the Youth Service could be seen to be as a result of two main issues. First, there was the belief that local authority services, particularly direct labour departments, were often corrupt, wasteful, and diametrically opposed to Tory doctrine related to minimal government (Thatcher 1993). The second was the position of Thatcher, who was opposed to what she described as professional interventionists, such as those working in the maintained Youth Service, who:

> *"have exaggerated their expertise and magnified their role, in effect substituting themselves for the parents with insufficient cause."*
>
> Thatcher (1993:630)

To combat corruption and waste, particularly within local authorities, political decisions were taken to introduce systems that would allow for more transparent comparisons between them by government as a means of demonstrating both accountability and value for money. From this doctrine came the Education Act (HMSO 1986), which increased

the powers of school governing bodies, including giving them almost total control over the use of school premises – many of which were used by the Youth Service. As a consequence, Youth Service provision ceased in a number of school settings because it was unable to meet the cost of new financial burdens, such as rent and caretaker costs (WYWP 1988). The Act also delegated the control of finance to schools and colleges as well as severely restricting local authority representation on governing bodies and giving schools the right to apply to opt out of local authority control. It also introduced a National Curriculum in Primary and Secondary schools and the testing and assessment of all pupils at the age of seven, eleven, fourteen, and sixteen. Parents were also given greater freedom to send children to the school of their choice. In the context of the maintained Youth Service, the Act placed a duty on local authorities to secure adequate facilities for Further Education and to plan provision strategically. The Local Government Act (HMSO 1988a) continued the political doctrine described previously, by requiring a wide range of local authority services to be put out to tender. This shifted the role of the local authority from a direct provider of services to an enabler. There was a great deal of cynicism by the Youth Service at the introduction of this system on the grounds that a market could not be constructed because of the lack of available structures relating to purchaser/provider/consumer. This was supported to some extent by Coopers, Lybrand Deloitte (1991), who believed that contract funding was a radical approach requiring a considerable amount of preliminary work before its introduction and effective implementation. For both philosophical and practical reasons, opposition was voiced by Youth Service practitioners in Wales on the grounds that the market process would not necessarily enhance practice (WYWP 1991). It was also believed that increased bureaucracy, including time spent on bidding applications, could affect the quality of work with young people by driving the full-time professional workers away from young people for greater periods of time. The introduction of these powerful state-directed developments suggested that youth work provision within a local education authority would be, as all public bodies had become, subject to greater levels of accountability. These developments also suggested that more overt management systems – including job descriptions for staff, the defining of outcomes, and monitoring and evaluation procedures – would be necessary to ensure that policy requirements were being met. These were areas

where the Youth Service had traditionally been weak and with further major funding cuts anticipated, the possibility of these deficiencies being remedied quickly was not viewed with optimism by those involved in the organisation (ibid). Within this developing political environment, the Youth Service was being directed towards more focused priorities, including an involvement in economic regeneration, business start up, community arts, and volunteering.

The maintained Youth Service was, as a consequence of these developments, becoming more firmly entwined within the new financial strategies implemented by the Conservative Party, and as a result faced growing pressure to further link its work to service-level agreements leading to a competitive tendering process based on a contract between purchaser and provider (HMSO 1988b). Within this environment, the decision was taken by central government to bring the Youth Service together in a series of conferences to *"clarify and focus on what it hopes to achieve"* (National Youth Bureau (NYB) 1989:5). In preparation for what was seen as a key series of events, it was considered important for the Youth Service to obtain information that would be of use to those who would represent the organisation at the Ministerial Conferences (WYWP 1989). The results of an audit, obtained through a national questionnaire survey of full and part-time workers, identified the Youth Service in Wales as an organisation with significant structural deficiencies that precluded it, in a collective sense, from delivering a programme linking government policy to the needs of young people (WYWP 1991). The results also identified the predominance of part-time workers, who outnumbered full-time workers by a ratio of 10:1, and revealed that part-time workers had a generally subservient role, that they were unaware of the new language appearing in youth work, were poorly trained following their initial qualifying course, and, in most instances, were isolated from their peers. The survey concluded that most of the deliverers of the service in Wales did not know or could not articulate what they were doing or how they judged the effectiveness of their work.

3.5.1 Thatcher to Major

On 28 November 1990, John Major became Leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister following a leadership battle that saw the end of the reign of Margaret Thatcher.

Both the process and the eventual outcomes of the three Ministerial Conferences held in December 1989, November 1990, and May 1992 have been examined, analysed, and recorded from an English perspective with significant negativity (Davies 1999). In the Welsh context, however, the development was ultimately both significant and positive in the sense that it saw the Youth Service take the initiative to sever some of its historical connection with England and attempt to develop a stronger identity for itself. At the second conference, during the debate around the issue of equal and cultural identity, an opportunity presented itself to the Welsh delegation to recognise the general issue of Welsh culture and the specific issue of the Welsh language. Disillusioned by the debate, which was, in the opinion of the Welsh delegates, too focused on race and sexuality – two issues with very little recognition within the Youth Service in Wales – the possibility of a specific Curriculum Statement for Wales was raised. This would, it was claimed, recognise what were described as the:

> *"fundamental differences between the English scene and that in Wales, this underlying the fact that there is a need for different structures and outline philosophy for those working in Wales."*
>
> (Skinner 1990a)

From this opportunistic action, which took advantage of the debate on cultural diversity, representatives of the Youth Service in Wales were able to suggest to the Ministerial Conference Steering Group that Wales should write its own Curriculum Statement (Skinner 1990b). Central to this action would be the production of a Statement of Purpose that would not have the levels of ambiguity of the English statement driven by the promotion of equal opportunities with its wish to challenge oppressions such as racism and sexism (Davies 1999). There was little opposition to the suggestion and the Youth Service in Wales became empowered to clarify its purpose as determined by what would be seen as criteria specific to Wales. This led to the decision to bring together a body representing the key Youth Service stakeholders in Wales who would be responsible for

writing a Core Curriculum for the Youth Service in Wales (Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) 1992).

An analysis of the information available from this period suggests that those responsible for the strategic development of the Youth Service in Wales failed to recognise the interrelated nature of three fundamental issues of critical importance to an organisation attempting to become more central to government action. First, the Youth Service workforce had little understanding or collective agreement about its philosophical position (WYWP 1991). To put it simply it appeared unable to articulate, in any cogent way, what it was attempting to do, how it intended to do it, or what it intended to achieve. Second, this position was exacerbated by the production of a Curriculum Statement that was – as the results of the questionnaire survey had revealed – too complex for its workers to understand without significant levels of additional training and support (WJEC 1992). Third, and perhaps, it can be argued, most important (because its resolution, unlike the previous two, was beyond the powers of those managing the Youth Service), the environment created by Conservative Party policy and affecting young people since 1979 was not conducive to the approach promoted within the Curriculum Statement (Davies 1999).

Government policy at this time could be seen to be more focused on punitive and controlling responses, underpinned by the development of an *"underclass thesis"* which promoted the idea that there was a threat to society from an identified group of young people (Jeffs and Smith 1994). The proposition promoted initially in the USA by Murray (1990) suggests that the central features of an underclass are communities with large numbers of young people who have been reared, without the benefit of a father's discipline, by sexually promiscuous teenage mothers who were both incompetent and incapable. In the opinion of Murray, significant numbers of young people became academic underachievers and school refusers with no wish to work, lacking family values, and who became criminals (Holman 1995). It was a hypothesis that resulted in a consistent response by the Conservative Party, who promoted the view that the problems associated with young people in society were because of their individual deficits and not

because of structural inequalities built into a capitalist society (MacLeod, 1995). This perspective, in a number of significant ways, continued to negate the principles contained within the Curriculum Statement, which further reduced both the identity of the maintained Youth Service and its effectiveness as an organisation with a young-people-first approach.

In an attempt to generate interest in what was recognised as an ailing Youth Service, and to promote a more collective approach based on an agreed position regarding its future, the Wales Youth Agency (WYA), created by the Welsh Office as a Non-Departmental Public Body in 1992 (WYA 1992) (the same year that John Major was re-elected to power), organised a national conference entitled Building the Future (WYA 1994a). The purpose of this initiative was to develop a strategy to promote the Youth Service following local government reorganisation, which would result in the amalgamation of the existing eight county councils and 37 district councils into 22 single-tier unitary authorities (HMSO 1994). To achieve its aim of promoting the work of the Youth Service, it was the intention of the Agency to:

> *"prepare a strategic plan that will secure the future of the Youth Service in Wales, ensure its high profile and its promotion, and create an environment in which the service can be safeguarded and can flourish."*
> (WYA 1994a:9)

The Wales Youth Agency published the strategy (WYA 1994a) but the general financial, social, and political conditions, combined with general political indifference – to what was perceived to be a way of working with young people that had no value to its political agenda – precluded it from having the success they hoped for. Local government reorganisation would however have significant implications for the maintained Youth Service both in the terms of how it would be managed by 22 Principal Youth Officers rather than the previous eight and how it would train and support its workforce within the new geographical boundaries.

In 1996, as the Conservative Party prepared for another election victory, a new body, the United Kingdom Youth Work Alliance (an independent campaigning group representing

the key interests of the Youth Service) attempted to raise the profile of the Youth Service at a key time in the political cycle. It did this by once again stating within its first publication, 'Agenda for a Generation', that the Youth Service purpose was to:

- *Build the capacity of young people, through promoting their skills, self-worth, creativity and enterprise.*
- *Promote social inclusion through supporting more disadvantaged young people, re-engaging them in learning and thereby enhancing their employability.*
- *Encourage active citizenship and developing in young people an awareness of their rights and responsibilities to the wider community.*

(UK Youth Work Alliance 1996:5)

The Alliance was also keen to describe the outcomes of effective Youth Service programmes, which were identified as being to increase the numbers of young people in the social, political, economic, and educational mainstream. To achieve this aim, they claimed, the Youth Service would set out to attract young people through the provision of a range of venues and organisations including youth clubs, uniformed organisations, faith-based groups, specialised centres in the arts or sports, counselling and information and advice centres focused on a Youth Service agenda concerned to develop the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, and emotional capacities of young people, with the intention of improving their personal and social development. In the opinion of the Youth Work Alliance, the possibility of achieving these outcomes would be significantly enhanced if Youth Service practice was developed from a clear statement of purpose; agreed partnership arrangements between local authorities, voluntary organisations and young people; appropriate numbers of trained staff; and formal procedures for the consistent delegation of resource allocations. As a campaigning organisation, the Alliance was also interested in developing a debate that moved away from young people being seen as dangerous and difficult to a debate concerned to describe the value of young people to the future of the United Kingdom. They were also highly critical of government, which they claimed had:

> *"no mechanism by which the needs and interests of young people can be identified – still less protected... The formal links between departments having responsibilities for issues which directly affect young people are*

limited: inter departmental consultation is perceived to be grossly inadequate: ministerial leadership is missing and joint action is virtually non-existent."

UK Youth Work Alliance (1996:12)

This publication started a wider debate about young people that was neither promoting a negative image nor advocating additional measures for their supervision and control. However, the Alliance was a relatively powerless organisation locked in a political framework that by 1997 had seen the embedding of a dismissive attitude about a number of key issues, which included an increase in focused poverty affecting the poorest third of the population as a result of changes in both the general economy (often through deliberate economic policy) and from particular actions of social policy (Loney et al. 1987, Donninson 1998). The resultant increase in inequality was described as *"unparalleled in the Western world"* (Johnson 1996:7). Government reaction to this claim was indifference (Giddens 1999:12), the same reaction to the claim that social inequality was inherently wrong or harmful to those it affected (Marsland 1996). A further significant characteristic of the Conservative Party legacy (which, it can be argued, remained after it had been removed from power) was the embedded concept of moral authoritarianism. This was a central plank of Tory ideology and was driven by the belief of the need to make a distinction within the field of social policy, as did the Victorians, of the difference between the deserving and undeserving poor (Thatcher 1993). Both groups, it was suggested, should be offered help but of different kinds to ensure that public spending did not just reinforce the dependency culture (ibid:627). A further dominant Conservative Party belief was that anti-social behaviour required correction through punitive measures; failure to do so was seen to promote a culture of irresponsibility within families which would be passed on from one generation to the next.

3.5.2 Conservative Party priorities to New Labour Party priorities

Elements of the Conservative Party education legacy to New Labour - who won the 1997 General Election with a landslide majority (Savage and Atkinson 2001) – included the National Curriculum, tests, league tables, and enhanced inspection, as did the proposed Conservative Party spending plans for the two years following the 1997 election. This was

a particular disappointment to the Youth Service, which had been starved of resources during the Conservative Party regime between 1979 and 1997 and which was desperate for additional support to revive its capacity to contribute to the agenda of the new government (Rose 1999). Anxieties were also beginning to grow in many youth workers about the continuation of a driven political agenda of public policy reform which spanned Conservative and New Labour administrations. This agenda was concerned to judge human services (a term increasingly used in preference to 'public sector', 'public services', 'health and social care') according to the criteria of economy, effectiveness, and quality. This led to a shift from:

> *"traditional administered bureaucracies to managed public businesses. By 1997 (with a New Labour government committed to further change) the impact of the reforming governments had been internalised."*
>
> (Farnham and Horton 1999:xi)

Educational and social programmes of the sort delivered within the Youth Service and negotiated by young people without the influence of either government-led employment agendas or appropriate and quantifiable outcomes was seen to be under significant threat from this developing ideology (WYA 1999a). Primarily because the significant amounts of new government money for education was being linked to what has been described as *"something for something"* funding (Seldon 2001:410). Consequently, additional bidding processes for resources were introduced to ensure that the government was more able to control the delivery of its agenda. The maintained Youth Service in Wales was not excluded from this and, as a consequence, was faced with both the prospect of additional resources and greater scrutiny of its work (NAW:2000a).

Bridging the period between the end of the Conservative Party in office and the election of New Labour was the consultation process that led to the production of the *'Occupational and Functional Mapping of Youth Work'* (NYA 1997a). Initiated by the Conservative-led Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) and supported by a steering group representing local authority and voluntary sectors throughout the UK, the project attempted to once again *"propose a key purpose statement for the youth sector which is in keeping with the stated aims of the sector"* (NYA 1997a :2). Responses from

137 local authority and voluntary sector organisations contributed to the project findings, which described the role of youth work as being:

> *"To facilitate and support young people's growth through dependence to interdependence, by encouraging their personal and social education and helping them take a positive role in the development of their communities and society."*
>
> NYA (1997a:25)

As well as describing Youth Service purpose, the mapping document was also concerned to identify the boundaries within which the service operated. Youth Work, it claimed, is contained in a setting concerned to develop challenging informal social and education programmes. Such programmes would lead to the planned personal and spiritual development of young people. Learning within the Youth Service setting would be carried out within a wide range of community-based locations, within which young people would feel secure and valued. Underpinning this approach would be the development of a high-quality relationship between the youth worker and young people, who would be supported to take greater responsibility for the decision making that affected their lives. As a consequence of this approach, it would be possible to identify clear differences between youth work and formal education of the sort carried out in school or college and informal work involving young people for purely recreational purpose. Once again, however, the Youth Service rhetoric of purpose was not matched with strategic decisions about how it would be enabled to achieve the tasks being set for it. Evidence was available to identify the maintained Youth Service in Wales as an organisation that did not in general link its work with young people in the community with some centrally defined statement of purpose.

The issues of purpose principles and values for the Youth Service were raised again during the consultation and production of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (NYA 2000a), which followed on from the previously described mapping process. It was recognised during the process that led to the production of the standards document that the agreed concepts and ideas arrived at would have a:

> *"familiar ring to them because they had been drawn from a number of sources including ministerial statements, policy documents, writings of youth work academics, educators and practitioners."*
>
> NYA (2000a:iii).

Youth work was once again described as being concerned with young people's personal and social development but there was the addition of the phrase 'educational development'. This emphasis of education was continued within the section describing Youth Work values as being concerned with "*a clear understanding of, and commitment to learning and development, equality of opportunity, social inclusion,* [an additional New Labour concept] *and the educational and social importance of choice, freedom responsibility and justice"* (NYA 2000a:iii).

Despite this focus on Youth Service issues, the maintained Youth Service at this time could be identified as an organisation that had been decaying as a consequence of three decades of political neglect and institutional ineffectiveness. The result was an organisation with insufficient financial support, operating in less than adequate buildings, delivering a programme of activities to young people with low levels of qualified full-time staff who had devolved most of the contact time with young people to the part-time workforce. No strategic consideration appears to have been given to how the maintained Youth Service in Wales would respond to a new political agenda other than to continue to write, publish, and promote statements which it was hoped would first mask its actual ability and second ensure its existence. It can be further argued that what the Youth Service really needed was a simple, achievable statement of its purpose that could be easily understood and translated into practice within the framework just described. The maintained Youth Service at the beginning of a new millennium was vulnerable both to the new and challenging requirements being placed on it by government and by its own refusal to take a more simple and achievable approach.

This writing of an unambiguous statement of purpose was attempted by the Wales Youth Agency (WYA 2000e). This publication described the Youth Service as an organisation which involves young people between 11 and 25, with the priority age range being 13 to 19 years, in a broad range of activities concerned with non-formal community-based

education and learning. The uniqueness of its work was linked to four elements, identified by Jeffs and Smith (1999) as:

- being built on the voluntary relationship between the young person and the worker;
- having an educational purpose;
- being young people focused; and
- valuing young people for what they are rather than on what they can achieve.

3.6 The maintained Youth Service focused on young people

This young-person-first stance of the maintained Youth Service was further promoted at this time in a range of publications which advocated the development of a way of working concerned with young people as individuals. These publications suggested that the Youth Service had a responsibility to develop a range of opportunities to respect basic human rights, the uniqueness of individuals, the right to self-determination, and the educational and social importance of choice, freedom, responsibility, and justice (Jeffs and Smith 1996, Banks 1999, Young 1999). From their standpoint, young people need to be recognised as a diverse group requiring a wide range of strategies to equip them to make sense of their life through the identification of the characteristics necessary for them as individuals to lead a *'life worth living'* (Simey 1992).

This approach to working with young people would appear to have a link to the philosophy of Aristotle (Thomson 1976) who claimed that the primary aim of the individual, their true purpose, is to *'live the good life'*. When the question *"what is the highest of all practical goods"* was asked, the answer given was *"The end is no doubt happiness, but views of happiness differ."* The search for this 'good' was not seen to be easy and warnings were given about false 'goods'. Pleasure as a 'good' was dismissed as leading to a *"bovine existence"*, honour as being concerned with *'convincing themselves of their own goodness'*. Wealth was also dismissed, being described as *"obviously not the good that we are seeking, because it serves only as a means i.e. for getting something else"* (ibid: 68). Suggestions were made, however, that all three contributed to the

attainment of the 'good life', as did *'virtue'* described as *"a readiness to do fine deeds"*. Aristotle gave guidance on how this 'good life' could be achieved. There were, he said, some options that needed to be considered, including the possibility that the 'greatest good', *happiness*, is something that can be learnt, or that it is achieved by divine dispensation or even by chance (Thompson 1976:80). The conclusion of Aristotle was that it was achieved through study and application.

However, the challenge to the thesis of developing a life worth living as the aim of the maintained Youth Service is highlighted by Darder (2002:40) who claims free-of-charge happiness is an anathema to a capitalist society driven, as it is, by what can be bought and sold. As a consequence, the continual free-of-charge process of humanisation, essential to being human (Freire 2001) becomes re-constructed in order for identity to become defined by an individual's capital and consumption (McLaren 1995). As the *"social, the cultural and the human are subsumed within capital"* (ibid:2) society becomes individualised as, caught in the unending quest for more capital, the dominated are anaesthetised to the reality of their domination, failing to perceive their problems as communal effects of their structural conditions and striving to attain the image of those who dominate them (McLaren 1995). A process of divide and rule undertaken by the dominator elites maintains the dependency of dominated on dominator; for work – as a means to more capital – and access to the required commodity. This provides an opportunity for the dominator to describe themselves as the saviour of the dominated by providing opportunities for work and benefits through acts of false generosity with the prime motivation for their actions being the continuance of the dominator motive (Freire 1996). As a result, it can be argued, the professional worker is always determined from above because their dependence on the dominating elites restricts their options for action for as long as they buy into the culture of capitalism and seek its outputs for fulfilment and success.

The culture of domination is further served by cultural invasion in which dominator elites seek to understand the dominated culture to impose their own culture more effectively. Such action assumes the superiority of the culture of domination over that of the

dominated culture (Freire 1996). Cultural invasion leads naturally to manipulation as the dominating culture directs education for its own ends. Schools and mass media are used to indoctrinate the population into quiet, uncritical submission to the culture of domination (McLaren and Leonard 1993). The work place, with its obsession with targets, efficiency and maximum profit at the least cost, removes autonomy from the individual, who is determined from above by the dominating elites decreeing the outcomes described above. As a result of this conquest, the dominated become determined from above by a culture of domination leading to *"dehumanisation"* (Freire 1996:134) which demotes those who have been determined from above from autonomous beings – capable of determining a life worth living – to beings for others (Perry 2000). Unable to exercise choice or to take action to transform reality, they can only adapt to an imposed reality constituted of the choices of others, an adaptation which is characteristic of the animal sphere, exhibited by men it is symptomatic of their dehumanisation (Freire 1974:4).

It is claimed (Freire 1976) that the dominated may become aware of their oppressed status and begin to move towards what is described as "critical consciousness" where reality is recognised as a changeable commodity rather than static object and the vocation to become more fully human is engaged actively through transformatory action and reflection (Freire 1976). The outcome of this process for the individual is recognition of duality; the regaining of humanity through critical consciousness but retaining the memory of self as dominated.

The duality of being critically conscious, but still working, and acting in a culture of domination where the banking system of unquestionable knowledge permeates the media, the workplace and human interaction forms the final contradiction. The conflicts of working to imposed targets, pleasing the elites and seeking success alongside the recognition that reality must be transformed and taking action to change it. There is, it is claimed, no opportunity to inhabit a different world and in doing so leave the dominated behind because to do so would negate their critical consciousness (Freire 1993). The action required is with the oppressed for the liberation of the oppressed and the oppressor, not individual peace of mind or ease of existence (ibid). By undertaking this action the

oppressed moves from being a "dual being" to a "revolutionary leader" described by Freire (1993) as critically conscious beings who have objectified reality and in doing so externalised the oppressor. Denouncing the culture of domination they have solved their internal contradictions and as a consequence their duality (ibid). Rejecting the methods of domination the revolutionary leader seeks out *"true avenues of communion with...* [the people] *ways of helping* [them] *to help themselves in critically perceiving the reality which oppresses them"* (Freire 1996:147). This approach has clear links to the purposes of the Youth Service which are to *"provide equality of opportunity for all young people so that they may fulfil their potential as empowered individuals and as members of groups and communities. To support young people in the transition to adulthood* (Appendix 1) Non-formal education linked to participation and empowerment form the key principles of the Youth Service practice which separate it from other types of work. Driven by its purposes principles and values, those who work in the maintained Youth Service require a critical awareness of the causes affecting the reality of the dominated. The work of the Youth Service therefore needs to begin with the world as perceived by young people (Twelvetrees 2002) and to seek to develop independent critical consciousness *"which will enable the participants to use and spread these abilities long after the worker has gone"* (Popple 1995:5)

3.7 Rhetoric subsumed by reality

From the historical overview described earlier in this chapter it is possible to conclude that many of those who work in the maintained Youth Service have failed to take this *"young people first approach"* (Drakeford 1998) because they have prioritised the requirements of government over the needs of young people. There would appear to be a small number of obvious reasons for doing so. First, many of those working within the maintained Youth Service are attracted by the security of government-sponsored youth work, despite it being heavily determined from above with an emphasis on targets, efficiency and hard outputs which do not lend themselves to a young person first approach. Second, the maintained Youth Service has become contained within a more accountable framework which allocates finance on the attainment of government-

determined targets. Third, the maintained Youth Service has been generally de-energised by a lack of resources and, as a consequence, it does not have the energy or capacity to oppose some of the draconian policy affecting young people.

Within this environment the discussion of a young-people-first approach was not a priority and the young people first agenda was focused on managing what were described by Huskins (1999) as the dangerous behaviours of young people. These included their involvement in such activities as truancy and school exclusion, drug misuse, risky sexual behaviour, and crime and anti social behaviour. In order to be seen as successful in managing these behaviours, even greater use of utilitarian methods of measurement have been introduced to provide results that suggest that these dangerous behaviours are being controlled by the interventions of government - including new responsibilities for the Youth Service. Within this environment, government strategies continue to be developed influenced by a set of general ethical principles, which describe young people as deficient and in need of rehabilitation. This deficit model of young people appears to be contained within an entrenched view of Government that views young people as a homogeneous group capable of being altered as a result of establishment reform. Changes to the school system, increased Further and Higher Education opportunities, new criminal justice arrangements, and work experience and training schemes are all too often seen as ways of ensuring that the agenda of Government is being followed.

As a consequence of these pressures only a limited effort by the maintained Youth Service to promote a young-person-first approach can be identified, underpinned by what Young (1999:2) describes as the moral philosophy of youth work – a position concerned to:

> *"Enable and support young people to ask and answer the central question of self-what sort of person am I? What kind of relationship do I want to have with myself and with others? What kind of society do I want to live in?"*

It can be argued that this is a stance concerned to support young people to develop skills that make it possible for them to reflect on their past actions, which in turn leads to more

positive personal decisions and more appropriate contemporary actions, leading to the discovery of the 'good life'. For a Youth Service driven by this perspective, the key is the idea of *'appropriate education'* because of its potential, in the opinion of Davies, (2002), to:

- Enable young people to act well and to seek excellence within the social practices in which they engage;
- Enable young people to make reasonable choices about the social practices in which they engage and the roles they take up within these social practices;
- Enable young people to develop a consistent character – showing the virtues of integrity and constancy – and have a clear sense of self in these different activities and over time (that is, have a unity to their lives); and
- Enable young people to determine for themselves the characteristics of the good life, a conception that will be achievable within contemporary society or through the development of society.

The nature of and the availability of this appropriate education within the community context has, however, been largely disregarded by government, who generally continue to ignore the importance of a style of learning that does not by necessity use a mechanistic system of measurement. As a consequence, current thinking by decision-makers has been too concerned to place the education and learning of young people in the almost exclusive domain of formal school-based education, with its commitment to a prescribed framework, as an organised learning event or package, delivered by a designated teacher or trainer, resulting in the award of a qualification or credit in accordance with the external specification of outcomes (Eraut 2000). Delivering this style of learning, however, has become a near impossible task for schools, affected as they are by a changing, complex society. This was recognised by Williams (2002), who argued that the attainment of appropriate education (skills, knowledge and attitude) by young people is being diminished because the institutions – outside of school – that have historically helped many of them shape their lives are not always available. As a result, too many young people are excluded from family continuity, access to conventional religious practice, or involvement in shared public activity. For many young people, particularly

those faced with issues of multiple deprivations, work, and relationships have become increasingly transient. Within this unstable environment, formal school-based education, in the opinion of Williams (2002:2), is fighting a losing battle to:

> *"sustain a tradition on behalf of the whole community, an accepted set of perspectives on human priorities and relationships, a feel for the conventions of life".*

Awareness of this unstable environment, however, does allow for the identification of a number of characteristics from which a more relevant understanding of Youth Service identity can arise. First, the work of the Youth Service is part of a wider community response to the perceived needs of young people, which are most often identified as being linked to educational needs, emotional and social needs, and welfare needs (Davies 2002). Second, there are opportunities for the Youth Service to operate alongside formal education, work, local community activities, and the activities of the family. Third, the Youth Service is not of itself 'a good': whatever its purpose, it is not concerned with its own perpetuation. For Aristotle, the primary goal for young people is for them to be enabled to discover and live that 'good life'. The purpose of the Youth Service can therefore be seen to be part of the response to this moral obligation to young people, in partnership with school, work, local community, and family endeavours.

3.8 The maintained Youth Service and non-formal education

The development of personal qualities obtained as a result of appropriate education therefore needs to take a radical approach through a more equitable partnership between formal and non-formal approaches. From this standpoint, non-formal learning opportunities can be created in the community which involve many young people who have - and who have not - been successful within the school system. The importance of non-formal learning is further advanced by the conceptualisation of the learning process within educational organisations that take account of a range of *"teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the learners, their culture and the objectives of the programmes concerned"* (Brennan 1997:190). It is further argued by Brennan that non-formal learning

is linked to the needs of the individual and society but is not as a consequence an unplanned process. If the process of non-formal education is to be understood, then some form of outcome other than what is accidental or incidental by nature may be needed in order to establish the notion of measurable outcomes. This approach implies that the learning process can take place in a non-formal setting but should be measurable or manifest in some way. If we take the settings within which the Youth Service operates, we may be able to observe, empirically, if some form of learning is taking place. The standard of communication, the levels of team-working, and the abilities to solve problems may evidence this, as would the ability of young people to make reasonable choices, to develop a consistent character, and in doing so determine for themselves what is the 'good life'.

It can be claimed that these are valuable learning outcomes for the economic and social agenda of government, who should be reminded that there are sound arguments for suggesting that formal educational attainment gauged by successful examination results is often inappropriate as a measure leading to macro-economic success (Jephcote and Salisbury 2000), firstly, because formal educational attainment is often seen to fail to develop in young people the ability to transfer formal educational experiences into other areas of their lives, including work and leisure, and secondly, because it fails to encourage wider problem-solving and continuing learning. Arguments are also available to suggest that the measurement of formal levels of education is inappropriate, as a standard of attainment, because of its failure to measure real levels of learning. This real learning, it is claimed, should include learning from outside of the institutionalised and accredited arena and can be located, as a non-formal learning process, within the wider community of family, friends, work and leisure (Bentley 1998). A continuing dichotomy between two education approaches can be identified: *non-formal*, which involves participants in or recipients of the learning process centrally in the design of the learning curriculum that they are partaking of or participating in, and *formal*, which can be seen to be heavily dependent on achieving outcomes predetermined by a curriculum. This dichotomy reflects in a number of ways the political debates related to the inherent ability or inability of young people to make reasonable decisions about their own lives for themselves.

The importance of a stance on this particular dichotomy should be linked to which approach is most effective in meeting the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy. Candy (1993) claims that if learning is not by discovery, or is not used and found useful, the individual will not internalise it and will not, as a consequence, have ownership of it. This individual ownership of learning may be difficult to achieve in the formal education setting – in the opinion of Candy – because of its dependence on achieving outcomes predetermined by a curriculum which is focused on their attainment. However, despite these differences, learning may not simply be a competition between formal and non-formal processes but a method that is facilitated within the two separate contexts. The tendency to see learning as either facilitated by formal or non-formal approaches may disguise the fact that some formal learning systems also contain non-formal characteristics in the learning process, thereby suggesting that the two methods of learning are not mutually exclusive and both may contain some elements of the other. Further blurring the boundaries between formal and non-formal education is the proposition by Brennan (1997:187) that there are also three non-formal educational possibilities. The first of these describes non-formal education as being complementary to the formal system because it is required to:

> *"perform a function which formal education was designed to fulfil but had not been able to achieve, partially perhaps but not totally".*

There could be some suggestion that this is already a phenomenon of contemporary Youth Service practice underpinned by an increasingly prescriptive 'Youth Service Curriculum' and the use of predetermined outcomes of the sort used by formal approaches. The second possibility for non-formal education is that it could be used as an alternative to the formal system. The third possibility is the use of non-formal methods as a supplement to the formal system as a consequence of its failure to act swiftly enough to the needs of some young people who could be identified as being unsuccessful in the formal system. This model has some resonance for the workers in the maintained Youth Service in Wales who are being persuaded to use their skills in developing relationships with young people to re–motivate them, through 'alternative curriculum activities', to return to formal learning.

In the context of this investigation, this third possibility appears as an inappropriate use of the non-formal approach to work with young people, particularly when linked to the view of Brennan, who says that these three types of non-formal education are represented as reactions to the limitations or failures of formal education. It is therefore imperative that *"non-formal education should not, then, reproduce the inadequacies of formal education"* (Brennan 1997:187). What this statement implies, however, is that there is a transparent difference between formal education and non-formal education with clearly defined boundaries over which it is possible to cross. Differences can be identified (Simkins 1976) between ideal-type models of formal and non-formal education, which suggests that formal education is long term and general and credit based, while non-formal education is short term and specific and non-credit based, with the control of formal education being external and hierarchical and non-formal education being self governing and democratic.

Further evidence of fundamental differences is also provided by the European Commission (2001), which gives descriptions of both formal and non-formal learning and adds a third type, which it describes as 'informal learning'. These descriptions identify:

1. Formal learning as a process typically provided by an education or training institution, structured in terms of learning, objectives, time, or support, and leading to certification. Formal learning is described as being intentional from the learner's perspective;
2. Non-formal learning as a process not provided by an education or training institution and not necessarily leading to certification. It is, however structured in terms of learning objectives, time, or support. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective; and
3. Informal learning as a result of daily life activities related to work, family, or leisure. It has no structure in terms of learning objectives, time, or support and typically, it does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional but in most cases, it is not.

Further interpretations are provided by Livingstone (2001) and Billet (2001) and by Beckett and Hager (2002), who take varying stances on the three approaches. There is, however, within these differences a level of agreement about the overlap between them, which recognises how difficult it is to make a clear distinction between them, as there is often a crossover between the three.

It can be argued that during this investigation, significant pressure was being placed on the maintained Youth Service for it to move away from a predominantly non-formal education position and to become at least in part a quasi formal education organisation. As a consequence, it has moved, it can be further argued, from its traditional young-people-first approach to a way of working that could be described as reproducing the inadequacies of formal education for young people who have already been failed by it.

3.9 Summary

The introduction to this chapter suggested that the Youth Service comprises organised anarchies, staffed by an assortment of fugitives from other trades and professions, who share no particular ethos or ethic about adhering to its articulated objectives. From the evidence examined it is possible to conclude the accuracy of that opinion with one significant exception. Throughout its history the maintained Youth Service has aligned itself, when given the opportunity, with government priorities often to the detriment of young people being given an additional arena of opportunity to develop for themselves a life worth living. It can also be claimed that the maintained Youth Service has, in most instances, colluded in a willing way with government initiatives, appearing to be ingratiatingly grateful for the rare opportunities to come in from the periphery of government attention to carry out some designated short-term task, even if these did not meet a style of work with young people articulated by the principles of the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (Appendix 1). It is the task of this investigation to determine if, within this new political era of devolved government, this cycle can be broken and that a new partnership can be formed between the maintained Youth Service, young people and the requirements of government policy.

CHAPTER 4

The needs of young people in the context of the investigation

4.1 Defining the meaning of needs

The concept of need[1] can be described as both complex and fraught with the danger of polarisation between paternalism and dictatorship, with both driven from a position of power imposed on the powerless (Doyle and Gough 1991, Langan 1998). Both of these approaches have some resonance with maintained Youth Service practice, as it is driven by a relationship between adults and young people where styles of intervention could be seen to be contained within a framework that includes paternalistic and dictatorial approaches, with a dominant adult perspective of what young people need common to both. The challenge when trying to identify the concept of need within this Youth Service context is attempting to identify ownership of 'the needs of young people'. This in itself is a complex debate. It has been suggested by Williamson (1996:iv) that work with young people within the boundaries of the maintained Youth Service is always informed by *"some synthesis of political, professional and personal agendas"* which have the potential to overwhelm the agendas of young people identified through their expressed need. The health agenda, anti-racist interventions and the environment were given by Williamson as examples of what have become significant agendas for adults working in the maintained Youth Service but are, he claims, of little overt interest to young people themselves. Concern was also expressed by Williamson about the ability of workers and young people to identify, in any reliable and valid way, the actual 'needs of young people'. For those working in the Youth Service, it was suggested that a diverse range of methods were used, including what was described as:

> *"pseudo-objective evidence gleaned from local community profiles and 'needs audits'. For most, however, it was a personal synthesis of fact,*

[1] Needs are what you must have to survive and live. Needs are essentials and include for example food, clothing and shelter (Doyle and Gough 1991).

perception and impression gained, obviously, from experience of close contact with young people in the locality"

(Ibid: 51)

It was further claimed by Williamson (1996:79) that the concept of 'need' for young people was often confused with 'wants' and 'issues', with the consequence that the concept becomes a *"highly elastic one"*. Adding another dimension to an already complex position are the conclusions of Williamson, who suggests that if those working within the maintained Youth Service restrict themselves to the definition of need expressed by young people, there is a risk that issues of importance to an education service would be overlooked, including the examples given previously, which might not be identified by young people themselves as either wants or needs.

Some philosophical support that illuminates the concept of need can, however, be found, particularly in regard to work-based motivation. Maslow (1954) pioneered the concept and introduced a five–tier hierarchy of needs (physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, self actualisation) and claimed that each level remained dominant until it had been satisfied, at which time the next level became dominant. Maslow further claimed that a need at the lower level of the hierarchy was always stronger than those at higher levels. Critics of the hierarchy of need theory claimed that it was vague and difficult to measure, that rigid demarcation of needs was suspect and the distinction between higher and lower order needs too simplistic (Gallagher et al. 1997). The proposition of Maslow, which became the benchmark of determining need, did, however, generate further debate and development. Hertzberg (1968) and Alderfer (1972) extended and refined the work, again focusing on the correlation between identification of needs, motivation and work. Within the wider context of determining more generic human needs, Doyle and Gough (1991) suggested that need as a definition is related to any necessary means for a given end and, as such, needs can be seen to be essentially relative. In the social setting, Bradshaw's taxonomy (Bradshaw 1977) claims *need* cannot be treated in isolation from the way it is defined and that there is a requirement to differentiate between four ways of determining the concept: *Normative*, a process dependent on the setting of a desirable standard which is then compared against the state

of an individual or a group, the difference being classified as a need; *Felt* need is a need closely aligned to the notion of want; *Expressed* need is felt need turned into action; *Comparative* need is obtained through studying the characteristics of a particular social group in receipt of a specific service and those with similar features that do not, the latter group then being defined as in need. Associated with the problem of need definition is the question of interpretation of the differences between needs and wants. Wants, it is claimed (Shakespeare 1995), are able to be satisfied by the mechanisms of the economic market, while needs are different in the sense that the prescribed remedy might not be wanted or desired by the individuals concerned.

4.2 The concept of need for the maintained Youth Service

While the philosophical debate about needs identification is important, the method whereby theory is related to practice in the Youth Service context is central to the focus of this investigation, which is attempting to measure how effectively the maintained Youth Service is able to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government (Chapter 5) while maintaining its organisational integrity (Chapter 3). The term 'needs of young people' litters documents and publications written about the Youth Service, most often, it can legitimately be claimed, from an adult perspective generally contextualised within a contemporary economic or social setting.

Circular 1516 (Board of Education 1940) provided a list of young people's needs, including them developing *'normal relationships'* and *'bodily fitness'* as well as *'building character'*. It was claimed (Ministry of Education 1945) that young people had the right to both opportunities and facilities for voluntary leisure time activities that met their basic needs as developing citizens in a modern social setting, with the *"satisfaction of those needs being the very raison d'etre of the Youth Service"* (ibid: 6). The Albemarle Report (Ministry of Education 1960:13) continued this trend of what could be described as well-meaning adults identifying the needs of young people within the *"changing social and industrial conditions and the current trends in other branches of the education service"*. The Youth Service, the Albemarle Report claimed, was to ensure that the *social needs of*

young people were met before their needs for training and formal instruction" (ibid: 52). Further attainment of these social needs would be through the bringing together of young people in groups of their own choosing, in association with what were described as "helpful adults" who would be interested in gaining their confidence as a means of involving them in discussions about *"ethical matters, sex, of adjustment to the world of work, the problems of marriage and home-making and of full adult responsibility"* (ibid). Central to this counsel was the quality of relationship developed between the adult worker and the young person, who was described as often too shy or lacking in confidence to discuss these and a range of other issues with parents or other adults. Milson and Fairbairn (Department of Education and Science 1969:22) continued the theme of linking the needs of young people to what they described as *"encouraging adults who believe in their possibilities"*. Some further guidance on the needs of young people was also given by Marchent (1972), who claimed young people had a range of fundamental needs including food, safety and sleep. Young people were described as needing to love and to be loved if they were to achieve their potential. Marchent made the further claim that young people's needs included having a good opinion of themselves and for this good opinion to be shared by others.

The Thompson Report (HMSO 1982:13) also listed some of the perceived needs of young people. Perhaps their most important comment in the context of this investigation was their claim that when those working with young people in the Youth Service attempted to define the needs of young people, the outcome was:

> *"descriptions of the qualities and attributes which the proposers think young people aspire to, or should aspire to, or which they think society wants them to have, and which they think their particular methods will inculcate"*.

This was a clear recognition of the existent association between adult workers and young people within the maintained Youth Service which, having been made, provided an opportunity for the reconfiguration of the relationship between adult and young person in order to more fully understand and respond to their identified needs. Interestingly, the

issue of identifying and responding to the needs of young people using the maintained Youth Service was not included in the report on the Youth Service in Wales (Welsh Office 1984). Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte (1991) did comment, however, and made the claim that there was an obvious weakness between Youth Service practice and the clearly understood needs of young people and recommended a system for the development of a strategic plan driven by an assessment of young people's needs against which funding would be allocated.

In 1994, a major survey was carried out in Wales (WYA 1994b), involving 1,000 young people between the ages of 13 and 19, via schools, sixth form colleges, youth centres, the high street and other places where young people met. The findings of the survey (which replicated a similar survey being carried out in France at the same time) provided a wealth of information about young people in Wales. Four specific questions within the questionnaire produced answers of particular relevance to this investigation. The first asked for an opinion about family and friends. The responses identified that 89% of young people felt at ease with their family, 88% had high levels of confidence in their parents and 84% stated that their grandparents were important to them. The second asked for comments about employment and work: 69% indicated that school was a good preparation for work but only 42% believed that employers had confidence in young people. The third question asked about participation and commitment to their community: 87% said they would be willing to take responsibility in community life, 72% stated they were in favour of a form of national service related to social, humanitarian or environmental issues, and 68% claimed they would like to be involved in community action of the sort that would improve the quality of life for all members of the community. The fourth asked respondents to identify the three things they would like in future life. A *'job'* was the first priority, listed by 62% of respondents, followed by a *'comfortable living'*, selected by 42%, *'a family'* (42%), and *'happiness'* (24%). At the bottom of this list were *'Welsh autonomy'* (1%), a *'say in the political process'* (1%) and a *'good education/go to university'* (5%).

When young people were asked through the survey to identify how best their needs could be catered for, the top five answers were to:

> 1. *create a youth facility in every community (84%)*
> 2. *create centres for debate between young people and adults (58%)*
> 3. *create a youth committee in every community (57%)*
> 4. *have regular consultation at local level with young people on questions concerning them (57%)*
> 5. *ensure that local politicians are required to consult with young people on matters that concern their social and educational lives (57%)*
>
> WYA (1994b:4)

The articulation by young people of the need for somewhere to go and for things to do was further recognised by the research of Williamson (1996:35), which concluded that young people had four needs of the Youth Service, which were:

- The need for association – somewhere to go;
- The need for activities – something to do;
- The need for autonomy – some space of our own; and
- The need for advice – someone to talk to.

Like the Thompson Report (HMSO 1982), Williamson too was critical of the ability of those working in the maintained Youth Service to respond to the needs of young people in an effective way. A critical factor in this, Williamson claimed, was the backgrounds of workers, which, it was suggested, had the potential to influence the types of curriculum activities offered to young people. As a consequence:

> *"ex-teachers and sports leaders were more inclined to give preference and priority to the provision of competitions and activities as a mechanism for promoting participation...In contrast, those trained professionally in youth and community work placed a greater emphasis on discussion, issue-based intervention, advocacy and advice/information work as a mechanism for promoting participation"*
>
> Williamson (1996:84)

The outcome of such an approach when related to the identification of the needs of young people using the maintained Youth Service could therefore be seen to be more a product

of worker preference than any expressed needs of young people (ibid: 84). Some examples of this approach were given through workers' interpretations of the needs of young people, which identified a more sophisticated list than that obtained from young people during the same research project and included providing:

- opportunities to meet the personal and social needs of young people;
- supported space for young people;
- activities to address the health needs of young people (drinking, drug use and sexual health);
- support to meet the transition needs of young people (education, employment and housing); and
- mechanisms to meet the information needs of young people.

Further evidence of the needs of young people from their perspective can be found in a publicity campaign (South Wales Echo November 2nd 1996) to promote the launch of *'Agenda for a Generation'* (UK Youth Work Alliance 1996). Davies, Chairman of the Wales Youth Agency, claimed the needs of young people could be met by *"a properly resourced Youth Service"* (South Wales Echo 2nd November 1996:6). Young people interviewed for the newspaper confirmed this claim and broadened the debate by claiming:

> *"There is a real need for young people to have their say. Nobody seems to listen and there is nowhere for them to go"*
>
> Nicholas Hay (18 years)

> *"I think there should be more outdoor activities available so kids can learn skills in mixing and looking after themselves"*
>
> Andrew Jones (19 years)

> *"There is nothing to do. A lot get into trouble because they hang around on streets getting involved in crime"*
>
> Nabila Shamsan (14 years)

> *"There are not enough youth provisions. But there is never enough that can be done and no cash to do it with"*
>
> Matt Briknall (18 years)

While young people had identified getting 'a job' as their most important need (WYA 1994b), a survey involving more than 5,500 employers in Wales identified the skills they needed to become employed (Mori Research 1998). These included generic skills, vocational skills and job-specific skills. Generic skills, identified as *"practical attributes"*, were described as the key skills because without them, it was claimed, individuals would find it difficult to operate in the workplace. These practical attributes were described in the survey as:

1. Being able to communicate effectively (88% of employer respondents);
2. Having the ability to learn (81% of employer respondents);
3. Being able to operate effectively in a team (81% of employer respondents);
4. Showing initiative (80% of employer respondents); and
5. Having the ability to follow instructions (79% of employer respondents).

The survey also identified both the future evolution of the Welsh economy and the changing importance of the skills required for employment. Growth was forecast to be strongest in retailing, wholesale, hotels and catering, which would be linked to anticipated growth in tourism. There was also an expectation of growth in public-service employment, particularly in health and teaching, corporate management and administration, and service-sector occupations. The survey also identified that there would be fewer low-skilled industrial jobs and that the numbers of agricultural labourers would continue to decline. Within these occupational changes, there would be some re-ordering of the ranking of particular skills and by 2007, the practical attributes required would be:

1. Understanding customer needs;
2. Ability to learn;
3. Communication;
4. Team working; and
5. Showing initiative.

From the information obtained from the 1994 survey of young people (with its identification of 'a job' as the most important need for young people) and the listing of the practical attributes needed for employment, it is possible to conclude that a key

responsibility for the maintained Youth Service to enable it to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government is the development of a curriculum that will enable young people to attain the identified practical attributes. The maintained Youth Service will, however, be faced with two challenges in doing so. First, it will need to develop and use reliable and valid mechanisms to measure levels of attainment – the distance travelled by young people as a result of its intervention. Second, it will have to do so in a way that reflects its organisational purposes and values and not resort to measurements of the sort used by formal education.

In the Youth Service context, some further identification of the needs of young people can be extracted from the text in 'Learning is for Everyone' (Welsh Office 1998). Young people, the report claimed, needed to be involved in a Youth Service process which would motivate them to return to learning. Within this agenda, the seminal need for young people was identified as educational attainment within the formal setting. The purpose of this educational attainment was described in *'Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales'* (NAW 2000a) as the means of both finding a job and progressing in employment. This position replicated the views of Blair (1996:66), who claimed *"the more you learn the more you earn. That is your way to do well out of life"*.

Other aspects of life for young people (outside of the educational attainment-employment continuum), with their own specific set of needs, require identification within this investigation to reflect their wider interests. Extending Entitlement (NAW 2000a) provided some evidence about the needs of young people from their perspective through a process of consultation with 17 focus groups, involving an unspecified number of young people, which resulted in the identification of a number of specific young people 'needs', which included:

- a meeting place controlled by young people without undue interference from adults;
- signing up to a conventional lifestyle centred on finding a job, home and car ownership;
- having access to Internet and IT facilities;

- joined up services to meet specific problems such as homelessness, health and poverty; and
- the availability of appropriate information.

