

**GOOD PRACTICE SERIES**

# TECs and CCTEs Working Towards Achieving Social and Economic Inclusion

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# About this guide

People can become excluded from the labour market for a variety of reasons. Such exclusion is a widespread, wide-ranging phenomenon, affecting all sections of the business and social community. It can be very difficult, increasingly so over time, for individuals to get back in to the mainstream of social and economic life. Therefore it is vital that the underlying causes are addressed, to give people the means, and the hope, that they can overcome their own particular circumstances to become included in their local social and economic development. Achieving social inclusion by equipping people to re-enter the labour market on their own terms must therefore be a top priority. TECs and CCTEs are in a powerful position to influence this agenda in their locality.

This guide illustrates the diverse range of work that TECs and CCTEs have been involved in over the last 18 months to increase social and economic inclusion. It describes successful ways of doing this through case studies of actual TEC practice around the country which highlight:-

- what the barriers are for the various excluded groups
- what is being tested to deal with these problems
- how to use partnerships to help tackle social exclusion
- types of funding you may be able to use
- the results - both 'hard' and 'soft' outcomes
- the factors that made the project a success and the lessons learnt.

Some of the projects are still running, so interim evaluation results are given. It is equally important that TECs and CCTEs and their partner organisations are aware of these projects. So as well as disseminating good practice, this guide is intended to promote the work of TECs and CCTEs.

The guide will be a useful aid for TECs and CCTEs who are thinking of setting up similar projects, showing how they can address priority issues such as combating disaffection and giving more individuals the skills employers need.

The guide will be placed on the TECtranet, along with further examples of good practice in this area. The examples show what is already working for some TECs and CCTEs, and could work for others - or which could be adapted to meet different needs. We hope that the projects described here spark off new ideas and stimulate you to explore different avenues and new ways to achieve social inclusion.

# Social exclusion

## What is meant by social exclusion?

People who are socially excluded lack the means to take a full part in economic, social, cultural and political life. They may lack basic skills or adequate accommodation, they may be socially isolated or living in economically and socially impoverished communities, perhaps with drug or alcohol problems, and they may be dependent on welfare. Social exclusion may be due to many factors - unemployment, low pay, low self-esteem, discrimination or lack of facilities and support. While material deprivation and lack of income are important aspects of social exclusion, this concept is not just about poverty. Neither is it simply about the effects of multiple disadvantage. Rather, it attempts to capture the many reasons and complex processes by which people become shut off from society.

## What is currently being done to promote social inclusion ?

The Government has placed social inclusion firmly at the top of its agenda -as demonstrated by its introduction of the Social Exclusion Unit, which reports directly to the Prime Minister

Tackling social exclusion is at the heart of the government's policy agenda and underpins much current policy activity. Some of the strategies being followed include

- the New Deal for communities
- the New Deals for 18 to 24 year olds, over 25s and lone parents
- Co-ordination Initiative, Coalfields Action Plan, Employment Zones, Education Action Zones and Early Excellence Centres)
- the Home Office's Crime Reduction Strategy
- the green paper on welfare reform
- the local government white paper Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People
- the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB).

The government has established the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) to co-ordinate and improve government action to reduce social exclusion, and to better understand issues which cut across departmental interests and promote solutions to them. The SEU has reported on truancy and exclusions from school (released in May), and people sleeping rough (released as a consultation document in early July and currently being considered by Ministers).

Various government departments have considered the unit's final draft report on deprived neighbourhoods, which recommends that 18 action teams should be set up to deal with different areas of work. The final report was released in September 1998. The topics for the second round of work by the SEU include teenage pregnancies and 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, work or training.

# Summary of good practice

The following are important characteristics of programmes and policies which tackle social exclusion effectively:

## Adapting and combining national policies and programmes with local capacity.

We need to ensure that resources go to areas of greatest need. This needs to be achieved within an effective national framework which sets clear parameters and ensures appropriate accountability.

## Consulting as widely as possible.

It is important to gain input from those who deliver programmes and services and, where possible, from the people who use them. We need to gather and share good practice, learn from previous experience and apply this knowledge. Prosper with key partners undertook extensive research to understand the needs of the client group and how to tackle them effectively.

