



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

*Research into the effectiveness
of youth training and
diversion schemes*

A Final Report to the
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

March 2006



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POLICY ON IDENTIFICATION

ECOTEC's policy for identifying individual Fire and Rescue Authorities was to preserve anonymity where requested by individual scheme members. Where direct quotes have been included in the report, the identity of the individual has been protected by omitting either the name of the Authority or specific job title of the respondent. Anonymity is also preserved, in instances where potentially sensitive issues are discussed with reference to local examples, and/or where poor practice is described.

ECOTEC has named individual Fire and Rescue Authorities, in cases where good practice examples have been showcased, or where the tone of the reporting on a particular issue is 'neutral'. The case studies at Annex two of the report provide significantly greater levels of detail on individual schemes. Explicit approval was therefore sought from the corresponding Fire and Rescue Authority in each case, prior to publication.

Research Summary

ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd were commissioned by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in May 2005, to conduct research into the effectiveness of youth training and diversion schemes in England. The research aimed to identify the range, number and types of schemes supported and/or delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service, and to provide a critical assessment of their effectiveness. The research covered universal schemes open to all (aged 10 to 25), and more targeted provision for disadvantaged young people.

The research is set in the context of recent policy developments for youth related provision. With the introduction of the Children's Act in 2004, a duty was placed on all local authorities to set in place adequate arrangements to safeguard children and young people through multi-agency working. The Youth Matters Green Paper further extends this agenda, by putting to consultation a series of reforms for the youth sector. These developments present a key opportunity to review the future role of the Fire and Rescue Service in working with young people. At the time of writing, a national strategy is under development. The findings from this study provide supporting evidence for the range of measures that it proposes.

- The type and range of youth training and diversion schemes

The research found that the Fire and Rescue Service is actively engaged in youth training and diversionary work across England. Based on a survey of 33 of the 47 Fire and Rescue Authorities across the country – a 70% response rate – a total of 332 schemes was identified. This represents an average of ten schemes per authority – a significant number, given that the Service does not have a principal (or formal) remit to work with young people.

The range of schemes that involve the Service are characterised by their uneven geographical development. Whilst the original focus of work with young people in the community dates back to uniformed Young Fire-fighter Associations established in 'inner city' areas during the 1980s, activities have expanded to all parts of the country. This expansion was not coordinated; Authorities developed their own approach to youth engagement with relative autonomy, and often with contrasting funding and aims. Even so, a common theme was evident for most schemes, of promoting community fire safety alongside the opportunity for personal development for young people.

The research found that the Fire and Rescue Service manages, delivers, and is involved as a partner in schemes that target young people across the whole spectrum of needs. The more 'universal' schemes remain the most widespread, with Young Fire-fighter Association and Duke of Edinburgh Award being greatest in number. The past five to ten years has seen an overall shift towards more 'targeted' schemes, with a growing number of higher-end interventions such as Princes Trust 'Team', LIFE, Firebreak and Phoenix. These schemes are typically shorter in duration and focus on more disadvantaged young people. At present, this aspect of provision is the most uneven in its availability, with

'clusters' of schemes located in certain Authorities. A further type of activity was identified at a local level, where the Fire and Rescue Service worked with partners to develop other youth interventions. Such schemes are a potential source of new ideas and approaches for the Service.

The research concludes that the current suite of universal and targeted schemes is an asset to the Service. At present, the range of schemes lacks some coherence, and would benefit from greater coordination and sharing of good practice. In particular, there is a priority to review the relationship between different types of scheme and other local provision for young people, to identify how the benefits experienced by young people might be sustained. This will entail greater cross-referral and networking.

- The effectiveness of the schemes

The research provided a systematic assessment of the different aspects of scheme management, delivery, and outcomes.

The overall approach to managing and staffing the schemes varied considerably. Over half of the Authorities who took part in the survey reported a core team of (<20) vetted staff in place for working with children and young people, often across a number of different schemes. In contrast, certain Authorities reported involvement of far larger numbers of (>80) personnel. This presented significant challenges for staff training and quality assurance. The research shows a need to more clearly identify core competencies, in line with other agencies that work with young people. The Service is faced with a challenge in determining how far staff should pursue more specialised youth work-type training whilst retaining its main focus on community fire safety.

The majority of all schemes had suitable quality frameworks in place, with due attention to risk assessments, child protection, and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff. A minority of schemes showed some gaps, including no current child protection policy. The operating environment of certain schemes is considerably behind that of other youth related agencies in this respect. Immediate steps should be taken to safeguard those young people who are already engaged in training across the Service as a whole.

The approach of the Fire and Rescue Service to equality and diversity monitoring is also an area of concern for the effectiveness of its youth engagement work. Very few Fire and Rescue Authorities reported measures in place which monitored and reviewed the participation of young people or staff from different ethnic groups. The overall response for engaging with Black Minority Ethnic (BME) young people was typically 'homogenised', with few examples of schemes that engaged with BME representative organisations or tailored activities according to specific cultural needs. There are benefits to be achieved from transferring good practice from the smaller number of schemes that have been more pro-active in this area. More targeted recruitment of scheme personnel from BME communities is one way in which the needs of BME young people might be appropriately addressed.

Partnership working was found to be a mixed area of effectiveness. Where successful, links with partners strengthened the expertise of Service staff and provided a joined-up approach to meeting the needs of young people. Some of the most effective schemes offered youth training with the Fire and Rescue Service as an integrated part of a wider programme of tailored activities. Key partners in this respect included educational institutions, Youth Offending Teams and Connexions. On balance, however, most Fire and Rescue Authorities were found to give partners more limited involvement in the day-to-day running of the schemes that they offer. The majority of schemes were managed internally by the Service, with partners in a more limited 'referral' role. Stronger partnership work is essential if the Service is to engage more effectively with current policy developments.

The funding profile of youth training and development work continues to draw heavily upon volunteer time and in-kind contributions. This had many benefits, including a strong ethos of community participation amongst fire-fighters, and a perception of cost effectiveness by partners. At the same time there has been an overall trend towards a more professional approach. Just under half of all schemes reported some form of remuneration of staff. In certain Authorities involvement in youth diversion has created improved opportunities for professional development. Furthermore, as schemes focused more on 'harder to reach' groups, so the need (and ability to) access wider sources of funding increased. Around half of Authorities now have a Youth Development worker, typically bringing professional expertise from 'youth' professions, and knowledge of key funding streams and targets.

The performance management framework for youth training schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Services is one of the key areas for attention. Around a third of schemes reported that they did not undertake monitoring, and two thirds reported no arrangements for evaluation. The absence of robust data to evidence the success of individual schemes has considerably hindered the progress of the Service in other areas (such as accessing funding). In particular, there is a stark contrast between the low level of evidence from 'older' schemes such as the Young Fire-fighter Association and the more competitive edge of newer schemes. The level of information that was provided for the research precludes a like-for-like assessment of impact.

