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ABSTRACT

This report examines survey responses by Scottish part-time youth workers, their employers, and trainers about program training needs. Of primary concern to the study were the characteristics and roles of part-time staff, their level of satisfaction with existing training, and their attitudes toward a modular training system. A total of 96 interviews were carried out. Respondents were staff in public and voluntary youth clubs, and in young farmers', scouts', and girls' groups. The study found that youth-work training and refresher courses were valued, while generic courses were criticized. Training was considered successful when it involved practical, relevant work alongside experienced staff. Residential weekends were favored; distance learning was not. Main training access problems were seen to be caused by a lack of full-time staff and inadequate budgets. Experienced youth workers seemed to be offered fewer training opportunities than new staff. Most part-time staff favored modules but employers and trainers were more doubtful. Welfare rights organizations' training was better because representatives of these organizations seemed to have a clearer view of their aims and objectives. Local authority workers, however, seemed less clear about agency goals, making identification of training needs more difficult. The document recommends that organizations more clearly identify goals and needs, and make training as relevant to needs as possible. On-the-job training with experienced trainers also is encouraged. Questions of policy, information, support services, and the use of modules are discussed. (TES)

Part-Time Youth Workers and Training :

A Study of Needs and Provision

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SCRE PROJECT REPORTS

Part-Time Youth Workers and Training :

A Study of Needs and Provision

Pamela Munn **Daphne Hamilton**

Part-time staff make up the bulk of staff in the community education service, yet little is known about their training needs and the adequacy of current training provision. This report is one of a series focussing on youth work, adult education and community development. Staff working in the voluntary and local government sectors were interviewed about training needs and provision and a nationwide survey of provision was undertaken. We also report views on modular training. Each report begins with a summary of main findings and some key questions for those involved in training.

The Scottish Council for Research in Education
15 St John Street, Edinburgh EH8 8JR
December 1989

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Preface

This is one of three reports arising from research on the training needs of part-time community education workers. The focus of this report is on youth workers. Companion reports on adult education workers and workers in community development are also available. The research was commissioned by the Scottish Education Department (SED) and had three main strands. The first strand involved researching the views of part-time staff, their employers and their trainers about training needs and about how adequately these needs were being met (the work reported here). The second strand concerned the development of a small number of training modules, based on identified needs. The third strand consisted of an evaluation of these modules in operation.

The work reported here would not have been possible without the help and support of a great many people. We are grateful to all those who spared time to be interviewed and to those who so thoroughly collected information for us about their training provision. The report has had the benefit of the constructive criticism of the research project's advisory committee and of Lyn Tett and Fiona O'Kane at the Scottish Community Education Council with whom we are collaborating in the research. We are grateful for their support and encouragement. Mavis Gutu and Janette Finlay typed successive drafts quickly and efficiently. Despite all these contributions to the work we should make it clear that sins of omission or of commission rest with the authors. The views reported here are not necessarily those of either the SED or of the Scottish Council for Research in Education.

Pamela Munn
Daphne Hamilton
July 1989

Summary of main findings

A brief summary is provided as a handy reference tool and as a guide to the main body of the report. Details of the research design methods are contained in Chapter 1. It is important to refer to this chapter to understand the claims about the generalisability of the findings.

Basic Training	There is a consensus across the voluntary and local authority sectors about the need for and content of basic training.	Chapter 2
Quality of Basic Training	Training targeted specifically at youth work was valued. Generic courses were criticised. There were some worries about standards and delivery.	Chapter 3
Beyond Basic Training	There is a consensus about the need for refresher courses. Beyond this there is a variety of training needs identified.	Chapter 2
Successful Methods	Training was seen as successful when it involved practical activities, relevant to the work places in which part-time staff operated. Trainers had to be credible and possess recent, relevant youth work experience.	Chapter 2
Successful Forms of Training	Residential weekends were favoured. Paradoxically, however, training should not be too time-consuming. Distance learning was not favoured.	Chapters 2 and 3
On-the-Job Training	Working alongside experienced staff was highly valued. We cannot over-emphasise the demand for on-the-job support and evaluation of work. Such support was reported as being more in evidence in the voluntary sector than in the local authority sector.	Chapter 2
Training Provision	Most of the training needs identified were provided in national terms. Access to particular courses could be difficult. The main problems were lack of full-time staff and adequate budgets to provide courses.	Chapter 3
Lack of Training	Experienced youth workers seem to be offered fewer training opportunities than new staff.	Chapter 3

Attitudes towards modules	Most part-time staff seem in favour of modules. Employers and trainers are more doubtful.	Chapter 3
Need for greater clarity of purposes of youth work in the local authority sector	The voluntary organisations, particularly the uniformed organisations, seemed to have a clear view of their aims and objectives. Training was organised to meet these. The local authority workers seemed less clear and this does not help in identifying training needs.	Chapter 4

Key points for consideration by trainers

While we are not in a position to make recommendations for futher training provision, we felt that it was worth drawing the attention of providers of training to the following key findings from our research.

Clarity of purpose

Training needs are more easily identified within organisations with clearly defined aims. As mentioned above, there were significant differences between the voluntary uniformed organisations included in our sample and local authorities in this respect.

Are your organisation's overall aims clearly defined? Is the relationship between training and the organisation's aims explicit?

Relevance

Training has to be relevant to be perceived as successful. Part-time staff prefer courses tailored to their specific needs to generic courses

Does your training develop the skills staff require to carry out their jobs effectively? Are they given the opportunity to practice their skills as part of their training? Are staff consulted about their training needs?

On-the-job training

On-the-job training is perceived as highly effective and desirable by part-time workers.

Are new part-time workers given the opportunity to work alongside experienced colleagues? If not, why?

Previous experience

All part-timers require appropriate training regardless of previous work experience. Trainers should not assume that teachers or social workers are adequately trained for youth work.

Do you make any assumptions about the suitability of part-timers previous training for their youth work activities?

Trainer credibility
Trainers with recent experience in the field, or who are also practitioners are regarded as the most credible. Being an effective practitioner is not in itself enough to guarantee being an effective trainer.

Are the trainers trained? Is their effectiveness assessed?

Modules
If training is developed using a modular approach, information and marketing are priorities.

Are you aware of the modular approach? Do you feel that modules could address your training needs? Does your staff know about modules?

Payment
The issue of payment for training must be addressed.

Are part-time staff expected to undertake training in their own time? What alternatives are there?

Planning and provision
The existence of a designated 'lead person' responsible for training and readily accessible information about training provision and take-up in the local authority sector would greatly facilitate strategic planning.

How is training policy formulated? What information and support services are available to policy makers? Who is responsible for implementing training policy?

Background

Introduction

In 1987 research on the training needs of part-time community education workers was commissioned. Why was research necessary? We have no wish to chart the history of the emergence of training in community education as a matter of concern. Suffice it to say that a series of reports, including the Carnegy Report (1977) and Alexander Report (1975) and Training for Change (1984), had stressed the need to review the training needs and training provision for community education workers. The focus on part-time staff was seen as particularly important since they represent the largest part of the work force. Indeed, reliable figures for the size of this work force have been difficult to come by. An indication of the size is that there are over 50,000 volunteers within youth organisations, the community education services have more than 20,000 voluntary or part-time staff and adult basic education has approximately 4,000 tutors employed as volunteers or part-time staff members. Clearly the quality of the contribution of such staff is important.

In dealing with such large numbers, employed by a range of organisations, targeted at different sections of the population, we had to be clear about:

- the focus of the research;
- how we were to collect information.

The details which follow provide the information needed to put our chapters on research findings in context. It is important to stress right from the beginning, that we are not claiming that our findings are generalisable to all part-time workers in Scotland.

The focus of the research

The general focus of the research was on the training needs of part-time staff and on how adequately these needs were being met. However, we needed to develop a more specific focus in order to be clear about the kinds of information which would be most useful in identifying needs and in making sense of perceptions of the adequacy of training. Accordingly, we developed the focus of the research as being:

- the essential characteristics of the roles of part-time staff;
- the kinds of training necessary to support staff in these roles;
- the satisfaction and dissatisfaction with existing training;
- the factors which determine whether provision is satisfactory;
- attitudes towards a modular system of training.

In seeking information about these matters we talked to part-time workers, their immediate employers and those involved in training. It was not always possible to distinguish clearly among these groups. Immediate employers, for example, were often involved in providing training as were part-timers themselves. Details of those interviewed are given in Table 1.2. First of all, we describe how we chose those to be interviewed.

How did we collect information?

It was clearly impossible to collect information from all those concerned with youth work in Scotland. In selecting our sample we chose three areas which provided the possibility of contrasting perspectives on training needs and provision:

- an inner city area;
- a rural area;
- a mixed area of large towns with a rural hinterland.

Even within these three areas, however, it was not possible to collect information from all those concerned with youth work. We, therefore, divided youth work into two categories:

- local authority sector;
- voluntary sector.

