

WALES YOUTH WORK
Partnership

TOWARDS A WORK PROGRAMME FOR
THE WALES YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP

ABBREVIATIONS

- CETYCW** : Council for Education and Training
in Youth and Community Work
- CVWYS** : Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services
- FEYSAW** : Further Education and Youth Service Officers
Association of Wales
- NEWI** : North East Wales Institute of Higher Education
- NYB** : National Youth Bureau
- VJEC** : Welsh Joint Education Committee

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this paper is to provide members of the Partnership Management Committee with the information and analysis which provides the foundation for the following recommendations :

1. That the Partnership convenes an ad hoc Working Group to organise a Weekend Forum on 11 to 13 July 1986.

The **purposes** of the Forum should be :

- (a) To discuss and agree on the form of infrastructure for the co-ordination and development of youth work practice to be facilitated by the Partnership (a proposed model is the subject of a further paper).
- (b) To discuss and prioritise areas of work to be tackled and to identify appropriate methods of working, resources and mechanisms for evaluation. (A menu of possibilities is the subject of a further paper).
- (c) To discuss the need for an annual youth work forum in Wales and, if it is needed to decide how to organise it.

The **target group** for the Forum should be :

- (i) Full-time staff in local authorities and voluntary organisations who devote a significant part of their activity to the youth service.
 - (ii) Part-time and voluntary youth workers.
 - (iii) Tutors and trainers who carry responsibilities for the initial or in-service training of full-time, part-time or voluntary youth workers.
2. That Partnership staff convene briefing meetings prior to the Forum to ensure as wide a debate as possible and to enable participants to be informed by the views of their colleagues.
 3. That this report forms the basis of a paper to be sent to the Directors of Education, the Directors of the major national voluntary youth organisations and the Director of the School of Social Studies at NEWI, Cartrefle. This paper to be accompanied by a letter from the Chair formally introducing the Partnership and seeking approval for the

involvement of their staff in the Forum and a willingness to consider further involvement arising from the Forum.

4. That the above paper is also sent as a matter of courtesy to all of those who gave their time to meet Partnership staff during the introductory meetings.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The source of the Wales Youth Work Partnership can be traced to a day conference Chaired by Professor George Thomason in Llandrindod Wells on 2 November 1978. The theme of the conference was "The National Youth Bureau - Links and Services in Wales". A Steering Committee established by that conference reported back to a further day conference on 29 September 1980 in Aberystwyth. This conference considered a report "Young People in Wales - A New Perspective",⁽²⁾ and initiated, through a further Steering Committee a proposal to the Welsh Office for the establishment of a Welsh Youth Affairs Unit/Secretariat.

In November 1982 the "first Conference in Wales to be devoted solely to considering the work of the Youth Service" was held and a follow-up Welsh Office Invitation Conference was held on 9 and 10 May 1985. The report of this conference reveals that the Welsh Office invited the WJEC, CWVYS, CETYCW and NYB to put forward a submission suggesting ways in which a national initiative might be structured.⁽⁴⁾ The then Minister of State, Mr. John Stradling Thomas MP, announced at the conference that funding constraints had prevented all of the proposals being accepted but that sufficient funds had been set aside to allow the appointment of two professional officers to cover training and staff development and to promote the dissemination of information and good practice, with administrative support, for a three-year period subject to an annual review.

It is not without significance in the light of subsequent developments that the Minister also said :

"The service should also benefit considerably from the backing which the consortium will receive from the WJEC, from the NYB and from CETYCW. It can also expect, the support and expertise of the voluntary sector through CWVYS and the statutory services represented by the Further Education and Youth Service Association of Wales."

Despite this, the FEYSAW has not been involved in the process of establishing the Partnership or, to date, in its management. CWVYS, on the other hand, has been centrally involved throughout and has two places on the Management Committee

It is also important to note that in finding the funds to set up the Partnership it had not proved possible to also approve CWVYS's submission for a second officer post.

Between May 1985 and the first Management Committee meeting of the Partnership in November 1985, a working group of representatives of CETYCW, CWVYS, NYB and WJEC, took responsibility for staff recruitment and initial preparations for the establishment of the Partnership. The Chair was appointed by the Welsh Office in time to Chair the first Committee meeting, the Training and Development Adviser was in post by 2 December 1985 and the Field Information Officer and Administrative Secretary started work at the beginning of January 1986.