Some concerns were expressed within the Extending Entitlement document about the reliability and validity of the focus-group process and the subsequent outcomes listed above. Of particular importance to this investigation was the recognition of how difficult it is for adults to engage in meaningful debate with young people in order to identify their needs. What appeared to have happened, when obtaining evidence for inclusion in a key strategic document, was the continuation of a traditional paternalistic approach, a view supported by the comment *"the convenors* (of the individual focus groups) *included their own summary of themes"* (NAW 2000a:90). As a consequence, doubt can be cast on the listing of the needs of young people within a wide range of government documents which could legitimately be criticised for promoting a particular agenda – usually party political – within the guise of articulated needs of young people. Care should be taken to follow a process alluded to in Extending Entitlement, which suggested there was a need (for adults) to build effective consultation into the process (of determining the needs of young people) to allow for a more accurate identification of the real needs of young people.

However, driven by its political agenda, the rhetoric of the National Assembly for ever-improving educational attainment was repeated in The Learning Country (NAW 2001a:8) by the claim *"we want learning to be an everyday part of working and non working life"*. Other comments in the Learning Country gave greater insight into the government's perception of the needs of young people when the need for impartial information and support and the involvement of young people in developing systems for themselves was identified. Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales Consultation on the Draft Direction and Guidance (NAW 2001c:7) listed 10 basic entitlements for every young person in Wales, written to meet the identified needs of young people from the first Extending Entitlement Report. The Entitlements were:

- Education, training and work experience – tailored to their needs;
- Basic skills which open doors to a full life and promote social inclusion;

- A wide and varied range of opportunities to participate in volunteering and active citizenship;
- High quality, responsive and accessible services and facilities;
- Independent, specialist careers advice and guidance and student support and counselling services;
- Personal support and advice – where and when needed and in appropriate formats – with clear ground rules on confidentiality;
- Advice on health, housing, benefits and other issues provided in accessible and welcoming settings;
- Recreational, and social opportunities in a safe and accessible environment;
- Sporting, artistic, musical and outdoor experiences to develop talents, broaden horizons and promote rounded perspectives, including both national and international contexts; and
- The right to be consulted, to participate in decision-making and to be heard, on all matters which concern them or have an impact on their lives.

There is little evidence available to identify the involvement of young people in the writing of these entitlements. It is, however, possible to identify some of the political priorities of New Labour, with its focus on economic and social regeneration through greater educational attainment (Chapter 5), which suggest a continuation of a controlling approach to the needs of young people driven by an adult-led plan within the contemporary political agenda. This is an approach contrary to that of the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3) which places it in a vulnerable position within the emerging policy framework being developed for young people.

It is clearly recognised that young people are not a homogenous group (Williamson 1996) but are nevertheless capable of being sub-divided into a small number of groups, the identification of which will be useful to this investigation, particularly in relation to identifying need from a maintained Youth Service perspective. Young people in Wales, like their counterparts elsewhere in the UK, can be seen to lead their lives in a generally compartmentalised way. For the significant majority of those up to 16 years of age, the

two main compartments – outside of the family – are formal education and leisure. Post-16, the two compartments become work and leisure, although there has been, in recent years, a significant increase in further or higher education being undertaken by growing numbers of young people. In addition, there has been the relatively recent recognition and political acceptance of a further group who can be identified as socially excluded, who are described by the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) set up by New Labour in 1997 (Chapter 5) as being:

> *".disproportionately from poor backgrounds in deprived areas. They may suffer multiple disadvantage and few recover from the poor start that they have had...where life goes wrong, or continues to go wrong...social exclusion in latter life is disproportionately the result. They are much more likely to be unemployed, dependent on benefits, to live in unstable family structures and be depressed about their lives"*
>
> (SEU 1999:8)

Within this model, the maintained Youth Service in Wales has the opportunity to work with young people who can be identified as:

1. in compulsory education, with a range of leisure time requirements during the late afternoon and evenings, at weekends and during school holidays;
2. in work, with more flexible and perhaps more sophisticated leisure-time requirements;
3. in post-compulsory education or training, with more flexible and perhaps more sophisticated leisure-time requirements; and
4. excluded from employment, education or training, with perhaps a range of complex requirements related to, for example, homelessness, financial poverty, involvement in criminal activities, poor health, and limited or no family support.

As a result, the priority target group of young people for the Youth Service, those aged between 13 and 19, are those who need to make, or who are about to make, a number of key transitions. These include the transition from school to work, from compulsory education to post-compulsory education, from financial dependence to financial independence and from dependent decision making to independent decision making. The categorising of young people in this way does not suggest there is no further requirement

for greater refinement of the categories. Within each of the sub-divisions, the search to identify the needs of young people could require further sub-divisions. As an example, young people in school (category 1) could be identified either as academic achievers, because they are able to meet agreed educational benchmarks for success, or as academic underachievers or academic failures. Each of these categories within the main sub-divisions could require a different set of responses to meet a particular set of needs. Within this complex environment, the process of identifying and responding to the sometimes-individual needs of young people becomes time consuming, resource intensive and dependent on interventions by skilled and well-supported staff. This process will be particularly relevant to determining and responding to the needs of those young people identified as having a range of interconnected difficulties within category four, which is a priority group for government in its campaign to reduce levels of youth disaffection for the economic and social reasons described in Chapter 5. As a consequence, one of the government's priorities for the maintained Youth Service is the development of an appropriate curriculum for young people described as disaffected; the outcome of the intervention is their return to formal education, training or work (HMSO 2000b). Within the arguments presented by Maslow and others, any approach to achieving this goal would be dependent on strategies capable of satisfying basic physiological, safety, love and belongingness needs before the higher needs in the hierarchy can be met – including a return to learning. These strategies would be dependent on both a partnership approach to working with young people across a range of government and voluntary agencies and the acceptance by the individual involved of the integrity of the process. The Youth Service, driven by its young-person-first approach, could find it difficult philosophically to use its relationship-building skills with young people, who are affected by the negative factors that result in their disaffection, to involve them in a range of measurable activities that may be inappropriate in meeting their current needs. If the Youth Service does adopt this stance it can be argued that its traditional young people- first approach is being diluted in favour of an overt political agenda

There has been, however, an insistence by both New Labour and the Welsh Assembly Government that the needs of young people would be met through enhanced formal

education opportunities and improved formal education attainment, with the role of the maintained Youth Service being to act as a conduit between young people and school or the workplace (Chapter 5). However, the validity of this one-dimensional stance, which promotes the view that formal education attainment can help with problems such as economic competitiveness and social disadvantage, has been vigorously challenged (Wood 2001), firstly because it is seen to fail to develop in young people the ability effectively to transfer formal educational experiences into work or leisure; and secondly because it fails to encourage wider problem-solving and continuing learning (Bentley 1998). Arguments are also presented to suggest that the measurements of formal levels of education are inappropriate as a standard of attainment because of their failure to measure real levels of education. These real levels, it is claimed, should include education and learning obtained from outside of the institutionalised and accredited arena and can be located, as non-formal and informal learning processes, within both work and leisure. It can also be argued therefore that for those young people coming into contact with the maintained Youth Service in Wales, a core need is appropriate education which recognises both the philosophical position proposed previously (Chapter 1, Chapter 3) and the need to develop a broader approach to learning than is perhaps the position for a significant number of young people. This broader approach is promoted by Gardner (1983, 1991, 1999), who challenges the view that intelligence is a single entity capable of measurement through an IQ test. The work of Gardner is part of a wider debate on the range and nature of intelligence which includes the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990) who articulated the theory of emotional intelligence and provided the foundation for the work of Goleman (1996) with its conclusion that the concept was perhaps more important than other factors such as social class or raw IQ. Another contributor to the debate was Perkins (1995) who rejected the idea that intelligence is a fixed or unitary quality and that to a significant degree the capacity for intelligent behaviour can be learned.

Gardner's contribution was the hypothesis that there were multiple- intelligences which included:

1. Linguistic – able to use in an effective way spoken and written language, ability to use language to remember information;

2. Logical Mathematical – being able to detect pattern, reason deductively and think logically;
3. Musical – able to recognise and compose musical pitches, tones and rhythms;
4. Body-kinaesthetic – able to use mental abilities to co-ordinate bodily movements;
5. Spatial – to recognise and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas;
6. Interpersonal – ability to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people; and
7. Intrapersonal – the capacity to understand self, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations.

Gardner claimed that the first two have dominance within the school setting, the next three are related to the arts and the last two are personal intelligences. Gardner further claimed that all seven intelligences are needed to live life well. The identification of the theory of multiple intelligences is useful in the context of this investigation even though the criteria identified are not without their critics (White 1996). Nevertheless they are identified as an example of a broader perspective of intelligence that suggests there are a number of ways of teaching and also a number of contexts within which teaching can take place. This would suggest the need for a more equitable partnership between formal and non-formal learning of the sort delivered by an effective Youth Service. As a result of a new, more evenly balanced partnership, young people would have enhanced opportunities to access learning of a sort that is not provided by an education or training institution and typically does not lead by necessity to certification (HMSO 2000c). The learning offered by the maintained Youth Service would nevertheless be predominantly structured learning (in terms of objectives, time and support), with outcomes being intentional from the learner's perspective. Non-formal learning as a voluntary process is concerned to ensure that individuals are actively involved in assessing need, designing learning experiences, locating resources and evaluating learning (Knowles 1975). This action is made possible it is claimed, as a result of a maturing process within which individual self-concept moves from dependency to interdependency assisted by an expanding bank of experience that becomes useful as a learning resource (Knowles 1984). This model has, however, been created primarily in literature focused on the education of adults, with minimal support

from youth work, although Youth Service philosophers (Jeffs 1979, Jeffs and Smith 1999, Banks 1999) have been concerned to make distinctions between formal and non-formal methods. A weakness of this polarised debate between formal and non-formal paradigms of learning is the failure to identify the need to develop a continuum between teacher-directed learning and student-directed learning. The argument would also seem to fail to recognise the problems associated with moving young people, still relatively inexperienced with life, from a disciplined, compulsory education environment into a liberal learning environment within which young people make the transfer from formal school-based teaching and learning to a process of lifelong learning owned by the individual.

Despite some difficulties arising from concerns over the too focused use of formal styles of learning and the importance of educational attainment as a means of achieving a particular economic and social agenda, the principle of becoming involved in the process of improving education attainment as a means of increasing employment opportunities should not be too difficult a step for those working within the Youth Service to take. Driven by a young-people-first approach, the Youth Service has always been concerned to promote a way of working focused on the needs of young people which is clearly led by employment (WYA 1994b). The challenge for the maintained Youth Service is to provide cogent arguments that result in its predominantly non-formal community-based teaching and learning approach becoming a recognised partner in the education of young people.

4.3 Summary

There does not appear to be a simple answer to the concept of need when it is related to young people within the maintained Youth Service context. There is evidence within the literature examined to suggest that it is a concept often reduced to an ideal through a paternalistic approach that passes easily over the ideal of individual ownership linked to establishing the characteristics of a 'life worth living' (Chapter 3). It is, however, a concept that can, in the opinion of such non-formal educators as Illich (1971), Jarvis (1983), Brookfield (1987) and Freire (1996), be altered through young people having

access to, and involvement in, appropriate education, as described in Chapter 1, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. As a consequence of such access and involvement, young people will be enabled to determine for themselves both the characteristics of a life worth living and the identification of their individual needs to achieve this.

This investigation will not therefore be looking for evidence that identifies, for example, the maintained Youth Service as an organisation providing interventions that meet the 'basic needs' as described by Maslow, the government-identified 'employment needs of young people' or the 'crime reduction needs of government'. Instead, the investigation will look for evidence from workers' descriptions of what they do with young people to determine if they are making a contribution towards meeting their broad educational needs of the sort promoted by Gardner. This approach will rely on evidence collected through the use of the research methods described previously (Chapter 2), which will be focused on identifying the range of opportunities provided by the maintained Youth Service through a planned curriculum of activities. When carrying out this research, further evidence will be sought to determine if what those working in the maintained Youth Service do with young people is being delivered in a way that reflects the purposes and values of the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3). Consideration will also be given to the planned outcomes of the actions to determine if they are meeting the needs of young people and the requirements of government. This approach will require an evaluation to be made about the effectiveness of an educational process, delivered in non-formal settings, that is planned, purposeful and conscious, leading to the further development of a range of personal and social skills, including those *"practical attributes"* described previously in this chapter. By making a contribution to developing these skills, it can legitimately be claimed that the maintained Youth Service is able to meet the employment and security needs of young people and the requirements of government with its economic and social regeneration agenda while maintaining its organisational integrity.

CHAPTER 5

The Government's requirements of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

5.1 New Labour – the big picture

The New Labour campaign for the 1997 general election was driven by a vision of:

> *"national renewal, a country with drive, purpose and energy. A Britain equipped to prosper in a global economy of technological change; with a modern welfare state; its politics more accountable; and confident of its place in the world"*
>
> (New Labour 1997:2)

This was a message that resulted in their election to national government on 3 May 1997 with a majority of 179 seats over all other parties in the House of Commons (Savage and Atkinson 2001). The foundation of this success was the vision of New Labour, which was built on what was described as the '*four building blocks of a more successful Britain*' (Blair 1996:xxi). First, there would be a new economic policy agenda designed to improve the living conditions of all the citizens of the United Kingdom, obtained as a consequence of an effective partnership between economic dynamism and social justice. Second, there would be a new social agenda designed to develop a modern society '*based on merit, commitment and inclusion*' (ibid:xxi). The achievement of this agenda would be underpinned by the promotion of such notions as duty, responsibility and obligations and would, as a consequence, remedy what was described as the historic failure of the Left to value individual responsibility and the failure of the Right to recognise the influence of social conditions. Third, there would be a programme of decentralisation achieved as a result of political and constitutional reform, including plans for devolution, a bill of rights, electoral and parliamentary reform and freedom of information. Fourth, there would be a new foreign policy designed to recognise the link between the well-being of the United Kingdom and its influence abroad.

From these four building blocks, New Labour promoted a style of politics described as the 'Third Way', underpinned, in the opinion of White (2001:4), by three core concepts: *'equal opportunity, civic responsibility and community'*. Adherence to these concepts would result, it was claimed, in the development of a society with all individuals having an equal opportunity to access strategic goods such as education, jobs, income and wealth (ibid:8). Pivotal to this approach was a political commitment to radical reform aimed at ending welfare dependency and encouraging self-reliance and the work habit, resulting in welfare-to-work initiatives for groups like single mothers and the young unemployed. It was also an approach concerned to reduce public expenditure on state-supported programmes to ensure competitive ability in the context of an economy increasingly affected by industrialised globalisation. Central to the achievement of the New Labour vision were the ideas of social interdependence, mutual obligation and social responsibility promoted as the stakeholder society, within which autonomous citizens would possess rights, assets and opportunities. In return, they would be expected to fulfil certain responsibilities and obligations driven by government policies on welfare, work and education.

For New Labour, both the embedding of the concepts of the Third Way and the achievement of its stated economic and social policy targets were dependent on the availability of enhanced educational opportunities and improved educational attainment for and by all young people (New Labour 1997). Education was promoted as the means by which individuals would be able to acquire stable sources of income, employment and security in an increasingly competitive global market. Education was also promoted as the key method to overcome social exclusion described as *"being more than just financial poverty; it describes a way of life where opportunities are few, services are difficult to access and people lose hope"* (HMSO 2000b:v). The political imperative for New Labour within this context was the promotion of the developing knowledge economy which increasingly involves the processing and communication of digital information (Bentley 1998). The importance of this was recognised by Blair (1997:40) who claimed that 50% of workers in Britain were employed in information processing and that *"70% of wealth will in the next century be created in information"*. It is recognised (Jones and Osmond

2000) that Wales does not have an appropriate share of knowledge-based services which they claim is worth *"£30 billion to the UK economy, more than the GDP of Wales"* (ibid: 46). If there was the same proportion of jobs in the knowledge-based industries in Wales as in the UK, *"97,000 additional jobs would have been created including 60,000 in business services"* (Jones and Osmond 2000:46) One of the priorities in achieving a proportional growth in the knowledge economy in Wales was to raise standards in education which would take into account the practical attributes described in Chapter 4, including effective communication, having the ability to learn, being able to operate effectively in a team, showing initiative and having the ability to follow instructions.

The philosophy of linking education with the economic and social well-being of the UK continued to be promoted during the early years of the first New Labour administration, as was the requirement to link increased investment to modernisation and reform (Brown 1998). An additional £19 billion over three years for education was announced in the 1998 Comprehensive Spending Review, to be used to meet the 1997 Manifesto commitment to make education the priority for New Labour (New Labour 1997). Specific targets included:

1. reducing class sizes;
2. providing nursery places for all 4 year olds;
3. new strategies to increase school standards;
4. greater availability of computer technology;
5. the introduction of lifelong learning strategies; and
6. continuing increases in education budgets.

However, in keeping with New Labour philosophy, the investment of public money was linked to continuing modernisation and reform of the education system, which would include new targets for literacy and numeracy, assessment of both pupils and teachers, and increased central powers (Kendall and Holloway 2001). This was a process designed to introduce new standards of efficiency, scrutiny and audit which had been introduced to ensure that stated government targets were met and every penny of public money was spent well (Brown 1998).

Unlike the previous Conservative Party (Chapter 3), New Labour was prepared to recognise the link between low economic performance, low educational attainment, high sickness levels, and high levels of criminal involvement leading to social exclusion. A government report (HMSO 1998:iv) made a key statement that set the tone for the government's developing disaffection strategy when it stated:

> *"The key task in tackling disaffection should be to provide challenge, restore motivation and engender key skills. Maximising formal educational achievement for those young people must be at the heart of the intervention"*

The response of New Labour to youth disaffection was the setting up of the Youth Access Initiative (Estyn 1999a), a three-year programme introduced to address the issue of disengagement of young people from school, work or training. Its initial outcome was the reintegration of those identified as socially excluded back into mainstream education and employment, primarily through the promotion of basic skills improvement. Its long-term outcome was planned to be both a reduction of the financial cost associated with poverty and criminality and a reduction of government expenditure on unemployment. This was an approach originally promoted by the Social Justice Report (Commission for Social Justice 1994:19), established by John Smith, the Labour Party leader before Tony Blair, which claimed *"social justice was not simply a moral ideal but an economic reality"*.

Further action to support the emerging economic and social agenda of New Labour was taken through the setting up of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) by Tony Blair in 1997 to:

> *"develop integrated and sustainable approaches to the problems of the worst housing estates, including crime, drugs, unemployment, community breakdown, and bad schools"*
>
> SEU (2000:5)

Its first publication (SEU 1998) proposed the setting up of 18 cross-cutting Policy Action Teams (PAT) to develop key policies related to disaffection. PAT 12, led by the Department for Education and Employment, was asked to produce a report for government on young people focusing on:

- the cost of youth disaffection and suggestions for identifying the most effective way of dealing with its causes;
- detailing the respective roles of different agencies;
- planning procedures, to ensure strategies are planned, co-ordinated and targeted to reduce disaffection;
- developing support strategies for families; and
- involving young people.

The findings of PAT 12 once again reinforced the complex disadvantage faced by certain groups of young people, particularly those in care, those affected by endemic poverty, those living in deprived neighbourhoods or those doing badly at school. The report also identified a lack of co-ordination between government provided services and inadequate systems for dealing with the needs of young people, which were described as being *"provided haphazardly or on a restricted basis"* (ibid:9). The report recommended that there was a need to set new objectives and create new structures to improve the way government develops and implements policy for young people. It also recommended developing new priorities to prevent young people from encountering the worst problems (rather than fire-fighting when they were in trouble), improving individual services for young people and involving young people in the decisions that affect their lives.

As a consequence of this developing political approach, the Youth Service in England and Wales was asked a number of questions related to how it would contribute to a political agenda that required it to increase the numbers of young people staying in, or returning to education (Welsh Office 1998a, NAW 2000a). Within this setting, the work of the maintained Youth Service in Wales was being coerced through financial pressures to introduce systems that reflected a growing accountability model driven by a continuing political agenda that prioritised economy, effectiveness and quality (Brown 1998). It was an ideology underpinned by systems which allocated financial resources based on an ability to demonstrate, through the attainment of measurable outcomes, that specified requirements were being met. Consequently, additional bidding, monitoring and evaluation processes were being introduced to ensure that funders, often the government,

were more able to control 'delivery'. This approach, continued from the previous Conservative Party era (Chapter 3), also become the accepted way of judging young people's learning within the New Labour era. Already driven by a well embedded examination culture, schools continued further to refine their structures, management styles and teaching methods in an attempt to ensure that young people secured ever-improving examination results, school-based monitoring systems were also enhanced to ensure the management of effective knowledge acquisition of young people (Chapter 1). Such systems were concerned to keep a continuous record of the incremental learning of pupils through their involvement in standardised individual testing, with the overall evaluation of the process, as a means of judging school effectiveness, being measured against the attainment of stipulated outcomes. The ability or inability of individual schools to attain the outcomes led to schools being perceived as 'successful' or 'unsuccessful'. The promotion of this approach has had a significant effect upon Youth Service policy development and practice, with both increasingly becoming driven by a belief that the primary outcome measure of educational attainment is examination results (WYA 2000c).

The challenges faced by youth workers within this new setting (in which it had arrived after facing many years of financial neglect and being divorced from political and policy influence) appeared to be little understood by government. The political position appeared unambiguous. To secure government support, that is, financial resources, the Youth Service had to identify the outcomes of their interventions in relation to their contribution to the delivery of the government's economic and social agenda. As a consequence, those working within the Youth Service were asked to identify how they contribute to, for example:

- Increasing the numbers of young people staying in, or returning to education;
- Preparing young people for the world of work;
- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Improving health; and
- Raising levels of political awareness and political involvement.

Failure to achieve the above goals on time and to a specified standard placed the Youth Service at risk of being isolated both from strategic decision making and by the withdrawal of funding. The Youth Service was, as a result of government policy, becoming more like other 'human service' organisations because it was starting to be controlled by the threat of having its funding removed if it did not adhere to the priorities of government. It was also being faced with increased competition from other organisations working with young people and it was being subjected to increased bureaucracy and external inspections.

5.2 New Labour and the Youth Service

Perhaps there was no surprise when the Youth Service was not mentioned by New Labour in their 1997 election manifesto and they paid little attention to its existence in their election campaign (NYA 1997b). An exception to this political indifference was the claim by the Labour Spokesperson on youth issues that the "*informal education offered within the Youth Service would be taken very seriously indeed*" (Kilfoyle 1997:16). Following their election victory, some insight into the early thinking of New Labour can also be found in the comment that the importance of the Youth Service was its role as a provider of personal and social education for young people (Hansard 3 July 1997). This role, it was later claimed, was central to New Labour's 'New Deal' (DfEE 1997) with young people and its lifelong learning strategy because of the Youth Service's ability to develop meaningful links with those who had "*slipped through the net*" (NYA 1997c:21). The Youth Service, it was further claimed, had a "*mainline to young people who cannot see a future for themselves*" (ibid:21). Its role was also centrally linked to leisure and culture, and the key issue of what was described as the "re-entry" of significant numbers of young people into education, training and employment. The Youth Service was clearly being required by government to become part of its social inclusion agenda (Welsh Office 1998a) by taking a more active role in providing support for disaffected pupils and young people through stronger links with schools and careers because it was perceived as an organisation with the ability to make contact with the most disaffected young people (ibid). There was little or no recognition by government of the potential of the maintained

Youth Service to contribute to the learning of young people in the community through the use of non-formal education methods grounded in the work of a range of educationalists, as described previously (Chapter 1).

The principle of appearing to value only education of the sort found in school that leads to formal qualifications was further supported by the findings of the Education and Employment Committee of the House of Commons, who claimed that to combat disaffection, *"all interventions should have the aim of reintegrating young people into mainstream education"* (HMSO 1998:iv). There is no intent in this investigation to dispute the importance of school or the success young people find there. There is clear recognition of the positive impact of formal education on the lives of young people in the way that it encourages academic success and both protects and cares for young people; there is, however, a suggestion that formal education based in school should not been seen as the only environment within which young people learn. Opportunities do exist for significant performance gain by young people through learning in the community, which does not appear to have gained recognition within the current political environment. This view was supported by the description of the role of the Youth Service in the process of reintegration, which was to become more closely aligned to schools who would be encouraged to make greater use of the expertise of Youth Service staff in providing appropriate support to disaffected young people. The Youth Service was also expected by government to use its skills in working with young people as a means of encouraging the *"very disaffected to re-engage in training"* (HMSO 1998:xi). The pattern that appeared to be emerging at this early stage in the life of the New Labour government was to see the Youth Service as a peripheral organisation to its agenda, only valuable because it operated within local communities and because it had a reputation of being able to build and maintain positive relationships with many young people that other organisations had lost contact with. The government did not appear to value the Youth Service based on a recognition of its potential to work with young people in a way guided by the purpose and values of its work and, through doing so, its ability to contribute to the government's agenda in a way different from, but no less valuable than school.

This position reflects past government interest in the Youth Service, underpinned by its recognition of the ability of the Youth Service to develop positive relationships with young people, many of whom could be seen to be involved in particular moral panics. Governments have often attempted to link this relationship to changes in young people's attitudes to unemployment (Williamson 1993), to youth offending (France and Wiles 1996), to sexual health (Teenage Pregnancy Unit 2000), and currently view it as a panacea for youth disaffection with its interrelated negative factors, including poor school attendance and low academic attainment (SEU 2000). These and other initiatives, including the linking of young people to the Youth Service within a school setting, appear to be unaware of or disinterested in the purposes and values of the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3). Strategies that do not adhere to key principles of the Youth Service, such as voluntary engagement – a difficult process in a school or prison setting, or as a result of a requirement to attend a youth club or youth project – became a process more concerned with control and the solving of a contemporary social problem than with using a young-people-first approach. As a consequence, the Youth Service can be seen to be diminished within such initiatives rather than enhanced. Instead of becoming a vibrant organisation within a political agenda driven by education, the Youth Service runs the risk of becoming little more than a classroom assistant, responsible for providing alternative activities for disruptive pupils. The Youth Service, it can be argued, has a positive role to play in the lives of young people through a partnership with schools and a range of other agencies, but to be fully effective it has to do so from a position that allows it to become a healthy organisation able to fully utilise its purposes and values.

5.3 The National Assembly for Wales

The National Assembly for Wales accepted that their particular strategic challenges were associated with eradicating the negative economic and social conditions specific to Wales (NAW 1999). In particular it was recognised that the endemic economic conditions resulted in *"the persistent and substantial gap between the levels of prosperity in Wales compared with the UK and the rest of Europe, Welsh per capita GDP is now only 82% of the EU average"* (European Task Force 1999:5). Regional disparities were also

recognised, with east Wales attaining the EU average for Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while in west Wales and the south Wales valleys, the GDP per capita is only 71% (Morgan and Morgan 1998, Hill 1999). It is claimed (Higgins and Morgan 1999) that the reasons for this prosperity deficit are easy to recognise and include low employment activity rates, low economic output, low investment in innovation and entrepreneurship and low levels of education, training and investment. The European Task Force (1999) claims that the problems associated with poor economic activity in Wales include the lowest household income in the UK as well as disproportionately high levels of dependency on social security benefit. Those affected by these circumstances are also often identified with poverty, crime and family instability and by their isolation from mainstream society (Blair 1996). This interconnection of negative factors affecting the lives of people in Wales was further highlighted (NAW 2000a) by the claim that social exclusion becomes an outcome and describes a way of life where opportunities are few, services are difficult to access and people lose hope. Young people were, it was claimed (NAW 1999), disproportionately affected by social exclusion, with 37% living in poverty in that they lived in households with less than 50% of the average income. Of households with dependent children, 18% did not have anyone earning money, and in some areas the figure approached 60%. 3,400 children were looked after by local authorities and 2,500 children were on the Child Protection Register. Over 5% of young people left school with no qualifications and one in seven 16 to 17 year olds were not in education, training or work. Unemployment and low pay was also seen as a contributor to the economic and social position of Wales with the Assembly (NAW 1999) claiming that in 1996-1997, 25% of households and nearly half a million people in Wales received income support or family credit.

The National Assembly for Wales, influenced by the findings of PAT 12, confirmed education as the catalyst for addressing these negative factors, with greater educational attainment described as the means of developing a more inclusive society within which opportunities would be made available to ensure all young people had the chance to reach their potential. This maximising of potential would be achieved through the introduction of a broad-based, continuous education strategy described as crucial for *"improving the*

social and economic conditions for everyone" (Welsh Office 1998a:iii). An integrated system was proposed involving schools, sixth forms, training providers, employers, further education (FE) and higher education (HE) institutions, and voluntary sector bodies to encourage a *"single seamless path from childhood to retirement and beyond"* (Hain 1998:1).

5.4 National Assembly for Wales and the maintained Youth Service

The political strategy to combat disaffection and the role of the maintained Youth Service in Wales within it were identified through the Green Paper on Lifelong Learning (Welsh Office 1998), which stated the role of the maintained Youth Service would be to *"help build bridges and open pathways of success for young people"* (ibid:12). The Youth Service would also increasingly develop the capacity to confront hard social issues such as homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, and crime, and to develop strategies with young people for the reduction of these problems. The role the Youth Service would be expected to assume within the new learning strategy was reinforced when it was stated that:

> *"most of all the Youth Service will need to work more closely with the Careers Service companies to help ensure that de-motivated youngsters return to learning"*
>
> (Welsh Office 1998a:12)

There was no suggestion in this key strategic document about developing the non-formal community-based teaching and learning responsibility of the maintained Youth Service. What appeared to be suggested was that those working in the Youth Service should use their skills of relationship building with young people to persuade them to return to school or further education. The maintained Youth Service contribution to the Learning Country agenda was envisaged as being to *"make a substantial contribution by helping young people either to maintain their interest in learning or to return to learning"* (ibid:12). This statement could be interpreted as a clear indication of the government's rejection of the learning of young people through their involvement in Youth Service activities within

the community. It was a position, it can be legitimately claimed, that was to permeate throughout the key education documents published by the Assembly during the time of this investigation.

Many of the 'Third Way' policies of New Labour were taken forward in Wales (Welsh Office 1998a), particularly those focused on education and the development of lifelong learning strategies. A central aim of the Welsh Office was to establish Wales as a learning country, which was seen as a catalyst for *"improving social and economic conditions for everyone"* (Hain 1998:iii). To ensure the implementation of this vision, the new National Assembly made the decision to introduce specific Welsh clauses to the Learning and Skills Bill which would enable comprehensive Welsh strategies for the support of young people in Wales to be introduced. Central to these strategies were responses planned to improve the educational attainment of young people as a means of ensuring the specific economic and social agenda targets of the Welsh government could be reached (NAW 2000a, NAW 2000b. NAW 2001a, NAW 2001b).

The Assembly requirements of the maintained Youth Service within this agenda were described in the explanatory notes of the Learning and Skills Act (HMSO 2000c:91), which stated that the organisations' responsibilities would include providing *"organised leisure-time occupation"* for young people. The interpretation of this statement, supported by additional comments in the explanatory notes, indicated that this would involve young people in a range of youth-centre-based activities which would include providing information and support to young people, and specialist activities such as outdoor education, sport, drama and art delivered as a universal entitlement for all young people with a growing commitment to working with young people at risk. The provision of these sorts of activities would be contained, as would the Youth Service, within a broader 'services for young people' strategy focused on *"encouraging, enabling or assisting young people"* to take part in education and training, to take advantage of opportunities for employment and to take part in the lives of their communities (HMSO 2000c:39). The style of education for the Youth Service was described as *"offering opportunities for non-formal types of learning... which do not necessarily lead to a qualification"* (ibid:19).

In an attempt to develop a framework for the more effective delivery of its economic and social regeneration agenda, and to fulfil the obligation of the National Assembly to provide more appropriate systems for supporting young people, a group identified as experts (including Youth Service specialists) were brought together to produce a document that took a strategic view of how the needs of young people in Wales would be both identified and responded to. The initial document, *'Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales'* (NAW 2000a), attempted to define the principles underpinning future policies and to determine the interface and level of effectiveness between existing policies. Priorities were also determined which would be delivered through a multi-disciplinary approach, involving a wide range of organisations working with young people, co-ordinated through Chief Executives of Local Authorities for the purpose of *"reviewing and developing services for the entire cohort of young people in their area"* (ibid:75). This new partnership would include the *"authority's Youth Service – reflecting the service's direct links with young people and its ethos of informal learning and inclusion"* (NAW 2000a:75); it was a partnership approach with a statutory base derived from the Youth Support Services Directions and Guidance (Wales) 2002 under Section 123 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (HMSO 2000d) and would direct local authorities to set up Young People's Partnerships (YPPs) as the primary vehicle for co-ordinating multi-agency activity to deliver the 10 entitlements described in the Extending Entitlement Report (NAW 2001c). The YPPs would not have a significant budget to carry out its co-ordinating role but were expected by the National Assembly for Wales to influence and co-ordinate the spending of individual partners and to commission activities so that services would become more focused on the priorities of the Extending Entitlement agenda.

A key component of the agreed approach was a commitment by the National Assembly for Wales to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1989), which became the foundation of principles, values and standards for dealing with young people in Wales. As a consequence, policy development was concerned in a fundamental way with developing systems to ensure the protection of young people, to ensure their access to proper

standards of physical care, learning and health, and their rights to participate in matters that affect them, which requires access to appropriate information.

This approach could be seen to be linked to the conclusions of PAT 12 (SEU 2000), which recognised the need to develop systems capable of co-ordinating services for young people in a coherent way (Chapter 4.2). The key strategic objectives identified by the 'experts group' also had similarities to the objectives of PAT 12 in that they were concerned to be:

1. coherent and responsive to the needs of young people;
2. able to link with community regeneration initiatives;
3. able to identify and support those at risk; and
4. able to identify gaps in provision and reduce duplication and complexity.

The planned outcome of the Extending Entitlement strategy, underpinned by these objectives, was to be a system within which young people were *"participating successfully within education, training and work as well as contributing as citizens within their communities and beyond"* (NAW 2000a:7). The document also claimed (as had PAT 12) that support for young people would be most effective when it was part of a broad network, open to all young people, within which policies were determined and delivered through a multi-disciplinary approach. This approach was broadly welcomed (WYA 2000c) because there had long been recognition in the Youth Service that young people do not organise their lives to fit neatly into the boundaries of government departments (Wylie 1999). Because many of the issues affecting young people are multi-faceted, no single service or department is able (particularly at the neighbourhood level) to respond effectively. Thus, Wylie claims, there is a need to work across service departments (for example, education and social services), across sectors (public and private), and across agencies (statutory and voluntary).

This position was recognised by the 'experts', who concluded that there was a need both to identify existing policy strands related to young people and to introduce strategies capable of improving and coordinating them as a means of ensuring a *"more holistic and*

responsive approach to young people" (NAW 2000a:2). The Extending Entitlement report placed three key requirements on the Youth Service in Wales. First, the Youth Service would work directly with young people to provide accessible information, support and opportunity. Second, it would work strategically with other young people's services in order to make an appropriate contribution to the health, learning and employment agenda of government. Third, it would encourage young people to contribute to the decision-making processes that affect their lives. The processes the Youth Service would use to realise the requirements of government were described as the provision of *"clubs, centres and projects, information shops, residential provision, issue based provision, group work, outreach and detached work, generic or focused"* (NAW 2000a:45). The outcomes of work provided by these and other means would be focused on learning and skills development for those young people involved. A significant weakness of the document, however, was its failure to identify either the philosophical position of the maintained Youth Service as a predominantly non-formal community based learning organisation or the methods that would be most appropriate for the organisation to measure the achievements of young people through their involvement in its activities. This provided a vacuum which was easily filled by the adoption of many of the methods of measurement of attainment used by schools.

The 1992 Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (Appendix 1) was written to give the Youth Service both its direction and a hoped for legitimacy as an education service. The Statement, which was 10 years old at the time of the investigation, had been constructed to address a different set of political priorities (Chapter 3). Concerns were, however, being raised by those working in the maintained Youth Service not about its philosophical position (as expounded in the Curriculum Statement) nor its ability or inability to measure, in an appropriate way, the outcomes of its work but rather how it would achieve – in a pragmatic way – the priorities set by the experts group. This group had identified that the Youth Service was faced with what were described as *"practical constraints"* (ibid:47), which included patchy provision and significant variation in quality and coverage across Wales which would preclude it from contributing in an

effective way to the new Assembly agenda (NAW 2000b). The remedy identified in the report was to introduce a range of mechanisms designed to:

1. enhance the training of the existing workforce;
2. improve facilities and equipment;
3. ensure the supply of high-quality trained staff; and
4. redress the inadequate levels of resources.

The recognition of these organisational weaknesses, which were seen to preclude the maintained Youth Service from effectively delivering better support and opportunity for young people, was not supported by any comment in the Extending Entitlement report about how development initiatives would be funded. This lack of resources had the potential to cause future organisational problems once the early euphoria of the document's release had dissipated. Neither was any mention made about how the maintained Youth Service would be both re-energised following its low ebb at the end of the Conservative Party's period of time in office and reintroduced into the macro-policy-making arena from which it had, in the main, been excluded during the period between 1979 and 1997.

Key strategy documents with the potential to affect the lives of young people living in Wales were also produced by the Welsh Assembly Government at this time. They included betterwales.com (NAW 2000b) *Putting Wales First* (NAW 2000c), and the *Plan for Wales* (NAW 2001b) which reinforced the priority of the new Assembly to develop a modern economy, the achievement of which was dependent on widening opportunities for learning, the improvement of skills and the construction of a more securely embedded knowledge base. However, these strategic documents failed to identify what was meant by the term 'widening opportunities for learning' and in doing so diminished the potential of non-formal community based learning of the sort offered by an effective Youth Service to contribute to the government's economic and social agenda (WYA 2000c).

During the time following the production of Extending Entitlement (NAW 2000a) there was considerable optimism felt by those working in the maintained Youth Service that

there would be overt government recognition of the range of learning opportunities available through the scarcely tapped potential of the non-formal community-based learning of the Youth Service (WYA 2000c). It was hoped that such recognition would result in an expansion of such learning for young people through their involvement in a wide range of community based activities, including sport, drama, music, travel, community involvement and much more. Disappointingly, however, it appeared that those in the Welsh Assembly Government with the responsibility for turning policy into practice interpreted the concept of 'widening opportunities for learning' to mean encouraging young people, including those who had abandoned school, back into formal styles of learning measured predominantly by the methods many young people had previously rejected.

To meet the aspirations identified in the three key strategy documents described previously, the Assembly published *The Learning Country* (NAW 2001a), which reconfirmed the role of learning as the means of *"liberating talent, extending opportunity, empowering communities and helping create wealth"* (Davidson 2001a:1). Those aged 14 to 19 years (a similar age to the 13 to 19 priority age range of the maintained Youth Service) were identified as central to the Learning Country strategy because they were seen to occupy the pivotal transition period between compulsory schooling and post-16 education and training. Consequently, young people within this age group became the focus of a number of key politically-determined initiatives which continued to reinforce the need to increase the base of educational attainment, primarily within the formal education sector, to improve both economic competitiveness and employment opportunities and to reduce levels of exclusion and welfare expenditure (Davidson 2001a). The Youth Service was excluded from this process, and its existence was not even recognised within the publication, which continued to promote what could justifiably be described as a one-dimensional approach to teaching and learning, predominantly within the formal education arena of school. An opportunity to describe what the Welsh Assembly Government required from the Youth Service was diminished because the publication continued to fail to recognise the potential of non-formal community-based education of the sort that could be delivered by an effective Youth

Service. As a consequence, another significant opportunity to embed the relevance of out-of-school learning in a key government document was missed.

Shortly after the publication of the Learning Country came the second publication of '*Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales*' – a consultation on the draft directions and guidance (NAW 2001c) which continued to support the principle of providing a framework for the delivery of its lifelong learning, inclusion citizenship and safety agendas. This document clearly described what the Assembly required of the Youth Service in Wales by again stating that its responsibility within the new political agenda was to make a contribution to the personal and social development of young people through what was described as informal rather than non-formal learning. To achieve this contribution, the maintained Youth Service would seek to engage young people in a process of lifelong learning and encourage them to take a more positive role in the life of their communities; it would provide information, support and opportunity and it would make a contribution to the health, learning and employment agendas of the Assembly. The role of the Youth Service within this framework was described by the new Assembly as being to use its expertise as informal educators and promoters of lifelong learning (NAW 2001c). The Youth Service would also, the report claimed, support other agencies to develop effective styles of work with young people as well as using its historical practice of youth empowerment and participation to ensure that young people became decision makers within the local services for young people. There was again little direction or guidance about what these terms would mean in practice for the maintained Youth Service with its predominance of part-time workers. Key concepts such as 'informal education', 'lifelong learning', 'empowerment' and 'participation' were ideals that needed to be introduced to a rapidly expanding maintained Youth Service with some alacrity.

The third and final '*Extending Entitlement: support for 11 to 25 year olds in Wales Directions and Guidance*' (WAG 2002a) detailed the structure within which the Youth Service would operate. It also identified the universal entitlements for young people (Chapter 4.2) agreed by the Welsh Assembly Government after a period of extensive consultation with those individuals and organisations working with young people (NAW

2000a). These Directions and Guidance laid out the framework for the delivery of services, including a number of key principles of importance to this investigation. The education and training process would need to be what was described as 'evidence based' (suggesting the need to use quantifiable measures) and capable of evaluation: as such, it would provide a firm foundation for knowledge exploitation and enterprise. It would also need to be a process that could justify, in a quantitative or qualitative way, a return on government funding and furthermore, it would be a process within which standards, results and outcomes would matter more than inputs.

Potentially, there was much in the document to confuse the maintained Youth Service. At a philosophical level, the rhetoric of valuing non-formal education appeared to have been diminished in favour of a process concerned to replicate the government's control of school-based education. Similarly, at a practical level, the importance of the Youth Service appeared to be diminishing, with such actions as not giving it an automatic place on the management group of the new Young People's Partnerships (WAG 2002a:29). This confusion of status and role was further exacerbated by the publication of the government's strategy for training and education for those aged 14 to 19 (WAG 2002b), which gave only nominal recognition to the role of non-formal community-based education of the sort delivered by the Youth Service. This strategy document had two main foci. The first was linked to formal education and the increased attainment of academic qualifications. The second was to ensure that school leavers had obtained the skills necessary for employment, which included what was described as a range of 'soft skills' such as working with others, problem solving and improving personal learning. Opportunities to obtain and develop these skills were identified within the 'Code of Practice for Out of School Hours Learning' (WAG 2002c). Once again, no significant mention was made of the Youth Service, its non-formal education role or its ability to work with the most disaffected of young people. What was being proposed through the introduction of this new prospectus was an opportunity *"to reinforce the good work achieved by teachers during the school day"* (Davidson 2002b:1). It was an opportunity (albeit an unfulfilled one at this time) for the Youth Service to establish a role for itself which would maximise its non-formal community-based approach. However, the Youth

Service was only mentioned in a peripheral way, the case studies used to describe effective practice were primarily school based and its users described in the main as pupils. This apparent diminution of the maintained Youth Service as a direct education contributor to the government agenda appeared to contradict the findings of the Welsh Affairs Committee Report on social exclusion in Wales (HMSO 2000e:ix), which claimed that it had:

> *"become depressingly clear to us during our enquiry that our education system is failing to meet the needs of a significant minority of young people....Thankfully, some of these young people had been reengaged and remotivated by the Youth Service...by offering informal courses in car maintenance...and programmes of skills confidence building to unemployed young people who are not ready to progress into employment or mainstream education and training".*

5.5 Summary

This Chapter set out to identify the government requirements of the maintained Youth Service in Wales. As a consequence of devolution (Chapter 1), the government in question is predominantly the Welsh Assembly, although it is recognised that the context within which the Youth Service in Wales is delivered is also affected in a significant way by the macro-political agenda of New Labour. Consideration of policy developments produced both by New Labour and by the National Assembly for Wales identified the following themes, which provide the context within which the maintained Youth Service operates:

1. identification of education attainment as the engine of the government's economic and social regeneration agenda;
2. recognition by government of the link between economic and social conditions prevalent in Wales;
3. commitment by government to addressing social exclusion and disaffection;
4. recognition by government of the relationships between issues such as low education attainment, poor employment prospects, poor health, family breakdown, and involvement in crime;

5. recognition by government of the need to reduce welfare dependency; and
6. limited acknowledgement by government of the potential of non-formal community-based teaching and learning as a contributor to the economic and social regeneration agenda.

Within this context, the government requirements of the maintained Youth Service in Wales can be identified as:

1. increasing the numbers of young people staying in, or returning to education;
2. preparing young people for the world of work;
3. developing the organisational capacity to confront hard social issues such as homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse and crime prevention and to develop strategies with young people for their reduction;
4. improving the health of young people;
5. raising young people's levels of political awareness and political involvement.
6. developing meaningful links with those young people who had "*slipped through the net*";
7. taking a more active role in providing support for disaffected young people through stronger links with schools and the Careers Service;
8. involving young people in a range of youth-centre-based activities, which would include providing information and support, and specialist activities such as outdoor education, sport, drama and art delivered as a universal entitlement for all young people; and
9. supporting other agencies to develop effective styles of work with young people as well as using its historical practice of youth empowerment and participation to ensure that young people became decision makers within the local services for young people.

A reward was offered by government to the maintained Youth Service for their involvement in attaining this long list of requirements which would be both an increase in funding and a promise of a greater say in how the policy agenda would be developed to meet specific economic and social regeneration agendas. This could be seen to be, as it

always has been, irresistible to an organisation, with its historic low levels of funding. The inherent danger in this offer, again as it always has been, was that the funding would not be to deliver the 'core work' of the maintained Youth Service but to carry out specialist functions with young people that would meet the requirements of government but not in a way that reflected the Youth Service's specific purposes and values.

CHAPTER 6

How knowledgeable are those working in the maintained Youth Service of its discrete identity?

6.1 Introduction

It is the intention of this chapter to provide an answer, from the evidence obtained from the research methods described previously (Chapter 2), about the level of collective knowledge and understanding of the purposes and associated principles and values of the maintained Youth Service held by those who work within it. This will be done to enable a decision to be made about whether the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3), as a clearly bounded group (or groups) of people interacting together to achieve a particular goal (or goals), is meeting the needs of young people (Chapter 4) and the requirements of government policy (Chapter 5) in a formally structured and co-ordinated way.

6.2 Collective understanding of Youth Service purposes, principles and values

The purposes of the Youth Service in Wales are included within the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (Appendix 1). As a result, the statement has become well embedded in a wide range of policy documents relating to the Youth Service, including Extending Entitlement, Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards, and Estyn Standards and Inspection Reports. The outcome of this action has been the inclusion of many of its key concepts within relevant local authority documents, such as Strategic and Operational Plans for the Youth Service. It is, as a result, the principal document for determining the purposes, principles and values of the Youth Service in Wales.

From the evidence obtained from the interviews it is possible to conclude that there is a high level of **recognition** of Youth Service purposes as described in the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales. However, evidence obtained from the same sources would indicate that a collective **understanding** of the purposes does not exist to the same extent. Typical comments identifying this conclusion included:

> *"I have heard about it but I don't know what is says or means. When I start my training I am sure it will be explained"*
>
> Part-Time Youth Worker

> *"Of course I know what the Curriculum Statement is and I know what it contains. I don't understand it though, the individual words are OK but they are joined up in an overcomplicated way. As it stands it doesn't give me any help at all.*
>
> Full-Time Worker

Two broad reasons for this gap between recognition and understanding of Youth Service purposes were identified by the results of both the questionnaire survey and the interviews. First, it can be claimed that little effective support, such as qualifying training, induction training, or effective supervision, has been given to a high proportion of staff working in the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 7). As a result, the interpretation of the concepts contained within the statements of purpose has been left, in many instances, to individual workers. This applies in particular to those who are employed part-time and who spend most of their time in direct contact with young people (Chapter 8). Second, there is evidence that indicates that the agreed purposes of the Youth Service (Appendix 1) have increasingly been influenced and often changed in practice as a consequence of the pressures exerted on it by the requirements arising from the contemporary political agenda. Consequently, those employed within the maintained Youth Service did not identify the purpose of their work with any consistency, nor did they provide any significant evidence of an in-depth analysis by respondents of the purposes and principles of the maintained Youth Service. Rather there was, in general, a functional approach concerned to provide what could be described as simplistic concepts which identified the work of the maintained Youth service as being contained within four broad domains – education, leisure/play, social welfare, and employment.