## Integrating policies.

This means working across Departmental boundaries to develop comprehensive packages of services. We need to identify and bridge gaps and inconsistencies between different Departmental responsibilities. The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) represents a prime example of cross-Departmental action.

## Making services simple to understand and easy to access.

While the systems and processes which underpin programmes and services may be sophisticated, people should know what they are entitled to and how they can access it. The Gladstone Park Community Centre in Peterborough and YouthBuild Bradford are both good examples of how this could be achieved as both highlighted the need for potential trainees from minority ethnic groups to be made aware of the training and education opportunities available.

## Making sure policies and programmes are flexible and responsive.

Policies need to recognise that the needs and circumstances of individuals, families and communities vary greatly - we can't design systems around the notion of a 'typical' client. Family literacy is an innovative approach to the problem of poor basic skills among parents and children. Humberside TEC have developed family literacy projects that have worked well given that for each different project the needs of parents and children are treated as primary importance.

## Encouraging innovation and testing out new ideas.

We need to be willing to take risks, particularly to try out integrated ways of providing services. Walsall TEC have worked closely with a local Deaf Centre to enable deaf people to compete on an equal footing in the labour market by enabling individuals to gain access to training.

# Case studies

## Birmingham and Solihull TEC: Training for Long-term Unemployed African-Caribbeans

'The Training for long-term unemployed African-Caribbeans project is based on sound labour market information from sources such as the Birmingham Economic Information Centre. This showed that wards with the highest unemployment also have the largest ethnic minority community populations and also the greatest skill shortages. African-Caribbeans are particularly under-represented in managerial and professional occupations.

This is one of a number of projects run by Birmingham and Solihull TEC's Access Team. We feel that targeting each project to a particular part of the community is the most effective way of combating inequality.'

**David Cragg, Chief Executive, Birmingham and Solihull TEC**

The project was set up in 1997 to overcome the barriers which African-Caribbeans find in moving into managerial and professional occupations, and employment generally.

The TEC offered training specifically for unemployed African-Caribbean people. They were to be trained as trainers, so they needed a background in a vocational skill. The target was to recruit 25 people, but only 20 suitable candidates were found.

The training began with sessions on personal skills, team building and assertiveness, and each trainee was assessed at the end of this programme. They then went on to TDLB Training the Trainers NVQ level 3 to gain underpinning knowledge, and developed their skills in training. The project included work placements and mentors to offer professional support and act as confidants.

### Funding

The TEC worked with NACRO, who were contracted to run the training. The project was funded from the European Social Fund.

### Outcomes

Sixteen of the 20 trainees completed the programme, either getting the full NVQ or units towards it. Most of these went on to further education and training, and one began work.

The project improved skills in an area of skills shortage, and increased the proportion of the African-Caribbean workforce who have high level vocational qualifications. This benefits the African-Caribbean community, but it is also good for the city's economy as a whole.

One unexpected outcome was that considerably more women than men were interested and took part in the project.

## Outcomes

Nine young people will qualify as Modern Apprentices in a range of building and allied trades, and will be offered employment at the end of their training. 90% of the participants have achieved their individual learning objectives.

Much needed inner city housing has been brought into use and there has been a significant increase in the number of ethnic minorities enrolling on construction courses at the college.

A community development board is being established consisting of the Bradford & Northern Housing Association, TEC, local authority, private enterprises and community representatives.

The possibilities of adapting the project to look at bringing derelict properties back into use are being explored.

## Reasons for success

**Taking advantage of existing relationships:** Some ethnic minority youths have 'scheme fatigue' and distrust new projects and ideas. YouthBuild Bradford deals with this by taking advantage of existing relationships to make sure recruitment is more effective and focused. For instance, a youth worker already working with a group of young people can promote the opportunities of the scheme more effectively.

**Using support workers from the local community:** A support worker acts as a link between employers and trainees, allowing the trainees to integrate more effectively. The support worker is more effective if he or she comes from the community targeted by the project.

