

Workforce Development in the South West
Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

February 2006

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Commissioned on behalf of
South West Forum and Learning Curve on behalf of
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Executive Summary

- ❖ The Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation, now the National Workforce Development Hub, describes the Voluntary and Community Sector as diverse and covering a variety of different organisations. Organisations range from traditional charities, to companies that trade to support their social aims, through to informal community organisations. The sector also includes federations, or networks of local groups working under national umbrellas. Voluntary and community sector organisations provide a wide range of services and activities and many of the organisations are involved in the delivery of learning, whether through accredited training or informal learning.
- ❖ The Government has increasingly recognised the importance of Voluntary and community sector organisations and the key role that they play nationally, regionally and locally. Initiatives to support the sector, underpinned by funding, have been undertaken and the Government has been active in encouraging and commissioning research and strategic planning in the sector, in particular emphasising the importance of developing the skills, capacities and potential of the workforce.
- ❖ Sector organisations generally display a strong commitment to training and workforce development. However, in spite of this commitment and the presence of a high proportion of well-qualified workers, skills gaps, that is skills lacking in the current workforce, and skills shortages caused by recruitment difficulties, are present in the sector. There are also skills gaps and shortages in the volunteer workforce.
- ❖ Nationally, the VSNTTO has recognised key skills gaps and shortages in generic skills, such as management, leadership and ICT, occupationally specific skills, for example, for care and conservation and sector specific skills like fundraising or managing volunteers. The main skills gaps and shortages included those relating to management, planning and development skills, ICT, leadership and problem solving as well as customer handling and communication (VSNTTO 2004).
- ❖ Research carried out in the South West Region indicates that the skills shortages and gaps within the community and voluntary sector were very similar to those experienced nationally. The main generic skills gaps were strategic planning, organisational management, leadership, team working and ICT. Fundraising, marketing and promotion, promoting diversity, employment practice and human resource management, including the

management of volunteers, were also identified as being areas where there were skills gaps and shortages.

- ❖ The research carried out for this report largely supports these findings. 61.2% of the organisations surveyed reported skills gaps amongst their employees, with small to medium sized organisations, which formed the largest proportion of respondents, being most likely to experience such gaps.
- ❖ The main generic skills gaps reported by the organisations were strategic planning, organisational management, leadership, team working and ICT. With financial management, business management, fundraising, knowledge of the user group, legislation, marketing and promotion, employment practice and human resource management, including the management of volunteers, also identified as being areas where there were skills gaps and shortages. The most frequently mentioned gaps, however, were the specialist skills particularly relevant to the organisations' main areas of activity.
- ❖ There are commonalities in skills deficits between paid staff, volunteers and trustees, with specialist skills and ICT skills most frequently mentioned for both paid staff and volunteers, however, there are some differences between the staff categories. These are examined in section 4.2.1.3.
- ❖ The areas of organisational activity with the highest incidence of reported skills gaps were education and training and health and disability, followed by the provision of advice, support and counselling, and housing and accommodation. Less than a quarter of the organisations surveyed had difficulties in retaining suitably qualified workers. Half of the respondents considered that the provision of suitable training by their organisations had impacted positively on staff retention.
- ❖ The survey revealed little variation either between the counties within the South West Region, or between the urban unitary authorities and the rest of the region, in the skills gaps reported by the survey organisations. The only notable exception is Wiltshire with a higher incidence of organisations reporting skills gaps.
- ❖ A large proportion of the survey organisations saw their skills gaps and future skills needs as being related to training. As is the case nationally, voluntary and community organisations in the South West Region are committed to training in order to improve skills levels and to develop capacity in staff and volunteers, and survey respondents considered

training to be *vital* to the future viability of their organisations; a view reflected in the high numbers of both paid and voluntary workers receiving training.

- ❖ Training is, in the main, carried out by a mixture of in-house and external provision. There are a number of different types of provider, with colleges being used by the greatest number of organisations, although both private and public organisations also make up large proportions of the external trainers.
- ❖ In terms of the types of training and learning required, continuing professional development was most favoured for paid staff, but a large proportion of respondents also mentioned in-house training, less formal training and accredited training. Respondents were most likely to see in-house training or less formal training as the best options for volunteers. Many respondents stressed the need to be flexible in the approach to qualifications in order to accommodate to the preferences and abilities of staff as well as the needs of the organisation.
- ❖ Awareness of relevant training providers was high amongst the employers interviewed, indicating their interest in training availability. Information on training providers was derived both proactively, with employers seeking information, and reactively, with employers receiving information from providers, for example from brochures. Many voluntary and community organisations work in very specialised areas, and the employers appeared to be aware of where to find specialist training in their specific fields.
- ❖ Whilst training and workforce development are recognised as important across the sector, there is a marked difference between large and small organisations regarding how training need is identified and addressed. The smaller organisations are less likely to have a systematic structure for assessing training need, training often being addressed on an ad hoc basis when funds are available. The large voluntary and community organisations tend to have workforce development strategies with formal staff appraisal and training needs assessments taking place on a regular basis.
- ❖ The importance of collaboration and resource sharing is fully recognised by local networks, but as both national and regional research has shown, many organisations have difficulty in locating appropriate programmes and trainers and a number of barriers to training have to be overcome. Major barriers include funding problems and difficulties in covering for staff released for training and these are combined with problems in

locating courses which cover both generic needs and the very specific requirements of specialist organisations. There may also be problems with travel in rural areas, especially for volunteers.

- ❖ The most frequently mentioned barriers to training were those related to cost and resources. Less than half the respondents to the survey said that their organisations had training budgets and the funding streams for many organisations are uncertain. The costs of training may be high, there may be no 'slack' in the system to allow for cover for those engaged in training or learning, even if this is provided in-house, and the costs of travelling to external training sessions or courses may be difficult to meet. The lack of core funding available to smaller voluntary and community organisations is also likely to mean that medium to long term planning, including planning for training, is more difficult.
- ❖ Other barriers to training were problems related to the accessibility and availability of training. Some members of staff, particularly volunteers, were also seen as lacking interest in undertaking training and personal development and this attitude was sometimes perceived as being more likely among older volunteers.
- ❖ The factors that are seen as likely to encourage the take up of training match closely with the stated barriers. Subsidies for the cost of training courses, help with the cost of travel and increased cover for staff are all mentioned. The need for more locally based or in-house training is also mentioned, as is the possibility of the provision of evening and week-end training.
- ❖ On-line training has been suggested as potentially obviating some of the problems associated with training. Respondents who would consider using on-line training saw the main benefits as being ease of access and lower costs. A few organisations already have on-line training.
- ❖ Respondents who thought that their organisations would not consider on-line training, saw there being problems in providing computer access, particularly for volunteers, with a number saying that they were lacking staff skills in the area. Others said that they disliked this method of delivery, or that it was unsuitable for the skills needed.
- ❖ While on-line training would be a useful tool for many organisations, for others, the lack of computer access and ICT expertise among the staff would provide barriers. For some practical skills computer assisted learning may be seen as unsuitable, and this may also be seen as the case for social skills.

- ❖ Skills shortages related to recruitment problems were experienced by a number of organisations. Difficulties in recruiting to some paid posts were seen by some respondents as being affected by the pay and conditions in the sector, which in some cases made it more difficult to recruit suitably qualified, skilled or experienced people, especially where voluntary and community organisations are recruiting to similar posts as other, both public and private sector, organisations. In the case of volunteers some organisations considered that it might be becoming generally harder to find volunteers.
- ❖ A number of important issues relating to training and workforce development issues arose from the survey and interviews carried out as part of the research.
 - ❖ For many organisations on-line training is regarded as a cost effective and flexible training medium suitable to the needs of the sector. Some of the larger organisations contacted have already developed, or are in the process of developing, on-line training content relevant to their specific technical spheres of operation. This solution may, however, not be open to smaller community organisations, where neither IT hard-ware nor IT expertise may be available. Nor is it suitable for all training and learning needs.
 - ❖ Mentoring and shadowing techniques were considered to be very important by many of the organisations. Practical on-the-job training, '*learning by doing*,' is regarded as an important means of developing skills and expertise in a large section of the workforce. This model may well be appropriate for much wider use, although respondents currently involved with such systems point out that successful implementation requires significant time inputs. There appears to be a strong case for providing external mentors for organisations with shortages of staff resources. It is suggested that in addition to providing technical assistance, external mentors could help staff to develop staff business management and processes skills, which has been identified as a weakness across the sector during the current research.
 - ❖ Training needs assessment facilitation is required in smaller voluntary and community organisations. The lack of time available to managerial staff in many small voluntary and community organisations means that external facilitation to

examine training needs and develop training plans would be likely to yield tangible results. The presence of a great deal of financial instability in the sector, which has implications for training up-take, means that training needs facilitation should be combined with wider diagnostic business advice as an integrated package.

- ❖ A number of respondents stressed that training and networking should be linked. Networking with relevant individuals and organisations within their specific fields of operation is vital to the successful delivery of their activities. Such communication enables knowledge transfer, the signposting of opportunities, access to influential contacts and a range of other benefits. Combining training sessions with organised, targeted networking opportunities was considered by respondents to be a valuable idea.
- ❖ Respondents considered that collaboration between voluntary and community organisations and colleges should be further encouraged. Some voluntary and community organisations have close links with colleges and universities and, for example, provide students with work experience opportunities and training facilities. The advantages are reciprocal, as the arrangement appears to provide valuable informal learning opportunities for voluntary and community organisation staff through their association with students and academic staff. Such reciprocal arrangements could have an application across the whole sector. In particular, it is suggested that examples of good college/voluntary and community sector collaboration could be publicised across the region in order to enhance the understanding of each other's requirements.
- ❖ The complexity of the skills needs of the voluntary and community organisations in the region necessitates a flexible approach to training and learning needs. For many organisations, including smaller and rurally based organisations, and for a number of particular skills, providing more informal learning opportunities may be important.
- ❖ Action learning, mentoring, and outreach and peripatetic work may be more effective in providing for the specialist needs that have been highlighted in much of the data, and for providing for small numbers of

learners who may be geographically dispersed. Good practice in all these areas is already in evidence in the region.

- ❖ Networking and learning partnerships of providers, including the voluntary and community organisations, may both spread the costs and help to improve access to opportunities for all organisations.

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Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors: Skill Shortages Study

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Research

The Social Research & Regeneration Unit (SRRU) at the University of Plymouth was commissioned by the South West Forum to investigate skills shortages in the Voluntary and Community Sector within the South West Region. The research is part of a twelve-month workforce development project, which is being managed by South West Forum, in collaboration with Learning Curve. A key aim of this project is to enhance workforce development in the voluntary and community sector in the South West Region. The project is funded by the Home Office through ChangeUp, the Government's framework for strengthening the capacity and infrastructure of the sector.

The workforce development project, which began in April 2005, has enabled previous research and policy documents relevant to skills and learning within the voluntary and community sector to be collated. An initial analysis of the findings, presented to a Regional Advisory Group, highlighted the issue of skill shortages within the region as a major gap in research. Although some local research on skills shortages had already been conducted, at present there is neither an agreed list of regional skill shortages nor any discussion of the likely reasons for these shortages. The Advisory Group therefore identified further regional work on skill shortages as its highest research priority.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of the current research project is to investigate skills shortages in the voluntary and community sector within the South West Region, with the key objectives being to provide:

- ❖ Evidence of the extent to which voluntary and community organisations across the South West experience skills gaps and shortages.
- ❖ A regional analysis of the reasons for such skills gaps and shortages.

- ❖ A list of the main skills gaps and shortages across the region, with any local or sectoral discrepancies highlighted.
- ❖ A list of any occupationally specific skills gaps and shortages.
- ❖ Suggested ways in which these skills gaps and shortages might be addressed.

1.3 The Research Context

This research project fits closely with an exercise currently being conducted by Learning Curve, mapping the availability of training and learning provision in the region for the voluntary and community sector.¹ Findings from the two pieces of work will be taken together to inform the preparation of a Regional Workforce Development Strategy for the voluntary and community sector in the South West.

In the context of the research, skills shortages are understood to refer to skills gaps, that is, skills lacking in the current workforce, as well as to recruitment difficulties, where there are shortages of suitably skilled and qualified recruits.

As specified in the original research brief, the definition of the voluntary and community sector employed in the current project is that used in the Treasury's *Cross Cutting Review* of 2002, where it is specified that, the sector is intended to be wider in scope than "general charities" and the "voluntary sector", inclusive of organisations reflecting the characteristics of social enterprises but narrower in scope than "non-profit", "third sector" or "social economy".

1.4 Structure of Report

The Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors: Skill Shortages Report is arranged under the following main headings:

- ❖ Methods:
 - ❖ Research Approach
 - ❖ The Secondary Research
 - ❖ The Primary Research.

- ❖ Literature Review:

¹ Learning Curve's project covers three regions specifically: Somerset, West of England and Wiltshire and Swindon

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ The Importance of the Voluntary and Community Sector
- ❖ Skills Needs
- ❖ The National Context
- ❖ The Regional Context
- ❖ Discussion.

- ❖ Primary Research:
 - ❖ The Telephone Survey Data
 - ❖ The Interviews
 - ❖ The Employee Survey.

- ❖ Summary Discussion:
 - ❖ The South West Skills Shortages Study Summary.

- ❖ Conclusions:
 - ❖ Future Training and Workforce Development Solutions.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Approach

The study was based upon a pluralistic approach, incorporating both primary and secondary research. An initial search of the available literature relating to the voluntary and community sector was conducted in order both to inform and to contextualise the primary research findings. The primary research consisted of a large-scale telephone interview survey with voluntary and community sector organisations, supplemented by a number of follow up face-to-face interviews with a selection of those organisations that took part in the survey. A self-administered questionnaire was also sent to employees from a sub-set of organisations taking part in the face-to-face interviews. The research approach adopted facilitated the gathering of data from a large number of organisations, reflecting the structure of the sector, and provided a means of pursuing key issues in greater depth. The methods utilised in the research are discussed further in this section.

2.2 The Secondary Research

A review of the literature related to both national and regional policies and to existing research on skills, training and learning in the voluntary and community sector, was carried out. The review drew on the documentation that had already been gathered by South West Forum as part of its wider workforce development project and supplemented this where appropriate through further study. This phase of the research was used to inform the design of the questionnaire used in the survey and to facilitate the analysis of the primary data within a wide, comparative context.

A data base of voluntary and community organisations in the South West Region was also established, using existing data sets supplied by South West Forum supplemented by information obtained from regional telephone directories.

2.3 The Primary Research

2.3.1 The Telephone Survey

Using the data base of voluntary and community organisations constructed during the secondary research phase as a sampling frame, a stratified random sample of organisations was drawn up. The sample was stratified by sub-region and by organisational size, type and location to ensure that it would reflect, as accurately as possible, both the sub-regions and the types of organisation within the region. It was calculated that a sample size of 320 would yield a sample that would be representative of the organisations in the region.

The data was collected by a telephone survey using a structured questionnaire which was conducted with managers/key decision makers from the voluntary and community sector organisations within the sample. A formal questionnaire was employed in order to ensure that comparable data from a large number of organisations could be obtained. A telephone rather than a postal survey was chosen both because postal questionnaires have a low response rate, and therefore tend to be less accurate than telephone surveys, and also because telephone surveys allow respondents to make comments and expand upon their answers. This means that the data collected may be much richer and more detailed than that collected by a more impersonal self-completed questionnaire.

The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the South West Forum and Learning Curve, and was piloted by the SRRU research team, before being finalised, to ensure that questions were clear and well sequenced. During the design process it was noted that the issues affecting skills gaps and shortages in voluntary and community organisations were likely to vary between paid-staff, volunteers and trustees. Therefore, all respondents were asked a set of key questions for all of their staff (paid staff, trustees and volunteers) and were then asked more focussed questions about one particular type of employee. At this stage the sample frame was stratified again with 50% of respondents being asked additional questions specifically relating to their paid workforce, 40% asked additional questions relating to their volunteers and 10% to their trustees. Within the sample

frame these values reflected both the proportions and salience of the different employee types within the sector.

A Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system was used for the survey. This system allows for automated routing of the questionnaire and central management of the sample. The survey was conducted during November and December 2005 and January 2006.

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the appendices.

2.3.2 Face-to Face-Interviews

The telephone survey was followed up with site visits to a small sub-sample of organisations, where face-to-face interviews were carried out with key decision makers. Eighteen visits and interviews were conducted. The sub-sample was selected from across the South West Region and was structured to include organisations in rural and urban locations and of different sizes, and to be representative of faith organisations, minority and ethnic community groups, front line deliverers and intermediary organisations.

An interview guide was designed to pursue issues arising from the telephone survey data. Particular areas of interest were:

- ❖ Attitudes towards the value of workforce development and training.
- ❖ Management and business process skills gaps and shortages.
- ❖ Barriers to training uptake.
- ❖ Uptake of training by trustees and related skills development needs.
- ❖ The perceived importance of leadership skills and relevant training requirements within the voluntary and community sector.
- ❖ Future training and workforce development solutions.

All interviewees were asked a core set of questions relating to these issues along with a set of additional questions that were tailored to their individual telephone survey responses. The

tailored questions reflected the differentiation made between paid staff, volunteers and trustees within the main survey and allowed respondents to add further depth to the responses given.

2.3.3 Employee Survey

The survey questions were adapted into a paper based skills needs analysis questionnaire for the voluntary and community sector employee survey. With prior agreement from the organisation in question these were sent to employees (paid staff, volunteers, and trustees) within a sub-set of the organisations participating in the follow up interviews. The purpose of the paper based skills needs analysis was to conduct an internal audit of the organisation's needs as a means of checking and validating the telephone survey findings. In total, 34 completed questionnaires were returned to SRRU, representing a small proportion of the total number sent out. There is evidence to suggest that the low response rate is indicative of the lack of time (within budgetary constraints) that voluntary and community sector staff have to complete 'non-core' tasks, which is in itself insightful for workforce development issues. Despite the low response rate the findings nevertheless add some depth to the study and served as a means of checking and validating the other aspects of the research and will be discussed more fully in Section 4.

A copy of the employee questionnaire is included in the appendices.

3. THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

The National Context

3.1 Introduction

Over recent years the Government has increasingly recognised the importance of voluntary and community sector organisations and the key role that they play nationally, regionally and locally. Paul Boateng, Secretary to the Treasury, in his introduction to the Treasury's Cross Cutting Review of the role of the voluntary and community sector, emphasised the Government's commitment to the sector:

The Government is passionately committed to the work of the voluntary sector. We believe that the voluntary and community sector organisations have a crucial role to play in the reform of public services and the reinvigoration of civic life. (HM Treasury, 2002).

Following the Review a number of initiatives were launched including Futurebuilders, an investment programme intended to build the capacity of VCOs to deliver public services, and ChangeUp, the capacity building and infrastructure framework for the voluntary and community sector. ChangeUp emphasised the importance of workforce development, which is also key focus of the draft South West Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Plan. (South West Forum: February 2006) A later Cross Cutting Review in 2004 noted that the Government's vision for the sector had not been fully implemented, however, it was emphasised that there had been significant progress. Government commitment to the sector was also re-iterated, together with the hope that the Review would

Deepen and reinforce future foundations between Government and the sector. (Secretary to the Treasury, Forward to the Treasury's Cross Cutting Review, HM Treasury, 2004).

The Government has also been active in encouraging and commissioning research and strategic planning in the sector, in particular emphasising the importance of developing the capacities and potential of the workforce.

3.1.1 Sector Definition

The Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation (VSNTO) describes the voluntary and community sector as a diverse sector covering a variety of different organisations (*Improving our Skills*, VSNTO, 2004). Organisations range from traditional charities, to companies that trade to support their social aims, through to informal community organisations. The sector also includes federations, which consist of a network of local groups working under a national umbrella, such as Age Concern.

Voluntary Sector organisations provide a wide range of services and activities including campaigning, lobbying, advocacy, advice, information, delivery and support services. These activities cover a large variety of groups and interests, and range from organisations concerned with disadvantaged and marginalised groups of people, to animal welfare, environmental concerns, and the protection of our cultural heritage. Many of the organisations are involved in the delivery of learning, whether through accredited training or informal learning. (VSNTO, 2004).

The *Improving Our Skills* report also emphasises the wide scope of the sector. Voluntary and community organisations range from national and international 'household name' charities run by professional paid staff and with high turnovers, for example the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the National Trust, through to small community-based organisations with no paid staff, relying solely on the efforts of volunteers

Many of the organisations in the sector do depend heavily upon volunteers, and while their input varies widely between the different fields of the sector workforce, these volunteers may play key roles in all aspects of the organisation. Their involvement ranges from management, to day-to-day administration and fundraising through to service delivery. In addition, trustees have a unique and vital role with a legal responsibility for the governance of these organisations. (VSNTO, 2004).

Within the sector as a whole there are differences between voluntary and community organisations and, as would be expected, these differences have an impact on their individual skill requirements. Community sector organisations are typically small, un-funded or project-funded organisations that deliver a single service to a local community and they tend to be dependent

upon volunteers rather than paid staff. The organisations are also usually controlled democratically by their members, who are often also their users. Examples include mother and toddler groups, sports clubs and environmental groups (Voluntary Arts Network, 2005).

This research report has not employed a tight definition of the voluntary and community sector. As specified in the research brief, the definition used is that employed in the Treasury's *Cross Cutting Review* (2002) where *'the sector is intended to be wider in scope than "general charities" and the "voluntary sector", inclusive of organisations reflecting the characteristics of social enterprises but narrower in scope than "non-profit", "third" sector or "social economy" .*

3.2 The Importance of the Voluntary and Community Sector

A list of key facts about the voluntary and community sector nationally, compiled by the Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation, shows that there are approximately 153,000 registered charities as well as a large number of social enterprises and 300,000 unregistered organisations in the sector. The gross income of general charities across the sector is £20.8 billion with an estimated contribution to the GDP of the UK of £7.2 billion. The sector employs approximately 569,000 paid staff, the equivalent of 2% of the total of UK employees, with 85,000 jobs having been created in the sector between 1997 and 2002. In addition it is estimated that there are 11.1 million regular volunteers and 750,000 trustees involved in the sector. (VSNTO, 2004).

In the South West Region, it is estimated that there are at least 25,000 voluntary and community organisations, including over 16,000 registered charities and 1,800 social enterprises. These organisations have a total income of £1.5 billion, of which £750 million was earned from fees from goods and services, membership and public service contracts. The sector employs in the order of 54,000 people, approximately 2.3% of the region's workforce, and the South West also has the highest level of informal and formal volunteering across the English regions. (South West Forum, 2005).

The voluntary and community sector is therefore recognised as being of importance to the economy as well as to community life. Some commentators have also seen the sector as providing a distinctively cost effective service, and there is evidence to suggest that in certain circumstances, for example where there are hard to reach groups or those with particular needs, voluntary and community organisations may have

certain advantages over other types of organisation. (Billis & Harris, 1996).

The Treasury Cross Cutting Review accepts that voluntary and community organisations may be particularly able to *'deliver services more effectively to certain groups'*, often because they are seen to be more independent, to involve members of the community, to have specialist knowledge and skills and to be more flexible. Certainly the review considers that the voluntary and community organisations may provide *'value-added'* in a variety of ways. (HM Treasury, 2002).

Value may be *'added'* not just by the direct activities of the voluntary and community organisations but also through the involvement of volunteers, trustees and community groups. Such involvement is likely to build capacity in individuals and communities, which may provide a range of benefits and opportunities for growth. Indeed, the key facts compiled by the VSNTO indicate that that 60% of the volunteers say that *volunteering gives them opportunities to learn new skills - especially communication and team skills.* (VSNTO, 2004).

ChangeUp, the initiative launched by the Home Office following the Treasury's 2002 Cross Cutting Review, recognises the crucial role the sector plays in delivering public services and in building strong, cohesive and self-determining communities. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has also identified the potential of the sector to help deliver their goal of widening participation in learning (VSNTO, 2004). ChangeUp and the LSC highlight the need to build the capacity of the sector. Part of this capacity building involves developing the skills and knowledge of the workforce, including paid staff, volunteers, trustees and board members.

3.3 Skills Needs

3.3.1 The National Framework

The Government's overall strategy for skills was specified in a White Paper in 2003, *21st Century Skills - Realising Our Potential*, which set out priorities in education and training and the provision of qualifications to encourage the development of skill levels across all sectors of the economy. Important aspects of the strategy include improving access to advice and guidance, facilitating entry to a variety of qualifications, recognising the needs of employers and learners and encouraging local learning

communities. The Learning and Skills Council plays an overall role in planning and providing training and assessing, in co-operation with the various sectors of the economy, their skills and training needs, and a number of organisations are involved in the provision of training, advice and support, both for employers and learners.