In each sector we interviewed a sample of:

- part-time youth workers;
- their immediate employers;
- their trainers.

We interviewed those concerned with youth work in general, excluding specialists in sport and in maladjustment, for example, from our sample. In deciding whom to interview we took the advice of the Community Education Department in the particular area. The main criterion for inclusion in the sample was that of salience of provision. In other words we chose those catering for the largest numbers of young people in each area. Table 1.1 gives details of the organisations involved in the research.

Table 1.1: Organisations involved in the research

	Inner City	**Rural**	**Mixed**
Local authority	Youth Clubs Outreach Workers Girls' Groups	Youth Clubs Group Worker	Youth Clubs
Voluntary	Catholic Youth Council B.Bs	Young Farmers Girl Guides	Scouts 2 Voluntary Clubs (non-uniformed)

A total of 96 interviews was carried out across the three areas. Details of these are given in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Total numbers interviewed

	Part-time workers	**Employers/Trainers**	**Total**
Local authority	37	22	59
Voluntary Sector	23	14	37
Totals	60	36	96

As we mentioned above the distinctions between employers, trainers and part-timers were not always clear cut. Indeed we have grouped employers and trainers together as a category because in the overwhelming majority of cases employers were also involved in training. Only five trainers interviewed were not employers. Table 1.3 shows the numbers interviewed by case-study area.

Table 1.3: Numbers interviewed by case-study area

	Local Authority		Voluntary Sector	
	Part-timers	Employers/Trainers	Part-timers	Employers/Trainers
Inner City	16	8	8	6
Rural	10	7	8	4
Mixed	11	7	7	4
Totals	**37**	**22**	**23**	**14**

All the interviews were tape-recorded and lasted on average around 45 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured. Questions covering each of the topics of the research were devised and a series of probes for each topic developed. However, there was no fixed order for asking the questions and no set way of moving from one topic to another. Instead the interviewer was responsive to the points being made by the respondent and used these to move from one topic to another. Respondents were invited to make additional comments about training which they saw as important and a content analysis was undertaken.

Are the findings generalisable?

It would clearly be absurd to suggest that the findings from the small numbers interviewed are generalisable to all part-time youth workers in Scotland. However, the advantage of the in-depth interview is that it allows the flavour of youth workers' concerns to emerge. This permits readers to judge whether the kinds of concerns being expressed by our sample strike chords with their own situation. Furthermore, the emergence of similarities of concerns of youth workers in different parts of the country and working in very different circumstances, encourage the view that we are not reporting the idiosyncratic opinions of a small number of youth workers. While views on training needs and the adequacy of current provision are bound to vary according to local circumstance, we hope those most actively involved in youth work will be encouraged to reconsider their own policy and practice in light of the broad thrust of the views reported.

We have also undertaken a national survey of training provision and this does allow us to present a snapshot of the range and content of courses across the country. This could only provide a flavour of the national picture as it was difficult to collect up-to-date and accurate information and the resources of the project did not allow the data to be cross-checked.

We begin by reporting our case-study data and considering the variety of roles which part-time youth workers play.

Training needs

In this chapter we concentrate on the training needs of part-time youth workers as seen by themselves and their employers/trainers. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to consider the range of roles which part-timers are seen as playing. The identification of these roles helps to put comments about training needs in context.

Roles of part-time youth workers

The first point to make is that part-time youth workers see themselves and are seen by others as having a wide range of roles. Table 2.1 lists the roles mentioned by our respondents.

Table 2.1: Roles of part-time staff

• activity leader	• first aider	• recruiter
• banker	• fund-raiser	• referee
• book-keeper	• group worker	• social educator
• cleaner/janitor	• health and safety officer	• stock controller
• committee member	• instructor	• street worker
• counsellor/friend	• key holder	• supervisor
• driver	• organiser/manager	• trainer
• facilitator	• programme developer	• trouble shooter

There are many important points to make about this table. The first point is the sheer diversity of roles which part-time youth workers see themselves, and are seen by others as playing. This may be because they took less for granted about the interviewer's knowledge of youth work; perhaps they had been on training courses where they had been encouraged to reflect on their roles; perhaps they operated in contexts which meant they had very demanding roles. Whatever the reasons for some staff having more to say than others, about their roles, we feel it is important to stress the multi-faceted nature of the part-time youth worker's job. As one worker so aptly summed up:

> You have a lot of roles to play. It is like ten jobs rolled into one.

This is important as training needs to be alert to this diversity of roles if it is adequately to meet the needs of part-time staf..

The second point to make is that it was difficult for us adequately to describe some roles. One youth worker, for example, spoke of acting as a 'buffer' between her noisy group of girls and a sensitive janitor. Another acted as a 'lobbyist' finding that 'getting money to do anything... takes an eternity'. Some of our categories, therefore, do not fully capture the flavour of the roles which youth workers play. Terms like 'referee' and 'fund-raiser' understate the nature of the work.

The third point is that some roles need a little elaboration so that their meaning is clear. A case in point is the role of facilitator. This is the term used to describe the process of allowing young people

to take risks and shoulder responsibility, while simultaneously offering them advice and support. A youth club leader talked about :

> (letting young people) handle the responsibilities for the group without making them feel desperate.

Similarly, in the voluntary sector a Guider explained:

> The skill of the Guider in the Guide Unit is letting the girls choose for themselves but guiding them so that if they really want to do something that really isn't on, or is impractical, then guide them away from it without deflating them too much.

Perhaps the most important point to make, however, is that the balance among the diversity of roles listed in Table 2.1 varies according to the particular contexts youth workers find themselves in. In the uniformed organisations and the Catholic Youth Council (CYC) the emphasis is on the moral and spiritual development of young people. In the uniformed organisations this ambitious aim is intended to be realised through 'giving (the boys) a clear sense of direction', in the words of a Scout leader, and leaders organise programmes designed to achieve badge awards. Badges are seen as one way of 'training for citizenship'. As one might expect, therefore, the emphasis in roles amongst the uniformed organisations is on organising, developing programmes and leading activities - on the trainer/teacher role in general - although, of course, many other roles are played as well. In the local authority sector the emphasis on roles was towards facilitator, and counsellor rather than on the overt teacher/trainer role. One employer remarked that the young people attracted to youth clubs, 'have a very negative perception of education' and so the role of social educator is performed through listening to what young people have to say, raising contemporary social issues such as drug or alcohol abuse or Aids and discussing, rather than teaching in a didatic sense.

Clearly, the uniformed and local authority sectors are each dealing with different groups of young people. Discipline problems were not raised as an issue in any of the uniformed organisations: they were mentioned by workers in the local authority sector. We would not wish to suggest that such problems were dominant. We wish merely to make the point that youth workers in the local authority sector have to respond to a wider range of young people than those in the uniformed organisations. It may, therefore, be difficult to specify the ways in which the aims for the social and personal development of youngsters are to be realised. The need is for a flexible response, adapted to particular young people. This can mean that youth workers find it difficult to specify their aims and objectives and, consequently, their training needs.

Lastly, it is worth stressing that the local government sector should not be seen as homogeneous. There are differences between urban and rural areas, for example. Duties in terms of booking halls and finance would tend to be carried out by youth workers in rural areas, whereas in inner cities they would probably be the responsibility of other personnel. Similarly, the job of a detached youth worker, literally trying to make contact with young people on the street, is rather different from running a youth club.

Despite the different emphases given to roles in various contexts the dominant reason for part-time staff becoming involved in working with young people was **enjoyment**.

Comments such as that, the minute enjoyment went out of the work 'that is the time to quit' were common. Several of the female leaders had found their way into youth work via their own children and through the playgroup movement. Others had become involved either having been members of youth organisations themselves, or, by being invited along by a friend already engaged in the work. Just as part-time staff were seen as playing a wide variety of roles, so they came from a variety of backgrounds. Many were parents and the majority were in paid employment outwith their youth work activities. Table 2.2 gives something of the flavour of this diversity.

Table 2.2: Jobs of part-time staff

• Accountant	• Hairdresser	• Painter/Decorator
• Baker	• Hospital Worker	• Personnel Officer
• Bank Clerk	• Insurance Broker	• Physiotherapist
• Businessman/woman	• Lecturer	• Policeman
• Butcher	• Lorry Driver	• Priest
• Caretaker	• Mature Student	• Receptionist
• Careers Adviser	• Minister	• Shop Assistant
• Farmer	• Mother	• Social Worker
• Forestry Worker	• Nurse	• Student
• Gardener	• Office Worker	• Teacher (primary & secondary)

The same diverse picture emerges when we consider the kind of settings in which the youth workers were operating. There were obvious differences not only in physical environment, but also in the amount of support, in the shape of direct help from colleagues, upon which staff could call. In most situations staff worked alongside several colleagues but a minority of staff worked single-handed. In almost all instances, the latter said they would prefer to work alongside colleagues. Table 2.3 shows the extent of support, in terms of immediate colleagues readily available to part-time staff. We also give details of the length of service in youth work of each part-timer interviewed. It is worth mentioning that roughly equal numbers of men and women were interviewed in the local authority sector. The exception here was in the rural area where only one man was interviewed. In the voluntary sector the Boys' Brigade were male only and Girl Guides were female only; otherwise there was a fairly even split between the sexes.

