

VOLUNTARY ACTION ON UNEMPLOYMENT

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Introduction: unemployment and the social services

The recent history of unemployment in Britain is an object lesson in how rapidly and completely conventional expectations, attitudes and policies can be overturned by events. In the mid 1970s, the numbers of the unemployed began to rise somewhat from the minimal level typical of the postwar years. Ten years ago, the official unemployment level of around 4%⁽¹⁾ was still low enough that few people entertained any serious fear that the Beveridge assumption of full employment was becoming untenable; and on this assumption depended the entire postwar economic strategy for ensuring general prosperity and averting individual poverty. Only a handful of social scientists gave much attention to the phenomenon. But in 1986, with an official figure of 14% (or 15.5% on the old count)⁽¹⁾ the prevalence and seriousness of unemployment is already a commonplace. As Showler and Sinfield⁽²⁾ put it, "Most groups in society now acquiesce in levels of unemployment that were regarded as unthinkable or just part of economic history less than a decade ago".

This article will focus on responses to unemployment from the voluntary sector, beginning by setting the discussion in the context of the social services generally. I shall describe the implementation and results of a postal survey of certain voluntary organisations in Scotland. It will be shown by reference to a discussion of the literature, and from the survey results, that voluntary action in relation to unemployment can broadly be understood as belonging to one of two types, designated the 'welfare' and 'prevention' models respectively. In the first, the aim is primarily to alleviate the consequences of unemployment for the individual affected while in the second, the main concern is to find new ways, at the local level, of preventing the occurrence of unemployment.

Why is unemployment a relevant concern for social welfare organisations? It might be argued that unemployment is an economic problem and that the proper place to look for a remedy is in changed economic policies. It is of course undeniable that changing economic and

political doctrines have had a marked effect on the level of unemployment.⁽³⁾ But it would be altogether too narrow to treat unemployment as exclusively an economic problem. The social consequences of unemployment are increasingly acknowledged, and some of them have implications for social welfare agencies. Hakim⁽⁴⁾ has usefully summarised these consequences, which may be paraphrased under five headings: (i) personal financial effects (ii) damage to health and increased mortality (iii) mental health effects (iv) increased crime and delinquency (v) damage to the social fabric as shown by increased rates of family breakup, homelessness, racial tension, and the like. Now the evidence on the exact nature and extent of these consequences is far from complete. For example, the observed higher morbidity amongst the unemployed in itself tells us nothing about its causation. What is beyond doubt however is that unemployment is associated with an increased incidence and severity of many of the problems that social welfare organisations exist to respond to. A short list might comprise poverty; poor health; depression; loss of meaningful role; family strain. All of these are well within the ambit of the statutory social services. Voluntary social action organisations have not only addressed themselves to mitigating the consequences of unemployment, but also considered what steps might be taken to reduce its incidence.

Despite the prevalence of unemployment, and the evidence that a very high proportion of clients come from families affected by unemployment, the statutory social services are only just beginning to address the issue systematically.⁽⁵⁾ One of the main reasons for what is perhaps a rather weak response is that social workers and their agencies have not hitherto been expected to deal with employment-related questions at all. Data on employment status are not routinely and reliably collected by social work agencies. The main emphasis on work with the unemployed appears to have been on welfare rights. This is clearly important; but it is no more than partly adequate as a remedial measure, and does nothing towards meeting the unemployed client's main need simply for a job.

The low response from the statutory social services at local level is paralleled by a lack of policy initiatives in the Scottish Office for supporting either statutory or voluntary sector social services for the unemployed. Some existing programmes including the Urban Programme and the Unemployed Voluntary Action Fund are able to support projects concerned with the effects of unemployment; and inevitably, a large proportion of the users of any social service are likely to be unemployed.

However government is clearly reluctant to become involved in initiatives likely to draw political attention to the issue, whereas voluntary action may well wish to generate interest in the political causes of unemployment as well as attend to its untoward effects.

The growth of interest in unemployment in community work, the voluntary sector, and the trade unions

While the response of the mainstream statutory social services to the problem of unemployment has so far been slight, the same cannot be said of the voluntary sector or of community work; here there is a ferment of activity. It will be convenient to review this activity under a number of headings.

Community work

Community workers were perhaps the first in the social welfare sector to take a serious interest in unemployment. The Association of Community Workers' annual conference in 1978 was devoted to the theme, and a collection of conference papers was published⁽⁶⁾. In the following year a volume in the National Institute for Social Work community work series was concerned with the links between community work and employment issues⁽⁷⁾. These events do not signal the beginning of community workers' interest in unemployment, however. It may be traced at least as far back as the Community Development Projects. The history of the CDPs has been thoroughly documented and a brief comment will suffice here.⁽⁸⁾ The CDPs were originally set up to combat deprivation in local communities by bringing about a more intensive and better coordinated delivery of the standard social services. The projects carried out detailed and wide-ranging studies of the problems of their local areas. The common theme to emerge from these studies was that the poverty and deprivation the projects were set up to alleviate did not originate primarily from within the communities affected. These problems were rather the consequence of much broader economic, political and social processes, and any work carried out at the local level could only have a mildly remedial effect at best. One of the key factors seen as affecting local prosperity was of course the success, or lack of it, of local industry, which in turn had to be seen not in isolation but in context as part of the international capitalist system. This analysis had major implications for the whole running and future of the CDPs because, among other things, it rejected the theory of essentially localised social deprivation upon which they had originally been set up.