The skills strategy document *Improving Our Skills* (VSNTO, 2004), which was commissioned by the Active Community Unit and developed by VSNTO, stresses the importance of locating the skills strategy for the voluntary and community sector within the national strategy. The Report includes a list of the organisations and departments involved in the national skills strategy, together with their functions and roles, and it is emphasised that:

An important focus of the voluntary and community sector skills strategy is to ensure that the voluntary and community sector infrastructure is in place at the local, regional and national level to ensure that the sector can engage effectively with these players and benefit from Government's current levels of commitment and investment in skills development. (VSNTO, 2004: Section 4).

The Learning and Skills Council has a specific strategy in relationship to the voluntary and community sector. The key proposals, which are summarised by the VSNTO,² focus on:

- ❖ *ensuring that local workforce development plans support the agreed needs of the voluntary and community sector in the area;*
- ❖ *the particular needs of 'voluntary and community sector organisations involved in supporting, developing and delivering learning';*
- ❖ *exploring a range of options for reducing barriers to workforce development;*
- ❖ *continuing to work with the VSNTO at a national level on the implementation of its Skills Strategy, ensuring it meets the needs of the learning and skills sector.*

² *The VSNTO document, Improving Our Skills: A Skills Strategy for the Voluntary and Community Sector, incorporates a fuller summary of the LSC proposals in Section 5, page12.*

The strategic plans set out for the voluntary and community sector are tied into the national strategy, and linkages between different sectors and across the voluntary and community sector are clear. A number of documents have set out the needs of, and plans for, the sector and the National Workforce Development Hub (formerly the VSNTO) has set out a business plan for the sector in England. This is built upon existing activity in the sector as well as upon the analysis and recommendations of ChangeUp, the strategic plans laid out in the National Skills Strategy (VSNTO, 2004) and other sector strategy documents,³ together with the recommendations of the LSC.

The vision set out in the Business Plan is that:

Voluntary and community organisations have the staff, volunteers and trustees with the diversity of skills and people they need to make an ever growing contribution to creating a better society.

With the overall objective being:

To lead and facilitate action that makes it easier for voluntary and community organisations to recruit and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities they work in. (The Workforce Development Hub, 2005).

The details of the development plan are shown in full in the document, together with the ways in which support and inter-linkages on a national scale will be put in place. The report highlights the need for organisations within the sector to appreciate the importance of investing in, and developing, the skills of their workforces, and points to the importance of identifying learning needs, linking these with a strategic planning process and ensuring that the costs of training are included in funding bids. The report also stresses the need to provide access to high quality learning that fits closely with the sector's varied working patterns. It is also recognised that traditional, formal training may be effectively supplemented, or replaced, by less

² The 2004 strategy document itself draws upon *Future Skills 2003: A skills foresight research document on the voluntary paid workforce*. A list of sources is shown in the bibliography.

formal methods, such as coaching, mentoring, action learning and secondments.

These less formal methods are particularly important in the sector as many organisations find it hard to resource training, both in affording the cost of formal courses and in providing cover for staff and volunteers. One to one or small group learning opportunities may also prove to be more flexible and suitable for the specific requirements of organisations and their staff. Even where more generic skills are concerned more flexible delivery and the ability to adapt training materials to suit the resources of the organisation and the needs of the staff and volunteers may be helpful. Flexibility and adaptability may be particularly important in rural areas where access to public transport is limited and distances to learning centres may be considerable. In fast changing situations and where organisations need to co-operate with others and to adapt, action learning groups and networks may also be especially effective.⁴

It is also important to recognise that because of their complex and diverse needs, formal training and learning opportunities may not be appropriate for individual clients or client groups of voluntary and community sector organisations. Outreach work and individual and group work at the point of need may play a vital role in delivering support, access to information and access to further learning and training opportunities, when this becomes appropriate.⁵

While the overall strategies for the voluntary and community structure are necessarily national strategies, it is also recognised that the particulars of skills gaps and shortages may vary on a regional and sub-regional basis. Section 3.3.2 includes data relating to skills levels, gaps and shortages at a national level, and Section 3.3.3 moves on to the information available at the regional and sub-regional level.

⁴ Further discussion and examples from the South West of less formal methods are in Section 3.5.

⁵ The importance of information, and therefore learning opportunities, being available at the time and point of need, and the willingness of people to make use of them was illustrated in a small scale qualitative study in a deprived inner city area. This study also illustrated the importance of a sense of community integration for women's sense of health and well-being. Trebilcock, L & Bryant, L. (November 2001). *Primary health care in an inner city area: what women expect. Community Practitioner*. Thursday 1 November 2001.

3.3.2 National Skills Levels, Gaps and Shortages

The VSNT0 (2004) shows that some 95% of organisations in the sector fund some staff training, however, it must be recognised that the sector is diverse and its skills, and therefore training, needs are complex. Additionally, while the sector contains a very large number of small organisations, with approximately one third of employees being in enterprises with ten or less employees, it is '*dominated, in funding terms, by a subset of large organisations*' (HM Treasury, 2002). Skills needs and training capabilities across the sector may, then, have a degree of variation.

At a national level the skills needs for the sector have been analysed in the strategy documents of the VSNT0 (VSNT0 2000, 2003 and 2004) and some of the specific skills needs of volunteers are examined in the Skills Active research *Strategic Development of the Volunteer Workforce* (SkillsActive, 2005).

Drawing on the studies carried out in 2000 and 2003, the VSNT0 2004 document details the key skills gaps and shortages in the sector. Problems were being experienced mainly in:

- ❖ Generic skills, such as management, leadership and ICT.
- ❖ Occupationally specific skills for care, conservation etc.
- ❖ Sector specific skills such as fundraising or managing volunteers (VSNT0 2004).

And the report goes on to list the top 12 skills shortages identified in *Futureskills* 2003. These were:

- ❖ Planning and Organising
- ❖ Problem Solving
- ❖ Team Working
- ❖ Strategic Use of IT
- ❖ Project Development/Management
- ❖ Written Communication Skills
- ❖ Strategic/Business Planning Skills
- ❖ Basic Computer Literacy/Using ICT
- ❖ Oral Communication
- ❖ Leadership Skills
- ❖ Customer Handling
- ❖ Skills to Deliver/Negotiate Contracts.

Futureskills 2003 also shows that those surveyed in the study considered that more fundraising skills were needed. Skills shortages, caused by a lack of suitably skilled and qualified recruits, a problem for 47% of the organisations, were considered to be particularly related to misconceptions that potential candidates may have about working in the sector and the relatively 'uncompetitive' pay structures. Learning opportunities provided to the sector workforce were found to vary in quality, availability, appropriateness and affordability and it appears that some organisations lack the knowledge and resources to plan and access different approaches to develop skills. Equally the sector has a need for a very wide spectrum of skills, some of them highly specialised, ranging, for example, from 'acrobat' to 'dealing with violent clients', and the operating environment for organisations is often both uncertain and complex.

In spite of a strong commitment to training and development, skills gaps, that is skills lacking in the current workforce, while less widespread than skills shortages, were nevertheless present in the sector. The sector does contain a high proportion of well qualified workers, it has the highest proportion of workers educated to degree level, 29%, but at 8% has the same proportion of those with no qualifications, as does the public sector. However, where skills gaps do occur *they are varied in scope, covering both management and wider organisational skills.* (Futureskills, 2003). The authors of the *Futureskills* report point out that, perhaps partly because of the large number of small organisations in the sector, many are hoping to recruit or develop multi-skilled staff.⁶ Many firms considered management skills, perhaps particularly the ability to plan and organise, to be a barrier to proficiency. Such skills gaps, as the report points out, are, however, *not restricted to managers.*

There are also skills gaps and shortages in the volunteer workforce. The research for the *Skills Matter* report (VSNTO, 2000) had also found that a third of organisations had found difficulties in recruiting trustees and committee members. The main reasons given for this were that people were unable to find the time, 41%,

⁶ Voluntary organisations often require people with a wide range of skills, for example organisations might require staff with experience in project management or fundraising combined with knowledge of their specific client group. A report by the MSF Union describes jobs within the voluntary sector as being more varied, with employees accepting responsibilities at far higher levels than they would in the statutory sector. Workforce dedication is high within this sector, but often workers feel they are being taken advantage of.

or that it was difficult to find people with the appropriate skills, 21%. There were particular difficulties in recruiting people with financial management skills, with a knowledge of the legal requirements or with the ability to provide strategic direction. (VSNTTO, 2000).

Over one third of organisations drawing on volunteers generally, reported difficulties with recruitment. The main problem was in persuading people to come forward, but there were specific skills areas, which often related to the particular area of work of the organisation, 21%, or fundraising, 17%, which caused particular recruitment difficulties. 38% of organisations surveyed mentioned skills gaps applying to their volunteer force. These gaps were also very varied, but 17% reported particular issues with communication, and 15% mentioned IT and skills specific to the area of work. The main skills mentioned in terms of future needs were IT, 37% and fundraising, 22%.

SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure and Learning, in a survey of the relevant Sector Skills Councils and key voluntary representative organisations found that respondents felt that a clear, further promotion and development of the National Occupational Standards was needed. And while there was some agreement from the educational establishments involved in training and qualification that it might be useful for both paid staff and volunteers to pursue the same, or similar courses, it was also recognised that this could be problematic for volunteers in terms of funding. In many cases there is a lack of funding to support volunteer training and the authors of the report note that there is a need for *'more information and guidance to support the development of Sector Skills Agreements to secure the inclusion of volunteers'*. (SkillsActive, 2005).

The training of volunteers is also an important issue in relationship to the age patterns of volunteers. Volunteering varies according to age group, with older people, those 45-54 and 65-74, being most likely to volunteer, and those aged either over 75 or 18-24 being least likely. Crucially, however, volunteers aged 18-24 were more likely to regard volunteering as a way of learning new skills, getting a qualification and achieving a position in the community.

In spite of the presence of skills gaps and the funding issues related to volunteer training, the voluntary and community sector demonstrates a strong commitment and training uptake. Research carried out in the sector (VSNTO, 2003) found that nearly all organisations, 94.1%, had provided or funded training for paid staff in the last 12 months, this compares with 63% of establishments on average across all sectors (LSC, 2004). Furthermore, 40% of organisations were either accredited, or working towards, Investors in People, which provides a framework for delivering business improvement by developing people's knowledge, skills and motivation. This is a 100% increase on the survey conducted in 2000 (VSNTO, 2000), which found 20% of organisations to be accredited or working towards accreditation. The main barriers to training within the voluntary sector were cited as being a lack of funding, the cost of training and the availability of suitable training and trainers. All of the largest organisations were found to be funding training, but while smaller organisations were somewhat less likely to do so, even here 87% of those reported as having an income of under £100,000, did provide some training for staff. (VSNTO, 2003).

Most of the organisations surveyed for the 2003 research were aware of quality standards in the sector and there was a *widespread perception that training not only addresses the skills gaps within an organisation, but that training benefits the wider community.* (VSNTO, 2003 p 53). However, there are barriers to training including the cost and availability of the training, and the authors of the report point out that this may be a particular problem in the sector given the breadth of job-specific training which, in the case of the organisations taking part in the current survey varied from generic issues, such as fund raising, through to working with dangerous clients. (VSNTO, 2003 p 53).

Across the sector, then, skills needs have been clarified and plans for training identified within the wider strategic development plans for the voluntary and community sector nationally. The sector, however, is complex and varied in nature and it is recognised there may be regional and sub-regional variations in skills shortages and gaps as well as in training needs. Section 3.3 considers research related to the South West at a regional and sub-regional level.

The Regional Context

3.3.3 Skills Levels and Shortages in the South West Region

The Learning and Skills Council publishes a National Employers Skills Survey (NESS), which gives detailed information about the extent and causes of skills gaps and recruitment problems together with a report of employers' training activity. The survey for 2004 showed that across all employment sectors nationally 20% of establishments said that they had staff who were not fully proficient, while 8% reported hard to fill vacancies. At a regional level the reports of skills shortages and gaps are similar, but there are both regional and sub-regional variations in skills shortfalls and in the levels of workforce qualification.

Table One shows some key figures for the South West Region overall in terms of its population, workforce and recruitment issues.

Table One: South West Population and Workforce Profile

Population (000)	4,999
Population of working age (000)	3,192
Employment (000)	2,480
Workforce with NVQ4+ qualifications (%)	25
Workforce with no qualifications (%)	11.2
Unemployment rate	2.9
Establishments reporting hard to fill vacancies (%)	9.2
Establishments reporting skill shortage vacancies (%)	5.7

Sources: Mid Year Population Estimates, Labour Force Survey, National Employee Skills Survey (2003)

It can be seen from the table that a relatively higher proportion of the work force in the South West, 25%, is qualified to NVQ level 4 or above, compared with just under 24% for the whole of England. In spite of this, the region experiences above average numbers of hard to fill vacancies, (9.2%) compared with 8% nationally, as well as above average skill shortage vacancies, 5.7% compared with 4% nationally.

When hard to fill vacancies are expressed as a proportion of all vacancies, in 2004 the South West experienced a slightly higher proportion than the national average (39% compared with 37% for

England). However, this is a considerable drop from 2003 when hard to fill vacancies accounted for 47% of all vacancies in the South West, compared with 40% across England. (LSC NESS, 2004).

In terms of skill shortage vacancies as a proportion of all vacancies, the South West is closer in line with the national average. In 2004 skill shortage vacancies accounted for 25% of all vacancies in the region, compared with a 24% average across England. However this is an increase for the South West from 2003, when the region had a low proportion of skill shortage vacancies, at 17% compared with 20% nationally. Sub-regionally Devon and Cornwall experience the highest levels of both hard to fill vacancies and skill shortage vacancies, at 12% and 8.2% respectively.

The National Employers Skills Survey (2004) also reported that 18% of establishments in the South West reported skill gaps, compared with 20% for England. This is a decrease from the 2003 findings when 23% of establishments in the South West reported skills gaps, compared with 22% for England as a whole.

The highest proportions of skills shortages in the South West Region in 2004 were identified as:

- ❖ Practical and technical skills : (54%)
- ❖ Communication : (41%)
- ❖ Customer handling : (37%)
- ❖ Team working : (35%)

Overall the Skills Survey indicates slightly higher than average skills shortages and skills gaps in the South West. However, although it is unsafe to assume trends on the basis of survey findings over only two years, the most recent figures indicate a decline in both skills gaps and shortages, even though the region is still experiencing slightly higher than average difficulties in these areas.

There is also evidence of some sub-regional differences. A survey, comparable with NESS was conducted by the Learning and Skills Council for Devon and Cornwall in 2002. The research found that during 2002 approximately 10% of businesses reported skills gaps

within their organisations, twice as many as those reporting them in 2001. This is much lower than the 18% figure reported for the South West as a whole in 2004 (LSC NESS, 2004), although employers in the sub-region reported a similar proportion of hard to fill vacancies as that shown in the later NESS report. The differences could be due to respondents' different interpretations of "skills gaps", or possibly to a different skills mix present, or needed, in the organisations surveyed in the earlier survey. It, perhaps, also demonstrates the importance of a baseline measure of skills gaps, shortages and needs for particular sectors.

In the sub-regional research the most frequently cited shortfalls for skills were in:

- ❖ Basic IT
- ❖ Team working
- ❖ Customer care
- ❖ Verbal communication
- ❖ Design and innovation skills.

A range of technical and job specific skills was also mentioned. These shortages are very similar to those identified in the South West as a whole (LSC: NESS, 2004) with the exception of the stress on basic IT skills.

Looking at training, the research also suggests that, excluding basic induction, health and safety and first aid training, nearly half the employers in Devon and Cornwall had trained at least one member of staff in the past year, with micro organisations being less likely to train their employees. This matches closely the NESS 2004 findings, where 52% of organisations in the South West had provided job specific training in the previous 12 months.

The research in Devon and Cornwall also considered the barriers to training. Affording the time to release people for training and the actual cost of training were most frequently mentioned. A later study, undertaken in 2004 for the South West Centre of Excellence, of learning needs and provision in the region, included two area studies focused on West Cornwall and Gloucester. The report highlighted the fact that time to release people for training may be impossible for small community groups. Access to learning opportunities can also be a barrier to learning among

smaller community and voluntary organisations due to a combination of timing learning and of cover for absence as well as a number of other factors. These barriers may be particularly pertinent because of the presence of large numbers of smaller organisations in the South West as a whole and in the voluntary and community sector in particular.

The skills needs for the voluntary and community sector in the South West are located within the population and workforce profile of the region as a whole. Employers as a whole are reported as experiencing slightly higher levels of skills gaps and shortages than for England as a whole and there is evidence of some sub-regional variations. Training needs and take up will also vary and will be affected by the numbers of micro organisations in the region, particularly in the dispersed rural populations of the sub-regions.

3.3.4 Sector Specific Skills Issues in the South West Region

3.3.4.1 Regional and Sub-Regional Research

Research in the region dealing specifically with skills shortages in the voluntary and community sector is not extensive, although important mapping exercises and a number of sub-regional studies have been undertaken. Statistics from the National Employers Skill Survey, published by the LSC show that in the South West Region, in a comparison of organisations in various sectors, more organisations in the voluntary and community sector than in any other reported having hard to fill vacancies but no skills shortage vacancies. Organisations describing themselves as charities, trusts or non-profit making, showed a slightly higher proportion of hard to fill vacancies than the private and public sectors and of skills shortage vacancies. (LSC NESS, 2003). Table Two shows extracts from the LSC data.

Table Two: South West Region Vacancies and Hard to Fill Vacancies in Different Sector Organisations, %

Vacancies & Hard to Fill Vacancies by Sector	Private Sector	Public Sector	Voluntary Sector	Charity/Trust/Non-Profit
Have no vacancies	79.6	75.4	71.4	76.6
Don't know if have vacancies	0.2	0.4	0.1	-
Have vacancies - none hard to fill	8.6	14.1	8.3	9.8
Have vacancies - don't know if hard to fill	1.2	1.5	2.1	2.6
Have hard to fill vacancies, but no skills shortage vacancies	5.7	4.5	15.4	6.0
Have skills shortage vacancies	4.7	4.2	2.7	5.1

Source: LSC NESS 2003

The statistics from the LSC are in line with other research that shows that voluntary and community sector organisations tend to report their staff as being fully proficient (VSNTO, 2003), although skills shortages and training needs are recognised.

The mapping study of the infrastructure of the sector in the South West (South West Forum, 2004) brought together the results of a number of studies carried out in the region. Findings from the regional research evidenced the presence of skills gaps and shortages that were very similar to those identified in the national studies. The report highlights shortages in:

- ❖ Strategic planning
- ❖ Organisational management
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Team working
- ❖ ICT.

Fundraising, marketing and promotion, promoting diversity, employment practice and human resource management were also identified as being areas where there were skills gaps and shortages.

The research also located some gaps in the infrastructure provision, particularly in Somerset and Dorset, here sub-regional and regional organisations estimate that between 35% and 50% of client need is unmet. 86% of infrastructure organisations responding to the survey operate in both urban and rural areas,

while only 4% have a purely rural focus.⁷ On the basis of their information the authors of the report say that it is evident that specialist activity infrastructure is generally lacking at *sub-regional or local level* (South West Forum, 2004 p10) in the following specialist areas:

- ❖ BME (particularly rural)
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Arts, Sports, Culture
- ❖ Regeneration/Social
- ❖ Training and Learning.

The report emphasises the importance of bringing together research results to underpin action to meet the skills needs identified, and of linking *the development of sub-regional hubs of activity and their strategic planning with a focussed development toolkit to foster a consistent strategic approach and....promote a 'common language' for VCS strategic planning across the region.* (South West Forum, 2004). It was also seen as important that providers in skills development and training should understand the ethos of the voluntary and community sector with its *particular value-base, organisational cultures and the motivations and drivers of its staff and volunteers.*

The diversity and complexity of the voluntary and community sector and the wide range of learning and training needs that this involves is fully recognised by the national and regional strategic plans for the sector. A report covering the regional social economy (RISE, October 2004) echoes national concerns in pointing to the problems relating to finding sufficient finances for training, being able to afford staff time and being able to access *appropriate* training locally.

These are serious issues for the sector and most of the organisations in the region covered by a study conducted by The Evaluation Trust (August 2004) identified having the capacity to offer future training as one of the major needs for the sector. The report, once again, stresses that training needs vary according to the different requirements of the volunteers, service users, members and staff and points to the lack of appropriate training.

⁷ This report points out that the questionnaire response rate from organisations was low, 40%, so that the data may not be viewed as entirely complete.

A lack of appropriate training in ICT skills was seen as particularly important, as the lack of these skills may particularly exclude groups and individuals from minority communities and small organisations from full participation across a range of activities.

Problems related to the use of ICT were a focus of a study carried out in 2004 by the University of the West of England for VOSCUR in Bristol. The report points to the barriers to using ICT in the voluntary and community sector as being funding, time, training, knowledge and also a lack of confidence. The report recognises the diversity of ICT needs across the organisations in the sector, but it is considered that, even though many organisations do receive help from a variety of sources, there is a general need for front line support and for quality assurance.

There are wide differences in economic performance across the South West, with *a buoyant north and east and a much less prosperous west of the region* (SWREF, September 2004). With the variations in urban and rural settlements across the region, there are considerable differences in social, economic and community infrastructure. While it is likely, then, that there will be a good deal of commonality in the skills and training needs of the voluntary and community organisations, there may be sub-regional differences in skills mix needs, in the availability of both full time staff and volunteers and in training opportunities and access to training. The detailed research into the skills shortages in the region will reveal the extent of the commonalities and the existence of any major differences.

Detailed evidence related to the sub-regions is not plentiful currently, but the available research shows similarities in terms of skills gaps and shortages, both with the national situation and across the region. Some of the available studies have concentrated upon training and describe examples of good practice as well as the problems faced in meeting training and learning needs. The next section considers some of the national, regional and sub-regional training issues.

3.3.5 Training and Learning

The Home Office publication, *Developing Excellence in the Voluntary and Community Sector*, emphasised the importance of developing

and supporting community capacity building, to equip citizens and community groups to engage in their neighbourhoods and local governance. (Home Office, March 2005 p5).

The report points out that the ChangeUp programme stresses the need for collaboration and the sharing of resources and good practice and taking an 'action learning' approach. This latter is seen as particularly important in testing, understanding and modifying solutions and priorities. A report mapping the provision of non statutory education, learning and training provision in the west of England carried out for the LSC West of England also recognises the importance of the voluntary and community sector in providing learning opportunities and support.

Voluntary and community sector organisations provide routes into learning in three different ways: directly to communities, directly to staff and volunteers and indirectly as routes to the engagement of potential learners, such as Health Visitors encouraging a young single mother to take part in a learning support programme. (LSC West of England, 2003 p10).

The report also notes that the voluntary and community sector is particularly recognised as an important provider of learning and labour market entry opportunities, to *'the socially disengaged'* and points out that, in mapping provision, it is therefore

'probably no coincidence that the voluntary and community presence, particularly in the inner cities, largely reflects pockets of deprivation across the sub-region. Likewise, the prevalence of voluntary organisations catering for black and minority ethnic communities reflects the multicultural nature of the City of Bristol. Conversely, the more affluent and rural communities within the sub-region tend to foster fewer voluntary and community agencies, although clubs and societies play an important role there'. (LSC West of England, 2003 p 10).

While the authors quite rightly point to the reflection of the demographics of local populations in the voluntary and community sector presence, it is important not to under estimate the pockets of deprivation in other South West cities and urban areas, and also the particular problems of rural dwellers, where severe deprivation, especially lack of access to information, is

often hidden⁸ as may be the needs of smaller black and ethnic communities, whose interests may not be well represented. These issues are particularly important as the authors of the report also point out that,

Background interviews with stakeholders showed that in the West of England, VCS is perceived to have key strengths and to make a distinctive contribution to the learning agenda. VCS organisations increase the overall supply of learning through outreach and diversity provision, particularly by reaching the 'hard to reach' and providing flexibility and first steps into learning. They also provide a strongly work-oriented focus and a knowledge of the needs of their learners.

This latter is crucial in the light of the lack of willingness of many adults to undertake formal training and the expressed wishes of residents in some areas of deprivation to be able to access information where and when it is needed. Indeed, because voluntary and community sector providers are at the edge of the system of learning provision they are seen as powerful allies of the LSC in pursuing its learning agenda and in diversifying the types of learning opportunity that are on offer, because of the informal and community-based learning that is their greatest strength and their ability to attract clients that are unlikely to be interested in more formal courses.