Table 2.3: Range of length of service and access to colleagues

		Range of length of service	Range of colleagues working alongside
Inner city	Boys' Brigade	3 years - 30 years	1 - 15
	Catholic Youth Council	6 months - 24 years	2 - 20
	Local Government	5 months - 30 years	0 - 9
Mixed area	Scouts	1.5 years - 30 years	0 - 3
	Voluntary Youth Groups	1.5 years - 15 years	0 - 15
	Local Government	8 months - 15 years	0 - 10
Rural area	Girl Guides	1.5 years - 30 years	0 - 3
	Young Farmers	2 years - 15 years	4
	Local Government	8 months - 6 years	0 - 6

In sum therefore, the picture is one of immense diversity of:

- roles played by part-time staff;
- employment backgrounds;
- length of service;
- access to colleagues for immediate support.

It is all the more remarkable, in these circumstances, that distinct patterns in terms of training needs should emerge. We consider these below.

Suggestions on the content of training

In this section we focus on the *content* of training. We concentrate on the similarities between the voluntary and local government sectors and between employers' and part-time staff's views. Where there are clear differences of opinion or emphasis between the groups, we draw attention to them. Before reporting on the needs identified by our sample we provide some brief information about the training provided in both the local authority and voluntary sectors.

In the local authority sector in the three case-study areas, it was generally expected that staff wishing to stay in employment would complete basic courses. In two of the areas the basic courses were run by full-time community education staff. In the third area an outside provider had responsibility for basic training. One other difference is worth pointing out. Two of the basic courses presented an insight into community education in general terms and those attending came from a variety of organisations, for example playgroups and tenants' associations as well as youth clubs. In the third course the training was specifically directed at part-time youth workers who were required to have undergone training within a year of their appointment to the service.

In the voluntary sector the uniformed organisations had programmes associated with nationally set targets. These organisations had a clearly laid down structure of progression from the newest participant through to the most senior. The remaining voluntary youth organisations were

supported by churches and a residents' association. The distinctive non-uniformed organisation in terms of training structure, was the Scottish Association of Young Farmers' Clubs (SAYFC) who organised and ran their own affairs with the support of past members. The local club was comparatively independent and was organised by a local members' committee which drew up and carried out an annual programme of activities. In addition to this there were nationally and internationally organised competitions and events.

The need for induction

A universally expressed need was for some kind of induction training. The precise content of the training and how long it should last varied according to the particular settings in which part-timers were working. However, there was sufficient similarity amongst respondents' views of what should be included to produce the list contained in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Suggested content for induction

- Introduction to key personnel (eg other part-timers; stewards; coffee bar assistants; first-line help)
- Job remit - what is being expected of the part-timer
- The resources/equipment readily available
- The overall aims of the organisation
- The training opportunities available

The amount of time to be spent on any of these activities, clearly depends on the part-timer's familiarity with the organisation and setting in which youth work is being undertaken. In the voluntary uniformed organisations, for example, where staff had come up through the ranks, the need to go over the organisation's aims might be less pressing than for a newcomer.

There was an interesting contrast between the local authority and voluntary sectors on the expessions of satisfaction with current induction provision. In general those in the voluntary sector seemed clearer about the overall aims of their particular organisations and their own role in achieving these aims than the inexperienced part-timers in the local authority sector. The latter pointed out that it was sometimes assumed they already knew what to do because they had backgrounds in social work or teaching or had been involved in a community centre in another capacity. This assumption they saw as misguided.

Basic training

The distinction between induction and basic training is slippery and was not always made by those we interviewed. However, for the sake of clarity, we thought it would be helpful to distinguish between becoming familiar with the setting in which one is operating, ie what we have called induction, and the development of key basic skills necessary to perform the job of part-time youth worker.

There were several areas of need identified by staff as being important. These areas have been divided into four main categories in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Basic training: suggested content

Provision of Experience:	being able to survive a weekend with young people visiting other units in action role playing support from colleagues self-understanding sharing objectives
Instruction on aspects of Organisation:	programming techniques for control running a session organising time
Provision of Information about:	booking accommodation, pitches etc health and safety insurance administrative procedures including book-keeping dealing with drugs**
Opportunities to develop Skills on:	ways of approaching young people understanding/relationships with young people first aid teaching/methods of instruction* organising with young people coping with badge work* working with groups activities, eg sports, arts and crafts, games counselling

*voluntary sector only
**local authority sector only

It is interesting that the vast majority of the content of basic training was common to both voluntary and local government sectors. The items raised in only one sector typically reflect the particular circumstances of those involved. Staff who listed 'drugs' for inclusion in basic training for example, were either working as outreach workers or in clubs where drug taking was a common problem. We understand that a large element of basic drugs training is included in voluntary youth work. However, the table presents the data collected from the case-studies and we make no claims for representativeness across Scotland.

As we will see in Chapter 3 opinions varied on the quality and accessibility of basic training on offer. For the moment, however, our concern is with the particular needs identified.

The balance of time devoted to any one of the topics listed above is clearly dependent on a whole range of factors including the features of the particular setting in which the youth worker is operating, the attributes of the youth worker and the time available for training. Indeed the perceived relevance and applicability of the training to the part-time staff undergoing training was one of the key indicators of high quality training. All we are doing here is describing the topics in which basic training was seen as necessary. We return to this below.

So far, however, we have concentrated on the training needs of inexperienced part-time staff. Our examination of the responses from the different groups led us to conclude that it would not be fruitful to try to establish distinctions between them. Accordingly, we decided to report together the findings of all those interviewed. As far as it goes, therefore, our evidence suggests there is a broad consensus among all the parties involved about the needs of part-time staff for basic training. The question then arises, 'Is there a need for training which goes beyond the basics?' The answer to this question is a resounding 'yes' although, as might be imagined, it was more difficult to see patterns in demands for this kind of training than for basic training.

Beyond basic training

Our identification of basic training was based on those items which staff across sectors saw as essential. In this section we concentrate on training which goes beyond the basics. In our view, however, it would be wrong to see this training as only for more experienced part-time workers. Some of the specified content in Table 2.6 would be appropriate for inexperienced workers, if they were working in clubs where drug taking was a common problem, or where racism was a problem. Much depends on the context in which the part-timer works. Clearly, refresher courses are intended for more experienced workers. As with the basic training courses, the level of demand depended on factors such as skills gaps within a particular working situation and personal need and interest.

There are two points to emphasise here. First, there seems to be a demand across the sectors for refresher or updating, courses. It is worth reminding ourselves that some of our respondents had been involved in part-time work for twenty years or more and so this kind of demand is not surprising. Second, there appears to be a higher proportion of needs specific to sectors than is the case with induction or basic training. Again, this is hardly surprising. As part-timers gain experience they perceive needs particular to their own contexts as do their employers/trainers. In many ways, then, our data suggest a core of induction and basic training, complemented by a range of optional supplementary training targeted at particular issues and a series of 'refresher' courses.

We see the demand for training as encompassing four main areas, described in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Training needs beyond the basics

Refresher/Updating Courses

- DSS and other procedures affecting young people
- group work
- programming activities

Handling Problems

- racism
- sexuality: AIDS
- substance abuse

Specialist Courses

- advanced sport/subject specific
- computer training**
- video work**

General Skills Courses

- confidence building*
- consciousness raising, exploring attitudes and prejudices**
- counselling
- management skills (eg communication, supporting volunteers, best use of resources)
- residential trips
- team building/relationships

*voluntary sector only
**local government sector only

Features of successful training

Almost regardless of the particular content of training there were certain features of training which, in the eyes of part-timers and their employers/trainers, seemed to encourage success. We should make it clear of course, that we have no independent measures of whether training was successful. The key features identified in the interviews are training which:

- includes opportunities to meet other part-time staff;
- can be applied directly to the part-timer's own situation - (relevance);
- is 'delivered' by those with credibility ie those with recent experience of the reality of youth work;
- does not take up too much time.

Let us now consider each one of these features a little more closely.

Opportunities to Meet Other Part-Time Staff

There was general recognition across the sectors of the value in part-timers meeting each other by visiting each others' clubs, attending seminars or conferences, and through shared resource centres.

The chief benefit of such meetings was seen as relieving anxiety about how good a job part-timers were doing. The relief in finding out that other people were experiencing similar problems was immense! Meeting others was also a means of exchanging ideas, making contacts and building networks. These could range from informal support networks to establishing a list of 'guest speakers' or 'guest demonstrators' who were effective for the club.