6.2.1 The Youth Service as educator

'Education' was identified, from the data collected and analysed during the investigation, as one of the central purposes of the maintained Youth Service. However, despite the near consensus in the use of the term, significant differences of understanding were revealed

between and within the discrete occupational strands about the term's meaning as a philosophical concept that could be translated into a form of practice compatible with the purpose, principles, and values of the Youth Service. At one end of the spectrum, comments were made by a number of Principal Youth Officers and full and part-time youth workers that education delivered through the Youth Service had become increasingly driven by *'formal'* methods using formative assessment procedures - including those contained within, for example, the Open College Network (OCN) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). A number of respondents claimed that this position had not been arrived at as a result of some thoughtful process involving those within the Youth Service. Rather, it had come about because:

> *"pressure was being placed on all sections of the Youth Service to develop a more formal approach to education which would include introducing methods of accreditation more suitable to that carried out at school"*
>
> Principal Youth Officer

This pressure, it was further claimed, was as a result of the comments contained within Estyn Inspection Reports, many of which identified *"high quality work"* in the Youth Service as being linked to the:

> *"substantial numbers of young people gaining formal accreditation for their achievements..... through a menu of routes that include:*
>
> - *A good range of Open College Network (OCN) units and courses*
> - *The Youth Achievement Award*
> - *The local authority's Record of Participation Award; and*
> - *Duke of Edinburgh Award"*
>
> (Estyn 2002b:7)

A number of those interviewed said that they believed local authorities who failed to provide these sorts of accredited educational opportunities within the maintained Youth Service were at risk of being criticised for *"missing opportunities to formally accredit the work of young people"* (Estyn 2001c:3). This position is further supported and its importance emphasised by comments contained within a range of other Inspection Reports, including Estyn (2001a), Estyn (2001b), Estyn (2002a), and Estyn (2002b), which all make positive reference to the attainment of *'formal'* qualifications by young

people through their involvement in the Youth Service. It was recognised by many of the Principal Youth Officer respondents that these comments – made by a powerful and influential body – sent out a very strong message to the Youth Service and in doing so, encouraged it to move away from a non-formal and informal approach towards a formal style of education and assessment (Chapter 3).

At the other end of the spectrum, the view that this formal education approach should become dominant for the Youth Service was challenged by the comments of a substantial number of full-time and part-time workers. Many claimed that the Youth Service was and should remain a *'non-formal and informal education'* provision, within which specific learning gains were difficult to measure and only of importance when they were recognised and valued by the individual to whom they related. A significant number of full and part–time workers claimed that their role was important in creating what was described as:

> *"an environment within which young people would be encouraged to take part in a range of new experiences with the outcomes being the attainment of skills that would be of use in their wider lives and not just in their life at work"*
>
> Regional/Specialist Manager

However, for many respondents, the terms non-formal and informal were used to identify an approach to their work with young people that could be described as unstructured, unthinking, unplanned, and devoid of any pre-determined or measurable outcomes. It was terminology that appeared to liberate many workers from any systematic approach to their work because the terms non-formal and informal had become interpreted to mean a way of work that was improvised and makeshift. The general outcome, as identified by the evidence, was an approach within which the worker was most often passive, in that they waited to be motivated into action by *"what the young people want"*, or functional, in that their role was to open the building, keep order on the pool table, impose discipline, and organise activities. The justification for these approaches was described as trying to avoid being seen by young people as being too much like school because what young people needed, in the opinion of those interviewed, was a 'non-formal' or 'informal'

environment within which they could escape the growing pressures to succeed at school by being with their friends and by taking part in activities they enjoyed. For many respondents, the Youth Service not being like school was of critical importance because there was a broad consensus about the academic ability of those young people they were in contact with, who were described in a variety of different ways as academic underachievers (Chapter 8). The response to this perceived reality was contained within two general strategies. The first, identified across all the occupational strands, suggested that the Youth Service should disassociate itself from any form of formal education approach in order to concentrate on what were described as the traditional ideas of relationship building, giving young people new and challenging experiences and providing somewhere for them to meet safely. The second strategy was to use the positive relationship between young people and youth workers to encourage them to develop a different attitude to learning. This, it was claimed, could be created by the use of traditional Youth Service curriculum activities, such as sport, craft, drama, dance, and wider community experiences, within which learning could be discovered or re-discovered in a way appropriate to the identified needs of the individuals involved. Concerns were expressed, however, about the general lack of acceptance, value, and resources given to this Youth Service approach by central government, local authorities, and other funding bodies, which continued to devalue the importance of a non-formal community-based learning approach when measured against formal education and work-based training.

Despite the use of the term 'education' by most of the respondents to describe one aspect of their work, it would be inaccurate to claim that there were clearly defined ideological positions within or between the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service about what sort of educational approach underpinned their work. From the information obtained during the investigation, it is possible to claim that an education approach – however described – was not an internalised part of a youth worker's functions despite the use of the term during the interviews. There was only limited evidence available to suggest that the maintained Youth Service promoted an approach to learning that was structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time, or learning support, the outcome

of which was intentional learning from the learner's perspective (Chapter 3). When an education approach was described by the respondents, it could be concluded that those in the maintained Youth Service had, in the majority of instances, adopted the form of education that could be seen to be most familiar to them: that is, an approach underpinned by an externally accredited outcome that was understood and accepted by government with its managerialist stance and its value for money requirement. It is possible to conclude from the evidence provided during the investigation that government requirements, described in policy documents supported by the comments of Estyn, had, in the perception of significant numbers of those interviewed, created an environment within which it was in their best interests to co-operate. Consequently, education, particularly of the sort leading to formal qualifications, was seen by many working in the maintained Youth Service as an added, externally directed role that had to be dealt with before their core role could be carried out. Comments were also made by a number of respondents about what they saw as the short-term nature of the current political fixation with involving young people in formal approaches to learning during their leisure time. This approach, in the opinion of many respondents, was no more than a short–term distraction which would soon lose its impetus as it was superseded by a new political imperative, when funding became tighter, or when a new political party became elected.

Practical limitations were also identified as the central issue for respondents working part-time when attempting to provide opportunities for young people to obtain accredited qualifications. These limitations were seen to be as a direct result of both the small amount of time they spent with young people and the often erratic attendance of young people at a Youth Club or Youth Project. This finding was substantiated by the results of the questionnaire survey, which indicated that more than 53% of this occupational strand worked less than 14 hours a week and 42% worked less than 10 hours a week (Chapter 8). The comments of several focus groups clearly articulated the part-time workers' perspective when they claimed that their contact with young people was sporadic and unpredictable because of the limited time they, as workers, were at the Centre or Project, a situation exacerbated by the often random pattern of attendance by most of the young people they met. Within this environment, the planning of courses or programmes of

activities leading to accreditation was difficult, particularly if they were dependent on the regular attendance of young people. This issue was also raised by full-time workers, who recognised the limited time they too spent in direct contact with young people (Chapter 8). The outcome of this situation was again an often restricted contact, which placed similar sorts of time pressures as experienced by the part-time workforce. From the significant amount of evidence obtained during the interviews, it is possible to identify the use of the term 'education' as a constant definition of the role of the maintained Youth Service. There was, however, little correlation between the use of the term and a form of practice that could be recognised as a non-formal educational approach as described in the Curriculum Statement for Wales. The most cogent descriptions of education by those involved in the investigation related to 'formal education', which appears to have become the dominant approach used within the maintained Youth Service. This is not to suggest that this approach is widespread; it might be that it is easier, because of its familiarity to respondents, to describe it rather than to struggle with what appear to be the unfamiliar concepts of non-formal education.

6.2.2 The Youth Service as leisure/playtime provider

The management and organisation of the leisure/playtime activities of young people was described by significant numbers of those interviewed as a core purpose of the maintained Youth Service. The outcome of this activity was described during the investigation as being to involve young people in positive *'worthwhile'* activities, designed to keep young people *"off the streets"* and *"out of trouble"*. The benefits to young people through involvement in these managed and organised activities were described by many of those involved in the interviews as *"learning to be part of a team"*, *"the development and improvement of new skills"*, and *"an opportunity to succeed at things they might be good at"*. Comments were also made by respondents about why they involved young people in a broad range of leisure-type activities as a part of their Youth Service programme the outcomes of which they stated, was to meet the needs of young people, either as individuals, or as members of a team. As a result, involvement by young people in such activities was not specifically geared to winning or making a profit or concerned with a

specific issue such as crime prevention or health promotion, although it was further recognised that all of these outcomes did happen or were likely to happen as a result of the involvement of young people in positive leisure-type activities. Once again, there was little evidence to suggest that those interviewed were involved in a thoughtful process within which there could be discovered the link between the purpose of a particular activity, the process by which that activity was being carried out, and the effective achievement of the outcome measured against the purpose of the activity. Leisure-type activities which spanned a wide range of interesting, stimulating, challenging, and exciting activities were being offered to young people who were accepting the opportunity to participate. There is little evidence available to suggest how these activities are managed to reflect the criteria necessary for them to be described as non-formal education. It can be suggested from the evidence obtained that a significant amount of learning was probably taking place but in a way that reflected a classic informal education approach (Chapter 3).

The use of the word 'play' as an activity of the maintained Youth Service was not clearly articulated during the interviews, although many of the sorts of activities described by those who responded to the interviews clearly could have been described as play. In many ways, the notion that young people use the Youth Service just to 'play' has increasingly become foreign to an organisation often influenced by a developing culture of quasi-professionalism underpinned by a little understood non-formal education philosophy. It can be argued that this position has been built on the foundation of the Curriculum Statement for Youth Work and other contemporary documents with their common view of promoting a service largely directed by funding-led, problem-based work with young people. However, a number of comments were made by respondents about a range of activities undertaken by young people through their involvement with the maintained Youth Service that can be seen to be motivated by the concept and values base of play as described by the Welsh Assembly Government. This policy document (WAG 2002c) describes play activities as being freely chosen and personally directed, intrinsically motivated without thought of external goal or reward. It is from this set of principles that much youth work practice is also delivered, which might provide a dilemma for those

working in the Youth Service who believe they are under pressure to increasingly measure many of the outcomes of its practice.

> *"Youth work in the recent past was about young people dipping in and out of a range of activities they were interested in. As a youth worker this challenged me to involve them in all sorts of things. Trips, sports, things in the community and lots of other things. We had a good time, they were happy to get on with it and enjoy the chance to try something new or different. If they didn't get on with it or if they had enough we did something else. I think they learned a lot from that sort of approach. They were much more together, like kids in a playground although some of them were 15 or 16 year olds.*
>
> Part-Time Worker

The findings of the questionnaire survey (Chapter 7) identify another reason why the issue of providing leisure/play-type activities to young people could be seen by some to be a relevant activity. For many workers, much of their work with young people is focused on those under the age of 11, with a significant minority of those working with young people as young as eight years old. Only limited comment was made by those involved in the interviews about the potential for measurable learning as a result of the leisure/playtime activities organised for young people as part of their Youth Service contact. This provides additional evidence to suggest that the maintained Youth Service is concerned with providing activities for young people within an informal education framework in that it takes place outside of a structure in terms of learning objectives, learning time, or learning support; as a result, it becomes a process within which learning is sometimes intentional, but in most cases it is not.

6.2.3 The Youth Service as carer

Many of the full-time and part-time workers interviewed described in some detail the caring role of those who worked within the maintained Youth Service. Providing a *'shoulder to cry on'* or to *'offer help when it was needed'* were seen as key roles for those working within the Youth Service, as was *'befriending'* young people. This apparent caring approach was described as one of the main purposes for youth workers, particularly those employed part-time, who were keen to be seen as sympathetic adults in the lives of

young people. A number of youth workers described this aspect of their work as part of their neighbourhood or local community responsibility, with many describing their role as *'looking out'* for young people for two particular reasons. The first was a belief that they were demonized by a range of influential bodies, including the government and the press, and needed, as a result, a champion to redress the balance of opinion when given the opportunity. The second was a strongly articulated view about the significant numbers of young people who came into contact with the Youth Service who were economically disadvantaged, negatively labelled as a result of criminal or anti-social behaviour, academic underachievers, or stigmatised as a result of living in a particular geographical location or because they came from a particular family. Young people in any or all of these circumstances were seen by those working in the Youth Service as in need of caring support as individuals. An example of this was given by a part-time worker working in the community within which she lives:

> *"I sometimes feed young people who I know are hungry and sometime I take young people to see the doctor because they are sick. Twice this year I have gone with young people to funerals of their friends who have died on the streets through car accidents or because of drug overdoses. Without the support of the Youth Service lots of young people would think that no one cared"*

The caring role of those working within the maintained Youth Service can be identified by the results of the investigation as a central responsibility across all the occupational strands. Its importance was described by a significant number of respondents who claimed that when young people were in need of care and support, either individually or as a group, it became the first priority. From the examples given, it is reasonable to suggest that those working in the Youth Service would go to remarkable lengths to provide a 'caring' response to a wide range of issues and actions involving young people, many of which would be condemned by other adults. There is a breadth of information to suggest that by adopting this stance, the ability of the maintained Youth Service to become a more 'formal' service was seriously disadvantaged because the well–being of young people appeared to be paramount to a significant number of workers, even if it meant a perceived quota for accreditation was not met.

6.2.4 The Youth Service as a link to employment

Youth workers, particularly those working full-time, identified what they described as a new prescribed role for the maintained Youth Service which was aimed at improving the employment opportunities of young people, *"particularly those who did not do well in school"*. This would be achieved, in the opinion of the respondents, through delivering activities designed to improve the *"key skills"* of young people, the attainment of which would encourage them to return to learning. There was some confusion about what this term meant to those working in the maintained Youth Service and little evidence was made available to suggest that there was any ability to identify these key skills or to describe appropriate processes for their attainment. However, workers in all the occupational strands could identify the reason for having key skills, which was, they said, to encourage young people to return to the formal education environment of school or college, to become more successful in obtaining formal education qualifications, which was clearly identified as the route into employment and a more positive lifestyle. Despite the strength of this position, a number of respondents suggested that young people could be offered a Youth Service 'qualification' delivered in a different way to school that would motivate them to obtain more 'qualifications' of use to them in the world of work or to continue their education within a further or higher education context. There were significant levels of scepticism about the value of some of the qualifications currently being offered by the Youth Service during the period of this investigation. A group of full-time workers summed up what was a widely held position when they said:

> *"OCN's for erecting tents, for attending the Youth Club or for working behind the coffee bar are just Mickey Mouse qualifications. Can you imagine a young person taking that sort of certificate for a job interview or to get on a proper training programme? We can't, neither can young people. Collecting these sorts qualifications has become more important for us as Youth Workers than they are for young people because they meet the targets we are being set. It's a bit bizarre.*
>
> Full–Time Worker

Some concerns were expressed about the changes that would need to take place within the Youth Service if it was to have a more effective role in preparing young people for the world of employment. Many claimed it would have to move away from its current

position where it had a *"loose contact"* with young people who spent much of their Youth Service time in self-directed activities with minimal or non-existent methods for recognising achievement. There would have to be a reconfiguration of its approach so that it provided opportunities for young people to obtain *'real'* qualifications with exchangeable currency value with employers, school or further and higher education. This was an approach opposed by the significant majority of respondents for three specific reasons. First, it was stated that the organisation would lose its identity as a discrete organisation, and young people, particularly those who came in contact with it, would lose a valued informal community meeting place. Second, the maintained Youth Service did not have the structure because of its over-dependence on part-time workers, nor the theoretical underpinning as a consequence of its structure, to carry out this new role. Third, it did not have sufficient resources to make the necessary adjustments to its structure or to its weak theoretical underpinning or to provide appropriate community-based teaching and learning opportunities for young people. Despite these concerns, there was significant recognition by those interviewed of both the importance young people placed on finding employment and the potential role they as workers could provide in supporting young people to attain this status. There was clear acknowledgement that being employed was a key stage in the lives of young people as they moved from dependence to interdependence and, as such, it was a legitimate responsibility of the Youth Service to provide appropriate support. For many respondents, this support was not related to providing opportunities for young people to be involved in what was described in a variety of ways as 'evening classes in the Youth Club'. There were from a small minority of respondents clear suggestions that the maintained Youth Service could provide a broad base of activities within which participants would be provided with opportunities to improve, for example, their communication skills, their team-working skills, and their problem-solving skills. It would be about providing 'appropriate education' for young people (Chapter 4), the outcomes of which would be a range of personal qualities such as improved self-confidence, appropriate ambition, and the ability to reflect and to take appropriate action related to the issues of importance to them. There was little evidence to link these outcomes to the social and economic agenda of the government – with the potential for increased funds or enhanced status – and there was even less evidence to

suggest that the attainment of these outcomes was either planned or measurable. What was generally being described was an unplanned process, which for some young people resulted in new or enhanced skills of significant importance both to themselves and to society.

6.3 Domain dominance

The analysis of the interviews revealed that significant numbers of full and part-time workers who come into contact with young people sometimes see these four domains – education, leisure/play, social welfare, and employment - as discreet, but more often they see them as overlapping, requiring them often to make informed, conscious decisions about their importance or priority. From the findings of the investigation, however, a link was identified to suggest that the domain choice was influenced by what was described by many workers across all the occupational strands as institutionalised financial insecurity, the response to which was the development of an embedded entrepreneurial approach to both fundraising and practice. Youth workers, primarily those employed full-time, were keen to describe the sources from which they had obtained resources in addition to those provided by the local authority. Little regard appeared to have been given to the potential implications of obtaining additional funding, even when the sources were clearly outside of the Youth Service remit. Examples given included truancy projects involving youth workers collecting young people from home and delivering them to school or to other *"places of learning"* and youth workers acting as classroom assistants tasked with *"cooling out disruptive pupils"* by using what were described as *"youth work methods"*. This lack of understanding of the purpose of the Youth Service position was supported by the comments of many respondents, which appeared to reveal what could be interpreted as a shallow, uninformed approach to youth work with significant numbers of those questioned demonstrating major deficiencies in their knowledge and understanding of the agreed purpose of the maintained Youth Service. Many of the responses openly asked for information about what the 'true' purpose of the Youth Service was. Questions were raised about whether it is driven by an education role and if so, what sort of education was it? Is it a leisure service with its link to entertainment? Is it about developing winning

athletes or winning teams? Is it about providing discos, computer games, or youth worker-led excursions?

A consequence of this uncertainty was the purpose of the Youth Service being seen by many of those working within it as a flexible commodity to be altered and re-prioritised depending on particular circumstances. In a number of responses, it was claimed that decisions regarding practice were made intuitively or arrived at as a result of worker reaction to what was described as *"meeting funding criteria"*, *"responding to what young people want to do"*, or *"to meet the needs of young people"*. As a result, the willingness of workers across all occupational strands to give a clear definition of the purposes of their work was guarded. A common thread extrapolated from the interviews was an apparent lack of interest in defining a *"fixed"* purpose, which might restrict what was described by several Principal Youth Officers as the *"diverse nature of youth work practice"*. There was significant commonality of comment by Youth Service managers, regional/specialist managers and full-time workers about a need for the Youth Service to *"be a lot of things to a lot of young people"*. Comment was also made by a number of Principal Youth Officers that they were *"a broad church which could be affected by a too prescriptively defined purpose"*. A significant number of the Principal Youth Officers gave support to this position and made comment about the need to be responsive to developing political agendas which might require the Youth Service to take on new responsibilities or change direction. Views were expressed that the Youth Service could be diminished both financially and in terms of influence if it adhered too rigidly to prescriptively defined purposes that restricted its ability to take part in new initiatives with the possibility of new and additional financial resources:

> *"we have to learn to become prepared to respond to the changes that are taking place around us on what seems to be a daily basis. Much of my time is now taken up in partnership working meetings where decisions are being taken about how the cake is going to be cut. I'm much more interested in making sure the Youth Service is making a case than I am in protecting a way of working with young people that more often than not is in the imagination of academics and some workers who are always fighting for obsolete causes. We need to get real and realise how tough the world really is"*
>
> Principal Youth Officer

Youth work in schools and involvement in 'alternative curriculum' activities, citizen initiatives, health promotion, improved school attendance projects, and community safety projects were given as examples of the types of work promoted by the Welsh Assembly Government that would be enhanced by what was described as *"a youth work approach"*. A consequence of the involvement of the Youth Service was the potential increase in both project funding and the expansion of staffing numbers. There was a great deal of pragmatism in the comments of the Principal Youth Officers and regional/specialist managers about such developments, with a Principal Youth Officer from a rural local authority making a typical comment claiming:

> *"More than 50% of my so called youth workers are funded from non-traditional sources. What they do does not easily fit into the requirements of the Curriculum Statement but there is a need to move forward with the new agenda"*

Only limited comments were made about the dangers inherent in this approach, which could result in the maintained Youth Service losing its specific identity to become a generalist organisation able to change its purposes, principles and values at the whim of government diktat or the requirements of other sources of funding.

Evidence from the investigation identified that practice was often influenced by conflicting priorities and the agreed purposes of the Youth Service (as described within the Curriculum Statement for Youth Work in Wales (Appendix 1)) sometimes became secondary in determining the type of activity, process, and outcome delivered by the Youth Service. Comments by respondents would also suggest that the development of a

collective knowledge of the concepts contained within the Curriculum Statement was not, in general, a priority for many of those working either full-time or part-time. The role of the youth worker as a provider of appropriate education to young people as they move from adolescence to adulthood appears to be unfamiliar to the significant majority of those interviewed who work directly with young people. What the interviews did reveal, however, was a more simplistic interpretation of the purpose of the Youth Service, which was described by a substantial number of both full-time and part-time workers as being to deliver a range of activities to help young people to gain positive experiences within their communities and beyond. Many of these opportunities could be identified as offering educational, participative, empowering, and expressive opportunities to young people. However, the findings of this investigation also identified the lack of a thoughtful link between the activities offered and the stated purposes of the Youth Service.

The consequence of this position appears to be a multi-layered Youth Service with managers generally being aware of the formal purposes of the Youth Service and its potential link to contemporary political agendas, but with little or no access to young people, and part-time youth workers with only a limited awareness of either the purpose of youth work or the requirements of government but being the main contact point for young people. Separating the two is a relatively thin line of full-time workers – almost half of whom are unqualified – who do not always provide an effective bridge between the aspirations of policy and the realities of practice, because of both a lack of effective understanding of organisational purpose and a diverse set of occupational demands. This negative perception of the existence of a collectively held understanding of purpose between the occupational strands was supported by the comments made by the Principal Youth Officers involved in the interview process. One, from a rural Youth Service, gave a view based on his experience within his employing authority by stating:

> *"No - we do not have a collective understanding of what the Youth Service is about. If you asked me what is youth work and then you asked one of my area workers, then you asked the youth worker in the field, you would get three different answers."*

This view was supported by another Principal Youth Officer working in a local authority in north Wales, who also claimed to have a professional understanding of the purpose of youth work which might or might not be shared by full-time qualified staff, and which was unlikely to be shared by part-time trained staff. The reason given for this was because part-time staff often brought into their practice a belief that their responsibilities were:

> *"to fill up the time young people spent in contact with the Youth Service and play sport, to take part in other recreational activities and give them a good time and not to consider any serious sort of education or development role which is what I think youth work is about."*

A further Principal Youth Officer was more optimistic and spoke positively about the changes that had taken place in her predominantly urban Youth Service over the past two years. The catalyst for this was described as the new Youth Service agenda arising from the publication of Extending Entitlement. This had led to the appointment of a team of full-time youth workers – it was not determined if these were appropriately qualified (Chapter 7) – who had been given opportunities to collectively agree the purpose of their work, the process by which it would be delivered, and the intended benefits of that work to those young people with whom it came into contact. However, this approach had only involved the full-time workers, while the part-time workers in the service were described as *"particularly badly neglected"* when it came to being included in developing an understanding *"of the ethos of what we are trying to achieve"*. Within this context, these workers were described as *"struggling on in their own way"*.

Full-time workers supported the view of the Principal Youth Officers group. A typical comment that reflected the views of a number of workers from the full-time workers occupational strand suggested that:

> *As full-time workers yes we know where we are going. But in relation to part-time staff I don't think so - we speak a different language to the part-time staff. Mainly because it is part-time work for them, they've often got two or three different jobs. So their priorities are different to ours. From the authority's point of view we are inflicting the mission statement on the*

part-time workers but their actual delivery is totally different from what our expectations are.

This was a commonly expressed view of the full-time workers who described a significant divide between themselves, their managers, and their part-time colleagues. There was also consistent comment from this group about the reasons why this divide with the part-time workers existed. First, it was claimed that the statement of purpose was too broad, too complex, and too far removed from the reality of those in most regular contact with young people. Simply, it was an inadequate tool for part-time workers to use, who often described it as being written for a different audience. Second, there were conflicting priorities between the occupational strands, with part-time workers claiming to hold the moral high ground because of their closeness to young people. Third, it was recognised that part-time workers were inappropriately prepared for their frontline responsibilities. A Principal Youth Officer claimed

> *"We need part-time workers more than we need trained part-time workers. That doesn't mean that we don't try to involve them in training, but we can't put too much pressure on them because they might leave. The best we can do at the moment is to encourage them to train within a year of them starting to work for us. The trouble with this of course is that they get into bad habits and start believing in a way of working that doesn't always reflect what we want as a local authority"*

The outcome of this approach, in the view of many of the regional/specialist managers and full-time workers involved in the investigation, was a significant number of part-time workers who did not have the necessary skills, knowledge, or attitude to "*plan and deliver a session*" or to understand how "*to put relevant articles into practice*" in a way that met the purpose of the Youth Service. As a consequence, the service offered to young people by part-time workers was seen to be improvised and was described as being too dependent on the skills, interests, and abilities of individual workers rather than a strategic intervention built on the defined purpose of the Youth Service.

Exacerbating this position, in the opinion of many of both the managers and full-time workers involved in the interview process, was what was described as the changing

profile of part-time workers, who were now seen to be drawn from a different background to that with which many experienced full-time workers were familiar. The abilities of current part-time workers were generally described in a negative way. Many were identified as local residents who had been drawn into the Youth Service for a variety of reasons. Respondents were highly critical of selection criteria, which were described in a variety of ways as cursory, with the consequence being the recruitment of workers with "*limited education*" and "*little ability to assume the responsibilities of working with young people in the community*". In the not-too-distant past, a number of respondents claimed it was teachers who filled most of the part-time Youth Service posts and gave the main support to the full-time workers. This, in the opinion of many of those interviewed, gave the Youth Service some status and authority as well as providing informed support. It also brought into the practice of youth work a view of education that could, in the opinion of a number of Principal Youth Officers and full-time workers, be used as an informed basis for the development of non-formal education approaches of the sort used by the Youth Service.

The part-time workers involved in the interviews were aware of many of the deficiencies in their individual knowledge and understanding of "*what the Youth Service is really about*". Many of them claimed that the reason for this was their ineffective induction and in-service training, which affected their performance as maintained Youth Service employees. However, their concerns did not appear to come from a search for either a deeper understanding of the philosophy underpinning youth work or greater clarification of the concepts contained within the Curriculum Statement. What was of greater importance to them was a range of more practical and – from their perspective – more relevant issues.

> *'I work by myself and I need to know how to deal with disruptive boys who've been drinking and are causing trouble'*

> *'What sort of activities should I be offering as a one night a week club with no facilities and a membership between kids in prams and 20 year olds?'*

'I want to do more than keep kids off the streets but I'm not sure about what else there is'

Comments were also made by a number of part-time workers who suggested that they were:

"being thrown in at the deep end" - 'being left to my own devices' and "being told when I started to get on with it"

This final point was recognised as a significant failing by a number of full-time and part-time respondents who recognised the need to be part of an appropriate induction programme concerned with introducing new employees to both the working practices and organisational culture of their new employment. As one group of full-time workers agreed, part-time workers came from such diverse backgrounds that it was unfair to expect them to understand the purpose of the maintained Youth Service, the process by which that purpose would be achieved, and the expected outcome. There was also recognition by many of those managers and full-time workers interviewed that without a robust induction, many workers, particularly those employed part-time, were liable to bring with them a weak understanding of some of the core priorities of the maintained Youth Service, including equal opportunities. This was recognised by Estyn (2001a:11), who claimed:

"All staff are committed to the young people served by their particular centre or project, but some staff are not clear about the overall aims and objectives of the service. Not all staff have been through a formal Induction process".

It was also agreed across the occupational strands that, as a consequence of the inadequate preparation of part-time workers, there was little opportunity to ensure a collective understanding of the purposes, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service. Finding solutions to the development of a collective understanding of the purposes, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service through training was, however, seen to bring its own challenges because of what was described as the fragile balance between training part-time workers and retention. The transient employment trends of

many of the workforce were identified by the managers and full-time workers as a significant reason why the maintained Youth Service struggled to have a collective understanding of its purpose. In an era of expansion, the recruitment, retention, and training of youth workers at both full and part-time levels was described as placing new and additional pressure to maintain sufficient levels of appropriately trained and experienced employees. A Principal Youth Officer reflected the views of colleagues involved in the interviews by saying:

> *"We calculate that we lose 25% of our part-time staff every year. It's very difficult to recruit new workers and when we do it is not always possible to train them before they start work. It's our intention to train them in the first year as a priority but depending on what time of year they start they might have to wait for training until their second year of employment. When they start the priority is to introduce them into the administration systems of the service, little time or energy is spent on introducing them into the philosophy of youth work. We hope that they will pick that up as soon as possible.*

A number of managers and full-time workers expressed concern about the problems of developing an experienced cohort of part-time workers, most of whom were described as having a variety of alternative options for part-time employment. Care is needed and given at management levels to ensure that part-time workers are encouraged to stay within the Youth Service and the pressure of training is kept, where possible, to a minimum.

> *"There is a real need to be careful about how part-time workers are treated. They are becoming difficult to recruit so we need to be careful of the pressure we put them under through things like training. Part-time workers are in the main interested in working directly with young people in a way that perhaps reflects their own particular interests or their own experience of the Youth Service. We don't want to frighten them away by getting them involved in a form of training that has become increasingly academic in the sense that they have to write assignments. Given the choice of making them train and perhaps losing them or hanging on to them with no training is no choice. We would prefer to hang onto them.*
>
> Full-Time Worker

It is not necessary to assume that as a consequence of this position, young people are inevitably subjected to a low-quality service through their involvement in the Youth

Service. Rather, it suggests that the focus of provision is on the young person with limited thought or action being given to the balance between the requirements of government policy and the needs of young people. This is not to suggest either that the requirements of government are not being met. It is not unreasonable to suggest that as a result of the wide range of opportunities provided for young people, delivered in a way that reflects consciously or unconsciously the underlying principles and values of youth work, many of the requirements of government are being achieved. What do not appear to be happening are any conscious attempts either to pre-determine the outcomes of particular aspects of Youth Service practice or to carry out post-outcome measurements. The Youth Service as a result places itself in a vulnerable position in an environment of accountability, made worse by the introduction of Young People's Partnerships with their joined-up solutions approach. In this vulnerable position, even greater articulation is required of the purpose and outcomes of their particular organisational approach and how this fits in – or not – with the wider political agenda.

6.4 Whose agenda?

There was a growing belief, articulated by many of the Principal Youth Officers and full-time workers involved in the interviews, that the focus of their work was increasingly being directed towards the delivery of the government's social and economic agenda, which was forcing them to re-prioritise their work into areas that were more focused. These areas included increasing the numbers of young people staying in or returning to education, preparing young people for the world of work, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, contributing to improving health, and raising levels of political involvement. Failure to achieve appropriate outcomes within these areas of work on time and to a specified standard brought with it, it was believed, the threat of funding being withdrawn, with the work being directed elsewhere to more receptive organisations. It was claimed that driven by this approach, the maintained Youth Service was increasingly becoming involved in a number of different government-directed priorities, each having the potential to develop its own discrete purposes, principles, values, and outcomes. An example of this, given by a number of respondents, was the Youth Work and Schools

Partnership Project. Funded at a cost of £900,000 over three years by the Welsh Assembly Government (WYA 2001), its purpose was to encourage young people, through the use of '*youth work*' methods delivered within the school environment, to raise their *"levels of achievement, attendance and motivation by improving their attitude towards learning"* (WYA 2001:1).

Much of this type of work, it was claimed by significant numbers of respondents, was described as promoting a style of intervention which abused the fundamental nature of youth work both because it *"moved practice away from the traditional voluntary nature of the relationship between the Youth Service and young people and because it embraced prescriptive outcomes demanded by funding bodies"*. The approach was also described as being about maintaining the individual deficit model promoted with such enthusiasm by the previous political administration, an approach that shifts the blame from structural deficiencies within society onto individuals, or groups of young people, who continue too often to be identified as lacking in some particular attribute, particularly the attainment of the 'right qualification'.

Young people labelled in this way are often referred to the Youth Service by their school, a position that caused significant concern to many workers involved in the study because of its conflict with the core principles and values of the Youth Service because it removes the right of young people to have ownership of the relationship with the youth worker by being able to decide whether or not to take part. A study of the Monmouthshire Youth Service (Jones 2000) raised this issue when it was claimed:

> *"the process of referral in the Youth Work and Schools Partnership programme were particularly disturbing. The form filling and observations of behaviour raising questions around the rights of the individual, participation and confidentiality. How the procedure sits comfortably in the framework of values that inform youth work is one to explore"*
>
> Jones (2000:14)

For many of those with a strategic responsibility for the maintained Youth Service, issues such as this – and others, including the crime reduction and health agendas – were viewed

as opportunities both to increase their budgets and to become more central to policy construction and delivery. Many other Principal Youth Officers and full-time workers expressed grave concerns about how the Youth Service was changing, with little resistance, through being manoeuvred into government-prioritised areas of work by the promise of a more secure future for those organisations able to meet its precise requirements. In the context of the Youth Work and Schools Partnership initiative, the cost to the maintained Youth Service would be its commitment to the specific agenda of school inclusion and the resultant increase in formal accredited certification. Opportunities, it was claimed, to debate the *"often inappropriate involvement of the Youth Service in a process concerned with a formal school based education approach both in and out of school have been limited or non-existent"* (full-time workers focus group). It could be concluded from the information obtained during the investigation that the Youth Service had been pressurised into making changes to its purpose, principles, and values through its insecurity at being left behind by contemporary debates resulting in it being isolated from prioritised funding streams. The consequence of this for many involved in the investigation was summed up by a full-time worker who said:

> *"I have never felt so uncertain of my role than I do now. I have become fearful of what I do and how I do it because I don't want to be seen to be off message. The result of that could be open criticism from those who control the purse strings in the Assembly.*

Respondents also claimed that they were under pressure to agree a new understanding of Youth Service purpose that moved them away from 'traditional' youth work based in local Youth Centres. Many of those interviewed claimed that the Welsh Assembly Government was exerting pressure on the Youth Service to suspend what were described as its *'purist notions'* of the purpose of the Youth Service and adopt new positions which ensured greater alignment to the government's agenda. What was being suggested during the interviews by those managers with a strategic responsibility for the delivery of the Youth Service was the development of a setting within which the Youth Service would be aligned more formally with what was described as the *'traditional approach to education'*. Alternative Youth Service solutions driven by non-formal community-based

learning, with a young-people-first approach rather than a system-first approach, were described as being *"lost, misunderstood or ignored"*.

Two additional issues with the potential to distort a clear identity for the maintained Youth Service were also identified. The first was described as the mixed, confused, and contradictory messages emanating from representatives of the Welsh Assembly Government about the political vision and priorities for work with young people during their leisure time. A commonly held position was described by a regional/specialist manager focus group which agreed:

> *"If you look through the Entitlement document there are mixed messages there. For example, it has all the usual what you might call prescriptive ideology, competences, work-based skills, the ability to work and all this. But if you actually look through the document you can pick out 'empowering young people' 'self reliance' 'developing the ability of young people to make their own decisions'. Now you could argue that some of these words are a contradiction to the prescriptive side and my view is that the Welsh Assembly is giving mixed messages"*

This position was made more difficult by what was described as the lack of 'direction' and the lack of 'leadership' from those within the Welsh Assembly Government with the responsibility for supporting the translation of government policy for young people into effective practice in a way that reflected the partnership commitment of Extending Entitlement. A consistent theme identified by those interviewed was related to the lack of empathy shown by government officials for the history and culture of the maintained Youth Service and its current neglected condition which required a planned strategic development rather than what was described as *"obedience to an enforced agenda by individuals who had little understanding and knowledge of its current status"*. There was a belief that a new agenda for young people was being created which would not include the traditional approach of the maintained Youth Service but would be contained within a more formalised Young Peoples Partnership (YPP) which would reflect the Connexions approach in England (DfEE 2000). The second issue was described in a number of ways as the one-dimensional aspects being identified in a range of diverse government documents which were concerned to identify particular issues or youth-related problems,

which could be solved through additional government funding by a focused Youth Service approach. As a result, the Youth Service agenda was increasingly being asked, in the opinion of those involved in the investigation, to develop programmes that would result in, for example, *"young people returning to learning"*, *"improving citizenship"*, *"reducing crime and anti-social behaviour"*, *"improving health"*, and *"reducing their involvement in risky sexual practices"*. Increasing pressure, it was claimed, was being exerted on those working within the Youth Service to demonstrate its effectiveness in dealing with these issues and problems through the identification of quantifiable outcomes. A key theme identified from the data obtained during the investigation indicated that significant numbers of workers felt unable to resist these developments because of their feeling of isolation within what was described as a disparate organisation. As a result, the Youth Service was seen by those working within it to be *"in a position where it was unable to fight the wishes of the National Assembly"*. This resulted, it was claimed, in an organisation that was easily manoeuvred away from its core responsibilities into alternative methods of working designed to achieve outcomes of use to the agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government, even when these contradicted the agreed purposes, principles and values of the Youth Service.

There was, however, recognition by the Principal Youth Officer and many of the regional/specialist managers of the new political requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government and the impact these would have on the work of the maintained Youth Service. It was recognised that enhanced levels of external accountability requiring clearly stated purposes and outcomes against which the Youth Service could measure its performance would be required. Failing to do this was seen, by many of those involved in the investigation, to have negative repercussions in a number of fundamental ways. First, the Youth Service would continue to have limited access to government money. Second, the Youth Service would become isolated or diminished within the new Young People's Partnerships, resulting in its return to its voluntary roots or its re-designation by government as a new organisation with a specific purpose. What was required, in the opinion of several of the Youth Service managers involved in the investigation, was a collective agreement with their colleagues which would result in the maintained Youth

Service being viewed as *"clear, as an organisation, about what it is and what it is able to do to help young people achieve, and equally as important what does it do for the government"*. It was further agreed that this needed to be done *'with one voice'*. This was a key theme by respondents from all the occupational strands, who agreed that the important priority at the time of the investigation was to:

> *"keep a direction on what the Youth Service is about and not to be drawn into some of the other agendas driving those who work with young people"*
> Principal Youth Officer

The dangers of failing to do this were described as a loss of identity with the principles, values, skills, and community links of the Youth Service being drawn into a range of inappropriate locations where they faced the possibility of being subsumed by more powerful organisations. The link between schools and the Youth Service was given as an example, as was the use of youth workers within crime-reduction strategies. What was being expressed was not reluctance by those involved in the Youth Service to work with other organisations; rather, it was a concern to do so from a position of equality, not subservience or dependence. For the full-time workers interviewed, this clarity of identity would be clearly underpinned by an approach of a particular sort delivered in a way complementary but different to the style of education experienced in school. It was felt that the promotion of this Youth Service approach would, if promoted in the 'right' way, enhance the image of the Youth Service to others working with young people. As a full-time worker said:

> *"I think the priorities are to gain credibility with everybody, actually putting across what we are doing, why we are doing it and what the young people are getting out of it. It is as simple as that at the end of the day"*.

A need to embed a collective understanding of the 'essence' of the Youth Service by defining more appropriately what it 'does', how it 'does it', and what 'results' are planned and achieved was being suggested. From this position, it was claimed that the maintained Youth Service would be able to defend the integrity of its approach, as this was identified by its purposes, principles and values. There was a need to do this, in the opinion of those

being interviewed, because the identity of the maintained Youth Service in Wales was being altered by a range of external pressures for political reasons. It was also recognised that while this process was taking place, the organisation was in a vulnerable position because it was apparently unable to find sufficient common ground on which to state its case. This was exacerbated, in the opinion of a number of workers across the occupational strands, because the Youth Service had, through rapid and uncoordinated growth, arrived at a position where too many of its workers were unqualified and unable to defend its traditional approach and identity because *"they don't understand what made the Youth Service special in the first place"* (Principal Youth Officer).

6.5 Youth Service principles and values

For both those employed in the maintained Youth Service and those taking part in its activities, making the link in practice between its purposes (what it intends to do) and associated principles and values (the way it intends to do it) is critical in developing an organisation with a discrete way of working with young people. The articulated principles and values of the Youth Service describe a way of working with young people that is underpinned by a social education approach that recognises:

- the ability and inability of people to resolve problems and change themselves;
- the tension and distinction between empowering and controlling people;
- the worth, ability, and rights of people;
- the right to self-determination; and
- the importance of collective action and collaborative working relationships and the value of co-operation and conflict.

Arising from this approach are the assumptions that the worker has respect for the individual and values the pluralistic culture of society, resulting in the need to confront inequality and discrimination. The principles and values of the Youth Service also assume that the worker recognises both the influence of personal values on practice and the reality that they are, like those they work with, changing beings.

These is little evidence from either the analysis of the interviews or the questionnaire survey to suggest that there was a collective recognition and understanding between and across all the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service of its organisational principles and values. Those involved in the interviews who were employed as Principal Youth Officers were almost exclusively qualified and experienced as teachers in formal education settings (Appendix 8). [This is a phenomenon that would benefit from further investigation to determine its possible influence on the Youth Service.] From the information obtained, it is possible to suggest that the significant majority had not been given, during their change of employment from teacher to youth worker, any significant induction training or other in-service training that would have helped to fully embed the purposes and associated principles and values of the Youth Service into their practice or their management of other Youth Service staff. A commonly held view was summed up by a Principal Youth Officer who said:

> *"I first made the transfer from school to the Youth Service as a part-time worker. I found the work interesting and rewarding and I quickly transferred into it full-time. I don't recall there being any specific decision being taken for me to be re-trained or even for me to be made aware of the differences, if there were seen to be any, between my role in school and my role in the Youth Club. The same can be said about my promotion into a management role. There was some assumption that I was a natural manager in the same way as I was assumed to be a natural Youth worker.*

The majority of the Principal Youth Officers interviewed described in a variety of different ways a wish to move forward with the new agenda and the new way of working, even if this meant abandoning what was described as traditional ways of operating. Comment was made about the too often inadequate outcomes of traditional evening 'Youth Club' provision, which was described as being unable to change to meet the requirements of new policy and associated funding streams with its new requirements for the Youth Service.

> *"To be truthful I'm not that interested in what went on in the past. What I'm interested in and what my employer is interested in is what we are expected to do today. I don't think that it's useful to have our past thrown at us by the likes of those in the Agency. We have a great opportunity to go*

forward. There's more money, more staff and the Youth Service is mentioned more by the government than any other time I can remember. We need to get on with what's expected of us and not fight old battles and work to old agendas. I don't really care about Albemarle or Thompson on any other old reports. They've been, had their day and gone and we must move on with the times."

What appeared to be important to the managers and strategic thinkers of the maintained Youth Service in Wales was maximising the perceived opportunities being presented by the new political environment. Driven by this priority, there was, it appeared, little intention to do so from a practice position that recognised the accepted purposes, principles and values of their organisation. Rather, there was a sense that complying with the contemporary political agenda would develop and protect their work with young people in the community. To maximise the perceived opportunities, there was within this occupational strand a general acceptance that the maintained Youth Service was facing a period of fundamental change which would see it become more closely involved with schools and more closely involved in the delivery of more formal styles of learning underpinned by quantifiable measures of success. As a consequence, the Youth Service was described as increasingly becoming involved in providing low-level reproductions of formal education, in the sense that the outcome of some activities were planned to lead to an externally measured 'qualification'. This point was summed up during a /specialist managers focus group debate about the education role of the Youth Service with a generally agreed comment:

"the young people who we are in contact with don't normally have any qualifications from school or college. The only success they have in their lives comes from getting a certificate for the work they do with us. We give these for regular attendance for good behaviour or for taking more responsibility in the youth club. Most are linked to OCN, NVQ's, or Sports Award, particularly those that involve young people in First Aid or Food Hygiene."

Little evidence was identified during the investigation to suggest that this developing process was being implemented by full-time and part-time workers in a collective or cogent way to implement the non-formal education approach promoted within the

Curriculum Statement (Appendix 1). This finding is perhaps not unexpected given the evidence obtained during the questionnaire survey (Chapter 7), which indicated that almost half of the respondents were unqualified and, as a consequence, had not been given an opportunity to consider the philosophical position of their work. New methods of work were being passed on to a workforce, many of whom were unprepared either to provide arguments to safeguard the purposes, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service or to suggest how these could be used to make a contribution to the government's agenda and the needs of young people.

There was, however, a considerable amount of evidence to suggest that both full-time and part-time workers continued to be actively involved in delivering to young people what they described in a variety of ways as *'skills development'* or *'skills improvement'*. These goals were described as being achieved through the involvement of young people in a wide range of *'practical activities'* that young people *'liked to do'*, and included sporting activities, such as football, and creative activities, such as painting, drawing, pottery, and performing arts, including dance and drama. Most of these activities did not appear to be consciously linked to a learning process, although a number of both full-time and part-time youth workers described in some detail what were seen by them as *'the benefits to young people'* obtained as a result of their specific involvement in such activities. Many of these, if planned as outcomes for young people and if legitimised by some agreed and reputable verification programme, would be highly valued within the current political agenda. Detailed claims were made of young people's enhanced abilities to socialise as a result of improved communication skills, to operate more effectively as a member of a team event or activity, and to take greater ownership of personal and group decision making. A typical example given by a part-time worker claimed:

> *"you can see the changes to young people as they become part of what's happening with us. Young people who can't look you in the eye when you say hello quickly respond to a positive approach, some patience and the setting of fair grounds rules that they know are realistic. I've been a worker in this area for 9 years so I've seen young people grow up and become OK adults. Maybe not world beaters at anything but OK people*

who have the right sorts of useful experiences, challenges and enjoyment from what the Youth Service is able to encourage them to do"

From the evidence, it can be claimed that at all levels of the occupational strands there is a significant gap between strategic development, delivery, and any sort of understanding and knowledge of underpinning purposes, principles and values. The result is that work with young people is tenuous, with curriculum activities most often appearing to be being divorced from a robust strategic position because of what was identified as a reactive approach dependent on the particular interests, abilities, or inclinations of individual workers. This conclusion is supported by the review of a local authority Youth Service, where it was claimed:

> *"A lack of agreed purpose ... ... has caused confusion about the changing role of the Youth Service. This has resulted in an organisational failure to clearly articulate the educational role of the Youth Service and to inculcate this approach with a part-time workforce. Evidence was available to suggest that at unit level traditional practice dominated resulting in the continuation of historical practice that had in most instances become a habit"*
>
> WYA (1999e:11)

The continuation of this approach to working with young people could be seen to be as a result of part-time workers being tasked to work with young people, often without the benefit of training or the close management support of colleagues more able to offer appropriate guidance (Chapter 7).

Despite these negative conclusions about the inability of the maintained Youth Service to formally recognise the links between organisational purpose, principles and values, there were significant levels of evidence to identify an organisational culture with a number of dominant characteristics that reflect both its stated purposes, principles and values developed through what could be described as its intuitive or observed and copied practice. Throughout the transcripts of the interviews were descriptions of ways of working with young people concerned both with education in its broadest sense and by a commitment to the well-being of young people. Examples were given of how these young people were being encouraged, supported, and enabled by the efforts of all occupational

strands to take part in a wide range of activities within which they were able to develop social skills and build relationships through their involvement in what were described as traditional Youth Service activities. Central to these activities were opportunities for young people to come together to take part in a wide range of group activities including, for example, residential experiences, being part of a team activity, visiting other youth organisations, or socialising within a Youth Club environment. The most often stated reason for young people's involvement in these and an extensive list of other activities (Chapter 9) was the positive relationship between the adult worker and young people. The building and maintenance of this relationship was seen to be the key element in encouraging participation in new and untried activities including Morris Dancing, ice-skating, acting, public speaking, financial management, and peer-assessment programmes. Within these comments there was continual reference to enjoyment, free choice, the positive feelings workers had for the well-being of young people, and how important their role and responsibilities were within the communities they worked and often lived in.