MAKING CONTACTS IN THE FIELD

Initial meetings have been held with a range of individuals and groups as part of the process of familiarising Partnership staff with youth work staff in Wales. Opportunities have also been used to elicit the views and expectations of the Partnership held by different interest groups. In addition to meetings with individuals involved in the management of the Partnership, the following contacts have been made to date :

With the officer(s) responsible for youth work within the eight local authorities in Wales

With officers of five national, voluntary youth organisations

With staff at NEWI, Cartrefle

With groups of full-time youth workers in Gwynedd and Clwyd With

groups of part-time youth workers in Gwynedd and Clwyd

With youth workers at three youth clubs in Powys and two youth centres in South Glamorgan

With a group of young people involved in local youth councils, Youth Link Wales and On Line*

With the North Wales Youth Officers Committee

With the research and information ad hoc group of the National Advisory Council for the Youth Service

INFORMATION GATHERING

During the visits to local authorities information was requested concerning the provision of training for staff involved in youth work. Some completed returns are still awaited. A questionnaire was also piloted to elicit information needs. This led to a questionnaire being sent to a random sample of youth workers throughout Wales and it is anticipated that responses will be collated and analysed by the end of June.

ISSUES ARISING FROM FIELD CONTACTS

In the course of meetings staff have encountered a range of expectations of the Partnership within the local authorities and those voluntary organisations visited. General impressions have also been gathered concerning the current state of youth work across Wales. Items of particular interest or concern regarding the work programme of the Partnership are as follows :

We encountered many expressions of low morale within the local authority service arising mainly from the cumulative effects of years of cutbacks in resources for youth work. One particularly significant observation connected low morale to a lack of confidence and self-esteem amongst workers. Whilst other parts of the education service become more focused on the 'vocational impulse'¹ and resources are allocated accordingly, so workers concerned with the social education and personal development of young people in an informal setting experience difficulties in sustaining a sense of their own worth. This has clear implications for the developmental strategies which the Partnership needs to pursue. In particular, it points in the direction of using methods which build on workers' strengths and enhance their feelings of worth and self-confidence.

* **Youth Link Wales** is an organisation created by a group of young people involved in the CWUYS experimental Project "Young People in the Prevention of Alcohol, Solvent and Drug Misuse".

On Line is the youth information handbook for Wales and is produced by a group of young people, the 'On Liners'.

With some individuals and groups staff encountered a particularly high level of hostility and cynicism about the Partnership. Whilst there was a general acceptance of the need for an organisation to carry out the tasks for which the Partnership was established, there were strongly expressed concerns about the way in which the Partnership had been set up.

some youth officers were clearly angry that FEYSAW had been excluded from the group of organisations which formed the Partnership. In view of the Minister's comments quoted above there would appear to be some justification for this.

more generally, the Partnership was in some cases perceived as having been established from 'on high'¹ without proper dialogue and consultation with the field.

Staff were made abundantly aware of specific issues connected with the culture, geography and politics of Wales.

the Partnership office is located in the southernmost part of the Principality

there are few native Welsh people on the Partnership Management Committee

there is a limited Welsh language capacity within the staff team

there already exists a youth work information and resource base at NEWI, Cartrefle, which, it was suggested, the Partnership may be unnecessarily duplicating

The voluntary organisation officers contacted held a more pragmatic and instrumental view of the Partnership. Some clearly associated the establishment of the Partnership with the failure to establish a second officer post within CWWYS - accordingly some measure of compensation was anticipated, particularly through activity in the training and development area.

Finally, a number of those contacted expressed concern that the limited resources of the Partnership might not prove commensurate with its ambitious aims.

SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

Youth Service Provision in Wales, Education Survey 13, 1984

Survey 13 provides extensive information and analysis about the state of youth work in Wales. With regard to training and development, a summary is provided in paragraph 7.2.18.

"Information obtained on training opportunities and staff development arrangements raises questions about objectives and their relationships to the roles performed, about how content, emphases and sequences are determined, and how methodology is decided; about appropriate levels, frequency and progression; about recruitment and selection procedures; about the transfer of learning from courses to practice, and about tutor selection, preparation and support. An HMI survey of training and staff development opportunities under the auspices of LEA's is taking these issues into consideration."