In the aftermath of CDP some community workers began to explore

the possibility of links between community work and trade unionism. As an occupation, community work represent a number of rather disparate interests but in terms of its major ideologies and practices, its sources of legitimation and its sponsoring bodies, it has been dominated in Britain by the social welfare 'industry' in general and more particularly by social work. With this background, the idea of linking up with trade unions represented something of a new departure for community workers. An attractive argument stimulated this exploration. On the one hand, social welfare and community work had long been concerned with the domestic and community sphere of life; personal, home and family concerns predominated. On the other hand, trade unionism was concerned with the public sphere of production and economic policy and its locus was the workplace and the party meeting. A class analysis however, would require the recognition of an identity of basic interests between those involved in community action and those involved in industrial issues. The point of bringing together action in the two spheres would lie in the belief that action in either one alone was considered unlikely to result in any significant basic improvement in the circumstances and life chances of the working class.

At the local level, problems in communities tend to be concentrated in precisely those areas most seriously affected by industrial decline; the community and the workplace are closely interdependent. According to some versions, community work and trade unionism practised in isolation from each other might actually be counterproductive in that they would merely facilitate the continued operation of the exploitative capitalist system.

Towards the end of the 1970s there were, then, ample grounds for community workers to take a professional interest in employment issues as a result of the recent history of community work⁽⁹⁾. Their interest was further stimulated by the arrival of job creation schemes sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission. In their continual attempts to devise suitable, but not too costly, programmes at very short notice the MSC staff turned both to the statutory social services and to voluntary social welfare agencies to sponsor the projects they did not themselves have the resources to devise, initiate, plan or manage in detail. Community workers were very often involved in originating and managing these schemes. A powerful incentive drove this involvement: at a time when funding in both statutory and voluntary sectors of social welfare was becoming more difficult than at any time since the late sixties if not longer, the MSC disbursed its relatively ample funds at an almost reckless rate. In community work and in the voluntary sector doubts have been raised about the political desirability and practical wisdom of accepting such relatively massive inputs from

government⁽¹⁰⁾; but despite these doubts the usual pattern has been to protest somewhat feebly about undesirable aspects of the schemes, and then take the money.

Intermediary bodies

Intermediary bodies were identified by the Wolfenden Report⁽¹¹⁾ as performing a number of distinctive functions within the voluntary sector and in the relationship of the voluntary sector to government. They may be local or national, generalist or specialist. Table 1 provides a pocket guide. Their main role is to support, develop and innovate in the voluntary sector, rather than perform direct services. In view of this it might be expected that unemployment would have emerged as a central preoccupation in the last few years. This would be reinforced by the links with community work, as many of those working for the intermediary bodies could fairly be described – and would describe themselves – as community workers. On the other hand, the councils of voluntary service, and especially the smaller ones, have a not unmerited reputation for sticking to ‘safe’, traditional, welfare or charitable concerns, and a reluctance to become involved in politically controversial issues.

TABLE 1 Typical intermediary bodies concerned with unemployment

	local	national
specialist	resource centre enterprise trust	Community Business Scotland Centre for Employment Initiatives British Unemployment Resource Network
generalist	council for voluntary service	Scottish Council for Community and Voluntary Organisations National Council for Voluntary Organisations Scottish Community Education Council

The policies and literature of the national generalist intermediary bodies do indicate a vigorous interest in unemployment in some quarters at least. Both the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations have staff specifically concerned with this area, and NCVO in particular has issued a number of documents arguing the role that local councils for voluntary service should

take. Another area of activity has been to speak for the voluntary sector on MSC employment creation programmes. In Scotland the Scottish Community Education Council supported a conference in 1983 dealing with responses to unemployment, and its newspaper SCAN regularly carries items describing initiatives. On the other hand there is some reason to think that currently the national bodies are leading where the local bodies are unsure about, or reluctant to, follow. An ‘Employment Project Pack’ issued by the Councils for Voluntary Service – National Association noted⁽¹²⁾ “Despite the fact that voluntary organisations have been involved in employment issues for a long time, some people regard such activity as illegitimate, irrelevant or downright dangerous”.

The emergence of specialist intermediary bodies concerned with employment issues is a sure sign of the increasing interest in this area, more particularly since many of them are of very recent foundation. The British Unemployment Resources Network was set up in 1983 and aimed to provide a national forum and information exchange. The Centre for Employment Initiatives, set up in 1981, “offers a range of services designed to help both policy makers and practitioners respond to the challenge of unemployment and its effects upon individuals and communities”⁽¹³⁾. Community Business Scotland, again founded in 1983 out of a predecessor organisation begun in 1978, and its associated bodies provide an information network and consultancy service. The ‘new cooperatives’⁽¹⁴⁾ – workers’, neighbourhood, and community cooperatives – whose development has been monitored by the Cooperative Development Agency are centrally concerned with alternative employment schemes. A number of the specialist intermediary bodies are closely tied up with the community business movement, which is discussed in the following section.