There was evidence of contradiction and confusion from all occupational strands about what those who worked in the maintained Youth Service were supposed to be doing. During the interview process, the most common initial answer to the question 'what are the purposes of the Youth Service?' was 'it is educative, participative and empowering', which are the process elements of the Curriculum Statement (Appendix 1). The initial analysis of this answer suggested that this is what the respondent believed or understood. Further analysis revealed that in many instances, it was a prepared reply given in the hope that it would satisfy the questioner and, in doing so, it would divert attention from what appeared to be the reality of practice. That is, it was being driven by a widely agreed, but generally unspoken purpose, which was, in a general sense, to help young people make good use of their free time. The conclusions reached by a focus group of full-time workers confirmed this when they claimed:

> *"there are in our experience at least two Youth Services. The one we try to be for those outside of our work and the real one which we understand. For other people we try to use the jargon and talk about our work as being about education that can measure what young people do through their*

contact with us. For us we know that what we do is more important than that. We live in the communities that young people live in. We very often become their first adult friend; this gives us a big responsibility when they turn to us for help, support or guidance. Survival is often the main priority and with the help of the Youth Service many of them do learn how to survive and move on. We can't measure it so we have to pretend that we do something else. It's a load of bollocks really and a complete waste of time.

6.6 Summary

It was important for the researcher to note that during the interview process there was evidence to suggest that many of those involved could be described as *"procedural compliant"* (Bryman et al 1994:178). The researcher believed that some of the answers to the questions raised during the interview process were concerned to satisfy the interviewer rather than providing an honest answer as this was understood by the interviewee. This necessitated at times a more prolonged interview process concerned to develop a level of trust and co-operation as a means of identifying more effectively the collective understanding of the purposes, principles and values that make the maintained youth Service a discrete organisation.

The evidence examined in this chapter did, however, lead to the conclusion that there is neither a collective understanding of the purposes of the maintained Youth Service nor of its interrelated principles and values. What could be identified was some limited agreement of a number of broad domains within which those employed by the maintained Youth Service operated in an ad hoc way. A prime cause of this approach was identified as institutionalised financial insecurity which made the prospect of additional resources appealing, even though their acquisition often required the maintained Youth Service to move away from its stated philosophical position. Exacerbating this position was the significant numbers of unqualified workers involved in the interview process who were both unable to identify the purposes, principles and values of the organisation and prepared to obtain additional resources in the belief that it was in the best interest of young people. This led to the purposes of the maintained Youth Service being identified

as a flexible commodity that could be altered or changed to meet the particular requirements of those providing financial support.

The evidence also identified the differences in understanding between the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service which led to significant differences of interpretation of the purposes, principles and values of the organisation. This difference of understanding became magnified in practice as direct work with young people was delegated to part-time workers who were often inappropriately recruited, trained and managed to carry out their work in accordance with clear guidance and appropriate support. Claims were also made during the interviews by workers across the occupational strands that the Youth Service agenda was being increasingly directed by government policy, which was moving traditional ways of working with young people into more specific areas such as employment, crime reduction and improving health. This development had the potential to divert the work of the maintained Youth Service towards more politically orientated priorities.

Within this framework several separate groups could be identified. There are those workers who understand the purposes, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service but who are nevertheless drawn to politically driven work and as such can be described as making a response to:

> *"an organisational innovation in which the technical requirements of the innovation... are broadly adhered to, but where there are substantial reservations about its efficacy and only partial commitment to it, so that there is a tendency for the procedures associated with the innovation to be adhered to with less than a total commitment to its aims"*
>
> Bryman et al (1994:178).

There are also those who appear to be content to embrace politically driven or resource driven work with young people even if doing so brings them into conflict with the purposes, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service. It can be concluded that the reason for this is because of a lack of knowledge and understanding of the organisations discrete characteristics. There is a third group, of often marginalised

workers, who are attempting to maintain a level of integrity by working with young people in a way that maintains core principles and values. It can be further concluded that the tensions between these groups has the potential to effect the quality of work being delivered to young people and the capacity to diminish the ability of the maintained Youth Service to meet the requirements of appropriate government policy.

CHAPTER 7

Is the maintained Youth Service in Wales appropriately resourced?

7.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out, through the use of the research methods described previously (Chapter 2), to establish the levels of human, financial and material resources available to the maintained Youth Service to deliver a curriculum which reflects its purpose, principles and values and enables it to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of relevant government policy. In order to accomplish this objective in a way that ensures reliability and validity, benchmarks will be identified that set standards against which a decision can be reached. This task is made possible because during the early optimism created by the Extending Entitlement (NAW 2000a) debate, the maintained Youth Service was asked, through the Principal Youth Officers' group, to 'dream the dream' and estimate the cost of delivering a model Youth Service capable of meeting the role defined for it (Chapter 2). To develop this model, a group representing the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Wales Youth Agency (WYA) and local authority Principal Youth Officers was brought together supported by Welsh Assembly Government officials to form a New Burdens group, who were asked by the new government in Wales to:

> *"attempt to quantify additional levels of financial provision for local government which would improve the present services available to young people in line with the Extending Entitlement report"*
>
> (NAW 2000d:1)

The New Burdens group made the decision to base their conclusions and recommendations on an analysis of four local authority Youth Services in Wales. These were selected to represent both rural and urban areas and a geographical range that covered north Wales, west Wales and south Wales and included Caerphilly, Conwy, Pembrokeshire and Swansea. The results from these authorities were extrapolated to a

national total by means of an indicative distribution formula used for the Children and Youth Partnership fund and concluded that *"the costs of a complete and comprehensive Youth Service which would cover both universal services to young people and targeted youth work would require in the region of £100 million per year"* (NAW 2000d:3).

The planned expenditure for the maintained Youth Service in the financial year 1999-2000 was £14.2 million, which left a shortfall of £85.8 million. Local authority expenditure on the Youth Service had peaked, in 1999-2000 terms, at £19.8 million in 1992-93 under the Conservative administration (Table 1), which suggested that a significant political commitment would have to be made by the new National Assembly for Wales to enable it reach the funding levels identified by the modelling exercise.

Table 1 Local Authority expenditure on the Youth Service (£ million) funded from LEA budgets

	1990-91	**1991-92**	**1992-93**	**1993-94**	**1994-95**	**1995-96**	**1996-97**	**1997-98**	**1998-99**	**1999-00**
Net Revenue	12.0	13.3	13.7	12.8	11.9	8.8	8.8	11.3	12.1	
Capital	0.9	1.2	2.9	1.8	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.3	1.5	
Total	12.9	14.5	16.5	14.7	12.4	9.4	9.0	11.6	13.6	14.2
Real Terms 1999-2000 prices										
Net Revenue	15.8	16.5	16.4	15.0	13.7	9.8	9.6	11.9	12.4	
Capital	1.2	1.5	3.4	2.1	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.3	1.5	
Total	**17.0**	**18.0**	**19.8**	**17.2**	**14.3**	**10.5**	**9.8**	**12.2**	**13.9**	**14.2**

Figures produced by the NAW (2000e)

It was recognised by the New Burdens group that this significant level of financial support would not be made available and that more realistic recommendations would have to be made. Priorities would therefore need to be determined. The first priority would be to increase the numbers of full-time workers by 250, at a cost of £0.98 million in the first year 2001-02, £3.75 million in the second year 2002-03 and £5.625 million in the third year 2003-04. This increase would be in recognition of both the low numbers of qualified workers in Wales, which was estimated as about 150, and the increasing ratio between

them and their part-time colleagues. This priority was supported by the findings of Estyn which claimed:

> *"There remains an over dependence on part-time staff in the Youth Service. Many authorities continue to lack staff ...who can engage in the development of a strategy, establish partnerships, manage quality and develop curriculum and other areas of work"*
>
> (Estyn 1999b:18)

The second priority was the refurbishment and maintenance of buildings. There was unanimous recognition by the New Burdens group of the dire condition of a large number of buildings used by the Youth Service throughout Wales. Forty-four buildings had been identified as being used within the four local authorities involved in the modelling. From this figure, it was estimated that throughout Wales there were more than 200 buildings used by the maintained Youth Service. These buildings, it was claimed, were in a:

> *"poor condition and getting progressively worse. The vast majority were also identified as lacking access for the disabled and raise serious health and safety concerns."*
>
> (HMSO 2000a:49)

It was calculated by the New Burdens Group that the cost of refurbishing all maintained Youth Service building in Wales would be approximately £20 million. No financial allocation was made to develop new facilities in areas where none existed. The third priority was the provision of minibuses, mobile units, IT facilities and information materials for young people. Supporting these allocations would be a corporate budget designed to develop, support and maintain a strategy embracing all services for young people. This priority would cost £1.3 million in 2001-02, £1.76 million in 2002-03 and £1.76 million in 2003-04, an annual expenditure for a full financial year of £80,000 per local authority. Driven by these priorities, the total requirement for new money by the maintained Youth Service was identified as £5.238 million for 2001-02, £10.510 million for 2002-03 and £14.385 million for 2003-04.

Table 2 Summary of proposed levels of additional funding for the maintained Youth Service (£ million)

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Corporate role	1.3	1.76	1.76
Youth Service:			
Qualified full-time workers	0.938	3.75	5.625
Refurbishment of buildings	2.0	4.0	6.0
Other	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total Youth Service Expenditure	3.98	8.75	12.625
Overall total	**5.238**	**10.510**	**14.385**

NAW (2000d)

Despite this significant reduction from the original estimates, the proposals of the New Burdens Group did not meet with the approval of the National Assembly for Wales, which made further cuts to its proposals and a final decision was taken to reduce the allocation of new money even further to £2 million for 2001-02, £3.7 million for 2002-03 and £4.75 million for 2003-04. Thus, despite the optimism for a new, more positive era for the work of the maintained Youth Service – created by the rhetoric of recently appointed politicians – sufficient levels of resources to support a regeneration process were not made available. The allocation of the new money is identified by local authority in Table 3.

Table 3 New Burdens allocation for the maintained Youth Service

a) Local Authority	b) Grant £ 2001-2	c) Young People 11-25	d) Additional Spend per head per year 2001-02	e) Grant £ 2002-3	f) Grant £ 2003-4
Anglesey	42,326	11,600	£3.64	79,362	100,525
Gwynedd	76,991	21,900	£3.51	144,359	182,854
Conwy	66,201	17,800	£3.72	124,127	157,227
Denbighshire	55,964	16,200	£3.45	104,933	132,915
Flintshire	91,791	27,100	£3.39	172,108	218,003
Wrexham	83,659	24,400	£3.43	156,861	198,690
Powys	72,881	20,200	£3.61	136,651	173,091
Ceredigion	54,575	17,500	£3.12	102,329	129,616
Pembrokeshire	76,129	19,300	£3.94	142,742	180,806
Carmarthenshire	106,551	30,500	£3.49	199,784	253,059
Swansea	162,447	44,500	£3.65	304,588	385,811
Neath/Port Talbot	95,109	24,100	£3.95	178,330	225,884
Bridgend	85,196	23,000	£3.70	159,742	202,339
Vale	80,744	21,800	£3.70	151,395	191,766
Rhondda Cynon Taff	174,208	45,400	£3.84	326,640	413,743
Merthyr Tydfil	43,067	10,700	£4.02	80,749	102,282
Caerphilly	125,713	32,300	£3.89	235,712	298,568
Blaenau Gwent	51,640	13,000	£3.97	96,825	122,644
Torfaen	63,258	16,800	£3.77	118,608	150,236
Monmouthshire	48,203	13,900	£3.47	90,380	114,481
Newport	97,885	26,400	£3.70	183,535	232,477
Cardiff	245,461	73,200	£3.35	460,239	582,969
Total £	**2,000,000**			**3,750,000**	**4,750,00**

Figures contained in columns a. b. e and f were calculated using information provided by the Youth Policy Team of the National Assembly for Wales .NAW (2001d)

The following sections of this chapter will analyse a range of information to reach a conclusion about the three priorities agreed during the New Burdens working party discussions. First, it will identify the characteristics of the staff who work across the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service. Second, it will establish the availability and suitability of the buildings within which the maintained Youth Service makes its main contact with young people. Third, it will determine the levels of resources available to Youth Service staff to deliver an appropriate curriculum.

7.2 The characteristics of the staff of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

The Youth Service in Wales was, at least for part of the time of this investigation, considered an *"information-free zone"* with little accurate data available about its expenditure or those working within it (WYA 1999b:2). An attempt had been made by the Wales Youth Agency to determine – for the period 1999-2000 – a range of information related to the maintained Youth Service, including the staffing levels of those employed within it. The data obtained was, however, incomplete, with two local authorities, Ceredigion and Ynys Mon, failing to provide any information. Concern was also expressed by both the Wales Youth Agency and the respondents about the reliability and validity of the information being provided. In particular, questions were raised about whether respondents were measuring specific elements of their organisation in similar ways. This applied, for example, to the use of the term qualified when related to managers, full-time workers and part-time workers. Powys, for example, claimed to have 9.6 management-qualified workers but there was no analysis possible of what this actually meant: were they, for example, workers with a management qualification or were they qualified youth workers with a management responsibility? If they were the latter, what level of qualification did they have? In an attempt to provide evidence to support that obtained by the Wales Youth Agency and, as a consequence, provide a more stable foundation on which to base this investigation, the decision was taken to carry out a questionnaire survey, the results of which would be of use in answering the research question (Chapter 1). Information obtained from the 608 responses to the questionnaire survey (Chapter 2) provided the main source for developing the following profile of the staff of the maintained Youth Service in Wales.

7.2.1 Gender, age and experience

Respondents to the questionnaire survey were unequally divided by gender, with males making up 41% (249) and females 59% (359) of the respondents. Further analysis of the results indicate that of the 159 workers who identified themselves as working full time, 58.% (92) were male and 42% (67) were female. Of the 443 part-time workers, 37% (162)

were male and 63% (281) were female. The results reveal that the part-time workforce is predominantly female while the full-time workforce is predominantly male.

These results reflect an historical position within which males have outnumbered females within the full-time occupational strand, including management, while females have outnumbered males within the part-time occupational strand. However, the results show a marked change since Survey 13 (HMSO 1984) was published. Of the 165 full-time workers identified at that time, 89% (147) were male and only 11% (18) were female. Statistics were not available for the gender balance of part-time workers but comments were made about the difficulties in finding appropriate numbers of male part-time workers.

Table 4 Ages of respondents

Males	Number	%	Females	Number	%
18-25 years old	53	9%	18-25 years old	87	14%
26-35 years old	79	13%	26-35 years old	102	17%
35-45 years old	68	11%	35-45 years old	104	17%
46-60 years old	45	7%	46-60 years old	64	11%
Over 60 years old	4	.65%	Over 60 years old	2	.3%
Total	**249**	**41%**	**Total**	**359**	**59%**

During the period of the survey, the majority of those working in the maintained Youth Service 53% (321) were under the age of 35. Of these, 22% (132) were male and 31% (189) were female. The largest single group, 17% (104), were female workers between the ages of 35-45 years. The largest single group of male workers, 13% (79), was aged between 26-35 years. Only .95% (6) of respondents were over the age of 60. Of these, 0.65% (4) were male and 0.3% (2) were female. When the age profile is measured against the number of years employed in the maintained Youth Service, the results describe an organisation that is young in terms of age and inexperienced in the number of years individuals have been employed. Of the 65% (398) workers employed for between 1-4 years, 31% (123) were between the ages of 18-25 and 37% (149) were aged between 26-35. Eight respondents indicated they had been employed for less than one year. It is interesting to note that 23% (140) of the respondents were themselves of Youth Service

age which indicates a major shift away from previous recent practice, when those employed within the Youth Service were expected to be at least 23 years of age at the time they completed their full-time training programme (WYA 1996). The reason for this minimum age requirement was to ensure that those working with young people had some degree of life experience that could be brought to their work with young people.

Table 5 Years employed in the Youth Service

Years employed	Number	%	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-60	Over 60
1-4 years	398	65%	123	149	93	33	nil
5-10 years	87	14%	9	26	15	37	nil
11-15 years	45	7%	nil	6	22	14	3
over 15 years	70	11%	nil	nil	42	25	3
Total	**600**	**98%**	**132**	**181**	**172**	**109**	**6**

The significant majority (65%, 398) of those who responded to the questionnaire survey had been employed in the maintained Youth Service for between one and four years. Further analysis of these figures show that of the 159 full-time workers involved in the questionnaire survey, 68.6% (109) had been employed for between 1-4 years, 10.5% (17) for between 5-10 years, 5.7% (9) for between 11-15 years and 15.2% (24) for over 15 years. This was not an unexpected result given the increase in paid employment opportunities within the maintained Youth Service following the political changes in the UK and Wales following the election of New Labour in 1997 which led to increased budgets for work with young people and thus to enhanced employment opportunities.

The results describe an inexperienced workforce, which has become part of an organisation moving through a period of great change driven by a political agenda emanating from the Welsh Assembly Government. Evidence will be sought elsewhere to determine if these new workers have been appropriately prepared, through approved training programmes and appropriate induction programmes, to deliver the new vision of youth work promoted by government. Of particular interest will be the results related to

the qualified status of respondents measured against both local[1] and national[2] qualifying levels.

7.2.2 Hours worked

The maintained Youth Service in Wales is overwhelmingly a part-time organisation, with 74.8% of its staff working less than 37 hours per week. The majority of workers, 53.6% (324), work less than 14 hours per week, with 42.4% (258) working less than 10 hours per week. The relationship of this information with the levels of qualifications described in Fig.1 and the length of time employed described in Table 5 provides evidence to suggest that the maintained Youth Service may not have an appropriate infrastructure to deliver an effective service in the sense of its ability to maintain its organisational identity, as this is determined by a collective understanding of purpose and values.

The identification of this position places a significant responsibility on those responsible for managing the maintained Youth Service to ensure:

- that appropriate systems for the induction of new youth workers are available which contribute to the embedding of a collective understanding of maintained Youth Service purpose, principles, values and outcomes shared across the occupational strands of the organisation;
- the availability of a qualifications pathway and in-service training programmes designed to offer further support both to workers already employed and to those entering the service; and
- that support mechanisms are available to give guidance, particularly to the part-time workforce, on the development of practice which meets the possibly competing requirements of government policy and the needs of young people.

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[1] Foundation Level within the Coherent Route of Training for Youth and Community Workers, Professionally Endorsed by the Education and Training Standards Committee

[2] Diploma of Higher Education, Professionally Endorsed by the Education and Training Standards Committee, or Qualified Teacher before 1988

Table 6 Number of hours worked by individual respondents per week

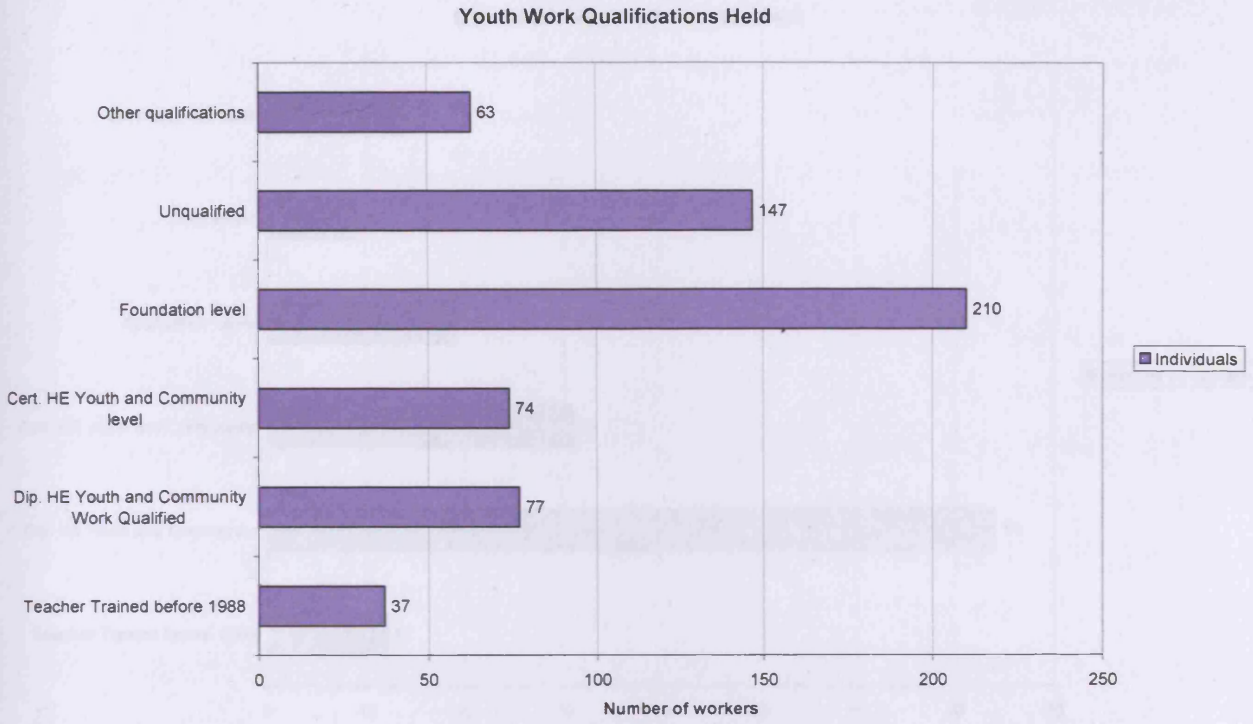
No. Hours per Week	Number	%
Less than 5 hours	115	18.9%
5-9 hours	143	23.5%
10-14 hours	66	10.9%
15-19 hours	58	9.5%
20-24 hours	27	4.4%
25-36 hours	34	5.6%
Full time (37 hours)	159	26.1%
Total	**602**	**99%**

However, the figures contained in Fig.4 provide evidence to suggest that support to youth workers through their involvement in relevant in-service training programmes is of a minimal nature and often unrelated to inducting the significant numbers of new workers into the non-formal community-based learning process advocated in much Youth Service documentation.

7.2.3 Youth work qualifications and training

The results of this section are measured against both the national and local qualifying standard for employment in the Youth Service in Wales. National recognition is a Diploma in Youth and Community Work, professionally endorsed by the Education and Training Standards Committee (ETS), an appropriate degree programme professionally endorsed by the ETS, or an approved teaching qualification obtained before 1988. Obtaining one or more of these qualifications results in recognition by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), which is the body responsible for the pay and conditions of those working in the Youth Service in Wales, England and Northern Ireland. Local recognition is a Foundation Qualification, which in Wales is two agreed modules of the first year of the Diploma in Youth and Community Work programme, professionally endorsed by the ETS. Other qualifications are offered by some local authorities, including an Open College Network (OCN) qualification designed to meet 'local need'. These latter qualifications are not normally professionally endorsed by the ETS or recognised by the JNC.

Fig.1 Youth work training and qualifications – all respondents



Seventy-seven (12.7%) of the respondents were recognised as nationally qualified Youth and Community Workers having successfully attained the Diploma in Youth and Community Work. This figure rises to 18.9% (111) when the pre-1988 teacher qualification is included. The qualification designated as Foundation level identifies the holder as a locally qualified youth and community worker, and was held by 34.6% (210) respondents. Of the full-time and part-time respondents, 24.2% (147) were unqualified and 10.4% (63) of workers indicated that they held other qualifications.

situation within which the quality of work with young people could be diminished. Also of significant concern is the identification of 11.9% (19) of workers who were qualified at Foundation level but were employed as full-time youth workers. Another possible contributor to the delivery of a low-quality service can be identified by the results of the survey, which indicate that 5.7% (9) of respondents hold no recognised youth work qualification at all to support their full-time practice, with 8.8% (14) claiming to hold other qualifications. In total, the results identify a position where 45.9% (73) of respondents employed as full-time youth workers in the maintained Youth Service do not hold a relevant youth-work qualification. This situation compares unfavourably to the position in England, where 90% of all full-time staff are qualified, with 68 authorities reporting that all their full-time staff hold the nationally recognised qualification and a further 26 authorities reporting more than 90% were qualified National Youth Agency (NYA) (1998). The current qualification level of 54.1% for full-time workers in Wales also compares unfavourably with the position in 1984, when it was recorded that 88% of full-time workers were qualified, 20% as youth workers and 68% as teachers (Welsh Office 1984).

Fig. 3 Qualifications of the part-time youth workers who responded to the questionnaire

Respondents employed part time included 5.6% (25) who were trained as teachers prior to 1988 and, as such, hold nationally recognised status. Three (0.67%) workers held the Diploma in Youth and Community Work, 6.2% (28) held the Cert. HE and 39.6% (178) of respondents held the Foundation qualification, which is recognised as the minimum qualification for part-time youth workers. What should be of some concern to the maintained Youth Service are the high numbers of workers, 47.9% (215), who were either unqualified or who held a wide variety of 'other qualifications' (Fig.3). The consequence is a high probability that the direction of the work of this occupational strand is determined more through personal choice than a commitment to stated organisational purpose.

Sixty-six youth workers, 17 full time and 49 part time, recorded 49 different qualifications within the section concerned to detail qualifications other than those recognised by the JNC, which included Bachelor of Education (BEd), Bachelor of Arts (BA Divinity), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Master of Science (MSc Environment), Higher National Diploma (HND) Business/Finance, Sports Leadership, Play Management, BTec Social Care, and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Play Work. Also listed were a wide range of qualifications that might be considered appropriate as supplements to recognised Youth and Community Work qualifications, including Sports Leadership, Pacific Institute Training, Mountain Leadership, Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) Coach, Basic Skills Tutor, Senior Winter Sports Leader, Diploma in Counselling, A-level Art, Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Health and Safety, and Diploma in Welfare and Play Management. Other, perhaps less obvious, qualifications for Youth and Community Work practice included WRU referee, Senior Member Training qualification, Hair and Beauty, National Nursery Examination Board (NNEB) and Food Hygiene. It should be of significant concern to the managers of the maintained Youth Service that large numbers of adults, many of whom are unsupervised during their normal working times with young people, were ill prepared – through not undertaking a recognised qualifying training programme – to carry out their responsibilities in an informed way (Figs. 1/2/3/4). This unsatisfactory and potentially dangerous position is exacerbated by the limited opportunities many youth workers have to undertake appropriate in-service training (Fig.

4). The analysis of the information obtained from the questionnaire survey provides evidence which identifies the maintained Youth Service as an organisation developing at a rate that appears to be out of control. The consequences have the potential to cause significant harm to the maintained Youth Service, as it requires the complexities of effective youth work practice to be delivered by growing numbers of unqualified and inexperienced workers (see also Table 5 and Figs. 2/3). If it takes a short-term approach and employs workers without fully preparing them through appropriate training and support, the maintained Youth Service takes the risk of failing to promote a collective understanding of its organisational purpose, principles and values. It also faces the further consequence of failing to interpret the requirements of government and to understand and respond to the needs of young people.

7.2.4 Access to in-service training

This question was asked within the survey to determine the support offered to staff during their employment as either full or part-time workers. This in-service training element was considered to be in addition to the qualifying training undertaken by individual workers, and would be designed to improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes as a means of ensuring the more effective delivery of their roles within the maintained Youth Service.

Fig. 4 Youth work training in-service

The in-service training programme for the maintained Youth Service identified through the responses of the questionnaire survey does not describe an organisation committed to providing support to its workforce to enable it meet the new agenda described in Extending Entitlement. Neither does it appear to recognise the changes taking place within the maintained Youth Service as a result of increased government funding. These changes include the rapid increase in the workforce, the widening of the full-time to part-time staff ratios, the employment of unqualified workers to key full-time and part-time posts and the increase in specialist focused provision.

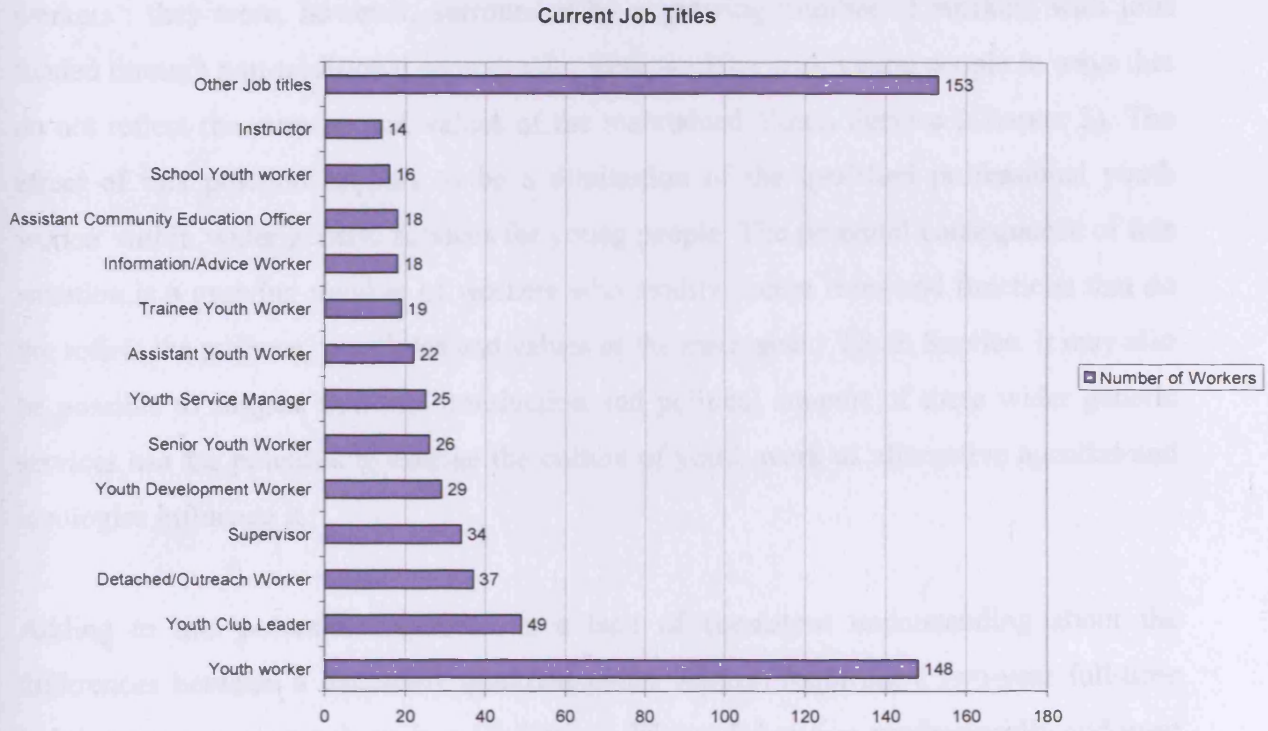
Contained in the responses is a conservative approach to what could be interpreted as a 'safe working practice' agenda, concerned with health and safety and child protection, either as specific subjects or linked to training related to first aid and minibus use. Apart from this safety agenda, there is little evidence of a systematic approach to the in-service training of workers to prepare them for or further support them in their work with young people in a way that reflects the purposes and values of the maintained Youth Service. There is no intent, in this conclusion, to devalue the importance of providing a safe environment for young people; there is a need, however, to consider other issues relevant to the delivery of a contemporary, maintained Youth Service curriculum which reflects government policy and the needs of young people. Given the high numbers of unqualified and inexperienced workers within the maintained Youth Service (Fig. 3) there was a pre-study expectation by the researcher that an appropriate introduction for new workers into the Youth Service would have been a priority. However, there was little evidence available from the analysis of the questionnaire results to suggest that significant numbers of new workers – either full or part-time – were being appropriately inducted into the Youth Service and as a result it appeared that they were often abandoned to work with young people without the benefit of exploring, challenging and understanding the purpose or the value base of youth work or the political, economic and social context within which it operates.

The maintained Youth Service has been identified through the evidence provided by the questionnaire survey as having an inexperienced workforce (Tables 4/5) with a significant

number of part-time (48%, 215) and full-time worker respondents (46%, 73) being unqualified to the agreed national or local standard. The evidence from the questionnaire survey also indicates that this deficiency is not redressed by robust induction or relevant in-service training programmes. This evidence does not support the view that the work of the Youth Service is *"skilled educational work"* with those involved in it needing to be *"appropriately trained"* (UK Youth work Alliance 1996:10).

7.2.5 Job titles

Fig. 5 Current job title



The results arising from the analysis of this section of the questionnaire highlight the difficulty the Youth Service has in developing a clearly recognised identity through the construction of clear boundaries assisted by well-defined and unambiguous job titles. If job titles are a prime means by which organisations are able to demonstrate their purpose, the use of 45 separate job titles by the respondents of the questionnaire causes uncertainty and confusion about the nature of youth work. Thirteen job titles identified were shared

between 71.85% (437) of workers. However, 25.16% (153) workers shared 32 different job titles. Many of these job titles were easily recognised as having a link to the maintained Youth Service, including, for example, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Worker, Warden, Youth Action Worker, and Youth Project Tutor. Other job titles had links with the Youth Service that were less easy to recognise, such as Summit Co-ordinator, Professional Development and Network Co-ordinator, Mentoring Project Worker, Extending Entitlement Partnership Development Officer, Youth Access Initiative Worker, Quality Assurance Worker, Young Persons Substance Misuse Worker, Support Worker, and Activity Tutor. The results describe a reflection of the current funding streams. There was a core of youth workers who were generally described as 'youth workers': they were, however, surrounded by a growing number of workers with jobs funded through non-traditional sources who were working with young people in ways that do not reflect the purpose and values of the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3). The effect of this position appears to be a diminution of the qualified professional youth worker within wider generic services for young people. The potential consequence of this situation is a growing number of workers who readily accept roles and functions that do not reflect the purpose, principles and values of the maintained Youth Service. It may also be possible to suggest that the introduction and political support of these wider generic services has the potential to change the culture of youth work as alternative agendas and ideologies influence it.

Adding to this potential confusion is a lack of consistent understanding about the differences between a nationally qualified youth worker, requiring a two-year full-time training programme resulting in a Diploma in Higher Education professionally endorsed by the ETS, and a locally qualified youth worker, needing to complete two identified modules from the first year programme of the Diploma (this equates to 200 hours training out of the first year total of 1,200 hours). Both full-time and part-time workers currently use the job title 'Youth Worker' to identify their occupation. This has become a position with the ability to cause further confusion in other professionals working with young people, from disciplines such as teaching, social work, police or careers, who often fail to recognise or acknowledge the part-time nature of the maintained Youth Service.

The other job titles identified through the questionnaire included Basic Skills Tutor, Fundraiser, Young Mums' Project Co-ordinator, Youth Forum Co-ordinator, Volunteer Co-ordinator and Instructor, which appear to describe specific activities contained within the framework of the Youth Service rather than being ends in themselves. These types of job titles add further weight to the argument that the Youth Service is having focused activities bolted on to it, resourced from non-traditional sources such as social services, police or Youth Offending Teams, with the potential to further distort Youth Service practice. This position is exacerbated by the use of a significant number of maintained Youth Service job titles with little connection to the general concept of youth work.

The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire survey would indicate that those working or claiming to work within the maintained Youth Service as youth workers, in the sense that their work is driven by a collectively understood purpose, cannot in all instances be easily identified.

7.2.6 Location

Information on the location of respondents was obtained to ensure that an appropriate balance was achieved between urban, rural and old industrial environments, the latter definition applying to those youth workers located in the old coal and steel producing areas. There is no suggestion that the results were a representative sample of youth workers employed within the three defined areas. Rather it was an attempt to ensure that issues of practice related to geographical location and associated demographic factors, such as rural isolation or economic disadvantage, were included within the questionnaire survey.

Table 7 Location of respondents

Location	Number	%
Urban	305	50.2%
Rural	200	32.8%
Old Industrial	103	16.9%
Total	**608**	**100.0%**

7.3 Part-time youth workers – their 'proper' jobs

This section was concerned to identify the types of employment and qualifications held by part-time workers outside of their employment with the maintained Youth Service. This information would be used to make judgements on:

1. the possibility of conflicts between a dominant maintained Youth Service culture and the dominant cultures of other organisations within which part-time youth workers are possibly employed full time. The consequence of any such conflict could be the diminution of a 'Youth Service' approach underpinned by a commitment to its agreed purpose, principles and values, and a potential reduction in the effectiveness of the Youth Service to maintain its organisational integrity and to meet the requirements of government and the needs of young people; and
2. the priority given to effectively induct the wide range of workers from a wide range of occupational backgrounds into a dominant maintained Youth Service culture. This will be correlated against the stated levels of Induction Training identified in Fig. 4.

Of the 608 youth workers who completed the questionnaire, 159 were full-time workers within the maintained Youth Service and were not required to complete this section of the questionnaire.

443 respondents had the opportunity to complete this section of the questionnaire and 34.7% (154) gave details of their employment outside of the maintained Youth Service. Of these, 33.7% (52) were female and 66.3% (102) were male. Of the respondents who were supposed to complete this section of the questionnaire survey, 65.7% (295) did not do so; 84.4% (249) of these were female respondents, and the remaining 13.6% (40) incomplete forms were from male respondents. An opportunity was missed to determine if those who did not complete this section of the questionnaire were unemployed. A small number of female respondents, 5 (.82%), did indicate that they were full-time mothers. No other mention was made of unpaid employment, neither was there any comment that would allow for a calculation relating to the numbers of full-time students involved in the survey.

Table 8 Main employment if not youth work

Main Occupation	Number	%
Teachers	30	19.5%
Administration Workers	27	17.5%
Education Welfare Officers	20	13.0%
Classroom Assistants	11	7.1%
Adult Education Workers	7	4.5%
Carers	7	4.5%
Roofers	6	3.9%
Learning Support Assistants	6	3.9%
Nurses	6	3.9%
Housing Workers	6	3.9%
Civil Servants	5	3.2%
Full-Time Mothers	5	3.2%
Tesco Workers	4	2.6%
Printers	4	2.6%
Caretakers	4	2.6%
Mechanics	3	1.9%
Assistant Town Clerks	3	1.9%
Total	**154**	**100%**

An analysis of the results identified that the main occupation of the largest group of part-time workers (87) was linked to formal school-based education, 30 (20.1%) as teachers, 20 (14%) as Education Welfare Officers, 11 (7.7%) as Classroom Assistants and 6 (4.2%) as Learning Support Assistants. There were also 20 (14.0%) Education Welfare Officers and 7 (4.9%) Adult Education Workers. This group equates to 64.9% of those who responded to this section of the questionnaire, which raises a question about the level of influence the formal education culture might have on the non-formal education focus of the maintained Youth Service. This investigation did not set out to provide an answer to this question, although its importance was recognised as a means of discovering if the maintained Youth Service had a dominant organisational culture or if it was driven by a number of sub-cultures as a consequence of both its predominance of part-time employed workers and its failure appropriately to induct its staff. It may be useful in the future to carry out research into this phenomenon.

Table 9 Other employment qualifications (first and second choices)

Other Employment Qualifications	Number	% of respondents	Number	% of respondents
	First choice		Second choice	
O levels/GCSE	32	20.7%	10	10%
Bed	13	8.4%	5	5%
Teachers Certificate	12	7.8%		
City & Guilds	12	7.8%		
Health & Safety	10	6.5%	7	7%
BSc	10	6.5%	2	2%
BA	6	3.9%	6	6%
A level	5	3.2%	16	16%
Dip. S.W.	5	3.2%		
NNEB	4	2.6%		
Catering	3	1.9%		
BTEC Childcare	3	1.9%	6	6%
PGCE			6	6%
Typing			6	6%
Diploma in Welfare Studies			3	3%
Post-Grad Cert. in Management			3	3%
RSA/IBT2			2	2%
Others	25	16.2%	28	28%
Total	**154**	**100%**	**100**	**100%**

The results of this section of the questionnaire survey did not provide any conclusive evidence to suggest that workers employed part-time in the maintained Youth Service were bringing from their full-time employment a range of qualifications relevant to their work with young people. This finding would suggest that they were, in general, reliant on the in-service training and support from their local authority employer for their work within the maintained Youth Service. What was of interest, however, was the decision by 65.7% (295) of the part-time workers not to identify either their employment or their qualifications. This information is likely to exist within the employing local authority but given the historical difficulty the Youth Service has had in producing reliable and valid information related to a wide range of organisational criteria (including finance, and numbers and levels of qualified workers), it is possible to hypothesise that an accurate

profile, within individual local authorities, of employment and qualification types and levels does not exist. If this is the position, no accurate profile can be constructed of the part-time workers across Wales. Without this information, it will not be possible to develop and implement an effective strategic plan that ensures those working within the maintained Youth Service understand what its purpose and values are and how, through the use of these, an appropriate curriculum can be developed that meets the requirements of government and the needs of young people. Developing a more accurate picture of the characteristics of the part-time workforce could be an area of investigation in its own right.

Table 10 Number of years employed outside of the Youth Service

No Respondents	Number of Years Employed
21	Under 1 year
34	1-3 Years
64	4-10 years
9	10-15 years
15	Over 15 years

The results of the questionnaire survey describe the maintained Youth Service as an organisation with structural deficiencies that preclude it from making a fully effective contribution to either the requirements of government policy or the needs of young people. Primarily, this position is as a result of the recent expansion of the numbers of new youth workers recruited following new government initiatives, and the apparent failure to support these to an agreed level through appropriate initial and in-service training.

Too high a percentage of maintained Youth Service youth workers employed both full time and part time have been identified as unqualified or trained at too low a level for the post that they occupy. As a consequence, the opportunity to discover the philosophical position of the Youth Service and its links to the requirements of government policy and the needs of young people is not available to significant numbers of youth workers, either before or during their employment. The result is an organisation that does not have a

collective understanding of its organisational purpose and its equally relevant principles and values. This position not only has the potential to affect the quality of work with young people, it also has the propensity to affect the way the maintained Youth Service is perceived by other organisations and individuals working with young people.

The combination of a young, inexperienced, unqualified and predominantly part-time workforce removes in a significant way the ability of the maintained Youth Service to be an effective partner to other organisations working with young people. Partnership working, a prerequisite of government as a method of ensuring the elimination of territoriality, duplication and uncertainty about role boundaries, as well as providing more joined-up services for young people, is faced with a number of significant difficulties in the environment described by this section of the questionnaire results. Firstly, as a predominantly part-time service, many workers do not have the opportunity to make contact with other organisations working with young people in a way that encourages partnership at a local delivery level. This position is exacerbated, when they do make contact, by a weak or non-existent understanding of the role of the Youth Service shared across occupational strands and between different local authority Youth Services.

7.4 The financial position

The figures contained in Table 11 are supplied by the finance departments of Local Authorities to the Welsh Assembly Government, who publish them as RO1 (Revenue Outturn) Youth Service line of spending.

Table 11: Youth service as a percentage of total education, by unitary authority, 2000-01 & 2001-02 and spend per head of population

	Outturn							
	2000-01				2001-02			
Unitary Authority	Youth service £ thousands	YS as % of education	Population 11-25	£ per head 11-25	Youth service £ thousands	YS as % of education	Population 11-25	£ per head 11-25
Isle of Anglesey	348	1.0%	11,600	30.00	489	1.3%	11,600	42.16
Gwynedd	1,125	1.9%	21,900	51.37	1,300	2.0%	21,900	59.36
Conwy	975	1.9%	17,800	54.78	886	1.5%	17,800	49.78
Denbighshire	402	0.9%	16,200	24.81	886	1.8%	16,200	54.69
Flintshire	1,252	1.8%	27,100	46.20	1,457	1.9%	27,100	53.76
Wrexham	1,751	3.0%	24,400	71.76	1,707	2.7%	24,400	69.96
Powys	1,057	1.5%	20,200	52.33	1,127	1.4%	20,200	55.80
Ceredigion	220	0.6%	17,500	12.57	380	0.9%	17,500	21.71
Pembrokeshire	568	0.9%	19,300	29.43	916	1.4%	19,300	47.46
Carmarthenshire	827	0.9%	30,500	27.11	1,201	1.2%	30,500	39.38
Swansea	2,000	1.8%	44,500	44.94	2,223	1.8%	44,500	49.96
Neath Port Talbot	417	0.6%	24,100	17.30	981	1.2%	24,100	40.71
Bridgend	1,089	1.6%	23,000	47.35	1,201	1.7%	23,000	52.22
The Vale of Glamorgan	699	1.2%	21,800	32.06	1,002	1.6%	21,800	45.96
Rhondda Cynon Taff	1,597	1.2%	45,400	35.18	2,657	1.8%	45,400	58.52
Merthyr Tydfil	617	1.8%	10,700	57.66	802	2.2%	10,700	74.95
Caerphilly	1,639	1.8%	32,300	50.74	1,774	1.8%	32,300	54.92
Blaenau Gwent	281	0.7%	13,000	21.62	487	1.2%	13,000	37.46
Torfaen	428	0.8%	16,800	25.48	953	1.7%	16,800	56.73
Monmouthshire	973	2.5%	13,900	70.00	974	2.3%	13,900	70.07
Newport	921	1.3%	26,400	34.89	1,609	2.0%	26,400	60.95
Cardiff	3,466	2.3%	73,200	47.35	4,627	2.7%	73,200	63.20
Total Wales	**22,652**	**1.5%**	**551600**	41.07	**29,639**	**1.8%**	**551,600**	53.73

Source: Revenue Outturn (RO1) and Revenue Account (RA) returns

Government-provided figures (Table 11) indicate that during the time this investigation was taking place, the maintained Youth Service expenditure in Wales was £22.652 million for 2000-01 and £29.639 million for 2001-02. These figures were 1.5% of the total education budget for 2000-2001 and 1.8% of the total education budget for 2001-02, giving the maintained Youth Service across Wales an average expenditure per head of 11-25 year old population of £41.07 per year in 2000-01 and £53.73 in 2001-02. These figures include the salaries of paid workers, the running costs of premises including repair and decoration, and the purchase of equipment. Additional financial information was made available as a result of Estyn Inspection visits to five Local Education Authorities during the period 2001-2002. These LEAs were: Caerphilly (February 2001), Pembrokeshire (October 2001), Conwy (December 2001), Gwynedd (February 2002), and Neath and Port Talbot (November 2002). Included within the reports was a range of information of use to this investigation and which is detailed in Table 12.

Table 12 Maintained Youth Service indicators

Service Indicators	Caerphilly	Pembrokeshire	Conwy	Gwynedd	N&PT
Unit Cost of Provision (11-25)	£115.56	£253	£222.03	£275.65	£121.86
Spend (11-25) per head	£27.75	£34.88	£30	£38	£27.44
Participation Rates (11-25)	24.1%	10.65%	13.2%	13.7%	28%
No. Youth Officers	3	1	2	2	3
No. full-time workers	9	5	6	10	5
No. part-time workers	127	68	97	138	126
No. part-time unpaid workers	0	64	0	0	16
No. young people in contact with Youth Service	5419	3203	2351	3,000	6870
Contact Ratio	33.4%	37.5		15.95	46.8
% of budget spent on vol. sector	4.85%	2.78%	4.5%	7.5%	5.4%
% of budget spent on in-service training	2.78%	4.483%	1.96%	1.7%	2.64%
Youth Service budget as % of education budget			1.42%	1.45%	

From the information contained in Table 12, it can be identified that the annual expenditure per head of population within the 11-25-age range during 2001 and 2002 was between £33.00 and £27.75, which is significantly lower than the figures given in the RO1 (Table 11). An additional source of information - an internal report for the Youth Service of Merthyr Tydfil (Kealy 2001) - identified the annual Youth Service expenditure per head of population within the 11-25 age range as £25.91, a figure more closely aligned with those identified by Estyn (Table 12). The information published by Estyn and the Merthyr Tydfil Youth Service does, however, cause some confusion because it contradicts the figures contained within the RO1 (Table 11). The extent of the differences between the RO1 and Estyn are identified in Table 13, which also identifies the total shortfall for each of the local authorities inspected by Estyn.

