

Youth Service in Wales 1939-1974

The ‘war-years’ (1939 – 45) and the years immediately following were described as a *‘painful, yet oddly exhilarating period of social awakening’* (HMSO 1960 Para.1.6). This was an awakening created out of the alchemy of two disturbing European Wars, the effects of which became apparent in political, economic, educational, cultural and social life, fundamentally influencing the nature of adolescence. Many young people in Wales and elsewhere lived through stressful times described as being deeply rooted in the soil of a disturbed world (ibid.).

The Government response was Circular 1486 (HMSO 1939) which promoted the need for a comprehensive Youth Service involving both the voluntary sector and local authorities. This expeditious intervention was driven by wide-ranging concerns about young people’s lack of adult control and influence. At the outbreak of war in 1939, 80% of young people left school at 14, with less than half being attached to a youth organisation (Powell 1962). This situation particularly at a time of crisis was unacceptable to those in power and central Government quickly assumed a *“direct responsibility for youth welfare”* (HMSO 1939:1). It would achieve this through the introduction of a Government-maintained Youth Service, as part of a national system of out of school education, focused on those between 14 and 20 years. The rationale for this prescribed age-range lay in the reason for the intervention, namely, the protection of young people because:

“the strain of war and the disorganisation of family life have created conditions which constitute a serious menace to youth”

HMSO (1939: p1)

The Circular did not advocate any significant shift away from the historical ways of attempting to ensure the conformity of working class young people; rather it was concerned to make an impact, by introducing new funding arrangements and by developing locally determined priorities. As a result, the philanthropic, controlling approach used previously remained (Butters and Newell 1978, Jeffs 1979, Smith 1988). The impact of the Circular was supported by the introduction of a National Youth Committee responsible for advising local authorities in England and Wales on the

strategic direction of the Youth Service, with a particular focus on how resources could best be used. This new organisation became responsible for making grants towards the costs of premises and equipment and by providing instructors for a wide range of activities (Cantor and Roberts 1972). State intervention also resulted in the identification and promotion of what were described as the three component parts of the Youth Service: central Government, local authority and the voluntary organisations (Leicester and Farndale 1967). The proposed model failed, however, to recognise the variance between the history of the voluntary service in England and the voluntary sector in Wales, which was at a very different stage of its evolution. This failure caused fundamental problems in Wales with the idea of partnership between the voluntary and maintained local authority Youth Service being at the earliest opportunity “*conveniently forgotten giving way to keen competition bordering on rivalry*” (Frost 1984:25). As a consequence many local authorities attempted to monopolise the new situation by “*ignoring the voluntary organisations and regarding them as well meaning amateurs*” (Ibid. 1984: 25). The involvement of young people was also largely ignored and they continued to be identified in the same way as they had been during the expansion of the voluntary Youth Service – as beneficiaries of adult-determined programmes, designed to ensure as far as possible their socialisation as conforming citizens. This concept has become peppered throughout numerous reports on the Youth Service since Circular 1486, often with the same degree of confusion of meaning and contradiction. It has, along with participation of young people, been the recurring theme for the Youth Service to the present day. During the post war period and beyond, major changes have occurred which have defined and re-defined the economic and hence social status of young people. This position is supported by Lister (1991) who claims that the wage as an outcome of employment has been traditionally important as the means of economic independence for youth; a life position that has been described as the key to citizenship. No analysis of the developing pattern of youth work and the social policy that attempts to define it in Wales during the period 1939-1974 can ignore the correlation between citizenship and economic independence, it transcends the notion of conformity (Jones B 2004).

In a more general sense the Government, through Circular 1486 and other reports of the time continued to ignore the context within which young people lived in Wales. Possibly

the greatest and most powerful Empire in history, driven overwhelmingly by English culture, had chosen to maintain its belief that what existed in Wales was no more than an extension of England (Davies 1999). Jones and Rose (NYA 2001) have offered an argument about the unique aspects of Youth Work in Wales underpinned by its specific social, political, industrial and religious differences. To compare the two profiles of youth work in England and Wales is too complex for this essay with each having their unique and common elements. They were, however, driven by a common purpose, which was to form the foundation of the working arrangements of a holistic and co-ordinated provision for the education of young working class people outside of school. It was anticipated that the outcomes would result in an effective organisation for inculcating young people into contemporary social culture through their involvement in Youth Service programmes underpinned by traditional middle-class values.