In supplying learning opportunities for the clients of voluntary and community organisations it is also recognised that these clients may have very diverse needs so that the provision appropriate to their skills, and other, needs may not lead to accreditation. Equally, organisations are providing a great deal of support and information related to access to, and participation in, educational and training opportunities. The diversity of formal and informal learning and the support and information being provided by the sector, both for their own staff and volunteers and very varied client groups, means that the training and support needs of organisations are also complex.

⁸ See, for example, Giarchi, G. (1999) *The Overshadowed Districts of East Cornwall: Social Exclusion in North Cornwall, Caradon and Restormel*. University of Plymouth

Organisations in the sector, included in the research for the LSC West of England, when asked what factors would attract learners and assist in meeting their learning needs, replied as follows:

❖ Staff training	:	33%
❖ Accreditation	:	31%
❖ Better accommodation	:	31%
❖ Childcare/crèche facilities	:	29%
❖ Transport assistance for learners	:	29%
❖ Capacity to meet demand	:	27%
❖ Increased access to IT	:	24%
❖ Language support	:	14%

When asked *what support they needed to provide learning*, the responses were:

❖ Fundraising	:	48%
❖ Accreditation	:	36%
❖ Managerial or committee training	:	31%
❖ IT and internet learning skill	:	31%
❖ Equalities training	:	23%
❖ Subject specific training	:	23%
❖ Training methods	:	22%
❖ Work based learning	:	17%
❖ New curriculum developments	:	11%

These factors and support needs reflect both the funding issues and staff training needs of organisations in the sector, and also the problems faced in providing for the learning and training needs of diverse and often deprived communities.

The report also points to problems involved in planning and managing learning provision in the sector, including quality and accountability, and it is recognised that:

...the sector comprises organisations with differing remits working within a competitive environment and with problems accessing sustainable funding. There are variations in organisational and managerial capacity, and information systems are limited. These are barriers to further development of the role of this sector. (LSC West of England, 2003).

There are, then, a number of support needs, in terms of learning and training provision for the sector and the authors of the report also note that the LSC has 'already identified the importance of working with the voluntary and community sector in its strategic plan' and feel that their research underlines the potential of the LSC to provide help, amongst other things, in backing collaboration, promoting the role of multi agency Learning Networks and supporting the development of the voluntary and community sector capacity, including staff and volunteer capacity. The LSC has already said it intends to give 'back office support' for the voluntary and community sector, which could provide access to a number of essential resources.

Examples of learning provision delivered by voluntary and community organisations, are also described in the report. One example is the community bus in Bath, which caters in particular for families and young people in disadvantaged and rurally isolated communities. The approach is informal and designed to help to develop skills, but it is emphasised that the information systems *'are well developed and included as part of an independent quality assurance scheme'* through the National Playbus Association. This 'mobile' provision is one example of the way in which outreach work can be carried out by organisations.

Other case studies include a community project in North Bristol, which is involved in a diverse learning and training programme mainly concerned to reach people who may be excluded from traditional learning routes. Also described is work in a community school in Weston-Super-Mare which, in particular, provides access and *'delivers opportunities to those who are socially excluded'* in a variety of ways and an Age Concern project in Thornbury. While Age Concern is primarily concerned with the general needs of older people and although *provision of learning or training is a secondary aim, it is recognised that "learning will enable*

older people to retain their independence.” (LCS West of England, 2003 p39).

Such examples illustrate the breadth of provision undertaken for the clients of organisations in the sector. Other examples of good practice in projects which relate more to staff needs are reported in the VSNT0 2004 report, *Improving Our Skills*. The first case study is concerned with ‘*Project 2001*’, which took place in London and Yorkshire. Small voluntary organisations were given face-to-face help in producing training plans and also in accessing accredited training for workers. The success of the project led to the setting up of the Yorkshire Continuum Project, which ‘*drew together the arts, cultural heritage and voluntary sectors*’ and:

*Adviser support was provided for organisations and some self-employed individuals, helping them to address skills and business development needs. The project also trained advisers, provided on-line learner support materials and helped 80 candidates towards achieving National Vocational Qualifications.*⁹ (VSNT0, 2004 p15).

Action learning, seen as an important approach for the sector in the Home Office report of 2005, is also described in one of the report’s case studies. The action learning approach is described as bringing ‘*groups of people together to help each other develop through group interaction and practical problem solving*’. The pilot project described in the case study is that of Action Learning for Managers, which brings together managers from different organisations with a trained facilitator.

These groups may be deployed in a variety of different settings and used to support and help groups in different ways. It is also important that there should be means to ensure that there is dissemination of innovative ideas and best practice standards beyond the groups concerned.

The third case study used in the report describes the work of the LSC London East in developing a Workforce Development Plan. The plan ‘*focuses on the role which the LSC can play in identifying and meeting the needs of voluntary and community sector employers in the London East area*’. (VSNT0 p18). *The plan includes provision for*

⁹ This type of project underlines the importance of ICT support and the provision of ‘hardware’, for communities as well as organisations.

activities such as research and mapping, support for partnership working, setting aside funds for management development, encouraging employers to adopt quality frameworks, promoting vocational qualifications and supporting provision of qualifications in voluntary and community sector specialisms.

Further case studies describe initiatives such as the development of the Cheshire and Warrington Voluntary Sector Learning Forum and the role of the Workforce and Skills Development Co-ordinator in West Yorkshire.

Many aspects of good practice that have been identified in various case studies are apparent in the *Draft Learning and Skills Development Plan* (April 2004 - March 2007) of The Devon Association of Council's for Voluntary Service (DACVS). The Plan emphasises the benefits of collaboration. These benefits include the capacity to make stronger and broader funding bids, and also economies of scale:

Economies of scale mean that training information, referrals and needs analysis can be provided collectively. The CVSs can come together to produce a joint programme, share a group of quality trainers who can work as a peripatetic team, across the whole patch. It will also allow good practice and innovative solutions to be shared more effectively in urban and rural areas. This will result in a broader range and style of provision across the whole of Devon. (DACVS, 2004 p2).

The Development Plan lists the current training providers, drawn from the voluntary, private and statutory sectors and details a model for collaborative delivery across Devon. Important aspects of the model include the use of outreach staff, both existing and new, to identify training needs and to set up meetings and evaluations. CVS senior managers are seen as providing a steering group together with the Devon Training Network, which will be involved in the planning of collaborative working, the sharing of information and the dissemination of best practice and strategy. The Plan aims to ensure, among other things that learning opportunities are provided Devon wide, that training provision is developed to meet the Quality Assurance needs of the voluntary

and community organisations and that training is also developed to meet the skills needs for volunteer recruitment, development and retention. Collaboration is also seen as involving action learning which means that innovation and good practise can be incorporated in a timely way, as is stressed in the Home Office Publication *Developing Excellence in the Voluntary and Community Sector*. (Home Office March 2005).

The Development Plan recognises the importance of ascertaining and mapping the expressed needs of the voluntary and community organisations and community groups within Devon and of mapping the resources currently available in order to maximise the potential for providing appropriate and cost effective training, that will meet quality assurance needs and will provide effective learner support. Working towards accreditation for volunteer learning is also seen as important, as is continuing professional development for all levels of staff.

The model proposed involves a mix of types of provision, with partner colleges and universities in the region supplying both partnership back up and courses where appropriate, and training and mentoring being provided by the network of community and voluntary organisations and private organisations. Outreach support and mentoring, while not inexpensive to offer, may be necessary to meet the needs of a geographically dispersed population and to ensure that the specific and specialist needs of voluntary and community organisations and their clients are met.

The development of diagnostic assessments and learner support for outreach work, mentoring, and the use of personal Development Profiles (Exeter CVS with the University of Plymouth) are all mentioned in the DACVS Plan and may be seen as important elements of more informal learning strategies. These types of strategy may be of importance in providing for more specialist, as well as general, learning needs and may also be helpful in reaching people in rural locations. (DACVS, 2004).

All the reports, activities and plans described raise issues and describe good practice related to the provision of, and access to, training and learning opportunities. Importantly, the VSNT0 report of 2004 also points out that some funders do not allow for the costs of staff development and training. This can cause problems for all organisations, but perhaps particularly for smaller

organisations, where difficulties in affording cover for staff undertaking training may be most acute. There are also concerns related to the availability and cost of appropriate training and while it is recognised that some of the training is excellent, there is variability in provision. There are a number of training providers, including voluntary and community sector organisations, colleges and universities, and private organisations. The report notes that training tailored for the sector is often more affordable and encourages networking, but that while more generic learning provision can be useful, there may be problems where there is a lack of a real understanding of the sector's needs. It is also important that there is flexibility in regard to cost, geographical location and e-learning. Equally important is the accreditation of learning, which is linked to the long-term goals of individuals. (VSNT0, 2004 p 16).

It has also been found that some groups in the social economy sector do consider the level of training and learning provision to be insufficient, and some are apparently unaware of their training needs. A study conducted by the Bristol City Council Social Economy Unit in 2004, for example, which surveyed both stakeholders and customers within the social economy, found that the current provision of learning is low. Only 15% of those surveyed felt there was a sufficient provision of training and development. The main areas that respondents felt should be developed were funding (63%), networks (58%), business planning (57%) and premises (57%). The research also highlighted that there is very little training and development activity specifically aimed at social entrepreneurs.

Research carried out in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES Mapping, 2005) found that many groups within the sector were not clear about their training needs. The greatest number of organisations surveyed named courses coming under the heading of 'legislation' as those they were most likely to need in the future, with IT being the second most frequently mentioned training requirement. The survey identified the main barrier to training as being cost, although the majority of respondents said that they would be willing to travel at least ten miles to receive training. This latter is interesting as geographical access was mentioned as an important barrier to training in many rural areas nationally. However, willingness to travel may also depend upon cost and for

some groups lack of rural public transport may also prove a barrier.

In spite of some of the difficulties in the provision of training, the Learning and Skills Council for Devon and Cornwall found that half of all voluntary and community organisations in Cornwall and two-fifths in Devon provide training for their staff. When only organisations containing paid staff are considered, the proportions providing training rise to over 80% of organisations in both Cornwall and Devon. The majority of this training was reported to be on the job training and most training was accredited. In addition to staff training, most voluntary and community organisations, approximately 70% for both Devon and Cornwall, provide training for volunteers, however nearly half of volunteer training was reported to be unaccredited. The survey also found that about one fifth of voluntary and community organisations provide training to external organisations, such as private companies and one in three provide training for their main client groups.

It is apparent from this research that there is training expertise within the voluntary and community organisations, and about two fifths of those supplying training thought that there was unmet demand, with lack of funding and insufficient staff being the main reasons for their being unable to meet this demand.

Only small proportions of voluntary and community organisations were found to deliver basic skills training. In Cornwall 6% delivered such training to staff, 3% to volunteers and 7% to clients, with the figures for Devon being 6%, 4% and 13%. Of those voluntary and community organisations who did not provide any basic skills training one fifth said that they would be interested in doing so, while a significant minority said that they did not have the capacity to do so. The report points out that very few of the organisations not providing basic skills training, but interested in doing so, were aware of the funding available for the delivery of such training. (*Research into the Voluntary and Community Sector..* LSC Devon and Cornwall, 2003).

As is the case nationally, voluntary and community organisations in the South West are committed to training in order to improve skills levels and to develop capacity in staff and volunteers and

voluntary and community organisations are also providing training for clients and other groups.

The importance of collaboration and resource sharing is fully recognised by local networks, but as both national and regional research has shown, many organisations have difficulty in locating appropriate programmes and trainers and a number of barriers to training have to be overcome. Major barriers include funding problems and difficulties in covering for staff released for training and these are combined with problems in locating courses which cover everything from the generic needs such as fund raising to the very specific requirements of specialist organisations, as well as travel problems in rural areas, especially for volunteers, and accessing 'difficult to reach' groups in both urban and rural areas.

3.4 Discussion

The voluntary and community sector is complex and diverse, and determining the skills needs of the sector is not straightforward. There are also many economic, environmental and social trends, new policy initiatives, in particular the Sustainable Communities initiative, on-going legislation and internal sector dynamics which influence the skill needs in the sector (VSNTO, 2000). In addition there are increased demands from service users with growing expectations of a high quality service, it is therefore emphasised by the sector that training and development initiatives must be carefully identified and targeted (VSNTO, 2004). Equally the sector supplies and supports training and learning opportunities to a wide variety of clients and, in turn, support and training for the voluntary and community organisations in carrying out this work are of crucial importance.

Research conducted in the South West indicates that the skills gaps and shortages within the voluntary and community sector are similar to those experienced nationally. The main generic skills gaps are:

- ❖ Strategic planning
- ❖ Organisational management
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Team working
- ❖ ICT.

Fundraising, marketing and promotion, promoting diversity, employment practice and human resource management, including the management of volunteers, were also identified as being areas where there were skills gaps and shortages. Further research may uncover other more specific skills needs related to particular groups and organisations in the region and sub-region.

In terms of training, both national and regional studies and reports have pointed to the need for the development and implementation of more strategically targeted planning, together with an improvement of the training infrastructure in relation to the availability of courses available and their accessibility. Some of the research has also indicated that varying the type of delivery used in training might be appropriate for some aspects of the activities carried out in the sector. Less formal learning such as mentoring, work shadowing, action learning and secondments, are often more appropriate to specific learning needs. It has also been shown that smaller organisations in the sector have particular difficulties in accessing training and one report has emphasised the need for outreach work:

There are a number of smaller community and voluntary organisations for whom access to learning opportunities is difficult, because of a combination of distance, timing, learning, cover for absence and other factors. For such groups local provision is essential and highlights the importance the importance of local learning centres fulfilling a local provision and outreach roles. (Towards a South West Regeneration and Renewal Learning Strategy - Report for the South West Centre of Excellence. University of the West of England and Cornwall Business School, 2004).

Equally, the funding of training, perhaps particularly for volunteers, is also problematic, especially for the smaller organisations, and as was pointed out in the LSC 2003 research in Devon and Cornwall, some voluntary and community organisations were not aware of the funding sources available for some types of training. It has also been emphasised that, while a considerable number of voluntary and community organisations carry out training themselves, it is important that external training providers should have a better understanding of the sector so that they may better understand its training needs and requirements.

The recognition of training and learning needs across the board is seen as crucial as is assistance for small organisations in accessing information

and 'good practice tools' to help them to meet staff skills needs. (VSNT0, 2004). The case studies and examples highlighted in research reports give clear indications of good practice in meeting training needs, and also illustrate the necessity of co-operation with partners in providing, co-ordinating and accessing support and developing learning and training provision and opportunities and in reaping the rewards of 'economies of scale' across a broad range of activities.

In bringing together the overall strategies for the voluntary and community sector, the National Workforce Development Hub has set out a business plan for England to facilitate the development of a skilled workforce across the sector, which *reflects the diversity of the communities they (the VCOs) work in*. The Business Plan outlines two major objectives,

- ❖ To lead and facilitate action that enables voluntary and community organisations to access resources to support a culture of learning and development, underpinned by leadership, good management and employment practice
- ❖ To lead and facilitate action that makes it easier for voluntary organisations to recruit and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities they work in.

The general strategy laid out in the Business Plan emphasises flexibility and the ability of more local 'hubs' to reflect particular needs within communities and sub-regions, while being fully integrated into the wider networks of the sector. The Plan points to the importance of sharing across networks in the regions and to ensuring an effective process for cross referencing between the hubs in the sector. The strategic approach across the sector ties in closely with the general strategy for the development of skills central to community needs set out in *The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities*.¹⁰ (HMSO, April 2004).

Much of the work carried out by the voluntary and community sector is of great importance to the Egan proposals particularly, since it has been recognised that voluntary and community organisations are often uniquely able to gain access to difficult to reach groups and can provide ways into learning both directly and indirectly to communities, staff and volunteers as well as to individual potential learners. (LSC West of England, 2003 p10).

¹⁰ An outline of some of the issues in the Egan Review, which are particularly pertinent for the VCS is included in Appendix 4

The Egan Review and the ODPM place great emphasis upon the importance of community participation and the provision of local solutions for local needs. This emphasis, together with the stress upon the need for co-operation across professions and open access to information about sustainable communities, relates clearly to the proposals laid out in the National Workforce Development Hub business plan for the voluntary and community sector in England (The National Workforce Development Hub, 2005) and to the general strategic planning within the regions (South West Forum, 2006).

4. PRIMARY RESEARCH

4.1 The Telephone Survey Data

The telephone survey provided the main focus of the primary research for the project and respondents from 320 organisations took part in the telephone interviews. The participating organisations were distributed across the South West Region and the majority were seen as providing services within the region with just over half covering a local area, a local authority district or a town. Nearly two thirds of the sample were described by respondents as a voluntary (as opposed to community) organisation and the majority of them (83.4%) were registered charities. 80% of the organisations provide frontline services encompassing a wide range of organisational activities and offering services to an array of different client groups. Many of the organisations rely on a variety of funding streams, some of which are intermittent. The majority of the organisations included in the survey are relatively small in size and the length of time that the organisation had been established varied, with the largest percentage having been established for 21 - 30 years. Approximately one third of the organisations included in the sample are currently accredited by a quality management system.

The characteristics of the organisations are described in more detail in this section of the report. The 320 respondents provide a representative sample of voluntary and community sector organisations within the south west. For the core questions within the survey the responses received will be within 5.4% of those that would have been received had all voluntary and community sector organisations in the region been surveyed. The sampling error will be higher for some of the sub questions: the smaller the numbers the higher the sampling error. Data derived from the survey is largely presented in the form of tables and graphics, however, where appropriate, verbatim quotes from the respondents are included to illustrate some of the emerging issues. For the purposes of this report the term 'staff' refers to paid staff, volunteers and trustees.

4.1.1 The Characteristics of the Organisations

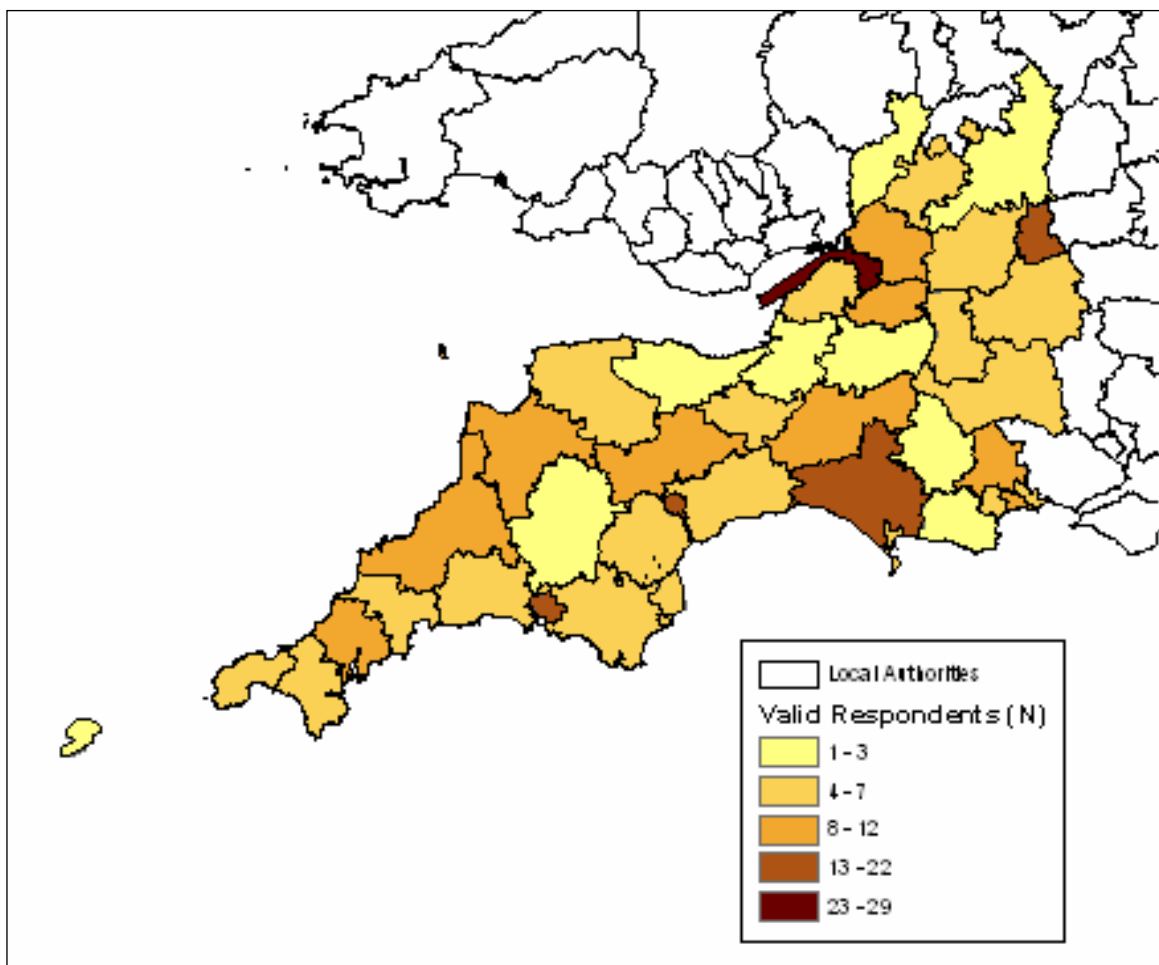
Survey respondents were asked a number of questions related to the characteristics of their organisations so that a profile of the organisations included in the sample could be built up. The

results from this element of the survey have been included in detail in this section to give as clear a picture as possible of the characteristics of the organisations in order to contextualise the discussion of skills gaps and shortages, and training and learning needs and opportunities in later sections.

4.1.1.1 The Geographical Distribution of the Organisations and Geographical Areas Served

Figure One shows the number of Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations included in the Workforce Development Survey by local authority districts. The number of organisations is indicated by shade of colour; the stronger the shade of colour the more organisations were present in that local authority district.

Figure One: Geographical Distribution of Sample of Organisations



Source: Crown Copyright/database right 2006. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service

Just over half, 54.7%, of the organisations were described as covering a local area, a local authority district or a town and overall the majority of organisations were seen as providing services in, or within the region. The regional focus of many of the organisations may facilitate co-operation within the region, for example in the provision of learning and training and this possibility might be strengthened by the fact that exactly half the organisations in the survey are part of networks of similar organisations. However, local hubs may have to pay particular attention to more national networking. Table Three shows the details of the geographical cover of the organisations.

Table Three: The Geographical Area Covered by Organisations

Geographical Area	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Local Area	92	28.8%
Local Authority District or Town	83	25.9%
County	51	15.9%
UK	33	10.3%
Region	15	4.7%
Sub - County	14	4.4%
Sub - Region	13	4.1%
England	6	1.9%
Overseas	6	1.9%
Worldwide	5	1.6%
England and Wales	1	0.3%
Other	1	0.3%
Total	320	100.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.1.2 Legal Status

The majority of organisations, 64.4%, were described by the respondents as Voluntary Organisations, with 21.9% described as Community Organisations and 9.7% categorised as 'both'. Five of the respondents were unsure how to describe their organisations.

All respondents were also asked whether their organisation is a registered charity. The data shows that 83.4% said that they were, 7.8% said that they were not and the remaining respondents either did not answer or did not know. However, a greater proportion of respondents were unsure about the legal status of their organisations, as Table Four shows.

Table Four: The Legal Status of Organisations

Organisational Legal Status	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Company Limited by Guarantee	99	30.9%
Unincorporated Association	58	18.1%
Incorporated by Royal Charter	9	2.8%
Industrial and Provident Society	8	2.5%
Trust	4	1.3%
Other	20	6.3%
Don't know	100	31.3%
No Response	22	6.9%
Total	320	100%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Nearly one third of the organisations were described as being companies limited by guarantee, while over 18% were unincorporated associations and only four were trusts. Differences in legal status may be particularly important in relationship to trustees, whose liabilities and responsibilities vary in different types of organisation. One respondent mentioned the particular problem of trustees indemnity insurance with there being *real problems over permission to obtain indemnity*. Other respondents felt that problems related to liabilities might deter potential trustees. Issues concerning legal and financial responsibilities for trustees are discussed further in later sections of the report.

4.1.1.3 Type of Provision and Client Groups

The majority of the organisations provide frontline services; Table Five shows that over 80% are frontline providers, while 7.8% are infrastructure organisations and a further 4.7% describe themselves as 'both'.