The research identified some recurrent messages, with regard to 'what works' in managing successful schemes. The need was identified to have clear criteria for recruiting staff, and for line management to take place in accordance with core FRS protocols. At its best, youth training proved a viable career opportunity within the Service. Schemes were typically most effective, where they joined-up with other local services or projects and provided an opportunity for progression. Partners routinely provided the main source of expertise on training, whilst community organisations proved crucial in 'reaching' more difficult groups.

Relative strengths were found, for schemes at different levels of intervention. Shorter schemes proved effective to address higher-end risk factors, such as a threat of school exclusion. They provided an important 'thinking space' for young people, outside of their usual relationships. Schemes undertaken over a

period of weeks or months had greater benefits for introducing young people to a structured programme of activities, for example over school holiday periods. Longer term schemes typically offered the greatest opportunities for progression and to gain accreditation. For all types of schemes, young people stressed the importance of having a support worker or mentor. The FRS was valued for offering positive role models, without the same kind of 'punitive' associations as for the police or Youth Offending Services.

- Priorities for future development

Whilst many of the findings of the report are specific to particular types of youth training and diversion scheme, a number of 'headline' priorities can be identified. These are as follows:

1. To set in place adequate safeguards, to protect young people who are engaged in youth training activities involving the Fire and Rescue Service; to include a Child Protection Policy, Risk Assessment and Criminal Record Bureau checks as standard;
2. To strengthen the existing partnership work for the schemes, by promoting the involvement of partners in design and delivery, and developing a more strategic approach for Fire and Rescue Authorities in linking with Children's Trusts and LAAs;
3. To improve the performance management framework for youth training schemes, by placing a greater emphasis on evidence based practice; to include more widespread use of monitoring/evaluation and a place for youth diversion schemes within local Integrated Risk Management Plans and performance assessment;
4. To encourage more widespread links with other local youth provision , in order to provide an effective basis for referring young people to/from the Fire and Rescue Service, and to ensure that any positive outcomes are sustainable;
5. To promote a more active approach for the Fire and Rescue Service in working with young people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, by consulting with BME representative organisations on opportunities and priorities for development and taking positive action to recruit BME scheme personnel and volunteers;
6. To develop guidance on effective staff training and career opportunities for youth training schemes, including information on where and how to access training, and promoting the role of Youth Development Officer; and,
7. To extend and develop networks for sharing of good practice in youth diversion, and to consider how effective schemes, especially those designed for disadvantaged young people might be disseminated more widely.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This report presents the findings of a research study entitled '*The effectiveness of youth training and diversion schemes*'. The research took place between May and August 2005, and was carried out by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

The Fire and Rescue Service has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to working with young people in the community. Prior research indicated that this activity is widespread, with nearly all Fire and Rescue Authorities delivering some type of youth intervention. The 2003 HM Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) Thematic Review, *Working with young people in the community*¹, identified a core set of youth training and diversion schemes that have been implemented across England. The aims of these schemes included the provision of basic training in fire fighting skills, awareness-raising of fire safety, and improving life skills.

With the introduction of the Fire and Rescue Service Act on October 2004, all Fire and Rescue Authorities in England gained a statutory requirement to promote fire safety with the aim of preventing deaths and injuries in the home, and reducing the impact of fire on the community as a whole. Much of this work will place increased importance on building links with young people, and especially disadvantaged young people.

With these developments in mind, the purpose of this study was to provide the first independent review of youth training and diversionary activity (in the broadest sense) at all-England level. ECOTEC was commissioned to undertake new primary research with Fire and Rescue Authorities, to explore the range and characteristics of schemes that are in operation and to benchmark current 'good practice'.

¹ ODPM, 2003. *HMFSI/HMFSI for Scotland. The Fire and Rescue Service – Working with Young People in the Community*, London: ODPM. Available from: <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1162371>

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main **aim** of the research was:

- to establish and critically assess the effectiveness of such schemes, including;
 - the extent to which they are currently targeted;
 - the benefits to disadvantaged young people and young offenders; and,
 - good practice in engaging with these groups.

To meet this aim, the **objectives** of the research were:

- To establish the range, number and types of youth training and diversion schemes FRSs currently offer, and;
- Within each type of scheme identified, to critically assess:
 - i. aims, background and rationale for the schemes (e.g. when established, scheme management, funding arrangements, how participants are recruited, design and delivery of training, adherence to youth training policy and plan etc);
 - ii. socio-demographics (e.g. age, ethnicity, background etc) of the young people involved in the schemes;
 - iii. staffing of schemes (e.g. the number of staff involved, their experience, training etc) and costs;
 - iv. the ways in which participants are recruited or referred, and the extent to which the scheme effectively targets disadvantaged young people;
 - v. the extent and nature of partnership working;
 - vi. the extent and nature to which the scheme is subject to monitoring or evaluation;
 - vii. any available evidence on the success of the schemes.

The research covered Fire and Rescue Authorities in England, with a focus on young people aged from 10 to 25. It included both ‘universal’ schemes open to all young people in a given local area, and more ‘targeted’ interventions that aim to meet the needs of vulnerable groups (including young offenders).

The study *did not* cover fire setter intervention schemes which focus on individual arsonists or schools-based fire prevention and safety education schemes. These types of intervention are the subject of other research.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the research comprised both primary and secondary data collection and analysis. The research was overseen by the ODPM, with further guidance from an Advisory Group with senior level representation from the Fire and Rescue Service and other national youth related agencies. The research was broken down into three main phases, as follows.

1.2.1 *Setting the context – literature review and stakeholder interviews*

A literature review was undertaken, to establish the context for the primary research and to capture any existing evidence for the effectiveness of the different schemes. It entailed a review of documentary sources (academic, policy and media), covering activities delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service in England; those undertaken by other uniformed services, and ‘good practice’ in youth work.

A series of telephone interviews were conducted with key stakeholders for youth training and diversion schemes that involve the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) in England. Five interviews were undertaken with national level representatives from the Service, the FRS Youth Support Association, Princes Trust and Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. The interviews provided the strategic context for the research, and informed on potential areas of ‘good practice’.

1.2.2 *National survey of Fire and Rescue Authorities*

Having established the background and strategic context for the study, phase two of the research was concerned with scoping out the extent and range of youth training and diversion activity within Fire and Rescue Service in England.

ECOTEC’s approach was to conduct a survey of all 47 Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. The survey obtained details on the number, type and range of youth training and diversion schemes delivered or supported by the FRS within each Authority; the young people who were participating, and examples of potential good practice.

The survey was distributed to a nominated representative for each Authority by both email and post. For Greater London, a sampling approach was taken – the survey was distributed to representatives from ten London boroughs to provide a snapshot of London-wide activity. The boroughs were selected using a structured set of criteria. These included population, geographical distribution, and levels of deprivation. The survey was returned by 33 out of the 47 Fire and Rescue Authorities in England (70%), and five of the 10 London boroughs (supplemented by centrally held data on the schemes).

The information from stage one was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods, in order to profile the schemes at Authority level and draw out key themes.