Radical and far-reaching plans were being prepared however for the development of a new society within which those involved in the Youth Service in Wales hoped to find a secure purpose and role. Social policy changes were being introduced from 1941 with the new Interdepartmental Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services clearly indicating the coalition Government's intent to ensure that society was to be developed to assist all its weaker members in their time of need. The Determination of Needs Act (HMSO 1941) supported this principle and set out to promote a society within which there would no longer be any second class citizens (Bruce 1968). Young people had a key role to play in this new agenda and the Government clearly articulated their importance by describing them as the country's greatest natural resource and trained young people its greatest need (HMSO 1943). To maximise this potential the suggestion was made of the necessity to support young people during the critical years following school (ibid.). The 1944 Education Act attempted to maintain this theme when it placed a duty on every local authority to ensure that their area had adequate facilities for further education which were to include "*leisure time occupation.... for any person over compulsory school age*" including "*play centres and other places*" and which could be used for "*recreation and social and physical training*". From the influence of the 1944 Education Act, youth work in Wales became located within Further Education Sector of the Local Education Provision. Further Education Officers were responsible for all 'Youth Service' activities,

both in the maintained and voluntary Sector. Despite the positive government intervention concern was being expressed about the uncertainty of the future for both young people and the Youth Service. Of particular concern was the possibility of compulsory National Service and the introduction of County Colleges, which would see much of the leisure time activities of young people moved into their domain as they introduced facilities such as residential accommodation, swimming pools, concert halls and playing fields (Evans 1965).

Further support was offered through the publication of a Government report (HMSO 1945a) which attempted to examine the purpose and content of the Youth Service. Its job, it said was to involve young people in a participative process different from school or work, voluntarily undertaken, complementary to other activities and approached from the standpoint of recreation. Emphasis was given to encouraging young people to experience new and different activities including an involvement in social and political systems as a means of ensuring their participation in the wider municipal, national and international community. Despite the articulation of these ideals the controlling function of the new centrally funded Youth Service was also evident because the report stated that young people were faced with dangers associated with a *“background of instability, social and economic, and of changing moral standards”* (ibid: 5).

Unfortunately many of the fears of those working in the Youth Service at this time were realised and shortly after the end of the war in 1945 the Youth Service became abandoned within a declining post war economic environment. With little centralised support the Youth Service in Wales quickly became affected by diverse levels of interpretation and neglect by local authorities.

2.4 THE SLIP INTO DECLINE 1945- 1951

The Labour party was elected to national Government in 1945 by campaigning on the need for both social reform, through the nationalisation of many parts of the economy, and the introduction of a comprehensive social security system and National Health

Service. Elected with a majority of 146, with 25 of the 36 seats in Wales, the Labour Party was able to plan its legislative programme with confidence. Underpinning this programme was the Beveridge Report (HMSO 1942) which set out the plans for developing a more egalitarian society related to the Government's core agenda of social equality. Priorities were, however, seriously and ultimately critically affected by the economic situation (Evans 1975). A central priority at this time was action to address the problems arising from the destruction of housing stock and the significant damage to schools and other buildings as a result of the blitz. Places for young people to meet were not a priority and an immediate consequence was that all building work associated with the Youth Service was stopped (Evans 1965).