Table Five: Type of Organisational Provision

Type of Provision	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Frontline services	268	83.8%
Infrastructure organisation, umbrella organisation	25	7.8%
Both	15	4.7%
Other	10	3.1%
Don't know	1	0.3%
No Response	1	0.3%
Total	320	100%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

When respondents were asked to describe more particularly the type of frontline services provided by their organisations, the majority, 48.8%, said that these were direct services, 28.8% provide advocacy and information or are involved in campaigning, 17.5% are providers of buildings and other facilities, 3.4% provide finance and other resources and five respondents, 1.6%, answered that their organisations provide a mix of services.

An important aspect of the profile of the organisations covered by the survey is the wide variety of operational areas that they cover. Table Six shows the general focus of the organisations, with Table Seven showing the main target groups, or clients of the organisations described by the respondents.

Table Six: Main Areas of Organisational Activity

Organisational Activity	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Health/Disability	54	16.9%
Education or Training	49	15.3%
Provision of advice, support or counselling	36	11.3%
Housing or accommodation	34	10.6%
Financial Support	20	6.3%
General charitable purposes	18	5.6%
Economic or community development	17	5.3%
Sports or recreation	15	4.7%
Environmental, conservation or heritage	11	3.4%
Provision of community facilities	11	3.4%
Animals	10	3.1%
Childcare	8	2.5%
Criminal justice	7	2.2%
Religious activities	7	2.2%
General infrastructure support	5	1.6%
Relief of poverty	4	1.3%
Arts or culture	2	0.6%
Other	11	3.4%
No Response	1	0.3%
Total	320	100%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The activities of the organisations vary widely, and this profile reflects the national situation across the voluntary and community sector and, therefore, the difficulties experienced because of the specialist needs in terms of both skills and learning opportunities. Equally the voluntary and community organisations operating in areas such as health and education may experience problems because they may be competing for staff with both public and private sector organisations.

The wide range of services and operational areas of the organisations also means that they offer services to a variety of client groups. Some services are available to the wider population as a whole, while others have more specific client groups. Table Seven shows the ways in which respondents described the main clients, or client groups of their organisations. The most frequently mentioned groups were children and young people, or people living in a specific area, however, organisational activities

are directed towards a range of people and this again increases the complexities related to skills and training in the sector.

Table Seven: Client Groups

Client Group	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Children/Young people	58	18.1%
All people living in a particular area	52	16.3%
No specific group	39	12.2%
People with disabilities/special needs	33	10.3%
Elderly/Older people	29	9.1%
People with particular health problems	22	6.9%
People in need of family support	19	5.9%
Minority Ethnic people/groups	10	3.1%
Other organisations	7	2.2%
Substance/Alcohol mis-users	6	1.9%
Homeless people	5	1.6%
Lesbian and Gay people	4	1.3%
Women	4	1.3%
Patients	3	0.9%
People/groups in rural areas	3	0.9%
Volunteers	3	0.9%
Other	23	7.2%
Total	320	100%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.1.4 Sources of Funding

Research carried out at a national level has indicated that sources of funding have a strong influence on the provision of learning and training opportunities. Many organisations rely upon a variety of funding streams, some of which are intermittent and precarious. The main sources of funding reported by the survey respondents are shown in Table Eight.

Table Eight: Sources of Funding

Funding Source	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Grants	194	60.6%
Fundraising events	170	53.1%
Trading	161	50.3%
Donations	153	47.8%
Funded by another organisation	24	7.5%
Contract/Service Level Agreement	11	3.4%
Other	8	2.5%
Don't Know	2	0.6%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

As is the case nationally, many of the survey organisations rely on more than one type of funding. Grants and donations are relied upon by large numbers of organisations, and as is evident from the table, over half hold fundraising events. Most of the funding sources are uncertain and this makes long term planning precarious. This may be particularly difficult for the smaller organisations, and a number of respondents in the in-depth interviews mentioned that the uncertainty about the availability of funds made planning, including planning for training and learning very difficult. Issues related to funding are discussed further in later sections of the Report.

4.1.1.5 Organisation Size, Length of Time Established and Workforce Structure

The majority of the voluntary and community organisations included in the survey are relatively small in size. 15% have ten or fewer members of staff and organisations with up to twenty staff constitute 42.5% of the sample. Table Nine shows that a further 26.6% of staff are involved in organisations with between twenty-one and forty staff and 84% of organisations have one hundred or fewer staff members.

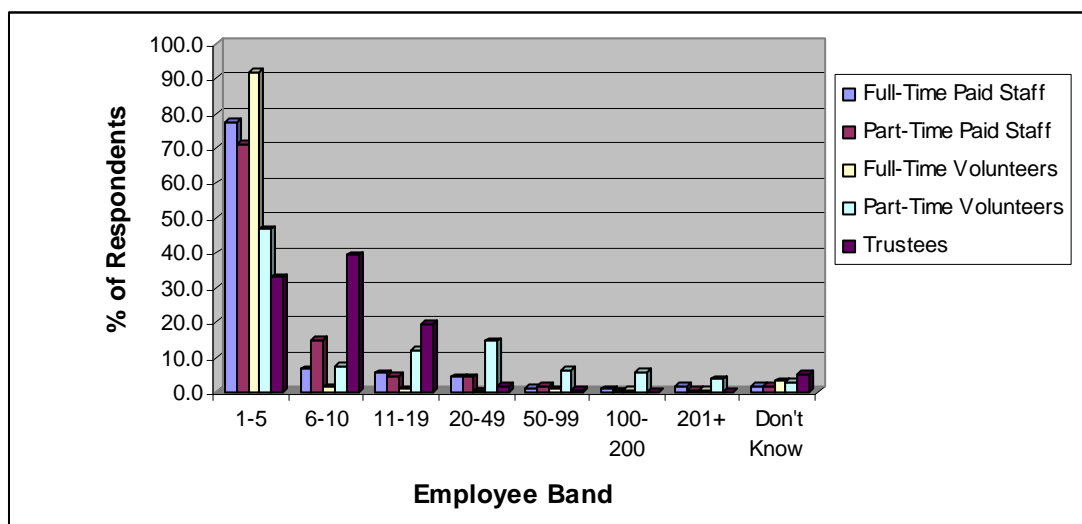
Chart One show the numbers of staff, in the categories of paid staff, both full and part time, volunteers, both full and part time and trustees, present in the organisations. The chart shows the relative importance of staff groupings and also indicates the importance of volunteers across the sector as a whole.

Table Nine: Organisation Size by Employee Band

Employee Band	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
1 - 5	14	4.4%
6 - 10	34	10.6%
11 - 19	88	27.5%
20 - 49	107	33.4%
50 - 99	27	8.4%
100 - 200	23	7.2%
200+	26	8.1%
Don't Know	1	0.3%
Total	320	100.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Chart One: Proportion of Organisations: Number of Staff in Each Employee Category



Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The length of time that the organisation had been established varied, with the largest percentage (18.4%) having been established for 21 - 30 years as, illustrated in Table Ten.

Table Ten: Number of Years Established

Years Established	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
0 - 5	28	8.8%
6 -10	51	15.9%
11 - 15	37	11.6%
16 - 20	37	11.6%
21 - 30	59	18.4%
31 - 50	43	13.4%
51 - 100	35	10.9%
100+	21	6.6%
Don't Know	8	2.6%
No Response	1	0.3%
Total	320	100%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.1.6 Management System Accreditation

Table Eleven shows that approximately one third of the organisations included in the sample are currently accredited by a quality management system, with a further 5.3% either working towards, or intending to work towards, accreditation. A number of systems had been adopted by the organisations, depending upon their service provision, although the single largest group of organisations, 14.7% of the total sample, was accredited by *Investors in People*.

The responses grouped into the 'other' category include a large number of specific quality assurance accreditations offered by societies and associations, such as, for example, the National Autistic Society or the Museum Association, which were not listed in the questionnaire.

Table Eleven: Quality Management System Accreditation

Quality Management System	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Investors in People	47	14.7%
Intend to/working towards	17	5.3%
PQASSO	9	2.8%
Occupational Standards	8	2.5%
Matrix Standard	5	1.6%
Community Legal Service Quality Mark	5	1.6%
Commission for Social Care Inspection	4	1.3%
ISO 9002 OR BS5750	3	0.9%
Business Excellence Model	1	0.3%
Social Audit	1	0.3%
Other	34	10.6%
None	182	56.9%
Don't Know	33	10.3%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.2 Skills Gaps

4.1.2.1 Introduction

Skills gaps, that is skills lacking in the current workforce of an organisation, pose problems for enterprises across the economy and raise a number of issues related to training and learning opportunities. The Learning and Skills Council shows that 18% of all establishments across the South West Region reported skills gaps in 2004 (LSC 2004) and while some research has shown that voluntary and community organisations are more likely to see their staff as being fully proficient (LSC 2003), there is evidence of the presence of skills gaps in the sector.¹¹ (VSNTO 2002, South West Forum 2004). The telephone survey for the current project included a number of questions asking about skills gaps relating to different groups of employees, as well as those occurring in the workforce as a whole, and about the effects of these skills gaps on current organisational efficiency.

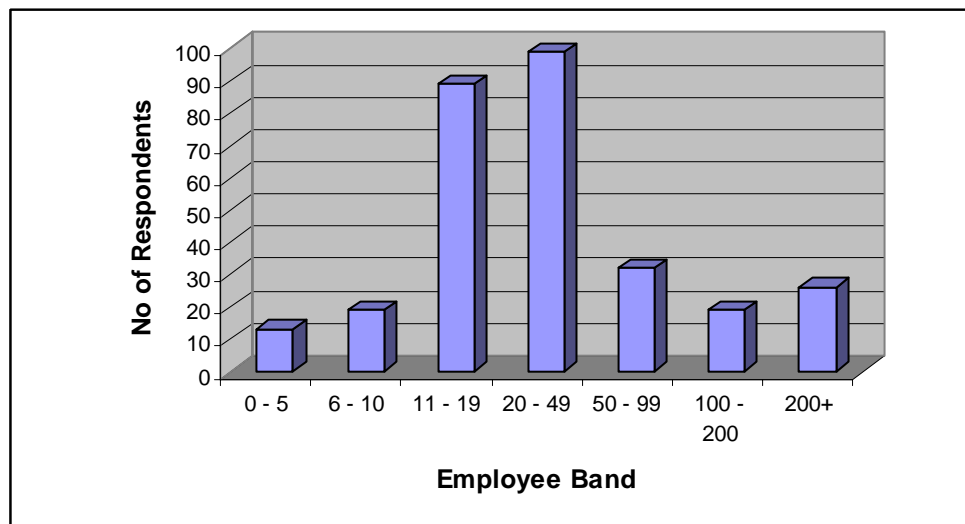
¹¹ Section 2 reports on the available research on skills gaps and shortages.

4.1.2.2 Skills Gaps and Needs in the Current Workforce

A large proportion of the respondents to the survey reported skills gaps in the workforce. Taking into account all staff, paid and voluntary together with trustees, one hundred and ninety-seven, 61.2%, of the organisations surveyed were experiencing such gaps. Issues relating to skills needs in the current workforce, the provision and take-up of training and learning opportunities, are often seen as differing between paid and voluntary workers. The skills gaps data are therefore shown in the tables below, first for *all* members of the workforce, in order to provide the overall regional picture across the sector, and then comparing the paid, voluntary and trustee staff members, in order to highlight any differences in skills gaps and skills needs.

One hundred and ninety-seven organisations reported that they were experiencing skills gaps. Chart two shows the proportion of organisations in each size category experiencing skills gaps. Small to medium sized organisations are those most likely to report having skills gaps.

Chart Two Organisations Experiencing Skills Gaps by Size of Organisation



Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Table Twelve shows the particular skills reported as missing from the workforce as a whole. Many of the reported gaps echo national findings, with organisationally and occupationally

specialist skills, the largest category, at 18.8%, and information and communication technology, management skills, both in managing employees and in financial/business management, all being mentioned by a number of respondents. Sector specific skills, such as fundraising, legislation and knowledge of the sector, the organisation and its users were also reported as lacking by 25 or more of the respondents. Other factors mentioned in national reports, such as leadership, communication skills, team working and project management, all feature in the responses made by the organisations. The skills gaps across the voluntary and community sector in the South West Region, therefore, are very similar to those experienced across the sector nationally.

There were also a number of skills mentioned by individual organisations, including very specific skills, for example, DIY teaching through to more generic skills, such as time management. These are grouped together in the 'other' category in the table.

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Table Twelve: Skills Gaps: All Staff*

Skills Gaps	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=197)	% of Total No of Respondents (n=320)
Specialist skills	60	30.5%	18.8%
Information and Communication Technology	43	21.8%	13.4%
Financial management	38	19.3%	11.9%
Business management	33	16.8%	10.3%
Management of employees	27	13.7%	8.4%
Fundraising	27	13.7%	8.4%
Knowledge of user/organisation/sector	26	13.2%	8.1%
Legislation	25	12.7%	7.8%
Direct marketing	20	10.2%	6.3%
Health and Safety	16	8.1%	5.0%
Communication skills	15	7.6%	4.7%
Quality systems	12	6.1%	3.8%
Planning	11	5.6%	3.4%
Customer handling	11	5.6%	3.4%
Administration	10	5.1%	3.1%
Project management	7	3.6%	2.2%
Leadership	7	3.6%	2.2%
Strategic planning	7	3.6%	2.2%
Team working	7	3.6%	2.2%
Recruitment	7	3.6%	2.2%
Budget setting	6	3.0%	1.9%
Skills leading to qualifications	5	2.5%	1.6%
Advocacy/Counselling	5	2.5%	1.6%
Supervising	3	1.5%	0.9%
Partnership working	1	0.5%	0.3%
Monitoring	1	0.5%	0.3%
Other	57	28.9%	17.8%
None	8	4.1%	2.5%
Don't know	11	5.6%	3.4%

*All members of staff in the 197 organisations, from the total sample of 320, reporting skills gaps.

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Some specialist skills may be common to a number of organisations and might be addressed by shared training and learning opportunities across the voluntary and community sector in the region, however, some voluntary and community

organisations are part of a very small number of organisations operating in a particular area of activity in the region. In the latter case organisations may struggle to address gaps in very specialised areas.

Table Thirteen shows the reasons given by the respondents for the skills missing in the staff of the organisation. The majority of respondents considered that insufficient training and a lack of suitable training were the main reasons for the existence of skills gaps in their organisations. Lack of staff experience and the fact that staff had not been in post long enough to acquire the necessary skills were also seen as important factors. Eight of the respondents mentioned that staff were unwilling to undergo training and eight mentioned the age of their staff.

Table Thirteen: Perceived Reasons for Skills Gaps

Reason for Skills Gaps	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=197)	% of Total No. of Respondents (n=320)
Insufficient training and development for staff/volunteers	42	21.3%	13.1%
Lack of suitable training available from external suppliers	26	13.2%	8.1%
Staff haven't been in job long enough	22	11.2%	6.9%
Difficult to keep up with changing skills needs	16	8.1%	5.0%
Recruitment difficulties	14	7.1%	4.4%
Age of staff	8	4.1%	2.5%
Unwillingness to train	8	4.1%	2.5%
Lack of experience	7	3.6%	2.2%
Other	6	3.0%	1.9%
Don't know	1	0.5%	0.3%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

A large proportion of the respondents saw their organisation's skills gaps as related to the need for training, and when asked in what ways the organisation was responding to such gaps, the majority made training-related replies, as is shown in Table Fourteen. Other responses included changing work priorities or redeploying work in order to cope, while seventeen organisations were taking no action. Four of the respondents said that the organisation was trying to solve the problem by recruiting new workers, which indicates that the problem may have been caused

by a skills shortage related to recruitment difficulties in these cases, rather than skills being lacking in the current workforce.

Table Fourteen: Organisational Responses to Skills Gaps: All Staff

Response to Skills Gaps	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=197)	% of Total No of Respondents (n=320)
Providing further training	73	37.1%	37.1%
Identifying training needs	19	9.6%	9.6%
Redeploying work	4	2.0%	2.0%
Recruitment	4	2.0%	2.0%
Changing work priorities	3	1.5%	1.5%
Other	11	5.6%	5.6%
No action being taken	17	8.6%	8.6%
Don't know	1	0.5%	0.5%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The emphasis on training was also echoed in the answers to a question asking about the factors currently driving the demand for skills. It can be seen from Table Fifteen that there were a range of factors that would necessitate increased training and learning opportunities. Changing policies, the increasing complexity of clients' demands and the higher expectations of users, were all seen as important drivers, as were the introduction of new technology, new working practices and the development of new projects and services. While work requirements and changing demands made upon the organisation were seen as the main drivers of demand, a small number of respondents mentioned staff needs for self-development. All these drivers have implications for the increasing provision of training and learning opportunities.

Table Fifteen: Factors Currently Driving the Demand for Skills: All Staff

Drivers for Skills	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=197)	% of Total No of Respondents (n=320)
Introduction of new technology	68	34.5%	34.5%
New working practices	44	22.3%	22.3%
Changing policy	36	18.3%	18.3%
Requirement of funders	21	10.7%	10.7%
Increased demand	17	8.6%	8.6%
Self-development	15	7.6%	7.6%
Needs of clients/users becoming more complex	12	6.1%	6.1%
On-going nature of training	11	5.6%	5.6%
Higher expectations of clients/users	10	5.1%	5.1%
Development of new projects/services	10	5.1%	5.1%
Requirement of work	10	5.1%	5.1%
Staff turnover	8	4.1%	4.1%
Other	5	2.5%	2.5%
Nothing	5	2.5%	2.5%
Don't know	5	2.5%	2.5%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Respondents were also asked to predict the skills that would be most important for their staff over the next five years. Table Sixteen shows the responses to this question. The greatest emphasis is upon planning and management skills of all types, including the management of finances, budgets and projects as well as people management and leadership skills. Recruitment, partnership working and ICT are all mentioned, but fundraising, which was seen as a skill lacking in current staff by organisations, is only mentioned by four respondents in terms of being an important future skills need.

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Table Sixteen: Future Skills Needs: All Staff

Future Skills	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=197)	% of Total No of Respondents (n=320)
Planning	61	31.0%	31.0%
Management of staff or volunteers	58	29.4%	29.4%
Project management	49	24.9%	24.9%
Quality systems	36	18.3%	18.3%
Supervising	33	16.8%	16.8%
Financial management	32	16.2%	16.2%
Budget setting	29	14.7%	14.7%
Recruitment	29	14.7%	14.7%
Strategic planning	26	13.2%	13.2%
Leadership	21	10.7%	10.7%
Partnership working	18	9.1%	9.1%
Information and Communication Technology	18	9.1%	9.1%
Completing forms	17	8.6%	8.6%
Direct marketing	16	8.1%	8.1%
Specialist skills	14	7.1%	7.1%
Team working	13	6.6%	6.6%
Communication skills	12	6.1%	6.1%
Health and Safety	11	5.6%	5.6%
Customer handling	11	5.6%	5.6%
Administration	9	4.6%	4.6%
Retail	8	4.1%	4.1%
Advocacy/Counselling	7	3.6%	3.6%
People skills	7	3.6%	3.6%
Legislation	6	3.0%	3.0%
Fundraising	4	2.0%	2.0%
Qualifications	4	2.0%	2.0%
Knowledge of user/organisation/sector	4	2.0%	2.0%
Business Management	3	1.5%	1.5%
Other	3	1.5%	1.5%
None	3	1.5%	1.5%
Don't know	2	1.0%	1.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.2.3 Skills Gaps: Intra Workforce Comparisons

The data contained in this sub-section is tabulated to show the responses related to paid staff, volunteers and trustees in terms of

skills gaps and requirements. The previous skills gaps data was presented to show a picture of the workforce as a whole, the tables in this sub-section allow for comparisons to be made between the groups. Table Seventeen shows the answers to a question asking whether there were any gaps between the current skills of the staff and those needed for the organisation to run efficiently. The proportions of respondents answering that there was an “efficiency gap” were almost the same across the staff categories at around 30%

Table Seventeen: Skills Gaps Present in the Workforce: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Skills Gaps	Paid Staff		Volunteers		Trustees	
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=320)
Yes	96	30.0%	101	31.6%	100	31.3%
No	176	55.0%	141	44.1%	106	33.1%
Don't know	9	2.8%	8	2.5%	9	2.8%
No Response	39	12.2%	70	21.9%	105	32.8%
Total	320	100%	320	100%	320	100%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The survey data, however, indicates a number of differences in the skills gaps reported for different categories of the workforce. Table Eighteen shows the skills gaps for paid staff, volunteers and trustees. There are a number of commonalities in the skills gaps listed for the groups, with specialist skills and ICT being high on the list of gaps for both paid staff and volunteers, although a higher proportion of organisations mention volunteers in both these categories. Management skills are also seen as important gaps across the categories of staff, and financial management, business management and issues related to legislation are the most frequently mentioned gaps for trustees.

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Table Eighteen: Skills Gaps: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Skills Gaps	Paid Staff		Volunteers		Trustees	
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=96)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=101)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=100)
Information and Communication Technology	24	25.0%	17.0	16.8%	2	2.0%
Specialist skills	19	19.8%	36.0	35.6%	5	5.0%
Management of employees	12	12.5%	4.0	4.0%	11	11.0%
Business management	10	10.4%	3.0	3.0%	20	20.0%
Financial management	9	9.4%	7.0	6.9%	22	22.0%
Health and Safety	9	9.4%	5.0	5.0%	2	2.0%
Direct marketing	6	6.3%	7.0	6.9%	7	7.0%
Administration	6	6.3%	2.0	2.0%	2	2.0%
Planning	5	5.2%	1.0	1.0%	5	5.0%
Project management	5	5.2%	2.0	2.0%	0	0.0%
Leadership	5	5.2%	1.0	1.0%	1	1.0%
Knowledge of user/organisation/sector	5	5.2%	9.0	8.9%	12	12.0%
Communication skills	4	4.2%	8.0	7.9%	3	3.0%
Customer handling	4	4.2%	7.0	6.9%	0	0.0%
Fundraising	7	7.3%	10.0	9.9%	10	10.0%
Strategic planning	3	3.1%	1.0	1.0%	3	3.0%
Legislation	3	3.1%	3.0	3.0%	19	19.0%
Skills leading to qualifications	3	3.1%	2.0	2.0%	0	0.0%
Budget setting	2	2.1%	1.0	1.0%	3	3.0%
Team working	2	2.1%	1.0	1.0%	4	4.0%
Supervising	1	1.0%	1.0	1.0%	1	1.0%
Recruitment	1	1.0%	0.0	0.0%	6	6.0%
Partnership working	1	1.0%	0.0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Advocacy/Counselling	0	0.0%	2.0	2.0%	3	3.0%
Monitoring	0	0.0%	1.0	1.0%	0	0.0%
Quality systems	0	0.0%	1.0	1.0%	11	11.0%
Other	15	15.6%	26.0	25.7%	16	16.0%
None	0	0.0%	5.0	5.0%	3	3.0%
Don't know	3	3.1%	2.0	2.0%	6	6.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Listing the “top twelve” gaps for each group of staff highlights some of the differences between the skills gaps and therefore the different potential training and learning needs. While there are clearly common priorities for all staff reflected in the similarities in the lists, the lists also reflect some of the different requirements that the organisations have of their groups of staff, as well as some

of the differences in training and background between paid staff and volunteers. While some of those interviewed considered that lack of funds would mean that volunteers would play an increasing part in all areas of work, currently more fundraising skills are needed particularly among the volunteers and trustees, whereas management skills of various types are stressed for the paid staff and trustees.

Table Nineteen: “Top Twelve” Skills Gaps

Paid Staff	Volunteers	Trustees
Information and Communication Technology	Specialist skills	Financial management
Specialist skills	Information and Communication Technology	Business management
Management of staff or volunteers	Fundraising	Legislation
Business management	Knowledge of the users/organisation/sector	Knowledge of the users/organisation/sector
Financial management	Communication skills	Management of staff or volunteers
Health and Safety	Financial management	Monitoring
Direct marketing	Direct marketing	Fundraising
Administration	Customer handling	Direct Marketing
Planning	Health and safety	Supervising
Project management	Quality systems	Specialist skills
Leadership	People management	Planning
Knowledge of the users/organisation/sector	Business management/legislation	Completing fundraising forms

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The reasons given for the lack of skills in certain areas are shown in Table Twenty. Insufficient training is the reason given most frequently for the skills lacking in paid staff, at 27.1% of the responses, while for volunteers insufficient training and lack of experience are seen as of equal importance, both being mentioned by 12.9% of the respondents. That staff had not been long enough in the job to develop all the necessary skills, was mentioned by eight (8.3%) respondents for paid staff and five (5.0%) for volunteers. The most frequently mentioned reason for skills gaps among trustees was difficulty in keeping up with changing skills needs. A lack of willingness of staff to undergo training was mentioned by a small number of respondents, but while this is apparently a problem for a minority of organisations, where it does occur it can pose a dilemma. This is particularly true in the

case of volunteers where pressing for training is seen as potentially counter-productive, as the volunteer may simply leave.