1.2.3 Case study visits

The final stage of the research was to identify a cross-section of schemes, to undertake in-depth research visits. The purpose of the visits was to further explore areas of potential good practice that were identified through the survey, and to elicit the views of personnel from individual schemes, with regard to key issues, barriers and critical success factors in their implementation. The visits also provided an opportunity to consult with young people involved on the schemes, to explore their views on 'what works', and to review key documentation.

A total of eleven schemes were short-listed for the research visits. They represented a cross-section of the main types of youth training and diversion schemes, varying from those with a universal focus, to others concentrating on more 'targeted' work with disadvantaged groups. Individual schemes were identified on the basis of showcasing aspects of (potential) good practice, such as professionalism in approach, practical innovation, and/or outcomes achieved. The criteria were informed by evidence of good practice in youth work from the literature review.

The case study visits lasted between one and a half and two days, and entailed face-to-face interviews with a cross-section of project staff. The composition of the interviews was varied to reflect the set-up of individual schemes, but typically included the scheme manager; Fire and Rescue Service operational staff and volunteers, and partners. Young people from the schemes were interviewed either singly or with use of focus groups.

The information from the case study visits was analysed alongside the documentary and survey evidence, to inform the final report. A summary of each of the case studies can be found at **Annex two**.

1.3 BACKGROUND CONTEXT – YOUTH TRAINING AND DIVERSIONARY WORK INVOLVING THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The current study was commissioned to build on existing evidence with regard to the involvement of the Fire and Rescue Service in youth training and diversionary work. It is important to consider this background context to position the outcomes from the research.

The origins of much of the current youth training and diversionary work that is undertaken by the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) can be found in the schemes set-up during the mid 1980s. Local records show that much of this activity was established in response to community dis coherence, and specifically in reaction to inner city riots. The Young Fire fighter

Association uniformed cadet scheme can be traced to the Handsworth riots in the West Midlands, when growing concerns over disaffection amongst young people and a lack of alternative youth provision prompted a response from the Fire and Rescue Service. Similar activity can be identified around this period in other parts of the country (in Newcastle, in response to the 1991 riots, for example). This phase of FRS youth engagement was therefore a predominately 'organic' process, with individual Fire and Rescue Authorities adopting a response to meet the issues of the time.

The early work of the Fire and Rescue Service in delivering youth training centred mainly on creating a sense of belonging in the community, creating a better environment, and addressing antagonism towards Fire fighter crews. From the outset, recruitment was often managed via local schools, with an emphasis on encouraging participation from both boys and girls. Local schemes drew on the strengths of the Fire and Rescue Service as an organisation based in the heart of local communities, working for the benefit of the community. Interviewees for this research stressed that independence from the criminal justice system was a key selling point for the Service, which encountered few of the stigmas associated with the Police or Probation Service.

A second key phase of development in youth training activity took place during the 1990s, as the success of early schemes in reducing hoax calls and strengthening community links became evident. The Fire and Rescue Service became involved in a number of pathfinder Neighbourhood Renewal Fund projects. Around the same time, the Service experienced a shift in focus towards 'community fire safety'. This was associated with a reduction in domestic fire deaths, and emerging evidence of the importance of preventative work. Youth engagement was re-positioned as a mechanism for getting fire safety messages to local communities.

The 1990s also witnessed an expansion in the range of schemes targeted at young people, and the support structures that were set in place around them. In 1997, the Fire Service Youth Support Association (FSYTA) received a Home Office grant to undertake coordination and training for youth training schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service. This paved the way for the creation of a national network of some 200 volunteers.

One important development was the launch of 'Team', a programme for 16 to 25 years olds developed by the Princes Trust. The programme aims to boost the employment chances for disadvantaged groups, alongside the personal development focus of predecessor schemes. The Fire and Rescue Service was positioned as a key partner from the outset, with the Team programme offering a logical extension of many of the uniformed cadet schemes that were delivered in partnership with schools. In order to maintain relationships with the FRS at a national level, a support group was set up for Team in 2000 – the Fire Service Support Association for the Prince's Trust. The group includes senior FRS representation. A secondee from the Fire Service was further recruited as a National Liaison Officer, to maintain ongoing contact with FRS teams.

The more recent development of youth training and diversionary work is brought up to date with the 2003 HM Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) Thematic Review, *Working with young people in the community*². The Review identified a considerable expansion in the type and range of schemes that involve the Fire and Rescue Service, and the age range of participants. It also highlighted the geographical reach of such schemes.

One of the key findings of the Review was the presence of diversionary work in nearly all Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. Around 80% of Authorities were found to offer Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes and various badge schemes (such as Scouts, Guides, and British Red Cross). Around half were found to run Prince's Trust Team Schemes and around two-thirds Young Fire-fighter Associations. Furthermore, a growth was identified in shorter schemes with a focus on more vulnerable groups of young people³.

The backdrop to the current research is one of uncertainty over the future of youth training involving the FRS. The HMFSI Thematic Report has shown an increasing uptake of youth training by Authorities, but a central strategy is not yet in place, to position this work in the context of wider developments for children and young people's services⁴. Funding is a particular challenge. The funding for the FSYTA was withdrawn in 2005, and the Princes Trust Team programme faces the potential withdrawal of funding from its key partner – the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). These cuts are at odds with the increasing move of many FRS teams towards a more professionalized approach to youth development, following the placing of Community Fire Safety on a statutory basis with the 2004 Act⁵. There is a growing demand to make youth training work a more integrated aspect of the Fire and Rescue Service.

This research study has taken into account the history of youth training and development work involving the Fire and Rescue Service. Key questions were asked of Fire and Rescue Authorities, regarding the effectiveness of the schemes with which they are involved, staffing and funding issues, and priorities for future development. The research presents evidence from the 'bottom up' of how youth training activities might be taken forward in relation to community fire safety. It also draws on the views of the partners from a number of these schemes, to consider how they perceive the benefits of what the FRS has to offer.

² ODPM, 2003. *HMFSI/HMFSI for Scotland. The Fire and Rescue Service Working with Young People in the Community*, London: ODPM. Available from: <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1162371>

³ These include branded schemes such as Phoenix, LIFE and Firebreak.

⁴ Children Act, 2004.

⁵ The Fire and Rescue Services Act, 2004.

1.4 KEY CONCEPTS – DIVERSIONARY WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

This report includes a range of schemes supported or provided by the Fire and Rescue Service in the capacity of management, coordination and/or delivery.

A common aspect to the majority of schemes is some kind of ‘diversionary’ focus. Diversionary activities are widely understood to be those that are intended to steer young people away from behaviour that is likely to place them at ‘risk’. This risk might entail anything from antisocial or criminal behaviour, to educational exclusion, to drug and alcohol misuse or family breakdown⁶. In relation to the work of the FRS, a further key area of risk is that of young people engaging in fire-setting, hoax calls or attacks on fire-fighters.