Relevant Training

It is easy to forget that part-timers are just that. Their youth work is, typically, only one of many demands on their time. Training which is additional to their regular one or two evenings a week commitment clearly makes additional demands. Training then has to compete with other activities which the part-timer could be engaged in and so if it is not 'right on the mark' there is a substantial risk of part-timers being turned off training for good. Excerpts from two interviews eloquently make these points.

The first extract is from a part-time youth worker in the local government sector on the placement which was part of his basic course:

> Everyone was sent to junior clubs to learn about clubs. I was working with people from 14 up, so what the hell experience does a junior club give me? ... They used to say to me, 'How would you take this to your club?' How could I take it to my club - what could I do with 6 year olds that I could do with this club (for 14 - 25 year olds).

The second is a reaction to a new approach to training recently adopted by one voluntary organisation. This new approach was seen as relevant because it included topics such as planning for your own youth club's development and a clear step by step process towards achieving an objective:

> As you can imagine I have attended fifty million courses ... over the years. I found that one refreshingly different. ... I called in to visit the course (for one night) and ended up staying for the nine weeks.

Credibility of the Trainer

If the trainer was perceived to know about the kinds of contexts part-timers found themselves in, the 'training message' was more likely to be taken seriously. This is not unique to youth work or to community education. Those involved in pre-service teacher training, for example, are encouraged to obtain recent, relevant experience of to-day's schools. And at a commonsense level, being trained by someone who knows about the reality of youth work, first hand, has an appeal. However, this is a demanding criterion for trainers to meet. It would clearly be impossible for trainers to have direct experience of all conceivable contexts for general youth work. Nor should it be assumed that experienced workers are, by virtue of their experience always good trainers. What seems to be important is that the training approach allows trainees to relate the training to their own context. This

can be done in a variety of ways; practical exercises; role play and/or joint training with subject or skills specialists and those with local knowledge, for example.

As well as being knowledgeable about the working environment of part-time staff, trainers had to be able to cope in these environments to be seen as credible. Again this is a demanding criterion for trainers to meet. However, one example makes this point tellingly in reference to a context where a trainer/employer was known not to be able to cope. A part-time leader had witnessed her trainer lock himself in a cupboard one night when some armed youngsters in her club had become particularly difficult. While this is obviously an extreme situation, we came across part-timers who were regularly faced with discipline problems sometimes arising from drug or alcohol abuse. In such circumstances it is training which concentrates on practice, delivered by an experienced worker, who can cope with such eventualities, which counts.

Time

As mentioned above, part-timers already devote time to the practical activity of running their clubs. Training which makes too many inroads beyond this commitment can be resented. This problem is compounded in rural areas where travelling time to a training event can be considerable. Ways of overcoming this included:

- having set projects to carry out within one's own club as part of a training course;
- the trainer travelling to the club;
- distance learning materials. (people wanted contact with others from time to time, in working their way through these).

Paradoxically, although many comments were made about time constraints, there was a general welcome and enthusiasm for residential weekends. We end this chapter by looking at our respondents' preferred forms of training. These were residential weekends, on-the-job support and evaluation, and handbooks.

Preferred forms of training

Clear patterns emerged which were common across the voluntary and local government sectors about the preferred ways of delivering training. There were some interesting differences in emphasis, however, between the two sectors, particularly on the need for full-time workers to support part-timers. We discuss this in more detail below.

Residential Weekends

Despite the time pressures on part-time workers, training which included a residential weekend or, indeed, consisted entirely of a residential weekend, was highly favoured. This holds true for the overwhelming majority of part-timers, regardless of length of service, and for employers, and across sectors. The comments below give the flavour of the enthusiasm with which residential weekends were regarded:

I learned more in that weekend than I did in the other five weeks.
(part-time leader, on basic training course)

The greatest training is when you are ... out of your area, when it's a residential. ... Even better if you are linking with another Region or another area. There's more exchange of information and realisation that they have the same problems as us.
(employer, local authority)

In addition to the formal structure we like our courses ... to have a residential element so that groups have informal after hours get togethers over coffee ... They can thrash out differences in their own experiences (of running a group). That tends to be very valuable and quite often more valuable than the formal content of the course.
(Assistant Scout Commissioner)

A criticism of residential elements came from one area where some part-timers had been unable to attend and so felt they had missed out, especially when it was referred to in subsequent training.

On-the-Job Support and Evaluation

One of the strongest messages coming from part-time staff was their need for on-the-job support. We cannot over emphasise how much support from full-time staff was valued. As we indicated earlier, the levels of support offered varied across and within the case-study areas. In a community school, for example, three full-time staff usually worked alongside the voluntary staff and this was highly appreciated. In contrast, in a community centre, part-time staff were left very much to their own devices. Reasons for lack of support from full-time staff varied and included:

- other commitments, so regular support not given a high priority;
- belief that part-time staff should not be dependent on full-time staff;
- staff shortages.

The kinds of areas where support was valued included:

- pre-session planning and programme meetings;
- working actively with young people alongside part-time staff;
- offering purposeful and constructive evaluation;
- staff development and training of part-time staff.

The value of having the regular support of a full-timer was neatly summed up by a trainer in the voluntary sector:

I don't see much point in having a super duper training set up if, when the individual who has then been trained, hasn't got anybody to lean on when he goes back into the field as it were.

Support from full-time staff was one which sometimes transcended sector boundaries. There was some evidence of inter-agency support, with a small number of voluntary sector staff welcoming contact with full-time local authority community education workers.

A statement by a Guider illustrates this:

> They (full-time community education staff) are aware of so much that is going on around ... They are aware of changes in education and how they affect youth groups. ... Contact is so helpful.

However, generally there was very little contact between the sectors. We understand this may be changing with recent developments in training on dealing with drug abuse being provided across sectors.

In contrast full-time staff who were not in regular contact with part-time staff in the local government sector were not highly regarded. More than this, however, lack of contact could be highly de-motivating as the following comments make clear:

> I think if this was the only job I was doing ... I would feel that I probably wasn't valued very much because they (full-time staff) didn't bother to come and see me and ask how I was getting on or ask whether I needed assistance.
>
> (part-time, local authority)

> To me, the youth leader is the prominent person in the youth club and if he hasn't got the right tools for the trade then he won't be able to do the job properly. ... The full-time community worker ... should be somebody with the skills already there and (be) ready to use (them) and provide training. ... He's (full-time worker) too busy to keep track ... He's losing touch with the training needs of youth leaders.
>
> (part-time, local authority)

As indicated earlier, opportunities to talk to other part-timers were also highly valued. Although this was no substitute for regular contact with full-time staff, it was often the main source of support.

In general, part-timers in the voluntary sector felt better supported by employers than part-timers in the local authority sector. There was a clear element of shared fellowship in the activities of the church based organisations and it is likely that this contributed to feelings of being supported. However, this was backed up by more tangible evidence of support through conferences, a forum for youth workers, headquarter offices being available as a meeting place and perhaps, most importantly of all, a clear commitment on the part of experienced staff to support part-time staff by visits to clubs. This is summed up by a Guide Commissioner but her comment could equally well apply to all the voluntary clubs researched:

> I like to get involved and visit all the units regularly. You have got to know the girls. I am aware that the minute you lose touch with the girls you are not really doing the job properly.

Of course, support from employers took place in the local government sector too. What we are suggesting is that there is not the same degree of recognition of the need for support as in the voluntary sector. Although many factors such as staff shortages and other work commitments might impede full-time staff's ability to provide support, our data suggest that the provision of such support needs to assume a higher priority. Regular on-the-job support, can be seen as an efficient and effective approach to training.

Handbooks

Most of the voluntary organisations had manuals or handbooks. Although they were sometimes criticised for being too complex, they were there as reference material when needed. A Guider commented:

> It is very useful because you can look up anything you are going to do and see what procedures you have got to go through before a trip; for example, having to get written permission to go to the swimming baths.

Information sheets and the training sections of national and local in-house journals were also seen as useful.

In the local authority sector, some staff suggested that a handbook for new staff would be helpful. A full-time worker reported that he would like to see a Regional handbook for part-time staff entitled 'Everything You Want To Know About Youth Work.' Topics to be included would be, health and safety; breakdowns of the mini-bus; what to do in case of an accident; legal points. The rationale for such a handbook was that it would provide a basic foundation from which to operate. Certainly some kind of basic information sheets would seem to be desirable if the following situation strikes chords:

> There have been people found ... overdosing in the toilets with hyperdermic needles sticking out of their arm. I don't think anybody has even got a back up phone number.
>
> (part-time leader; youth club)

Summary

In this chapter we have described training needs, the features seen as promoting successful training and preferred forms of training provision.

We have indicated three levels of content for training, namely:

- *induction* focusing on job remit, identification of key people particularly first-line help, the overall aims of the organisation, the resources readily available and the opportunities for training;

- *basic training* which should include provision of experience such as visiting other clubs; instruction on aspects of organisation such as running a session; provision of information about a variety of matters such as health and safety, and insurance; and opportunities to develop skills fundamental to the job;
- *additional training* which should include refresher and updating courses; courses in handling problems such as AIDS; specialist sports or subject courses; and general skills courses such as management, or counselling.