**Presenting a wider picture:** Trainees can make more informed decisions when presented with a wider picture. This should cover things like what percentage of people in the trade are from ethnic minorities, future job prospects, success stories and role models.

## Lessons learned

The marketing of the programme must not be rushed - a longer lead time makes sure that the young people and their parents get a chance to find out about the opportunities available, and the benefits of taking them up.

## CELTEC: The React Project

'The React Project aims to improve the employment prospects of offenders and ex-offenders who are, or have been, in contact with the probation service.

It aims to break down the very real barriers to employment, education, and training which offenders face - many have few skills and lack ability, confidence and motivation - by giving them positive experiences to encourage them to get involved.'

**Anthony Drew, Chief Executive, CELTEC**

- In the first 6 months of 1998 there were 426 referrals, 240 Action Plans produced and 103 individuals progressed to training education or employment.

### Reasons for success

- A multi-agency approach ensures that clients can choose from a menu of activities and find one that suits their needs.
- In multi-agency projects, one agency needs to take the lead, both for funding and for monitoring purposes.
- Having a steering committee makes sure that each agency had access to independent committee members. It can also act as an avenue for complaint for the partners if something does go wrong.
- Recruiting a project co-ordinator ensures that someone is responsible for monitoring information from all the partners.
- Create an environment which is non-threatening, non-bureaucratic and flexible in its approach to both time keeping and individual's needs and circumstances.

### Lessons learned

Getting each separate agency to see themselves as working for React, rather than their own separate organisations, has been the most difficult thing to achieve. But team building events are helping to achieve this. The agencies involved constantly remind themselves that each brings its own specialisation which is valuable in providing a positive outcome for the client.

## CEWTEC: Save the Family

'Save the Family provides emergency accommodation for homeless people and has recognised that further long-term support is required in order to help clients break out of the poverty cycle in which they find themselves.

Due to the severe personal problems and crises they face, the clients need in-depth support, mentoring, training and careers planning services to help them break out of that cycle.

By helping Save the Family to provide these services, including becoming a centre to deliver key skills, CEWTEC believes that more clients will break out of the poverty trap and work towards becoming economically active.'

**Alan Moody, Chief Executive, CEWTEC**

Many of the clients that Save the Family work with are victims of desperate problems such as crime, violence, drug and alcohol abuse and unemployment. The aim of this two-year project is to give them the chance to take a full part in the local economy by increasing their self-confidence and self-esteem, developing their personal and pre-vocational skills and giving them access to learning and job opportunities.

### Funding

The project is a partnership between CEWTEC, Save the Family and Cheshire County Council Economic Development Unit. It was originally set up using ESF funding.



## Outcomes

### The first year

- 57 clients joined the programme
- 4 went into employment
- 26 entered mainstream training or further education
- 11 were trained as mentors.

### The second year

- 50 have joined since April 1998
- 2 have gained employment
- 7 have achieved a vocational qualification
- 2 have entered mainstream training or further education
- 38 have enrolled on the key skills programme
- 3 members of staff have achieved TDLB D32/D33 and one has almost completed D34.

Clients have also become much more outward looking and are planning ahead, rather than just living from day to day.

## Reasons for success

A lot more effort is required to motivate this type of client group, and their commitment fluctuates because of personal crises. So Save the Family staff looked at everyday activities they could use for key skills training and assessment. Clients found this more related to their everyday experiences, and this made it easier to gather evidence and so complete the programme.

Peer group examples and an outreach service has also proved a successful way of encouraging clients onto the programme.

Mentors also helped to get clients onto the programme and encouraged them to keep going when personal problems arose. One of the biggest problems was encouraging clients to focus on the long-term outcomes when their personal situation is so difficult.

## Lessons learned

Working with voluntary organisations like Save the Family can require a great deal of time and effort. For instance, many do not have systems and procedures for keeping records. Staff may also be expected to carry out more than one role, and may not find this easy to adapt to.

## Outcomes

The project as a whole will provide direct support, education, training and work opportunities to 100 people a year. The project has demonstrated a local, unmet need and has already assisted 65 local people.