The national guidance for the Children’s Fund⁷ identifies ‘four levels’ of prevention in working with children and young people, based on models that were initially developed by Hardiker et al.⁸. These levels of prevention provide a useful framework for the report:

- **Level One:** *Diversionary prevention* is where the effort is targeted before problems can be seen, thus prevention strategies are likely to focus on whole populations.
- **Level Two:** *Early prevention* implies that problems are already beginning to manifest themselves and action is needed to prevent them becoming serious or worse.
- **Level Three:** *Heavy-end prevention* focuses on multiple, complex and long-standing difficulties that require a customization of services to meet the needs of the individual concerned.
- **Level Four:** *Restorative prevention* focuses on reducing the impact of an intrusive intervention. This is the level of prevention that would apply to, for example, children and young people in public care, those permanently excluded from school or in youth offender institutions or supervision and/or those receiving assistance within the child protection framework.

For the purpose of the current research, the main focus is on prevention levels 1 and 2. The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) primarily comes into contact with whole populations of young people, through working within a given local area. However, ECOTEC found that young people with more complex or pronounced needs are referred by partner agencies (levels 3 and 4). Examples include Youth Offending Teams who might refer young

⁶ Include Youth, 2004. *Position Paper on Prevention* [online]. Available from: http://www.peermediation.org/policy/position_paper_prevention.doc

⁷ Children and Young People’s Unit, 2000. *Children’s Fund Guidance*, London: CYPU.

⁸ Hardiker, P., Exton, K., and Barker, M., 1991. *Policies and Practices in Preventative Child Care*. Aldershot: Avebury.

offenders; while the Connexions Service might refer Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training, care leavers or young people with mental health difficulties.

The research thus examines the work of the Fire and Rescue Service in working with young people with a diverse range of needs. It considers the breadth of 'diversionary' work that is being carried out with young people involving the FRS, and whether current training and resources are geared-up to meet these different levels of need.

1.5 REPORT STRUCTURE

This report has been structured to summarise the overall patterns of provision identified from the survey, and to focus on some of the key elements of the schemes in turn. This has been achieved as follows:

- **Section two** reviews the aims and objectives and key characteristics of the main types of schemes that were identified through the research. The prevalence of these different schemes is then reviewed at Fire and Rescue Authority level;
- **Section three** considers the partnership and management arrangements for the different schemes, including an overview of funding and financial management;
- **Section four** outlines the staffing arrangements for the schemes (including both paid and voluntary staff), and reviews the measures that are in place for quality assurance;
- **Section five** gives a profile of the main target groups, including the rationale for working with particular groups, the selection criteria and methods of referral;
- **Section six** reviews the current extent of monitoring and evaluation for schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service, including methods to obtain feedback from young people. The section reviews the available evidence for outcomes and impact;
- **Section seven** presents the evidence from the study with regard to 'what works' in planning and implementing schemes with young people involving the Fire and Rescue Service, drawing on the experiences of local scheme personnel and partners from across England; and,
- Finally, **section eight** summarises the findings from the report and concludes on the current effectiveness of youth training and diversionary work involving the Fire and Rescue Service in England.

CHAPTER 2

Youth training and diversion schemes, and their characteristics

The aim of this section is to provide an overview of the different types of youth training and diversion schemes supported and/or delivered by Fire and Rescue Services and identified by ECOTEC's survey, and their prevalence. It profiles the number and type of different schemes, their distribution at Authority level, and aims and activities of the schemes.

2.1 THE SITUATION IN ENGLAND

ECOTEC's survey was targeted at all 47 Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) in England, to map out their current involvement – whether in a delivery or support role – with youth training and diversion schemes. The findings provide a 'snapshot' of current activity, across the following scheme types:

- Young Fire-fighter Association;
- Princes Trust 'Team' programme;
- Duke of Edinburgh Award;
- Youth association 'badge' schemes; and,
- other, locally-specific schemes, not covered by the above.

A total of 33 FRAs (70% of all Authorities in England) completed the questionnaire within the allotted time frame (see **Annex three**). The achieved sample includes a mix of urban and rural Authorities, and a reasonable geographical spread.

For the purpose of the research, it was necessary to treat the London Fire Brigade as a single Authority, although in practice the size and scope of Greater London makes it an exception within the study. The approach taken was to count the schemes for which data is held centrally (Princes Trust, and LIFE). The survey questionnaire was then sent to a cross-section of ten London boroughs, in order to map-out information in other local activities⁹. The data was combined to form a dataset for 'Greater London'. This dataset provides a snapshot of activity only, therefore, and must be treated with some caution.

⁹ A total of five survey questionnaires were returned from this exercise.

The analysis of the findings from the survey highlighted two key issues in how 'schemes' were reported upon by individual respondents:

- The definition of a 'scheme' was interpreted in several different ways. The majority of respondents identified a scheme on the basis of a discrete project, and counted the number in existence within their Authority. In certain instances, however, the information was presented as an annual total. In these instances, the Authority deemed each training intervention an individual scheme, rather than defining the numbers of schemes in 'geographical' terms (i.e. the numbers of separate locations from which activities are delivered). For the purpose of the research, an individual project was counted only once, irrespective of the frequency of delivery. The totals provided are, therefore, more conservative than if schemes per Authority were defined on the basis of turnover.
- The distinction between youth training and diversionary schemes and those concerned with schools fire safety education or fire-setting behaviour was not always clear-cut. There was evidence of considerable overlap and even cross-referral between such schemes, where the Fire and Rescue Service is the lead partner¹⁰. A number of schemes were deemed to be outside of the criteria for the research and were not therefore included in the analysis.

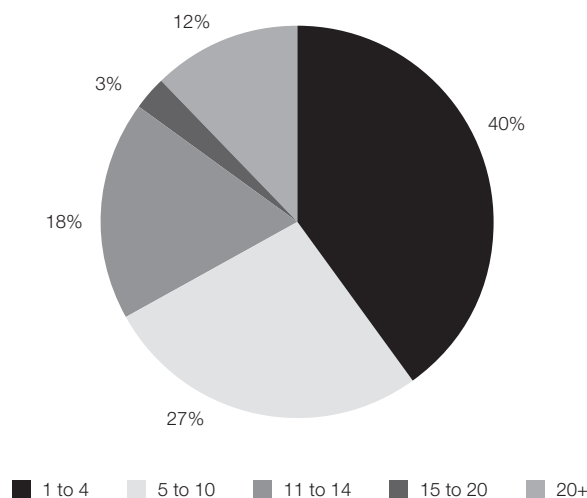
With the above taken into account, a total of 332 youth training and diversion schemes was reported across the Authorities surveyed (n=33). This figure is likely to be higher for all (47) Fire and Rescue Authorities, although it is difficult to calculate the margin of this difference with any degree of accuracy. A certain amount of skewing might be anticipated in the response rate from pro-active Authorities, than from those where youth provision is less established. It cannot be assumed, therefore, that the average number of schemes for non-responding Authorities is on a par with the survey average.