However, documents continued to be produced during the immediate period following the end of the war. Circular 51 (HMSO 1945b) was published detailing new funding arrangements, which emphasised the relationship problems between the voluntary and maintained sectors in Wales. A further report (HMSO 1945c) was also produced that attempted to both map the progress of the Youth Service and define the responsibilities of the Local Education Authorities in the future. In a pragmatic sense these were seen to have permanent structures able to ensure continuity of policy and appropriate financial resources to provide security and status for salaried workers. They were also within the control of publicly elected bodies, able to account for public expenditure for the Youth Service, and promote the ideals of democracy. This would be achieved by the promotion of a methodological approach based on the voluntary commitment of young people within an environment that promoted "*variety, freedom, self government and easy relationships between members and leaders*" (ibid: 8). The intended outcome of this was the inculcation of young people into what was described as a preparation for the responsibilities of "*adult citizenship*". The principal recommendations of the report clearly identified the Youth Service as providing *leisure opportunities* for all young people that would not be age bound, delivered through a partnership arrangement between the maintained and voluntary sectors. Structurally, overall responsibility for the Youth Service would be the statutory duty of the Ministry of Education devolved to local education authorities who would devise procedures ensuring the maintenance of existing resources while progressively increasing the provision of facilities. In Wales it was

planned to create a system of informal education opportunities for young people by constructing a system to “*progressively extend the provision for camps, swimming baths, playing fields, training courses of instructors, libraries, co-operation in eisteddfodau, festivals sports etc*” (HMSO 1945c: section 12).

During this time the embryonic local authority Youth Service in Wales continued to struggle to develop an identity that would both assist those working within it to recognise their responsibilities and to inform Government and the wider public of its value. This role confusion was caused by the description of the Youth Service as an education service (HMSO 1939, HMSO 1944) a position contradicted by HMSO (1945c) which described the Youth Service in Wales as a leisure service providing facilities for the social and physical training of young people. This uncertainty of role between education or leisure service provider was caused primarily by a lack of effective direction and support from central Government. This position was exacerbated by the actions of many Local Education Authorities who saw the emerging Youth Service as a soft target and reduced expenditure without fear of reprisal during times of financial stringency (a phenomenon that has affected the Youth Service ever since).

The elimination of this confusion and the confirmation of the strategic role of the Youth Service could have been assisted by the local education authority audit planned to provide the basis of development plans for Further Education Colleges and County Colleges (HMSO 1947). The outcomes and subsequent proposal for the Youth Service focused on operational issues however, at the expense of a more strategic intervention concerned to describe how the service would transfer Government policy of the day into something of value to both central Government and young people (Barnes 1948). However the economic circumstances described previously resulted in a halt in all youth welfare expenditure and Government made no statement on a national policy for youth work (Evans 1965, Cantor and Roberts 1972).

What did result was a pressure for economy resulting in the cessation of Youth Service building work, savage cuts in grant aid and a reduction in the numbers of workers in

training. This was followed by the departure of many experienced workers and the decline of the Youth Service into what became described as the “*the years of doubt and indecision*” (Evans 1965).

2.4 SAVED BY THE TEDDY BOY 1951-1964

The Conservative Party, under Winston Churchill, won the General Election of 1951. Their manifesto for the election “Britain Strong and Free” was keen to promote a traditional approach and criticised the negative effect of nationalisation and the financial extravagance of the Labour Government which had led to devaluation of the pound. The manifesto was also concerned to develop two key themes of freedom and abundance that would be achieved by increasing national output, with hard work, good management and thrift having their reward. It was also claimed that the “*Conservative Government would cut out all unnecessary expenditure*” (ibid. 45) – a political statement that has always appeared to spell danger for the Youth Service. This proved to be true and by 1952-3 the Youth Service was identified by both a shortage of accommodation and leaders, as a direct result it is claimed of Government neglect resulting in a low level of priority and the reduction of finances (Peters 1967).

In 1955 the Conservatives under the leadership of Anthony Eden won 344 seats to the 277 of Labour. This was followed in 1959 with the margin of victory increased to 365 seats to 258 under the leadership of Macmillan (Butler and Rose 1960). The period between 1951 and 1964 was a pivotal time in the sense that it can be identified by its rapid and significant social change which questioned the class divide by raising the standards of living for the mass of people (Monk 1976). Supporting these fundamental changes were technological advances resulting in an increase of 1 million white collar workers and the decrease of 500,000 blue collar workers that further blurred the class structure (Lipset and Bendix 1959). Underpinning many of these developments were the outcomes of the Butler Education Act of 1944 which had improved the opportunities for secondary education to a point where there were significant increases in the proportion of young people staying on in school beyond the school leaving age (Butler and Rose 1960).