Of the 100 trainees who will benefit from this project, it is anticipated that 35 will achieve NVQs, 30 will achieve credit towards NVQs, and 20 will achieve locally recognised qualifications.

15 trainees are likely to progress into employment and a further 35 into further education and training. Clients have gained self-respect and self-confidence, their family relationships have improved and there has been a huge increase in motivation. The Opportunities Project has led to greater awareness of the difficulties faced by the client group, and more effective networking between agencies and professional groups such as GPs and CPNs.

## Reasons for success

- Carrying out sound research to establish the local need.
- Working with different agencies to bring in different types of help and guidance.
- Using clients as mentors for people who need extra help.
- Allowing clients to sit on steering groups to make sure they are fully involved in the day-to-day running of projects.
- Forging links with key agencies such as the Employment Service, Health Practitioners and colleges.
- Establishing the financial commitment of the agencies involved.

## Lessons learned

A facilitator is needed to bring together the many different agencies, specialists in their own fields - local health trusts, social services and so on - who would not get involved otherwise.

A critical part of the process is to start with very good, in-depth research, to build up a good case for the need to undertake the project you propose and to make sure it will tackle the problems effectively.

It is very important to get the commitment of senior players in the various organisations, for example the Director of Social Services. This is crucial to the success of the project.

TECs need to recognise that it is necessary to fund provision for disabled people so that they are able to take part.

## Funding

Half of OSW's £1.1 million annual budget comes from the Single Regeneration Budget. The rest is made up from the European Social Fund, private, voluntary and government contributions and core government funding for training. The Single Regeneration Budget funding will run out in 1999, but the TEC is looking for new ways to fund the project after that date. They hope to bring in new partners and funders, and in the long term expand the geographical area it covers.

## Outcomes

- 700 homeless people have found work as a result of OSW
- 272 of these are from ethnic minority groups
- 700 people have successfully completed pre-vocational training
- over 1,000 people have gone on to access further education and vocational training

The OSW project has broken new ground in bringing together agencies which have not worked together before. This integrated approach, and the carefully targeted services, are meeting the needs of homeless people for training and help with getting work.

## Reasons for success

Innovative ideas and approach to the problem.

Co-ordinated thinking - bringing together groups which previously worked separately but with the same general aim.

## Some lessons learned

- The administration involved in having to apply annually for some types of funding puts a strain on staff and reduces the time they can put into doing the main work of helping on the initiatives themselves.
- There were some difficulties with planning for the future because of changes in Government policy during the lifetime of the project.
- Good communication between the partners is vital - partners from different sectors don't always understand the constraints faced by others or how they can affect what can be done.

## Greater Peterborough CCTE: Gladstone Park Community Centre

'The Gladstone Park area has a large Asian and African-Caribbean population. Ethnic minority groups face long-term unemployment due to discrimination, lack of skills and cultural and linguistic barriers.

The Gladstone Park Community Centre plays an important role in the educational and social life of people in its community. Its Study Centre offers a variety of services including out-of-school study for young people, an IT course for ethnic minority groups and a one-stop information shop for unemployed adults.'

**Stephen Catchpole, Chief Executive, Greater Peterborough CCTE**

- provide a counselling service to help with preparing comprehensive business plans and training packages
- highlight existing skills and training needs so that trainers and employers are more aware of the potential needs of ethnic minorities.

To achieve its objectives, the project will:

- establish a skills register
- develop individual action plans
- get employers to provide a number of workplace training places for ethnic minority trainees
- provide 'gateway' courses to improve access to further and higher education.

### Building on good practice

The priorities for the Gladstone Centre next year will be to build upon the good practice already established and to accommodate the demands for increased membership. The Centre will:

- actively seek new partners within the community and the commercial sectors of the city
- establish a youth forum and train mentors to enable a greater degree of self-management of the Centre by the students themselves
- recruit and train volunteer tutors and mentors from the local community and educational institutions.

## Humberside TEC: Family Literacy Project

'The Family Literacy Project is aimed at helping both children and parents in deprived areas. By giving parents training in literacy and other basic skills, they are helped to go on to support their children's learning. The project is intended to promote lifelong learning and raise awareness of further education opportunities.'