Community businesses and local enterprise trusts

In general terms, a community business is a production or trading organisation geared to the perceived benefit of the local community rather than to the usual private sector standards of profitability. It resembles an ordinary commercial business in that it has a product or products and, if it is to survive, must compete successfully in what may well be a difficult market. On the other hand it is community oriented in that its product is seen as beneficial to the local community; it aims to generate employment in what will invariably be an economically depressed area; and its surplus, if any, is applied for the good of the community rather than to private profit. Community businesses often adopt values and operating practices more typically encountered outwith the main industrial sectors, such as a

cooperative form of management, accountability to the local community rather than to owners of capital, and an over-riding concern with the wider social benefit of the organisation's activities. These objectives may well, of course, be difficult to reconcile with the commercial disciplines necessary for long term survival.

The community business movement, with its ideology of social benefit, has much in common with the statutory and voluntary sectors of social welfare in general, and with community work in particular. Its starting point is the perception of a set of related social problems centred on poverty, deprivation, and the corrosive social and personal consequences of unemployment. In addressing these problems however, the community business movement takes it as axiomatic that creating socially useful and personally meaningful work is the key to a solution, rather than the provision of traditional remedial or welfare programmes to mitigate the undesirable consequences of economic poverty. The significance of the community business movement therefore is that it borrows some of the methods of both industry and community work, but applies them to ends which, from the traditional point of view in either sector, are at least unconventional if not downright deviant.

Local enterprise trusts may broadly speaking be thought of as local intermediary bodies set up to promote enterprises which embody some at least of the ideals of the community business movement. They are normally situated in highly depressed areas. There is considerable diversity which makes further generalisation of limited value⁽¹⁵⁾.

Scotland has been a leading centre of activity in the community business movement. There are several regionally based intermediary bodies and, at the last published count, about 80 community businesses had been established outside the Highlands up to 1986⁽¹⁶⁾. These facts, together with the novel ideological aspects of community businesses, make this a particularly interesting context for studying responses to unemployment.

The unemployed as volunteers

Offering one's spare time to do voluntary work is of course a well known and long established feature of British society. Although precise distinctions are not always easily made, especially at the margins, the key feature of volunteering is that the volunteer offers his services through the medium of an agency or organisation which may be either in the statutory or the voluntary sector. The possible attractions of involving the unemployed as volunteers are fairly clear. On the one side, the demand for

voluntary social services may seem to be almost infinitely elastic, and the unemployed have time in abundance as well as a range of possibly useful skills. The demand for voluntary help might be expected to increase at a time of increasing poverty and deprivation combined with reductions in the level of state welfare services. On the other side, volunteering might seem to offer the unemployed some of the satisfactions, if not the income, of paid work: a sense of purpose and usefulness, an escape from loss of status, isolation and depression, and the opportunity to participate in shared endeavours with others. In addition, a number of government initiatives including the Voluntary Projects Programme of the MSC and the Unemployed Voluntary Action Fund have actively sought to promote participation in volunteering by the unemployed. In spite of all these factors it is clear that voluntary work is no easy answer to the problems of the unemployed, or indeed to the needs of the sponsoring agencies.⁽¹⁷⁾ In a useful, if hurried, piece of research Gay and Hatch⁽¹⁸⁾ indicate that unemployed people are no more likely than the population as a whole to engage in voluntary work; moreover, the unskilled and lower social class groups who in general have a lower propensity to volunteer are also those who are greatly over-represented amongst the unemployed. An indication of more profound difficulties in channelling the unemployed into voluntary work is the probability emerging from Gay and Hatch's research that the consumers of volunteers are not generally adapted to creating opportunities which fit the distinctive interests and needs of the unemployed, or the time and skills they offer. Agencies tend to define their objectives in terms of the needs of the target group – the elderly, handicapped, etc – rather than in terms of the needs of the suppliers of the service; but "most existing agencies do not have helping the unemployed as one of their objectives"⁽¹⁹⁾.

A form of voluntary work which is specifically adapted to the unemployed is the skills exchange, whereby members offer their time and skills to a common pool from which all may draw as needed. In practice such schemes have been very difficult to sustain⁽²⁰⁾ and it seems unlikely that in themselves they can offer much benefit. However, a few schemes which combine the idea of a skills exchange with some more structured ongoing activities seem to be in a stronger position⁽²¹⁾.

Unemployed workers centres

Unemployed workers' centres represent the main tangible response of the trade unions to the consequences of unemployment. The centres are predominantly of very recent creation. The first was established in Newcastle in 1978. In the summer of 1981 there were estimated to be 70 in

Britain⁽²²⁾; in summer 1982 a figure of 140 was given⁽²³⁾. Figures of around 190 have been quoted for 1983⁽²⁴⁾⁽²⁵⁾. In Scotland, the first centre was set up at the end of 1982⁽²⁶⁾; and in February 1983 Labour Research reported replies to a survey from 11 Scottish centres, in a UK survey which attained an overall response rate of 56%. The Scottish figure for late 1983 is about 23, while by mid 1986 there were reported to be 24 in Strathclyde⁽²⁷⁾.