The Youth Service did not flourish within this environment of peace, prosperity and increasing availability of commercial alternatives for young people and it continued to decline. It was estimated by the end of the decade that Government expenditure on the Youth Service had fallen by about 25% in real terms since 1945-6 (HMSO 1960). This negative attitude and resultant political indifference had an obvious effect on morale and by the end of the 1950's it was claimed the Youth Service was only reaching about one-third of young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one (ibid.).

However both the public and Government during the second half of the 1950's felt uneasy about what they perceived as the growing threat of juvenile delinquency. This was supported with specific moral panics generated by the appearance of 'Teddy Boys' the image portrayed by actors such as James Dean and Marlon Brando and the release of Bill Haley's 'Rock around the Clock'. Young people on the streets of Welsh towns and villages became seen as a threat by the wider community as the gentler image of the monkey parade (Jones and Rose 2001) was overtaken by what was seen by many as a more outwardly aggressive youth culture. Public concern was also expressed about another perceived revolt built around the organised Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament which was seen as attracting groups of mainly left wing young people (Bedarida 1979). This feeling of public and Government discomfort was further exacerbated by the literary revolt involving a number of authors who claimed they were: "*disappointed by the dullness and deferential smugness engendered by the mating of the Acquisitive Society with the Welfare State* (ibid.). These public concerns linked to the possibility of additional problems as a result of the post war baby boom (Cantor and Roberts 1972) led to criticisms of central Government intransigence. The response was the setting up a committee under the chairmanship of Countess Albemarle in November 1958 to carry out a review of the Youth Service. This action was seen as critical by some because there was a growing recognition that despite its perceived potential to deal with growing moral panics it was in serious decline to a point where it described at the time of the Review as "*dying on its feet*" (HMSO 1960:v.).

The purpose of the Youth Service was described in the Review as social and pastoral rather than educational with its function being the provision of activities complementary to the training received at home, school and at work. Activities would, the report claimed, be built around three elements *association, training and challenge* which would provide young people with opportunities to maintain a sense of *fellowship*, the development of capacity for making *sound judgements* and something that was *worthwhile but beyond pleasure or personal reward*.

The general effects of the Review have been well recorded (Davies 1999,) but the specific implications for the Youth Service in Wales less so. This was due to the failure of the Review Committee to recognise all but the most obvious of differences between the service in England and Wales and the rejection of a specific Youth Service Development Council for Wales. A Council for England and Wales was set up however with an instruction to include within its membership “*at least two with knowledge of the special problems of Wales*” (HMSO 1960:108). This was a familiar phenomenon for Wales used to under representation on UK bodies dealing with Youth Service issues, a position exacerbated by the lack of a collegiate structure to democratically or strategically select effective representatives. This resulted in the dominant Local Education Authority i.e. Glamorgan or the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) determining the representation on the YSCD and promoting a particular style of Welsh Youth Service that could be identified as English speaking based in the urbanised areas of the south.

The responses to HMSO 1960 from the Glamorgan LEA are quite significant in understanding the nature of youth work in Wales at this time. The Authority represented the largest percentage of the population of Wales, and had set up systems of practice that were recognised for their quality. In November 1958, driven by a growing awareness that youth work was changing to have closer links with school and the world of work, the LEA set up a Sub-Committee of the FE Committee to specifically shadow and monitor the work of the Review. The Further Education Committee of Glamorgan recorded mixed views about its recommendations. They did not, for example, accept the recommendation that the Youth Service should be available for all young people aged 14-20 because they

had already committed themselves to Senior Centre Provision for those aged 14yrs 9 months - 25 years of age, (Glamorgan County Council 1960). In justification for this rejection they quoted the success of the older members of Taibach Youth Centre whose reputation in Youth Drama was world-known, Richard Burton had started his career on their stage. Others centres including Aberkenfig were held up examples of good practice of working with older young people of South Wales. There was also limited provision in the County for Junior Centres catering for the 11-15 year olds. The FE Committee recommended that the County Council retain the present arrangement. School based youth provision understandably found favour because 55 primary schools in the County already had such provision. More positively received was the recommendation that consideration should be given to planning new secondary schools with a community wing, which could be used for both adults and young people. This recommendation resulted in 11 school campus-based Youth wings by the time of the boundary changes of 1974, each staffed by two full-time youth workers. Following 'Albermarle' these wings adopted a 'coffee bar' approach to youth work, from where developing relationships with young people would blossom into spontaneous activities. Recommendations about the training and qualifications of youth workers were also enthusiastically received and acted upon (Glamorgan County Council 1964).