A Strategy for the In-Service training of those who work full-time in the youth service in Wales, WJEC/CETYCW

The final report of the CETYCW/WJEC Working Group on the above subject was considered at a day conference in March 1986 and a report of that conference is awaited. The Working Group made recommendations to youth service employers and recommendations to the Partnership as follows :

"that a priority of the Training and Development Adviser should be to establish a national programme for the training of officers from both the voluntary and statutory sectors."

"that it establish a group charged with the development of training whose terms of reference include facilitating and keeping under review the promotion of opportunities for staff development and training, publicising training opportunities, monitoring the use made of those opportunities and establishing such groups as would further these purposes."

"that it promote a co-operative learning network of those responsible for implementing the recommendations of this Report; that it seeks appropriate additional resources from the Welsh Office to enable it to service the network and evaluate progress."

"that its Information Officer, in active collaboration with the information centre at the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education, the National Youth Bureau and the Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work, promotes a wider awareness of the modes of training which can be utilised in staff development and the materials that would assist such activities."

"that in collaboration with institutions of higher education , drawing in particular on the enterprise of the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education in training youth workers, should consider how best to produce a scheme whereby modules of accredited training could lead to a national award. Where appropriate the Wales Advisory Body for Local' Authority Higher Education and the Welsh Joint Education Committee should be involved."

Starting from Strengths - The report of the panel to promote the continuing development of training for part-time and voluntary youth and community workers, NYB, Sept. 1984

The significance of this report is that it argues for a move away from basic courses of the 'Bessey'¹ type towards a credit accumulation system through the construction of a "portfolio" of experience and training. It provides an agenda for action at unit level, at authority or organisation level, at regional level and at national level, with the greatest emphasis on unit level.

"It will be clear that we place great emphasis on support and training at this (unit) level. No amount of courses can substitute for sustained support of the kind described. It is this that should form the bedrock of the Youth Services' response to the learning and support needs of the part-time and voluntary youth worker."

At regional level the panel identified RAC's as the appropriate vehicles for monitoring, moderating and validating training provision and for the training of trainers and tutors.

Report of the feasibility study on a regional resource and development unit for North West England, NYB 1985

This feasibility study was conducted by NYB in conjunction with Manchester Polytechnic and involved extensive consultation with youth and community work interests throughout the North West of England. Had a similar study been undertaken

in Wales it is difficult to predict whether the outcomes and issues identified would have been similar, but the findings of the study should nevertheless provide pointers for the Partnership in the development of its work programme.

In defining the work of a regional resource unit a central principle to emerge was that the unit should be enabling and to base its work on needs as identified by its client group:

As one local authority described it

".....the starting point of the resource team needs to be the current position of its client group at any one time. It will begin where the users are, with their perception of need, and not impose perception of need or solutions. Colleagues need to be encouraged to work out their own issues, problems and find their own solutions if that is what they seek."

In relation to information and resources the researcher identified support for an information clearing house, a facility for the preparation of materials on specific issues, computer-assisted networking of resources/information to local units, and the development of methods to encourage workers to communicate about their work.

"An important function of a regional unit would be to develop ways that work could be written up or made accessible through a range of possible media. Field workers time is an important factor. But the spin-off in terms of morale and a sense of worth for workers involved in this process should not be underestimated."

In relation to development the North West study revealed a consensus around the need to identify and promote good practice via field-led curriculum development.

"The unit might establish development working groups around particular issues. These might operate either regionally, or sub-regionally with groups covering a number of local authority areas in a part of the region. These models have been discussed at a number of meetings with great interest. Groups would be expected to promote development through identification of existing work, research, and support of innovative work, workshops etc. This is seen as mutually supportive, field-led curriculum development. It builds on the strengths which already exist and capitalises on the enormous potential for collaboration across local authority and organisational boundaries. It is seen as an entirely realistic approach which can liberate considerable energy and open up a flow of ideas. But it cannot happen without the mechanism to initiate, support, service and sustain it."

In relation to the support and training of full-time workers a number of suggestions were made regarding the form that a regional unit's role might take, for example:

- as a clearing house for training opportunities
- facilitating the sharing of training expertise
- joint sponsorship of training initiatives
- possible devolution of CETYCW responsibilities
- facilitating field-led training regionally and sub-regionally
- developing support networks and consultancy panels
- developing a role in relation to student placements

The study was less clear about the role of a regional unit in relation to part-time and voluntary worker training but did identify a role in relation to facilitating field-led research in co-operation with training agencies. In relation to a Forum role, the following functions were identified.