Many of the centres have depended on substantial MSC funding to sustain their activities. This has led to a curtailment of possibly 'political' activities. One theme above all emerges from the commentaries on unemployed workers' centres. Do they exist primarily to offer personal support and welfare services, or should they be concerned with the structural causes of unemployment? As Vivian⁽²⁵⁾ puts it, "Unemployment centres are caught between two ideals – either to make the best of things, or to be a focal point of protest against the system that creates unemployment". There is much to suggest that the trade unions themselves are deeply ambivalent about work with the unemployed. Although the trade unions portray themselves as one of the key institutions of a broad class-based labour movement, and not merely as workers' representatives at the place of work, they have been largely ineffectual in tackling the interests of their ex-members who have become unemployed. When a worker loses his job, he usually also loses the concern of the main organisation which represented his interests. Similarly, the trade union movement has been reluctant to fund unemployed workers' centres in any way commensurate with the resources it can apply to its traditional activities. Trade unions are defined by their relationship to the world of work; they have been slow to assimilate the new realities of non-work.

Although usually sponsored, at least in part, by the trade unions, unemployed workers' centres have not relied upon them exclusively. The relevance of such centres to this review is that they often entail a coalition of trade union and community work interests. We have here another emergence of the link between community work and unemployment which was discussed above. Some unemployed workers' centres may in reality owe as much to professionals in the social welfare field as to activists in the trade unions. The centres have been a focus of concern for intermediary bodies in social welfare. For these reasons it is important to consider the unemployed workers' centres in any estimation of voluntary social action with the unemployed, even though the trade unions do not constitute a part of what is conventionally regarded as the voluntary sector.

A provisional classification of interventions related to unemployment

The literature reviewed above reveals a wide variety of actual, or potential, forms of voluntary action in relation to unemployment. A relatively small number of themes, however, is discernible. There is direct concern for the plight of the unemployed themselves, who face poverty, isolation, loss of skills, loss of status, and mental and physical ill-health. There is frustration with the direct costs of unemployment, reflected in the list just given and in national economic statistics⁽²⁸⁾. There is also a concern with the opportunity costs of unemployment: enforced idleness exists in the midst of such obvious social problems as urban dereliction, bad housing, industrial decline, pollution, racial tension, rising drug abuse, unmet dependency amongst the aged and disabled, and so forth. A further theme is the possible irrelevance or obsolescence of certain social institutions and the need to supplement or replace them. This is expressed, for example, in the actions of some of the intermediary bodies and in the field of community businesses, cooperatives, and other novel forms of production organisation. All this takes place against a backdrop of significant government expenditure on MSC programmes to absorb the unemployed, which the voluntary organisations have taken a major role in implementing.

The following typology of responses summarises the themes evident from the literature. The typology is based on distinctions that may be drawn between different analyses of unemployment as a social problem: that is, it reflects different possible understandings of the causes and effects of unemployment. The classification proposed here therefore embodies, at least in embryo, alternative strategies for dealing with unemployment.

The first distinction then is between

- (i) responses aimed at alleviating the harmful consequences of unemployment for individuals; not addressed to reducing unemployment as such
- (ii) responses aimed at reducing the occurrence of unemployment. These two broad strategies will be referred to as the *welfare* and *prevention* models, respectively.

The two broad strategies may in turn be subdivided. The relationship is shown in Figure 1.

- (iii) The *pure welfare* model aims simply to provide direct services to the

unemployed, such as welfare rights advice, alternative activities, or counselling.

- (iv) The *augmented welfare* model has somewhat similar basic aims to (iii), but in addition to direct service, favours organised political action on issues affecting the unemployed: for example, campaigns on welfare benefits. Its political aims are relatively narrow in scope.
- (v) The *traditional employment* model aims to protect and enhance the availability of conventional employment opportunities within the established sectors of the economy. On this view the best approach to unemployment is simply to create more ordinary jobs.
- (vi) The *new work* model also seeks to create new jobs, but is not satisfied with traditional definitions of work. Hence there is interest in new organisational structures (especially community businesses) and new philosophies of work – more leisure, job sharing, different patterns of work over the life span, etc⁽²⁹⁾. There is some suggestion here of a broad social movement in infancy.

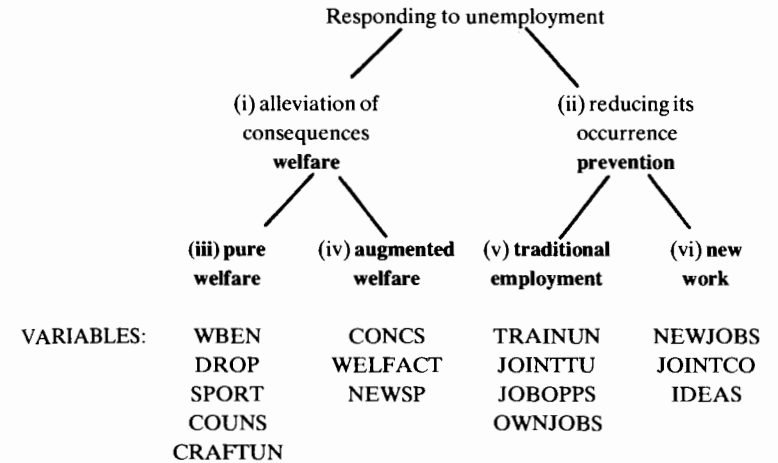
Within these four models, a number of distinctive activities can also be identified from the literature. Fifteen such activities were identified for the purposes of this research, and these are also shown in Figure 1 as a classified list of the variables which were adopted in the design of the postal survey to be discussed below. It should be noted that the allocation of the various *activities* to one or other of the *models* is presented at this point as a hypothetical representation of the field. The extent to which it is supported by the findings will be discussed later on.