'Albermarle' did identify two areas of specific concerns relevant to the Youth Service in Wales. The first was the issue of grants to voluntary organisations in Wales made through their English based headquarters who received a block allocation direct from central Government. The Report did not make a specific decision on the issue, but stated that it would expect that a proportional amount of any increased grant would be passed on to Welsh organisations. The second area of concern was the apparent lack of support given to voluntary organisations by Welsh Local Education Authorities where it was stated that *"some of the most glaring examples of such inequalities were given by witnesses from Wales"* (HMSO1960 p).

There findings of the Review led to a period of optimism and debate on the purpose of Youth Service in Wales which was coupled with intense growth and development, built on a significant expansion programme (Peters 1967). This was matched by the

programme to train additional full-time leaders and by 1964 there were 1100 (an increase of 400) qualified against the 1960 target of 1300 by 1965 (Chataway 1967). In Wales between 1957 and 1967 there was an increase in youth officers from 14 to 38 (171%) with only one authority, Carmarthanshire, having no designated officer. Full-time workers increased from 10 to 53 (430%) although 4 authorities (23.5%) still had no full time workers. Part-time workers increased from 959 to 1153 (20%) in maintained youth centres that had expanded in numbers from 300 to 385 (28%) with budget increases of 324% from £280,901 to £911,110 (HMSO 1969). There was also significant growth in the Youth Service building programme. Pembrokeshire Youth Service constructed ten purpose built centres in the most populated areas of the authority. Merioneth opened four purpose built youth centres, Caernarfonshire opened two new youth centres, a specialist outdoor and residential conference centre and three full time community centres. Denbighshire opened four new youth and community centres, 13 separate youth centres and the flagship Queens Park Youth and Recreation Centre opened in Wrexham in 1965 at a cost of £64,500 (YSIC 1970).

Unfortunately, the explosion of new buildings and the training of large numbers of new workers were not matched by a collective, strategic view of the role of the Youth Service in Wales. Little attention was given to the development of a mechanism that matched what the Youth Service in Wales did with the requirements of its main source of funding – central Government. During the early years following the publication of the Albemarle Report little attention seems to have been given to constructing a collectively agreed purpose or value base for the Welsh Youth Service. What appeared to be happening was uncoordinated growth involving significant numbers of recently qualified workers (many trained for one year under emergency powers) operating in new neighbourhood youth centres without the benefit of local knowledge or the support of robust management systems. Within this environment, programmes were underpinned by stereotypical attitudes and low expectations: boys were seen as only being interested in sport and girls only interested in boys (Tash 1963). This position was identified by an analysis of youth club activities carried out three years after HMSO 1960 which revealed peripheral youth

work issues, such as physical activities had been expanded, while association, the central philosophy of the Report, was neglected (Youth Service 1963).

There was an indication towards the end of the 1960's that the nature of youth work was to change, a change, which would have fundamental implications for working with young people in Wales by the end of the Century. Those changes were being flagged up by the Reports of the Youth Employment Services of South Wales, who in their reports during the late 1950/60s on matters of youth employment were getting more and more despondent. In the mid-sixties they were suggesting that young people were taking longer at school-leaving time to find work, there were subtle hints that they should stay at school longer; suggesting that raising the school-leaving age was political expediency. In 1962 LEAs across Wales began to change the school-leaving dates to cope with the problems of the transition from school to work. This was supported (HMSO 1963) by the recommendation that the school leaving age should be raised to 16, and that the last year of school should be an **'initiation into the world of work'**. So as Jones and Wallace claim:

“the pathways out of school were beginning to be transformed by the structure of the education, training and labour systems”.

(Jones J & Wallace C.)