- organisation of conferences, seminars, etc., to identify areas of work that can be co-ordinated through the development of regional policies
- to evaluate practice
- to make arrangements for information exchange and debate matters of topical interest
- to represent and lobby for the needs of the region

In relation to the staffing levels required by such a unit, this report sounded a useful warning;

"unless there is an adequate level of core staff (41 proposed) it would be impossible to take on the functions which have been identified. Many went further and argued that too few staff could be counter-productive in raising expectations which could not be met and would put unacceptable pressures on those asked to do the work."

It also highlighted staff secondment, (of both full- and part-time workers) as the most realistic method of obtaining the staffing input needed to take on significant amounts of developmental work. This method would also offer the field an exciting prospect for staff development.

Perhaps the main implication of this feasibility study for the work programme of the Partnership is that to be effective, objectives and priorities need to be determined by the field. The role of the Partnership must also be essentially enabling rather than providing.

PLANNING PROCESS

Arising from the Partnership Management Committee meeting in January, the Training and Development Adviser initiated a planning process which involved convening a small group composed of one representative of each 'Partner'¹ organisation which met at the end of February. The group addressed a series of questions intended to assist in the development of a work programme. Written responses were also invited from those members of the Management Committee who were not involved in the small group meeting and these were tabled at the meeting. Also tabled at the meeting was a letter from the Welsh Office indicating a wish to see the purposes of the Partnership translated into priority areas of work; a statement of how the priorities are to be tackled; what form of delivery is envisaged; and how the effectiveness of the plans are to be evaluated. The outcomes of this meeting are listed in an Appendix.

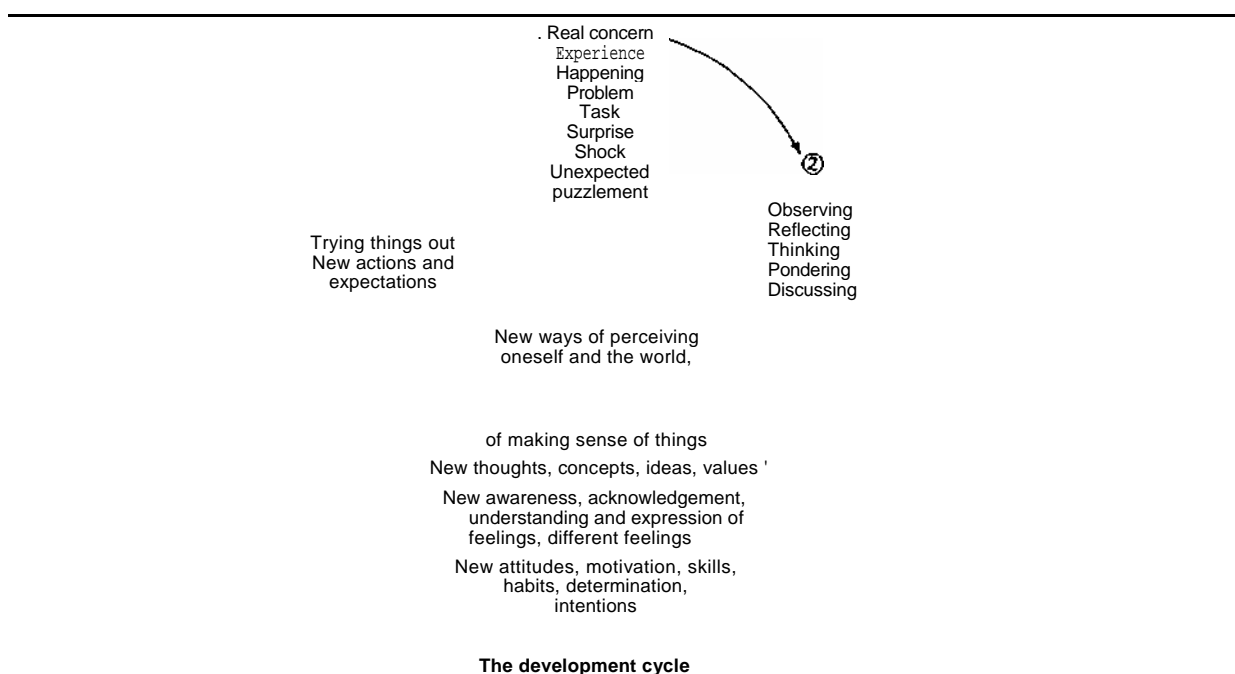
PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