Survey of voluntary action on unemployment in Scotland: design

A postal survey was carried out of all known voluntary organisations in Scotland falling within certain categories. The aims were to gauge the prevalence of the activities identified from the literature, and to gain an initial picture of the number, size, composition, age and staffing of the voluntary organisations which pursue these activities. It was also wished to examine the relationship between types of organisation and activities pursued, and enquire in a preliminary way whether the classification of models and activities proposed above was supported empirically.

The survey was planned during the latter part of 1984 and carried out in March-May 1985. Fortuitously, during the planning period three directories⁽³⁰⁾ and one descriptive study⁽¹³⁾ were published which were

FIGURE 1 Hypothetical models of intervention in relation to unemployment



For key to variable names, refer to Table 7

directly relevant to voluntary sector work with the unemployed. This gave rise to the rather unusual opportunity of carrying out a postal survey on the basis of newly compiled directory information in a field which is rapidly changing and difficult to classify. It was therefore possible to aim for a relatively complete 'snapshot' of the situation in Scotland at that time.

The study population

The survey covered four main types of voluntary organisation, plus several minor categories. The types of organisation were selected on the basis that some or all examples of each type were known to have an interest in unemployment, as indicated in the self-descriptions given in the directories mentioned above. The four main groups are: community businesses; unemployed workers' centres; councils for voluntary service; and volunteer bureaux. A total of 200 relevant organisations was identified, and a further 64 were included in the original survey but removed in the light of later information which showed that they did not fall within the designated categories. Table 2 gives a breakdown of the survey population.

Concern about the effects of unemployment is not of course confined to voluntary organisations of the types identified here, and so the decisions

Table 2 Survey population and response of valid members by type of organisation—

	Organisation type:						TOTALS		
	CB	UWC	CVS	VB	ARC	Y		O	CO
response N	24	21	32	15	12	8	8	6	126
non response N	28	26	6	4	2	2	1	1	4
total N*	52	47	38	19	14	10	9	7	200
org. type as % of pop.	26	23	19	9	7	5	4	3	(100)—
% response by org. type	46	45	84	79	86	80	89	86	63

* excluding unidentifiable non-respondents — figures in this row rounded to nearest 1%

Key to organisation type:

- CB = community business or local enterprise trust
- UWC = unemployed workers' centre
- CVS = council for voluntary service
- VB = volunteer bureau
- ARC = area resource centre
- Y = youth unemployment project
- O = other
- CO = community organisation linked (e.g. tenants' association etc.)
- UNID = unidentifiable

about which organisations to exclude are of some significance. Table 3 lists the more important exclusions, with notes on the reason for exclusion. The general principles adopted were to exclude: local authority provision; services which get involved with unemployment *incidentally*, rather than define unemployment as the *central* issue; bodies not directly involved with unemployment.

TABLE 3 Organisations excluded from survey

Organisation type	Reason for exclusion
Grant making charitable trusts	Main role is funding initiatives of other organisations — not involved in direct practice re unemployment
Local authority community education services	(a) Local authorities not in voluntary sector (b) Community and adult education distinguished here from voluntary social action (but there exist affinities with community work)
WEA	See (b) above
Regional or Scottish intermediary bodies, specialist and generalist	Survey not designed to explore their role
Educational institutions	Not in voluntary sector
Welfare rights and general advisory services	Not specifically concerned with unemployment
General youth work	Unemployment affects all youth work to some extent; interest reserved for specialist youth unemployment projects
MSC schemes, with some exceptions	Such schemes generally aimed to complement normal activities of organisation. YTS is a training scheme. Projects included where directly addressed to unemployment as in unemployed workers' centres, etc.

Content of questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to gather information in two main areas: (i) location, structure, funding and staffing of the respondent organisations (ii) activities carried out in relation to the unemployed or unemployment, with some indication of priorities. In order to fulfil the intention of sketching a broad outline of the field, it was desirable to aim for a good response rate and the questionnaire was therefore kept as short and simple as possible. A pilot version was mailed, with a covering letter, to a few organisations of the same type in England. The pilot received a response of 9 out of 13 and indicated that, with one or two minor amendments, the questionnaire would elicit the information required. The main body of the questionnaire asked respondents to say which of the 15 activities identified in Figure 1 their organisation carried out.

Survey results: profile of the organisations

Response

The response achieved is shown in Table 2. The overall net response rate was 63%. It should be noted however that this figure masks an important variation in response rate by type of organisation. Unemployed workers' centres and community businesses achieved 45% and 46% respectively, whereas the response rate for all other types of organisation combined was 83%. In the case of community businesses the low response rate may well be attributable to the fact that about half those included in the survey population were listed as under development rather than actually functioning. The low response rate for unemployed workers' centres is less easy to account for, but it is worth remarking that the total population of 47 is much higher than reported in previous surveys. It is also noteworthy that the unemployed workers' centres and community businesses are very much newer established than the other two main groups, the councils for voluntary service and the volunteer bureaux. It would not be unexpected if the newer organisations were less able to cope with answering even a short questionnaire, partly for reasons of resources and partly perhaps because they were less clear on their position regarding the various matters dealt with in the questionnaire.