We have suggested that there are strong patterns of commonality across the local government and voluntary sectors on induction and basic training needs. Additional training demands seem to be more sector specific but this may be a feature of our sample.

The chapter has identified features of successful training which are:

- opportunities to meet other part-time staff;
- relevance and direct applicability of content;
- credibility of the trainer;
- 'reasonable' time commitment.

The emphasis on practicality and relevance is striking. When we consider this in conjunction with the preferred form of training being on-the-job, an apprenticeship model of training is suggested. It seems that part-time workers want to learn from other experienced part-timers or full-time staff. They are the master craftsmen and by observing them, talking to them and working alongside them, they will learn most of what they need to know. Off-the-job training is seen as having a place as long as it is practical and relevant. The almost total absence of comment about theory is striking but perhaps not surprising. A one or two evening a week commitment where there are activities to organise, problems to deal with and records to be kept, perhaps predisposes people to concentrate on the practicalities of how to do something when it comes to training, rather than theories of adolescence or of the rationale for community education. The preference of part-time staff for practical activities and skills related training suggest that theory should be approached through practice rather than as an introduction to practice.

The final point to make is that the voluntary sector seems to have clearer aims and objectives than the local government sector, and this clarity is associated with more precisely targeted training and a higher commitment to on-the-job support. This state of affairs no doubt reflects the weighty generic remit of local authority youth work and the budgetary and other resource constraints under which it operates. However, some of our employers/trainers interviewed did not believe in on-the-job support, preferring part-timers to develop their own style and sink or swim. This was not the message about support coming from the part-time staff we interviewed.

3

Perceptions of national training provision

This chapter is concerned with the perceptions of national training provision. We begin by looking at the range of courses provided across the country. This is followed by a consideration of perceptions of the quality of training at a local level in our case-study areas. Finally, we discuss our respondents' views on modular training.

The national picture

In addition to our work in the three case-study areas described in Chapter 1, we undertook a more comprehensive survey of training provision for part-time staff. This survey was conducted by a postal questionnaire.

It was difficult to identify all the providers of training as no readily accessible data base exists. The following steps were taken in an attempt to ensure as wide a response to our questionnaire as possible.

- All Principal Community Education Officers (PCEO) in Regional/and Island Authorities and each division of Strathclyde were contacted.

- Where community education or their equivalent departments indicated they did not have sole responsibility for training other departments were contacted. These included Leisure and Recreation and Social Work departments.

- The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) was approached to identify Councils of Social/Voluntary Service. Each Council was contacted.

- The Scottish Standing Conference of Voluntary Youth Organisations (SSCVYO) assisted in identifying national voluntary youth organisations. In all, 22 organisations were contacted.

We asked these institutions and departments to provide us with information on:

- the number and title of courses offered to part-time youth workers;
- the objectives of the course;
- the staff targeted;
- the numbers participating;
- the length of the course and the distribution of course hours (eg 1 day, 2 hours over 3 evenings);
- the name of the trainer and of the training co-ordinator;
- the categories of voluntary and part-time staff receiving no training and the reasons for this;
- how training was organised generally within the organisation.

Information was supplied from all the Regions, Islands and Divisions in Scotland. In the voluntary sector 13 of the 22 youth organisations contacted responded but 3 of these 13 were unable to supply us with information. They explained that our questions were inapplicable because they had been unable to carry out training. An extract from one letter makes the general point:

> With financial constraints being what they are we cannot afford to send managers and part-time staff on training courses. Also we do not seem to have time to devise courses for our own use. Thus we muddle on.

Of course we do not know about the extent of training in the 9 voluntary youth organisations who did not respond to our enquiries. More generally, we should stress that the picture we present is necessarily incomplete. As we shall see below, in some cases readily accessible and reliable statistical information was not available. This applied both to the local government and the voluntary sectors. In the local government sector, for example, information on training provision and take-up tended to be held by local area teams, not centrally. Similarly, in some voluntary organisations information tends to be held at district rather than national level. Clearly, there are good reasons for this where responsibility for training is devolved to local area workers. However, it made our task of collecting information difficult and we wonder if there would be merit in information being held at Regional/Divisional level, in order to facilitate strategic planning.

We present a picture of the provision and take-up of training, then, that is necessarily incomplete. We offer a snapshot of the training provided between April 1987 and March 1988 to voluntary and part-time paid youth workers. For clarity we report training provision in the local authority and voluntary sectors, separately. However, it should be noted that some training provided in the local authority sector was taken up by part-time staff in the voluntary sector.

Local authority sector provision

Table 3.1 shows the numbers of courses provided and illustrates the kinds of topics covered in these courses. As contextual information we also provide estimates of the population statistics for each Region/Division as supplied by the General Register Office for Scotland for June 1988.

Table 3.1: Numbers of courses provided for part-time youth workers, local authority sector April1987-March 1988

	No. of courses	Examples of content	Estimated population (to nearest 1,000)
Borders	**8**	Drug abuse; programme development.	103,000
Central	**8**	General youth work.	272,000
Dumfries & Galloway	**4**	Induction; drugs education.	147,000
Fife	**18**	Basic youth work; drug awareness; counselling; group work; induction; first aid; sport; new developments.	344,000
Grampian	**95**	Group work; first aid; sport; relationships;drugs/alcohol/ AIDS; drama	501,000
Highland	**11**	New games.	202,000
Lothian	**25**	Dealing with disruption; health/drugs/AIDS/alcohol; first aid.	741,000
Orkney	**2**	Introduction to youth work.	19,000
Strathclyde			2,317,000
Argyll & Bute	**0**		
Ayr	**25**	Health (eg AIDS, alcohol, drugs); first aid; sports; drama.	
Dumbarton	**16**	Alcohol abuse; video making; counselling; outdoor activities.	
Glasgow	**51**	Health/drugs/AIDS/alcohol; basic accounts, sports coaching; management of resources; first aid.	
Lanark	**10** **+6**	Basic youth leadership; art; first aid; drama; working with video. Community arts courses (available to youth workers and others).	
Renfrew	**11** **12** **8**	Introductory/basic youth leadership courses*. Refresher course for youth leaders; working with girls; social education; drugs; counselling; audio-visual reprographics Offered to all categories of staff.	
Shetland	**0**		22,000
Tayside	**17**	Drug awareness; residential work; Part I and Part II youth work.	394,000
Western Isles	**0**		31,000
Total	**327**		

* Basic leadership training courses were aimed at all those working in a part-time paid or voluntary capacity in community education.

We indicated at the beginning of the chapter that we would not wish to claim complete accuracy for the numbers of the courses offered. We were unable to cross-check the reported data. The return from Borders, for example, pointed out that our questionnaire did not consider training on a one-to-one level in the work place and that this was often the more appropriate form of training in rural areas. Similarly in Lothian, many part-time workers attend courses offered by the South East Scotland Training Association (SESTA) but statistics on take-up were not available. In Central a number of courses were operated in addition to those identified. These were on offer 'to interested persons whether directly or indirectly associated or not with youth work'. Nevertheless, our data suggest a higher training profile in Grampian and in most of the Strathclyde Divisions than in other parts of Scotland. The returns from areas where no training had taken place usually identified lack of resources, human and financial, as the main reason:

> We have neither the manpower nor the financial resources with which to train people.
>
> (Western Isles)

> Staff resignations and problems of geography (timing of last ferries to the islands) mean that no training has taken place.
>
> (Shetland)

> A prolonged staff vacancy and consequent industrial action led to the blacking of most training activities.
>
> (Argyll and Bute)

Form, Content and Take-up of Training

Training courses were offered in a variety of forms. These included evening courses, for example one two hour session per week over five or six weeks, residential week-ends and non-residential week-ends. Table 3.1 gives examples of the content covered by training. A more comprehensive inspection of the content suggests that the training on offer across Scotland covers most of the training needs identified through the research in the case-study areas and reported in Chapter 2. However, the availability to a part-timer of training in any part of Scotland varied considerably. Our survey suggests that the amount and frequency of training depends on a number of factors:

- the availability of trainers;
- the uptake of courses;
- the priorities of providers;
- the available budget;
- access to national courses;
- geographical situation.

These factors can interact, of course, and it is often a combination of events over which the community education service have little or no control which result in training opportunities being limited. In Highland, for example, a lack of community education staff being available to provide training meant that workshops were held only in one centre. Hence staff in youth clubs far removed from that centre tended not to get training. Returns from some Regions/Divisions mentioned either

that there were insufficient numbers of part-timers to offer specialist courses, for example in an advanced youth leaders course, or that courses had to be cancelled due to lack of uptake. Table 3.2 lists staff who had not been offered training 1987-88 and the reasons given for this.