In choosing to call itself a PARTNERSHIP, the Partnership evokes a major tenet of the youth service from the 1944 Education Act through to the Report of the Review Group on the Youth Service in England (Thompson Report). Partnership in the Youth Service context normally refers to the partnership between local education authorities and voluntary organisations and this is reflected in the composition of the organisation's Management Committee. The WJEC and CWVYS are the appropriate representative bodies who, together with the bodies having England and Wales responsibilities for youth service, CETYCW and NYB, make up the four partners. The point is made earlier that between the Ministerial announcement in May 1985 and the first meeting of the Partnership in November 1985, FEYSAW moved from a position of apparent equal status with CWVYS to no decision-making involvement. The point has also been made, not without a trace of irony, in meetings attended by staff,

that the Partnership is representative of everything except the field and the young people it is in business to serve. It is a considered view that great care should be taken to provide representation and access in an open and accountable fashion.

PARTICIPATION is the other principle on which the youth service is founded and refers, in practice and in legend, to the participation of young people in the decision-making processes of their youth groups and organisations. It is based in the belief that young people grow and develop as persons through opportunities to exercise personal authority, to make choices, to act with autonomy and with individual and collective responsibility. The same can be argued (to be consistent it almost has to be argued) on behalf of those adults who work with young people and hence the emphasis in most of the reports cited previously on 'field-led' developments. It is likely that the effectiveness of the Partnership will be crucially influenced by its willingness and ability to honour this principle by enabling the field-led developments to occur.

The third principle is connected with the climate within which the Partnership will work and will have a responsibility for creating. It is the principle of LIFELONG LEARNING which is the cornerstone of community education theory and practice. Its essence in relation to the training support, and development needs of youth work staff is that staff at all levels need to be continually engaged in a learning system through which they can develop their practice. A useful model is that of the development cycle formulated by Tom Boydell (5)



The Partnership may be well placed to encourage and facilitate a range of methods to engage youth work staff in such a cycle.

AIM

The aim of the Partnership is first clearly expressed in the details sent to prospective applicants for the post of Training and Development Adviser.

"The aim is to provide an infrastructure for the co-ordination and development of youth work practice throughout the voluntary and statutory youth services in Wales."

PURPOSES

Eight purposes were identified in the initial submission for funding to the Welsh Office.

1. to promote and provide support for social education and youth work responses to the needs and aspirations of young people throughout Wales;
2. to establish effective co-operation between statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations seeking to meet those needs;
3. to create increased opportunities for effective participation by young people building on initiatives started in International Youth Year;
4. to provide servicing and support to local networks through information, training and development;
5. to make available in-service training for full-time workers, part-time and voluntary workers, and senior members throughout Wales;
6. to publish accounts of useful and innovatory practice in addition to making available other information relevant to those working with young people;
7. to provide a forum for discussion, decision and joint action on youth issues in Wales; to arrange or co-operate in the arrangement of conferences, seminars and study groups on priority issues and on specialist areas;

8. to work with the staff of the Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work, the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services, the National Youth Bureau, and the Welsh Joint Education Committee in pursuit of improving youth work practice, policy and provision and seeking to promote the availability of their services, publications and expertise to youth work in Wales.

Note: These purposes were established on the basis of a staffing establishment which included a Field Services Adviser post which has not been funded. Priority in the first instance is to be given to purposes (4) to (8) above.

METHODS

The Partnership must now respond to the request from the Welsh Office to:

- (i) translate its purposes into priority areas of work
- (ii) identify methods of tackling priorities
- (iii) decide on appropriate forms of delivery and evaluation

If these are to follow from a synthesis of the considerations presented above, then of central importance will be the way in which and the extent to which the initiators of the Partnership are able to engage with field interests in collaboratively determining future direction. The recommendations have been arrived at in an effort to ensure that the Partnership achieves its aim and purposes in the longer term.

Two further papers which will provide background for the proposed Weekend Forum in July 1986 outline a suggested structure through which the Partnership may progress its work and details the range of possible initiatives from which priorities may be determined.