The survey also sought to determine the number of schemes in operation *per Authority*, including all of the eligible scheme types. Figure 2.1 suggests that the situation in England is varied at present. All participating FRAs reported at least some involvement in youth training; more than a third reported up to five schemes, but the majority were supporting up to 10. As might be anticipated, rural Authorities tend to be those with the fewest schemes, although this trend was by no means consistent. For example, Cornwall had five Young Fire-fighter Association schemes, alongside involvement with the Princes Trust.

¹⁰ Indeed, this scope for cross-referral between the schemes was considered a strong point by the key stakeholders that were interviewed for the study.

One of the significant features of the survey was the presence of ‘champion’ Authorities, where the level of youth training and diversion activity was much higher than for the rest of England (in purely numerical terms). To a degree, this reflected the strategy of certain Authorities to deliver smaller schemes across a wide area. For example, all 28 Fire Stations in West Sussex had established links with youth association badge schemes. Similarly, County Durham and Darlington had achieved ‘accredited access status’ for the Duke of Edinburgh Silver and Bronze Awards. This status has been used to roll out training to Fire Stations throughout the County in a co-ordinated way, and to deliver the programme in youth offending establishments.

Figure 2.1 Total number of schemes per Fire and Rescue Authority



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The situation within Greater London suggests a mixed pattern of youth training and diversionary activity. There is evidence of a strong central LIFE Team, supporting both newer and well established schemes across six boroughs. Similarly, Princes Trust activity is evident in multiple boroughs. Activity outside of these main schemes is patchier, however, with two London boroughs reporting zero schemes in place. In both instances, funding was a major factor.

One borough identified the practice of referring young people to established schemes in a neighbouring borough. This was considered to be a more cost effective approach than setting up new schemes ‘from scratch’. In the second example, conflicting funding priorities were the main barrier. There was a perception of funding being targeted at higher-end interventions around crime, with less scope for accessing funding for new diversionary work. In both cases, an interest was expressed in running schemes in the future. One respondent considered youth training a viable way to help improve access to local BME communities, for Community Fire Safety.

The survey highlights the degree to which the situation in England is constantly changing. Variations were reported in the number and frequency of schemes delivered over the course of a given year (such as targeted activity over summer holiday periods), and in the turnover of individual schemes. Some of the reasons for this were:

- the need to replace out-of-date courses or accreditation;
- new opportunities arising from partnership work; and,
- expansion of schemes, following successful piloting.

The greater availability of more standardised tools and materials was a particular theme. For example, Scout and Guide activity involving the Fire and Rescue Service has often been ad hoc in the past. Greater standardisation is expected, with the launch of a new national programme involving the Service in 2005.

2.2 RATIONALE FOR YOUTH TRAINING AND DIVERSIONARY WORK INVOLVING THE FRS

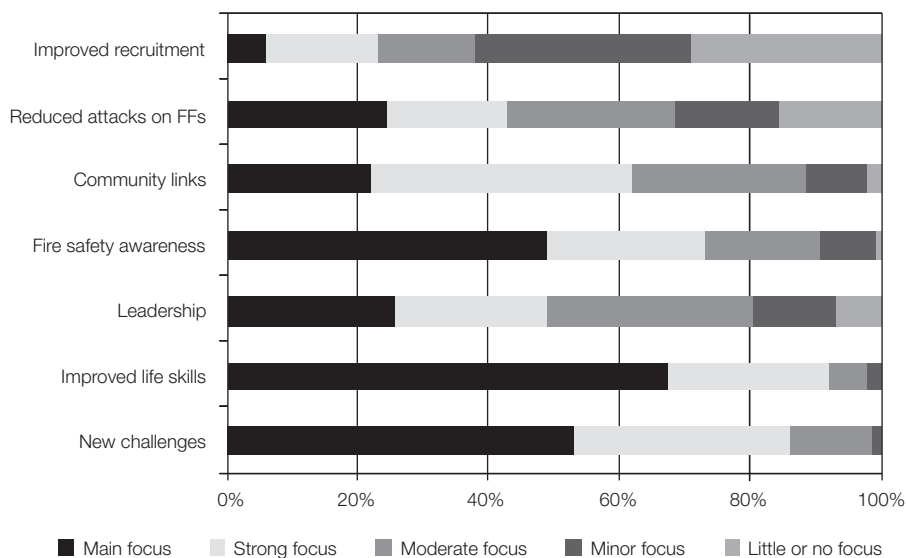
Across the whole range of schemes that were reported, Fire and Rescue Authorities applied similar terminology when describing the aims or rationale of their work with young people. Common over-arching principles were found for most of the schemes, regardless of differences in their structure and content.

One of the principal aims reported was that of embedding a stronger 'youth' element within the Community Fire Safety agenda. An opportunity was also perceived for gaining assistance from partners, to increase capacity for this agenda. A high proportion of respondents identified the important role of education in ensuring that fire safety messages are passed on to 'hard to reach' communities, seen as a key responsibility for the Fire and Rescue Service, given their greater risk from fire. The training schemes were described as a means of formalising these links, whilst ensuring positive outcomes for young people themselves. This 'dual' approach accords with existing research findings on effective youth work practice. For example, research by De Montfort University identifies the key role of youth work in building community capacity alongside personal development for young people¹¹.

¹¹ Merton, B., et. al., 2004. *An Evaluation of the Impact of Youth Work in England*. De Montfort Enterprise Ltd, (RR606).

To explore these issues further, Fire and Rescue Authorities were asked to consider seven main types of potential objectives/outcomes that might be achieved with youth training and diversionary work. Using a five point scale from 1 (little or no focus) to 5 (main focus), respondents were asked to identify how far these objectives applied to each of the schemes with which they are involved. The results were aggregated, to provide an overall picture of the main objectives, across the whole range of schemes that are covered by the research. The results are presented at Figure 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2 FRS views on the main purpose of youth training and diversion schemes



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The chart supports the findings from elsewhere in the survey, that youth training activity is targeted on personal development and community fire safety in combination. More than 40% of respondents cited ‘improved life skills’ for young people as a main focus of their work, with ‘fire safety awareness’ and ‘new challenges’ scoring almost as highly.

The chart indicates that few schemes were targeted at ‘community links’, as the *main* intended outcome. These types of links were perceived to be a ‘strong’ focus for a high proportion of a majority of schemes, whose central purpose is to engage and train young people directly.

The response was most segmented with regard to ‘reducing attacks on fire fighters’. Respondents were divided on whether this type of outcome was a main; strong; moderate; minor focus, or had little or no focus within their schemes. This response perhaps reflected the growing range and type of activities with which the Fire and Rescue Service has become involved. Whilst many of the original Young Fire-fighter Association schemes were a response to hostility towards fire-fighters, for example, newer schemes centre upon the employability and life skills of individual young people. Yet further schemes are targeted on both sets of outcomes, and view them as complementary.