Table 3.2: Staff receiving no training and the reasons for this

	Category of staff	Reason for no training
Borders	Volunteers in youth clubs Senior youth club workers	Insufficient staff/equipment. Limited range of courses offered by national agencies to Borders.
Dumfries & Galloway	Junior youth club workers	This provided individually at local level. Training emphasis on 16+ age group.
Fife	50% part-time paid workers Some voluntary workers	Lack of courses. Other commitments. Had previously undergone training.
Grampian	Youth workers working with under-12s in one area	New community school being developed. Priority given to working adolescents.
Highland	Staff in clubs far removed from a training centre	Staff shortage.
Lothian	Some youth workers	Individual training budget - can meet the costs of very few courses. Staff encouraged to take SESTA courses.
Orkney	Some youth workers	Staff changes. 'There are only three of us!'
Argyll & Bute	All staff	No courses offered.
Ayr	Senior youth workers	No full-time member of staff available to organise training.
Dumbarton	Junior youth club staff (14 and under) Specialist workers eg girls' workers, outreach workers.	Not seen as a priority. Lack of necessary experience and knowledge. Intend to run courses 1988-89.
Glasgow	Advanced youth leaders (refresher courses)	Insufficient staff interested in participating. Not a priority given budgetary constraints.
Lanark	Senior youth workers Youth work/activity leaders	Change in role needed clarifying before devising new training. Staff shortages and changes.
Shetland	All staff	No courses offered
Western Isles	All staff	No courses offered

The implication of Table 3.2 is that priority is given to new part-time staff, as might be expected. Workers in junior clubs and experienced part-timers seem to be the categories most frequently missing out on training where priorities have to be made.

In three areas, Central, Renfrew and Tayside all categories of staff were offered training, although training opportunities were not always taken up by all staff. Table 3.3 shows that the reason given in two of these areas for the provision of training opportunities is the existence of a high profile training team.

Table 3.3: Areas where all categories of staff were offered training and the reasons for this

Region/Division		Reason given
Central	All categories offered training.	-
Renfrew	'Training offered to all categories of staff at different levels. Many staff did not receive training ... perhaps they feel they have undertaken all the training necessary.'	Each area team has a 'lead person' training. These members of staff have undertaken an assessed course and along with APCEO form the Divisional Training Group.
Tayside	All categories offered training.	In the Division/area training is offered by full-time CE staff working in a training team.

Our data suggest that when training is offered there is, in general, a good response from the targeted group. Thus if there is a target group of 20 it is typical to have 14-16 participating. General introductory courses also seem to have a good response. In Central, for example, 73 staff in total attended two Introduction to Youth Work days, and in Glasgow cohorts of 30 or more undertaking basic youth leadership courses are not uncommon.

Who Provides Training?

In each Region/Division a range of providers is used. Overwhelmingly, however, training is provided in-house by community education departments themselves or by social work departments. Two Regions made the point that they would use outside providers as an exception, for specialist areas. Certainly the predominance given to staff shortage as a reason for *not* providing training suggests a reliance on full-time community education staff not only as identifiers of training needs and organisers of provision but also as 'deliverers' of training. If budgets permitted, no doubt the service might 'buy in' more outside training and, as we shall see below, there may be scope for developing training targeted at both the voluntary and local authority sectors. In the meantime, it is worth giving the flavour of the range of 'outside' trainers used for part-time youth workers.

Table 3.4: 'Outside' providers of training: the local authority sector

AIDS Training Centre
Candle Centre for Help with Addiction
Craigie College
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
Glemmore Lodge
Grace Productions
Guidance Teacher (from local school)
Intermediate Treatment Resources Centre
Inverclyde Drugs Line
Jordanhill College of Education
Local Community Nursing Team
Northern College of Education
Open University
Police
Pollock Addictions Information & Advice Centre
Red Cross
Royal Edinburgh Hospital
Scottish Badminton Union
SESTA
St Andrew's Ambulance
St John's Ambulance
Volunteer Action Resource Centre

So far we have concentrated on the extent and take-up of training. What did part-time staff and their employers/trainers have to say about the quality of what was on offer?

Perceptions of the Quality of Training

It is important to remember that we have no independent indicators of the quality of training. We did not observe any training, for example, or have access to any evaluation of training undertaken by providers. This section reports the views of those who had undergone training, in the context of local authority work, about its worth and is based on data from our three case-study areas.

As we indicated in Chapter 2, there was a perceived need for induction and basic training. Most of the staff interviewed had experienced such training. Their views on its adequacy and appropriateness were mixed, ranging from 'interesting' and 'enjoyable' to 'largely irrelevant'. Basic or foundation courses which were not specifically focused on youth work were generally criticised as irrelevant. Extracts from two workers in different parts of the country are typical of the kinds of comments made:

> I think a youth leaders' course would be more useful than the foundation course which had people from playgroups and other organisations.

> I found it helped me to communicate with adults and groups more than for working in the youth club. ...I would say that it hasn't helped me understand the job.

Even where courses were specifically directed at youth work staff, there was criticism of training methods. There would be too much emphasis on paper and not enough on practical activity. Again, one quotation serves to illustrate the general point.

> (I thought) oh no! They're handing out more paper again... more role plays would have been a lot more helpful.

There were also worries about standards and these came both from part-timers and from employers in one case-study area.

> I could have sat on that course and not opened my mouth, which certain people did, and passed it. ...As far as I am concerned, the only way to fail that course is not to turn up.
>
> (part-timer)

> We're kind of rushing people through because they have to be qualified. We're in all honesty hesitant to fail people ... if we don't pass them then we lose them from our clubs

The contrast with the approach in adult basic education is striking. In our report on this we stress the careful approach to recruitment where opportunities to drop out of the basic training were built-in so that volunteers select themselves. Clearly recruitment problems can be acute in some areas but we would question the view that the solution to such problems lies in relaxing training standards.

In summary, then, positive views about aspects of basic training were expressed in all three case-study areas. In general they were viewed as helping staff gain in confidence and there was appreciation of courses delivered by trainers who were knowledgeable about the geographic areas in which part-time staff were working. However, none of the case-study areas escaped criticism of the basic courses. In the rural area concerns were expressed about quality, relevance and delivery. In the mixed area delivery was praised but there was concern about relevance and the accessibility of the course; sometimes it took two or three years to get a place on the youth work course. In the urban area the worry was about standards across the differing areas and sometimes about relevance.

It is difficult to generalise about perceptions of the quality of specialist or advanced courses since those interviewed had done a variety of different training courses. Perhaps two points are worth making. Firstly, there was a consensus that courses needed to be constantly updated. There was a need to take account of the changing circumstances in which part-time youth workers found themselves. Here again, the emphasis was on the credibility of trainers as having recent experience of operating in areas which were the focus of training. Secondly, and related to this, there was a need for trainers to build in evaluation of courses and follow-up. Several staff expressed the view that this was essential to see whether what had been taught as training courses had been put into practice and whether the training had in fact been relevant to the needs of the individual part-time staff. Where

there was built-in evaluation or feed-back from courses, full-time staff were able to pick up criticisms and pass them on to the training team. In this way a cycle of course development and improvement could be put into action.

So far we have concentrated on the local authority sector. Let us now turn to provision in the voluntary sector.

Voluntary sector provision

We should remember that we are reporting provision based on returns from 10 groups who offered training out of the 22 contacted. A massive 321 'events' were reported with the Girl Guides topping the league at 170 events. Of course we need to be cautious about making comparisons since we have no way of knowing how easy it is for the organisations to provide information about their training provision. However, a glance at Table 3.5 reveals a substantial difference in the provision of training by the uniformed voluntary organisations on one hand and the non-uniformed on the other. Our interview data, reported in Chapter 2, suggests that the uniformed organisations have a uniquely clear structured progression in training for their youth leaders. These organisations had published handbooks detailing what was expected from their part-time staff, including aims and objectives, restrictions on activities, and of qualifications required for specialist activities such as camping or mountain craft. These handbooks appeared to be most developed in the Guides and Scouts where they were referred to regularly. In the uniformed organisations local programmes are closely associated with national set targets and there is a clear progression through badge activities towards these. This means that training targets tend to be clearly defined.

Table 3.5 overleaf shows the wide range of content included and again suggests that the needs identified in the case-study areas and reported in Chapter 2 are being covered We received information about a total of 311 courses. We know, however, that this is an underestimate as the return from the Scouts was based on a sample of 5 of the 31 districts into which they are organised. The amount of paperwork involved made it difficult for returns to be available to us in the time available. A truer estimate would be around 150 courses or events.