J. ROONEY

April 1986

WHAT ARE THE "KEY PURPOSES" OF THE WYWP ?

1. to promote and provide support for social education and youth work responses to the needs and aspirations of young people throughout Wales;
2. to establish effective co-operation between statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations seeking to meet those needs;
3. to create increased opportunities for effective participation by young people building on initiatives started in International Youth Year;
4. to provide servicing and support to local networks through information, training, and development;
5. to make available in-service training for full-time workers, part-time and voluntary workers, and senior members throughout Wales;
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WHAT ARE THE INTERNAL "STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES"

Strengths

officers
 motivation
 commitment
 resources of 'Partners'
 objectivity
 "Partnership concepts"
 potential for innovation
 collective experience

Weaknesses

shortage of staff
 lack of credibility
 suspicion of 'English '
 bilingual ignorance
 lack of knowledge
 lack of accountability
 poor structure
 hostility
 financial restraints
 lack of direct field involvement
 lack of time differing expectations

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR "ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES" ?

North/South Wales
Welsh language
unemployment
Rural isolation
Urban deprivation
Lack of provision/facilities/services
Lack of staff leadership
Low morale
Fear of innovation
Lack of 'supportive'¹ structures
Resistance to external exposure
Creative potential
high articulation - young people

DESCRIPTION

1. What will WYWP achieve as a result of its activity ?

(Impact on the 'field')

- (i) improvements in Youth Work practice, provision and policy (in response to issues, needs of young people).
- (ii) improvements in the confidence and morale of youth service staff.
- (iii) enhanced recognition of status, identity and profile of Welsh Youth Work.
- (iv) clarity of purpose of Youth Work (assist the 'field')
- (v) improvements in structures for decision-making at all levels
- (vi) improvements in recognition - response to the needs of 16-25 year olds (especially disadvantaged)
- (vii) heighten recognition for the need for staff development and in-service training
- (viii) recognition of WYWP's role as a clearing house for training responses and resources
- (ix) develop programme for 'Training the Trainer'
- (x) develop training for part-time workers
- (xi) develop managerial and entrepreneurial skills at all levels

PERFORMANCE

1. What indicators will be used to assess whether or not the results have been achieved

renewal of funding

evaluation of training events and every initiative

amount of use made of information service and regular feedback from 'clients' on relevance and usefulness

spontaneous feedback

'gut' reaction

improvement in quality and quantity of provision and practice

increase in sales or demand for published output

higher media profile increased resources

2. What specific target levels or performance have been set with reference to the indicators ?

The group had insufficient time to address this question.

2. Which groups will benefit, in what way and to what extent from the activity?

The young person, p/t and f/t workers, officers

youngsters in that the YS will be more flexible and imaginative in its styles of response

part-timers in that full-timers will be more support! e and will have helped them to create clear terms of reference

full-timers will have an effective say in development; receive and participate in a programme of in-service training that has a logical and clear pattern; will have a firmer understanding of their organisation's aims and objectives and how they are to be achieved.

officers perhaps have most to gain from a move towards more democratic structures, from a national programme of in-service training, and to a lesser extent, staff development. They will need to support developments and learn to manage change, divert and protect resources and learn how best to ensure that their own staff develop to their full potential.

3. How will these benefits be secured ?

A better and more widely available information service by improving on existing structures.

Through helping units and organisations to establish and question (regularly) their aims and objectives

Through facilitating the creation of policies and programmes of staff developments and training.

Through the adoption of participative methods, e.g.

- young people in the running of their club/group, etc.
- p/t staff in the formulation of training programmes, criteria for evaluating success at work

f/t staff in helping to decide the agenda of monthly meetings with with officers, the content of in-service training policies, etc

officers in creating a climate where all the above and much more can develop

REFERENCES

- (1) One Day Conference Report - "The National Youth Bureau - Links and Services in Wales", CWVYS 1979
- (2) Young People in Wales - A New Perspective. A Report by the Steering Group appointed by the above conference. Publisher unknown.
- (3) Referred to in 'The Proceedings of a Conference held in the Welsh Office, Cathays Park, Cardiff.'¹ Welsh Office 1985.
- (4) Above.
- (5) Management Self-Development, Tom Boydell. International Labour Office, Geneva.