Drawing on evidence from across the study more widely, a learning and ‘personal development’ aspect was identified as an aim for almost all schemes. Aspects of personal development that were generic to most schemes were:

- Team building and leadership skills;
- Confidence, motivation and self esteem;
- Life skills;
- Learning responsibility.

The ways in which these elements have been combined within individual schemes are outlined in the following sections of this report.

2.3 OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN TYPES OF SCHEME

Based on the Authorities that responded to the survey, a number of core ‘types’ of scheme have been identified, for which certain common characteristics are evident across the country. These are Young Fire fighter Association, Princes Trust ‘Team’ and Duke of Edinburgh, and are described in this section.

2.3.1 The Young Fire-fighter Association

The Young Fire fighter Association (YFA) scheme is one of the longest established schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service in England, dating back to the late 1980s. It takes the form of a membership association for young people – usually 11-16 year olds, from all types of backgrounds. It aims to encourage personal development and strengthen community links, providing young people with a sense of belonging.

YFA has benefited from a national support function since late 1990s, when the Fire Service Youth Training Association (FSYTA) was set up on a voluntary basis. Some commonalities therefore exist between schemes in England, based on the practice guidelines in the FSYTA manual. Some Fire and Rescue Authorities have been keener to maintain independence from the FSYTA, however, and have developed a ‘Fire Cadet’ model with similar aims and outlook but separate development.

The Fire and Rescue Service performs the lead role for all Young Fire fighter Association schemes, including the management and coordination of activities. Typically, other partners are involved in referring young people and/or to provide specific additional expertise. This often includes educational partners such as schools and LEAs.

The survey found that YFA schemes were predominantly delivered on fire station premises, with a focus on providing access for young people in the local community. This usually related to specific local wards, but was sometimes borough-wide. A minority of Authorities that were studied for the research made use of school premises (or a Pupil Referral Unit) to deliver some aspects of the scheme, but most undertook desk-based activities at a local fire station.

Where the YFA scheme was more established, certain Authorities offered it across their whole Authority area. This entailed creating a number of individual YFA ‘teams’ or ‘units’ who were located at different fire stations, but worked to a common set of activities and standards. The research found a number of such Authorities, delivering YFA on a multi-station basis ranging from four to thirty five individual fire stations.

YFA schemes were characterised by a long-term personal development focus. Many of the schemes that were studied for the research offered the chance for young people to participate for a period of several years. An established practice was for young people who have been involved up to age 16 to undertake training in order to continue to work on the scheme as volunteer members of staff.

The core activities for most of the YFA schemes were a combination of:

- fire-related skills training, based at the fire station (e.g. hose drills, ladder drills);
- outward bound trips or residential visits;
- other practical training including first aid, food hygiene, and manual handling; and,
- personal development topics such as health awareness, or substance misuse.

Certain schemes have been mapped to the national curriculum – enabling them to add value to mainstream PSHE activities or Key Skills at school, for example.

The research found that the BTEC was the most commonly used form of accreditation for the Young Fire fighter schemes, although not exclusively so. In one Authority, a number of schemes were reported to be running in parallel, each testing different vocational routes. These comprised a BTEC scheme, a scheme using the ASDAN award scheme¹² leading to a final BTEC Award, and a route using the ASDAN system only. The aim was to identify the accreditation that might be best suited to the needs of different groups of young people.

¹² ASDAN is an approved awarding body, offering programmes and qualifications to develop key skills and life skills.

2.3.2 *The Princes Trust 'Team' programme*

The Princes Trust 'Team' programme is a 12-week programme of activities that is run by delivery partners on behalf of the Trust, on a franchise basis. The aim of the programme is to build confidence and employability skills for 16-25 year olds who are unemployed and/or educational under-achievers, care leavers or ex offenders.

As a potential delivery partner, the Fire and Rescue Service typically manages and coordinates the Team programme at a local level. This entails providing a Team Manager, Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader. Basic skills support is also required, although this expertise is usually sourced from another partner.

According to the survey, where the FRS was the lead partner, responsibilities included making available dedicated staff to deliver the planned activities, as well as providing the necessary resources for the programme such as equipment or venues. The FRS also provided a support role to other agencies (e.g. colleges), however, as a delivery partner. This might include seconding staff to perform a Team Leader role, or providing access to drill yards.

The activities delivered within the 12-week programme varied according to the set-up and location of each Team, although a common national framework and guidelines must be followed. Adherence to these guidelines is monitored by an external verifier. Activities were centred on the key 'building blocks' of team building, community-based projects, work placements and residential or outdoor activities. Specific topics included:

- Fire safety awareness;
- Role modelling;
- First Aid;
- Food hygiene;
- Community cohesion;
- Interview techniques;
- Health and safety; and,
- Citizenship.

Through these activities the 'Team' Programme seeks to teach young people a range of skills, which will promote personal development; lead to higher levels of confidence and motivation and improve their life opportunities. It is anticipated that this will then result in increased employability and the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications such as City & Guilds Profile of Achievement or accreditation of Key

Skills. This is an important aspect of the programme, with the delivery partner able to access funding on the basis of success rates.

Fire and Rescue Authorities used a range of locations to deliver the Team programme, including sports clubs; youth centres, Scout huts and various types of rented premises, in addition to the fire stations themselves. The geographical coverage varied from city – or county-wide, to more locally based schemes. The scope of individual Team programmes varied, depending on the length of time in existence, infrastructure (urban/rural), and the funding profile.

2.3.3 *The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme*

The Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) is a national scheme offering three levels of Award to young people aged 14 to 25; Bronze, Silver and Gold. At each of these levels a participant must complete activities in four sections: Service, Skills, Physical Recreation and Expeditions. In order to complete the Award at Bronze level it takes 6 months, at Silver level it takes a minimum of 12 months and at Gold level, 18 months.

DofE operates on a franchise basis under which there are two forms of licence; Operating and Access. Currently Fire and Rescue Services act as Access organisations whereby they are licensed to deliver one part of the Award to young people. Typically, this is the ‘Service section’ of the Award.

The research found that DofE was being delivered through the instructional support of fire fighters provided by the Fire Station watch members; Community Fire Safety personnel and/or central assistance from the Authority’s headquarters. Young people are offered advice and guidance in relation to community fire safety and general fire awareness; direct training such as First Aid or other physical activities. The selection of activities varied according to the level at which the Award was being pursued and the personal choice of the individual young people.

Notwithstanding these differences, common activities included:

- Physical training: use of fire fighting equipment and methods of rescue;
- Methods of extinguishing fires;
- Fire safety awareness: preparing home fire safety plans, understanding the process of combustion and toxic effects of smoke; and,
- Assessment: written or oral to test the knowledge and skills gained.

Through instructional support and training, the FRS seeks to engage young people and facilitate their personal development; offer them experience of a work environment, specifically the role and challenges of the ‘modern fire service’ and develop their understanding of community and fire safety.

This contribution to the 'Service' section of the DofE was located on the premises of the fire stations themselves, whether the geographic catchment was local, district or county wide.