Trying to categorise the 311 courses is difficult. For example, only 2 courses are labelled as induction but we do not know whether the 68 courses called basic training also included an induction element. Furthermore, we do not know whether the 31 general courses offered by the Guides included induction or indeed whether the 30 leadership courses included basic and advanced leadership. However, using the figures in a rough and ready way we can see that of the 311 courses offered:

- 131 might be classified as induction/basic training (2 induction, + 68 basic training + 61 general leadership courses);
- 8 were unambigously identified as refresher, skills, sports, or subject;
- 172 were specialist courses of one kind or another: of these 68 might be classified as general skills such as management training, public relations, programme development, and the remaining 104 subject specific such as camping, badges/awards, make-up, and working with the elderly;

The high number of specialist courses offered by the Girl Guides perhaps reflects the clear objectives and programmes for training mentioned in Chapter 2. We suspect the same is true of the Scouts.

Table 3.5: Voluntary sector provision

Organisation	Total No. of Courses	Course Content	No.	Course Content	No.
Frontier Youth Trust	2	Induction and Ideas Forum	1	Skills Development	1
Girls Brigade:					
National	13	Award Scheme & Competition			
		Syllabi	3		
		Camping	2	Leadership	4
		Refresher	3	New Programmes	1
Regional	59	Preparation for Leadership/Basic Officer Training	48	Skills Refresher (music, movement, craft etc)	5
		Competition Syllabi	3	Public Relations	1
		Training Skills	1	Sport	1
Scripture Union	12	Communication Skil's	1	Working with Children	1
		Camping	5	Group Work	2
		Biole work	1	Training Skills	2
Girl Guides	170	General Courses	31	Outdoor Activities	16
		Arts and Crafts	15	Planning	15
		Leadership	30	Ceremonies	11
		Music/Dance	12	Public Relations	1
		Management	7	Changes	15
		Evaluation	1	International	12
		Comic Relief	1	Programme Training	7
		Badges/Awards	6	Trainers	1
		History	2	Home Skills	1
		First Aid	4	Make-Up	1
		Games	16	Resources	2
		Camping	2		
Bapist Union	3	Mission Training (includes group work and organisational skills)	1	Youth Leadership (includes substance abuse and group work)	2 2
The Campaigners	5	Youth Work Skills - Basic	2	Youth Work Skills - Advanced	2
		Training Skills	1		
Scouts	28	Leadership Training - Basic	17	Leadership Training - Advanced	5
		Tutor Training	1	Camping	3
		Programme Development and Evaluation	1		
SA Young Farmers	10	Leadership Development	8	Tutor Training	1
		Club Management	1		
VS Orkney	8	Management Skills	2	Managing Conflict	1
		Induction	1	Working with the Elderly	1
		Reminiscence	1	Evaluation	1
		Volunteer Selection	1		
Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied (PHAB)	1	Identifying needs and planning relevant training programme			

Form and take-up of training

As in the local authority sector, training was provided in a variety of forms, whole days, residential weekends, and in two or three hour blocks spread over a number of evenings. Most training was provided in-house with outside providers being used in specialist areas such as first aid or sports. It is difficult to be precise but our data suggest that over 250 of the courses were provided by the voluntary organisations themselves, the remaining being provided by the organisations listed in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: 'Outside' providers of training

British Red Cross
Church of Scotland
Community Education (Orkney)
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Panel
Dundee College of Education
Fire Brigade
Floral Art Group
Member of Spastic Home Staff
New Games Association
Non-affiliated Specialists (drama, dance, arts, crafts)
Salvation Army
Scottish Keep Fit Association
SCVO
SSCVYO
Syergetics Training Consultancy
Unemployed Voluntary Action Fund
Volunteer Development Scotland

The main point to emerge is the lack of inter-organisation or inter-agency training. As one Guider from a case-study area pointed out:

> ... the Guide movement is ... very proud of the way it does things. There is great rivalry between the Guides and Scouts. ... I mean we don't think Scouts put tents up ... you know we put them up better!

It could be argued that there is scope for shared training between the local authority and voluntary sectors. We came across some examples of this in our case-studies and through the national survey but generally such provision is conspicuous by its absence. Clearly inter-agency training would have to be clearly targeted and exhibit the characteristics of satisfactory training such as relevance, described in Chapter 2. One group of guides had attended a community education course on how to run committees, for example. They found that the committee procedure detailed in their organisation's rules was rather different from that on the course and they felt unable to apply much of what they had learned. Clearly a balance has to be struck between training which is specific to

a particular organisation because of its ethos, aims and objectives and generic training which cuts across sectors and organisations. In principle there would seem to be gains to be derived from people from a range of organisations undertaking some training together. At the moment the balance seems to be very much towards organisational and sector 'isolation'.

It is interesting to note that some outside agencies, the Red Cross and Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for example, are providing training across sectors and for a variety of organisations within sectors. There may be scope to develop inter-agency training from this kind of base. However, there would need to be opportunities to relate training to the trainees' own contexts if the criterion of relevance were to be met.

As far as uptake of training was concerned, this was reported as good, again striking a chord with the local authority sector. Training was targeted either at small groups 15-20 with take up usually being at least half of the target group, or larger general events where 100 or more were targeted. For example, whole days or weekends were devoted to ceremonials, games, and history by the Girl Guides. Smaller groups would focus on one or two areas, for example, a craft evening or games with a purpose.

Perceptions of Quality of Training

Basic training courses, where they were offered, were tailored to the needs of the individual organisation. In the Guides and Scouts part-time staff were required to have a warrant before they could have their appointment ratified. This invoived them in carrying out a programme over approximately 6 months. In both organisations there was specific training for each category of staff so that non-warranted staff had their own training while still having access to all other general courses offered. Warranted leaders in the Scouts were expected to complete the basic training course offered within 2 years; while in the Guides warrants had to be reviewed every 5 years. To do this, leaders had to spend 15 hours in training over that period and have learned a new skill. The SAYFC offered new office bearers an annual one day of training for member organisations in the district. This provided opportunities for office bearers from different clubs to meet each other and introduced office bearers to the skills required to carry out their posts. The Catholic Youth Council had introduced a new Youth Ministry course which included planning for the clubs' development, achieving objectives; and raising awareness about the nature of adolescence.

All these courses were generally praised by those involved, the three main criticisms being the time which training could take up, the amount of paperwork involved and the level of language sometimes being too high. It is worth re-emphasising three points about voluntary sector training:

- the overall aims and objectives of the organisations are typically clear;
- training is typically delivered by those actively involved in the day-to-day running of clubs, sections;
- training is targeted at particular levels.

We suggest that these three points contribute substantially to what respondents perceive to be successful training provision of good quality.

It is clear from this brief look at training provision and take-up in both the local authority and voluntary sectors that a wide range of training is provided in terms of both content and structure. We have indicated, however, that the access of an individual part-time worker to training is dependent on a number of factors including the availability of trainers, the size of the training budget and geography. How did part-time workers and their employers/trainers view the prospect of a modular approach to training? The next section reports their views.

Perceptions of modular training

For this section we return to our case-study data. In interviews all our respondents were asked about their views on a modular approach to training. In particular, we were interested in their views on modules being certificated by SCOTVEC.

Before reporting views, we should make it clear that modular training was a new concept to many of the staff interviewed. This meant that a description of a modular approach had to be supplied. The description included the following elements:

- a package of learning over a period of 20 or 40 hours;
- a package which specified at the start what the student would have learned by the end of the module;
- the prospect of national certification;
- the potential linking of one module to other modules.

It should be borne in mind, therefore, that most of our respondents were reacting to the *idea* of modules as outlined above, rather than the *experience* of modules. Very few had either taught modules or been a student on a modular programme. They therefore knew little about the degree of flexibility in 'fleshing out' modules, adapting modules to local circumstances or flexibility in teaching and learning approaches. As we shall see below there was considerable misunderstanding of these matters, implying the need for information about modules being targeted to community education if a modular approach to training is to be adopted.

On the whole, the interviewees' reaction to the prospect of modules was mixed, with the balance towards favouring a modular approach. Almost all part-timers were in favour of modules, although their support could be qualified by reservations about delivery. Stronger reservations and outright resistance tended to be found among employers/trainers. Part of the explanation for these differences in perception may lie in the fact that the issue of modular training has already been considered by some full-time staff who have taken a position on its desirability. In numerical terms we recorded 61 respondents supporting modules, 14 against modules and 20 unsure or with no comment.

Those who were in favour of a modular approach gave reasons which could be divided into three main areas, *enhancing and systematising training, opening up employment prospects and increasing the availability of training*. Table 3.7 gives examples of these categories.

Table 3.7: Reasons for supporting modular training

Enhancing and systematising training
• would develop standardised training
• would fill gaps in training
• would provide continuity of training
Opening up employment prospects
• would provide an avenue to full-time training and qualification
• may 'open up' further education/employment to part-time staff
• would provide qualifications for skilled work
• would improve wages
• would provide nationally recognised qualifications
Increasing the availability of training
• courses would be available regardless of the availability of staff
• would provide a package to 'take off the shelf'
• could be adapted to local needs
• could be delivered in situ
• provide open access to skills

It can be seen from this table that there are some misconceptions about the nature of modules, the most obvious one being that they consist of a ready-made package. Anyone who had 'fleshed out' a module knows that the ready-made package idea is an oversimplification! Whether modules would provide an avenue to full-time training is an open question. However, it is interesting that one aspect of support for modules lies in their potential route to accreditation and to opening up employment prospects.

