

Cyngor Ieuenctid Cymru
Wales Youth Agency



Training Review 2005

Report by Christopher Gregory

CG Solutions

Research Consultant

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Christopher Gregory

07906 184 098

info@cg-solutions.net

www.cg-solutions.net

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1. Background

Christopher Gregory of CG Solutions was engaged by the Wales Youth Agency to undertake a research consultancy incorporating an audit of youth sector training across the 22 local authorities in Wales.

The research consultancy operated from 2nd March 2005 to 24th March 2005, 8 days total consultancy time.

The purpose of this audit was to gather information on youth-work training taking place across Wales and, where possible, identify venue and course details. Data collected was to be used to assist in resource and information sharing, offering enhancement of existing partnerships and opportunities to develop economies-of-scale and best practice. Additionally the process offered an overall “snapshot” of current youth sector training activity, and allowed respondents to provide any other information relevant to the review.

Promotion of training venue services, and the opportunity to gain a quality mark through registration as an ETS Certified Education and Training Centre also formed part of the audit activity outcomes.

All appropriate information captured will be made available to the youth sector through the Wales Youth Agency services. Furthermore, all information was be treated in the strictest of confidence and administered as required under the Data Protection Act.

2. Research Methodology

The audit was conducted through a mix of desk-based research, telephone interviews and meetings with local authority Training Managers and/or Training Officers. Desk research, telephone interviews and meetings were undertaken predominantly at the offices of the Wales Youth Agency.

Refer to Appendix 1 for listing of audit participants.

Preliminary contact was made via an introductory letter sent via email to all local authority Training Managers and/or Training Officers.

Refer to Appendix 3a (English) & 3b (Welsh) for copy of Introduction Letter.

Data collection was conducted using a 4-part questionnaire developed by the staff of the Wales Youth Agency. Information was gathered both electronically and in handwritten format, with results collated and filed through the Agency administrative system.

Refer to Appendix 2a (English) & 2b (Welsh) for copy of Training Audit 2005 Questionnaire.

Where appropriate it was suggested that participants complete the Education and Training Standards Committee for Wales ETS Approved Training Centre registration to gain this quality mark.

Refer to Appendix 4 ETS Approved Training Centre Registration Form.

3. Review Questionnaire

The 4-part questionnaire was designed to capture as much information as possible related to current contacts, venue and training activities, and included:

- Authority contact details: lead person, contact details
- Venue details: services, resources, availability
- Course details: specifics of each course, schedule for period April 2005 – August 2006
- Other commentary related to the audit process

Interviews undertaken took between 1.5 and 2 hours to complete. Original copies of completed questionnaires are filed with the Wales Youth Agency.

Refer to Appendix 2a (English) & 2b (Welsh) for copy of Training Audit 2005 Questionnaire.

4. Findings - Data

Hard copy of all review questionnaire responses can be found through the Wales Youth Agency office management. Key findings and outcomes include:

Overview: The following data constitute key findings:

1. 22 Local Authorities were contacted
2. 21 Local Authorities responded to communications
3. 19 Local Authorities completed review activity within timeframe
4. DVLA changes to Minibus licensing issue
5. Duplication of training

Part 1 – Authority Details

Complete update of responsible training manager / officer contact details.

Part 2 – Venue Details

Complete review of venues being used to undertake training, incorporating available services and facilities, such as:

- Contact & location details, including websites and maps
- Student capacity
- Access (parking; disabled facilities & access)
- Equipment (presentation screens; OHP; technology access)
- Residential services (accommodation; catering)

Criteria	Result
# of training venues	*77
# of training venues open to external access	*38
# of residential venues available	*11
# of training venues offering ICT access (computer suite; Internet access)	*51
Average student capacity	*28 [min = 10; max = 100]
Type of facility	Youth Club Council Office County Hall Community Centre Community Education Centre Community Hall YHA / YMCA

* excluding Newport, Swansea & Wrexham

Based on questionnaire details the following summary can be made per criterion:

- *Contact & location details, including websites and maps*

Contact details confirmed.

Location / map information provided through online postcode finder or map already held at Agency.

- *Student capacity*

Ranged from 10 in small training room or ICT suite, to 100/120 in large county and/or community hall with conference facilities available.