2.4 SCHEMES WITH A FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Whilst the focus of many of the principal schemes involving the FRS might be described as 'diversionary', the research also identified a number of schemes that address heavier-end preventative work. In particular, the Fire and Rescue Service demonstrated an established track record of working with young offenders, those who are at risk of offending, and a range of other 'vulnerable' groups of young people.

A feature of much of this work were the strong links that had been established between the FRS and partners such as Youth Offending Teams, Neighbourhood Renewal partners, Connexions, local authorities, Sure Start, and (some) voluntary and community sector organisations.

Three main types of scheme were recurrent amongst the Authorities that took part in the research. These were – Firebreak, LIFE and Phoenix.

2.4.1 Firebreak

Firebreak is a short-course scheme, lasting twelve weeks. It is targeted at young people aged 13-15 who have offended or at risk of offending or educational exclusion, and/or young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The scheme aims to support progression within mainstream education, reinforcing this with a positive learning experience outside school. A key feature of the scheme is often the 'day release' format, with activities designed to enhance and reinforce the school curriculum.

The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) manages, coordinates and delivers Firebreak, and liaises with referral agencies to identify suitable young people to take part. In some cases, pre-course support is also offered by the FRS. For example, this might be provided in order to help the young person make an informed choice about attending the course.

A diverse range of activities are offered by the scheme, including:

- Fire service drills
- Team building activities
- Education and advice on first aid, substance misuse and health living
- Abseiling

- External speakers; and,
- Discussion groups

Firebreak schemes are delivered mainly from Fire station premises, although some activities are offered off-site, such as outward-bound activities.

2.4.2 *LIFE*

The LIFE scheme is an intensive five-day programme, delivered by the FRS. The aim of the scheme is to improve community relations and reduce antisocial behaviour directed at Fire fighters, whilst aiding the personal development of young people.

Eligible groups for LIFE are primarily ‘vulnerable’ young people, aged 13-19. This includes young people who have been excluded from school, those who are the perpetrators or victims of crime, or who show signs of antisocial behaviour. A key intended outcome of the scheme is to re-engage participants with education or with their community, where signs of disengagement were identified prior to referral.

The Fire and Rescue Service is the lead partner for the LIFE scheme, and performs a management, co-ordination and delivery role. Schemes usually include a dedicated team, comprising a LIFE Team Leader/Lead Trainer and a number of operational Fire fighters who have been trained to participate on the programme. Fire stations form the operational base for LIFE schemes, although catchment areas range from the whole Authority area to more specific ‘hotspots’ for arson, fire setting and anti-social behaviour.

Activities on LIFE include the leadership training, team working and problem solving skills. The scheme also includes activities designed to raise young people’s self-discipline and self-esteem. Typically this is achieved by combining physical activities, such as learning to use fire fighting equipment, with awareness-raising sessions.

2.4.3 *Phoenix*

The Phoenix scheme is targeted at young people who offend, or show signs of offending behaviour. The scheme works with 11-16 year olds to provide a short and intensive (five day) programme of work experience and practical skills training, under the supervision of the Fire and Rescue Service. The aims of the scheme are to address antisocial behaviour, whilst providing an opportunity for young people to enhance their employability and social skills in a supported environment.

The duration and structure of the scheme is similar to the LIFE scheme, which was widely reported to be a more recent adaptation of Phoenix. Both schemes provide an intensive phase of training to boost the skills

and confidence of young people and encourage further participation in other positive activities. There are some key differences, however, including the geographical distribution in England and the partners/sources of funding accessed. These differences are explored further in the next section.

Phoenix is managed and delivered by the FRS, relying on mainly seconded staff to perform the administration and instruction for the course. The FRS typically also provides the venue, equipment and catering for the programme. Activities identified by the research include – citizenship awareness training; practical skills; community fire safety exercises; First Aid; risk assessment and team work. Each of these activities is designed to help improve a sense of self-esteem, discipline and responsibility.

Common to all of the schemes outlined above, is the expectation that the delivery of activities by fire fighters will offer a positive role model for young people. Interacting on a personal level with the FRS is expected to improve these young people's sense of social responsibility and their awareness of the impact which anti-social behaviour has on their local communities.

2.5 PREVALENCE OF THE DIFFERENT SCHEMES

The research collected information on the number of schemes of different types within each Fire and Rescue Authority, across England. It is possible, therefore, to compare the prevalence of each of the main types of schemes at a national level.

Table 2.1 ranks the different types of scheme that were found by the survey, in order of prevalence. The table shows the total number of schemes of each type, for all Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). This is based on a sample of 70% of FRAs in England.

Table 2.1 Prevalence of the main scheme types

| Scheme | Total No of schemes, based on FRAs responding to the survey (n=33) |
|---|---|
| 1. Duke of Edinburgh Award | 93 |
| 2. Young Fire-fighter Association | 90 |
| 3. Youth organisation 'badge' schemes | 49 |
| 4. Princes Trust (Team and ad hoc involvement) | 43 |
| 5. LIFE | 12 |
| 6. Firebreak | 12 |
| 7. Phoenix | 3 |
| 8. Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other locally developed schemes (18) • Multi safety awareness (6) • Details unspecified (4) • Junior Citizen Events (2) | 30 |

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The table shows that the Duke of Edinburgh Award was the most prevalent of the schemes (by 'count' alone). It must be noted, however, that over half (50) of the individual Duke of Edinburgh schemes were concentrated within a single Authority. This skewed the wider pattern at an all-England level, where the Young Fire-fighter Association emerged as by far the most prevalent of the schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service (Table 2.1). This concurs with previous research, which suggested that the Association schemes were the most established and widespread.

The profile of the Prince's Trust schemes broadly matched the information collected by the Fire and Rescue Service Princes Trust Support Association, through their internal audit¹³. Whilst a fair number of Authorities are delivering the Team programme on behalf of the Trust, the involvement of others is more ad hoc. Some FRS teams reported delivering fire safety and awareness training to other providers of the Team programme. This typically included the secondment of staff, and providing access to equipment and premises.

Around a third of Authorities in the survey sample reported no work with the Princes Trust, and several had recently ceased activities. One of the reasons for this was concern over the security of funding for the programme in the future.

¹³ An audit was completed between January and March 2005, to map-out the Fire and Rescue Service's involvement with the Princes Trust. This was conducted by the National Liaison Officer, based on a questionnaire distributed to all 62 Chief Fire Officers. The Audit provides a snapshot of FRAs engaged with the Trust as delivery partners, and those providing secondments only. It showed that the Team programme remains the principal scheme for which the FRS is a lead partner, but that a higher number of Authorities provide ad hoc contributions (e.g. equipment, access to premises).

The table indicates that schemes with a targeted focus on more vulnerable young people were fewer in number than the more 'universal' schemes such as YFA. There also appeared to be greater variation in the type/branding of such schemes. Phoenix and LIFE have similar elements and structure, for example, but have developed as distinct 'pockets' of provision. The survey suggested that most LIFE activity was concentrated in the South East, with some links between the London and Hampshire schemes. A further cluster of schemes was located in Cleveland. In contrast, the Phoenix scheme was favoured in each of Tyne and Wear and Cornwall. These types of short-course schemes showed signs of expansion, as a number of other Authorities who took part in the survey were thinking about introducing them.