Respondents were also asked to include any relevant literature, such as constitution, leaflets, reports etc. This yielded a substantial volume of material, and in some cases there were quite full letters of amplification as well. In general this material served to confirm the picture already built up from the literature. In a number of cases substantial local information was

provided.

Age of organisations

The breakdown of age by organisation type is shown in Table 4. The main observations here are that community businesses are young organisations: 71% were less than 3 years old. Much the same is true of unemployed workers' centres, of which again 71% were less than 3 years old. On the other hand the councils for voluntary service were longer established – 74% over 6 years.

Representations from other organisations

Eighteen different kinds of organisation were mentioned by respondents as being represented on their own organisation. However, of these only 7 types were mentioned by more than 10% of respondents. The breakdown by organisation type is shown in Table 5. The most important organisations which supply representatives are clearly the district and regional councils, particularly the latter. In the case of unemployed workers' centres the trades unions provide a major constituency, as would be expected from the fact that the unions have been the main initiators of such centres. The councils for voluntary service draw heavily from local voluntary organisations, as again is to be expected from the nature of their constitutions.

Funding bodies

A somewhat similar pattern emerges with respect to funding bodies as does with regard to organisations supplying representatives. Seventeen different funding sources were mentioned but of these only 6 were named by more than 10% of respondents. The breakdown of funding sources by organisation type is shown in Table 6. In general funding is fairly evenly spread by source and recipient organisations. However, the councils for voluntary service are particularly reliant on SWSG and regional council funding: this is entirely to be expected from the nature of the institutionalised funding arrangements. The MSC is particularly important for unemployed workers' centres, accounting for the fears of curtailment of 'political' activities noted earlier. It is interesting that the main newly established groups, the community businesses and the unemployed workers' centres, are reliant on a diversity of funding sources.

TABLE 4 Organisation type by time established at 1.5.85

Shown thus: N
col %

	Organisation type:								TOTALS
	CB	UWC	CVS	VB	ARC	Y	O	CO	
up to 1 yr	5	5	0	4	1	1	0	1	17
	20.8	23.8	0	26.7	8.3	12.5	0	16.7	13.6
2-3 yrs	12	10	5	4	4	5	4	2	46
	50	47.6	16.1	26.7	33.3	42.5	50	33.3	36.8
4-6 yrs	5	6	3	4	6	2	4	3	33
	20.8	28.6	9.7	26.7	50	52	50	50	26.4
over 6 yrs	2	0	23	3	1	0	0	0	29
	8.3	0	74.2	20	8.3	0	0	0	23.2
TOTAL	24	21	31	15	12	8	8	6	125
	19.2	16.8	24.8	12.0	9.6	6.4	6.4	4.8	100

Scottish Government Yearbook 1987

For key to organisation type, see Table 2

TABLE 5 Organisation type by bodies supplying representatives

Shown thus: N
col%

	Organisation type:								TOTALS
	CB	UWC	CVS	VB	ARC	Y	O	CO	
district council	6	11	10	0	5	1	0	1	34
	25	52.4	31.3	0	41.7	12.5	0	16.7	27
regional council	10	11	18	6	7	5	3	1	61
	41.7	52.4	56.3	40	58.3	62.5	37.5	16.7	48.4
loc. auth. unsp.	3	3	6	2	0	1	3	0	18
	12.5	14.3	18.8	13.3	0	12.5	37.5	0	14.3
comm. council	3	3	9	0	3	1	1	0	20
	12.5	14.3	28.1	0	25	12.5	12.5	0	15.9
trade unions	1	15	8	1	1	0	2	0	28
	4.2	71.4	25	6.7	8.3	0	25	0	22.2
vol. orgs.	3	2	31	6	4	0	1	1	48
	12.5	9.5	96.9	40	33.3	0	12.5	16.7	38.1
churches	2	5	7	0	0	0	2	1	17
	8.3	23.8	21.9	0	0	0	25	16.7	13.5
local comm. org.	2	1	7	0	5	0	0	1	16
	8.3	4.8	21.9	0	41.7	0	0	16.7	12.7

Scottish Government Yearbook 1987

For key to organisation type, see Table 2

TABLE 6 Organisation type by funding sources

Shown thus: N
col%

	Organisation type:										TOTALS
	CB	UWC	CVS	VB	ARC	Y	O	CO			
district council	6 25	8 38.1	10 31.3	2 13.3	3 25	2 25	1 12.5	0	0		32 25.4
regional council	3 12.5	7 33.3	22 68.8	2 13.3	5 41.7	2 25	3 37.5	1 16.7	1		45 35.7
SWSG	0	0	24	1	3	0	1	0	0		29
	0	0	75	6.7	25	0	12.5	0	0		23
MSC	3 12.5	9 42.9	1 3.1	8 53.3	6 50	2 25	1 12.5	0	0		30 23.8
urban aid	9 37.5	4 19	1 3.1	0	5 41.7	3 37.5	2 25	1 16.7	1		25 19.8
	2	0	7	4	0	4	4	2	2		23
trusts	8.3	0	21.9	26.7	0	50	50	33.3			18.3

For key to organisation type, see Table 2

Staffing

Respondents were asked to give the number of full time and part time staff working in their organisation. The replies should be treated with some caution since it became clear that the questionnaire did not reliably distinguish between ordinary paid staff and workers on MSC schemes attached to the organisation. Nevertheless the clear picture emerges of predominantly very small paid staffs. Of the respondent organisations 52% had no full time staff, 23% had one and 11% had two. Likewise 85% of respondent organisations had either none or one part time staff. No significant differences between types of organisation emerged.