Table 13 Spending comparison between the RO1 and Estyn

Local Authority	a) RO1 figures, spend per head 11-25 population	b) Difference of funding figures between RO1 and Estyn 11-25 population	c) Shortfall to bring Estyn identified spend per head 11-25 population up to RO1 figures
Caerphilly	£54.92	£27.17	£877,591
Pembrokeshire	£47.46	£12.58	£242,794
Conwy	£49.76	£19.78	£352,084
Gwynedd	£59.36	£21.36	£467,784
Neath and Port Talbot	£40.71	£13.27	£319,807

Column a) contains spend per head of 11-25 year old population identified by the RO1 figures contained in Table 11, Column b) describes the difference in funding per head 11-25 year old population between the R01 figures (Table 11) and those identified by Estyn (Table 12). Column c) identifies the total shortfall between the RO1 figures and the Estyn figures multiplied by the number of young people of Youth Service age in each authority (Table 11). The disparity appears to be as a result of the RO1 figures including financial elements over which the Principal Youth Officers have no control and which they discount when making their own calculations. These elements include, for example, Play, Youth Access and Adult Education budgets. They may also contain amounts allocated as the Youth Service contribution to central local authority services, such as Human

Resources and Financial and Legal services. The Estyn and Merthyr Tydfil Youth Service figures are, however, the actual sums of money identified by the Principal Youth Officers as the amount they have available to them to work with young people within the framework of the maintained Youth Service. This ambiguous position is not unique to Wales; the National Youth Agency (NYA) for England claimed they based their audit of the Youth Service in England on figures provided by the local authorities rather than from central government sources because they believed this decision would give a more accurate position of actual income (NYA 2000b).

This apparent confusion about the actual budget of the maintained Youth Service is exacerbated by the vagueness surrounding how the Youth Service budget identified within the RO1 is calculated. The RO1 figure for 1999-2000 was given as £14.2 million (NAW 2000). The calculation of the Youth Service budget within the R01 figures described in Table 11 indicate the budget for the maintained Youth Service in the financial year 2000-2001 increased to £22.7 million and increased further in the financial year 2001-2002 to £29.6 million. There is some uncertainty about what was delivered from the £8.5 million increase in budget between the financial years 1990-2000 and 2000-2001, and similarly the £6.9 million increase in the financial year 2001-2002. An additional £2.0 million was included in the financial year 2001-02 as a result of the New Burdens money, leaving a figure of £4.9 million. It is possible to conclude, using the 1999-2000 budget of £14.2 million as a baseline, that the increase in funding for 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 was derived from other sources[3] including the Children and Youth Partnership Fund (Welsh Office 1999a) and the Youth Access Initiative (Estyn 1999a).

If this conclusion is accurate, additional funding was included in the maintained Youth Service budget for elements of specific practice with young people which may or may not be linked to the core purposes of the maintained Youth Service. Cymorth funding, for example, is to *"provide a network of targeted support for children and young people*

[3] The Audit of the Local Authority Youth Service in Wales for 2003/04 claimed that 69% of its budget came from the local authority with the rest, 31%, coming from alternative sources, including 18% of its total budget from various strands of Cymorth funding(WYA 2005).

within a framework of universal provision, in order to improve the life chances of children and young people from disadvantaged families" (NAW 1999:3). The role of the Youth Access initiative is to *"help young people above the school leaving age who are not in education, training or jobs to progress to effective forms of education, training or into jobs"* (Estyn 1999a:1). It is suggested that a more in-depth analysis of the expenditure of the maintained Youth Service in Wales is needed to answer three fundamental questions:

1. How much money is actually being spent by the maintained Youth Service in Wales?
2. Does the difference between the RO1 figures and the Estyn/Merthyr Tydfil maintained Youth Service figures exist, or is it an accounting anomaly?
3. Does the spending of the maintained Youth Service reflect its agreed purposes and values or is the money spent on other ways of working with young people that reflect the priorities of the Welsh Assembly Government?

The importance of attempting to arrive at an accurate position about the finances of the maintained Youth Service is related to identifying the level of actual growth caused by the introduction of new money in the delivery of a Youth Service curriculum in accordance with its purposes and values. Despite the difficulties in identifying growth it is possible to hypothesise from the information made available during the study that a significant amount of expansion is related to providing new activities contained within developing political priorities. New sources of funding to expand the Youth Service as a predominantly non-formal community-based education activity are limited, as the Youth Service has been encouraged both by financial reward and the comments contained within Estyn Inspection Reports to direct its work into new arenas, such as encouraging young people to return to formal education, training or the world of work. These purposes would have been more appropriate for the Youth Service if it had been encouraged, through additional funding, to achieve these aims through maximising its potential in a non-formal community-based education role, rather than to be branded as inadequate because of its inability or reluctance to enter the world of formally accredited learning. This was, however, a difficult position to avoid because of the significant amounts of money coming

to the maintained Youth Service from sources linked to developing political agendas within a new managerialist era (Chapter 1).

As well as attempting to define the overall level of expenditure of the maintained Youth Service, an attempt was made to discover how the total expenditure was sub-divided. From the evidence considered, it was possible to identify a small number of core elements[4] of expenditure, the most significant of which was the payment of staff, accounting for about 69% of the total maintained Youth Service budget. The importance of this cost was recognised by the managers of the maintained Youth Service, who claimed:

> *"staff costs are our biggest area of expenditure by a long way. It is our responsibility to make sure this is spent in a way that makes sure we have value for the money spent. This means making sure staff clearly understand what we are trying to do and how we should measure our success"*
>
> Principal Youth Officer

The figures identified previously (Figs. 1/2/3/4) could suggest that this significant element of the maintained Youth Service budget was not being well used in preparing workers to carry out their roles and responsibilities in an effective way.

From the evidence examined, it is possible to conclude that the maintained Youth Service has not benefited from the aspirations of the Extending Entitlement agenda. When existing budgets are measured against the £100 million benchmark identified by the New Burdens group, the government-determined budgets (Table 11) indicate a shortfall – if a model Youth Service is to be provided – of £77.348 million in 2000-01 and £70.361 million in 2001-02. This shortfall would be even higher if the figures provided by the Principal Youth Officers were used in the calculation because their figures were consistently lower than those used by the government. By using the actual figures of the New Burdens group (Table 3), the benefit to the maintained Youth Service per head of

[4] The Audit of the Local Authority Youth Service in Wales for 2003/04 (WYA 2005) identified 7 key areas of expenditure, which were staffing (68.7%), renting accommodation (10.0%), resources (7.2%),grants to the voluntary sector (3.3%), training (2.1%), capital expenditure (1.5%), and other (7.2%).

11-25 year olds as a result of the Extending Entitlement strategy can be calculated as an average of £3.65. This figure was, however, dependent on individual local authorities receiving the full grant to support the Extending Entitlement agenda. For a significant number of local authority Youth Services, this did not happen because the unhypothecated New Burdens funding (Table 3) was not in all cases spent on the maintained Youth Service but was diverted within the local authority to benefit other locally determined priorities. A Principal Youth Officer commented during the interview process:

> *"If we get a third chance of Extending Entitlement money and if it actually gets passed to us, which it hasn't in the past two years we would be in a much better position...I think we will come so much closer in the ideal world. You know I want another £1 million or £500,000 anyway"*

The implication of this lack of resources was described as a pressure on workers across all the occupational strands to make decisions about what can and what cannot be achieved. Such decisions included the need to stagger opening times in an attempt to provide some level of service during school holidays and some weekends (Chapter 9). Other resource pressures identified included being unable on a regular basis to hire what were described as essential facilities, such as swimming pools, gymnasiums and sports halls, theatres and drama centres. There are, however, even more significant conclusions to be drawn from these figures. First, the maintained Youth Service was operating with a budget almost 80% less than the amount it had calculated during its modelling process. Second, the significant element of this reduced income was being spent on human resources, almost 50% of whom were unqualified. For an organisation committed to delivering a service to young people based on the quality of the relationship between them and the youth worker, this should be a position of some concern.

From the evidence taken from a range of sources, including financial figures supplied by the National Assembly for Wales, it is possible to conclude that the maintained Youth Service in Wales has been given little opportunity to make a serious contribution to the Extending Entitlement agenda. Though promised much initially, there is little evidence to suggest that political rhetoric has been translated into practical support through the allocation of appropriate levels of new funding. This conclusion should not be perceived

as a criticism of individual youth workers, who, without exception, demonstrated during the interview process high levels of enthusiasm and commitment to working with young people in a positive way.

7.5 Buildings and facilities

During the period of time this investigation was being carried out, it was calculated that the maintained Youth Service in Wales had responsibility for managing approximately 200 buildings, within which a curriculum of activities were being delivered to young people (NAW 2000). Many of these centres were in a generally poor condition, as was recognised by the Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales, who commented:

> *"Youth centres are generally in a very poor state of repair. Poor facilities in some centres limit the services that the workers can provide for the young people. Centres based in shared buildings, such as schools, often have very limited space, and many of the facilities in the buildings may not be available to the young people"*
>
> (HMSO 2002:52)

This statement is reflective of a range of information provided by a number of different sources. The Wales Youth Agency review of the Blaenau Gwent Youth Service (WYA 1999e:12) concluded that a number of clearly defined problems had been identified, including *"the poor state of a number of buildings both in the sense of structure and the state of repair and décor"*. This theme was continued in the inspection of Caerphilly (Estyn 2001a:11), which also recognised:

> *"Youth Centres are generally in a very poor state of repair. Most are too small for the number of young people using them. Many have leaking roofs and broken and boarded up windows".*

There was a clear correlation in the Inspection Reports of this time between the poor condition of the buildings and the quality of work with young people being delivered. The inspection of the Pembrokeshire Youth Service (Estyn 2001b) claimed that when there was sufficient good quality accommodation available, under the management control of a

Community Education Officer, the aims and objectives of the service could be more readily achieved. There was also a clear recognition by Estyn of the scale of the problem facing Youth Service managers across Wales when they attempted to address obvious problems associated with inadequate buildings. This issue was clearly identified during the Inspection of the local authority Youth Service in Conwy, who had prioritised funding to carry out essential improvement work, but the cost of this was described as being *"far greater than the budget will allow"* (Estyn 2002). The Inspection Reports also highlighted what were described as the inadequate facilities in some centres and the link between these and the quality of work being delivered. The inspection of the maintained Youth Service in Caerphilly (Estyn 2001a:11) concluded:

> *"The lack of a kitchen, running water or a quiet area for discussion, limits the opportunities for young people to develop a range of social and creative skills or to discuss important issues, either as a group or in confidence with a youth worker"*

This theme was continued in the Inspection Report of Neath and Port Talbot (Estyn 2002b:4), where the conclusion was made that *"the standards of accommodation and equipment is unsatisfactory"*.

Within this environment, those involved in the interview process identified a number of common strands of concern arising from the general condition of the buildings within which they had to operate. The most consistent of these concerns was the effect of the physical environment as the greatest determiner of the Youth Service curriculum, with a greater effect on practice than any deep philosophical position or a strict adherence to the purpose and values of youth work. This view was articulated by a focus group of full-time workers, who claimed *"In a limited environment, limited activities will be carried out"*. Curriculum development capable of delivering a contemporary agenda that met the needs of young people and the requirements of government was affected fundamentally, in the opinion of those involved in the interviews, by the characteristics and location of the premises being used. Buildings of the poor quality described within Estyn Inspection

reports written during the period of time this investigation was being carried out were described by a focus group of full-time workers as:

> *"the single most important reason why the Youth Service does not attract more young people or maintain contact with them as they grow into their teenage years"*

The work of the Youth Service, too often delivered in poor quality buildings with a minimum of useful equipment, was thought to be unappealing to many young people, particularly those who had access (because of age or financial resources) to commercial leisure-time activities, including such outlets as pubs, clubs and leisure centres. Respondents claimed that young people with a television, DVD player, PlayStation and music system at home were unlikely to want to spend a part of their leisure time in a poorly presented environment which could be cold, damp and uncomfortable with little opportunity for enjoyable activities. As a consequence, young people attracted to Youth Clubs were seen to be those at the lower end of the economic social structure, or those who had a specific interest fulfilled, such as playing sport or taking part in out-of-centre activities. The location of Youth Service premises was also seen to be an obstruction to making contact with young people.

A number of respondents described how the Youth Service had become in many instances the dubious beneficiary of unwanted local authority buildings regardless of their location or state of repair. This issue was recognised by a Principal Youth Officer, who commented:

> *"Far too many buildings have been taken over by the Youth Service without adequate resources including staff. We have just been offered a building in xx, but this is another instance where a building is available so it will be useful for the Youth Service. What that means is that it's at the end of its useful life. No thought has been given about what we want or what young people want. We have to have the courage to say no, it's not what we want, we want it where it's needed by young people, we want it here, this is what we want"*

The issue about being a second-hand service not only applied to what was described as *"handed-on buildings"* but also related to the resources available within those buildings. This point was recognised during the Inspection of Caerphilly (Estyn 2000a:12), when a comment was made that:

> *"Equipment in centres is usually adequate and serviceable, but this is sometimes only due to centre staff being proactive in recycling equipment discarded by other organisations"*

The issue of the availability of appropriate buildings and sufficient resources was viewed with some despondency by those interviewed, who were extremely negative about the possibility of improvements from the present position. A Principal Youth Officer from a predominantly rural local authority claimed:

> *"in the years I have been in the Service I have seen a reduction in the amount of money available to the Youth Service year on year...there has not been a new centre in xx in my lifetime, not that I am aware of. You are talking about, on the whole, the Youth Service happening in old, refurbished somebody else's buildings and there are one or two purpose-built centres but most of these are of a considerable age. ...the total repair and maintenance budge for xx is something like £32,000. Now that is for 16 of our own Youth and Community Centres, some of them large like xx, which is an old school.... but it is also for the 102 community centres and village halls for which we have a landlord responsibility plus some of the community school facilities which are linked to joint working arrangements... . I mean, it is a farcical situation that's not getting better"*

Another common strand identified by those involved in the interviews was the link between poor quality premises, the lack of equipment and the response to these by those young people with whom the Youth Service was in contact. The opinion of significant numbers of respondents across the occupational strands was of a direct correlation between poor quality buildings, inadequate resources and the behaviour of young people.

7.6 Summary

The evidence found during the investigation identified the maintained Youth Service in Wales as continuing to be embedded in a culture of financial poverty within which aspiration, by workers who remain in it, to achieve the highest standards of provision appears to be diminishing. Staffing levels have been increased, but at a cost. Many local authorities in their haste to fill both full and part-time posts have failed to ensure staff members are appropriately qualified to minimum standards. There is evidence available to conclude that only a small number of workers benefit from either formal induction training or ongoing in-service training. The maintained Youth Service in Wales is grossly underfunded. A consequence of this situation is an organisation that is often prepared to enter into areas of work that could be identified as being diametrically opposed to its organisational purposes and values. There is too often a resignation to badly maintained, poorly decorated and ill-equipped premises that are often poorly located within the community to meet either the needs of young people or the requirements of government policy.

CHAPTER 8

How the maintained Youth Service in Wales is organised

8.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to provide evidence about how the maintained Youth Service is organised as this is identified by:

1. the time full and part-time workers spend in direct contact with young people through their work in the maintained Youth Service;
2. the age, gender and academic attainment of those young people using the Youth Service;
3. the methods used by workers to identify the needs of the young people with whom they come into contact; and
4. the identified needs of those young people using the maintained Youth Service.

This information will provide the foundation on which can be judged the effectiveness of the programme and outcomes the maintained Youth Service offers to young people (Chapter 9). This evidence in combination with that identified in Chapters 6 and 7 will enable a reliable and valid conclusion to be reached about the focus of the investigation described in Chapter 1.

8.2 Time spent by those working in the maintained Youth Service in direct contact with young people

Those who work in the Youth Service make the claim that theirs is an occupation based on the quality of the relationship between the adults working within it and the young people who voluntarily use it (Chapter 3). This section of the chapter examines the amount of time spent by both full-time and part-time workers in direct contact with young people, during which the quality of the relationship can be both developed and enhanced.

8.2.1 Full-time workers' levels of contact with young people

Full-time workers were asked in the questionnaire survey to estimate the percentage of their time spent in contact with young people on a weekly basis. By using the baseline figure of 37 hours per week worked, it was also possible to calculate the amount of time - both in hours and as a percentage - full-time workers spent 'away' from direct contact with young people. The findings obtained about the total time full-time workers are in contact and away from contact with young people can be found in Table 14.

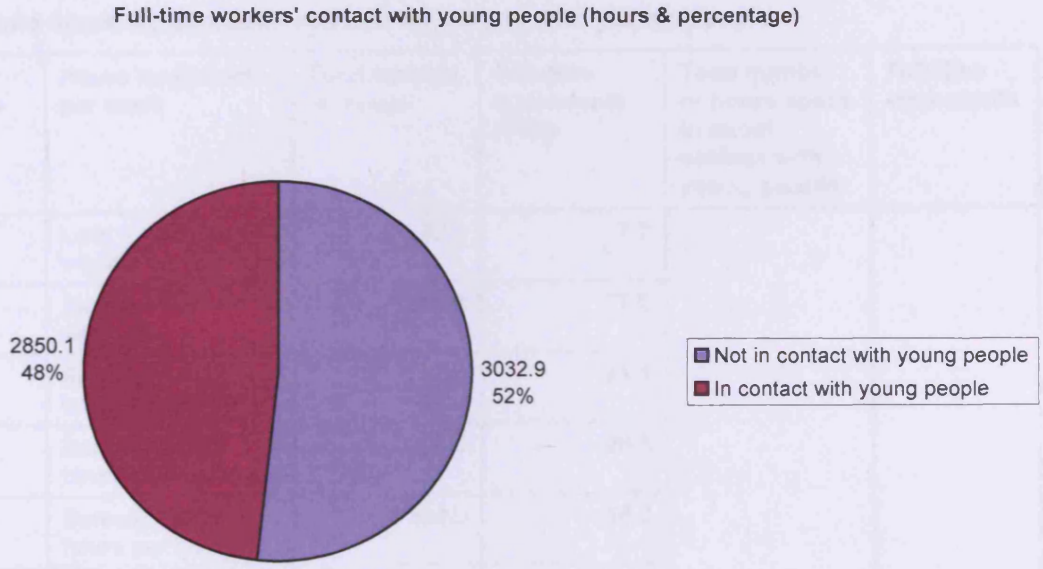
Table 14 Time spent by full-time workers in contact with young people

Number of workers	% Time in contact with young people	Time in contact with young people (hrs & total hrs)	% Time not in contact with young people	Time not in contact with young people (Total hrs)	Full-time equivalents (FTE) not in contact with young people
11	nil	nil	100%	(407)	11
11	5%	1.9 hrs (20.9)	95%	(386.1)	10.5
12	10%	3.7 hrs (44.4)	90%	(399.6)	10.8
2	15%	5.6 hrs (11.2)	85%	(62.8)	1.7
12	20%	7.4 hrs (88.8)	80%	(355.2)	9.6
5	25%	9.3 hrs (46.5)	75%	(138.5)	3.8
10	30%	11.1 hrs (111.0)	70%	(259)	7.0
3	35%	13.0 hrs (39.0)	65%	(72)	1.95
3	40%	14.8 hrs (44.4)	60%	(66.6)	1.8
4	45%	16.7 hrs (66.8)	55%	(81.2)	2.2
18	50%	18.5 hrs (333.0)	50%	(333)	9.0
10	60%	22.2 hrs (222.0)	40%	(148)	4.0
1	65%	24.1 hrs (24.1)	35%	(12.9)	.35
6	70%	26.0 hrs (156)	30%	(66)	1.8
10	75%	27.8 hrs (278.0)	25%	(92)	2.5
12	80%	29.6 hrs (355.2)	20%	(88.8)	2.4
4	85%	31.5 hrs (126.0)	15%	(22)	.6
8	90%	33.3 hrs (266.4)	10%	(29.6)	.8
7	95%	35.2 hrs (246.4)	5%	(12.6)	.34
10	100%	37.0 hrs (370.0)	0%		0
159	**% Time**	**2850.1 hrs**		**3,032.9 hrs**	**82**

From this information, it is possible to conclude that young people only have limited contact with full-time workers during their working week because a significant part of the

full-time respondents' working time is spent 'away' from direct contact with young people. 6.9% of respondents (11) within this occupational strand indicated that they had no contact with young people: another 6.9% (11) claimed only to spend 5% (1.9 hours) of their time in direct contact. A further 19.4% (31) of those who responded to the questionnaire survey spend 25% or less of their working time with young people. 42.7% (68) of respondents indicated that they were in direct contact with young people for more than 60% of their working time. The analysis of the figures provided indicates that the respondents spend the equivalent of 82 full-time workers' posts (3,032.9 hours) away from direct work with young people, leaving 77 full-time equivalents in contact with young people, which is 48.4% of the total time of the 159 full-time worker respondents (Fig 6). This is not a contemporary phenomenon; in 1990, the Wales Youth Work Partnership Survey (WYWP 1991:3) concluded that *"approximately half of full-timers' working time may be spent on management, training and administration"*.

Fig 6 Full-time workers' contact with young people



8.2.2 Part-time workers' levels of contact with young people

The same level of accuracy in calculating the total working time of the full-time workers group could not be achieved for the total time worked by those employed part time because part-time workers had been asked in the questionnaire survey to indicate the

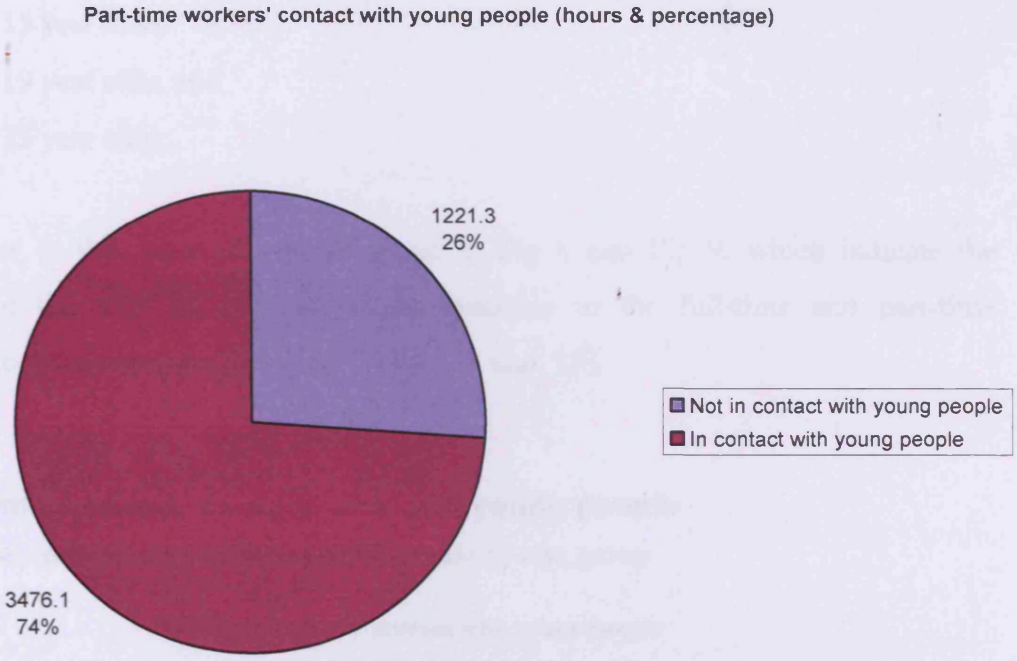
number of hours they worked within 6 specific time bands (Table 15). Having considered the evidence available, the decision was taken to use the mid-point of each time band as an average figure, which would be multiplied by the number of respondents to give a total time against each time band (Table 15). An example of this calculation is the 115 workers identified in column 1 of Table 15 who work less than five hours per week. The mid-point of that time band is 2.5 hours x 115 workers = 287.5 hours, which is equal to 7.7 full-time equivalent posts. By using this calculation for each time band, it was possible to estimate that the total number of hours available to the 443 part-time worker respondents is 4697.5 (126.7 full-time equivalents).

By using this 'average time' of each time band and the figure supplied by respondents about the estimated percentage time they spent on face-to-face work with young people, it was also possible to calculate that the part-time workforce spent 74% of their total time in direct contact with young people (Fig. 7), which is 3476.2 hours (94 full-time equivalents).

Table 15 Time spent by part-time workers in contact with young people

No. of part-time workers	Hours employed per week	Total number of hours	Full-time equivalents (FTE)	Total number of hours spent in direct contact with young people	Full-time equivalents
115	Less than 5 hrs per week	287.5	7.7		
143	Between 5-9 hrs per week	1001.0	27.0		
66	Between 10-14 hours per week	792.0	21.4		
58	Between 15-19 hours per week	986.0	26.6		
27	Between 20-24 hours per week	594.0	16.0		
34	Between 25-36 hours per week	1037.0	28.0		
443		**4697.5**	**126.7**	**3476.2**	**94**

Fig.7 Part-time workers' contact with young people



8.3 Profile of young people in contact with the maintained Youth Service

Using the baseline information described previously in Tables 14 and 15, it is the intention in this section of the chapter to develop a profile of the young people who were in contact with the maintained Youth Service by age, gender and academic attainment. Obtaining this information is considered important within the context of this investigation because it would allow a more informed judgement to be made about their characteristics. This information will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of Youth Service interventions in meeting the needs of the specific groups of young people using it (Chapter 9)

8.3.1 Youth workers' contact with young people by age

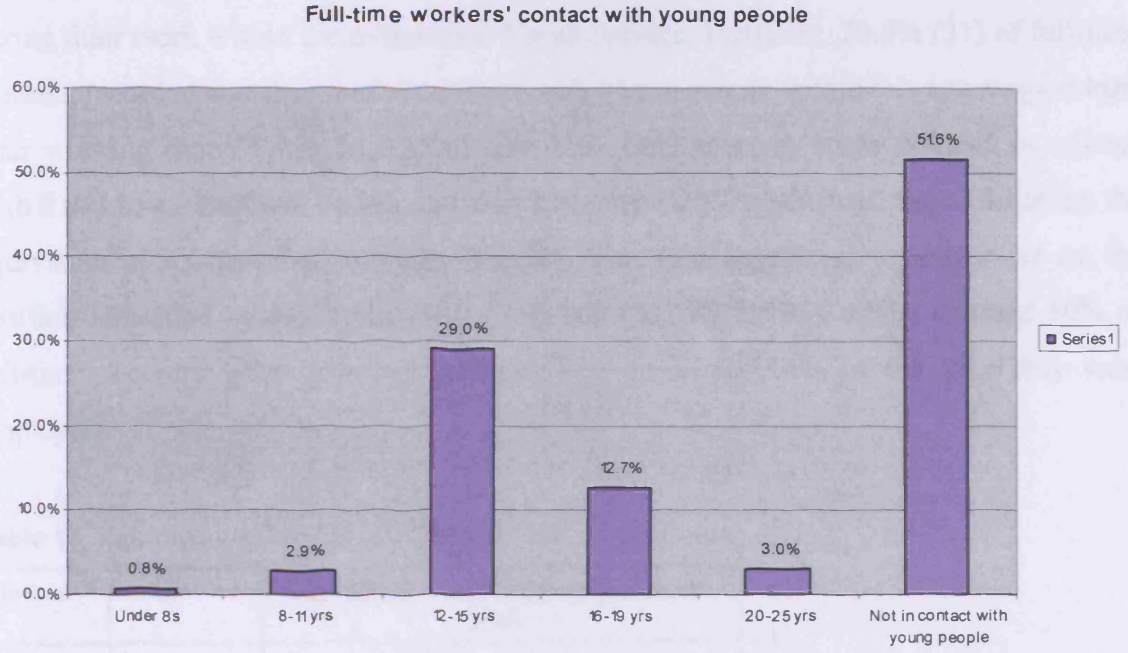
Both full-time and part-time youth workers employed in the maintained Youth Service in Wales were asked in the questionnaire survey to identify, by percentage, the young people they were in contact with within specified age bands, which included:

- those less than 8 years old;
- 8 to 11 year olds;
- 12 to 15 year olds;
- 16 to 19 year olds; and
- 20 to 25 year olds.

The responses to this question can be found in Fig 8 and Fig 9, which indicate the percentage of the total numbers of hours available to the full-time and part-time respondents to the questionnaire survey (Tables 14 and 15).

8.3.2 Full-time workers' contact time with young people

Fig 8 Full-time workers' contact with young people by age group



8.3.3 Full-time workers in contact with under 8 year olds

The significant majority of respondents, who worked full time, 96.8% (154), indicated they were not in contact at any time with children less than 8 years of age. A small minority, 3.1% (5), of respondents indicated that they were in contact with children under the age of 8 during their work within the maintained Youth Service. Three of the five

spent relatively small amounts of time in contact with this specific age group, which in total accounted for 11.2 hours of their time per week. The remaining two, however, spent more significant amounts of time, which in total accounted for 35 hours of their combined time per week. These two workers, who indicated they spent 30% (11 hours) and 64.8% (24 hours) of their time per week in contact with those under the age of 8, described their jobs as 'New Opportunities Fund Co-ordinator' and 'Extending Entitlement Partnership Development Officer'. Both of these workers were unqualified. The total time spent by full-time workers in contact with those less than 8 years old was 46.2 hours (0.8% of the total time available), which is equivalent to 1.3 full-time posts (Fig.8. Fig. 10).

8.3.4 Full-time workers in contact with 8 to 11 year olds

Of the full-time respondents who completed this section of the questionnaire survey, 79.1% (117) stated they were not in contact with children between the ages of 8 to 11 during their work within the maintained Youth Service. However, 20.9% (31) of full-time workers recorded that they were in contact with young people within this age range during their working time (Table 16, Fig10). The total time spent by these workers in contact with 8 to 11 year olds can be calculated as 170.8 hrs (2.9% of the total time available), the equivalent of 4.6 full-time workers (Fig. 8). This is a significant improvement on the position identified by the Youth Service survey (WYWP 1991), which claimed 50% of full-time workers were involved with this age group for 18% of the time they were employed.

Table 16 Full-time workers in contact with 8 to 11 year olds

Number	Hours	Total Hours	Full-time equivalents (FTE)
9	1.9	17.1	.46
8	3.7	29.6	0.8
1	5.6	5.6	0.2
8	7.4	59.2	1.6
2	9.3	18.6	0.5
2	11.1	22.2	0.6
1	18.5	18.5	0.5
31		**170.8**	**4.6**

8.3.5 Full-time workers in contact with 12 to 15 year olds

Of the 159 full-time workers who completed the questionnaire survey, 84.2% (134) claimed to be in contact with 12 to 15 year olds at some time during their working week (Table 17, Fig. 10). This figure includes 6.9% (11) of full-time workers who were in contact with 12 to 15 year olds for 75% or more of their time and 19.5% (31) of full-time workers who were in contact with young people of this age range for 50% or more of their time. In total, the full-time workers claimed to be in contact with this age group for a total of 1708.5 hours (46.2 full-time equivalents), 29% of the total time available to the 159 full-time respondents (Fig. 8, Fig. 10)). The information contained within Table 17 identifies the levels of time full-time workers spent in contact with the 12 to 15 year old age group.

Table 17 Full-time workers in contact with 12 to 15 year olds

Number	Hours	Total hours	Full-time equivalents (FTE)
22	3.7	81.4	2.2
17	5.6	95.2	2.6
11	7.4	81.4	2.2
8	9.3	74.4	2.0
17	11.1	188.7	5.1
9	13.0	117.0	3.2
9	14.8	133.2	3.6
10	16.7	167.0	4.5
6	18.5	111.0	3.0
9	22.2	199.8	5.4
2	24.0	48.0	1.3
3	26.0	78.0	2.1
4	27.8	111.2	3.0
2	29.6	59.2	1.6
3	31.5	94.5	2.6
1	33.3	33.3	0.9
1	35.2	35.2	0.95
134		**1708.5**	**46.8**

8.3.6 Full-time workers in contact with 16 to 19 year olds

From the evidence provided, it is possible to conclude that 41.5% (66) of full-time workers spent a total of 747.9 hours in contact with young people between the ages of 16 and 19 (Table 18, Fig. 10), which is 30.2% of the total available time of the 66 workers who responded. It is, however, only 12.7% of the total available time for the 159 full-time workers who answered the questionnaire survey (Fig. 8, Fig.10). These figures compare unfavourably with those identified by the Wales Youth Work Partnership survey (WYWP 1991:3), which claimed that more than 90% of full-time workers were in contact with the 16 to 19 year old age group for more than 20% of their time.

Table 18 Full-time workers in contact with 16 to 19 year olds

No. workers	Hours	Total Hours	FTE
19	3.7	70.3	1.9
21	7.4	155.4	4.2
10	12.6	126.0	3.4
5	16.7	83.5	2.3
2	22.2	44.4	1.2
3	25.9	77.7	2.1
2	29.6	59.2	1.6
1	31.5	31.5	.85
3	33.3	99.9	2.7
66		**747.9**	**20.2**

8.3.7 Full-time workers in contact with 20 to 25 year olds

The analysis of the data available through the questionnaire survey identified that 14.5% (23) of full-time workers were in contact with young people between 20 and 25 years of age (Table 19, Fig.10). These respondents claimed they were in contact with this age range for a total of 177.8 hours (4.8 full-time equivalent (FTE)), which is 3% of the total time spent by the 159 full-time worker respondents to the questionnaire survey (Fig.10). This figure is significantly lower than the figures identified by the maintained Youth Service survey carried out by the Wales Youth Work Partnership (WYWP 1991:3), which concluded that almost 70% of those employed full time in the maintained Youth Service worked with the 20 to 25 year old age group for 16% of their time. A comparison between

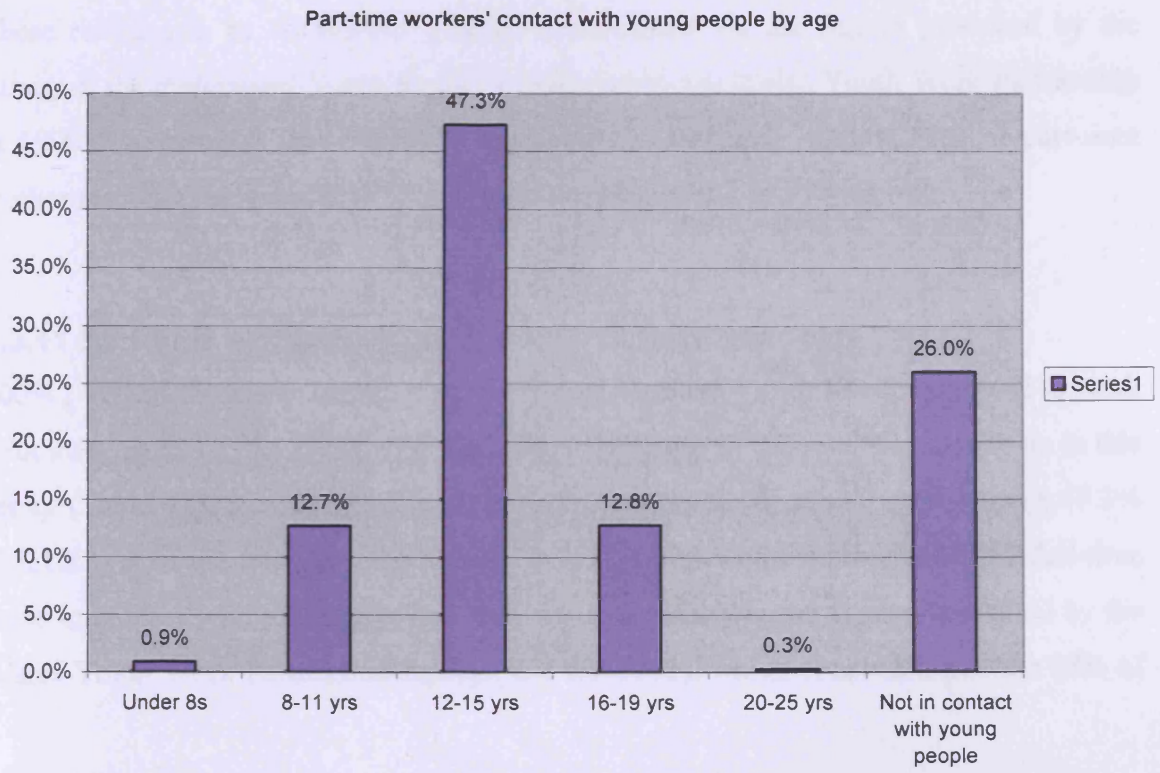
these two sets of figures describes a downward trend in the age range of the young people using the maintained Youth Service, with significantly fewer full-time workers in contact with this age group.

Table 19 Full-time workers in contact with 20 to 25 year olds

Number	Hours	Total hours
5	1.9	9.5
4	3.7	14.8
3	5.5	16.5
4	7.4	29.6
3	11.1	33.3
1	14.8	14.8
1	18.5	18.5
2	20.4	40.8
23		**177.8**

8.3.8 Part-time workers' contact with young people

Fig.9 Part-time workers' contact with young people by age group



8.3.9 Part-time workers in contact with under 8 year olds

The significant majority of respondents who worked part time, 94.3% (418), stated they were not in contact at any time with children under 8 years of age as part of their youth work responsibilities; 5.7% (25) indicated that they were (Fig.11). Using the mid-point of each time band as an average figure for each of the bands of hours worked per week, it can be calculated that 42.2 hours (0.9% of the total number of hours available Fig. 11), which is the equivalent of 1.14 full-time posts, are spent by the part-time workforce in contact with those less than 8 years old (Fig. 9).

8.3.10 Part-time workers in contact with 8 to 11 year olds

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire survey employed as part-time workers, 62.3% (276), indicated that they were not in contact with children and young people aged 8 to 11 years. 37.7% (167) of part-time workers indicated they were in contact with young people between the ages of 8-11 (Fig.11) for a total of 598.5 hours (12.7% of the total time available), which is the equivalent of 16.2 full-time posts (Fig. 9. Fig. 11).

These results can be considered a slight improvement on the figures produced by the survey of the maintained Youth Service carried out by the Wales Youth Work Partnership in 1990 (Chapter 4). That survey indicated that at that time, almost 33% of part-time worker respondents spent 28% of their time working with 7 to 11 year olds.

8.3.11 Part-time workers in contact with 12 to 15 year olds

100% (443) of those working part time in the maintained Youth Service claimed to work with those aged 12 to 15 (Fig. 11). From the calculation of the total time available to this group (Table 15), it is possible to determine that this occupational strand spent 47.2% (2221.2 hrs) of the total time available (Fig. 11), which is the equivalent of 60 full-time posts in contact with this age group. This has a similarity to the figures identified by the Wales Youth Work Partnership survey (WYWP 1991), which concluded that the 98% of

the part-time workforce spent almost 50% of its available time working with this particular age group.

8.3.12 Part-time workers in contact with 16 to 19 year olds

A significant number of part-time respondents, 89% (394), indicated they were in contact with 16-19 year olds (Fig.11) through their employment with the maintained Youth Service and that they spent 12.8% (601.7 hours) of the total time available, which is the equivalent of 16.3 full-time workers (Fig. 9, Fig. 11). 11% (49) of respondents claimed that they were not in contact with this age range for any of the time during their work within the maintained Youth Service.

8.3.13 Part-time workers in contact with 20 to 25 year olds

Part-time worker respondents indicated that they had negligible contact with the 19 to 25 year old age group. 2.7% (12) of workers (Fig.11) from the 443 respondents to the questionnaire survey indicated that they were in contact for a total of 0.3% (12.5) hours with this particular age group (Fig.9, Fig.11). This figure is significantly lower than the results identified by the 1990 survey of young people (WYWP 1991:2), which claimed that 28% of part-time workers were in contact with young people between the ages of 20 to 25 for 18% of the available working time.

8.3.14 Summary of workers' contact with young people

Fig 10 Full-time workers' number and percentage time with young people by age group

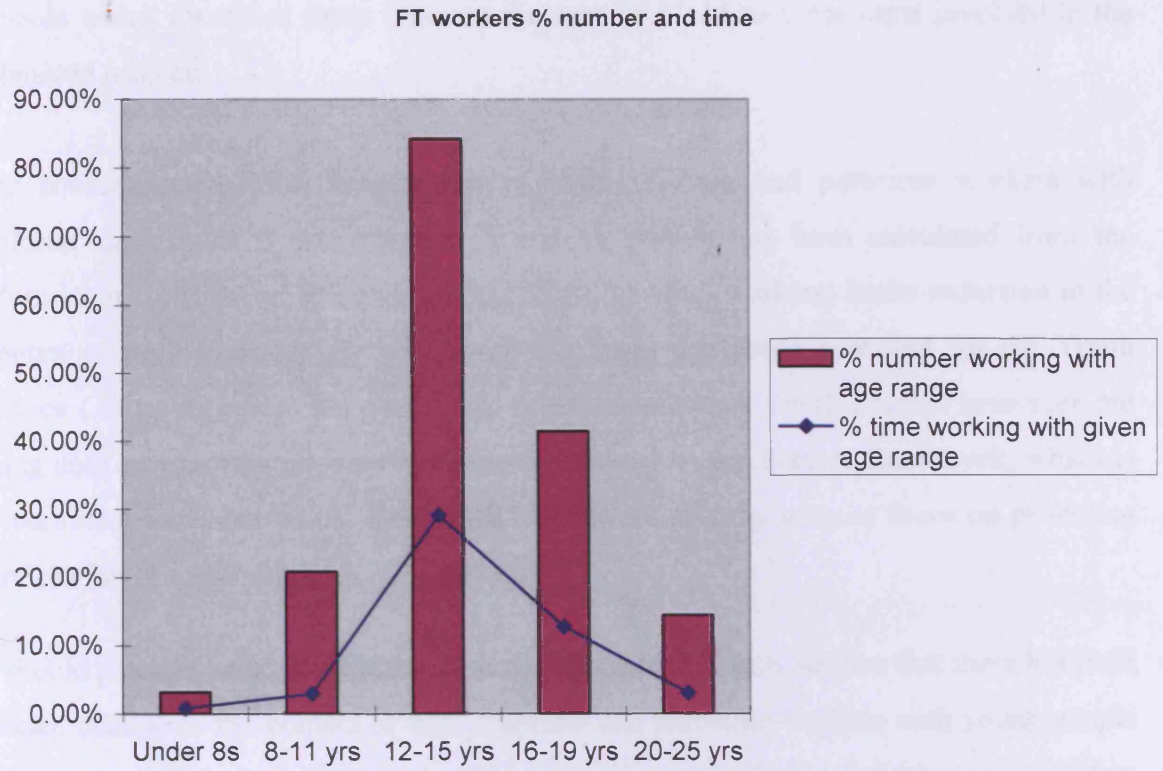
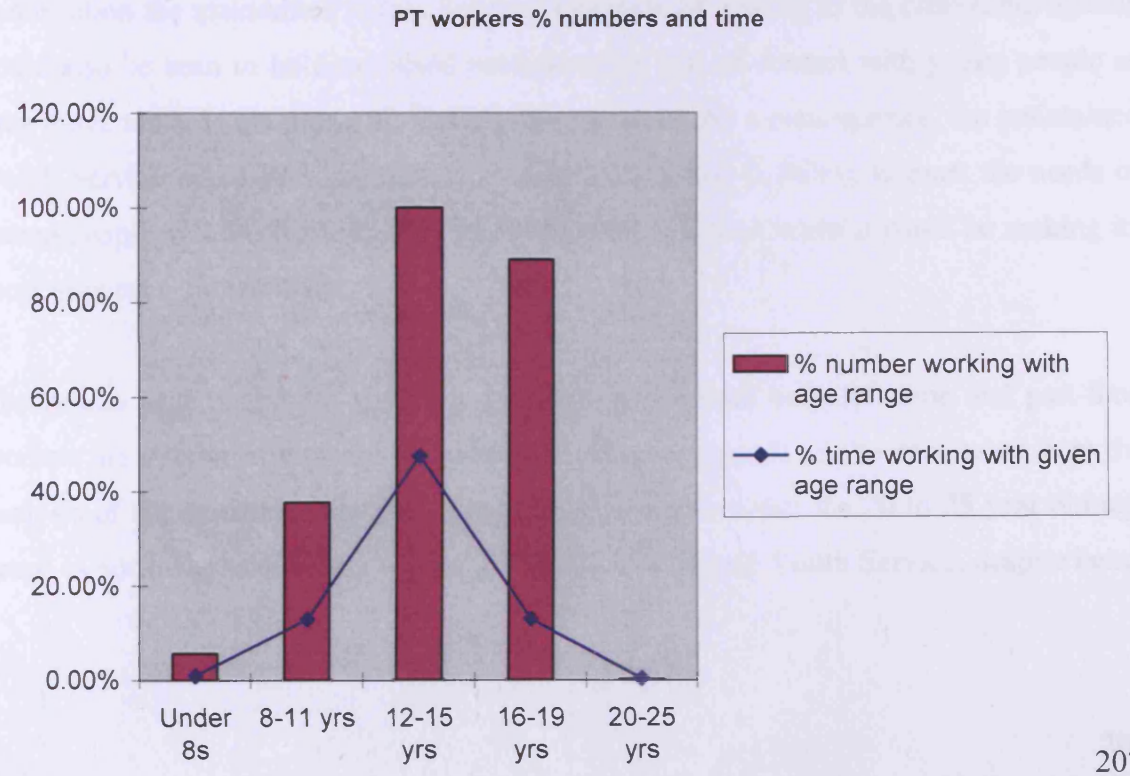


Fig 11 Part-time workers' number and percentage time with young people by age group



The results identify the 12 to 15 year old age group as the group which is in contact with the maintained Youth Service most often. The focus on this age range was mirrored in the evidence obtained through the analysis of the Youth work in Wales Excellence Awards which identified those between the ages of 11-14 as those most involved in the submitted projects.

The consequence of the involvement of both full-time and part-time workers with children aged under 8 and between 8 and 11 (which, has been calculated from the information collected as being equivalent to 30 full-time workers) is the reduction in the amount of time available for work with the target age range specified for the Youth Service (11 to 25 years) (Appendix 1). It also means that Youth Service resources are being used inappropriately outside of the maintained Youth Service framework, which is of particular relevance to the Extending Entitlement agenda, with its focus on providing services for 11 to 25 year olds (Chapter 4).

It should perhaps be of some concern to the maintained Youth Service that there has been a steep decline in the contact of both full-time and part-time workers with young people after the age of 15. At a time when many young people are facing a number of significant transitions, including those from school to work or school to Further and Higher Education, they are doing so without the support of the maintained Youth Service. The contribution the maintained Youth Service is capable of making to the citizenship agenda could also be seen to be diminished because of its loss of contact with young people as they move towards obtaining the vote at the age of 18. As a consequence, the maintained Youth Service could be identified as an organisation that is failing to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government at a time when it could be making its most important contribution.

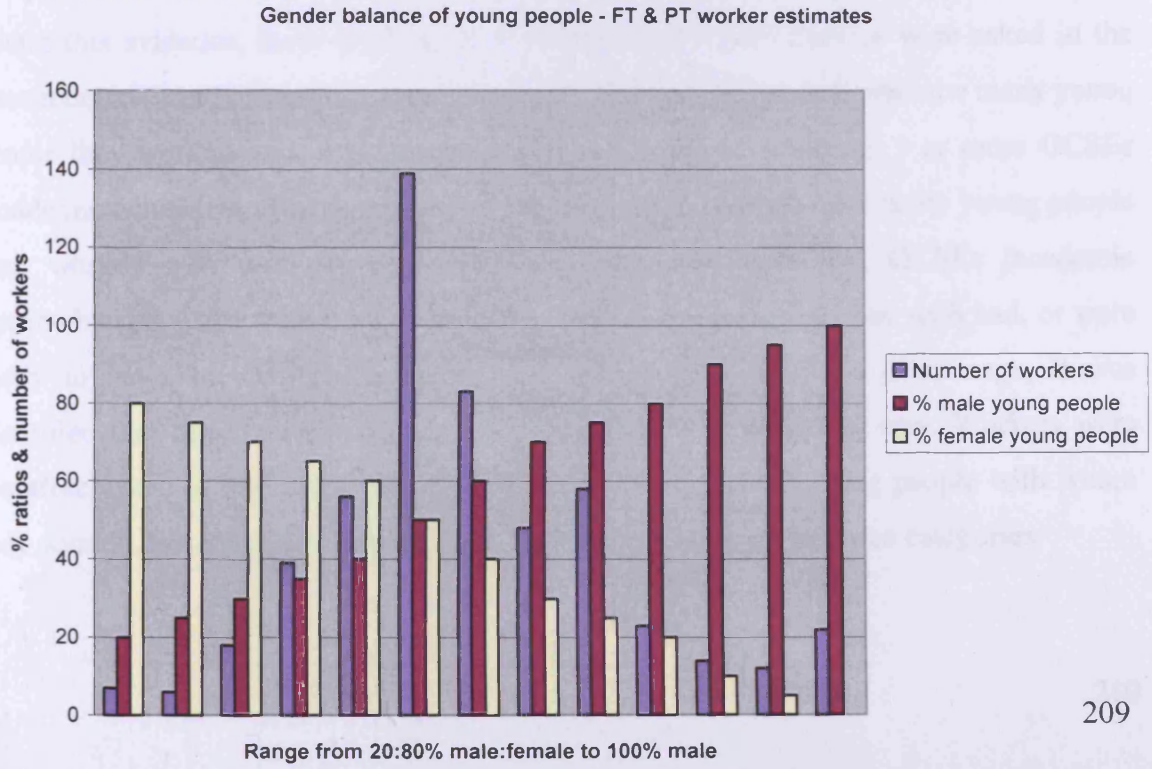
The results also indicate a significant decline in the time both full-time and part-time workers are in contact with the 20 to 25 year old age group. It can be concluded from the analysis of the evidence available during the investigation that the 20 to 25 year old age group is not being adequately catered for by the maintained Youth Service, despite being

identified within both the Curriculum Statement for Wales (Appendix 1) and by the Extending Entitlement agenda (Chapter 4). It can be further concluded that the maintained Youth Service is failing to provide opportunities that meet the needs of a significant cohort of young people which it has identified as being within the framework of its responsibility. In doing so, it has become less effective in meeting its own and government-required priorities.