Table Twenty: Reasons for Skills Missing: Paid staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Reasons for Skills Missing	Paid Staff		Volunteers		Trustees	
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=96)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=101)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=100)
Insufficient training	26	27.1%	13	12.9%	3	3.0%
Lack of suitable training	5	5.2%	1	1.0%	2	2.0%
Staff haven't been in job long enough	8	8.3%	5	5.0%	1	1.0%
Difficult to keep up with changing skills needs	6	6.3%	2	2.0%	8	8.0%
Recruitment difficulties	3	3.1%	1	1.0%	2	2.0%
Age of staff	2	2.1%	2	2.0%	4	4.0%
Unwillingness to train	1	1.0%	4	4.0%	2	2.0%
Lack of experience	5	5.2%	13	12.9%	4	4.0%
Other	11	11.5%	9	8.9%	6	6.0%
Don't know	1	1.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

When respondents were asked what action was being taken by organisations to cope with missing skills, identifying training needs and providing further training were the most common responses from those respondents replying to the question, as is shown in Table Twenty-One.

Table Twenty-One: Organisational Responses to Skills Gaps: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Organisational Responses to Skills Gaps	Paid Staff		Volunteers		Trustees	
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=96)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=101)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=100)
Providing further training	39	40.6%	28	27.7%	6	6.0%
Changing work priorities	0	0.0%	3	3.0%	0	0.0%
Redeploying work	4	4.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Recruitment	0	0.0%	2	2.0%	2	2.0%
Identifying training needs	10	10.4%	5	5.0%	4	4.0%
Other	7	7.3%	4	4.0%	0	0.0%
No action being taken	5	5.2%	5	5.0%	7	7.0%
Don't know	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	0	0.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

In line with national research, the organisations taking part in the current research that have reported skills gaps in their workforces, are highly committed to training. Future skills needs, as well as current deficits, will shape training and learning needs, and a comparison of predicted needs for skills is shown in Table Twenty-two. Information and computer technology skills are seen as being important across the board, as are specialist skills. Customer handling skills and communication skills are emphasised for both paid staff and volunteers, while financial management skills are seen as important for paid staff and trustees.

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Table Twenty-Two: Future Skills Needs: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Future Skills Needs	Paid Staff		Volunteers		Trustees	
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=96)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=101)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=100)
Planning	1	1.0%	2	2.0%	1	1.0%
Management of staff or volunteers	8	8.3%	1	1.0%	2	2.0%
Project management	5	5.2%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%
Quality systems	3	3.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Supervising	2	2.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Financial management	13	13.5%	5	5.0%	11	11.0%
Budget setting	5	5.2%	0	0.0%	4	4.0%
Recruitment	1	1.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.0%
Strategic planning	3	3.1%	2	2.0%	2	2.0%
Leadership	2	2.1%	0	0.0%	2	2.0%
Partnership working	1	1.0%	1	1.0%	1	1.0%
Information and Communication Technology	29	30.2%	19	18.8%	1	1.0%
Completing forms	3	3.1%	1	1.0%	0	0.0%
Direct marketing	7	7.3%	1	1.0%	0	0.0%
Specialist skills	35	36.5%	19	18.8%	4	4.0%
Team working	7	7.3%	5	5.0%	2	2.0%
Communication skills	13	13.5%	16	15.8%	3	3.0%
Health and Safety	15	15.6%	6	5.9%	0	0.0%
Customer handling	11	11.5%	18	17.8%	0	0.0%
Administration	8	8.3%	4	4.0%	1	1.0%
Retail	1	1.0%	6	5.9%	0	0.0%
Advocacy/Counselling	7	7.3%	4	4.0%	0	0.0%
People skills	9	9.4%	7	6.9%	0	0.0%
Legislation	21	21.9%	2	2.0%	3	3.0%
Fundraising	10	10.4%	3	3.0%	4	4.0%
Qualifications	10	10.4%	2	2.0%	0	0.0%
Knowledge of user/organisation/sector	21	21.9%	11	10.9%	1	1.0%
Business Management	8	8.3%	3	3.0%	7	7.0%
Other	29	30.2%	28	27.7%	4	4.0%
None	4	4.2%	20	19.8%	12	12.0%
Don't know	10	10.4%	7	6.9%	1	1.0%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The wide range of skills needed, and lacking, across a number of organisations has an important bearing upon the provision of training and learning opportunities across the region. Section 4.1.4

covers survey responses related to questions about training provision and needs.

4.1.2.4 Sub-Regional Variations

The geographic variation in voluntary and community sector skills gaps across the South West Region was analysed by comparing the levels for each county within the region, with unitary authorities being grouped into a single category. This revealed that the number of organisations reporting skills gaps within most counties are within 10 percentage points of the average for all voluntary and community sector organisations in the survey, as shown in Table Twenty-Two. The skills gaps within the combined unitary authorities are also very close to this average, thus indicating that there is very little difference between urban unitary authorities and the rest of the region. The number of organisations reporting skills gaps in Wiltshire (80.8%), however, is almost 20 percentage points higher than the regional average. A follow up discussion indicates that there could be two reasons for this. Firstly, Wiltshire has a tight labour market with low unemployment and secondly, there is no Higher Education presence within the county and therefore no pool of graduates entering the labour market.

Table Twenty-Two: Sub-Regional Variations in Reported Skills Gaps

County & Unitary Authority Name	Organisations (n = 314)		
	Total (N)	Skills Gap (N)	Skills Gap (%)
Wiltshire	26	21	80.8%
Somerset	19	13	68.4%
Devon	55	37	67.3%
Unitary Authorities	109	68	62.4%
Gloucestershire	21	12	57.1%
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	44	24	54.5%
Dorset	40	21	52.5%

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.2.5 Occupationally Specific Skills Gaps

Within occupations, specific skills gaps by area of organisational activity were revealed by the survey. For the three types of

employee (paid staff, volunteers and trustees) varied patterns emerged. Table Twenty-Three shows that the total number of organisations reporting skills gaps is highest within the education and training sector, although interestingly this seems to be a bigger issue for trustees than either the paid or volunteer workforce, closely followed by organisations undertaking health and/or disability related activities and those providing advice, support or counselling. Skills gaps were also reported by a number of organisations in the organisational activity areas of housing or accommodation, economic or community development and general charitable purposes. The smallest number of organisations reporting skills gaps was in the arts or culture sector.

Table Twenty-Three: Number of Respondents Indicating Skills Gaps by Organisational Activity

Main Area of Organisational Activity	No of Respondents indicating skills gaps			Total No of Respondents
	Paid Staff	Volunteers	Trustees	
Education or Training	9	16	24	49
Health/Disability	14	16	13	43
Provision of Advice, support or counselling	13	9	16	38
Housing or accommodation	13	5	3	21
Economic or community development	5	5	9	19
General charitable purposes	5	8	3	16
Financial Support	5	7	2	14
Environmental, conservation or heritage	2	8	3	13
Provision of community facilities	4	4	5	13
Criminal justice	5	4	3	12
Sports or recreation	4	2	5	11
Childcare	2	3	5	10
Religious activities	4	3	0	7
General infrastructure support	4	1	2	7
Relief of poverty	1	3	2	6
Animals	2	1	1	4
Arts or culture	0	1	1	2
Other	4	5	3	12

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.3 Staff Retention

As can be seen from Table Twenty-Four less than a quarter of the voluntary and community organisations surveyed reported that

they have difficulties in retaining suitably qualified workers. Interestingly, the data reveals that a larger percentage of organisations reported difficulties in retaining suitably qualified trustees (22.2%) than difficulties in retaining either suitably qualified volunteers (16.4%) or paid staff (12.2%).

Table Twenty-Four: Retention Difficulties for Suitably Qualified Workers

Staff Retention Difficulties	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=156)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=128)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=36)	
No	131	84.0%	102	79.7%	27	75.0%	260
Yes	19	12.2%	21	16.4%	8	22.2%	48
Don't know	3	1.9%	3	2.3%	1	2.8%	7
No Response	3	1.9%	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	5
Total	156	100%	128	100%	36	100%	320

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Of those who reported difficulties a very small minority said that they find particular skills hard to retain within their workforce, as shown in Table Twenty-Five.

Table Twenty-Five: Number of Respondents Who Find Particular Skills Hard to Retain

Organisations Finding it Hard to Retain Skills	Paid staff	Volunteers	Trustees	Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	
No	12	16	4	32
Yes	7	5	4	16
Total	19	21	8	48

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

For paid staff, the hard to retain skills included:

- ❖ Advocacy and social work skills (1)
- ❖ Finance (1)
- ❖ Frontline skills (1)
- ❖ Maintenance (1)
- ❖ Management (1)
- ❖ Fundraising (1)
- ❖ Experienced staff (1)

For volunteers, the hard to retain skills, as described by respondents, included:

- ❖ Ability to work hard (1)
- ❖ Physical fitness (1)
- ❖ People willing to go on the 'shop floor' (1)
- ❖ Legal skills (1)

For trustees, the hard to retain skills included:

- ❖ Conference booking (1)
- ❖ Leadership and general committee membership skills (1)
- ❖ Legal and financial skills (1)
- ❖ Treasurer skills (1)

Those respondents that reported having specific hard to retain skills within their workforce were also asked whether they thought there were any particular reasons for this. Their responses are shown in Table Twenty-Six which illustrates especially that pay and conditions is a contributory factor for the volunteer workforce.

Table Twenty-Six: Reasons for Problems Experienced in Retaining Suitably Qualified Staff

Reasons for Retention Problems	Paid staff	Volunteers	Trustees	Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	
Pay and conditions	2	9	1	12
Misconception of role	3	2	1	6
Normal turnover	2	3	0	5
Lack of career development opportunities	2	3	0	5
Working hours	1	3	0	4
Short term funding	1	2	1	4
People leaving after gaining experience	1	2	1	4
Their other responsibilities - e.g. being parents	3	0	0	3
Their age	2	1	0	3
Location	0	1	0	1
Other	4	3	1	8
Not Applicable	0	1	0	1

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Those respondents were likewise asked about the impact of their retention problems on their organisations. The most popular

responses were that retention issues increases pressure on their existing staff, limits their operations and services and also means that they need to recruit and/or retrain staff as illustrated in Table Twenty-Seven. The impact of this increased pressure is more marked for paid staff and volunteers than it is for trustees, even though, in general, trustees are the more difficult to retain.

Table Twenty-Seven: Impact of Retention Problems on Organisation

Impact of Retention Problems	Paid staff	Volunteers	Trustees	Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	
Additional pressure on staff	5	3	1	9
Limits operations/services	3	5	1	9
Need to recruit/retrain	5	4	0	9
Working longer hours	2	4	1	7
Turning work away	1	2	2	5
Not meeting project deadlines	0	2	0	2
Affects on fundraising	1	1	0	2
Lower level of staff skills	0	2	0	2
Other	2	1	0	3
None	0	5	2	7

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Finally, those respondents were asked whether the provision of training helps to retain their staff. The results are shown in Table Twenty-Eight. For paid staff over half of the respondents said that it did. Likewise just under half of respondents said that training helps to retain volunteers. The opposite is true for trustees, however, where over half of respondents said that training does not help to retain them, which may reflect the wider workforce development issues for trustees that have been discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

Table Twenty-Eight: The Impact of Training on Staff Retention

Impact of Training on Retention	Paid staff	Volunteer s	Trustees	Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	No of Respondents	
Yes	11	10	4	25
No	6	9	5	20
Don't know	2	2	0	4
Total	19	21	9	49

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.4 Training and Learning

4.1.4.1 Introduction

Training and learning opportunities are key for the skills needs of the voluntary and community organisations in the region and nationally, and also for the national policies and initiatives for workforce and community development across the economy as a whole. A number of questions in the telephone survey were concerned with training needs, provision and problems, and respondents were also asked about current practice and preferred solutions. Issues related to training were also part of the focus of the in-depth interviews and further discussion of these issues appear later in this section.

4.1.4.2 Addressing the Skills Gaps and Skills Requirements

The majority of respondents from the organisations experiencing problems because of missing skills, saw training as providing a potential solution. When further asked about the ways in which training could be provided to cope with the gaps, there were some differences in the ways that it was felt that provision should be made for paid staff and volunteers. Continuing professional development was most favoured for paid staff, but a large proportion of those responding to the question also mentioned in-house training, less formal training and accredited training. Respondents were most likely to see in-house training or less formal training as the best options for volunteers, although continuing professional development and accredited training were also seen as appropriate by a number of organisations.

There were differences in the attitudes towards the need for training to lead towards a qualification. Of those respondents replying to a question asking to what level of qualification they thought staff should be trained, the largest proportion, 115 respondents, replied that they felt it did not matter whether or not training was linked to a qualification. Organisations were more likely to want paid staff, than volunteers, to obtain qualifications, the largest proportion considering NVQ level 2 or 3 to be appropriate, although 27 respondents selected NVQ 4 or degree level. In some areas of operation there are statutory requirements, or professional standards covering the qualifications necessary so

that the organisation has no choice other than to recruit qualified personnel or to provide appropriate training. Many respondents, however, stressed the need to be flexible in the approach to qualifications in order to accommodate to the preferences and abilities of the staff as well as the needs of the organisation, for example:

(Train) to the level that they are willing to go to do the job properly - don't push anyone beyond their skills.

Attitudes to the need for qualifications are affected by a number of drivers; the needs of the organisation, which depend upon their areas of operation, statutory and professional requirements and the needs and preferences of the staff.

4.1.4.3 Attitudes Towards Training Provision

Table Twenty-Nine shows the varying approach to staff training among the respondents replying to a question about attitudes towards training. Many organisations tend to provide training when the need arises, but, especially where paid staff are concerned, most organisations either always plan training in advance in line with the organisations goals, or do so in the case of some training. Training for trustees is most likely to be provided on the basis of need. The numbers in this category, however, are small and it is likely that the need for training is very much related to the backgrounds of the recruits.

Differences in approach were illustrated by the remarks made by the respondents, with some organisations having a very structured approach for example:

We do all the same training for paid staff, high-level training. We work on a professional development process. All our volunteers have appraisals and personal development plans - no different treatment.

Others considered that staff were fully proficient or that formal training was not necessary for operational effectiveness:

The people we have all do their stuff and don't have any complaints.

Training is not a big thing within the organisation. It's about helping each other and mutual understanding

Table Twenty-Nine: Approaches to Training

Approach to Training	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=156)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=128)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=36)	
Training is not really planned and we provide training when the need arises	48	30.8%	46	35.9%	20	55.6%	114
Training is planned sometime in advance and is linked to our organisation's strategic goals	54	34.6%	31	24.2%	1	2.8%	86
Some training is planned in advance and is sometimes linked to our strategic goals	46	29.5%	32	25.0%	2	5.6%	80
We do not provide training	4	2.6%	15	11.7%	13	36.1%	32
Don't know	2	1.3%	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	4
No Response	2	1.3%	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	4
Total	156	100%	128	100%	36	100%	320

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The planning of training in advance is also related to finances. While most of the organisations not providing training said that this was because there was no need to do so, or that their personnel were fully proficient, others mentioned cost, not being able to provide cover for staff and not being able to spare the time for attendance at courses. Lack of interest from staff was cited as a reason for not providing training in a few cases, as were, albeit by a small number of organisations, access to, and the availability of, training. The data indicates that funding can, in fact, pose a major problem:

We continually look at training needs and see what's on offer - the only difficulty is getting the funding.

Difficulties can be caused by uncertainty about finance and not all organisations have a training budget, indeed, only just over 38% (122) of the survey respondents said that their organisations had such budgets. These budgets were slightly less likely to be available for voluntary than paid staff, and were very unlikely to be available for trustees. In the case of the latter, however, the number of responses was small and organisations were more likely to provide ad hoc training.

4.1.4.4 Current Workforce Development Provision

Respondents were also asked if any members of staff had received training in the twelve months prior to the survey. 71.9% of respondents reported that paid staff had received training, with the proportions being 51.9% for volunteers and 23.1% for trustees. Those whose staff had received training were then asked about the numbers of staff involved. Table Thirty shows the responses to this question. The numbers of respondents are different for each category of staff that is, paid staff, volunteers and trustees; these numbers are shown at the top of the appropriate column the table.

Table Thirty: Numbers of Staff having Received Training in the Previous 12 Months

Numbers	Paid Staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=230)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=166)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=74)	
0 - 5	122	53.0%	47	28.3%	60	81.1%	229
6 - 10	39	17.0%	41	24.7%	10	13.5%	90
11 - 15	15	6.5%	15	9.0%	3	4.1%	33
16 - 20	10	4.3%	2	1.2%	1	1.4%	13
21 - 25	7	3.0%	13	7.8%	0	0.0%	20
26 - 30	5	2.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5
31 - 50	8	3.5%	14	8.4%	0	0.0%	22
51 - 100	7	3.0%	8.0	4.8%	0	0.0%	15
101+	6	2.6%	9.0	5.4%	0	0.0%	15
Don't know	11	4.8%	17	10.2%	0	0.0%	28
Total	230	100%	166	100%	74	100.0%	470

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Training had, in the main, been carried out either by a mixture of in-house and external provision, or in-house. There were some differences between the categories, with volunteers being the most likely to be trained in-house. Table Thirty-One shows a detailed breakdown of the responses.

Table Thirty-One: Type of Training Provision: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Training Type	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No. of Respondents
	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=156)	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=128)	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=36)	
Mixture of in-house and externally provided	96	61.5%	44	34.4%	7	19.4%	147
In-house	26	16.7%	58	45.3%	8	22.2%	92
Provided by external organisations	26	16.7%	8	6.3%	5	13.9%	39
No Response	6	3.8%	17	13.3%	13	36.1%	36
Other	2	1.3%	1	0.8%	3	8.3%	6
Total	156	100%	128	100%	36	100%	320

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

A number of organisations were used to deliver training externally. Table Thirty-Two gives the breakdown of use. Because the respondents could answer that they used more than one type of external organisation for training, the percentages show the percentages of particular staff categories receiving training at a given facility. For example, 59 paid staff were reported as having received training at a college, and they made up 75.6% of all personnel receiving college training. There are a number of different types of provider, with colleges being used by the greatest number of organisations, although both private and public organisations also make up large proportions of the external trainers. The presence of a range of trainers, including the community and voluntary organisations, could facilitate the setting up of trainer networks to allow for more flexible delivery of training. The 'other' category shown in the table is also quite large. This is because a number of the respondents mentioned a variety of specific organisations or particular courses; the Grouping shown in the table represent the categories of provider.

Table Thirty-Two: Types of External Training Providers

Provider Type	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	
College	59	75.6%	18	23.1%	1	1.3%	78
Private Organisations	39	67.2%	16	27.6%	3	5.2%	58
Public Organisations	38	74.5%	11	21.6%	2	3.9%	51
Other VCOs	12	46.2%	9	34.6%	5	19.2%	26
Individual consultants	14	70.0%	6	30.0%	0	0.0%	20
Local CVS	9	50.0%	7	38.9%	2	11.1%	18
Organised by Head Office	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	3
Other	12	57.1%	9	42.9%	0	0.0%	21
None	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	3
Don't know	7	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Not all the training carried out either in-house or externally was linked to formal qualifications. 66.7% of respondents, whose organisations had provided training, said that the training undertaken by paid staff had led to a qualification, the proportions for volunteers and trustees were 27.3% and 5.6% respectively. Paid staff were more likely than volunteers or trustees to have studied, or be studying for, NVQs and are much more likely to be working towards the higher levels of qualification. There are some areas of the sector in which specific qualifications are mandatory, and working towards sector standards may become increasingly important in the future. The details of the qualifications leading from the training/education are shown in Table Thirty-Three. A number of respondents who mentioned specific qualifications, replied that the training was to meet occupational standards, or that *it depends on the job* or *it depends on the training*. These types of answer are grouped in the 'other' category in the table.

Table Thirty-Three: Qualifications Linked to Training

Qualification Type	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	
NVQ Level 3	51	79.7%	12	18.8%	1	1.6%	64
NVQ Level 2	34	68.0%	15	30.0%	1	2.0%	50
Sector Related Certificate	24	66.7%	10	27.8%	2	5.6%	36
NVQ Level 4	17	94.4%	0	0.0%	1	5.6%	18
Health and Safety / First Aid Certificate	9	75.0%	3	25.0%	0	0.0%	12
Depends on role	4	66.7%	2	33.3%	0	0.0%	6
Degree	4	66.7%	2	33.3%	0	0.0%	6
NVQ Level 1	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	4
NVQ Level 5	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	4
City and Guilds	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3
Diploma	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3
Depends on staff	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	3
Other	10	90.9%	1	9.1%	0	0.0%	11
Don't know	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	6
None	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The skills for which training was provided also cover a very wide range. Much of the training for paid staff was for specialist skills relating to the organisation, or to particular occupational skills needed within the organisation, and there was also considerable emphasis on health and safety issues. ICT skills were also seen as important, particularly for paid staff.

A large number of particular skills were also mentioned, many of these were related to short term need, for example *decorating - we moved to a new building*, or to particular events such as open days or inductions. These types of answer have been grouped into the 'other' category in Table Thirty-Four which gives a full list of these skills. The skills for which training is being offered are consonant with those that respondents considered would be necessary in the future and which are listed in Section 4.1.2.3.

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Table Thirty-Four: Skills for Which Staff Were Trained

Skills Trained	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	
Specialist Skills	68	70.8%	26	27.1%	2	2.1%	96
Health and Safety	59	64.1%	32	34.8%	1	1.1%	92
Information and Communication Technology	24	63.2%	12	31.6%	2	5.3%	38
Customer Handling	7	41.2%	10	58.8%	0	0.0%	17
Legislation	12	70.6%	3	17.6%	2	11.8%	17
Childcare	12	80.0%	3	20.0%	0	0.0%	15
Child Protection	10	71.4%	4	28.6%	0	0.0%	14
Retail	2	14.3%	11	78.6%	1	7.1%	14
Communication Skills	6	46.2%	7	53.8%	0	0.0%	13
Advocacy/Counselling	5	38.5%	8	61.5%	0	0.0%	13
Financial Management	10	83.3%	2	16.7%	0	0.0%	12
Knowledge of User/Organisation/Sector	3	27.3%	8	72.7%	0	0.0%	11
Direct Marketing	7	77.8%	1	11.1%	1	11.1%	9
Business Management	6	66.7%	2	22.2%	1	11.1%	9
Management of staff or volunteers	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	6
Administration	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	6
Communication Skills	4	66.7%	2	33.3%	0	0.0%	6
Project Management	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4
Recruitment	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4
Team working	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	4
Training	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	4
Fundraising	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4
Planning	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	3
Quality Systems	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3
Budget Setting	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3
Leadership	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	3
Developing Current Skills	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2
Monitoring	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1
Supervising	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1
Strategic Planning	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1
Partnership working	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1
Completing Forms	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1
Not Applicable	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1
Other	26	55.3%	20	42.6%	1	2.1%	47
Don't Know	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	4

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The wide range of skills, covering generic transferable skills, skills generic to the voluntary and community sector as a whole, and more specialist organisational or occupational skills, underlines the complexity of the skills, and therefore the training needs, in the sector. In some cases very small numbers of organisations will be requiring particular training or learning opportunities at any one time. These factors underline the importance of flexibility, and an imagination in provision.

The majority of respondents said that they were satisfied with the courses that staff members were currently receiving, stating that they were of high quality and appropriate to the needs of the organisation. Courses that were available locally were also mentioned favourably.

4.1.4.5 Barriers to Training

For many organisations, however, there were a number of barriers to training with 37.2% of organisations reporting that they experienced such barriers in relationship to paid staff, 25.6% for volunteers and 10.6% for trustees. The full list of barriers reported by respondents is shown in Table Thirty-Five.