Student capacity average range was 10 – 20.

- *Access (parking; disabled facilities & access)*

Parking was generally easily available, with rare occurrences of limited. All offered some form of parking.

Disabled access was available at all sites except some outdoor activity facilities. Where available all ground floor buildings were accessible. Generally second floor access was limited. All local authorities had works programmes in place or pending to address disability access.

Majority of sites offered train and/or bus within walking distance although general comments were that timetables were sporadic or not particularly useful. All outdoor activity centres required vehicle transport to access.

- *Equipment (presentation screens; OHP; technology access)*

The most comprehensive equipment sites were those involved with the CREDU Digilab programme (ultimately 82 youth access centres across Wales).

Majority of facilities offered general equipment access, as listed below, or if not on-site could be booked and made available based on training needs.

- Kitchen facility and/or catering by arrangement
- OHP & screen
- Flipchart
- Photocopying
- TV & Video
- Broadband Internet
- Whiteboard
- Data projector

- *Residential services (accommodation; catering)*

Residential facilities focused on outdoor activities provision with a variety of dormitory, cottage and separate programme leader accommodations. All offered onsite catering and support entertainment facilities. Most were external non-authority operations.

Part 2 - ETS Registration

If training venues were not ETS registered, a registration form covering all centres was forwarded via Royal Mail.

A total of 56 registration forms were distributed.

Refer to Appendix 5 – ETS Registration Form: Distribution Table.

Part 3 – Course Details

All local authorise training managers contacted stated that all courses were “open access”, that is available to both statutory and non-statutory bodies engaged in youth sector activities.

Additionally all stated that the YPP structure was offering challenging but developing opportunities for enhanced partnership working and notification opportunities in relation to delivery of training to the sector.

Listing of course types and level (accreditation / non-accreditation).

Course Title	Course Accreditation
Introduction to Youth Work	Y
Introduction to Youth Work	Y
Foundation in Youth Work	Y
Certificate in Youth Work	Y
Diplomat in Youth Work	Y
Degree in Youth Work	Y
Supervision & Support	Y
First Aid	Y/N
Sexual Health & Relationships	Y/N
Substance Misuse	N
Anger Management with Young People / Handling Aggression / Challenging Behaviour	Y/N
Bullying	N
Child Protection	Y/N

Course Title	Course Level
Counselling Skills	Y/N
Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Leader	Y
Housing Issues	N
ICT (CREDU Digilab; ECDL; camera & video camera)	N
Information Advice (Canllaw / Clic)	Y
Accreditation (ESTYN; Train-the-Trainer; OCN Assessor; Getting Connected; IOSH; Pacific Institute)	Y
Curriculum Development	N
Midas and/or other Minibus	Y
Equal Opportunities / Racial Equality	N
Arts & Crafts	N
Detached Youth Worker	Y/N
Health & Safety	Y/N
Outdoor Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Leader (Football) • Outdoor Pursuit Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BELA • Mountain Bike Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canoing • Caving / Potholing • Mountaineering/Climbing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surf Lifesaving 	Y/N
Welsh Language	Y/N
Smoking	N
Participation (YPP Senior Members training)	Y/N
Youth Forum Training	Y/N

Course Title	Course Level
Corporate training access(ie non-youth sector specific): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Time management • Report writing • Recruitment & Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict Resolution • Health & Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid • Risk Assessment • Committee Skills • Communication Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision • Quality Assurance 	Y/N

Part 4 – Any Other Comments

An opportunity for participants to provide other supporting evidence and information relative to youth sector training in their local authority.

Please refer to next section for data.

5. Findings - Commentary

Personnel responsible for the management of training within Local Authorities were **all** willing to assist in the review process.

The general response was supportive, considered and delivered with a sense of humour. This was despite numerous impediments, primarily due to competing priorities and available time.