8.3.15 The gender balance of those in contact with the maintained Youth Service

A substantial number of respondents, 86.3% (525), at both full-time and part-time worker levels completed this section of the questionnaire survey, which asked respondents to indicate the female and male balance of their Youth Centre or Youth Project. They were not asked to give an actual number of male or female workers they were in contact with because at the pilot stage, comments had been received which suggested that many organisations did not have a sophisticated enough registration system to identify specific numbers of young men and young women. As a consequence, the decision was taken to ask respondents to give an opinion about the gender balance as a percentage figure. The results of this question are detailed in Fig 12.

Fig 12 Gender balance of young people in contact with the maintained Youth Service



The largest group of respondents, 26.4% (139), claimed that they were in contact with an equal gender balance. Above the 50% gender balance, 49.5% (260) of workers claimed that the gender balance was male dominated. Below the 50% gender balance, 24% (126) of workers indicated that the gender balance was female dominated. 76.0% (399) of respondents who completed this section indicated that young men made up 50% or more of the gender balance of the young people with whom they were in contact. 50.4% (265) of respondents indicated that young women made up 50% or more of the gender balance of the young people with whom they were in contact. 4.2% (22) of workers claimed that they worked exclusively with young men. No respondents claimed to work for 100% of their time with young women. The results indicate that those who work in the maintained Youth Service in Wales are most often in contact with young males.

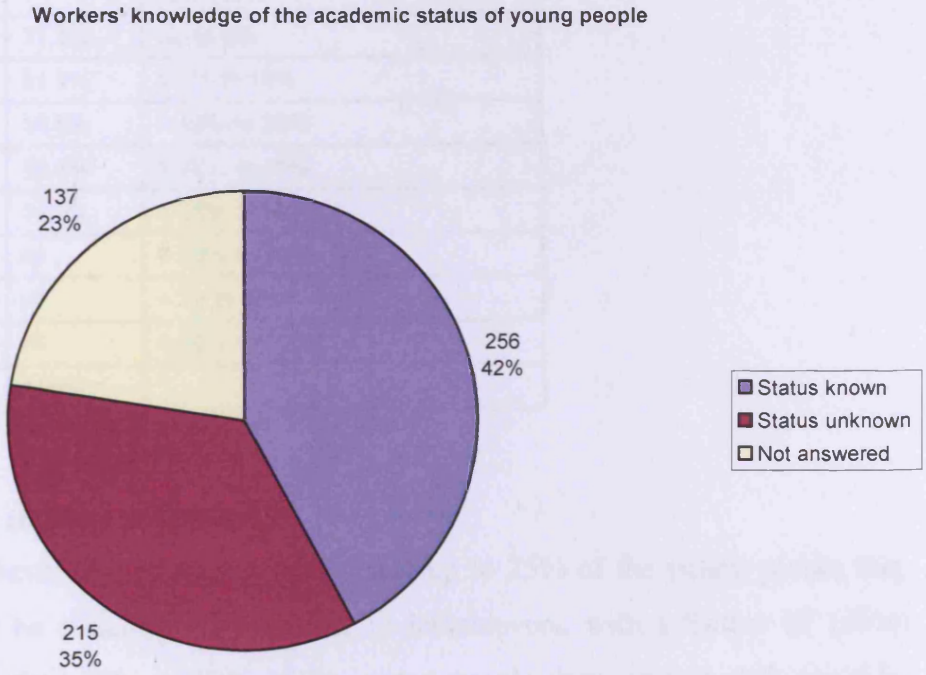
8.3.16 Levels of academic achievement of the young people using the maintained Youth Service in Wales

It was the intention of this part of the questionnaire to obtain evidence about the formal education backgrounds of the young people with whom workers were in contact. This information was seen to be useful for two reasons. First, it would form part of the profile of the general characteristics of those young people who were in contact with the maintained Youth Service. Second, it would provide evidence on which judgements could be made about how effectively those working in the maintained Youth Service respond to the particular characteristics of those with whom they are in contact (Chapter 9). To obtain this evidence, those working in the maintained Youth Service were asked in the questionnaire survey to answer three questions. The first was to indicate how many young people they worked with had attained, or were capable of attaining, 5 or more GCSEs (academic achievers). The second asked respondents to indicate how many young people they worked with had, or were likely to have, less than five GCSEs (academic underachievers). The third asked how many young people they worked with had, or were likely to have, no GCSEs (academic non-achievers). During the pilot stage, it was identified that this information was not generally kept in a formal way. Workers were therefore asked in the questionnaire to identify the number of young people with whom they were in contact as an estimated percentage within each of the three categories.

Of the 608 respondents, 256 (42.1%) completed this section of the questionnaire survey in a way that could be analysed. A further 215 (35.4%) respondents indicated that they did not know the academic status of those young people with whom they came into contact. The remaining 137 (22.5%) either left this section blank or completed it in a way that did not allow for its inclusion in the results. It is possible to suggest from these figures that more than 50% of those working within the maintained Youth Service did not give value to obtaining information on the formal academic achievement of the young people with whom they were in contact.

All 256 respondents who completed this section in a way that could be analysed indicated that they worked with young people in each of the three categories.

Fig 13 Workers' knowledge of the academic status of young people in contact with the maintained Youth Service



8.3.17. Academic achievers

Of these 256 respondents, 80 (31.3%) indicated that, in their opinion, up to 5% of young people they worked with had attained, or were capable of attaining, 5 GCSEs. A further 54 (18.5%) claimed that more than 5% to 15% of young people they worked with had attained, or were capable of attaining, the relevant standard to be classed as an academic achiever. 43 (16.8%) respondents claimed that more than 15% to 25% of young people they worked with could be classed as academic achievers and 50 (19.5%) workers indicated that they worked with young people who fitted the criteria for being academically successful. Only 29 (11.3%) respondents indicated that more than 35% to 50% of the young people they worked with had attained, or were capable of attaining, 5 or more GCSEs. No workers indicated that they worked with a higher percentage than 50% of young people who could be classed as academic achievers.

Table 20 Academic achievers

No. of respondents	% (256)	Estimated % of academic achievers
80	31.3%	Up to 5%
54	21.1%	> 5% to 15%
43	16.8%	> 15% to 25%
50	19.5%	> 25% to 35%
29	11.3%	> 35% to 50%
nil	nil	> 50% to 70%
nil	nil	> 70 to 85%
nil	nil	> 85% to 100%
256	**100%**	

8.3.18 Academic underachievers

Of the 256 respondents, 83 (32.4%) indicated that up to 25% of the young people they worked with could be classified as academic underachievers, with a further 87 (34%) claiming that more than 25% to 50% of the young people they worked with could be included in this category. 86 (33.6%) indicated that more than 50% of the young people they worked with were underachieving in the school setting in that they did not have or were seen to be unlikely to obtain 5 GCSEs.

Table 21 Academic underachievers

No. of respondents	% (256)	Estimated % of academic underachievers
11	4.3	Up to 5%
28	10.9	> 5% to 15%
44	17.2	> 15% to 25%
42	16.4	> 25% to 35%
45	17.6	> 35% to 50%
30	11.7	> 50% to 70%
33	12.9	> 70% to 85%
23	9.0	> 85% to 100%
256	**100**	

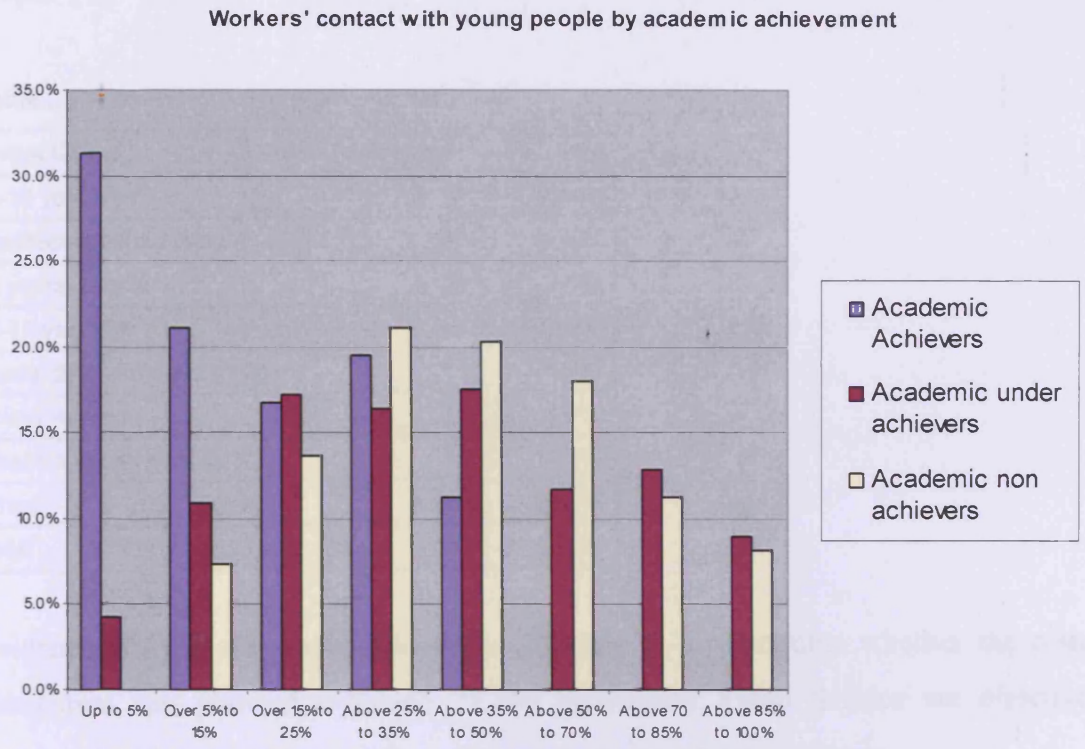
8.3.19. Academic non-achievers

Of the 256 respondents, 54 (21%) indicated that up to 25% of the young people they came into contact with did not have or were unlikely to obtain any GCSEs. A further 106 (41.4%) claimed that more than 25% to 50% were in the same category, with a further 96 (37.5%) indicating that more than 50% to 100% of the young people they worked with could be described as academic non-achievers.

Table 22 Academic non-achievers

No. of Respondents	%	Estimated % of academic non-achievers
nil	nil	Up to 5%
19	7.4%	> 5% to 15%
35	13.7%	> 15% to 25%
54	21.1%	> 25% to 35%
52	20.3%	> 35% to 50%
46	18.0%	> 50% to 70%
29	11.3%	> 70% to 85%
21	8.2%	> 85% to 100%
256	100%	

Fig.14 Workers' contact with young people by academic achievement



8.3.20 Targeting particular groups of young people: full-time and part-time youth workers' responses

To further develop the profile of the young people, respondents to the questionnaire survey were asked to identify any specific characteristics of those with whom they were in contact. In response to this question, 324 (53.2%) respondents claimed they targeted specific groups of young people (Table 23), with the remaining 284 (46.7%) claiming they did not. The majority of respondents to this question, 13.8% (84), targeted the priority age group of the government (14-18 year olds), while 2% (12) of youth workers targeted 13-17 year olds. 7.4% (45) targeted disaffected young people, which perhaps reflect an influence of debates relating to disaffection, status zero and social inclusion. Within the other responses were a wide range of priorities, many of them reflecting a local or even a personal approach to youth work practice. These priorities are included in the 'others' column; examples included youth workers who targeted young people described as *"bored and unhappy teenagers"*, *"those sitting down"*, *"smokers"*, *"referred young*

people", "academic young people", "those who show anti-social behaviour" and *"sports people".*

Table 23 Groups of young people targeted

Target Group	Number	%
14-18 year olds	84	13.8%
Disaffected young people	45	7.4%
All young people	24	3.9%
13-17 year olds	12	2.0%
Those disadvantaged by age	11	1.8%
Young women	10	1.6%
Disabled young people	10	1.6%
Others	128	21.0%
Total	**324**	**53.2%**

Evidence will be considered elsewhere (Chapter 9) to determine whether the planned curriculum and planned outcomes of the maintained Youth Service are effective in meeting the identified needs of these particular groups of young people.

8.4 What methods are used by the maintained Youth Service to identify the specific and wider needs of young people with whom it comes into contact?

Those employed across the occupational strands within the maintained Youth Service described (in a number of different ways) *"conversation"* as the most used method of identifying the needs of the young people with whom they were in contact. This process of conversation was described as a dialogue between the youth worker and an individual young person or in a group situation involving one or more youth workers and a number of young people. A focus group of full-time workers described *"talking and listening"* to young people as:

> *"our bread and butter. It's what we do and what we need to do if we want to keep on side with young people. It's a method of identifying need that has been used by youth workers for a long time but has now got some kudos because politicians and civil servants think they discovered it. The*

Youth Service doesn't need the UN Convention to know that if you want an opinion the best way to get it is to ask, particularly if those you are asking have a positive relationship with you."

Conversation as a method of determining the needs of young people was also recognised as important by Estyn, who claimed that youth workers *"consult extensively with young people and ask them what they want the Youth Service to provide"* (Estyn 2002b:9). The outcome of this process was also recognised in an earlier Estyn Report that commented on the quality of the relationship between young people and youth workers, which resulted in a detailed knowledge of individual young people, enabling staff to meet their articulated *"needs and aspirations"* (Estyn 2001c:7). Conversation was also a key method by which the needs of young people were identified and decisions made about curriculum content in the projects submitted for the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards. Comment was made in all of the 193 applications (Chapter 6) about the participation of young people in determining the Youth Service curriculum. A typical comment was made by a full-time applicant from a rural Youth Service, who claimed:

"young people are involved in deciding what we do, and how we do it. It is a process that young people own."

Application Number 78

The comments contained in the Estyn Reports and in the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award applications are supported by the overall findings of the questionnaire survey, which asked respondents to identify and prioritise – in a list of up to five – the methods they used to identify the needs of those young people they came into contact with during their work within the maintained Youth Service.

Conversation, as a method to identify what young people needed from their involvement in the maintained Youth Service, was identified by 41.3% (251) of respondents as their first priority, by 27.1% (165) as their second priority, by 13.7% (83) as their third priority and by 3.3% (20) as their fourth priority. In total, it was identified across the four priorities by 85.4% (519) of respondents. A small number of those who completed this section of the survey, 7.6% (46), claimed to use questionnaires as a method of

determining what young people needed from their involvement with the maintained Youth Service as their first priority, with 3.6% (22) listing it as their second priority. Assessment forms were used by 4.9% (30) of respondents as their first priority and 4.4% cited forums. Priority 1 was completed by 62% (377) of respondents, priority 2 by 47.8% (291), priority 3 by 23.6% (144) of respondents and priority 4 by 6.5% (40) of respondents. None of the respondents identified a fifth priority, despite being given the opportunity to do so.

As can be seen from these results, the ability of respondents to list a range of methods to determine needs was limited, as 38% (231) of respondents did not identify a first priority, 52.3% of respondents (317) did not identify a second priority, 76.4% of respondents (464) did not identify a third priority and 93.5% of respondents (568) did not identify a fourth priority. Those who completed the questionnaire were not asked to give a reason why they did not choose more than one priority. As a consequence, it is not possible to determine if they only used one method or if they were unable to identify more than one method. Given the evidence contained within other sections of this chapter (when options to list up to five priorities were not completed), it may be possible to conclude that many respondents were unable to identify more than one or two methods for determining the needs of young people from their involvement in the maintained Youth Service.

Table 24 Method of determining what young people need from their involvement in the maintained Youth Service

	Priority 1		Priority 2		Priority 3		Priority 4		Total
Response	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**%**
Conversation	251	41.3%	165	27.1%	83	13.7%	20	3.3%	85.4%
Questionnaire	46	7.6%	22	3.6%					11.2%
Assessment forms	30	4.9%							4.9%
Forums	27	4.4%	24	3.9%	16	2.6%			10.9%
Quiz	12	2.0%							2.0%
Information from other agencies	11	1.8%	32	5.2%					7.0%
Observation			21	3.4%	15	2.5%	10	1.6%	7.5%
Evaluation forms			15	2.5%	15	2.5%	10	1.6%	6.6%
Community			12	2.0%	15	2.5%			4.5%

Knowledge									
Total number of respondents	377	62.0%	291	47.8%	144	23.6%	40	6.5%	
No response	231	38%	317	52.1%	464	76.2%	568	93.5%	
Total	**608**	**100%**	**608**	**100%**	**608**	**100%**	**608**	**100%**	**100%**

Conversation as a method for determining the needs of young people was also widely identified during the interview process, as was the style of conversation, which was described by a focus group of full-time workers as "*democratic*" and concerned to be "*participative and empowering to reflect the principles contained within the Curriculum Statement for Youth work in Wales*" (Appendix 1). It was also a method that relied in a significant way on what was described as the quality of relationship between worker and young people. Those employed within all the occupational strands talked about this method as the foundation on which the needs of young people could be determined and a range of activities identified and delivered.

Some concerns about the use of conversation could be identified from the evidence obtained during the interview element of the investigation. Several Principal Youth Officers made comments about the need to prepare young people for the "*democratic process*" that many would have access to through their involvement in the Youth Service because it was believed that significant numbers of young people would have had little experience of such a process in other parts of their lives. This was a theme also identified by a number of those working full time, who claimed in a focus group session that:

> *"asking young people a question is easy, as might be getting an answer. But getting an answer that reflects the real opinion of a young person is not clear cut. It is something that needs practice both by those young people responding and those adults listening and a non-judgemental and sympathetic worker who is able to provide the right sort of support that encourages, rather than ridicules and which recognises that young people are rapidly changing individuals who are likely to change their minds on a regular basis."*

It was suggested during the interviews that the process of conversation between adult and young person within the Youth Service context was the important method of determining

needs. It was, however, a process that was most effective, in the opinion of a number of respondents, when it was carried out between those who had developed a positive relationship with each other within which there was a level of trust, confidence and a feeling of self-worth. A full-time worker summed up this view by claiming:

> *"when we speak with young people there is always the intention for it to be as equals. It is only from that starting point that we can go forward. I hope that young people value me and I always want to value young people."*

It is possible to conclude from the evidence obtained during the investigation that the process of talking and listening between adult worker and young person was both the means (whereby a positive relationship was the outcome) and the process (which led to the identification of the needs of those young people coming into contact with the maintained Youth Service). The identified method of determining need was, however, a process focused on the young people already in contact with the maintained Youth Service. There was no evidence to suggest that the maintained Youth Service had a strategic approach to identifying the needs of those young people it was not in contact with. The evidence did identify the lack of both a wider 'market research' and a wider 'marketing strategy' capable of identifying and responding to the needs of young people.

8.5 The identified needs of those young people using the maintained Youth Service

The questionnaire survey results provided a range of information to identify what respondents considered to be the needs of those young people they were in contact with (Table 25). The most important need (50.5% across four priorities) was described in a variety of ways as being associated with young people having access to a range of leisure time activities, including their involvement in a range of sporting activities, trips, visits, outdoor activities and indoor activities such as art, craft, and dance. This was followed by a range of answers within a theme that identified the need for young people to feel good about themselves, having fun and positive experiences, which was identified by 33.9% of respondents across the four priority areas. Having somewhere to go was a need identified

by 21.6% of respondents across the four priority areas. Activities planned to lead to a qualification was a need of young people identified by 13.3% of respondents across the four priority areas. Needing somewhere to meet friends was only identified by 0.8% (5) of respondents. The same number identified young people as needing somewhere 'to get out of the house'. It should be recognised, however, that the information was only relevant to those young people using the maintained Youth Service who have been identified in this Chapter as being from a narrow band of potential users.

Table 25 Identified needs of young people using the maintained Youth Service

	Priority 1		Priority 2		Priority 3		Priority 4		Total
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**%**
Leisure Activities	167	27.5%	92	15.1%	48	7.9%	nil	nil	50.5%
Feeling good	98	16.1%	68	11.2%	40	6.6%	nil	nil	33.9%
Somewhere to go	64	10.5%	41	6.7%	27	4.4%	nil	nil	21.6%
Activities leading to qualifications	36	6.0%	24	3.9%	19	3.1%	nil	nil	13.3%
Others	36	5.9%	18	3.0%	16	2.6%	10	1.6%	13.1%
Total number of respondents	401	66.0%	243	39.9%	150	24.6%	10	1.6%	
No response	207	34%	365	60.1%	458	75.4%	598	98.4%	
Total	**608**	**100%**	**608**	**100%**	**608**	**100%**	**608**	**100%**	

During the interview process, information was obtained to suggest a more complex interpretation by those working within the Youth Service regarding the issue of the needs of young people. For example, the need 'having somewhere to meet' was supplemented by comments that young people needed that 'somewhere' to be within their own community, open at times when they had free time and which involved their choice of when they attended and when they left. As a full-time workers focus group concluded:

> *"What we try to create is a feeling of ownership by young people of where they meet and, as far as we can, when they meet. We cannot in enough instances be open at all the times they would want, simply because of budget constraints but we do our best"*

In another example of added complexity, workers across all the occupational strands involved in the interview process made comment about the importance of the need for

young people to develop a positive relationship with adults working in the Youth Service. This relationship building, it was claimed, provided in many instances the first steps in developing an adult relationship based on equality and on the voluntary nature of the relationship between adult worker and young person. . It provided an opportunity it was claimed for young people to enter into a dialogue concerned to examine the rules of the new adult environment into which many young people using the maintained Youth Service felt they were entering. As a focus group of regional/specialist workers concluded:

> *"It was a chance for young people to sound out and listen to what was acceptable and what was not, language, attitudes to the opposite or same sex, issues of racism, opinions on relationships and politics."*

It was further agreed by workers across all of the occupational strands that dialogue between young people and workers met an important need in supporting young people make the transition from dependence to interdependence (Appendix 1) but it was difficult to plan and manage and even more difficult to measure and justify within an era of enhanced accountability.

No mention was made in either the questionnaire survey returns or during the interviews of the responsibility of the maintained Youth Service to work in partnership with young people to develop a range of 'practical attributes' (Chapter 4) that would be of use to them in both their working and non-working lives.

8.6 Summary

At the time of the investigation the maintained Youth Service in Wales can be identified by a number of characteristics. First, it is an organisation that predominantly devolves the delivery of its work to its part-time workforce who are in direct contact with young people for 72% of their time as opposed to the full-time workforce who spend 48% of their time with young people. This situation, given the levels of qualifications, length of time employed and levels of qualifications (Chapter 7) could bring into question the ability of

the maintained Youth Service to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of relevant government policy while maintaining its discrete identity. Second, it is an organisation mainly in contact with the 12 to 15 year old age group, most of who are male and can be identified as either academic underachievers or academic non-achievers. No evidence was obtained during the investigation to suggest that there was a deliberate strategy to attract young people with this profile; neither was there any significant evidence to suggest that contact with this group was as a result of developing Welsh Assembly Government policy. It would be useful to the maintained Youth Service for further research to be carried out to determine why the maintained Youth Service does not have appeal to a broader group of young people. Third, the maintained Youth Service can be identified as an organisation dependent, in a significant way, on its ability to determine the needs of young people through conversation. Evidence also suggested that there was not a proactive approach to determining the wider needs of young people in the community. Rather, there was a focus on those young people who had found their way into the maintained Youth Service to the disadvantage of young people in the wider community. Fourth, the results of this method of determining the needs of young people lead to the provision of a range of leisure-type programmes as a means of contributing to their well-being. It would be useful for the maintained Youth Service to determine from the perspective of a wider range young people – not only those using the organisation – if what it offers is also appropriate in meeting their needs.

CHAPTER 9

What does the maintained Youth Service in Wales do and how does it measure it?

9.1 Introduction

It is the intention in this chapter to examine how the maintained Youth Service responds to the information identified in Chapter 8 through the delivery of a range of activities whose planned outcomes have an impact on meeting both the needs of those young people it comes into contact with and the requirements of government policy. To achieve this, a range of information will be examined which will identify:

- the programme the maintained Youth Service offers to young people;
- the planned outcomes of that programme; and
- the methods used for measuring the outcomes of that programme.

9.2 The programme the maintained Youth Service offers to young people

It is claimed (Chapter 3) that non-formal learning is linked to the needs of the individual and society but is not, as a consequence, an unplanned process. Evidence should therefore be available of a planned programme being developed by the maintained Youth Service that is relevant to meeting the needs of young people and the requirements of government. (Chapter 4, Chapter 5).

9.2.1 Questionnaire survey results

In response to being asked in the questionnaire survey to describe the programme of activities on offer to young people (listed in order of priority with a maximum of five entries), respondents identified a relatively wide range of choices (Table 26). Sport was identified as the first priority by 9.4% (57) of respondents, followed by issue-based work, identified as the first priority by 8.9% (54) of respondents. Teaching was identified as the

number one priority by 7.6% (46) respondents followed by skills development, selected by 6.9% (42) of respondents. Sport was the most popular response overall across the five priorities, identified by 21.4% (130) of respondents across the priorities. The second most popular overall response, teaching, was identified by 19.6% (119) of respondents. The third most popular overall response was out-of-centre activities with 18.2% (111) of respondents, despite only 2.3% (14) identifying it as their number one programme activity. The fourth most popular activity across the five priority areas was skills development, identified by 16.2% (101) of respondents, and the fifth was art and craft with 12.3% (75) of respondents.

Descriptions of activities were coded for analysis based on an interpretation by the researcher of the terminology used by the respondent. However, significant levels of ambiguity with regard to terminology can be identified in the analysis, which had some potential to affect the identified results. Football, for example, was coded as sport, but indoor games, which could involve playing football, was coded as indoor games. As a consequence, the figure arrived at for sport, 9.4% (57), could possibly be increased to 12.7% (77) of respondents if indoor games, 3.3% (20), were added. This ambiguity of terminology is particularly relevant to the issues of 'teaching' and 'skills development', which have a combined response across the five priority areas of 36.7% (220) of respondents.

Within the definitions of teaching were descriptions such as *"teaching literacy and numeracy"*, *"teaching cooking"*, *"teach them about basketball and life"*, *"senior member training"*, *"teaching art and craft"*, *"dance teaching"*, *"delivering accredited learning through youth achievement awards"* and *"teaching the alternative curriculum"*. These and other activities that included the term 'teaching' were coded accordingly. However, many respondents did not describe their activities as teaching but as skills development through the involvement of young people in a range of identified activities, which included football, basketball, art, craft, dance, music, woodwork and IT. It is logical to conclude from the information provided that there is a direct correlation between the involvement of young people in a curriculum of activities provided by the maintained

Youth Service and a teaching process leading to the development of skills relevant to the activity being undertaken. There is rationality therefore, in suggesting that 'teaching' and 'skills development' are the same activity and should be considered as such. As a consequence, the maintained Youth Service could be described, from the evidence obtained from the questionnaire survey, as an organisation principally concerned with the teaching of young people through their involvement in the range of activities described previously.

It is important to note that respondents to the questionnaire survey had little difficulty in identifying a number one priority, which was completed by 94.8% (576) of workers; however, a number two priority could only be identified by 75.8% (461) of respondents, priority three by 58.6% (356) of respondents, priority four by 34.7% (211) and priority five by 14.6% (89) of respondents (Table 26). From this information, it is possible to conclude that many young people are gaining limited experience from their involvement with the maintained Youth Service in Wales.

Table 26 Main activities, identified in questionnaire survey, ranked by 1st to 5th choice

Response	1st choice		2nd choice		3rd choice		4th choice		5th choice	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Sport	57	9.4%	32	5.3%	23	3.8%	12	2.0%	6	.98
Issue-Based Work	54	8.9%			23	3.8%			5	.82%
Teaching	46	7.6%	37	6.1%	30	4.9%	6	1.5%		
Skills Development	42	6.9	28	4.6%	23	3.8%	8	1.3%		
Organising Events and Activities	38	6.3%	24	3.9%	22	3.6%	14	2.3%	5	.82%
Advice and Information	38	6.3%	12	2.0%	16	2.6%	10	1.6%		
Art and Craft	26	4.3%	28	4.6%	17	2.8%	15	2.5%	9	1.5%
Discussion	25	4.1%	22	3.6%	16	2.6%	9	1.5%		
Management/Organisation	24	3.9%	15	2.5%						
School-Based Youth Work	23	3.8%	9	1.5%						
Indoor Games	20	3.3%	36	5.6%	13	2.1%	16	2.6%		
Youth Forums	19	3.1%	10	1.6%					10	1.6%
Policing	19	3.1%			10	1.6%				
IT	14	2.3%								
Out-of-Centre Events	14	2.3%	31	5.1%	21	3.5%	31	5.1%	14	2.3%
Support to Young People.	13	2.1%			10	1.6%				
Canteen	12	2.0%								
Other	92	15.1%	94	15.5%	90	14.8%	90	14.8%	40	6.5%
Group Work			25	4.1%						
Dance/Drama/Music			19	3.1%						
D of E Award Scheme			17	2.8%						
Community Projects			12	2.0%						

Responding to Need			10	1.6%						
Health					20	3.2%				
Fundraising					12	2.0%				
Competition					10	1.6%				
No Response	32	5.2%	147	24.2%	252	41.4%	397	65.3%	519	85.4%
Total	**608**	**100.0%**	**608**	**100.0%**	**608**	**100.0%**	**608**	**100.0%**	**608**	**100.0%**

9.2.2 Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards applications

Further evidence related to the types of programme activities carried out by those working within the maintained Youth Service can be identified by the information contained in the 193 applications for the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards submitted by the maintained Youth Service between 1997 and 2002 (Appendix 4). From the analysis of these entries, it is possible to identify both the type of programme on offer to young people and the intended outcomes of their involvement within what was considered by the applicants as high quality practice. As such, they provide another primary source of information which contributes to answering the research question in a reliable and valid way (Chapter 1).

The most popular programme activity submitted for an Excellence Award was identified under the general term 'art' which made up 14% (27) of entries which included a number of community art projects involving young people in producing a mural or artwork in community locations. This was closely followed by performing arts with 13.5% (26) of entries. The third most popular programme activity was described in the award applications under a general heading of 'health' which was included in 11.9% (23) of entries: many of these entries were linked to advice and information provision in the sense that they involved young people obtaining relevant health-related information through a variety of innovative practices. These practices included peer presentations, weekend events with 'expert guests' providing advice and information on topics such as healthy eating, sex education, and raising awareness of drug and alcohol misuse. The fourth most popular programme choice was involving young people in youth forums which was included in 10.9% (21) of entries; this activity was followed by international exchanges included in 5.7%, (11) of entries, and by developing community links in 5.7% (11) of entries. Reconnecting young people to education was identified in 4.7% (9) of entries, as was information services and skills development. Many of the applications described more than one purpose of a programme activity. For example, a senior member training programme (described as the main activity) used a programme that involved developing community links (described as a secondary purpose). The full extent of these multi-

purpose programmes are identified in Table 27. It should be noted that skills development was the most popular secondary activity, with the same number of respondents who selected art as the primary purpose. The term 'skill development' is also mentioned later in this chapter as an outcome of the work; this situation reinforces the confusion amongst workers of the differences between Youth Service process and Youth Service outcomes.

Table 27 Programme activities identified within the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award applications

Type of Activity	Primary purpose		Secondary purpose	
	Number	%	Number	%
Art	27	14.0%	6	3.1%
Performing Arts	26	13.5%		
Health	23	11.9%	14	7.3%
Youth Forum	21	10.9%	3	1.6%
Community Links	11	5.7%	18	9.3%
Youth Exchange	11	5.7%		
Information/Advice	9	4.7%		
Reconnect to Education	9	4.7%	6	3.1%
Skill Development	9	4.7%	27	14.0%
Crime Reduction	7	3.6%		
Young People's Issues	6	3.1%	3	1.6%
IT	5	2.6%		
Senior Member Training	5	2.6%	3	1.6%
Camp Craft	4	2.1%		
Residential	4	2.1%	3	1.6%
Sport	4	2.1%		
Community Aid	3	1.6%		
Shared Experiences			6	3.1%
Others	9	4.7%	20	10.4%
No Reply			84	43.5%
Total	**193**	**100%**	**193**	**100%**

9.2.3 Interviews

From the evidence obtained from those involved across the occupational strands in the interview process it is possible to identify a high level of agreement that the main purpose

of the maintained Youth Service was providing young people with somewhere to go and something to do. This required those working in the maintained Youth Service to establish a community base within which a range of activities could be delivered, the most important programmes of these were described as sport, art, outdoor activities, and performing arts.

The 'somewhere to go and something to do' hypothesis was however contested by a number of workers who held a view that was articulated by a focus group of full-time workers who claimed:

> *"we are living in a world of commercialism within which young people have unprecedented access into a wide range of leisure-time opportunities which have cutting edge facilities. Many young people also have access to the world in their own houses through the internet. Those we see now also have sophisticated music systems, playstations, gameboys, and televisions with 900 channels. Young people also have parents who have the means and the willingness to take their children to a range of specialist clubs who focus on single activities like swimming, gymnastics, and self defence, If the Youth Service thinks it can just open the door of a poorly located poorly equipped, poorly decorated building and attract young people it will be mistaken."*

This view is supported by evidence obtained elsewhere (Chapter 8) which identified the generally low standards of buildings used by the maintained Youth Service. Many buildings were described as being incapable of providing an appealing environment for young people.

Also of importance to those being interviewed, either as individuals or within focus groups, was the opportunity to identify a range of reasons why the maintained Youth Service was restricted in delivering a more creative and interesting range of programme opportunities for young people. It is possible to locate these reasons within two broad themes.

First, was the limited understanding of staff employed by the maintained Youth Service of the purpose of the maintained Youth Service and the principles and values that

underpinned the development and delivery of an appropriate range of programme activities for young people. This, it was claimed, was not caused by low levels of commitment and enthusiasm but by both a lack of opportunity to become qualified and by inadequate levels of in-service support. These comments support the findings identified in Chapter 7.

The second issue identified was the times the maintained Youth Service is available to young people. A number of workers employed part time claimed that they were on fixed evening contracts that only paid them to work with young people for a maximum of 52 hours a year, calculated at 2 hours per week for 26 weeks. Others were employed on more generous contracts, but it appeared to be usual for the maintained Youth Service to operate, in the very best examples, for a maximum of 40 weeks a year (Chapter 7). As a consequence of this limited contact time with young people, often in buildings of poor quality with limited facilities and resources, the opportunity to be creative and innovative when developing programmes was significantly curtailed. Full-time workers were faced with similar circumstances but for different reasons. Many identified a changing role which often included an enhanced management responsibility, which effectively removed them from direct contact with young people and from directly influencing the development of appropriate programmes.

The comments on levels of contact time with young people can be supported by the findings of the questionnaire survey, which asked respondents to indicate whether they worked during school holidays and weekends. The results of these questions can be found in Figs 15 and 16:

Fig.15. Working weekends

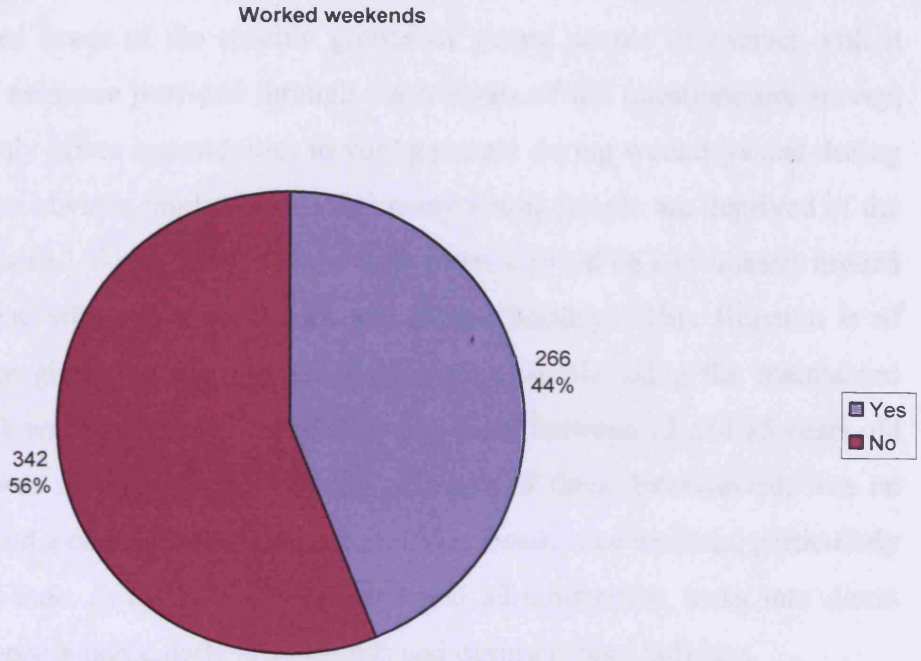


Fig. 16 Working recognised holidays

The issue of calculating the numbers of workers who work weekends and holidays is important in determining the way the maintained Youth Service responds, in a practical way, to the identified needs of the specific groups of young people in contact with it (Chapter 8). On the evidence provided through the analysis of the questionnaire survey, the Youth Service only offers opportunities to young people during weekdays and during school term time. The obvious implication is that many young people are deprived of the benefits of the maintained Youth Service at the time when it could be legitimately argued they need it the most, which is at weekends and school holidays. This situation is of particular importance given the age profile of the young people using the maintained Youth Service, which was identified as being primarily those between 12 and 15 years old (Chapter 8). What was required, in the opinion of many of those interviewed, was an increase in funding and a change in working patterns that would take workers, particularly those employed full-time, away from management and administration tasks into direct contact with young people particularly at weekends and during school holidays.

9.3 The planned outcomes of the programme offered to young people

Non-formal community-based learning of the sort delivered by the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3) is driven by a philosophical position that requires it to provide a structured learning environment within which there is intentional learning from the learner's perspective. Evidence was sought during this investigation to determine how effective the maintained Youth Service is at providing a structured learning environment for young people clearly identified by learning outcomes.

9.3.1 Intended outcomes - questionnaire survey

To obtain the evidence detailed above, respondents to the questionnaire survey were asked to indicate if the activities they delivered were planned to achieve specific outcomes (Table 28). Those who responded positively to this question were asked to describe the types of outcomes they planned for their work with young people through the maintained Youth Service (Table 29).

Table 28 Are outcomes for the maintained Youth Service activities planned?

Response	Number	%
Yes	486	80%
No	61	10%
No Answer	61	10%
Total	**608**	**100%**

Of those who responded, 20% (122) of workers either stated they did not plan their activities to achieve specific outcomes or did not reply to the question. 93.4% (114) of those who said no or did not answer the question were part-time workers and 6.6% (8) were full-time workers. Further analysis revealed that of the 114 part-time workers, 84.2% (96) could be identified as unqualified. All of the full-time workforce who said they did not plan their work to achieve specific outcomes or who did not answer the question were classed as unqualified.

Other than the high level of unqualified workers, it was not possible to identify, from the information supplied during the questionnaire survey, if there were any particular reasons why 20% (122) of the total number of respondents did not plan their work to achieve specific outcomes. The conclusion that can be reached from the evidence is that a significant number of respondents were working with young people in a way that was only concerned with process, that is, enabling them to take part in an activity for no particular outcome, either planned or incidental. An example of this approach can be found in the reply of a youth-work trainee employed full time with between 1-4 year's service who did not plan activities to achieve specific outcomes and listed his main activities with young people as:

- Entertainment;
- Information;
- Fun;
- Providing somewhere to go for young people; and
- Support.

This type of response was found throughout the questionnaires completed by those who claimed not to plan their work to achieve specific outcomes. As a result, it is possible to conclude that many of those working within the maintained Youth Service are only providing a social provision within which young people appear to be left to develop their own interest.

Those 80% (486) of respondents who did indicate that they planned their work to achieve specific outcomes were asked to list the outcomes, with no restriction on the number they were able to identify. The analysed results can be found in Table 29.

Table 29 Planned outcomes

Planned Outcome	Number	%
Social skills	221	36.3%
Informal Learning	123	20.2%
Key Skills	112	18.4%
Recognised Qualifications	108	17.8%
Practical Skills Development	65	10.7%
Fun	33	5.4%
Greater Awareness of Drug/Alcohol Issues	22	3.6 %
Records of Achievement	22	3.6%
Providing Information	20	3.3%
Enhanced Opportunities	20	3.3%
Meet the Requirements of the Youth Work Curriculum Statement	17	2.8%
Meet the Needs of Young People	14	2.3%
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme	13	2.1%
Empowerment of Young People	10	1.6%
Others	92	15.13%
Did not plan their work to achieve planned outcomes	61	10.0%
Did not complete this section	61	10.0%

When trying to analyse the results of this element of the questionnaire survey, similar difficulties were encountered to those identified during the analysis of the prioritised activities detailed in Table 26. Because the question allowed respondents to identify the planned outcomes of their work in their own terms, a number of different descriptions

were used that could be interpreted as being related to the same outcome. For example, replies with the highest level of response included (in first, second and third position respectively) outcomes that were identified as 'social skills, 'informal learning' and 'key skills'. Originally, these were coded and quantified to reflect the replies obtained and are identified in Table 29 as three separate outcomes. Following further evaluation of the results, for the purpose of analysis, the decision was taken to consider the three separate themes of 'social skills', 'informal learning' and 'key skills' as being contained within a general theme of 'skills' development. As a consequence of this decision, it is possible from the information supplied to conclude that the generic term 'personal skills development' was identified by 456 respondents as being a planned outcome, described as *"better communication", "improved self esteem", "better decision making", "working in a team" and "improved organisation skill"*. These direct quotes indicate clearly the clear level of understanding maintained Youth Service workers have of the appropriate skills young people were able to develop through the range of programme activities described in Table 26.

A number of respondents, 10.7% (65), also identified 'practical skills' as an outcome, which included *"improved IT skills", "art and craft skills", "sporting skills"* and *"climbing skills"*.

The evidence obtained from the questionnaire survey is supported by the comments of Estyn Inspections, which recognised that the value of the contact young people had with the maintained Youth Service was linked to them *"gaining skills in ICT, arts and crafts and sports"* (Estyn 2001a:3). Similar comments were made (Estyn 2002a:3) which claimed the Gwynedd Youth Service was enabling young people to *"make progress in developing important skills"*. This position was also recognised in Neath and Port Talbot (Estyn 2002b:8), where it was recognised that young people through their involvement in the maintained Youth Service were demonstrating *"enhanced self esteem, growing maturity, decision making and presentation skills"*.

In addition to the development of personal and practical skills, 17.8% (108) of respondents claimed to be offering recognised qualifications to the young people with whom they were involved through their work with the maintained Youth Service. These skills included qualifications primarily within the Open College Network (OCN) framework and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) for a variety of achievements including Senior Member Training, Food Hygiene, and Care Awards such as babysitting.

A wide range of planned outcomes which could not be categorised was identified by 15.13% (92) of respondents. These 'other responses' included *"stopping young people smoking so much"*, *"encouraging young people to go to church"*, *"young people attending youth club on a regular basis"*, *"more respect from young people to adult workers"*, *"less bad language"*, *"less violence and damage to the centre"* and *"stopping young people watching so much television"*. This section of the questionnaire provided similar comments related to a wide range of outcomes and suggests that too many of those working within the maintained Youth Service have not been introduced either to the purposes, principles and values of their work or to the philosophical position underpinning non-formal community-based education.

9.3.2 Intended outcomes – Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards

An analysis of the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards (Table 30) identified planned outcomes similar to those identified by the questionnaire survey. These outcomes were focused on the development of a range of skills most often through participation in activities such as sport, art and outdoor activities.

The range of skills identified can be sub-classified as personal and practical. Personal skills identified included improved communication, team working and problem solving, the achievement of which was described as leading to an increase in confidence, self-esteem, and knowledge. Practical skills are obtained through a diverse range of activities including camp craft, canoeing, guitar playing, drama, story telling, carpentry, welding, catering, Internet, library use, film making, photography and choreography.

Table 30 Planned outcomes identified from the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award applications

Type of Outcome	Number
Skills Development	182
Improved Confidence	95
Increased Knowledge	76
Community Links	60
Improved Communication	39
Education Attainment	38
Improved Self-Esteem	32
Improved Team Working	29

9.3.3 Intended outcomes – interview responses

For the majority of workers interviewed, the question on the intended outcomes of their work elicited a range of responses similar to those identified in the questionnaire survey. These included the development of social and personal skills, informal learning and a wide range of practical skills related to young people's involvement in sport, art, and IT.

A small number of Principal Youth Officers and full-time workers identified their role as developing in young people a range of practical 'attributes' including communication, team working and problem solving skills. They also identified the skill required by workers to deliver a programme of activities that was of interest to young people and which could be used by them to achieve outcomes linked to the attainment of the full range of practical attributes (Chapter 4). These managers and full-time workers identified, in an unambiguous way, a process of work with young people that used programme activities including sport, art, outdoor activities, and performing arts as a vehicle for obtaining relevant outcomes for young people such as those described as practical attributes. There was a clear recognition by a number of those involved in the interview process that young people who developed the full range of practical attributes were, as a consequence, more able to succeed in both their working and non-working lives.

9.4 The methods used for measuring the outcomes of the programme offered

The questionnaire survey did not ask respondents to detail the methods they used to measure the **attainments** (measured against standard benchmarks of A Levels, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, OCNs, NVQs) or the **achievements** (targets met by young people measured against non-standard benchmarks) of the planned outcomes for young people involved in the maintained Youth Service curriculum. It was the intention to explore this issue during both the examination of Estyn Inspection Reports and during the interview process.

The nature of the planned outcomes described previously in this chapter, such as personal skills development, for example, with planned outcomes of improved communication skills, team-working skills and problem-solving skills would require a range of sophisticated methods to measure the attainments and achievements.

The methods used to measure the development of both personal and practical skills would also be required to fit into the philosophical position of the maintained Youth Service and would be concerned to enable young people take ownership of both their learning and its assessment.

From the evidence obtained during this investigation, it is possible to conclude that the maintained Youth Service does not in general use a range of appropriate methods (Chapter 4) for measuring the planned outcomes of its work which reflect the philosophical position of non-formal education. This is not to suggest that there is a general lack of knowledge about the importance of measuring the outcomes of its work. Throughout the investigation, attempts were made by respondents to articulate what young people and the government could expect to have as a result of maintained Youth Service interventions. However, there was little unanimity between them, with the largest number of respondents claiming it was a task that could not be carried out and a significant minority of workers who claimed that the outcomes of the work of the maintained Youth Service could be achieved by using formal education methods in what a

full-time worker described as 'a youth work way'. For a small number of workers the task was seen to be contrary to the philosophical position of non-formal education with its requirement to locate the ownership of both the learning and the assessment of that learning with young people. The outcome of the work for this group was the development of a range of skills relevant to and owned by young individual young people, which enabled them to measure the distance they had travelled themselves.

What could be identified from the evidence provided were three specific reasons why those working in the maintained Youth Service were unable to collectively define both the method used to measure the outcome and the type of outcome being measured. First, there was a lack of collective understanding of the 'essence' of youth work and the difficulties related to arriving at agreed definitions about what youth work 'does', how it 'does it' and what 'results' are planned and achieved. Achieving this collective understanding was identified, by the findings of the investigation, as being made more difficult for practitioners as a consequence of the conflicts they encounter between a professional code, which advocates attention to the expressed needs of individuals and groups, and bureaucratic pressure for increased efficiency and compliance to predetermined outcomes (Chapter 1). This conflict is constantly exacerbated by the need for workers to maintain their levels of professional knowledge in a rapidly changing practice environment, which often challenges their philosophical and knowledge base. This situation can create circumstances where patterns of task and knowledge are inherently unstable.