MSC schemes

Some 32% of respondents were involved in running Community Programme schemes. The vast majority of the schemes were small, employing fewer than five full time and five part time staff. There were no marked variations by organisation type except that the community businesses had a fairly low level of involvement, which is somewhat unexpected.

Very few respondents (about 5%) were involved in YTS schemes, and around 3% ran VPP schemes.

Survey results: activities of the organisations and models of intervention

As previously explained, the body of the questionnaire was designed to gather information about the prevalence and importance of various activities on behalf of the unemployed. Respondents were asked to indicate whether their organisation was involved in the activity on a four point scale, as follows:-

	Coding for analysis purposes
X = definitely not appropriate to you organisation	1
Blank = neutral	2
/ = activity your organisation is now involved in	3
// = vitally important to your organisation's work	4

Scoring was well distributed over the range; in many cases around a quarter of the population fell into each scoring category.

An overall idea of the prevalence of the activities may be gained from

Table 7. Taking the responses coded 3 and 4 (above) together as *positive* responses, it will be seen that in general positive responses in respect of each of the activities were given by between nearly one-third and nearly two-thirds of respondents. There was little difference in the popularity of the eight most popular activities. All activities scored at least 25% positive responses. This confirms that the activities identified from the literature are all widely considered important.

In the analysis of the data, each *model of intervention* was considered to be associated with a number of the activities already discussed, while each *activity* was treated as belonging uniquely to one model. Thus, for example, welfare benefits advice was regarded as indicative of what was identified above as the *pure welfare* model (see Figure 1).

The hypothesis which informs this analysis is as follows. If the various activities are indeed derivations from one or other model of intervention, it would be expected that the various activities linked with each particular model would be highly associated with each other. Thus, in Fig. 1, the five variables **WBEN**, **DROP**, **SPORT**, **COUNS**, **CRAFTUN** would *together* tend to score highly in respect of organisations employing a *pure welfare* model.

The relationship of the various activities to each other was explored by means of the gamma statistic. This measures the proportional reduction in error to be gained in the prediction of one variable by reference to another. It is applicable to ordinal-level measurement and takes values between -1 and 1⁽³¹⁾. As the data were well distributed over a four-point ordinal scale it was considered that this would be an appropriate means of measuring any tendency for one activity variable to score high or low along with another activity variable.

If the various activities do tend to be associated with each other, this will be shown up by a crosstabulation of the gamma statistic. This is shown diagrammatically in Figure 2.

Table 8 combines the foregoing arguments and applies them to the analysis of the data. It will be recalled that four models were postulated involving respectively 5,3,4 and 3 variables. If the hypothesis of four models entailing these variables is to be supported, Table 8 would show up four corresponding blocks of high gamma scores.

It will be seen from Table 8 that there is no clear evidence for the existence of four distinct models. However, there is good support for a

TABLE 7 Prevalence of activities

Activity	Variable name	% respondents ans. positively*	rank order
personal advice and counselling	COUNS	60	1=
helping unemployed people create own job or business	OWNJOBS	60	1=
joint work with local community orgs.	JOINTCO	60	1=
campaigns or projects to create new jobs	NEWJOBS	57	4=
promoting discussions on new ideas about work and employment	IDEAS	57	4=
opportunities for skills and crafts	CRAFTUN	56	6
welfare benefits advice	WBEN	54	7=
training courses	TRAINUN	54	7=
defending job opportunities	JOBOPPS	39	9
drop-in rec. activities	DROP	37	10
organised action on welfare benefits issues	WELFACT	35	11
publish newspaper	NEWSP	33	12
seeking concessions	CONCS	29	13=
joint work with trade uns.	JOINTTU	29	13=
organised sports	SPORT	28	15

* (see page 194) 'Positively' means scores of 3 and 4 combined.

FIGURE 2 Illustration of use of cross-tabulated gamma statistics

		Activity variables				
		A	B	C	D	E
A						
B						
C			H			
D			H	H		
E			H	H	H	

H = high gamma for cross-tabulated variables
 blank = low gamma

In this example, variables B,C,D,E are seen to be highly associated with each other. If listed sequentially on the table they will form a block on the table.

slightly modified hypothesis. If the four models are reduced to two groups – the *welfare* and the *prevention* models – the import of Table 8 is that there is strong support for the existence of a *prevention* model comprising the variables in groups (iii) and (iv) in Figure 1. Similarly, if the variable CRAFTUN (opportunities for practising skills and crafts) is excluded, there is fair support for the existence of a *welfare* model comprising the other variables also listed in Figure 1.

We may now proceed to examine the tendency for *organisations* of a given type to be involved in particular activities or to adopt one or other model of intervention. In Table 9 positive responses (i.e. scores of 3 and 4 combined) are shown for each variable and organisation type, where the variables are grouped into the two models the existence of which is supported from the previous analysis.

Table 10 represents an attempt to indicate how active the various organisation types are within the two models. The following conclusions may be drawn.