**Peter Fryer, Chief Executive, Humberside TEC**

Humberside TEC have run several family literacy projects over a number of years, in partnership with schools and the Community Education Service. They have been very successful in targeting parents of schoolchildren who have literacy problems, and whose children are likely to have the same problems.

To start with, a pilot project was run in several different types of school: four infant, junior and special schools. Parents who had literacy problems were encouraged to attend training to help them learn how to help their children by improving their own literacy skills.

They were taught in groups of 12-15 at their child's school, during school time for one or two days a week - they learned literacy, numeracy and ICT, and developed literacy games they could play with their children.

## Leeds TEC: Opex Plus

'Opex plus is a project managed by Leeds TEC which aims to overcome the barriers to employment and training that young people face, and deal with their particular needs.'

The project brings together a number of agencies with an interest in young people, and it responds to their needs in a number of ways.

The location, in quality office accommodation and in the heart of the city centre, reflects the project's values - that youngsters deserve the best possible service, in the best possible conditions.'

**Alistair Graham, Chief Executive, Leeds TEC**

Opex plus is aimed at three broad groups:

- 16 year olds who are not in school, further education or vocational training. These do not appear on any official records. Some are homeless, or involved in drug addition and crime - but it includes smaller groups such as young carers who look after older relatives.
- Young people with educational or emotional special needs which need exploring before they can start training.
- Young people who do not know what sort of job they want to do.

### Outreach

Delivered by The Market Place (the charitable arm of Leeds Parish Church), Outreach gives practical help in overcoming barriers caused by lack of housing, drug dependency and court appearances. Operating very much at 'street level', last year saw the appointment of a peer youth worker, herself a graduate of the project, and now a Modern Apprentice.

### The Individual Skills Profile

This is carried out by a team of qualified careers professionals from Leeds Careers Guidance, using a full range of assessment techniques, including computer-based literacy and numeracy. Leeds TEC has even developed its own assessment tool - the Individual Skills Profile (ISP) - which is currently being accredited by the RSA.

The ISP measures the ability of young people to meet the needs of employers, including:

- punctuality and attendance
- appropriate presentation
- ability to work with others, and
- flexibility and commitment.

Where their employment skills are lacking, the young people undertake an action plan to improve.

### Preparatory and Initial Training

- 275 clients
- 137 were transferred to training
- 49% success

### Jobsearch

- 186 clients
- 164 placed into work
- 88% success

### Reasons for success

The project has run for three years and has an ongoing culture of evaluation and continuous improvement.

Trainees understood what they had to do, and why. This showed that communication methods worked well. The assessment was very useful - the young people felt they were being properly assessed, and 44% worried about failing. And the mentoring system is a great plus for the programme, with much evidence of trainees relying on mentors for help and advice.

## Lincolnshire TEC: Armed Forces Resettlement Project

‘With this project, we aimed to help one particular section of our local population overcome barriers to getting back into work - the large numbers of people made redundant from the armed forces who then came to settle in Lincolnshire. They were unusual as an excluded group in that they were highly skilled and trained, but still had difficulties finding suitable jobs.

The armed forces resettlement project was set up in 1993 to run in conjunction with the MOD’s resettlement programmes, offering programmes which were tailored to the local labour market and which addressed local skills needs. Its main aims were to help service leavers move into civilian work quickly, and to make good use of their skills and knowledge to improve the local economy, filling skills gaps in local industries.’

**David Rossington, Chief Executive, Lincolnshire TEC**

The main barriers facing the service leavers were that

- employers had negative preconceptions about their skills, attitude and lack of flexibility
- service leavers did not know how to transfer their existing skills to civilian work
- they lacked commercial awareness
- they often had an inflated idea of their employability outside the military.

The partners of the service leavers also had difficulties finding work as, having had to move around a lot, they had had little opportunity for training.

## Reasons for success

The TEC and its partners have identified a number of pointers to the success of the project.