Table Thirty-Five: Barriers to Training

Barriers to Training	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	
Cost	78	58.6%	41	30.8%	14	10.5%	133
Time taken to attend	27	37.5%	28	38.9%	17	23.6%	72
Access to training	20	54.1%	13	35.1%	4	10.8%	37
Availability of training	16	61.5%	4	15.4%	6	23.1%	26
Lack of interest	4	21.1%	14	73.7%	1	5.3%	19
Lack of cover	11	84.6%	2	15.4%	0	0.0%	13
Lack of cover for training	5	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5
Unaware of training providers	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	2
Unaware of training needs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1
No need	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1
Well trained staff will leave	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Personnel already fully proficient	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Other	7	41.2%	8	47.1%	2	11.8%	17

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

The most frequently mentioned barriers were those related to cost and resources. Less than half the respondents to the survey said that their organisations had training budgets and the funding streams for many organisations are uncertain and this feature has already been noted earlier. Table Eight in Section 4.1.1.4 illustrates the extent to which organisations are dependent on intermittent or precarious sources of income and the difficulties, in training terms, for organisations with uncertain income streams are numerous. The costs of training may be high, there may be no 'slack' in the system to allow for cover for those engaged in training or learning, even if this is provided in-house, and the costs of travelling to external training sessions or courses may be difficult to meet.

Replies that have been grouped into the 'other' category in the table included a variety of issues, including a *lack of availability of premises for training* and *getting together enough staff members* for courses where a minimum number of attendees is specified.

A number of respondents commented upon these issues in the survey, and the comments illustrate not just some of the difficulties experienced, but the effects that the circumstances of different types of organisations may have. For example, one respondent pointed out that mandatory qualifications could cause difficulties:

The government require you to do mandatory NVQs. It should be paid for, especially when it's paid for by the service users and (the money) could be spent on care.

Another mentioned the high cost of training:

The important thing is to keep the cost of training down - there are lots of courses around, but costs vary widely, there's no cheap, quality training.

The cost of cover, was highlighted by this respondent:

A lot of it is not about training, but paying for time when they are at training. Prohibitive, especially when the government cuts funding.

Other respondents emphasised travel problems, in this case especially where personnel are dispersed:

We appreciate the need for training. Our main problem is that our network of volunteers is so widespread geographically. On-line training might be the answer, but there are problems with this also.

Other barriers mentioned were problems related to the accessibility and availability of training. Some members of staff, particularly volunteers, were also seen as lacking interest in undertaking training and this attitude was sometimes perceived as being more likely among older volunteers, for example, *some volunteers are resistant to new ideas - mainly elderly volunteers.*

The factors that would encourage the take up of training are listed in Table Thirty-Six, and many of these match closely with the stated barriers. Subsidies for the cost of training courses, help with the cost of travel and increased cover for staff are all mentioned. The need for more locally based or in-house training is also mentioned, as is the possibility of the provision of evening and week-end training.

Table Thirty-Six: Factors that Would Encourage Training Provision

Factors Which Would Encourage Training	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondent
	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Total No of Respondents	
Subsidies for cost of training course	61	49.2%	51	41.1%	12	9.7%	124
Nothing	38	43.7%	40	46.0%	9	10.3%	87
Subsidies to help with cost of travel	16	55.2%	8	27.6%	5	17.2%	29
Change in your organisation	13	44.8%	10	34.5%	6	20.7%	29
Increased cover	13	68.4%	6	31.6%	0	0.0%	19
More time	11	73.3%	3	20.0%	1	6.7%	15
More in-house or local training	6	50.0%	3	25.0%	3	25.0%	12
Training delivered locally	6	60.0%	4	40.0%	0	0.0%	10
Staff driven	3	37.5%	5	62.5%	0	0.0%	8
Better quality	2	33.3%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%	6
See the benefits of training	3	60.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	5
Evening and weekend training available	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	4
Legislation	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	2	50.0%	4
Not Applicable	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	2
On-line training available	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1
Other	9	50.0%	7	38.9%	2	11.1%	18
Don't know	7	53.8%	4	30.8%	2	15.4%	13

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

4.1.4.6 On-Line Training

Only one respondent mentioned on-line training as a factor likely to encourage the take up of training (Table Thirty-Six). However, in answering a question asking directly whether organisations would be likely to utilise on-line training if it were offered, nearly 58% of respondents replied positively, as Table Thirty-Seven shows.

Table Thirty-Seven: Attitudes Towards On-Line Training

Attitudes to On-line Training	Paid staff		Volunteers		Trustees		Total No of Respondents
	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=156)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=128)	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=36)	
Yes	104	66.7%	62	48.4%	19	52.8%	185
No	43	27.6%	56	43.8%	13	36.1%	112
Don't know	7	4.5%	8	6.3%	4	11.1%	19
No Response	2	1.3%	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	4
Total	156	100%	128	100%	36	100%	320

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Those who would consider using on-line training saw the main benefits as being ease of access and lower costs. A few organisations already have on-line training.

Respondents who thought that their organisations would not consider on-line training, saw there being problems in providing computer access, particularly for volunteers, with a number saying that they were lacking staff skills in the area. Others said that they disliked this method of delivery, or that it was unsuitable for the skills needed.

While on-line training would be a useful tool for many organisations, for others, the lack of computer access and ICT expertise among the staff would provide barriers. For some practical skills computer assisted learning may be seen as unsuitable, and this may also be seen as the case for social skills.

4.1.4.7 Discussion

The complexity of the skills needs of the voluntary and community organisations in the region necessitates a flexible approach to training and learning needs. For many organisations,

including smaller and rurally based organisations, and for a number of particular skills, providing more informal learning opportunities may be important. Action learning, mentoring, and outreach and peripatetic work may be more effective in providing for the specialist needs that have been highlighted in much of the data, and for providing for small numbers of learners who may be geographically dispersed. Networking and learning partnerships of providers, including the voluntary and community organisations, may both spread the costs and help to improve access to opportunities for all organisations. Flexible and more informal learning opportunities may be of particular importance for volunteers, who may be more likely to resist taking up training. More formal methods for training leading to qualifications will remain important, with on-line training, where appropriate, providing a relatively flexible means of delivery, which can be accessed at times appropriate to the needs of the organisation and staff members.

Training provision and workforce development is discussed further in Section 4.1.4.

4.1.5 Skills Shortages

Skills shortages, caused by a lack of suitably skilled and qualified recruits were also experienced by a number of the organisations in the survey. In the twelve months prior to the survey taking place, a high proportion of the organisations had recruited new staff. 57.8% of organisations had recruited paid staff members, 55.3% volunteers and 40% trustees. Those respondents whose organisations had recruited new staff were then asked whether they had suffered any difficulties in filling the vacancies. Of the organisations recruiting paid staff, 21.9% (70 organisations) had experienced problems in recruiting paid staff, 25.6% (82 organisations) of those recruiting volunteers had experienced difficulties as had 13.1% (42 organisations) of those recruiting trustees.

A wide range of posts had proved difficult to fill. 11 organisations had found difficulty in recruiting paid members of staff to managerial posts, while problems in recruiting administrators were mentioned by seven respondents. Other hard to recruit posts mentioned by five or fewer organisations, were support, advice,

youth and development workers, fundraisers, finance officers and trainers. Amongst volunteer posts, administrators, youth, advice, and development workers were all referred to by a small number of respondents.

Only six respondents specified the trustee posts that had been difficult to fill. Chair person and treasurer posts were both mentioned by two respondents and administrator and 'all posts' mentioned by one respondent. A detailed table of types of hard to fill vacancies by type of vacancy by sector activity is included in the Appendices.

The recruitment problems experienced by the organisations had impacted on the organisations concerned in a number of ways. Table Thirty-Eight shows respondents' answers to a question about the effects upon the organisations of difficulties in filling posts.

Table Thirty-Eight: The Impact of Recruitment Problems: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Impact of Recruitment Problems	Paid staff	Volunteers	Trustees	Total No of Respondents
	No of respondents	No of respondents	No of respondents	
Extra pressure on staff	10	6	3	19
Working longer hours	9	4	1	14
Turning work away	4	9	0	13
Affects service delivery	3	8	0	11
Cost	8	1	0	9
None	4	2	2	8
Not meeting project deadlines	3	1	0	4
Don't know	1	0	0	1
Not Applicable	0	1	0	1
Other	10	10	1	21

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Problems in recruiting paid staff had meant extra pressure and longer working hours for current staff, in a few cases organisations had failed to meet project deadlines and others said that service delivery had been affected. Failure to recruit volunteers had had similar effects, although as can be seen from the table, slightly more organisations felt that service delivery had been affected or that work had been turned away. The failure to recruit trustees

appeared to have the least impact, although extra pressure was placed on other staff.

Organisations had attempted to get round recruitment problems in the main by re-advertising (30), advertising out of the local area (26), or especially targeting advertisements (11). Those looking for paid employees had used temping agencies in four cases, improved pay and conditions in three cases, or recruited less qualified individuals also in three cases.

The reasons given for the difficulties in filling vacancies were varied. However, few applicants, the lack of suitable local applicants and a lack of qualifications and skills, or interest in the type of work undertaken by the organisations predominated in the responses related to both paid staff and volunteers. The specific reasons given by the respondents are listed in Table Thirty-Nine.

Table Thirty-Nine: Reasons for Recruitment Difficulties: Paid Staff, Volunteers, Trustees

Reasons for Recruitment Difficulties	Paid Staff	Volunteers	Trustees	Total No of Respondents
	No of respondents	No of respondents	No of respondents	
Lack of suitable local applicants	20	8	6	34
Few or no applicants	10	18	1	29
Lack of interest in type of work	4	18	3	25
Lack of qualifications	15	4	5	24
Lack of skills	10	0	4	14
Commitment/Responsibility	0	7	3	10
Low wages	0	7	0	7
Unsociable hours	3	2	0	5
Lack of skills	0	5	0	5
Location	3	1	0	4
Part-time work	3	0	1	4
Short term funding/work	1	0	2	3
Applicants misconceptions	0	1	1	2
Lack of experience	0	0	1	1
Don't know	0	2	0	2

Source: SRRU Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Development Survey

Difficulties in recruiting to some paid posts were seen by some respondents as being affected by the pay and conditions in the sector, which in some cases made it more difficult to recruit

suitably qualified, skilled or experienced people. In some cases voluntary and community organisations are recruiting to similar posts as other, both public and private sector, organisations so that it was felt that *there should be a pay structure that reflects someone's level of qualification*. In the case of volunteers some organisations considered that it might be becoming generally harder to find volunteers, one respondent, for example, felt that volunteering should be encouraged from an earlier age, *I would like to see more emphasis at an early stage of people's life on community involvement and helping voluntary organisations - fewer people are willing to do something unpaid*. The trustee posts that were hard to fill sometimes involved specific skills and posed particular difficulties. These issues are discussed further in Section 4.2.2.4.

Skills shortages present a number of challenges to organisations, especially in areas where voluntary and community organisations are competing with other organisations for staff. Some commentators consider that improving the skills of the current staff in organisations and improving the retention of well qualified staff might go some way to mitigating the difficulties presented by recruitment problems. However, at least one respondent mentioned that one of the problems of developing staff and improving their skills was that they would become more likely to look for opportunities in another organisation. Issues of staff retention are considered in Section 4.1.3.

4.2 The Interviews

4.2.1 Introduction

Following the telephone survey, 18 face-to-face follow-up interviews were undertaken with key decision makers in a sub-sample of organisations. The sub-sample was selected from across the South West Region from organisations agreeing at the telephone survey stage to take part in further research. The sample was structured to include organisations in urban and rural locations and included representatives from faith organisations, minority and ethnic community groups, front line deliverers and intermediaries. The interviews were designed to pursue issues of importance arising from the telephone survey, and focussed upon:

- ❖ Attitudes towards the value of workforce development and training.

- ❖ Management and business process skills gaps and shortages.
- ❖ Barriers to training uptake.
- ❖ Uptake of training by trustees and related skills development needs.
- ❖ The perceived importance of leadership skills and relevant training requirements within the voluntary and community sector.
- ❖ Future training and workforce development solutions.

4.2.2 Workforce Development Culture and Attitudes Towards Training

4.2.2.1 Workforce Development Culture

Workforce development strategies appear to vary considerably across the voluntary and community sector. In spite of these variations data from the interviews demonstrates that the majority of managers have an active interest in workforce development. A number of factors could be seen to influence managers' attitudes:

- ❖ Limited financial resources can make it difficult to attract suitably qualified individuals from outside the organisation.
- ❖ Due to the specific requirements and '*subtle personalised nature*' of the work that many voluntary and community organisations are involved in, it is often considered advantageous to develop current members of staff who understand the requirements and context of the activities.
- ❖ There is a general ethos that existing staff should be offered development opportunities where possible to safeguard their continued employment.
- ❖ There is a perception that employees within the voluntary and community sector must become more adept at project management, financial and administration skills to be able '*to function in a modern systems orientated business culture*'.

It is important to recognise, however, that whilst the interviews identified high levels of interest in workforce development

amongst respondents, in many cases, this interest was not translated into concrete actions, particularly amongst smaller organisations. The reasons behind this, in many cases, relate to the prioritisation of effort towards immediate short-term delivery of services and the acquisition of funding. This '*fire-fighting mentality*' tends to militate against structured workforce development planning which is linked to the delivery of medium to long term goals. It is possible to identify a link between levels of financial stability and the propensity of organisations to convert workforce development aspirations into reality.

Attitudes amongst trustees can have a significant bearing on workforce development. Where the board of a voluntary and community organisation is comprised of trustees from contemporary professional backgrounds in which there is a strong workforce development culture, it is likely that this culture will also be present in the voluntary and community organisation. Where trustees are not from professional or managerial backgrounds, or where they display more '*traditionally orientated*' management cultures, interest in workforce development can be lacking.

4.2.2.2 Attitudes Towards Training

Previous national studies have found that voluntary and community sector organisations place significant emphasis on training and workforce development considerations. Results from the face-to-face interviews in the present study demonstrate similar findings. Indeed, without exception, all the respondents considered training to be *vital* to the future viability of their respective organisations, a view reflected in the high incidence of paid and voluntary staff attending training courses identified during the telephone survey.

Awareness of relevant training providers was high amongst the employers interviewed, indicating their interest in training availability. Information on training providers was derived both proactively, with employers seeking information, and reactively, with employers receiving information from providers, for example from brochures. Many voluntary and community organisations work in very specialised areas, and the employers appeared to be aware of where to find specialist training in their specific fields.

An active '*bush telegraph*' seems to exist relating to the availability and quality of training.

In some cases, employers did not differentiate between the training needs of their paid staff and those of their volunteers. This was often because volunteers were '*doing the same job*' as their paid colleagues and, therefore, required the same levels of competence and training. Several respondents stated that due to funding shortages they would be relying increasingly on volunteers to deliver front line services, and would therefore need these volunteers to possess and maintain the requisite skills. Health and Safety legislation, together with a number of other legal and insurance policy related issues, also necessitate volunteers being provided with the same training as salaried employees.

The high level of importance placed on training is related to the fact that many of the voluntary and community organisations interviewed are delivering frontline professional services, for example in the fields of education, social work and healthcare. Employees in such organisations are required to have professional qualifications which need to be updated from time to time to meet legislative requirements, as well as to keep abreast of technical developments. A number of respondents said that they operate '*within a constantly changing field*', requiring knowledge and skills updates on a regular basis.

Whilst training and workforce development are recognised as important across the sector, there is a marked difference between large and small organisations regarding how training need is identified and addressed. With few exceptions, it appears that the smaller organisations have little if any systematic structure for assessing training need, training often being addressed on an ad hoc basis when funds are available. The large voluntary and community organisations, however, demonstrate very similar workforce development strategies to corporate entities operating in the private sector, with formal staff appraisal and training needs assessments taking place on a regular basis.

These differences in the approaches and capacities of the large and smaller organisations reflect the situation found nationally, where it has been found that the more financially vulnerable smaller organisations are less able to fund training or to provide cover for

staff who are in training. These differences underline the importance of a flexible, and possibly more informal, approach to learning opportunities and training.

4.2.2.3 Management and Business Process Skills Gaps and Shortages

Gaps and shortages in management and business process skills in smaller voluntary and community organisations have been identified in previous national studies and were highlighted during the telephone survey. The interviews pursued in greater depth some of the issues related to these gaps and shortages.

At an employee level, it appears there is a lack of these skills for two key reasons. Firstly, it was found that individual members of staff from specific technical backgrounds, for example, in social work and mental health, had, in a number of cases, been promoted into management positions without having the necessary skills, experience *or interest* to operate as effective managers. In many cases individuals had joined their organisations without previous management experience, particularly at a senior level. Secondly, the research indicates that many smaller voluntary and community organisations struggle to successfully recruit experienced management level employees from outside, often due to a lack of job security and uncompetitive salaries when compared with the private sector.

With regard to a lack of business acumen at a trustee board level, many respondents focussed on the difficulties encountered in persuading suitably experienced and/or qualified individuals to become trustees. The reasons given tended to be centred on time - *'good business people tend to be too busy running businesses'* - and, very importantly, the personal risk associated with trustee liabilities. The forthcoming proposals to give trustees the same protection as directors of limited companies may significantly allay the fears that prevent many suitable candidates from volunteering their services under the current system.

4.2.2.4 Barriers to Training

Training uptake within voluntary and community sector organisations is high and compares favourably with the private

and public sectors. There are, however, a number of barriers to uptake.

(i) Financial Limitations

Whilst financial limitations were encountered across all sizes of organisation, a distinct difference exists between the training budgets available to large voluntary and community organisations compared to those of small organisations. In general terms, large organisations do not struggle to make comprehensive training budgets available to their staff. This is certainly not the case at the other end of the spectrum.

When considering the barriers to training within smaller voluntary and community organisations, it is vitally important to understand the financial framework within which many of them operate and the fragile funding streams on which many small-scale charitable organisations depend for their existence. For many smaller voluntary and community organisations financial resources are extremely variable from year to year, making medium to long term budgeting, including budgeting for training, extremely difficult:

'I would say that the difference between the private and voluntary sectors is to do with resources and funding'.

'Training is difficult for voluntary and community sector organisations due to money. If my organisation and other charities were businesses which could afford to develop staff, training would be applicable. With our organisation everything is so fluid. I never know who I am going to have employed here from one week to another'

'The training we will need in the future depends on which projects we successfully achieve funding for. We don't know what these will be'.

A key finding from the research, which mirrors previous studies, relates to the lack of core funding available to many smaller voluntary and community organisations. Lack of core funds necessitates training to be financed from grant funded project income which is difficult to plan for, given that training budgets are often limited within project grants and project timeframes may not be compatible with training or learning needs. In addition, it

is impossible to establish a training schedule based on anticipated project income when applications for project grants may not be successful.

These findings from the interviews echo national research findings.

(ii) Lack of Capacity

In addition to financial limitations, there appears to be a significant structural difficulty in the sector relating to staff having sufficient time to attend training. Whilst this is often cited as a problem by employers across all sectors of the economy, including private corporate entities, the lack of spare capacity within voluntary and community organisations makes it particularly difficult for employers to arrange cover for staff and volunteers.

When considering lack of spare capacity, it is also important to note that managerial staff sometimes appear to struggle to find the time to adequately assess the training and learning needs of their staff, and to plan appropriate training delivery:

'I guess I could no doubt get some funding for training but where am I going to find the time to find out who to go to for the money, how to make the application, write the application and then work out how many hours my staff will be away for and how to cover for them whilst they're away'.

One respondent reported that certain members of her staff had received training only because the individuals concerned had identified their own training requirements, raised the money and worked over a week-end to make up lost time.

This lack of capacity at a managerial level can be identified as a serious bottleneck in the ability of voluntary and community sector employees to gain access to training.

(iii) Lack of Individual Staff Motivation

The interviews also revealed that some employees, particularly voluntary and part-time staff, appeared to have a lack of interest in training and personal development:

'People working within the voluntary sector are doing it for reasons other than earning cash. They tend to join the voluntary sector later in life when they've done what they need to do and now want to do something that's useful and valuable, not for fame or fortune. Training to get on up the ladder is not high on their want list'.

'For Grandmothers, looking after grand children is a higher priority than going on a training course'.

Some of the respondents cited situations where voluntary staff had positively resisted training, feeling this was *'structuring them too much and introducing unacceptable rules and regulations'*. Given the reliance of many organisations on volunteers, insisting on training in such instances represents a risk, given that a volunteer may choose to leave rather than to take up unwelcome training.

National studies have shown that younger people acting as volunteers are those most likely to want to take up training and learning opportunities. Younger people are less likely to volunteer, but are more likely to see volunteering as a way of learning new skills or gaining a qualification than are older people.¹² For older people the provision of more informal, on-site opportunities might be more acceptable, and, perhaps, more practicable.

(iv) Trustees

Developing the skills base amongst trustees was a subject which stimulated considerable interest amongst respondents. It is apparent that trustee boards vary significantly across the sector, with some boards containing a wide range of professionally qualified individuals whilst others appear to be made up of *'enthusiastic amateurs'*. The training needs of trustees depend on the existing skills base and mix of a board, which, in turn, is driven by the ability of the trust to attract suitably qualified individuals.

Training uptake by trustees also appears to be limited by their perception that they do not need training. Some executive employees did not feel comfortable in suggesting to trustees - *their employers* - that they might benefit from training. It is likely that

¹² See, for example, the SkillsActive Report, 2005.

the most appropriate person to assume this role is the chair, or equivalent, of the trustee board. There was little evidence that this was occurring.

Respondents repeatedly stressed the importance of having trustee board members with financial and business expertise. Where such skills were lacking, respondents identified this as a significant weakness. Two possible solutions were envisaged. Either providing existing trustees with financial and business management training, or recruiting new trustees with suitable qualifications and experience. Respondents were mainly of the opinion that existing trustees with no financial management skills would be unlikely to take up training, due to lack of interest and/or time, and that recruiting from outside would be a preferable option.

It appears that a number of trustees may be unaware of their legal liabilities and responsibilities and that formal induction training in this area is required. Given the significant liabilities and commitments associated with becoming a trustee, respondents were of the opinion such training would act as a '*natural filtering process*' to dissuade individuals who were not truly committed to the organisation and the role from becoming trustees.

4.2.3 Leadership

Leadership skills were regarded by respondents as extremely important within the voluntary and community sector, given the need to deliver objectives with limited financial resources which '*necessitates motivating individuals to deliver 110% and go beyond what they would ordinarily do*'. In the majority of cases, respondents felt that leadership skills within their respective organisations were highly developed:

'In our outfit like most smallish charities, the place wouldn't survive if it weren't for two or three good leaders at the hub keeping things moving'.

Respondents tended to draw a distinction between leadership and management skills, several acknowledging weaknesses in the latter within their organisations in areas such as project

management, staff management and administration. Once again these findings echo findings from national and regional research.

4.3 The Employee Survey

In total, 34 completed staff questionnaires were returned to the SRRU research team, representing a small proportion of the total number sent out. It is also of note that although the questionnaires were sent to paid staff, volunteers and trustees, all 34 returns were from paid staff, divided equally between full-time and part-time positions. There is evidence to suggest that the low response rate is indicative of the lack of time (within budgetary constraints) that voluntary and community sector staff have to complete 'non-core' tasks. Managers warned of the likelihood of a low response rate at the time of issuing the questionnaires; a prediction which proved to be accurate. Given the number of questionnaires returned and the self-selecting nature of the derived sample, results emanating from the dataset should be interpreted as indicative observations rather than statistically robust findings. It must also be borne in mind that the findings relate to paid staff only.

It should also be noted that of the 34 questionnaires received, 23 were from one entity; a regional branch of a large national charity. Although this weighting within the sample may call into question the representativeness of the data received, responses given by staff from this organisation do not appear to demonstrate a markedly different profile to those received from elsewhere. The respondent profile includes a good spread of job titles and staff seniority levels from managers through to junior employees.

4.3.1 Current Levels of Training Received

In line with the views expressed by managers during the telephone survey, the employee survey results indicate that training provision is widespread. Only two out of 34 respondents state an absence of any training provision.

An examination of the type of training received reveals that whilst non accredited training such as basic health and safety or manual handling is a feature, 65% of respondents indicate that the training they are receiving will lead to a nationally recognised qualification.

In general, the majority of staff paint a positive picture with regard to training opportunities available to them. There does appear, however, to be a small minority of staff who feel their respective organisations are not taking sufficient steps to address skills gaps. For example, of the 14 respondents considering themselves to have a current skills gap, four indicate that their employer has failed to take any action to address this deficit thus far.

In the vast majority of cases, training is delivered by both internal and external providers, the latter being delivered equally by colleges, local companies and individual consultants. 90% of respondents have received some form of training in the last 12 months.

Despite the apparent willingness on the part of voluntary and community sector organisations to provide learning and training opportunities, approximately half of employees highlight the existence of barriers to uptake, mirroring the feedback provided by employers during the telephone survey. Cost and the logistical considerations surrounding capacity feature strongly in the data, as does their proximity to suitable training.