Specific issues that were raised during this review, and not restricted solely to the review process include:

- *Opportunity for reflection & review:* despite initial hesitation **all** respondents found the review process a productive opportunity to reflection on existing training provisions. They further saw it as an opportunity to commence some form of forward thinking in terms of needs analyses for training
- *Current activities overview:* all respondents felt that the data being gathered would personally benefit their training programme activities, particularly in gaining access to more comprehensive venue data, plus reviewing other authority programmes which would allow for opportunities for partnership training / shared resourcing
- *ESTYN reviews:* caused some conflict as “not another audit please” was the response. However, the coincidence of the ESTYN review offered an easy pathway for information transfer, as much of the Wales Youth Agency data had already been collected/collated
- *End-of-Financial year commitments:* administrative duties in this area taking precedence over other activities
- *Staff leave and/or sickness:* delegated personnel to oversee activities due to absences were either not in place, or were not able to answer the details required in the questionnaire
- *Motivation of audit:* one participant responded with some concern over the motivation behind the audit, as it could be seen as a “political stunt” to provide evidence in support for the continued and/or expansion of Wales Youth Agency services post-absorption into the Welsh Assembly Government
- *Duplication of Training Services:* an example was cited where local authority was able to provide training service to the voluntary sector but the Agency had delivered the training instead. Request for continuing dialogue and cascade referrals so that as much training could be delivered locally as possible
- *Staff resourcing:* High percentage of staff is on part time contracts, necessitating training mainly restricted to evenings and weekends. This also has an impact on staff retention and overall professional development opportunities
- *GEST Funding:* The removal of GEST funding stream has had a negative effect upon the amount of training being provided, due primarily to reduction in budgetary allocations. The knock-on effect has been reduced training

programmes, and reduced options in terms of the primary delivery mechanism of residential and/or evening delivery

- *Training budgets:* part time staff training allowance rates have not been increased since the early 1990's, and is still fixed at £12.00 per session
- *DVLA Minibus:* changes in the licensing criteria around minibus accreditation were of concern to **100%** of respondents. All saw potential reduction in training services due to cost implications (estimated at £1000 per trainee) of training any personnel who has gained their standard driving license since 1997
- Review process timing did not match with local authority timing of training needs analysis or responses to training budget proposals to WAG
- Preferred the "personal touch" with opportunity to discuss and review questionnaire with a person, rather than "please complete and return"
- Would like to see "training calendar" on website

Other observations by consultant:

- Initial letter received without complaint
- No specific concerns raised on access to English / Welsh document versions
- Contact details: add website address option
- Combine equipment availability as single check list & comments box
- Most participants ignored the single A4 page course details section preferring to use the table format for replying to course details questions

5. Gaps

The following constitutes outstanding data capture requirements:

1. Blaenau Gwent CBC
Questionnaire completed electronically and emailed to training manager for confirmation of data; awaiting feedback on whole document
2. Cardiff CC
Questionnaire completed electronically and emailed to training manager for confirmation of data; awaiting feedback on course details
3. Ceredigion CBC
Questionnaire received by post, completed by applicant. No telephone interview was undertaken.

Delay in contact meant insufficient time to complete review by proposed deadline.

Agency staff follow-up for gaps / clarification.

4. Merythr Tydfil CBC
Primary training manager, Annette Sheldon, on annual leave during review process. Head of Department, Tanis Cunnick, assisted in process, however some information gaps exist.

Agreed for agency to contact Annette Sheldon directly to cover any gaps / clarification necessary post-Easter.

5. Newport
Failed to present for prebooked telephone interview session.

Failure to attend meeting meant insufficient time to complete review by proposed deadline. Suggested questionnaire be completed electronically and submitted to agency with agency staff follow-up for gaps / clarification.

6. Neath Port Talbot CBC
Respondent was temporary contractor who was about to vacate post. Information provision deemed accurate, however potential gaps in courses being delivered were identified.

Contact Darryl Williams to complete course delivery details.

7. Swansea
Significant delay (ie 22nd March) in responding to repeated letters, email and voice contact.

Delay in contact meant insufficient time to complete review by proposed deadline. Suggested questionnaire be completed electronically and submitted to agency with agency staff follow-up for gaps / clarification.

8. Wrexham
No response to either email or telephone communication. Full data capture required.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1:	Audit Participant Listing
Appendix 2a:	Training Review 2005 Questionnaire, English
Appendix 2b:	Training Review 2005 Questionnaire, Welsh
Appendix 3a:	Introduction Letter, English
Appendix 3b:	Introduction Letter, Welsh
Appendix 4:	ETS Approved Centre Registration Form
Appendix 5:	ETS Registration Form Distribution List