- The most important is the involvement of so many local employers so the outcomes match the needs of the local labour market.
- The project is locally-based, finding local solutions to local problems.
- The approach is holistic, involving the whole families.

## Lessons learned

During the course of the project some other problems became clear

- both civilian and military sides had difficulty understanding each other's jargon
- the service leavers' CVs often did not identify their transferable skills
- legislation in some industries required civilian certification of skills, which excluded those with military certification, even though they had the relevant skills
- feedback from employers showed that service leavers needed practice at job interviews.

To overcome these, Lincolnshire TEC used a carefully designed PR campaign, targeted to the two distinct audiences - local employers and the service leavers. The campaign introduced service leavers to what the TEC could offer, and showed employers that the skills and experience of service leavers could be harnessed and used as a great resource for local industry.

The TEC developed a close working relationship with all the local service units to find out as much as possible about what service leavers needed.

## Manchester TEC: Salford WAY for Women

'The Salford WAY project has been key in encouraging ambition and delivering opportunity for many women who would otherwise have been trapped in unemployment or dead-end jobs. We think the project is unique, because it takes account of the real, additional barriers that women face in achieving their career goals - the need for personal support or training, and the need for reliable, affordable childcare. The partners are proud of its success, but it has only been a success because of the close partnership working on the ground, and because the women of Salford have been prepared to work so hard to overcome these barriers.'

**Richard Guy, Chief Executive, Manchester TEC**

Salford WAY is a development programme for women with young children who want to get back into work, or who want to develop their careers. It aims to improve their opportunities for training and education, employment, and career progression, and to overcome the barriers they face. These are principally a lack of affordable childcare and a need for personal development. Some feel they are held back by discrimination because of where they live, their gender, race or educational background, - others feel they cannot communicate effectively.

Funding for the project comes from the Single Regeneration Budget, the European Social Fund, local authority capital receipts, the TEC and Fair Play. The Single Regeneration Budget funding will run out in 2000, but the TEC hopes to find new sources of funding to continue the project.

## Outcomes

The large numbers of participants who have gone on to work, training and education demonstrate the success of the project.

Of 450 women involved since 1995

- 113 have got jobs
- 85 got new qualifications.

Salford WAY supported 440 new childcare places and 14 child groups.

Less quantifiable benefits include increased confidence, and great enthusiasm as a result of the Internet training. The financial support given to overcome the barrier of childcare costs has resulted in significantly improved prospects (more work and higher earnings) for providers of childcare.

## Reasons for success

Manchester TEC attribute the success of this project to three main reasons:

- the tailored approach to dealing with individual clients' needs
- flexibility
- a strong network of local organisations.

## Merseyside TEC: Community Work and NVQ Training Programme

'This innovative project offers a flexible solution to the barriers which have traditionally restricted the development of individual community workers - childcare, travel costs and the lack of local training. It aims to provide community workers and volunteers with training which will fit in with their individual circumstances.

It is designed to give community workers, especially those who are unqualified and unemployed, better employment prospects and aims to improve the quality of community work in Liverpool, Knowsley and Sefton. It specifically targets Local Partnership Areas and Pathway Areas.'

**Linda Bloomfield, Chief Executive, Merseyside TEC**

The NVQ training programme was begun as a result of research commissioned by a partnership of Merseyside TEC and Liverpool City Council. This involved consulting all the Liverpool area partnerships, 108 individuals and a wide variety of local community organisations.



## Shropshire CCTE: Madeley Area Pathways Project

'This is an important project for matching available provision to individual needs, helping to steer young people who are isolated and not participating in the world of work, education or training, through the array of support mechanisms and programmes open to them. The appropriate intervention at the right time, with mentor support, ensures young people can become integrated back into the labour market with renewed self-esteem and confidence.'

**Angie Robinson, Chief Executive, Shropshire CCTE**

The Telford area suffers from high unemployment, and a large percentage of the young unemployed people in Telford live in the Madeley area. The Pathways Project (MAPP) aimed to help disaffected young people (aged 16-25) make use of the help available to them to improve their prospects. It tried to steer them through the various agencies and opportunities in the area, to make them aware of their own potential and of what support they could get.