TABLE 8 Gamma for two-way crosstabulations

Shown thus: gamma > 0.4 in plain figures; gamma > 0.25 but < 0.4 in brackets; gamma < 0.25 blank.

	WBEN	DROP	SPORT	COUNS	CRAFTUN	CONCS	WELFACT	NEWSP	TRAINUN	JOINTTU	JOBOPPS	OWNJOBS	NEWJOBS	JOINTCO	IDEAS
WBEN	(.29)														
DROP	.41														
SPORT	.67	.62													
COUNS		(.25)	(.26)												
CRAFTUN		(.26)													
CONCS	.52	.46	.46	.46											
WELFACT	.63	(.26)		.40		.66									
NEWSP	(.28)	(.31)	(.35)	(.25)		.48	(.39)								
TRAINUN	(.26)			.45	(.27)										
JOINTTU				(.27)		(.33)	(.36)		.27						
JOBOPPS	(.31)					.41	.49		(.39)	.49					
OWNJOBS				(.27)	.42				.50	.54					
NEWJOBS									.53	.42			.53		
JOINTCO	(.32)			.42		.37	.41	(.32)	.52	.71			.41	.51	
IDEAS				(.25)		(.25)	(.26)		.52	(.37)			.61	.61	.64

For key to variable names, see Table 7.

Hypothetical models (numbered as in Fig. 1):

- (iii) pure welfare model comprising WBEN, DROP, SPORT, COUNS, CRAFTUN
- (iv) augmented welfare model comprising CONCS, WELFACT, NEWSP
- (v) traditional employment model comprising TRAINUN, JOINTTU, JOBOP PS, OWNJOBS
- (vi) new work model comprising NEWJOBS, JOINTCO, IDEAS

TABLE 9 Organisation type by percent positive scores for activities

Welfare model:	CB	UWC	CVS	VB	ARC	Y	O	CO
	WBEN	25	81	44	40	83	62	75
DROP	12	76	19	13	42	75	50	67
SPORT	12	67	9	7	42	75	12	33
COUNS	50	90	37	60	58	75	87	67
CONCS	8	67	19	13	25	50	50	33
WELFACT	17	17	44	7	42	25	62	0
NEWSP	25	38	34	13	50	50	37	17
Prevention model:								
TRAINUN	67	52	37	60	58	50	75	50
JOINTTU	21	67	22	20	33	0	25	33
JOBOPPS	42	57	47	13	42	25	25	17
OWNJOBS	92	62	43	20	58	62	62	100
NEWJOBS	71	52	69	20	67	25	50	83
JOINTCO	75	71	50	33	83	62	50	33
IDEAS	71	52	56	27	58	50	87	67

Notes: For key to organisation type, refer to Table 2.

For key to activity variables, refer to Table 7.

TABLE 10 Organisation type by average percent positive score

Organisation type	Average % positive score:		Rank order:	
	welfare	prevention	welfare	prevention
CB	21	63	8	1
UWC	69	59	1	2
CVS	9	46	6	6
VB	22	28	7	8
ARC	49	57	4	3
Y	59	39	2	7
O	53	53	3	5
CO	41	55	5	4

For key to organisation type, refer to Table 2.

'Average percent positive score' represents average of positive scores, b model, as shown in Table 9.

- (i) Community businesses are strongly involved in the prevention model, as indeed is to be expected. They are markedly unenthusiastic about the welfare model and the contrast is very distinct.
- (ii) Unemployed workers' centres appear to be almost equally involved in the welfare and prevention models. The ambivalence over this has already been commented on elsewhere.
- (iii) The councils for voluntary service have by comparison only a rather low level of involvement in work with the unemployed. This is quite significant in view of the emphasis being given to the subject by the national intermediary bodies. As previously suggested, the national bodies have made some attempts to lead where the local bodies are generally still reluctant to follow.
- (iv) The volunteer bureaux also have a relatively low level of involvement with the unemployed. Numbers of respondents commented to this effect in their replies. This finding is of some interest given the high priority attached in some quarters to making voluntary work available to the unemployed, and the unemployed available to potential recipients of their voluntary work.
- (v) The remaining three organisation types each comprised less than 10% of respondents (i.e. less than 12 each) and generalisations on these small groups would be rather risky, especially as there is considerable variety within the three groups. Here it would be advisable to look for further qualitative data.

Conclusions

While interest in the problems of unemployment has a relatively long history in community work circles, it is only very recently that social action on unemployment has begun to emerge as a major theme in the activities of local voluntary organisations in Scotland. The newer bodies specifically concerned about unemployment are more committed to the field than the longer established generalist intermediary bodies or the volunteer bureaux. Nonetheless, in many ways the voluntary sector as a whole is ahead of the statutory services in trying to devise suitable responses to unemployment.

This study has been concerned mainly with community businesses, unemployed workers' centres, councils for voluntary service and volunteer bureaux. The picture which emerges is of a rapid proliferation of small, new and localised bodies pursuing a range of some 15 activities. Two broad

orientations can be discerned amongst all this activity. They are the welfare model, where the aim is to mitigate the consequences of unemployment, and the prevention model, where the aim is to reduce its occurrence. Only the community businesses are unambiguously committed to the prevention model; the other groups are divided in their allegiance to one model of the other.

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