Second, there is an historic difficulty in defining and measuring the outcomes of youth work practice, consequently, there are few appropriate models on which to build. The work of the Youth Service is also increasingly driven by a belief that effective programmes will develop in young people a wide range of what are described as 'soft skills' or 'enhanced emotional intelligence'. These soft skills include fostering attributes and skills such as an ability to communicate, work in teams, solve problems, and develop self-esteem or display initiative. The external monitoring and evaluation of the extent to which youth work interventions sponsor the acquisition of these characteristics is difficult if not impossible. For example, workers lack access both to the point that young people

have reached prior to intervention and to the extent to which other, parallel learning experiences contribute to change. As a consequence, there is no credible 'scale' able to measure the 'distance travelled by young people'. Even if it were possible to develop the tools to measure progress, a problem would remain: the philosophical position of much youth work has located the ownership and assessment of learning with young people, which requires an approach that recognises the intrinsic value of learning managed through the development of the skills of action and reflection. However, such approaches have little credibility within an environment that perceives monitoring and evaluation as management tools whose primary function is to ensure that set objectives are achieved within the cost calculations imposed by policy makers.

Third is the increasing plagiarising of models more appropriate to other areas of work, including formal school and college-based education. The consequence of this is all too obvious. A significant amount of evidence was found during the investigation of a growing trend amongst those working in the maintained Youth Service to measure the outcomes of their work through the use of formal education methods. The Estyn Inspection of Neath and Port Talbot stated that "*substantial numbers of young people gain formal accreditation for their achievements*" (Estyn 2002b:7). The importance of these sorts of qualifications was reinforced by the Estyn Inspection of Caerphilly, which claimed "*many of the activities undertaken by young people lead to national certification*" (Estyn 2001a:5). Evidence was also found during the interview process to suggest that the use of formal methods of measuring achievement was becoming more usual, with a focus group of full-time workers concluding that the maintained Youth Service was "*becoming like school in the evenings*" in that it was increasingly being directed into forms of work that were only seen to be of value if they were certificated by well-tried accreditation methods. This approach appears from the evidence obtained to be a growing trend to involve young people in a range of activities that lend themselves to monitoring and evaluation processes linked to outcomes measured by external sources. Open College Networks (OCNs), National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), Youth Achievement Awards and their like are proliferating within a new Youth Service environment driven by political dogma (Chapter 3). There are inherent dangers in this

practice, including the loss of the special contribution of the maintained Youth Service within a new landscape of managerialism and accountability.

This main reason for adopting the position of increasingly using formal methods of measuring outcomes appears to be the continuing failure of the maintained Youth Service to be able to determine the outcomes of its work in an appropriate way and to promote them with confidence to those with the responsibility for allocating resources. Instead, the outcomes of effective Youth Service provision appear to be treated with disdain or as mysterious by the significant majority of those involved in the investigation, who claimed in a variety of different ways that determining Youth Service outcomes required many years of distillation before becoming pure enough for consideration. A full-time worker involved in the interviews summed up a widely held view articulated throughout the investigation by stating:

> *"what young people really get from the Youth Service is almost impossible to measure at the time of their involvement. But what makes me believe in the importance of the Youth Service is meeting with young people 10 years after they've left the youth club who tell me how great it was and how much the learned from whatever experience they were involved in. Getting on with people, making decisions about things that affected them in the club, being part of a team, all the things that the government seems to be talking about now and giving other organisations money for."*

Underpinning this position was an almost total disregard of a non-formal education approach concerned to enable young people to become responsible for their own learning and for its assessment. Only a small amount of evidence was available from the research to suggest that young people were made aware of the non-formal education approach of the maintained Youth Service and their individual role within it. What could be identified was a well-established philanthropic approach within which young people were most often relegated to the role of 'user' of pre-determined programmes.

Despite these overall negative comments about the ability of those involved in the maintained Youth Service to identify the methods they use to determine the outcomes of their work, it was possible from the evidence made available to determine four different

models that were claimed to be in use. These included self-assessment, observation and reflection, peer assessment, and formal accreditation.

It was identified by the findings of the investigation that the first three methods were often used together to provide a more reliable and valid method for determining the outcomes of maintained Youth Service programmes. Self-assessment was described, by a small number of predominantly full-time workers, as a process within which young people were enabled to recognise and accept ownership of both their learning and its assessment. It was not a process dependent on formal externally validated tests (as is the case with formal education) but a process dependent on developing a range of individual skills, which were identified by workers across the occupational strands as *"reflection, communication (talking and listening), negotiation, compromise, being able to work with others and developing an enhanced ability to learn"*. For those workers using this model, the distance travelled by young people as a result of their learning in a wide variety of settings including school, community and work would be determined by young people, for their own use. The role of the maintained Youth Service in this process was described by some respondents as being to contribute to the development of the skills that would enable young people do this effectively.

Worker observation and reflection was described by a small minority of workers as a key method for determining the outcomes of their work. It was a method described as requiring both an agreed purpose and agreed outcomes. An example was given during the interview process by a full-time worker who identified the purpose of a project as:

> *"to develop communication, team building and problem solving skills in a group of 13 to 15 year olds who had a history of truanting from school and being involved in anti-social behaviour."*

The process for achieving this outcome was a weekend residential activity involving a planned programme of outdoor activities. The prime methods of evaluating the outcomes of the programme measured against its purpose were observation and reflection. This, it was claimed, was a participative process with the active involvement of the young people,

who would be encouraged to assess their own performance through a process of reflection and by recording their actions and achievements.

The third method, peer assessment, was identified as one which used groupwork techniques to determine the development of skills by young people. It was described as a method being used in a wide range of settings, often in partnership with worker observation.

Formal accreditation opportunities were also described as an appropriate method for measuring the outcomes for young people through their involvement in a range of maintained Youth Service programmes. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme was seen as one example by a number of workers as was the attainment of a range of formal qualifications related to First Aid and Food Hygiene, which were both given as examples by a worker who involved young people in outdoor and residential activities.

Substantial levels of evidence were obtained during the interview process, which identified that a significant number of respondents were overly focused either on the process, which they described as an outcome, or on inappropriate outcomes when measured against the purposes and principles of the Youth Service. Taking part in a wide range of activities was described by a number of workers across the occupational strands as *"having participation"* as the outcome.

> *"actually getting the sorts of young people who we see in the Youth Service to do something is a mega achievement. Getting them involved in football or rounders or swimming is important because participation is what we are about and being involved is also empowering which is what we also do."*
>
> Part-time Focus Group

There was little evidence provided by the part-time worker strand and from a significant number of those employed in the full-time worker strand to suggest that attempts were being made to consider the use of participation in the sorts of activities being delivered by the maintained Youth Service as a vehicle for developing planned outcomes that would

meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government. The evidence that was available with regard to planned outcomes was primarily concerned with developing what could be described as a culture of success, within which young people were encouraged to take part in competitive activities with the single planned outcome of *"winning"*. It was an outcome that appeared unconcerned with any aspects of personal development for the young people taking part in competitive activities. Rather it was a focused approach adopted by many workers across the occupational strands and was summed up by a full-time worker who claimed:

> *"The job of the Youth Service is to build the self-esteem and confidence of young people and being successful at competitive activities is the key contributor to both of those. Young people know that if they come to this club they will be successful and they will win things. For many it is the start of a change of attitude from thinking they are a failure to knowing they can win."*

Little attention appears to be given within this model of the potential to use competitive activities as a means of achieving planned outcomes such as team building, problem solving or communication, which are obviously important in competitive team activities such as basketball, football, or netball.

9.5 Summary

From the evidence identified during this chapter, it is possible to conclude that the maintained Youth Service does not have a collective ability across the occupational strands to contribute in a conscious way to young people developing the 'practical attributes' that enable them to operate effectively in their working and non-working lives (Chapter 3). It should be recognised, however, that significant numbers of those working in the maintained Youth Service describe the outcomes of their work as being related to the development of the sorts of skills (Chapter 9) contained within the framework of 'practical attributes'. It should also be recognised that pockets of high quality practice reflecting the purposes and values of the maintained Youth Service could be also identified. What appears to be lacking is a coherent process across the organisation

linking 'what the maintained Youth Service does' to how 'it does it' to what 'it achieves' linked to appropriate mechanisms to measure 'what has been achieved'.

A consequence of this lack of coherence is that most often the maintained Youth Service carries out its work as a predominantly informal education organisation, providing opportunities for potential learning for young people (that either is or is not useful within the context of their working or non-working lives) as a result of daily life activities similar to that related to work, family, or leisure. Within this context there is only limited structure in terms of learning objectives, time, or support offered. Sometimes learning in this informal environment may be purposeful but in most cases, it is not.

There is no intention when arriving at this conclusion to diminish the importance of the informal learning context of the maintained Youth Service, which has a long tradition of using its characteristics (Chapter 3) in its work with young people – based on voluntary association, debate, dialogue and negotiation – often as a means of developing positive relationships on which to encourage participation in non-formal education programmes. There is, however, a need to recognise that informal education is not discrete to the maintained Youth Service but a process that can happen wherever young people meet, including during school time with its predominantly formal education approach. The maintained Youth Service should, therefore, be concerned for most of its time with the non-formal learning of young people, delivered within the boundaries set by its organisational purposes and values (chapter 3).

CHAPTER 10

Conclusions and recommendations

10.1 Introduction

This investigation is concerned to provide an answer to the question "is the maintained Youth Service in Wales concurrently able to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of relevant government policy while maintaining its discrete identity as described within its purposes and value statements?" To provide a reliable and valid answer to this question, an attempt was made to identify the core characteristics of the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3), the needs of young people as identified by those working in the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 4) and the specific requirements placed on the maintained Youth Service by government policy (Chapter 5).

Three methods of obtaining appropriate evidence to provide an answer to the question were used: document analysis, a questionnaire survey and individual and focus-group interviews (Chapter 2). These methods were located within an evaluation research framework concerned to measure the extent to which a planned programme of activities achieves its desired objectives (meeting the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy) within the culture of the organisation being evaluated. In carrying out this process, it was recognised by the researcher that the results of evaluation research rarely rely on the empirical evidence alone because there is a necessary compromise to be made between precision and the broad picture. It was also recognised by the researcher that evaluation theory has been developed from the concept of managerialism, supported by what is described as the inaccurate assumption that both policy makers and managers are in control of decision making (Chapter 2). However, the goal-setting environment promoted by government (Chapter 1, Chapter 5) is of growing significance to the Youth Service, which is increasingly pressurised by government to introduce both more formal curriculum activities and accreditation mechanisms to its work with young people and more robust evaluation systems to ensure policy initiatives are adhered to. These

politically determined results linked to government agendas appear to discount the more difficult-to-measure outcomes related to the more specific needs of young people in favour of more easily quantifiable measures of the sort most often found within the formal education setting.

However, for the researcher, the term evaluation was broader than an attempt to measure the effects of existing and particular government priorities. In the context of this investigation, evaluation research was concerned to understand the real effects of policies, to compare the assumptions upon which policies are based with social experience and to assist in a considered assessment of their viability and appropriateness.

To achieve this outcome, the investigation attempted to move away from a process driven by a hierarchical approach concerned with management-defined problems to one concerned to involve group discussion, negotiation and consensus. As a consequence, the investigation became a process both of identifying the value of a complex context through the collection of a range of evidence from individuals and groups with a relevant interest and of making judgements about what was obtained, which was measured against the specific criteria identified in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. In adopting this stance, it was recognised that the investigation had a specific focus that precluded it from evaluating a range of organisational characteristics other than those identified. Consequently, certain issues were not considered, including finding out from young people themselves what they believed their needs were, evaluating user satisfaction, or asking young people to identify the benefits of their involvement in the maintained Youth Service.

The conclusions of the investigation will be drawn from the evidence, described in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9, which is focused on the research objectives identified in Chapter 1. First, this final chapter will examine what this evidence revealed about the level of collective understanding by those working within the maintained Youth Service of its discrete identity; second, it will identify the resources the maintained Youth Service has available to carry out its work; third, this chapter will consider how the maintained Youth Service is organised; fourth, it will identify what the Youth Service does and how it

measures it; and fifth, this chapter will use these conclusions to answer the research question. Throughout this process, the opportunity will also be taken to make recommendations concerned to develop further the synergy between the three elements of the question as a means of providing a more effective service to the young people of Wales.

10.2 The level of knowledge of those working in the maintained Youth Service of its discrete identity

Chapter 3 identified the maintained Youth Service as an organisation located for most of its existence at the margins of government thinking, the exceptions being the short-lived effects of the Albemarle Report (Ministry of Education 1960) and the yet-to-be-measured impact of Extending Entitlement (NAW 2000a, NAW 2001c, WAG 2002a). From the evidence obtained during the investigation, it can be concluded that the reason for this marginalisation is the collective inability of the maintained Youth Service to promote its potential as a non-formal community-based education provider (Chapter1) to the government that funds it (Chapter 6). Consequently, the maintained Youth Service is an organisation removed from any significant influence within the policy debate relating to young people or education and supported by inadequate levels of funding (Chapter 7). This marginalised position can be seen to be self-perpetuating because of the maintained Youth Service's periodic changes of organisational direction caused by the need to realign its identity in order to fit into particular funding criteria. Rather than adopt a defendable collective stance that reflects its tradition of voluntary association, debate, dialogue and negotiation, the maintained Youth Service appears more concerned to shift the focus of its provision in order to gain what it thinks is greater financial security and greater political influence.

Continuing marginalisation has caused the maintained Youth Service to attempt (within the environment of a centralising Labour government) to re-brand itself through the adoption of characteristics of the sort aligned to powerful organisations such as schools. This re-branding has manifested itself in a Youth Service 'curriculum statement',

enhanced 'managerial' structures, 'workforce development' strategies, 'formal measurement methods' and the identification of the young people with whom it comes into contact as 'customers' or 'clients'.

Some resistance to this re-branding was identified (Chapter 6) by approaches that reflect the tradition and history of the Youth Service, which generally remains a predominantly community-based organisation despite pressures to move it into, for example, schools or crime prevention arenas. As a result, it operates where young people are (Chapter 7) and, when appropriately funded, it was identified as operating at the times young people need it (Chapter 4, Chapter 8). It is an organisation that brings young people into contact with adults who support their involvement in a wide range of activities, of benefit both to themselves and often to their communities. Because of its community location and its voluntary association, the maintained Youth Service is also an organisation able to make and maintain contact with many young people who are not in touch with other structures in society, such as school or the workplace (Chapter 8).

From the range of evidence examined, it can be concluded that the maintained Youth Service cannot be described as a clearly bounded group (or groups) of people interacting together to achieve a particular goal (or goals) in a formally structured and co-ordinated way (Chapter 3). Rather, it can be identified as a disparate, uncoordinated organisation with a wide range of understanding of its purposes, principles and outcomes, characteristics which are too often defined by individuals or small networks of workers.

As a consequence, the term Youth Service can be seen to be a contested term subject to a wide variety of interpretations between and within the occupational strands of the organisation (Chapter 6). Three key themes could be identified from the evidence collected during the research to indicate why this is so. First, there were the particular circumstances in place at the time of the investigation. Second, there is the ambiguity of maintained Youth Service identity as a consequence of an ineffectual Curriculum Statement. Third was the role of young people using the maintained Youth Service.

10.2.1 Particular circumstances at the time of the investigation

The interrelated circumstances in place at the time of the investigation created a unique context for the delivery of work with young people through their involvement with the maintained Youth Service. These circumstances included:

- the setting up of the National Assembly for Wales with its interest in education, youth inclusion and participation (Chapter 1);
- the development of a national government strategy for working with young people in Wales with its intent to develop a coherent approach within a Young People's Partnership framework (Chapter 3, Chapter 5);
- the creation within the National Assembly for Wales of a Youth Policy Unit with a responsibility for promoting the legal base of Extending Entitlement (Chapter 3, Chapter 5); and
- the expansion of resources for the Youth Service (Chapter 7).

The result of these developments has been the rapid, generally uncoordinated expansion of the maintained Youth Service, which did not have sufficiently robust mechanisms in place to maximise the new opportunities being presented to it because of its weak organisational foundation (Chapter 3, Chapter 6, Chapter 7). This organisational weakness ensured that the large number of new recruits to the organisation (Chapter 7) were both uninformed of the purposes of the maintained Youth Service and inadequately prepared for practice through qualifying training, induction programmes and continuing professional development (Chapter 7).

This inadequate preparation meant that many workers were separated from both the philosophical position of the maintained Youth Service and its history prior to their employment (Chapter 6). As a consequence, many of the recruits to the maintained Youth Service following the allocation of New Burdens money (Chapter 7) can be identified as being unable to articulate the purposes, principles and values underpinning their work, or to provide cogent arguments to counter the particular practice stance being advocated by Welsh Assembly Government officials with the responsibility for translating government policy into practice (Chapter 6, Chapter 7).

The rapid expansion of an organisation in poor health as a result of a number of years of neglect within the previous political era (Chapter 3) meant that it continued to be driven by a range of differing priorities and understanding between the occupational strands both within and between individual local authorities. These differing priorities and understanding have became so pronounced that it is possible to conclude that they have separated the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service (Principal Youth Officers and regional/specialist managers, full-time workers and part-time workers) in such a fundamental way that they could legitimately be described as operating in three separate 'young people' organisations. This position appears to be so well embedded that the possibility of an organisation-driven conciliation process concerned to bring about a collective understanding of purposes, principles and values can legitimately be described as remote.

This conclusion was arrived at because the Principal Youth Officers, as the managers of the Youth Service at a local authority level, were identified as being primarily concerned with macro-management issues, key to which was the continuation and possible growth and status of their particular local authority Youth Service. The focus on this priority has led at times to the distortion of the synergy between organisational purposes and organisational principles and values, as funding streams rather than organisational identity drives the work of the maintained Youth Service. This situation has been exacerbated by the increase in special projects driven by a focused funding regime linked to the delivery of specific services for young people, which are often contrary to the young-people-first approach of the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 3). The purposes of the maintained Youth Service were also identified as being confused at a strategic level by the emergence of Young People's Partnerships, which were perceived by the Principal Youth Officers to be taking a more central responsibility for developing an holistic approach at a local authority level for the delivery of services to young people, often without the involvement of the Principal Youth Officer.

Full-time workers, who should have been providing the core professional integrity of the organisation, were identified by the evidence contained within the investigation (Chapter

8) as being too often separated from direct contact with young people and, as a result, provided limited input into a form of practice that ensured a robust adherence to the philosophical position of a predominantly non-formal community-based education service (Chapter 6). As an occupational strand, full-time workers have also been influenced by the rapid expansion of the maintained Youth Service, which resulted in 45.9% of the full-time workforce being unqualified at the time of the investigation (Chapter 7). From the evidence examined it is possible to identify that the outcome of this untenable position is a group of key full-time workers who are unqualified, unable to recognise the purposes of the maintained Youth Service and dislocated from maintained Youth Service history, and as a result, they are isolated from traditional ways of working (Chapter 3). As a consequence, the maintained Youth Service was identified as being more susceptible to the contemporary young-people agenda as interpreted by civil servants with the responsibility for turning government policy into practice. Arguments were presented by both Principal Youth Officers and full-time workers during the investigation to suggest that although many workers were unqualified, they were undertaking qualifying training concurrently with their employment. This line of argument would have been more persuasive if the numbers of unqualified workers were less than those identified.

Part-time workers were identified as being concerned with a naive young-people-first approach generally through the delivery of low-level leisure provision which failed to recognise the challenges associated with providing predominantly non-formal community-based learning that is intentional and appropriately planned, delivered and measured. This occupational strand has most contact with the young people who use the maintained Youth Service (Chapter 8). The ultimate consequence of this predominantly low-level leisure provision approach is the continuation of a disparate uncoordinated way of working with young people with a wide range of differing community, local authority and national priorities resulting in a minimum of intentional learning of the sort advocated by the philosophy of non-formal education (Chapter 4). Part-time workers have also been influenced by the rapid expansion of the maintained Youth Service and 47.9% were unqualified at the time this investigation was carried out (Chapter 7).

10.2.2 The effect of the Curriculum Statement on the maintained Youth Service in Wales

The second theme identified was the ambiguous environment created by the production of the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (Appendix 1), the purpose of which was to provide a foundation for the work of the maintained Youth Service. The evidence obtained during the investigation, however, identified a significant level of confusion (particularly amongst full-time and part-time unqualified workers, who rely on the publication for the direction of their practice) about the relationship between purposes, principles and values. This conclusion is not to suggest that there is a general lack of knowledge by workers about maintained Youth Service purposes, principles and values, which are well documented in a range of contemporary publications (NYA 2000a, WYA 2002e). It is more about recognising the difficulties associated with extracting a collective understanding of the 'essence' of youth work and the difficulties related to agreed definitions of what youth work 'does', how it 'does it' and what 'results' are planned and achieved through the information contained within the Curriculum Statement. For many workers involved in the investigation, the important content of the Curriculum Statement was in the process statements, which identified the work of the Youth Service as being 'educative', 'participative', 'empowering' and 'expressive'. While these four statements underpinned their work, this did not ensure that the work was part of a process that, for example, engaged with young people through their voluntary association, was age specific and concerned to start from a point determined by young people (Chapter 3). The outcome of this lack of recognition of the starting points for the work of the maintained Youth Service was a programme of activities for young people that, in general, seldom rose above a process-driven activity separated from a clearly articulated purpose or intended outcome.

Evidence was found to identify a level of high-quality provision delivered by both full-time and part-time workers which reflected an appropriate philosophical position. This work was also identified as being under continual pressure as a consequence of the conflicts many workers encountered as they attempted to maintain a professional code which advocates attention to the expressed needs of individuals and groups and opposes

bureaucratic pressure for increased efficiency and compliance to predetermined outcomes. This conflict is constantly exacerbated by the need for workers to maintain their levels of professional knowledge in a rapidly changing policy and practice environment, which often challenges their philosophical and knowledge base (Chapter 6), with little opportunity to take part in a coherent continual professional development process (Chapter 7).

10.2.3 The maintained Youth Service and its relationship with young people

The third theme identified by the evidence obtained during the investigation was the lack of collective understanding across the occupational strands of the role of young people within the maintained Youth Service. At the root of this uncertainty was confusion about both the voluntary attendance of young people and the non-formal education approach driven by an intentional learning process determined by them. It would be possible to conclude that an approach driven by these two characteristics should result in young people being centrally involved in the development, delivery and measurement of the programme delivered by the maintained Youth Service. However, there was little evidence to suggest that this was happening as an embedded process adopted by all the occupational strands in contact with young people involved in the maintained Youth Service. The reason for this lack of collective understanding can be linked to the lack of opportunity for full-time and part-time workers to be introduced to the organisational characteristics of the maintained Youth Service through appropriate qualifying training and induction programmes (Chapter 7). A consequence of this failure is a too-often individualised concept of the purposes and linked principles and values of the organisation that employs them.

10.2.4 Unfocused and unsure

It can be concluded that the combination of these three themes has resulted in the maintained Youth Service becoming unfocused and unsure of its purposes as it switches primarily between education, leisure/play, caring, and employment preparation responsibilities (Chapter 6). It has become an organisation easily distracted from its

agreed philosophical position into forms of work determined by particular government policy, including, for example, such initiatives as crime reduction and the management of disruptive school pupils. It can be concluded that the reason for this distraction is the lack of a dominant organisational culture and the proliferation of a number of sub-cultures with a disparate range of interpretations of key Youth Service concepts between and within occupational strands. Education, participation, empowerment, creativity, and transition, for example, have all become terms with a wide variety of interpretations dependent on the sub-culture group making the interpretation.

Within this environment, it can also be concluded that the attention given to the maintained Youth Service following the publication of the National Assembly's strategy for young people, Extending Entitlement (Chapter 3, Chapter 5), resulted in the identification of incorrect priorities. Rather than providing additional resources to improve its infrastructure through the recruitment and training of additional workers, it can be concluded that the key priority should have been the production of a national Youth Service Strategy focused on a range of priorities that would enable it to make a contribution to the new policy agenda in a way that reflected its organisational identity (Chapter 3). A Youth Service strategy would also have needed to contain the priorities necessary to re-energise an organisation suffering from almost 30 years of neglect, including, for example:

1. a refocused purpose (and a collective agreement to it) which clearly linked purpose to principles and values;
2. a building refurbishment programme to bring dilapidated buildings up to standard;
3. defining an appropriate structure which focused resources on maximising contact between workers and young people;
4. identifying agreed outcomes for young people through their involvement with the maintained Youth Service;
5. methods for measuring the outcomes for young people through their involvement in maintained Youth Service programmes;
6. describing the environment within which the predominantly non-formal community-based education activity of the maintained Youth Service is delivered;

7. a strategy for training and inducting the significant numbers of workers being recruited into the service;
8. the writing of National Standards for the maintained Youth Service;
9. developing an appropriate maintained Youth Service budget; and
10. detailing partnership working relationships within and between the 22 local authority Youth Services as a means of ensuring the more effective delivery of a predominantly non-formal community-based learning experience for young people.

The current disparate nature of the maintained Youth Service has, from the historical and contemporary evidence examined, become so embedded that there appears to be little opportunity for the position to be effectively improved without radical intervention. There is therefore a need for a more far-reaching reconstruction of work with young people in the community as a means of ensuring that they have a range of appropriate non-formal community based learning opportunities in addition to those available in school. The elements of this reconstruction are described in the following analysis and recommendations.

Recommendation 1

That a national Youth Service be created which would be identified by its non-formal community education approach planned to meet both the identified needs of young people and the economic and social regeneration priorities of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Recommendation 2

That the national Youth Service be identified by a statement of intent (not described as a curriculum statement with its formal education connotations), which would be linked to an agreed set of principles and values, including its:

1. voluntary association with young people;
2. particular educational approach;
3. focus on an age-specific group of young people;

4. value of young people for who they are rather than what they can achieve; and
5. universal approach.

Recommendation 3

That National Standards be produced to provide the foundation on which the Youth Service delivers its work. These standards will be concerned to identify a range of elements essential for the delivery of an effective high quality non-formal community based education service.

Recommendation 4

That the national Youth Service changes it focus to become an outcome driven organisation rather than the predominantly process-driven organisation it is currently. This change of focus would be underpinned by its non-formal education approach which places both the ownership of learning and the assessment of that learning in the control of young people through a range of activities into which they enter voluntarily.

Recommendation 5

That the national Youth Service be located within a system that is not dependent on its organisation, management and delivery being within 22 local authorities, where there is a potential to dilute its collective ability to adhere to a core philosophical position which is often subsumed by competing political and managerial priorities.

10.3 The levels of human and physical resources of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

10.3.1 Human resources

The issue of resources for the maintained Youth Service in Wales is linked to two themes: does it spend what it has in an efficient way; and does it have sufficient resources for it to operate effectively? In determining whether the maintained Youth Service spends its

budget in an efficient way, consideration needs to be given to its most important resource, those whom it employs. There are, it can be concluded, two main reasons why consideration should be given to its employees. First, the maintained Youth Service is an organisation dependent, for both the process and the product of its work, on the quality of the relationship developed between the adult worker and young people (Chapter 3). The quality of this relationship is not based on, for example, paternalism, friendship or traditional hierarchies but on a foundation created by the voluntary attendance of young people, the consequence of which is the shift in the balance of power away from the adult to the young person. In this relationship, there is a critical need for workers to negotiate with young people the framework for the relationship, which can be ended at any time by the young person without penalty. Failure to recognise the expectations of young people within this relationship can result in the adult worker being left without young people to work with. Understanding the importance of the voluntary relationship and developing approaches to work within it requires skilled workers who are appropriately recruited and trained to enable them to respond adequately to the challenges presented. These challenges include, as examples, managing the shift of power in favour of the young person, seeing young people as young people, starting from a point determined by young people and recognising young people as individuals capable as change.

Second, the workers across the occupational strands of the maintained Youth Service are responsible for 68% of its total budget expenditure (WYA 2005), which places on those responsible for the strategic direction and operational management of the maintained Youth Service a fundamental requirement to ensure the workforce is adequately prepared to carry out its responsibilities as described within a range of documents (NYA, 2000, WYA 2002,).

It can be concluded that the ability of too many workers employed by the maintained Youth Service to carry out the range of complex responsibilities associated with their work is significantly diminished by their unqualified status. The extent of this position is demonstrated by the information contained in Chapter 7, which identified 45.9% of the 159 full time workers involved in the investigation as unqualified in accordance with the

requirements of the Joint Negotiating Council. A similar proportion, 47.9%, of part-time workers was also identified as unqualified (Chapter 7).

The financial implications of these high levels of unqualified staff within the maintained Youth Service can be estimated from the maintained Youth Service budget for 2001/2002 (Chapter 7), which was identified as £29.639 million. Of this figure, 68%, £20.15 million was spent on employing staff. From the audit figures for the maintained Youth Service for 2003-04 (WYA 2005), the total number of managers was 119, the total full-time workers 363 and the total number of full-time equivalent posts, calculated from the total number of hours worked by the 2367 part-time workers, was 251. The total number of full-time equivalents was 731. Therefore, the total proportion of full-time equivalent workers employed in the maintained Youth Service during the time of the investigation that were unqualified was 40.6% (297 full-time equivalents). The total estimated cost of unqualified workers can therefore be calculated as £8.18 million. Of even more concern than the spending of a significant amount of scarce financial resources on unqualified staff is the potential for a diminished standard of work being offered to young people in the community in the name of the maintained Youth Service. From the evidence available, it is possible to conclude that the maintained Youth Service does not manage a significant part of its financial resources in an efficient way to the detriment of its ability to deliver in a discrete way a service that meets the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy.

Recommendation 6

That the numbers of full-time workers be increased to ensure a minimum ratio of 1 worker to every 400 young people within the priority age range of the national Youth Service.

Recommendation 7

That a minimum of 90% of the staff employed within the national Youth Service would have undertaken appropriate qualifying training prior to their employment (the attainment

of this level of qualified staff would bring the new service into line with levels that exist in the maintained Youth Service in England).

Recommendation 8

That all those employed in the national Youth Service have access to professionally endorsed Continuing Professional Development opportunities.

10.3.2 Physical resources

The evidence obtained during the investigation identified the maintained Youth Service in Wales as continuing to be embedded in a culture of financial poverty within which aspiration by workers to work in high-quality buildings, both appropriately staffed and resourced, was at a very low level. There was, in too many instances, a resignation to badly maintained, poorly decorated and ill-equipped premises, often inappropriately located within the community to meet either the needs of young people or the requirements of government policy. The New Burdens Group (NAW 2000d) had identified the acuteness of this particular problem and concluded that the maintained Youth Service was in need of an immediate £20 million to refurbish existing buildings and that additional funding would be required to develop new facilities in areas where none existed (Chapter 7). Alleviating this particular deficiency is seen as critical in realising the articulated needs of young people for places to meet (Chapter 4).

At the time of the investigation, relatively insignificant amounts of money had been passed to local authorities for the refurbishments of maintained Youth Service buildings through New Burdens funding (Chapter 7). It was also identified during the investigation that much of the money that was allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government as a result of the New Burdens recommendations was not used for the purpose for which it was given and was diverted into other local authority priorities (Chapter 7). The maintained Youth Service audit for 2003-04 concluded that the capital expenditure for the year was £429,852, which is more than £3.5 million less than the amount proposed within New Burdens (NAW 2000d). The outcome of this level of underspending year on year is a

continuing deterioration of the fabric of the buildings being used by the maintained Youth Service with the implications this has on the delivery of high-quality work.

The evidence obtained from the investigation also identified the low level of spending per head by the maintained Youth Service on the 11-25 year olds in Wales, which was calculated as £53.73 per year (Chapter 7, Table 11). This was not, however, the amount available to be spent directly on a programme of activities for young people. Rather, this figure was divided between staff costs (68% £36.50), renting accommodation (10% £5.40), resources (7.2% £3.90), grants to the voluntary sector (3.3% £1.80), training (2.4% £1.30), capital expenditure (1.5% 0.81p) and other spending (7% £3.80). The amount of money supplied through the local authority for the delivery of a programme that would maintain the interest of young people in the activities of the maintained Youth Service would have to be found from 7% under the heading 'other', or £3.80 per head for young people aged 11-25 per year (WYA 2005).

Simply stated, the maintained Youth Service in Wales is grossly underfunded to carry out its work in a way that consistently meets the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy. Underfunding continues to provide insurmountable difficulties for the staff of the maintained Youth Service to attract and work in a positive way with young people, who are often affected negatively both by the condition of the buildings within which they meet and by the lack of equipment and facilities (Chapter 7).

Recommendation 9

That £20 million, plus inflation from the year 2000, is made available to refurbish the existing building stock currently used by the maintained Youth Service. This would be in line with the recommendations made in the New Burdens Report (NAW 2000d).

Recommendation 10

That a minimum of £4 million be allocated on an annual basis to the national youth Service to continue upgrading buildings and purchase new equipment. This would reflect the requirements of the New Burdens Group (Chapter 7).

Recommendation 11

That the national Youth Service develops a network of existing physical resources across Wales which will be converted into centres of excellence concerned to involve young people in a wide range of non-formal community based learning through, for example, the performing arts, sport, outdoor activities and the visual arts.

Recommendation 12

That a core budget allocation of at least £150 per year be made available for every young person in Wales between the ages of 13-19, which is the current priority age range for the maintained Youth Service. This figure would reflect the aspirations of an organisation ambitious to embed its approach within the Life Long Learning Framework of the Welsh Assembly Government

10.4 The organisation of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

The maintained Youth Service is organised in such a way as to remove those who should be most able to understand their role – the full-time workers – from direct contact with young people for significant periods of time. Direct contact with young people is, as a consequence, devolved in general to the part-time workers. The extent to which this happens can be illustrated by the evidence described in Chapter 8 (Fig. 6, Fig. 7), which identifies that 48% of the full-time workers' time is spent in contact with young people, while part-time workers spend 74% of their working time in the maintained Youth Service in direct contact with young people. It has also been identified (Chapter 7) that the 52% of time spent by full-time workers away from contact with young people is spent on a range of tasks including management. The significance of this situation is further

emphasised by the results of the 2003-04 audit of the maintained Youth Service (WYA 2005); in 1999, there were 75 designated managers, (WYA 2000d) whereas the WYA audit identified that by 2003 the number of managers had reached 119, an increase of 59%. Additional information is required to establish the reasons for the proliferation of managerial posts within the maintained Youth Service and the effect this situation might have on the quality of delivery to young people.

Further evidence identified the full-time workers as being in contact with both under 8 year olds and 8 to 11 year olds for a combined total of 3.7% of their time. Both of these age groups are outside of the specified age for the Youth Service and it can be concluded that this figure should be deducted from the time full-time workers are in direct contact with young people, which reduces the overall direct contact time to 44.3%. Part-time workers were also in contact with under 8 year olds and 8 to 11 year olds for a combined time of 13.6%, which reduces their overall contact time with young people to 61.4%.

Recommendation 13

That a strategy be developed and implemented to ensure that full-time workers in the national Youth Service, in the normal course of their work, are in contact with young people for a minimum of 75% of their time and that part-time workers in the normal course of their work are in contact with young people for a minimum of 90% of their time.

Recommendation 14

That the work of the national Youth Service focuses on its agreed priority age range, that is, young people aged 13 to 19 years.

Recommendation 15

That the structure of the national Youth Service be developed in such a way as to reduce the numbers of managers currently in post and that the amount of time spent by full-time workers on management tasks is minimised.

Recommendation 16

That a reconfigured national Youth Service structure ensures the continuation of local delivery of agreed programmes. Strategic management and the management of corporate activities such as training, quality standards and quality assurance systems, and programme development should, however, be carried out on a regional or national basis.

10.4.1 Becoming a universal service

From an analysis of the evidence examined (Chapter 8), it is possible to conclude that the young people involved with the maintained Youth Service in Wales during the period of the investigation can be identified by three major characteristics. First, they are predominantly within the 12 to 15 year old age group; second, they are mostly male; third, a significant number of them are not successful within the formal school system. This user profile does not adequately reflect the universal commitment of the maintained Youth Service.

Recommendation 17

That the national Youth Service develops and implements a marketing strategy for widening its contact with young people as a means of ensuring its universal principle. A key element for inclusion in this strategy will be the marketing of a process that young people will see as being both enjoyable and of use to them both in their working and non-working lives. To be successful this marketing strategy will need to be supported by a local infrastructure capable of delivering high quality support to young people in appropriate, well-resourced buildings in suitable locations.

Recommendation 18

That the national Youth Service develops strategies to more appropriately meet the needs of young people by maximising the times their service is accessible to young people by opening more often at weekends and during school holidays.

10.4.2 Working with young people

'Conversation' with young people was described by those employed across the occupations strands as the most appropriate way to determine needs and was the method used by 85.4% of workers (Chapter 8 Table 24). From the evidence examined, it is possible to conclude that there is an over-reliance on conversation as a means of determining the needs of those young people with whom the maintained Youth Service is in contact. This conclusion is not intended to criticise conversation as a method because it can be clearly identified as being appropriate for an organisation driven by a young-person-first approach (Chapter 3). The concern is related to two significant deficiencies in the process. First the effectiveness of the process is dependent on the young people using the maintained Youth Service being able to participate fully in a conversation with an adult worker and being able to articulate clearly what they need from that relationship. It would have been useful to have seen a range of other methods identified by respondents including, for example, greater use of observation and assessment forms, reflection, role playing, surveys, reading and research. Second, conversation was a method for determining need only with those young people who were already in contact with the maintained Youth Service. There was no evidence to suggest a strategic approach to engage with a range of young people, through conversation or other means, who were not in regular contact with the maintained Youth Service.

There is also some concern that the emphasis by respondents on conversation as a method for determining the needs of young people is, at least in part, a result of the influence of contemporary policy developments including Extending Entitlement and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child with its strong focus on consulting young people about issues that affect them. Conversation could therefore be seen as *the* outcome of effective Youth Service practice rather than part of a process that leads to agreed action

and the attainment of appropriate outcomes. This position was identified from evidence contained within a number of comments made by workers within all of the occupational strands, which were summed up by a focus group of part-time workers who made the claim:

> *"the outcome of our work for young people is to get them talking, telling us what they want, how they want it and when they want it. If we manage that then our job is done."*

Recommendation 19

That a marketing strategy, linked to the market research strategy, is developed and used by the national Youth Service to keep those between the ages of 11 – 25 aware of the opportunities available to them through their involvement in the organisation. This strategy would be focused on promoting a style of personal development, the outcomes of which would be of use to young people in both their working and non-working lives and capable of making a contribution to the social and economic agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government.

10.5 What the maintained Youth Service does and how it measures the outcomes

The maintained Youth Service offers to young people a range of opportunities predominantly during their leisure time after school, sometimes at weekends and sometimes during school holidays (Chapter 9). These opportunities include providing somewhere for young people to go where they can become involved in a wide range of activities, including, for example, sport, art and outdoor activities. From the evidence available, it is possible to conclude that there is a commonality of outcomes for young people identified by the investigation which are achieved through their involvement in these and other activities. Both those working full-time and those working part-time describe the outcomes of their work as being to enable the further development of a range of personal and practical skills of use to the young people with whom they come into contact (Chapter 9). There was no evidence obtained during the investigation to indicate

that young people become involved in the maintained Youth Service as a conscious act to become more competent in the described 'practical attributes' of, for example, communication, team-working, or problem solving (Chapter 4). A small number of Principal Youth Officers, regional/specialist managers and full-time workers recognised both this position and the skill required by workers to deliver activities that are of interest to young people and which could be used to achieve outcomes linked to the development of the identified 'practical attributes'. Evident from these respondents was a position that identified the vehicle of work with young people (for example sport, art, outdoor activities, performing arts) as a way of obtaining relevant outcomes for young people, such as those described as 'practical attributes', in an enjoyable and appealing way. It was also recognised by a number of those involved in the interview process that young people who attained and developed these and other 'practical attributes' were, as a consequence, more able to obtain employment, security and status and to take a more active part in their neighbourhoods, wider communities and society (Chapter 4). For the government, young people who gain these attributes become both part of a workforce that is more able to compete in a global market, underpinned by a knowledge economy, and contributors to its citizenship and wider social regeneration agenda (Chapter 4, Chapter 5).

Recommendation 20

That those working within the national Youth Service be directed to link the skills development of young people to an intentional learning process that is voluntarily entered into by young people, through a broad spectrum of activities that young people find enjoyable, challenging and appealing.

10.5.1 How the maintained Youth Service measures its outcomes

There is a lack of formalised systems or procedures to manage or measure, in a collectively agreed way, the outcomes of maintained Youth Service programmes in a manner that reflects a non-formal education approach. Diametrically opposed positions were identified: one group of workers across the occupational strands indicated that learning by young people as an outcome of the work of the maintained Youth Service is

most appropriately measured by the sort of testing process used in school; a second group claimed the maintained Youth Service provided free-time activities for young people within which a formalised programme linked to any form of attainment measurement would be an imposition. Common ground for both groups was a belief that effective programmes, either planned or spontaneous, result in young people developing a wide range of 'soft skills', including 'emotional intelligence', or 'key skills', including an enhanced ability to communicate, work in teams, solve problems, and develop self-esteem or display 'initiative'.

Developing appropriate systems for the external measurement of these skills is problematic, particularly through the use of external measures such as those plagiarised from the formal school setting. For example, workers lack access both to the point that young people have reached prior to intervention and to the extent to which other, parallel, learning experiences contribute to change. As a consequence, there is no credible 'external scale' able to measure the 'distance travelled by young people'. Even if it were possible to develop the tools to measure progress, a problem would remain: the philosophical position of the non-formal education approach of the maintained Youth Service locates the ownership and assessment of learning with young people themselves, which requires an approach that recognises the intrinsic value of learning managed through the development of the skills of action and reflection (Freire 1972). However, such approaches have little credibility within an environment that perceives monitoring and evaluation as management tools whose primary function is to ensure that set objectives are achieved within the cost calculations imposed by policy makers. The consequence of this managerialist environment for the maintained Youth Service is all too obvious. There is a growing trend to provide activities for young people that lend themselves to monitoring and evaluation processes linked to outcomes measured by external sources. Open College Network (OCNs), National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), Youth Achievement Awards and their like are proliferating within a new youth service environment driven by political dogma.

Throughout its history, there is little evidence to be found of a collective commitment to working with young people in a developmental way if the outcomes of such an approach conflict with government priorities. There should be no surprise in this position given that the maintained Youth Service is funded directly by government. It can also be concluded that as a consequence of its responsive nature to government directives, the maintained Youth Service has generally been unable to develop its philosophical position with sufficient rigour to persuade any government of its potential as a non-formal community-based education service capable of contributing to the appropriate education needs of young people.

Recommendation 21

That the national Youth Service be directed to develop a range of appropriate methods for determining the outcomes of its work with young people. These methods should reflect a non-formal education approach and recognise the role of young people in measuring their own learning

10.6 Summary

This investigation set out to answer a question with three interrelated elements - the maintained Youth Service in Wales, the needs of those young people with whom the organisation was in contact, and the requirements of appropriate government policy. Each of these elements had to be identified before the effectiveness of their relationship could be judged. After carrying out this process, it can be concluded that the maintained Youth Service cannot in general meet the needs of young people and the requirements of appropriate government policy while maintaining its discrete organisational identity. The most pertinent reason for this is that significant numbers of those working in the maintained Youth Service are incapable of identifying the characteristics that make it discrete (Chapter 3). It can also be concluded that it is an organisation that sometimes meets the needs of young people, not always as a thoughtful process but as a consequence of intuitive practice based on an understanding of young people developed as part of its high-quality-relationship-building role. It is also an organisation that sometimes meets the

requirements of government policy, most often, it can be concluded, as a survival mechanism rather than as a process concerned to make a contribution to the economic and social regeneration agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Despite the criticisms identified in this investigation, the maintained Youth Service in Wales does remain an organisation with significant strengths, particularly its ability to develop positive relationships with young people in community locations. It is an organisation capable, at times, of producing high quality work of considerable benefit to young people who make contact with it. The challenge for a national Youth Service is to unlock its full potential so that this high quality work becomes the norm. To achieve this, a national Youth Service will need to both collectively organise itself and convince those who fund it that it is capable of making a significant contribution to young people, the Extending Entitlement agenda, the Learning Country agenda and the economic and social regeneration aspirations of Wales.

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APPENDIX 1

Cyngor Ieuenctid Cymru
Wales Youth Agency

YOUTH WORK CURRICULUM STATEMENT FOR WALES

Wales Youth Agency
Leslie Court
Lôn-y-Llyn
CAERPHILLY
Mid Glamorgan
CF8 1BQ

Tel 01222 880088

THE YOUTH WORK CURRICULUM STATEMENT FOR WALES

This Statement IS intended to:

- establish the main purposes of youth work in Wales
- inform those outside the service of these purposes
- provide common and mutual understanding of these purposes
- provide a framework for the development of practice and determining of priorities
- create a means by which progress towards the achievement of these purposes is measured

The Statement IS NOT intended to:

- lead to a single, prescriptive and inflexible curriculum which would restrain diversity or restrict initiative.

The Curriculum Statement for Wales has been produced by a working group consisting of members of the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS, the Welsh Association of Full-time Youth and Community Workers (WAFTYCW), the Further Education and Youth Service Association of Wales (FEYSAW), the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC), and the Wales Youth Forum; following the recognition by the Second Ministerial Conference at Birmingham of the legitimacy of a separate statement for Wales.

It has been endorsed by the Wales Youth Work Partnership and subsequently by the Wales Youth Agency.

May 1992

THE PURPOSES OF YOUTH WORK IN WALES

The purposes of youth work in Wales are:

- to promote equality of opportunity for all young people in order that they may fulfil their potential as empowered individuals and as members of groups and communities.

- to support young people in the transition to adulthood.

- to assist young people to develop attitudes and skills which enable them to make purposeful use of their personal resources and time.

Youth work thus offers young people opportunities which are:

- **EDUCATIVE** - enabling young people to gain the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to identify, advocate and pursue their rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of groups and communities, locally, nationally, and internationally.

- **PARTICIPATIVE** - through voluntary relationships in which young people are partners in the learning processes and decision making structures which affect their own and other people's lives and environments.

- **EMPOWERING** - enabling young people to understand and act on the personal, social and political issues which affect their lives, the lives of others and the communities of which they are a part.

- **EXPRESSIVE** - encouraging and enabling young people to express their thoughts, emotions, aspirations and cultural identity through creative and challenging activities, particularly those which increase their understanding of the bilingualism, heritage and cultures of Wales.

The above opportunities should be designed to promote equality for all through the challenging of oppression and inequity, from the acceptance of differences which spring from race, sexual identity, gender, disability, age and religion, and the recognition of the diversity of culture and language in Wales.

THE DELIVERY OF YOUTH WORK IN WALES

Youth work in Wales is delivered through a partnership between voluntary organisations and local education authorities working together and independently to provide or facilitate:

- **informal and structured educational programmes** which challenge young people and enhance their personal and spiritual development, social and political education.

- **places and relationships** within which young people can enjoy themselves, feel secure, supported and valued, learn to take greater control of their lives, and to recognise and resist the damaging influences which may affect them.

- **access** to relevant information, advice, guidance and counselling which includes advocating the rights of young people.

The delivery of youth work in Wales will be assisted by appropriate **research** into issues and trends which particularly affect young people's lives, and by **collaboration** with appropriate agencies and services whose expertise may be harnessed in order to advance young people's needs, interests, and rights.

PRIORITIES

- The youth service is open to all young people within the specified age range 11-25, but gives priority to transition to adulthood in the 13-19 age group.

- The identification of priority groups and issues will be determined nationally, locally or organisationally and would be based on the principles of ensuring equality of access and opportunity.

PROVISION

- The type, method and mix of youth work provision should be determined locally and/or organisationally.

- The establishment of appropriate provision should be considered in relation to the needs of individuals and groups, desired outcomes and purposes. The delivery methods used might include:

  - centre-based work
  - centres for curriculum specialities
  - detached work
  - information, advice, guidance and counselling services
  - mobile provision
  - outreach work
  - project work
  - residential work
  - targeted provision for specific groups

MEASURING PROGRESS AND ASSESSING OUTCOMES

- The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales should provide the basis for establishing agreed criteria by which process can be measured (by an organisation, authority, or unit) and specific outcomes of the work identified.