The young people face many barriers to finding work: homelessness, living alone without family support, being a single parent, lack of skills and qualifications, travel costs, low self-esteem and little understanding of the local job market.

MAPP was set to run over three years. As research had shown that the support the young people needed was already available, MAPP first needed to find out why they were not aware of these services or not using them.

Shropshire CCTE led the project with a steering group made up of Telford Christian Council, which provided mentors, and managed and supervised the project, Shropshire Careers Service and Madeley Employment Services (both of which worked with the project mentors).

The age range of 16 to 25 meant that the group had widely varying needs - from very immature 16 year olds to 25 year olds with families. MAPP decided to focus on the younger end of this range. In the second year of the project a mentoring scheme was set up - mentors were chosen for their knowledge of the problems the young people face, and their ability to communicate with this group. Three mentors were appointed who, between them, offered a balance of skills, age and experience. They were trained in what services are available, and how to refer people to the agencies offering help. This was arranged by the agencies themselves.

By the third year, the mentors were working with a number of young people, giving each one the support they needed to make the best use of the help available from all the local agencies.

### Funding

The project is part-funded from the Single Regeneration Budget - part of a larger bid for the Madeley area. This is match-funded by all the partners in the project.

### Outcomes

MAPP has achieved a great deal already, although it is only halfway through. As a result of the project there is now an accessible support team giving young people help, advice and encouragement to overcome the problems they face. When young people are housed in the area, they are referred to MAPP to make sure links are set up immediately.

The mentors have worked with 28 young people, and helped many of them to find work, training, counselling, housing or benefits. Four young people took part in the Prince's Trust and gained NVQs.

There are significant barriers preventing deaf people from taking up training

- language - profoundly deaf people communicate in British Sign Language (BSL), which is quite separate and different from English - it is impossible for them to use training without BSL interpreters
- lack of confidence
- lack of useful advice and information about the training available to them.

Two projects have tackled these problems: the first provides training courses for profoundly deaf people; the second is an information and advice shop run by deaf people.

### Training courses

Colin Sanders, Development Manager of the Walsall Deaf People's Centre, recruited people to take part in two courses: a four-day course on Basic Food Hygiene and a two-day Basic First Aid course. He also brought in trainers and sign language interpreters to run the courses.

The TEC worked closely with Colin to design the courses so that they fulfilled all the requirements of the awarding bodies for the relevant qualifications as well as the participants' special needs.

Twelve people took part in each course.

The courses were partly funded from the TEC's surpluses, with money from the European Social Fund which had been awarded to provide special training for unemployed adults in Walsall.

### Outcomes

There have been many positive outcomes: after ten of the 12 participants on each course succeeded in gaining the certificate for their subject

- four went on to study English and Basic IT at a local college
- three found work (two of these had been in residential care for some time before this)
- one is now involved in the catering for training events at the Deaf People's Centre and its Social Centre.

More generally, they gained confidence in their ability to achieve - for many of them, this was their first positive experience of training. Now, seeing these people's success, other deaf people have begun to take an interest in training.

The Development Manager and a member of the TEC staff have gone on to organise training in Advice and Guidance qualifications.

### Information and advice service

A professional, impartial information and advice service was set up in March 1998, open one day a week at the Deaf People's Centre, to meet the needs of all people with a hearing loss. People can visit the centre, or use the fax or minicom for advice and guidance on many issues such as employment, training, benefits and housing.

## Lessons learned

The Walsall Deaf People's Centre already provided a small number of courses run in sign language when the TEC identified the need for wider provision. Although they had a basic business plan, they did not really have the capacity to expand at the rate the TEC hoped. The administration involved in keeping the database for the advice service up to date meant a rapid expansion in their administrative work.

In the future, they will need to find new sources of funding, and at the moment the Centre does not have the physical resources to bid successfully for these funds.

As a volunteer organisation, the Deaf People's Centre is a victim of its own success - as its volunteers have become more confident and capable, they have found paid work and no longer have time to volunteer. A programme of training to replenish the supply of suitably trained volunteers at an earlier stage would have overcome this problem.



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