4.3.2 Awareness of Skills Gaps

Interestingly, there is a high degree of consistency in the perceptions of employers and employees regarding current skills gaps and future training needs. Of the 41% of staff who acknowledge a gap in their skills base, business process skills such as strategic business planning, project management and financial administration featured strongly in the data.

Staff respondents cite new working practices, the development of new projects/services and a changing policy environment as being the key drivers behind the need for skills development in the future. Strategic planning, financial management/budgeting and soft skills (e.g. team building) are all seen as vital components to meeting future challenges.

Reasons given for current skills gaps indicate a lack of availability of suitably qualified trainers and insufficient training provision in appropriate subject areas. It is important to note that whilst overall delivery of training in the last 12 months has been

widespread, training in the key identified problem areas such as budgeting and strategic planning has been somewhat limited.

4.3.3 Training Preferences

Results suggest that a large proportion of the staff within the sample prefer formal training delivery and are keen to obtain qualifications. Approximately two thirds of respondents believe their future skills requirements can best be met through continuing professional development (CPD), short courses or through in-house training as opposed to only a third who express an interest in less formal training such as mentoring, work shadowing or action learning. Managerial staff, in particular, are found to prefer formal training opportunities. Also mirroring the results of the telephone survey, 60% of respondents stated they would use on-line training if it was made more readily available.

5. SUMMARY DISCUSSION

5.1 The South West Skills Shortages Study Summary

The Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation, now the National Workforce Development Hub, describes the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) as diverse and covering a variety of different organisations. Organisations range from traditional charities, to companies that trade to support their social aims, through to informal community organisations. The sector also includes federations, or networks of local groups working under national umbrellas. VCS organisations provide a wide range of services and activities and many of the organisations are involved in the delivery of learning, whether through accredited training or informal learning.

The VCS employs approximately 569,000 paid staff, the equivalent of 2% of the total of UK employees, and it is estimated that in addition there are 11.1 million regular volunteers and 750,000 trustees involved in the sector (VSNTTO 2004). The Government has increasingly recognised the importance of VCS organisations and the key role that they play nationally, regionally and locally. Initiatives to support the sector, underpinned by funding, have been undertaken and the Government has been active in encouraging and commissioning research and strategic planning in the sector, in particular emphasizing the importance of developing the skills, capacities and potential of the workforce.

Sector organisations generally display a strong commitment to training and workforce development. However, in spite of this commitment and the presence of a high proportion of well qualified workers, skills gaps, that is skills lacking in the current workforce, and skills shortages caused by recruitment difficulties, are present in the sector. There are also skills gaps and shortages in the volunteer workforce. Nationally, the VSNTTO has recognised key skills gaps and shortages in generic skills, such as management, leadership and ICT. Skills gaps and shortages concerning occupationally specific skills for example in care and conservation along with sector specific skills like fundraising or managing volunteers have also been highlighted.

Nationally, skills needs have been clarified and plans for training identified within the wider strategic development plans for the voluntary and community sector. It has also been recognised that skills development within the sector will need to be articulated with initiatives

and developments taking place across the economy at a national level. Learning opportunities provided to the sector workforce have been found to vary in quality, availability, appropriateness and affordability. Both national and regional studies and reports have pointed to the need for the development and implementation of more strategically targeted planning, together with an improvement of the training infrastructure in relation to the availability of courses and their accessibility.

Previous research carried out in the South West Region indicates that the skills shortages and gaps within the community and voluntary sector were very similar to those experienced nationally. The results from the survey and interviews for this Study provide further evidence to support this. The main generic skills gaps were, strategic planning, organisational management, leadership, team working and ICT which is similar to the national picture. Financial management, business management, fundraising, knowledge of the user group, legislation, marketing and promotion, employment practice and human resource management, including the management of volunteers, were also identified as being areas where there were skills gaps and shortages. However, the main skills gaps for 35.9% of respondents from the survey concerned specialist skills which were particularly relevant to the main area of activity for their organisations.

A quarter of all respondents to the survey highlighted that insufficient training was perceived to be the biggest reason for skills gaps within their current workforce and, therefore, perhaps unsurprisingly, the provision of further training was cited as the way perceived by organisations to overcome them. The introduction of new technology and working practices along with changing policy were perceived to be the three biggest factors driving the demand for skills. In terms of future skills needs, a wide range of skills were highlighted by organisations with planning, management and supervision of staff and general project management, budgetary and financial skills all featuring highly.

When looking at the skills gaps present in the different elements of the workforce delineated by the categories of paid staff, volunteers and trustees, little difference was found with skills gaps perceived to exist in around 30% of the current workforce. However, on closer inspection, the results of the survey did indicate a number of differences in the skills gaps for the different categories along with a number of commonalities with specialist skills and ICT skills being high on the list of gaps for both paid staff and volunteers. Management skills, financial management and

issues related to legislation are the most frequently cited gaps for trustees.

When examining skills gaps by organisational activity the areas of education and training and health and disability were perceived to have the highest incidence of skills gaps in their workforces followed by those who provided advice, support or counselling and housing and accommodation. Although when analysed by staff category this seems to be a bigger issue for trustees than either for the paid or voluntary workforce. Questions concerning staff retention revealed that less than a quarter of the organisations surveyed had difficulties in retaining suitably qualified workers. However, over half of the respondents said that they perceived that the provision of suitable training within their organisations had a positive impact upon retention generally.

As is the case nationally, voluntary and community organisations in the South West are committed to training in order to improve skills levels and to develop capacity in staff and volunteers, and voluntary and community organisations are also providing training for clients and other groups. Training needs and take up may, however, vary sub-regionally and are affected by the numbers of micro organisations in parts of the South West, particularly in the dispersed rural populations. However, results from the survey revealed little variation between urban areas covered by unitary authorities and the predominately rural areas within the counties of the South West Region in terms of skills gaps reported by organisations. The only notable exception was in Wiltshire with more organisations reporting skills gaps in their workforces.

Studies carried out in the region evidence examples of good practice in the provision of informal learning opportunities in the sector. These include outreach and peripatetic work, offering learning opportunities for clients, as well as less formal learning and training opportunities for staff and other organisations. The latter include action learning, mentoring, tutoring and support in specific skills areas and the development of training plans.

The importance of collaboration and resource sharing is fully recognised by local networks, but as both national and regional research has shown, many organisations have difficulty in locating appropriate programmes and trainers and a number of barriers to training have to be overcome. Major barriers include funding problems and difficulties in covering for staff released for training and these are combined with problems in locating courses which cover both generic needs and the very specific

requirements of specialist organisations. There may also be problems with travel in rural areas, especially for volunteers, and in accessing 'difficult to reach' groups in both urban and rural areas.

The voluntary and community sector is complex and diverse, and determining the skills needs of the sector is not straightforward. There are also many economic, environmental and social trends, new policy initiatives, in particular the *Sustainable Communities* agenda, on-going legislation and internal sector dynamics which influence the skill needs in the sector. Training and development initiatives therefore need to be carefully identified and targeted (VSNT0 2004). The sector also supplies and supports training and learning opportunities to a wide variety of clients and, in turn, support and training for the voluntary and community organisations in carrying out this work are of crucial importance.

Previous national studies have found that voluntary and community sector organisations place significant emphasis on training and workforce development considerations. Results from the survey and face-to-face interviews in the present study demonstrate similar findings. Indeed, respondents considered training to be *vital* to the future viability of their respective organisations, a view reflected in the high incidence of paid and voluntary staff attending training courses identified during the telephone survey.

Awareness of relevant training providers was high amongst the employers interviewed, indicating their interest in training availability. Information on training providers was derived both proactively, with employers seeking information, and reactively, with employers receiving information from providers, for example from brochures. Many voluntary and community organisations work in specialised areas, and the employers appeared to be aware of where to find specialist training in their specific fields. An active '*bush telegraph*' seems to exist relating to the availability and quality of training. Results from the survey revealed that colleges were the main provider of training to the sector as well as other public sector organisations. However, the public sector was closely followed by private sector organisations in providing training to the sector. The range of training provided for was not unexpectedly diverse given the complexity of the sector and the areas of activity covered by the organisations who took part in the survey, specialist skills were cited most frequently as those areas where training had been given. Skills relating to general issues of regulation along with more specific

regulatory requirements such as, Health and Safety also featured frequently in training provided.

Barriers to training reflected the national picture with those relating to cost and resources the most frequently mentioned. In some cases, employers did not differentiate between the training needs of their paid staff and those of their volunteers. This was often because volunteers were *'doing the same job'* as their paid colleagues and, therefore, required the same levels of competence and training. Several respondents stated that due to funding shortages they would be relying increasingly on volunteers to deliver front line services, and would therefore need these volunteers to possess and maintain the requisite skills. Health and Safety legislation, together with a number of other legal and insurance policy related issues, also necessitate volunteers being provided with the same training as salaried employees.

Whilst training and workforce development are recognised as important across the sector, there is a marked difference between large and small organisations regarding how training need is identified and addressed. With few exceptions, it appears that the smaller organisations have little if any systematic structure for assessing training need, training often being addressed on an ad hoc basis when funds are available. The large voluntary and community organisations however, demonstrate very similar workforce development strategies to corporate entities operating in the private sector; with formal staff appraisal and training needs assessments taking place on a regular basis.

Whilst financial limitations were encountered across all sizes of organisation, a distinct difference exists between the training budgets available to large voluntary and community organisations when compared to small operations. In general terms, large organisations do not struggle to make comprehensive training budgets available to their staff. This is certainly not the case at the other end of the spectrum. A key finding from the research, which mirrors previous studies, relates to the lack of core funding available to many smaller voluntary and community organisations. Lack of core funds necessitates training to be financed from grant funded project income which is difficult to plan for, given that training budgets are often limited within project grants and project timeframes may not be compatible with training or learning needs. In addition, it is impossible to establish a training schedule based on anticipated project income when applications for project grants may not be successful.

When considering lack of spare capacity, it is also important to note that managerial staff sometimes appear to struggle to find the time to adequately assess the training and learning needs of their staff and to plan appropriate training delivery. The interviews also revealed that some employees, particularly voluntary and part-time staff appeared to have a lack of interest in training and personal development. Some of the respondents cited situations where voluntary staff had positively resisted training, feeling this was '*structuring them too much and introducing unacceptable rules and regulations*'. Given the reliance of many organisations on volunteers, insisting on training in such instances represents a risk, given that a volunteer may choose to leave rather than to take up unwelcome training.

National studies have shown that younger people acting as volunteers are those most likely to want to take up training and learning opportunities. Younger people are less likely to volunteer, but are more likely to see volunteering as a way of learning new skills or gaining a qualification than are older people.¹³ For older people the provision of more informal, on-site opportunities might be more acceptable, and, perhaps, more practicable.

Training uptake by trustees also appears to be limited by their perception that they do not need training. Some executive employees did not feel comfortable in suggesting to trustees – *their employers* - that they might benefit from training. It is likely that the most appropriate person to assume this role is the chair, or equivalent, of the trustee board. There was little evidence that this was occurring. The importance of having trustee board members with financial and business expertise was repeatedly stressed by respondents. Where such skills were lacking, respondents identified this as a significant weakness. Two possible solutions were envisaged. Either providing existing trustees with financial and business management training, or recruiting new trustees with suitable qualifications and experience.

Respondents tended to draw a distinction between leadership and management skills, several acknowledging weaknesses in the latter within their organisations in areas such as project management, staff management and administration. Once again these findings echo findings from national and regional research. Leadership skills were regarded by respondents as extremely important within the voluntary and community sector, given the need to deliver objectives with limited

¹³ See, for example, the Skills- Active report, 2005.

financial resources which '*necessitates motivating individuals to deliver 110% and go beyond what they would ordinarily do*'. In the majority of cases, respondents felt that leadership skills within their respective organisations were highly developed.

In addition to skills gaps, skills shortages were also experienced by a number of the organisations in the survey. In the twelve months prior to the survey taking place, a high proportion of organisations had recruited new staff. Of the organisations recruiting paid staff, 21.9% had experienced problems in recruiting paid staff, 25.6% of those recruiting volunteers had experienced difficulties as had 13.1% of those recruiting trustees and a wide range of posts had proved difficult to fill. A small number of organisations had found difficulty in recruiting paid members of staff to managerial posts, while problems in recruiting administrators were mentioned by a smaller number of respondents.

Other hard to recruit posts mentioned by five or fewer organisations, were support, advice, youth and development workers, fundraisers, finance officers and trainers. Amongst volunteer posts, administrators, youth, advice, and development workers were all referred to by a small number of respondents. Only a very small number of respondents specified the trustee posts that had been difficult to fill, chair person and treasurer posts were both mentioned by two respondents and administrator and 'all posts' mentioned by one respondent.

Organisations had attempted to get round recruitment problems in the main by re-advertising, advertising out of the local area, or especially targeting advertisements. Those looking for paid employees had used temping agencies, improved pay and conditions, or recruited less qualified individuals in a small number of cases. The reasons given for the difficulties in filling vacancies were varied. However, few applicants, the lack of suitable local applicants and a lack of qualifications and skills, or interest in the type of work undertaken by the organisations predominated in the responses related to both paid staff and volunteers.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Future Training and Workforce Development Solutions

An analysis of the findings from the survey alongside the in-depth interviews provided an opportunity to explore potential training and workforce development solutions relevant to voluntary and community sector needs. A number of themes arose from these discussions:

- ❖ *On-line training was regarded favourably.* Given the financial and capacity limitations identified by several respondents, on-line training is regarded as a cost effective and flexible training medium suitable to the needs of the sector. Some of the larger organisations contacted have already developed, or are in the process of developing, on-line training content relevant to their specific technical spheres of operation. This solution may, however, not be open to smaller community organisations, where neither ICT hard-wear nor ICT expertise may be available.
- ❖ *Training needs assessment facilitation is required.* Given the lack of time available to managerial staff in many small voluntary and community organisations, some form of external facilitation to examine training needs and develop training plans would be likely to yield tangible results. However, because there is a great deal of financial instability in the sector, which has implications for training up-take, training needs facilitation should be combined with wider diagnostic business advice as an integrated package.
- ❖ *Mentoring and shadowing techniques should be encouraged.* With financial and capacity limitations unlikely to disappear for many voluntary and community organisations, practical on-the-job training - '*learning by doing*' - is an important option for developing skills and expertise in a large section of the workforce. In addition, with many jobs within the sector being of a '*hands-on interpersonal nature*', often involving direct interaction with members of the public, respondents frequently regarded on-the-job training as the best way for staff to gain the requisite skills. As one respondent put it, '*you can't really learn how to deal with someone suffering from domestic violence by reading about it in a book. You need to work with that person in their*

environment'. A small sub-section of the organisations contacted already operate a mentoring or shadowing system, often on an informal basis, to help staff train as they go about their daily work. This model is appropriate for much wider use, although respondents currently involved with such systems were keen to point out that successful implementation requires significant time inputs, and time is a resource many organisations struggle to find. A strong case for providing external mentors to such organisations would appear to exist. It is suggested that in addition to providing technical assistance, external mentors could help staff to develop their business management and processes skills, which has been identified as a key weakness across the sector during the current research.

- ❖ *Training and networking should be linked.* A number of respondents stressed that on-going networking with relevant individuals and organisations within their specific fields of operation is vital to the successful delivery of their activities. Such communication enables knowledge transfer, the signposting of opportunities, access to influential contacts and a range of other benefits. Combining training sessions with organised, targeted networking opportunities was considered by respondents to be a valuable idea, worthy of detailed consideration.
- ❖ *Collaboration between voluntary and community organisations and colleges should be further encouraged.* It emerged during the interviews that some voluntary and community organisations have close links with colleges and universities, for example, providing students with work experience opportunities and training facilities. As well as providing advantages for the academic institutions, this arrangement appears to provide valuable informal learning opportunities for voluntary and community organisation staff through their association with students and academic staff. Such reciprocal arrangements could have an application across the whole sector. In particular, it is suggested that examples of good college/voluntary and community sector collaboration could be publicised across the region in order to enhance the understanding of each other's requirements.

- ❖ *Develop a framework for a flexible for Personal Development Portfolio within the sector.* A flexible but standardised framework for learning plans or personal development portfolios for the voluntary and community sector that capture formal and informal training and learning including accredited and non - accredited training could be developed. The development of such plans or portfolios could act as a passport between employers in the sector that are recognised by organisations. The plans or portfolios would necessarily need to be owned by the employee but could also form a useful appraisal tool to the benefit of the individual and organisation. Models of good practice that record mentoring, action learning and other types of learning and training already exist within the South West region to facilitate such a development.
- ❖ *Develop a Trustee Training and Induction Programme.* Training uptake by trustees appears to be limited by their perception that they do not need training. Some executive employees did not feel comfortable in suggesting to trustees - *their employers* - that they might benefit from training. It is likely that the most appropriate person to assume this role is the chair, or equivalent, of the trustee board. It appears that a number of trustees may be unaware of their legal liabilities and responsibilities and that formal induction training in this area is required. Developing the skills base amongst trustees was a subject which stimulated considerable interest.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix One : *The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities*
- Appendix Two : South West Voluntary and Community Sector
Skills Shortages Study: Employer Questionnaire
- Appendix Three : South West Voluntary and Community Sector
Skills Shortages Study: Employee Questionnaire

Appendix One

The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities

The Egan Review of the skills that would be needed to help deliver the aims of the 'Sustainable Communities Plan' (ODPM 2003) was begun in April 2003, at the request of the Deputy Prime Minister, and reported a year later. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) sees the achievement of sustainable communities as of key importance:

At the core of all our activities is one overarching aim. This is to create thriving, vibrant, sustainable communities which will improve everyone's quality of life. A sustainable community is a place where people want to live and work now and in the future. (ODPM Web Site)

This view of community is taken up by Sir John Egan in the foreword to the Review (HMSO 2004) in defining sustainable communities;

Sustainable Communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity. (HMSO, April 2004).

The initial approach of the Review was from the point of view of the built environment, but the report goes on to take a very comprehensive approach, looking at all the potential partners and stakeholders, including community organisations. Twenty-four main recommendations were made in the Review and the ODPM response was very positive, concluding:

The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities presented an ambitious vision to identify and develop the skills needed for prosperous and sustainable communities. (ODPM, 2004).¹⁴

At the time of the response the ODPM revealed that work was already underway in some areas. For example, the recommendation to establish a national centre for sustainable community skills, its first task to be to take forward the implementation of much of the Review, had already been taken forward. The government has also made a financial commitment of £22 billion for the sustainable communities project, and continues to play a lead role. The

¹⁴ The full response is available on the ODPM web-site at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk>

ODPM also agreed with the recommendation of the Review that local authorities were the most appropriate bodies to take the overall lead locally, *co-ordinating and orchestrating delivery of sustainable communities*: a timetable for the incorporation of Community Strategies by local authorities in their planning and activities had been laid down in the report.

Within the overall plans, ensuring local community participation is seen as of central importance, a factor also stressed by the government. And while the Review is concerned with upskilling professional workers, the importance of access to, and delivery of skills training across communities is also seen to be of vital importance.

The Egan Review describes seven major components of sustainable communities:

Housing and the Built Environment - A quality built and natural environment.

Social and Cultural - Vibrant, harmonious and inclusive communities.

Governance - Effective and inclusive participation and leadership.

Environmental - Providing places for people to live in an environmentally friendly way.

Transport and Connectivity - Good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services.

Economy - A flourishing and diverse local economy.

Services - A full range of appropriate, accessible public, private and community and voluntary services.

(HMSO, 2004 pp 19-21)

These elements are all spelt out in more detail in the Review as are a number of performance indicators, which are seen as, *clear, measurable targets against which progress could be regularly tracked*. (HMSO, 2004 p 24). It is also pointed out, however, that the performance indicators chosen to measure progress will be dependent upon local circumstances and the *needs and priorities of local people*.

The Egan task group recognised that the sustainable communities agenda which they had laid out was complex and that, therefore, in order for it to succeed a very wide range of skills would be needed:

From the technical such as designing high quality townscapes, to the more generic such as strong, informed leadership. In addition to these we will need people with the ability to think and work outside their traditional compartments, who can bring together disparate organisations and interests to help deliver the common goal. This will require new skills and new ways of acting from those involved in delivery. (HMSO, 2004 p 29).

The skills needed necessarily mean that a wide range of occupational groups, covering all the component areas of the sustainable community, would be drawn upon. These occupational groups are specified on page 53 of the Review and include professional community and voluntary workers as well as the 'cross-cutting occupations' of neighbourhood renewal and regeneration practitioners. Much emphasis is laid in the Review upon the 'upskilling' of current professionals, and it is also stressed that there are many generic skills which are *essential for delivering sustainable communities*. These generic skills include ways of thinking about and approaching issues, as well as, in some cases, particular knowledge. In summary the generic skills specified include

- *Inclusive visioning.*
- *Project management.*
- *Leadership.*
- *Breakthrough thinking/brokerage.*
- *Team/partnership working within and between teams, based on a shared sense of purpose.*
- *Making it happen, given constraints.*
- *Process management/change management.*
- *Financial management and appraisal.*
- *Stakeholder management - including ability to work with local residents/community groups.*
- *Analysis, decision making, learning from mistakes.*
- *Communication – including intelligent listening to the community, and promotion of development solutions.*
- *Conflict resolution.*
- *Customer awareness and how to secure feedback.*

Appendix Two

Employer Questionnaire

SRRU



Social Research & Regeneration Unit
A University of Plymouth Centre of Expertise

SOUTH WEST VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR: SKILLS SHORTAGES STUDY

EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE

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Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

INTRODUCTION

CHECK THAT ORGANISATION IS A VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION OR REGISTERED CHARITY IF YOU ARE NOT CERTAIN

Introduction:

ASK TO SPEAK TO THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONNEL OR HUMAN RESOURCES (LARGE ORGANISATIONS)
OR DIRECTOR OR CHAIR (SMALL ORGANISATIONS)

Good morning/afternoon, my name is XXXX, and I am calling from the University of Plymouth. We are conducting some research on behalf of the South West Forum into workforce development in the Voluntary and Community Sector within the South West region.

The aim of this research is to look into skill gaps, shortages recruitment difficulties and training needs. The findings will be used to develop ways to tackle skills shortages within the sector.

We would be grateful if you could spare 10 minutes of your time to answer this important survey. I can assure you that all your answers will be confidential.

IF INCONVENIENT MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK

If respondent requests more information direct them to the south west forum website: www.southwestforum.org.uk and select the workforce development project from the menu on the left hand side.

ALL TO ANSWER

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Firstly I am going to ask you for some background information about your organisation.