- Such criteria should be determined at every level within the context of the provision.

- It is encumbent upon each youth work provider to establish methods of measuring progress which are appropriate to the work being undertaken.

- In assessing Outcomes, providers should take account of the needs being addressed, the resources utilised, the processed adopted, and the specific benefits that accrue to young people.

- The ongoing process of evaluation will enable good youth work practice to be identified, and will contribute to the determining of future youth work strategies.

17 May 1991

Dear colleague,

WALES YOUTH WORK CURRICULUM GROUP

The inter-agency group comprising representatives of CWVYS, FEYSAW, WAFTYCW, WJEC, and WYF, serviced by WYWP, was established in 1990 following proposals made by FEYSAW, and subsequently supported by the other agencies, to look at core curriculum issues in Wales. The Group has thus far:

- carried out a curriculum survey of full and part-time workers in Wales and published its results.
- acted as the planning and organising group for a Welsh Office Day Seminar on the Core Curriculum.
- received and considered papers emanating from the two Ministerial Conferences on the Core Curriculum.
- received and considered a draft document prepared by a WJEC Working Group concerning core curriculum for the youth service in Wales.
- noted responses sought by the WJEC Working Group on its draft document.
- received and considered an example of Measurement of Performance from the Powys Youth Service.

The group considered its immediate agenda to include:

- the consideration of the WJEC draft document
- receiving and giving consideration to any additional papers relevant to the discussion.
- consulting with its constituent groups regarding the subsequent draft document and to their views as to the way forward thereafter.

...../cont/

As a result of the completion of the first two tasks of the immediate agenda, the group has now produced the subsequent draft document, based on the WJEC draft document (to whom grateful thanks are extended). The group would now be grateful if, as a constituent agency, you would:

i) consider the document and propose amendments and additions as necessary.

ii) offer advice as to how the re-drafted document should be disseminated in a wider consultative process to your members.

Responses to this draft statement are requested by 12 July 1991 - this will give you the opportunity of dovetailing discussions with those relating to the establishment of the projected Wales Youth Agency.

There remains much to be done in terms of measuring progress and measuring outcomes and the group will, in its continuing role, be considering processes by which these may be defined.

Finally, the Inter-Agency Curriculum Group has been invited to consider the possibility of drawing together representatives to discuss the issue of the core curriculum for Wales with a view to its endorsement. At the end of the consultation, a mechanism by which the statement may be endorsed and adopted on an al -Wales basis will be considered by the group. I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours faithfully,

Brian Williams
Director

APPENDIX 2

EXTRACT

Guidelines to Endorsement

of Initial Training for
Youth and Community Work
in Wales

2. PRINCIPLES

The Wales Youth Agency, through its Education and Training Standards Committee has adopted for its purposes the following **definition** of youth and community work and the worker's task.

"Youth and community work offers both planned and spontaneous opportunities for learning through experience, about self, others, society and the environment. The values underpinning the work derive from a clear understanding of, and commitment to, equality of opportunity and the educational importance of choice, freedom , responsibility and justice. Situations are created so that young people and adults can learn by interacting with peers and others in a variety of groupings, by a range of new experiences which extend, challenge and excite an individual, and by opportunities for reflection which foster the development of ways of seeing the world.

"The worker's task, therefore, is to plan and provide appropriate experiences to take advantage of those which arise spontaneously, to foster learning by employing a range of interpersonal skills such as counselling, advocacy, group work and teaching on relevant themes.

Underlying principles

This definition refers to the **values** underlying youth and community work. These values recognise:-

- social education as the core process in youth and community work:
- the ability and inability of people to resolve problems and change themselves;
- the tension and distinction between empowering and controlling people;
- the worth, ability and rights of people;
- the right to self determination;
- the importance of collective action and collaborative working relationship; and the value of co-operation and conflict.

These assume:-

- respect for the individual;
- respect and value for the pluralistic culture of society;
- the need to confront inequality and discrimination;
- the need to recognise the influence of the worker and her/his values; and
- the need to recognise self and others as changing beings.

Therefore:-

- Youth and community workers need to have an understanding of structures in society, including inequalities, power and powerlessness.
- Individuals need to identify how their values have been, and are currently shaped by their experiences in any group e.g. family, peers, race, class, and gender.
- The strength and value of the work lies in the diversity of backgrounds and skills in the workforce.

Learning process

In order to be effective the **learning process** should acknowledge that:-

- youth and community work should be an ongoing process of creative learning and development for workers, and they should be involved in a process of observation, listening, action and reflection;
- attaining a qualification is only part of this learning process and any training which supports this should **acknowledge, validate and extend prior learning and experience, enabling participants to identify future learning needs;**

- any youth and community work course or scheme, leading to qualification, should recognise that participants are necessarily influenced by the learning process in which they have participated; this process should therefore be student-centred, including curriculum development, organisation and assessment, with the expectation that their later work would then be person-centred; and the learning process adopted by the course or scheme should reflect the values underlying youth and community work (see page 4).

Equal opportunities

Training schemes or courses should by their design, format and content, address the existence of all forms of discrimination in society.

The Education and Training Standards Committee, in accord with principles and practice of youth and community work, are commited to:

a) the general principle of equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of difference, with regard to sex, sexuality, ethnic or racial origin, nationality, family circumstances, age, disability, religious belief, political orientation, social and trade union activity or language;

b) the promotion and support of initiatives which seek to ensure the principle of opportunity for all.

In considering a course or scheme for endorsement the ETS will expect the principles of equal opportunities to inform and underpin all facets of the course/scheme.

Processes to promote equal opportunities should be evident in processes, for example:

- how applicants and staff will be selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities;

- curriculum content and materials, ensuring that language usage does not discriminate by interpretation;

- strategies whereby students and the field are made increasingly aware of the principles of equal opportunities and the practices and processes of overt and covert discrimination;

- systems for the continuous monitoring and review of the Equal Opportunities policies as expressed explicitly in the course documentation.

APPENDIX 3

Extract from a paper produced by the Wales Youth Agency in August 2002 as part of a training programme delivered by the Staff College on the history of the maintained Youth Service in Wales

Constitutional Base

Sections 41 and Section 53 of the 1944 Education Act (HMSO 1944) first determined the constitutional base of what eventually became described as the maintained Youth Service in Wales. Section 41, which deals specifically with further education, placed the duty on each local education authority to secure provision for:

'leisure-time occupation, in such organised cultural training and recreational activities as are suited to their requirements, for any person over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided for that purpose'.

Section 53 placed the duty on each local education authority to ensure that their area had *'adequate facilities for further education, which were to include leisure time occupation ... for any person over compulsory school age'.* To achieve this local education authorities, with the approval of the Minister, were enabled to establish, maintain and manage a wide range of appropriate activities including camps, holiday classes, play-centres, gymnasiums, and swimming baths (Dent 1947). Neither Section 41 nor Section 53 used the term 'youth service' although it had been used previously in the Board of Education publications Circular 1486 and *'The Youth Service after The War'* (HMSO 1943). It was also the term used in the document *'The Purpose and Content of the Youth Service'* set up in 1943 (ministry of Education 1945) and the 'Post War Youth Service in Wales' (Ministry of Education 1945).

This ambiguous legislative base for the Youth Service was recognised in a government report (HMSO 1982) which claimed the Youth Service was underpinned by confusion and uncertainty caused by the lack of clear legislative provision which defined, in broad terms the remit of the Youth Service. Despite these and other comments contained in a number of unsuccessful Youth Service Bills (Haselhurst 1973, Brown 1974, Townsend 1975, Skeet 1980, Lloyd 1993, Kilfoyle 1995) concerned to introduce a more easily recognised legislative base for the Youth Service it remained dependent on an interpretation of the relevant sections of the 1944 Education Act. This remained the position even when Section 41 of the 1944 Education Act was re-located as Section 120 of the Education Reform Act 1988 (HMSO 1988) and inserted under Clause 11 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (HMSO 1992). Both the revised Section 120 of

the Education Reform Act 1988 and Clause 11 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 maintained the text originally contained in Section 41 of the Education Act 1944.

However the position of the Youth Service was arguably weakened as a result of Clause 11 (HMSO 1992) which included *"it shall be the duty of every local education authority to secure the provision for their area of adequate facilities for further education".* In an attempt to define adequate and in doing so develop a base line for Youth Service funding a high court judgement was sought to determine if an English County Council was in breach of its statutory duty under Section 44 and Section 53 of the Education Act 1944. The application was refused because Mr Justice Pill ruled that the absence of a clear definition of the term adequate meant that he was not able to reach a conclusion *"that it is arguable that the figures which Warwickshire regarded as adequate are in fact inadequate"* (CYWU 1993). Section 53 of the 1944 Education Act remained unaltered within both the Education Reform Act 1988 and the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

The Education Act 1996 continued the ambiguous language of previous education legislation linked to the Youth Service. Section 2 defined "further education" as including *"full-time and part-time education suitable to the requirements of persons who are over compulsory school age (including vocational, physical and recreational training) and organised leisure-time occupation provided in connection with such education".* Subsection 2(6) described "organised leisure occupation" as *"leisure-time occupation in such organised cultural training and recreational activities as are suited to their requirements, for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by facilities provided for that purpose".* Section 15 of the Education Act 1996 maintained the term adequate in regard to the responsibility of local education authority responsibility to secure the provision for further education. Section 508 of the Education Act 1996 which replaced section 53 of the Education Act 1944 reconfirmed the responsibility of the local education authority to provide for their area *"adequate facilities for recreation and social and physical training".* Strategies for achieving this were described as being through direct or assisted action to establish, maintain and manage a wide range of activities including camps, holiday classes, playing fields, play centres, gymnasiums, swimming baths, organised games and expeditions.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 (HMSO 2000) established the Learning and Skills Council in England and the National Council for Education and Training in Wales. By doing so the historical connection, through common legislation, between the Youth Service in Wales and the Youth Service in England was partly dissolved. Some issues of

commonality were maintained however. These included the removal from the Learning and Skills Act 2000 of Section 15 of the Education Act 1996 and the amendment of Section 508 of the Education Act 1996. This section of the Act was given additional strength because it was the section as the section that defined the *"statutory basis for the Youth Service provided by the local authority"* (HMSO 2000:6). The Youth Service was described by this document as an organisation providing a range of activities including youth clubs, information centres and specialist centres. It also recognised its increasing commitment to working with young people at risk (ibid).

The Act describes the main duties of the Council as being to secure the provision of proper facilities for-

a) *"education (other than for higher education)... suitable to the requirements of persons who are above compulsory school age...*
b) *training suitable for such persons,*
c) *organised leisure time occupation connected with such education, and*
d) *organised leisure-time occupation connected with such training"*

The Explanatory Notes of the Act (ibid) defines, with reference to Section 2 of the Education Act 1966, *organised leisure-time occupation* as it is interpreted in Wales, as covering a wide range of organised activities offering opportunities for non-formal types of learning which do not **necessarily** lead to a qualification. The interpretation of the term in England describes the phrase as meaning covering a range of activities offering opportunities for non-formal types of learning, which **does not** lead to a qualification.

Section 123 of the Act describes the power of the National Assembly of Wales to direct a local authority to provide, secure or participate in the provision of "youth support services"- which would include the Youth Service–designed to enable, enable and assist young people between the ages of 11-25 to:

a) *participate effectively in education and training*
b) *take advantage of opportunities for employment*
c) *participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities*

In providing, securing or participating in the provision of a youth support service the local authority are required within the parameters of the Act to consult with a range of named organisation or representatives of organisation. These are:

a) a Health Authority
b) a chief officer of police
c) a police authority

d) a probation committee and
e) a youth offending team

A representative of the Youth Service is not included in the required list but may be invited as an appropriate person in the opinion of the local authority.

The constitutional status of the Youth Service linked through the its location within Further Education (HMSO 1992) and its definition contained within the Explanatory Notes of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 which links it to Section 508 of the Education Act 1996 is contrary to the position described by the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Education and Lifelong learning. During the Plenary Debate for the approval of the Youth Support Directions (WAG 2002:55) the Minister stated *"The Assembly is taking an impressive step today, namely to make youth work statutory in Wales. We are unique, as the only part of the UK where this has happened"* This statement fails to recognise the link to the Education Act 1992 and Education Act 1996 which form the constitutional basis of the Youth Service. It also gave inappropriate status to the Youth Service in Wales by claiming a unique statutory base. The Education Act 1992 and the Education Act 1996 was before the era of devolution relevant to both England and Wales. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 in recognising the importance of the Education Acts of 1992 and 1996 to the definition of the Youth Service did so from an England and Wales position. The plenary debate and the resultant ambiguity about the constitutional basis of the Youth Service was underpinned by confusion regarding terminology. The Minister opened the debate with a clear statement *"This legislation represents a significant step forward. For the first time in Wales it provides a statutory base for youth support services"* (WAG 2002:51. This position was confused by the comments of the Plaid Cymru Assembly Member Helen Mary Jones who *replied "giving the Youth Service a statutory foundation once again in Wales is a positive step"* (ibid:52). The focus on the 'Youth Service' was continued by the comments of Chapman who said *"What assurances can the Minister give that the intentions of 'Extending Entitlement: Supporting young People in Wales' to place a statutory requirement on all local authorities in Wales to secure a Youth Service as described in the curriculum statement for Wales"* (ibid:53). The Ministers reply was the one described previously.

APPENDIX 4

Gwobr Ragoriaeth Gwaith Ieuenctid yng Nghymru
Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award

The Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award was first introduced by the Minister of State for Wales in 1994 to give national recognition of quality youth work practice. The Award is an annual 'reward' for past or current work with young people and will bestow a quality 'benchmark' upon the successful projects.

Entries are invited from youth organisations for a specific project or piece of work that has been undertaken as part of a youth work programme.

Entries must demonstrate a recognition of the revised Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales, which states that opportunities for young people should be educative, participative, empowering and expressive. Entries should clearly describe the benefits of the work to the young people involved and their role in the project. The Award's remit is broad and submissions of original and innovative work are welcomed. A brief summary of the curriculum statement is enclosed.

Entries must also be accompanied by a letter of nomination (of not more than one side of A4) from a person independent of the project. This letter should briefly outline how the nominator knows about the project and his/her reasons for supporting it. Each entry will receive a certificate acknowledging its nomination for a Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award.

Each entry will be looked at by a panel of independent judges led by the Chairman of the Wales Youth Agency. The panel will judge the information provided in the entry against the curriculum statement and decide which projects receive an award of excellence. Each award winner will receive a certificate of excellence and will be able to use this quality mark to the benefit of their work on, for example, publicity material and to support funding applications.

Those entries which are deemed to be of outstanding quality will be considered for an additional Premier Award which will attract a major cash prize. Entries shortlisted for the Premier Award may be visited by members of the Awards panel who will wish to meet with the young people and adults involved in the project.

Entries should detail work carried out between September 2001 and September 2002. The work may be for any length of time but must involve young people aged from 11-25 years. Priority will be given to work with 13-19 year olds. Entry forms should be submitted by the entry deadline of Friday 27 September 2002.

The awards will be presented during Youth Work Week 2002, 28 October – 3 November.

How to Apply

Please read these notes carefully, especially the information from the curriculum statement as this criteria will be used by the judges.

The entry form should be typed or written in black ink. Entries may also be produced on your own computer as long as the same headings, layout and format are used.

Only one copy of the entry should be submitted but it is advisable to make further copies for your records.

Good luck, and don't forget to include your letter of nomination!

YOUTH WORK IN WALES EXCELLENCE AWARD

Application pack *2002*

What is the Award?

The Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award was first introduced by the Minister of State for Wales in 1994. It is an annual award scheme which aims to recognise the talents of organisations and individuals within those organisations working with young people - either in past projects or ongoing work.
It is sponsored by the National Assembly for Wales and administered by the Wales Youth Agency.

Gwobr Ragoriaeth Gwaith Ieuenctid yng Nghymru
Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award

The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales was initially written and approved in 1992. The following statement was reviewed and rewritten in 2001. In future it will be reviewed every three years. The review working group consisted of the following members: The Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS); Representatives of the Principal Officers Group; Advisory Council - Wales Youth Agency; Education and Training Standards Group (ETS); The Youth and Community Work Training Agencies; Young Voice/Llais Ifanc. Curriculum Policy Manager, Wales Youth Agency (acted as the secretariat to the review process).

The Wales Youth Agency, The Principal Officers Group and CWVYS as the main groups responsible for the delivery of the Youth Work in Wales have endorsed the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (YWCSW).

THE YOUTH WORK CURRICULUM STATEMENT FOR WALES

The purposes of youth work in Wales are:

- to promote and actively encourage equality of opportunity for all young people in order that they may fulfil their potential as empowered individuals and as members of groups and communities.
- to actively support young people through significant changes in their lives and assist them to understand their rights and responsibilities during their transition to adulthood.
- to encourage young people to develop knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values which enable them to make purposeful use of their skills, resources and time.

Youth work, through its voluntary relationships with young people, offers inclusive opportunities to learning that are:

- EDUCATIVE - enabling young people to gain skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values needed to identify, advocate and pursue their rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of groups and communities, locally, nationally, and internationally.
- PARTICIPATIVE - where young people are encouraged to share responsibility and to become equal partners, fundamental to the learning processes and decision making structures which affect their own and other people's lives and environments.
- EMPOWERING - encouraging and enabling young people to understand their rights and responsibilities so that they are able to act on the personal, social and political issues which affect their lives and the lives of others; as responsible citizens of the communities of which they are a part.
- EXPRESSIVE - encouraging and enabling young people to express their emotions and aspirations, through creative, sporting and challenging opportunities which raises an awareness of:
  - Cultural identity
  - Bilingualism and the value of ones own language
  - Heritage
  - Respect for diversity
  - Citizenship and respect for others

These opportunities should be designed to promote equality for all.
They should:

- challenge oppression and inequality
- promote acceptance of the differences that spring from race, sexual identity, gender, disability, age, religion and class
- recognise the importance of the Welsh language and its heritage, other languages, and the diversity of cultures in Wales.

Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award

Entry Form

Please read the accompanying notes before completing this form.

A: About yourself

Name of applicant	
Are you a full-time, part-time or volunteer worker?	
Title of Project	
Name of Youth Club / Organisation	
Is it Statutory, Voluntary or Independent?	
Address	
Post code	
Tel	

B: About the project

B.1	Please give a brief description of the project (not the general work of your organisation), including where and when the project took place, and how long it lasted.
B.2	What did the project try to do? (ie aims and objectives) - continue on page 4 if necessary.

3.3 How many young people took part in the project, and how many young people helped to organise it?

Taking part:		**Organising the project:**	
Age		Age	
11 - 13 yrs	.....	11 - 13 yrs	.....
14 - 19	.....	14 - 19	.....
20 - 25	.....	20 - 25	.....
Total No.	.....	**Total No.**	.....

3.4 Describe which of the criteria in the youth work curriculum statement that the project fulfilled and how it did this: (This may be one or more of the following)

EDUCATIVE:

PARTICIPATIVE:

EMPOWERING:

EXPRESSIVE:

B.5	Were links or partnerships made with any other organisations during the project? (eg. health, sport organisations, police, probation, careers, social services, etc). If yes, please give details of the purpose of the link(s), and how the link(s) developed?
B.6	How was the project funded?
B.7	What were the most and least successful aspects of project?

Most successful	Least successful

B.8	What lasting benefits or likely benefits has the project produced for the young people involved?
B.9	What are the future plans for the project?
	Please do not enclose supporting evidence - the Award Panel may ask to see these materials.

C: Nomination

Please give details of one person who knows about your project. (This person must be over 18 years of age and independent of your project)	
Name	
Address	
Tel No	
Email	

Continue on this page if necessary

D: Bank Details

If this entry is successful, who should the cheque be made payable to? (Please note, cheques will not be made payable to individuals)	
Account Name:	

E: Declaration

I agree that the details provided in this entry form are correct	
Signed	Date

Please return this form to:

Wales Youth Agency, Leslie Court, Lôn y Llyn, Caerphilly, CF83 1BQ. Tel 02920 855700.

APPENDIX 5

Analysis of Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards

There are a number of useful Youth Service documents available for analysis, including individual local authority strategic and operational plans, Youth Service audits and ESTYN inspection reports. These documents are all capable of contributing to the information from which the results of the study will be based and, although they were used to provide evidence of use to the investigation, the main documents analysed were the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Award Entries. The Award had been introduced in 1994 by the then Minister of State for Wales to give national recognition of quality youth work practice contained within a specific project or piece of work undertaken as part of a youth work programme. 193 applications had been made by the maintained sector between 1997 and 2002, each one required by the criteria for entry to demonstrate recognition of the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales. All entries were considered as examples of excellent work as defined by those who made the application; no added consideration was given to those determined as winners of the award by the judging panel who remained unknown to the researcher. By adopting this approach the analysis became an interpretation of Excellence Award entries of equal status, each one entered as a piece of work determined as excellent by the applicant. The high numbers of full-time workers involved in completing the entry form, 70% (135), further enhanced the validity of the applications as documents capable of making a reliable contribution to the study.

Table 1 Status of Applicants

	Number	**%**
Full -Time Worker	135	70%
Part – Time Paid Worker	56	29%
Volunteer	2	1.0%
Total	**193**	**100.0%**

It was believed that those working full-time within the maintained Youth Service would have both an understanding of the purpose values and principles and outcomes of youth work and a level of expertise in working with young people. This would ensure that many of the contemporary issues facing the maintained Youth Service young people as a result of government policy and the changing needs of young people would be understood and articulated in a competitive process concerned with the concept of excellence.

Table 2 Location of Respondents

	Number	%
Anglesey	3	1.6%
Blaenau Gwent	3	1.6%
Bridgend	6	3.1%
Caerphilly	3	1.6%
Cardiff	21	10.9%
Carmarthen	6	3.1%
Ceridigion		
Conwy	7	3.6%
Denbighshire	6	3.1%
Flintshire	4	2.0%
Gwynedd		
Merthyr	4	2.1%
Monmouth	5	2.6%
Neath and Port Talbot	11	5.7%
Newport	11	5.7%
Powys	16	8.3%
Pembroke	1	.5%
RCT	57	29.3%
Swansea	7	3.6%
Torfaen	7	3.6%
Wrexham	5	2.6%
Vale of Glamorgan	10	5.2%
Total	**193**	**100%**

An analysis of the location of the respondents revealed 20 of the 22 local authorities had made Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards applications between1997-2002. The applications did not reflect numerical equality across the local authorities with Cardiff and Rhonnda Cynon Taf making 40.4% of the applications. Nevertheless it was believed that these documents were able to provide evidence of use to the investigation.

Table 3 Year of Application

Year	Number	%
1997	27	14.0%
1998	25	13.0%
1999	16	8.3%
2000	35	18.1%
2001	53	27.5%
2002	37	19.2%
Total	**193**	**100.0%**

APPENDIX 6

Maintained Sector Youth Work Practitioner Questionnaire

Personal Details

ID 5

Name

Gender: Male ☐ Femal ☐

Age: 18-25 ☐ 36-45 ☐ Over 60 ☐

26-35 ☐ 46-60 ☐

Current Youth Work

Name of Employing Authorit

Current Job Title

Years Employed: 1-4 ☐
5-10 ☐
11-15 ☐
Over15 ☐

Location: Urban ☐
Rural ☐
Old Industrial ☐

Do you work weekends? YES / NO
If YES, how many per year
Do you work recognised holidays? YES / NO
If YES, how many per year

Number of Hours Worked per Week

Less than 5 hours ☐
5-9 hours ☐
10-14 hours ☐
15-19 hours ☐
20-24 hours ☐
25-36 hours ☐
Full Time 37 hours ☐

Please describe your main activities with young people (no more than 5, prioritised in order of time spent)

1

2

3

Are activities planned to achieve specific outcomes? YES / NO

If YES, please list outcomes:

Please estimate percentage of time spent on face to face work %

Youth Work Training and Qualifications

Teacher Trained pre 1988 ☐ Dip HE ☐ Cert HE ☐ Foundation ☐

Unqualified ☐ Others ☐ Others - please list (no more than 5)

Youth Work Training: In-service - please describe (no more than 5)

Other Work

Main Occupation (if not youth work)

Number of years employe

Qualifications

Young People

How would you describe the young people that you come in to contact with during the course of your youth work? (Percentage)

Age Under 8 (%)

8-11 years (%)

12-15 years (%)

16-19 years (%)

20-25 years (%)

Total 100%

Female membership } Total 100%

Male membership }

Estimate of current or potential academic ability

Academic achievers % (5 GCSEs or more) }

Academic Under-achievers % (Less than 5 GCSEs) } Total 100%

Academic Non-achievers % (No qualifications) }

Dont Know ☐

How do you assess the needs of young people? (no more than 5 in order of priority)

Do you target particular groups of young people? YES / NO ☐ If YES, please describe your target group:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionaire.

Please return to: John Rose c/o Wales Youth Agency Leslie Court Lon-y-Llyn Caerphilly CF83 1BQ

APPENDIX 7

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Purpose:
To obtain detailed and specific information from individuals and focus-groups

Interviewing framework

Introduction

Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview, the purpose of which is to determine if the maintained Youth Service of which you are part is able to concurrently able to meet the needs of young people and the requirements of government policy while maintaining its discrete identity as described within its purposes and values statements. Can I first of all assure you that you will remain completely anonymous and no records of the interviews will be kept with your name on them.

How knowledgeable are you of the discrete identity of the maintained Youth Service?

1. What is it that makes the maintained Youth Service different from other organisations working with young people? *(Voluntary attendance of young people, non-formal education approach, age specific, valuing young people in a particular way)*

2. How easy or difficult is it to identify the differences between the maintained Youth Service and other organisations working with young people?

3. Are these differences important to you in determining how you work with young people?

4. What sorts of methods are available to you to ensure you become aware of the discrete identity of the maintained Youth Service? *(Training both qualifying and in-service, reading relevant publication,)*

How well is the maintained Youth Service resourced?

1. what are the most important resources to you to carry out your work? *(qualified workers, suitable buildings, appropriate levels of relevant equipment)*

2. do you have sufficient of these resources for you to carry out your work effectively?

3. is the quality of these resources suitable for their purpose? *(buildings in good condition that is warm dry well lit, appropriate amounts of equipment. Sufficient qualified trained workers, well furnished)*

4. what types of resources would be your highest priorities? *(qualified workers, well maintained well resourced buildings)*

How, is your employing Youth Service organized? How much time does it spend for example in contact with young people?

1. what in your experience are the ages, gender and academic attainment of those young people using it?

2. what methods do you use to identify the needs of the young people you come into contact with?

3. what have you identified as the needs of the young people you are in contact with?

What does the maintained Youth Service do and how does it measure its outcomes?

1. what do you do with young people through your work with the maintained Youth Service?

2. are these activities planned? *(always, mostly, sometimes, never)*

3. what criteria do you use when planning these activities? *(needs of young people, requirements of government, worker choice, response to a community issue)*

4. what do you plan as the outcomes of your work? *(enjoyment by young people, formal accreditation, participation by young people, involvement in new activities, widening experience)*

Are you able to measure these outcomes? (yes/no/some)

1. if you are able to measure the outcomes of your work what methods do you use? *(formal accreditation, enjoyment of young people, observation, self assessment, peer assessment)*

APPENDIX 8

Interviewee Profile

ID 5

Personal Details

Gender: Male ☐ Femal ☐

Age: 18-25 ☐ 36-45 ☐ Over 60 ☐

26-35 ☐ 46-60 ☐

Current Work

Name of Employing Authorit

Current Job Title

Years Employed: 1-4 ☐
5-10 ☐
11-15 ☐
Over15 ☐

Location: Urban ☐
Rural ☐
Old Industrial ☐

Please describe your main areas of work (no more than 5 prioritised in order of time spent)

1

2

3

4

5

Youth Work Qualifications

Teacher Trained pre 1988 ☐ Dip HE ☐ Cert HE ☐ Foundation ☐

Unqualified ☐ Others ☐ Others - please list (no more than 5)

Profile of those involved in the interview process

Evidence to enable this question to be answered came predominantly from those involved in the interview process. The profiles of those interviewed are detailed in Figures 1 to 15.

Breakdown of those interviewed by Occupational Strand and Employing Authority

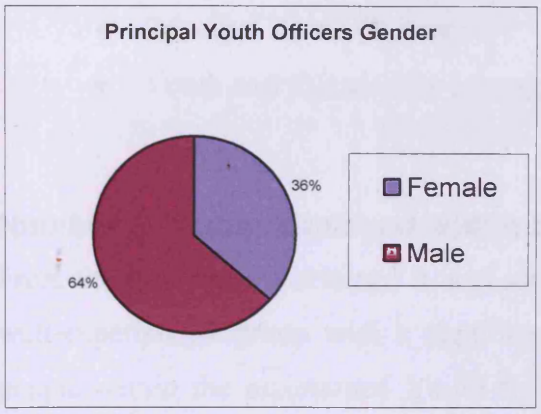
Contributors to the interview process came from 20 of the 22 local authorities in Wales. The process involved 11 local authority Principal Youth Officers,40 full-time workers from 16 different local authorities and 129 part-time workers from 14 different local authorities. The two local authorities not involved at any level were Ynys Mon and Gwynedd. Attempts were made to involve these two organisations but for a number of reasons that proved to be difficult. This was disappointing because they are Youth Services with a high level of Welsh language provision and for that reason it would have been helpful to have had their involvement. This was not seen to be a significant disadvantage however because of the involvement of participants in the interview process at all occupational strands from other predominantly Welsh language providers such as Ceredigion and Conwy.

Characteristics of the Principal Youth Officers Interviewed

The gender balance of Principal Youth Officers involved in the interviews was male 7 (64%) female 4 (36%). The gender balance at the time of the interviews within the whole Principal Youth Officer group was male 16 (73%) female 6 (27%).

Fig 1 Gender balance – Principal Youth Officers

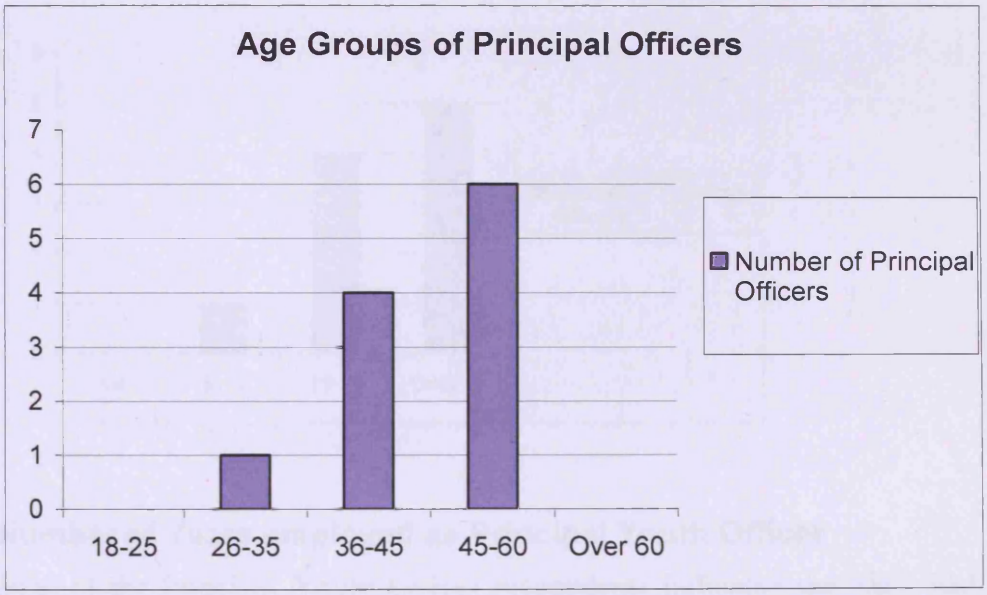
Fig 1 Gender balance – Principal Youth Officers



Ages of Principal Officers involved in the Interviews

The majority (6) of the Principal Youth Officers involved in the interviews were between the ages of 45 to 60. A further four Officers were between the ages of 36 to 45. One Principal Youth Officer was aged 26 to 35.

Fig 2 Ages – Principal Youth Officers



Current Job Titles of Principal Youth Officers involved in the Interviews

The 11 Principal Youth Officers involved in the interviews shared 7 different job titles. These were identified as:

- Senior Manager
- Principal Officer Community Education
- Principal Youth Officer
- County Youth Officer

- Youth Service Manager
- Principal Youth Officer
- Youth and Community Manager

Number of Years employed within the maintained Youth Service

From the information obtained it is possible to identify the Principal Youth Officers as a well-experienced group with a significant level of knowledge of working with young people within the maintained Youth Service. Only one of those interviewed had been employed for between 5 and 10 years, four Principal Youth Officers employed for between 10 and 15 years and 5 for more than 15 years. One Principal Youth Officer did not indicate how many years they had been employed in the maintained Youth Service.

Fig 3 Number of Years employed within the maintained Youth Service – Principal Youth Officers

Number of Years employed as Principal Youth Officer

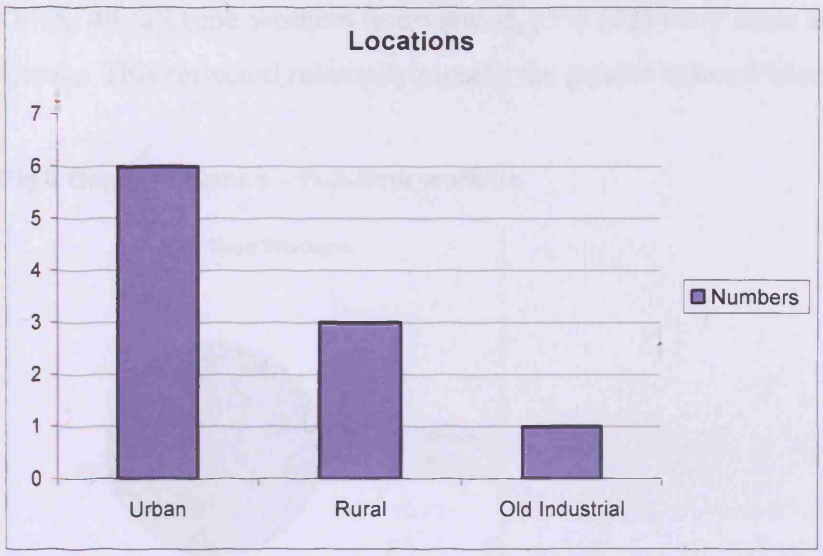
Nine of the Principal Youth Officer respondents indicated that they had held that post since government reorganisation in 1996. Two respondents had held the post of Principal Youth Officer for less than five years.

Employment location of the Principal Youth Officers involved in the Interviews

The largest number of Principal Youth Officers (6) involved in the interviews indicated that they worked in an urban environment. Three indicated they worked in a rural

environment and one worked in an old industrial area. One Principal Youth Officer did not provide information on their location.

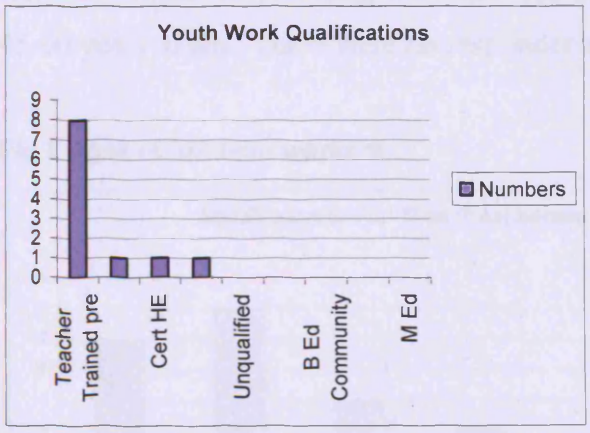
Fig 4 Location – Principal Youth Officers



Qualifications of the Principal Youth Officers involved in the Interviews

72 % (8) of Principal Youth Officers involved in the interviews were teacher-trained before 1988. As a consequence they were recognised by the Joint Negotiating Committee as qualified youth workers. 18 % (2) held the Diploma in Youth and Community Work, 1 (9%) was unqualified.

Fig 5 Youth Work Qualifications – Principal Youth Officers

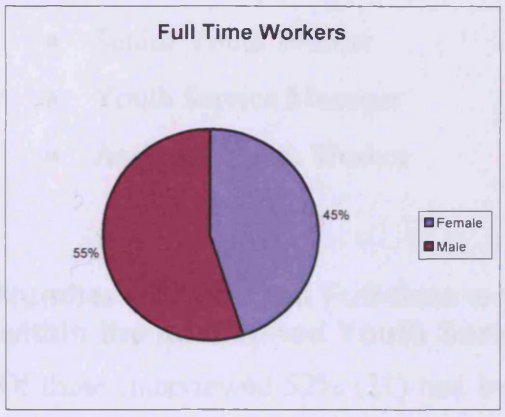


Characteristics of the Full-time workers Interviewed

Gender balance of Full-time workers

Of the 40 full time workers interviewed, 55% (22) were male and 45% (18) workers were female. This reflected relatively closely the gender balance identified in Chapter 7

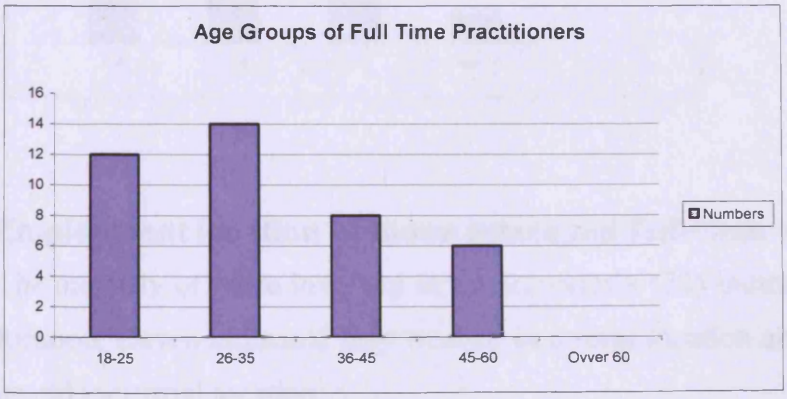
Fig 6 Gender balance – Full-time workers



Ages of Full-time workers involved in the Interviews

The largest numbers of respondents 35% (14) were in the 26-35 year old age group. This was followed by 30% (12) respondents who were in the age group 18-25. 65% (26) of the respondents were therefore between the ages of 18-35, which reconfirms the maintained Youth Service as an organisation with a relatively young workforce (Chapter 7). 20% (8) full-time worker respondents were between the ages of 36-45 and 15% (6) were between 45-60 years of age. There were no respondents over the age of 60.

Fig 7 Ages – Full-time workers



Current Job Titles of the Full-time workers involved in the Interviews

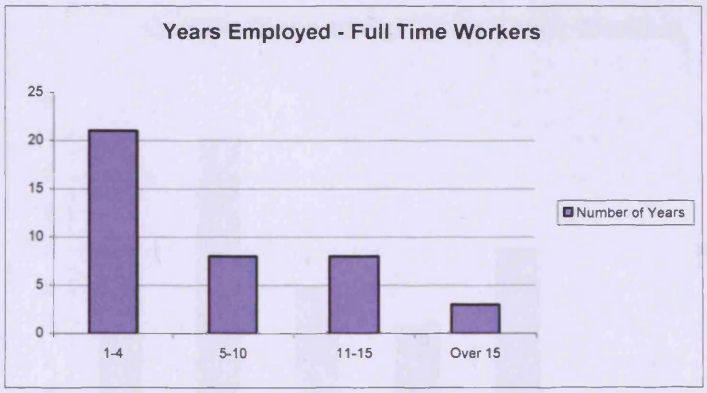
The Full-time workers involved in the interview process shared 14 different job titles, which included:

- Youth Worker
- Youth Worker Youth Club Leader
- Detached/Outreach Worker
- Supervisor
- Youth Development Worker
- Senior Youth Worker
- Youth Service Manager
- Assistant Youth Worker

Number of Years the Full-time workers interviewed have been employed within the maintained Youth Service

Of those interviewed 52% (21) had been employed in the maintained Youth Service for between 1-4 years, 20% (8) had been employed for between 5-10 years as had those employed between 11-15 years. 7.5% of respondents indicated that they had been employed for more than 15 years.

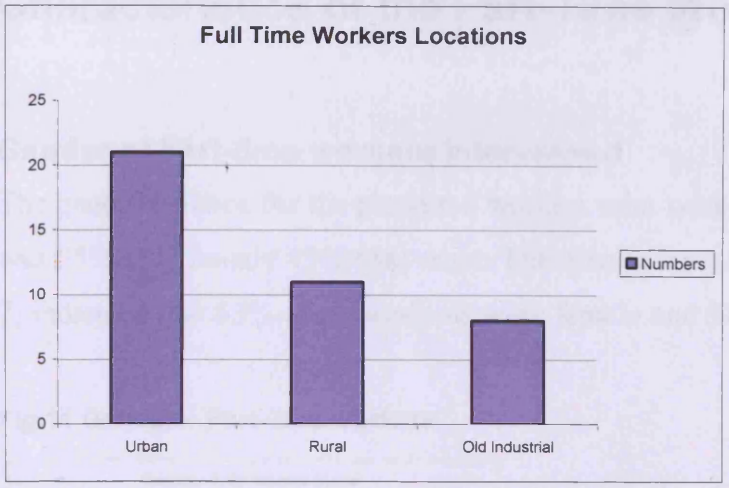
Fig 8 Number of years employed – Full-time workers



Employment location of those employed Full-time who were interviewed

The majority of those involved in the interviews (22) indicated they worked in an urban location, eleven indicated they worked in a rural location and 7 indicated they worked in an old industrial location.

Fig 9 Location – Full-Time Workers



Qualifications of the Full-time workers involved in the Interviews

The largest number of respondents 35% (14) indicated that they were qualified at the nationally recognised level which is a Diploma in Higher Education. 20% (8) respondents were qualified Teachers before 1988. 20% (8) indicated they were unqualified. 15% (6) were qualified to Certificate of Higher Education level and 10% (4) qualified at foundation level. It could be concluded from this information that 55% of the respondents were qualified at an appropriate level but the remaining 45% were not.

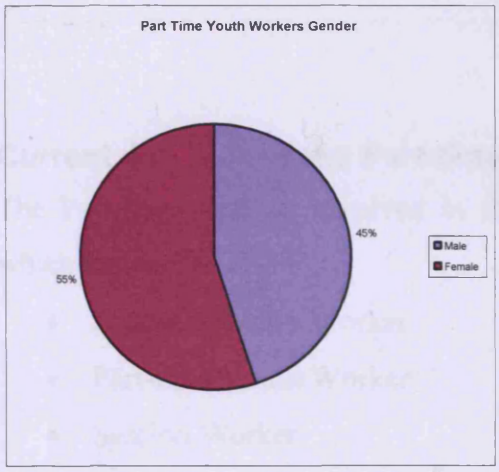
Fig 10 Qualifications – Full-time workers

Characteristics of the Part-Time Workers Interviewed

Gender of Part-time workers Interviewed

The gender balance for the part-time workers who were involved in the interview process was 55% (71) female 45% (58) male. The results from the questionnaire survey (Chapter 7) indicated that 63% of respondents were female and 37% were male.

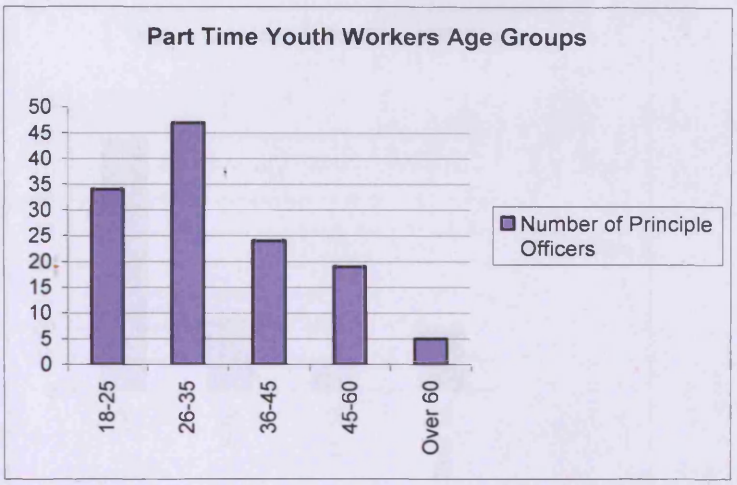
Fig 11 Gender – Part-time workers



Ages of Part-time workers Interviewed

The largest group of part-time workers 36% (47) indicated that they were between 26-35 years of age. The second largest group 26% (34) were in the age group 18-25. This would indicate that 63% (81) of the part time workforce were between the ages of 18-35. 18.6% (24) were between the ages 36-45 and 15% (19) were between the ages 45-60. 4% (5) were indicated that they were over the age of 60.

Fig 12 Ages – Part-time workers



Current Job Title of the Part-time Workers Interviewed

The Part-time workers involved in the interview process shared 17 different job titles which included:

- Assistant Youth Worker
- Part-time Youth Worker
- Session Worker
- Youth Work Co-ordinator
- Youth Club Leader

Number of Years the Part-time workers interviewed have been employed within the maintained Youth Service

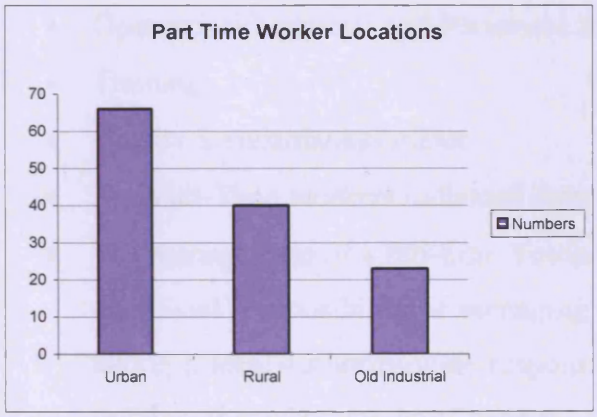
61% of part-time workers who were involved in the interview process had been employed within the maintained Youth Service for between 1 and 4 years. 17% had been employed for 5-10 years and 7% (9) for 11-15 years. 15% indicated that they had been employed for more than 15 years

Fig 13 Number of Years employed – Part-time workers

Employment location of those employed Part-time who were interviewed

The significant majority (66) of the part-time workers involved in the interviews claimed to be working in a urban location, 40 claimed to be working in a rural location and 23 claimed to work in old industrial location.

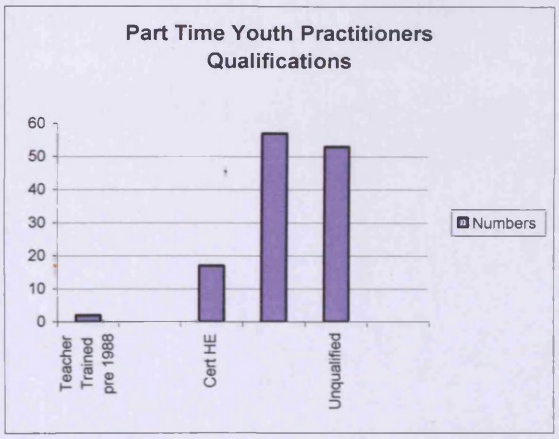
Fig 14 Location – Part-time workers



Qualifications of Part-time workers involved in the Interviews

The marginally largest group 44% (57) of part-time workers involved in the interviews indicated that they were qualified at the appropriate local qualification level through the attainment of a Foundation qualification. The second largest group 41% (53) indicated they were unqualified. 13% (17) were qualified at Certificate of Higher Education level and 1.5% (2) were qualified as Teachers before 1988.

Fig 15 Qualifications – Part-time workers



Main Areas of Work

Those involved in the interviews were also asked to describe the main areas of their work prioritised in order of time spent on each. The analysis of this data indicated the following:

- The Principal Youth Officers, however defined, indicated they were responsible for:
- Strategic Planning
- Operational/Financial and Personnel Management
- Training
- Quality Standards/Assurance
- The Full-Time workers indicated they were responsible for:
- The management of a full-time Youth Centre or Youth Project sometimes with the additional responsibility of managing a small number of part-time centres and or taking a local-authority-wide responsibility for a particular area of work such as training or curriculum development.
- Financial Management
- Personnel Management involving almost exclusively part-time workers
- Working as part of the Youth Service Team
- The Part-Time Workers indicated they were responsible for
- Delivering a programme of activities with young people
- Some financial management