So also were the beginnings of new pathways to a different approach to youth work and a raft of provision for young people with their growing sophistication increasingly influenced by the commercial world and the powerful messages of the 'swinging sixties'.

2.6 THE TEENAGE CONSUMER 1964-1970

This period of time was potentially of great importance to the Youth Service in Wales as it was to the Youth Service in the rest of the UK still affected as it was by the explosion of resources and political attention following the publication of the Albemarle Report. It was a time affected by radical legislation and by buoyant growth in personal wealth. It

was also a time of great and continuous change for youth culture, affected and directed by a new approach in music, art, fashion and literature, within which young people became active participants and consumers (Marwick 1999). Unfortunately it also marked the start of the decline of the Youth Service as it once again struggled to respond to contemporary circumstances. Denis Howell, under-secretary of State highlighted this by describing the Youth Service as an organisation operating in a policy vacuum unaware of either Government or young people's needs (Youth Review 1965:6). Howell offered to help it find its way by describing the Government's vision for it. The Youth Service he said had at its centre a broad-based curriculum including hostelling, camping, environmental service, social service and appreciation of arts and recreation. However the development of a collective Youth Service purpose continued to be ignored during the mid 1960's. Howell (Youth Review 1968: 3), claimed that after more than three years as the Minister for Youth and Sport in the job he was still trying with very little success, to identify its role. To assist he once again gave clear guidance. The Youth Service, he said, had a simple function. Its job was to enable the development of the individual and the individual personality by providing a wide variety of opportunities for young people to enjoy their leisure and recreation. It was an informal service that needed to move away from the concept of the youth club or risk losing its appeal for young people particularly those over the age of 16. Its work, including guiding and counselling, would be carried out in a wider variety of settings, including leisure centres, sports clubs, cultural clubs and further education institutes and the focus of youth work would be the unattached. Central to this vision was the introduction of a method of working that involved young people in activities that caught their imagination utilised their natural interests and gave them positive rather than negative reputations within their communities. This work would be delivered in the context of a growing community responsibility that would blur the age ranges of those using the service and would more fully utilise resources such as school buildings.

The Government's commissioned reports on the relationship between the Youth Service and schools and between the Youth Service and the community (a consistent theme of Howell rhetoric) were also published during this time. These two reports were

amalgamated into the single Milson and Fairburn report, (HMSO 1969). The report was not received with much enthusiasm by those working in the field or from the Government of the day who did not accept the findings. Central to these was a new philosophy for the Youth Service, advocating an education and experience approach for its work for membership of an active society (Etzioni 1968). Two strands drove this concept: that social change is inevitable and individuals within this context should be empowered to contribute to the effects of those changes as they affect their lives. For the Youth Service in Wales the implications of the Report, were related to the greater involvement of young people in its work and within the wider society. A target that would be achieved by their encouragement to *“play an active part in a society, which they themselves will help to mould”* (HMSO 1969: 2). Political education was also emphasised by the comment *“few young people have any political education at all; with the lowering of the voting age this vacuum is more noticeable and needs filling”* (ibid: 4). Central to this change in philosophy were the statements related to the broadening of the service in terms of age range (a position in direct opposition to HMSO 1960) which should be changed to include all those who had need of it. The damage to the Youth Service by this particular statement was considerable as options for working with both children and adults were considered and implemented resulting in a downward spiral of involvement from those previously targeted. It was claimed, the Youth Service in Wales turned its back on young adults as an identifiable group by introducing provisions that 17, 18, 19, and 20 year olds could not relate to (National Association of Youth Clubs 1977).