Support for modules was qualified from time to time by stipulations such as that they would be delivered by community education staff, that they would involve practical activities and that residential weekends would be included. Distance learning was unpopular, particularly if it implied remoteness from other workers and from support.

As indicated above, most doubts about a modular approach came from employers/trainers. In only one organisation, the Scottish Association of Young Farmers, were doubts expressed by all part-time staff regardless of status. Doubts can be categorised under three main headings *lack of relevance, inappropriateness for community education ethos, and loss of contact between full-time and part-time staff*. Table 3.8 gives examples of these categories.

Table 3.8: Doubts about a modular approach

Lack of relevance
• lack local relevance
• lack personal relevance
• become out of date
• too rigid
Inappropriateness for community education ethos
• create opportunities for failure
• inappropriate to have formal qualifications
• fear of compulsory training
• becoming a prerequisite for payment of staff
• professionalisation of voluntary work
• would lead to loss of part-time staff
Loss of contact between full-time and part-time staff
• delivered by further education staff
• threat to local training
• delivered in a college rather than on the job

Some full-time staff saw no need for modules, as training needs were already being met, in their view. There was also concern about costs. However, some of the objections listed in Table 3.8 reveal misconceptions about the nature of modules, particularly in terms of adaptability to local and personal circumstances. There are clear worries too about whether community education sites could become centres for accreditation. As we indicated above, there is a clear need for information about modules to be transmitted in the local authority and voluntary sectors, if they are to be used increasingly as a vehicle for training part-time staff. We are not suggesting that better information is the way to remove all reservation about modules. Clearly, there is a need for a debate on the issue. However, better information would help to ensure that such a debate took place on the basis of better understanding about the nature of modules.

Summary

This chapter has considered the extent, form and take-up of training in Scotland. It has also reported views on modular provision from the case-study areas. We have stressed the wide ranging nature of courses, the good response rate to training opportunities and the different content areas covered. We have drawn attention to the factors affecting the availability of training to any individual part-time youth worker by giving examples of staff receiving no training in various parts of the country. We have also drawn attention to the problems of obtaining statistically reliable information on training provision and uptake, information which we would see as important for strategic planning. Finally, we have reported the conflicting views about modules, stressing that doubts come mainly from full-time staff. More information about modules is needed by full-time and part-time staff. Information needs to be targeted at all groups, employers, trainers and part-time staff themselves.

In our opinion information on four main aspects of modules needs to be made available:

Module descriptors It needs to be made clear that these are not off-the-shelf training packages containing 'model' materials.

Flexibility There needs to be a greater awareness of the adaptability of modules to local contexts.

Assessment People need to draw the distinction between:

- the learning outcomes;
- the evidence which indicates whether a learning outcome has been met;
- the ways in which such evidence can be collected.

In particular they need to be disabused of the notion that assessment is by paper and pencil text. Employers/trainers need information about their role in assessment, the amount of work involved, and about moderation procedures.

Accreditation There are high hopes among many part-time staff that modular training and certification will provide a route to full-time training. We know this hope is premature but it would clearly be a pity if modular training were undertaken by part-time staff in the belief that it opened up training routes if this was not to be the case.

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter we try to sum up our findings about training needs and provision and to discuss their implications for training policy for part-time staff. In providing a summary we take each of the aspects of the research described in Chapter 1 in turn.

What kinds of roles do part-time youth workers play?

A wide variety of roles are played depending on the particular context in which part-time staff find themselves. In the voluntary sector, and particularly in the uniformed organisations, the emphasis was on programme development and on organisation and management. We suggest that the explanation for this lies in the overall ethos of such organisations where national objectives are specified and the job of local groups is to meet these objectives. In the local authority sector the emphasis was on being a facilitator, counsellor and friend with less prominence being given to programme development and management.

What kinds of training are necessary to support staff in these roles?

The first point to make here is that part-time staff come from a wide variety of backgrounds and so are likely to have different kinds of training needs. We were forcefully reminded, however, that it was a mistake to assume that staff from a teaching or social work background did not need training. There are likely to be different profiles of training needs for individual workers and we discuss the implications of this for a modular approach to training, below. Our research suggests three broad categories of training needs for all part-time youth workers:

- induction, which we define as an introduction to the setting in which one is operating;
- basic training, which we define as the development of key basic skills necessary to perform the job of part-time youth worker;
- refresher courses for experienced workers;
- specialist courses such as drug, alcohol, solvent abuse; advanced sports.

How satisfactory is existing training and what are the factors contributing to satisfactory provision?

Training was perceived as successful when it:

- included opportunities to meet other part-time staff;
- was relevant (in terms of content) to the situation in which staff were working;
- was not too time consuming;
- was delivered by those with recent experience of youth work.

There was a clear need for on-the-job training and regular support from more experienced workers as well as 'training courses'.

Chapter 3 described the wide variety of training courses on offer between April 1987 and March 1988. However, that chapter also drew attention to the influence of such factors as the availability of full-time staff and budgetary constraints in determining whether part-time staff had

access to training. Detailed research in the organisation and management of training in Scotland was not possible. It is noteworthy that where area teams have a designated 'lead person' for training, who has undergone an assessed course, as in Renfrew, training was offered to all categories of staff.

How is modular training perceived?

Very few staff had experienced modular training either as trainers or trainees and so were responding to the *idea* of a modular approach. There was overwhelming support for a modular approach from part-time staff themselves. They saw such an approach as:

- enhancing and systematising training;
- opening up employment prospects;
- increasing the availability of training.

Most doubts about a modular approach were voiced by full-time staff, these we have categorised as employer/trainer. Their doubts were in terms of:

- lack of relevance;
- inappropriateness for community education ethos;
- loss of contact between full-time and part-time staff.

There seems to be widespread lack of information about modules among community education workers. If training is developed using a modular approach, information and marketing are priorities.

Key points for future training developments

In this final section we identify what seem to us to be the major points that need to be considered when developing training for part-time youth workers. These are points arising from the research and so they do not address political and financial questions which necessarily underpin any development activity.

- There needs to be a clearer focus on the purposes of youth work in the local authority sector. Unless purposes are clearly spelt out it is difficult to identify training needs accurately. We were struck by the differences between the national youth organisations and the local government organisations in this context. The national organisations had clearly set national objectives with training conceived as a progression towards these. We are not in a position to advocate the setting of national or regional objectives for public sector youth work given our small sample size. However, our case-study data has demonstrated the value of area teams specifying their objectives and evaluating whether their training provision is geared to meeting these. There is a striking contrast here with Adult Basic Education where objectives are clearly set and training targeted. We discuss this in more detail in our report on training in adult education. There may well be occasions when training is deliberately targeted obliquely at objectives, by emphasising the personal development of part-timers in a particular context, for example. Nevertheless, specifying objectives would provide a framework for training and would contribute towards the public accountability of the system. We note that in August 1989 SSCVYO is publishing National Youth Work Curriculum Guidelines which have been approved by the Voluntary Youth

Organisations, by COSLA and by the SED. We have not had an opportunity to study these Guidelines but they could represent an important first step in defining and targeting training.

- There is a need for regular informal support and evaluation, provided on the job, by more experienced colleagues. Our case-study work and the responses to our national survey strongly suggested that training should be conceived as one-to-one on-the-job, as well as more formal training courses.

- Training has to be practical and relevant to be perceived as successful. It is important to remember that most part-time workers are volunteers. Extra time devoted to training beyond their one or two evening a week commitment means that training has to be clearly targeted. Basic training targeted at youth work was much preferred to basic training on the community education service in general. Training that involved practical tasks and was participative was highly valued.

- Training has to be delivered by people with credibility in the field. Full-time staff who have not been actively involved in youth work or who were not regularly in contact with part-time staff in the field, were not highly regarded.

- Where possible, outreach workers should work in pairs. This would help on-the-job training and the identification of training needs. A valued approach to general support and training for these staff, was the provision of a regular forum for discussing their experiences and problems.

- There is an overall consensus on basic training across the local authority and voluntary sectors. This suggests possibilities of developing a basic training curriculum. Such a curriculum would need to be adaptable to local contexts and needs if it is to meet demands for relevance and practicality.

- There is diversity in training needs beyond the basics. However, we were struck by the fact that the same 'outside' providers, were used by both the voluntary and local government sectors. There seems to be scope for more inter-agency training, with the caveat, again, that opportunities would need to be built in to apply such training to local circumstances.

- There seems to be a lack of readily accessible information about training provision and take-up in the local authority sector. We would have thought such information necessary for strategic planning by regional authorities in developing and monitoring their training provision.

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