Q. Would you describe your organisation as a...READ OUT

- (a) Voluntary Organisation
- (b) Community Organisation
- (c) Other, please specify

Q. Is your organisation a registered charity? Yes/ No/DK

1. What is your organisations legal structure? Is it a... READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (a) Company limited by guarantee
- (b) Industrial and Provident Society
- (c) Unincorporated association
- (d) Other – specify
- (e) (Don't know)

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

2. What geographical area does your organisation cover? Is it.. READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (a) Just your local area
- (b) Your local authority district or town
- (c) County wide
- (d) All of England
- (e) All of the UK
- (f) Overseas
- (g) Other, please specify

3. Can you briefly describe what your organisation does primarily? READ OUT AS NECESSARY, SINGLE CODE IF POSSIBLE

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| (a) Animals | (g) General charitable purposes |
| (b) Arts or culture | (h) Health |
| (c) Disability | (i) Housing or accommodation |
| (d) Economic or community development | (k) Overseas aid or famine relief |
| (e) Education or training | (l) Relief of poverty |
| (f) Environmental, conservation or heritage | (m) Religious activities |
| (n) Sports or recreation | |
| (o) Other, please specify | |

4. Does your organisation primarily provide frontline services or are you an infrastructure organisation?

- (a) Frontline services
- (b) Infrastructure organisation (umbrella organisations, trade association)
- (c) Other, please specify

If provide frontline services ask Question 5, otherwise skip to Question 6

5. Thinking about these frontline services, which of the following best describes the main frontline services your organisation provides? Does your organisation.... READ OUT, SINGLE CODE IF POSSIBLE

- (a) Provide finance and/or other resources and services to individuals or organisations (includes grants and human resources)
- (b) Provide buildings and/or facilities and/or open spaces (includes housing, community centres, schools)
- (c) Provide services (includes education, training, healthcare, community services)
- (d) Provide advocacy, campaigning, information and/or research (includes campaigning, research, provision or advice/information)
- (e) (Other, please specify)

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

6. Who are your main target group of users? READ OUT AS NECESSARY, SINGLE CODE IF POSSIBLE
- (a) Children/young people
 - (b) Elderly/old people
 - (c) Woman
 - (d) Refugees
 - (e) Ethnic minorities
 - (f) Unemployed people
 - (g) People with disabilities/special needs
 - (m) Other, please specify
 - (h) Homeless people
 - (i) People with particular health problems
 - (j) Other charities/voluntary organisations
 - (k) All people living in a particular area
 - (l) No specific group
7. Thinking about how your organisation is funded, is it through.. READ OUT. MULTI CODE
- (a) Grants
 - (b) Donations/Bequests
 - (c) Fundraising Events
 - (d) Trading
 - (e) Other, please specify
8. How long has your organisation been established?
9. Is your organisation part of a network of similar organisations? Yes/ No/DK
10. Is your organisation currently accredited to any of the following quality management systems? READ OUT, MULT CODE
- (a) Investors in People (Work with the Skills for Business Network to develop a programme of management development based on the new Investors in People Management and Leadership model)
 - (b) Matrix standard (quality standard for any organisation that delivers information, advice and/or guidance on learning and work)
 - (c) PQASSO (Charities Evaluation Services practical quality assurance system for small organisations, or for projects within larger organisations)
 - (d) Occupational Standards
 - (e) Business excellence model
 - (f) Social Audit
 - (g) ISO 9002 or BS5750
 - (h) Other, please specify

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

11. Including yourself, approximately how many staff does your organisations currently have (please include paid staff, volunteers and trustees)?
- Of these how many are:
- (a) Paid - Full time
 - (b) Paid - Part time
 - (c) Volunteers – Full time
 - (d) Volunteers – Part time
 - (e) Trustees

SELECT ONE GROUP FOR MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE AND ASK KEY QUESTIONS FOR OTHER TWO GROUPS

KEY QUESTIONS

PAID STAFF/VOLUNTEERS/TRUSTEES

12. Thinking about skills within your organisation. Would you say that there is a gap between the types of skills that your current paid staff/volunteers/trustees have now and those they need for the organisation to work as efficiently as possible?
Yes/ No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 13

If Yes: Which skills do you think are missing for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE

Management skills

- (a) Planning and forward thinking
- (b) Monitoring and evaluation
- (c) Management of staff/volunteers
- (d) Project management
- (e) Implementing quality systems
- (f) Supervising staff/volunteers
- (g) Financial management
- (h) Budget setting
- (i) Recruitment & selection of staff/volunteers(v)
- (j) Strategic planning
- (k) Leadership skills
- (l) Partnership working

Fundraising skills

- (o) Knowledge of where to apply
- (p) How to complete forms
- (q) Direct marketing

Other skills

- (r) Technical/specialist skills in area
- (s) Team working skills
- (t) Communication skills
- (u) Health and safety
- Customer handling skills
- (w) Don't know
- (x) None

IT skills

- (n) Basic computer literacy/IT
- (y) Other - Please specify (and give detail)
.....

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

13. Have any paid staff/volunteers/trustees in your organisations received training over the past 12 months?
Yes/No/DK

If DK please skip to Q15

If No: Is there any particular reason why your organisation hasn't undertaken any training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees in the last 12 months? MULTI CODE

- (a) Cost
- (b) Lack of cover for training
- (c) Time taken to attend
- (d) Access/distance to training
- (e) Availability of suitable training
- (f) Unaware of any suitable training providers
- (g) If personnel are too well trained they will leave
- (h) Personnel already fully proficient
- (i) We don't know what our training needs are
- (i) Other, please specify

Please go to Q15

If Yes: How many paid staff/volunteers/trustees have received training over the past 12 months?

14. Does your organisation experience any barrier to training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees?
Yes/No/DK

If yes: What barriers to training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees does your organisations experience? MULTI CODE

- (a) Cost
- (b) Lack of cover for training
- (c) Time taken to attend
- (d) Access/distance to training
- (e) Availability of suitable training
- (f) Unaware of any suitable training providers
- (g) If personnel are too well trained they will leave
- (h) Personnel already fully proficient
- (i) We don't know what our training needs are
- (i) Other, please specify

15. Now, turning to recruitment, have you recruited any paid staff/volunteers/trustees for your organisation in the last 12 months?
Yes/No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 17

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

16. And did you have any difficulties filling any of these vacancies? Yes/No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 17

If Yes: And why have these vacancies been hard to fill? MULTI CODE

- (a) A lack of Skills
 - (b) A lack of qualifications
 - (c) A lack of experience
 - (d) A lack of interest in the type of work
 - (e) A lack of suitable applicants in the local area
 - (f) Few or no applicants
 - (g) Applicants misconceptions of working in the sector
 - (h) Low wages
 - (i) Short term funding/work
 - (j) Other? Please specify, (e.g.: Temporary contract/Part-time/Travel time/Expense and Lack of public transport/Conditions)
-

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

SKILLS

17. Thinking about skills within your organisation. Would you say that there is a gap between the types of skills that your many paid staff/volunteers/trustees have currently and those they need for the organisation to work as efficiently as possible? Yes/ No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 20, otherwise continue with Question 17

If Yes: Which skills do you think are missing for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE

Management skills

- (a) Planning and forward thinking
- (b) Monitoring and evaluation
- (c) Management of staff/volunteers
- (d) Project management
- (e) Implementing quality systems
- (f) Supervising staff/volunteers
- (g) Financial management
- (h) Budget setting
- (i) Recruitment & selection of staff/volunteers(v)
- (j) Strategic planning
- (k) Leadership skills
- (l) Partnership working

Fundraising skills

- (o) Knowledge of where to apply
- (p) How to complete forms
- (q) Direct marketing

Other skills

- (r) Technical/specialist skills in area
- (s) Team working skills
- (t) Communication skills
- (u) Health and safety
- Customer handling skills
- (w) Don't know
- (x) None

IT skills

- (n) Basic computer literacy/IT

(y) Other - Please specify (and give detail).....

**Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study**

- 18.** Why do you think these skills are missing among your paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE
- (a) Insufficient training and development for staff/volunteers
 - (b) Lack of suitable training available from external suppliers
 - (c) Staff/volunteers have not been in the job long enough
 - (d) Workforce find it difficult to keep up with change
 - (e) Training programmes only partially completed
 - (f) Recruitment problems
 - (g) Other, please specify
- 19.** What is your organisation doing in response to the skill gaps of your paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE
- (a) Providing further training
 - (b) Changing work priorities
 - (c) Redeploying work within the organisation
 - (d) No particular action being taken
 - (e) Other, please specify
- 20.** What is currently driving the demand for skills of paid staff/volunteers/trustees within your organisation? MULTI CODE
- (a) Introduction of new technology
 - (b) New working practices
 - (c) Increasing emphasis on partnership working and collaboration
 - (d) Changing policy
 - (e) Requirement of funders
 - (f) Development of new projects and services
 - (g) Higher expectations from clients/users
 - (h) The needs of clients/users becoming more complex
 - (i) Other, please specify
- 21.** What particular skills do you think will be important for paid staff/volunteers/trustees in your organisation in the future (e.g. within the next 5 years)? MULTI CODE

Management skills

- (a) Planning and forward thinking
- (b) Monitoring and evaluation
- (c) Management of staff/volunteers
- (d) Project management
- (e) Implementing quality systems
- (f) Supervising staff/volunteers
- (g) Financial management
- (h) Budget setting
- (i) Recruitment & selection of staff/volunteers(v)
- (j) Strategic planning
- (k) Leadership skills

Fundraising skills

- (o) Knowledge of where to apply
- (p) How to complete forms
- (q) Direct marketing

Other skills

- (r) Technical/specialist skills in area
- (s) Team working skills
- (t) Communication skills
- (u) Health and safety
- (v) Customer handling skills
- (w) Don't know – skip to Question 25

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

(l) Partnership working (x) None - skip to Question 25

IT skills

(n) Basic computer literacy/IT

(y) Other - Please specify (and give detail)

.....

22. How can these skill requirements for paid staff/volunteers/trustees be best met? READ OUT, MULTI CODE

- (a) Through Continuing Professional Development or short courses
- (b) Through more accredited training, for example, staff members working towards NVQ's through a local education and training provider
- (c) Through in-house training
- (d) Through less formal training such as mentoring, work shadowing or action learning (group of people come together regularly to help each other to learn from their experience)
- (e) Other, please specify

23. And to what level of qualification would you like your paid staff/volunteers/trustees trained? MULTI CODE

- (a) NVQ Level 1 (low GCSE or BTEC introductory certificate or diploma)
- (b) NVQ Level 2 (high GCSE or BTEC first diploma)
- (c) NVQ Level 3 (A or AS Level or BTEC national award, diploma or certificate)
- (d) NVQ Level 4 (BTEC higher national certificate or diploma)
- (e) NVQ Level 5 (BTEC diploma)
- (f) It doesn't really matter if training is linked to a qualification
- (g) Other, please specify

24. Are you aware of any training providers who can meet your paid staff/volunteers/trustees training needs?

Yes/No/DK

If Yes: Who are they?

.....
.....

If Yes: And how did you find out about these training providers?

.....
.....

25. Are there any particular courses relevant to your paid staff/volunteers/trustees that are not provided locally, that you feel should be?

Yes/ No/DK

If Yes: What are they?

.....

26. Do you think it should be your organisations' responsibility to provide training for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees?

Yes/ No/DK

If No/DK: Who do you think the emphasis for training of paid staff/volunteers/trustees should be upon? DO NOT READ OUT

- (a) Individual staff
- (b) Other, please specify

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

TRAINING

I'm now going to ask you some questions about the training of paid staff/volunteers/trustees within your organisation, by training I mean both training and staff development.

27. Which of the following best describes your organisations approach to training your paid staff/volunteers/trustees? READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (a) Training is planned some time in advance and is linked to our organisation's strategic goals.
- (b) Some training is planned in advance and is sometimes linked to our strategic goals.
- (c) Training is not really planned and we provide training when the need arises.
- (d) (We do not provide training) DO NOT READ OUT
- (e) Other, please specify

If (d) Training is not provided, please go to Question 33, otherwise continue with Question 28

28. Do you have a training budget for paid staff/volunteers/trustees? **Yes/ No/DK**

If Yes: What is your yearly training budget for paid staff/volunteers/trustees?

.....

29. And is training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees carried out? READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (a) In-house
- (b) Provided by external organisations
- (c) Mixture of in-house and externally provided
- (d) (Other, please specify

If b or c answer Question 30, otherwise skip to Question 31

30. Who do you use for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees external training? MULTI CODE

- (a) College
- (b) Local CVS (Council for Voluntary Services)
- (c) Private organisations
- (d) Individual consultants
- (e) Other, please specify

31. Does any of the training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees lead to nationally recognised qualifications? **Yes/No/DK**

If Yes: What qualifications does the paid staff/volunteers/trustees training lead to? MULTI CODE

- (a) NVQ Level 1 (low GCSE or BTEC introductory certificate or diploma)
- (b) NVQ Level 2 (high GCSE or BTEC first diploma)
- (c) NVQ Level 3 (A or AS Level or BTEC national award, diploma or certificate)
- (d) NVQ Level 4 (BTEC higher national certificate or diploma)
- (e) NVQ Level 5 (BTEC diploma)
- (f) Other, please specify

32. Have any of your paid staff/volunteers/trustees received training over the past 12 months? **Yes/No/DK**

If No, please answer Question 33, if DK skip to Q37

**Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study**

If Yes: How many of your paid staff/volunteers/trustees have received training over the past 12 months?
.....

33. Is there any particular reason why your organisation hasn't undertaken any training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees in the last 12 months/Why doesn't your organisation provide any training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE

- (a) Cost
- (b) Lack of cover for training
- (c) Time taken to attend
- (d) Access/distance to training
- (e) Availability of suitable training
- (f) Unaware of any suitable training providers
- (g) If personnel are too well trained they will leave
- (h) Personnel already fully proficient
- (i) We don't know what our training needs are
- (j) Other, please specify

Now go to Question 37

34. What types of skills were paid staff/volunteers/trustees trained for? MULTI CODE

Management skills

- (a) Planning and forward thinking
- (b) Monitoring and evaluation
- (c) Management of staff/volunteers
- (d) Project management
- (e) Implementing quality systems
- (f) Supervising staff/volunteers
- (g) Financial management
- (h) Budget setting
- (i) Recruitment & selection of staff/volunteers(v)
- (j) Strategic planning
- (k) Leadership skills
- (l) Partnership working

Fundraising skills

- (o) Knowledge of where to apply
- (p) How to complete forms
- (q) Direct marketing

Other skills

- (r) Technical/specialist skills in area
- (s) Team working skills
- (t) Communication skills
- (u) Health and safety
- (v) Customer handling skills
- (w) Don't know
- (x) None

IT skills

- (n) Basic computer literacy/IT
- (y) Other - Please specify (and give detail)
.....

35. Are you generally satisfied with the courses your paid staff/volunteers/trustees are currently receiving? Yes/ No/DK

If DK please skip to Q36

If No: Why do you say that? What changes would you like to see in course provision for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees?
MULTI CODE

- (a) More courses delivered in the evenings and weekends

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
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- (b) More courses available locally
- (c) Courses should be more practically based
- (d) Higher quality courses should be available
- (e) Other? Please specify

.....

If Yes: Why do you say that? What elements of the course particularly meet closely with your paid staff/volunteers/trustees training needs? MULTI CODE

- (a) Courses are available at suitable times
- (b) Courses are available locally
- (c) Courses are of a high quality
- (d) Other? Please specify

.....

36. Does your organisation experience any barriers to providing training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees? Yes/ No/DK

If Yes: What barriers to training paid staff/volunteers/trustees does your organisation experience? MULTI CODE

- (a) Cost
- (b) Lack of cover for training
- (c) Time taken to attend
- (d) Access/distance to training
- (e) Availability of suitable training
- (f) Unaware of any suitable training providers
- (g) If personnel are too well trained they will leave
- (h) Personnel already fully proficient
- (i) We don't know what our training needs are
- (j) Other, please specify

37. What would encourage you as an organisation to provide more training for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE

- (a) Subsidies to help with the cost of the training course
- (b) Subsidies to help with the cost of travel and other indirect expenditure associated with training
- (c) Training delivered in-house or more locally
- (d) Greater availability of on-line training
- (e) Greater availability of training delivered in the evenings and at weekends
- (f) Nothing
- (g) Other, please specify

38. If on-line training was available for your paid staff/volunteers/trustees would your organisation consider using this?
Yes/No/DK

If DK skip to Q40

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
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39. Why do you say that? Why would/wouldn't your organisation consider using online training for paid staff/volunteers/trustees?

.....
.....

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

RECRUITMENT

Still thinking about the paid staff/volunteers/trustees within your organisation; I am going to ask you some questions about recruitment.

40. Have you recruited any paid staff/volunteers/trustees for your organisation in the last 12 months?
Yes/No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 45

41. And did you have any difficulties filling any of these paid staff/volunteers/trustees vacancies?
Yes/No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 45

If Yes: And why have these paid staff/volunteers/trustees vacancies been hard to fill? MULTI CODE

- (a) A lack of Skills
- (b) A lack of qualifications
- (c) A lack of experience
- (d) A lack of interest in the type of work
- (e) A lack of suitable applicants in the local area
- (f) Few or no applicants
- (g) Applicants misconceptions of working in the sector
- (h) Low wages
- (i) Short term funding/work
- (j) Other? Please specify, (e.g.: Temporary contract/Part-time/Travel time/Expense and Lack of public transport/Conditions)

.....

42. What types of paid staff/volunteers/trustees posts have proved difficult to fill? MULTI CODE

- (a) Chief exec/director
- (b) Managerial
- (c) Co-ordinator
- (d) Fundraisers
- (e) Development workers
- (f) Youth workers
- (g) Support workers/befrienders
- (h) Advice worker/counsellors
- (i) Information/research/policy officer
- (j) Trainer
- (k) Administrators
- (l) Other, please specify

.....

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How have you got round this recruitment problem for paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE

- (a) Altered Job Specification
- (b) Promoted internally/retained existing staff
- (c) Recruited less qualified/experienced staff
- (d) Improved pay and conditions
- (e) Increased overtime
- (f) Subcontracted
- (g) Turned work away
- (h) Used agency temps
- (i) Advertised out of local area
- (j) Done nothing
- (k) Other, please specify

43. What has been the impact of these paid staff/volunteers/trustees recruitment problems on your organisation?

- (a) Turning work away
- (b) Not meeting project deadlines
- (c) Working longer hours
- (d) Other, please specify

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

STAFF RETENTION

44. Thinking about your current paid staff/volunteers/trustees, do you have problems retaining suitably qualified workers?
Yes/No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 49

If Yes: Are there any particular skills that are hard to retain among your paid staff/volunteers/trustees?

Yes/No/DK

If No/DK, please go to Question 47

If Yes: What particular skills are hard to retain among your paid staff/volunteers/trustees?

.....

45. Do you think there any particular reasons why you have problems retaining suitably qualified paid staff/volunteers/trustees?
Yes/No/DK

If yes: Why do you think you have particular problems retaining suitably qualified paid staff/volunteers/trustees? MULTI CODE

- (a) Location
- (b) Working hours
- (c) Pay and conditions
- (d) Short term funding/work
- (e) Other, please specify

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
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46. What impact do these paid staff/volunteers/trustees retention problems have on your organisation? MULTI CODE
- (a) Turning work away
 - (b) Not meeting project deadlines
 - (c) Working longer hours
 - (d) Other, please specify
47. Have you found that training your paid staff/volunteers/trustees helps to retain them?

Yes/ No/DK

ALL TO ANSWER

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

48. Is there anything else you would like to say about training and skill requirements in your organisation?

.....
.....

49. As part of this research South West Forum wish to put together a data base of Community and Voluntary organisations in the region. Would you be happy for your contact details to be passed back to them?

Yes/ No

50. Finally would you be happy for us to contact you again in the future if we were to conduct some further research on these issues?

Yes/ No

That is the end of the survey. Thank you for your time and contribution to this review of the Voluntary and Community Sector training and skills issues.

Appendix Three

Employee Questionnaire

SRRU

Social Research & Regeneration Unit
A University of Plymouth Centre of Expertise



SOUTH WEST VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR: SKILLS SHORTAGES STUDY

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE

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**Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. If, for any reason, you feel unable to answer a question, simply leave it unanswered and skip to the next one.

Section 1: Your Details

In this section we would like you to give us some information about you and your position.

A. Please indicate whether you are a:

Paid member of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trustee or Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
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B. Please indicate the hours you normally work:

Full time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part time	<input type="checkbox"/>
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C. What is your job title:

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D. What are your main duties?

E. How long have you been in your current position:

Less than 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 months to 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 1 year up to 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 2 years up to 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 5 years up to 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

F. How old are you?

16 – 24 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	25 – 34 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	35 – 44 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
45 – 54 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	55 – 64 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	65 – 74 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
75 – 84 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	85 years or over	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Section 2: Your Skills

In this section we would like you to give us some information about your skills.

1. Thinking about your skills, would you say there is a gap between the types of skills that you currently have and those you need to work as efficiently as possible?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------

If No or you Don't know please go to Question 5, otherwise continue with Question 2.

2. Which skills do you think you are missing? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Management skills					
Planning and forward thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Management of staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implementing quality systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervising staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment & selection of staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnership working	<input type="checkbox"/>
IT skills					
Basic computer literacy or IT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study**

Fundraising skills						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of where to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>	How to complete forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other skills						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical and specialist skills in area	<input type="checkbox"/>	Team working skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health and safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer handling skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify and give details	<input type="checkbox"/>		
.....						

3. Why do you think these skills are missing? (Please mark ALL that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient training and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of suitable training from external suppliers	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have not been in the job long enough	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training programmes only partially completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>		
.....						

4. What is your organisation doing in response to your skill gaps? (Please mark ALL that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Providing further training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Changing work priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Redeploying work within the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	No particular action being taken	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>		
.....						

5. What is currently driving the demand for your skills within your organisation? (Please mark ALL that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduction of new technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	New working practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing emphasis on partnership working and collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Changing policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Requirement of funders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Development of new projects and services	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher expectations from clients or users	<input type="checkbox"/>	The needs of clients or users becoming more complex	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				
.....						

6. What particular skills do you think will be important for you, within your organisation, in the future (e.g. within the next 5 years)? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Management skills						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning and forward thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Management of staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implementing quality systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervising staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment & selection of staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnership working	<input type="checkbox"/>

IT skills

<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic computer literacy or IT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Fundraising skills						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of where to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>	How to complete forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other skills						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical and specialist skills in area	<input type="checkbox"/>	Team working skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health and safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer handling skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify and give details	<input type="checkbox"/>		
.....						

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
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If you Don't know or you have answered None please go to Question 11

7. How do you think these future skill requirements can be best met? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Through continuing Professional Development or short courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Through more accredited training, for example, working towards NVQ's	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Through in-house training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Through less formal training such as mentoring, work shadowing or action learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>			

8. To what level of qualification would you like to be trained? (Please mark ALL that apply)

NVQ Level 1 (low GCSE or BTEC introductory certificate or diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ Level 2 (high GCSE or BTEC first diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ Level 3 (A or AS Level or BTEC national award, diploma or certificate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ Level 4 (BTEC higher national certificate or diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ Level 5 (BTEC diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	It doesn't really matter if training is linked to a qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

9. Are you aware of any training providers who can meet your training needs?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
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10. If Yes, who are they?

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11. Do you think it should be your organisation's responsibility to provide training for you?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------

12. If No or Don't know who do you think the emphasis for your training should be upon?

Individual staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Section 3: Training

In this section we would like you to ask you some questions about training within your organisation. By training we mean both training and staff development.

13. Which of the following best describes your organisation's approach to your training?

Training is planned some time in advance and is linked to the organisation's strategic goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some training is planned in advance and is sometimes linked to the organisation's strategic goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training is not really planned and training is provided when the need arises.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training is not provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
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If training is not provided please answer Question 14 and then skip to Question 27. Others please answer Question 15.

14. If training is not provided, why doesn't your organisation provide any training for you? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of cover for training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time taken to attend	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access or distance to training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Availability of suitable training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unaware of any suitable providers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personnel already fully proficient	<input type="checkbox"/>	They don't know what our training needs are	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Now go to Question 27.

15. Is your training carried out...

In-house	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided by external organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixture of in-house and externally provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

If provided externally please answer Question 16, if all In-house please skip to Question 17.

16. Who does the organisation use for your external training? (Please mark ALL that apply)

College	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local CVS (Council for Voluntary Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual consultants	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>		

17. Does any of your training lead to nationally recognised qualifications?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------

18. If Yes, what qualifications does your training lead to? (Please mark ALL that apply)

NVQ Level 1 (low GCSE or BTEC introductory certificate or diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ Level 2 (high GCSE or BTEC first diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ Level 3 (A or AS Level or BTEC national award, diploma or certificate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ Level 4 (BTEC higher national certificate or diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ Level 5 (BTEC diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

19. Have you received any training over the past 12 months?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------

If you have not received any training over the last 12 months please answer Question 20 and then skip to Question 27. If you have received training over the last 12 months please answer Question 21.

**Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
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20. Is there any particular reason why your organisation hasn't undertaken any training for you in the last 12 months? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of cover for training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time taken to attend	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access or distance to training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Availability of suitable training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unaware of any suitable providers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personnel already fully proficient	<input type="checkbox"/>	They don't know what our training needs are	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Now go to Question 27.

21. What types of skills have you been trained for in the last 12 months? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Management skills					
Planning and forward thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Management of staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implementing quality systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervising staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment & selection of staff or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnership working	<input type="checkbox"/>
IT skills					
Basic computer literacy or IT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Fundraising skills					
Knowledge of where to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>	How to complete forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other skills					
Technical and specialist skills in area	<input type="checkbox"/>	Team working skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer handling skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify and give details	<input type="checkbox"/>		

22. Are you generally satisfied with the courses you have received?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
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23. If No, why do you say that? What changes would you like to see in your course provision? (Please mark ALL that apply)

More courses delivered in the evenings and weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>	More courses available locally	<input type="checkbox"/>	Courses are of a high quality	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

24. If Yes, why do you say that? What elements of the course particularly meet closely with your training needs? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Courses available at suitable times	<input type="checkbox"/>	Courses are available locally	<input type="checkbox"/>	Courses are of a high quality	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

25. Do you think your organisation experiences any barriers to providing training for you?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------

Workforce Development in the South West Voluntary and Community Sectors:
Skill Shortages Study