In Wales the influence of sections of the Report resulted in many youth workers becoming Youth & Community Workers, Youth Centres were opened to all particularly the very young. The pledge by the Glamorgan Youth Service to offer provision to Senior Members faded in an influx of children, the average age of young people attending youth provision dropped dramatically. The very character of the ‘centres’ changed. Long standing youth projects including Drama Festivals, the Eisteddfod and all Wales Sporting & Athletic meetings failed to attract new participants. There were some persuasive ideas in Milsom & Fairbairn, but they failed to take root through a reluctance of youth workers in Wales to consider them and to apply them in the best interests of young people. As a

consequence of this neglect and with new Local authority boundary changes in 1974 the Youth Service in Wales slipped into a sharp decline as it struggled to find a new identity

1970-1974

Ted Heath, leader of the Conservative Party, became Prime Minister in 1970 with the promise to reorganise the machinery of Government, reduce public expenditure as part of its strategy for dealing with the economy and to undertake a major reform of industrial relations (Sked and Cook, 1984). Action with regard to the first promise was contained within HMSO (1969) which saw the merging of a number of Government departments and the setting up of a small multi-disciplinary policy review group with the role of outlining for the Cabinet the wider implications of Government programmes. Decisions related to the economy were quickly implemented and included the abolition of free milk for schoolchildren and an increase in the cost of school meals, prescription and dental charges. Underlying these decisions was a statement from the Ministry for Education that claimed in a debate on public expenditure that “*the essential need of the country is to gear its policies to the great majority of people, who are not lame ducks*”.

During the beginning of this period all the local authority Youth Services in Wales were contributing to an UK wide survey conducted by the Youth Service Information Centre (1971). What an overview of the survey revealed was an organisation that appeared to be identified by a paucity of creative practice which was divorced from the contemporary needs of young people and the requirements of Government policy. This situation was encouraged by Government disinterest, resulting in a policy vacuum within which the articulation of Youth Service priorities was ignored, a position exacerbated by the disbanding of the National Youth Development Council (Youth Review 1972:2). This issue of political neglect was again becoming a recurring theme for the Youth Service, which was in turn being accused by Government of not taking a proactive approach to synthesising social policy with Youth Service practice for the benefit of young people. It was a position built on three interrelated characteristics that were becoming recurring themes for the Youth Service:

1. the lack of general consensus among policy makers on the purpose of youth work,
2. the inability of the Youth Service to describe its work in a way that had general acceptance by its constituent parts, and
3. the reluctance on the part of local authorities adequately to fund what was developing into an organisation built on general statements and poorly defined philosophical concepts.

Driven in many way by these issues, the Youth Service adopted some of the philosophical concepts of the Milson Fairbairn report, particularly those which advocated links between youth work and community development. This was done as a means of repackaging the Youth Service with sufficient enthusiasm to bring about a change of name and organisation location. Many 'Youth Services' became 'youth and community work services' contained within a Community Education Department, rather than within Further Education, (Jones 1998). On reflection the development, which often amalgamated adult education, leisure, community work, community education and the Youth Service in a variety of combinations can be seen to be both conceptually deficient and ineffectively executed. No apparent consideration appeared to be given to either the interconnectedness of the strands of Community Education departments or to the process by which they would be managed to ensure an improved provision for the users of the service. It is also possible to recognise at this time many of the negative characteristics of the Youth Service, which act against it taking a more central role within the social professions. There was, it appeared, an apparent inability to take a systematic approach to the strategic development of the service, to provide adequate and appropriate systems for the support of managers and workers and to promote its work to either politicians or the public. In developing what were to become deeply embedded cultural characteristics, the ability of the Youth Service to link its practice in a clearly articulated and coherent way with both the needs of national Government and young people was seriously diminished within an ill defined Youth and Community framework.

Significant political decisions, with the potential to further affect the Youth Service in Wales, were also being taken at this time. These were built on a long standing debate

related to Local Government Reform in Wales which eventually resulted in new system of enlarged counties consisting of a combination of existing counties. These came into force on 1 April 1974 with eight new counties and 37 new district councils derived from the previous system of 13 counties and 164 boroughs and urban and rural districts (Davies 1993).

This development, in partnership with the political and economic circumstances post-1974 had antipathetic and long lasting implications for the Youth Service in Wales. These included the continuing marginalisation of the service and a devaluation of its importance. External funding sources became more important as a substitute for core funding and the decline in both full-time qualified staff and a reduction of in-service training opportunities led to the de-intellectualising of much of Youth Service provision in Wales. By the time the Thatcher government had come to power in 1979 the Youth Service in Wales was weakened to a point where it was effectively defenceless against the approach of a radical administration.

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