Firebreak was in place across a wide geographical area, with schemes located in the South East, Midlands, South West, East of England and Northeast. This suggests that aspects of the scheme are easily replicable and/or have been effectively disseminated. The work of the Fire Service Youth Training Association was reported to be similarly important in ensuring the uptake of the YFA scheme across different English regions, as was the Fire Service Support Association for the Princes Trust (FSSAPT).

The figures for the youth organisation badge schemes are less conclusive, as some two thirds of Authorities did not complete the corresponding section of the questionnaire. This might be attributed either to a lack of knowledge of these types of schemes on the part of the respondent, or the fact that no such schemes exist within that Authority. A number of Authorities reported a good level of co-ordination with Scout and Guide groups, the St John's Ambulance, army air and sea cadets. Indeed, these partnerships were reported as flexible ones, with the FRS providing fire awareness training as required.

2.5.1 Other types of scheme

A total of 30 'other' schemes were identified through the survey. This category gave rise to the greatest variation in types, with respondents listing projects that had developed locally alongside the more common schemes.

Various multi-safety training schemes were found to operate across the country. They typically involved other emergency services such as Ambulance Teams, Air Rescue, and the Police. The format/activities varied, but with the FRS usually performing instructional training as part of the wider scheme. Such projects were typically small scale, often using a 'road show' format to access different communities. Indeed, the reported contact time with young people was lower than for the schemes where the FRS was a lead partner and worked with a group of young people over a period of days or weeks.

One of the benefits of the multi-safety training approach was the opportunity to 'pool' the funds of the different agencies that are involved, thus achieving economies of scale. One example of this is the

‘Safety Works’ project in Tyne and Wear, which was able to make use of a multi-agency life skills centre. The centre was developed with joint funding from the Drug Action Team, Police, Transport Agency and Youth Service in addition to the FRS. It provided a series of ‘simulated’ spaces, so that young people can undertake role play to test out different practical scenarios. This enabled the FRS to put across fire safety messages alongside other key personal safety topics for young people.

In addition to multi-safety training, the Fire and Rescue Service has also established a number of schemes with a particular ‘local’ focus and branding. While this activity is relatively small in scale and scope, it does show the willingness and capacity for individual FRAs to pilot new approaches to meet local needs. Indeed, a characteristic of these schemes was the diverse range of local partners. This included the more routine involvement of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations.

Table 2.2 collates the characteristics of the ‘other’ schemes identified by the survey.

Table 2.2 Other local schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service

| Name of | Fire and Rescue Authority | Summary | Partners |
|------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Archon scheme | County Durham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivational activities provided for young people by the FRS, as part of a local Inclusion Programme | Connexions Youth Service |
| 2. Career development scheme | Essex | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth scheme to provide career development for high achieving young people • BTEC accreditation delivered in partnership with local schools | LEA/schools |
| 3. FIRE scheme | West Midlands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire safety education, citizenship and OCN award for 10-18 year olds • Pilot uniformed association, for potential large scale rollout | Youth Offending Services |

Table 2.2 Other local schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service
(continued)

| Name of scheme | Fire and Rescue Authority | Summary | Partners |
|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| 4. Fire Service Work Experience | Tyne and Wear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured work experience placements for young people • Team work; citizenship | Connexions |
| | Hertfordshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical training and work experience for 12-16 year olds, by application: • To encourage an interest in the FRS; to foster a spirit of community involvement • Delivered from three fire stations; uniformed course | Partners not specified |
| 5. FIRE Works Youth Achievement Programme | Northumberland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme for young people aged 13-15 who are disengaged from education, or at risk of offending; • Delivered over holiday periods, to improve social, community and team working skills; • Themed activities: antisocial behaviour; community work | Youth Service Schools CDRP |
| 6. Fireball | Leicestershire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project engaging young people in sport as a diversion from fire-setting; relationship building with fire fighters; • Referral via schools, for 9-13 year olds, identified by teachers | Score for Sport NACRO Braunstone Community Association |

Table 2.2 Other local schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service
(continued)

| Name of scheme | Fire and Rescue Authority | Summary | Partners |
|--|---------------------------|--|---|
| 7. 'Fire fighter for a day' – Junior Inclusion Project | Surrey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach project on social housing estate with high levels of crime and social exclusion • Fire fighter demonstration skills, equipment; relationship building with young people | Partners not specified |
| 8. FIREFLY | Greater Manchester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive five-day work experience programme, within a disciplined, uniformed team • Working with 10-18 year olds; young offenders • Focus on safer communities; reducing re-offending | Youth Offending Team Community Safety Unit |
| 9. Flare | Lancashire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRS scheme with a focus on disadvantaged communities: • Working towards awards within the National Framework for Informal Learning (e.g. first aid) | Education Business Partnership Youth Offending Team Youth Inclusion Programme |
| 10. Holiday programmes | Warwickshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer holiday diversionary schemes; team building activities • Accessing national project funding | Youth and Community Service Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) |

Table 2.2 Other local schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service
(continued)

| Name of scheme | Fire and Rescue Authority | Summary | Partners |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| 11. Madani youth training scheme | Humberside | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging local BME communities • Smoke detector training and ownership | Madani Youth Organisation Connexions |
| 12. Peer Mentoring Project | Shropshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team building; role play for disaffected young people • Peer education activities (13-15 year olds working with younger children to build self esteem) | Local Schools NACRO Community Safety Partnerships |
| 13. Reparation Programme | Durham and Darlington | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project to offer positive role models to 11-19 year olds as part of a YJB reparation scheme: • Rehabilitation programme: activities to address offending behaviour | Youth Justice Board for England and Wales |
| 14. SAFE | Cleveland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five week programme, offering fire safety awareness education to young people • Focus on disadvantaged groups (NRF area) • Run alongside the LIFE programme: some shared partners | Connexions Community Safety Partnership Local Youth Organisations |
| 15. Skidz | Buckinghamshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary courses in motor vehicle repair and maintenance • Assistance in the community | Skidz (registered charity status) VCS organisations |

Table 2.2 Other local schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service
(continued)

| Name of scheme | Fire and Rescue Authority | Summary | Partners |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 16. YMCA scheme involving the FRS | Hertfordshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivational and confidence building scheme for vulnerable groups (e.g. care leavers, unemployed) • Fire safety and practical training elements | YMCA Connexions Local Hostels |
| 17. Young parents course | Cornwall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team work, communication skills and employability for young parents • Community fire safety messages and skills | Sure Start |

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As the table shows, a high proportion of the schemes that originated locally were targeted at specific groups of young people. In particular, there was a strong focus on disadvantaged groups, in particular on:

- young people either excluded from school or at risk of exclusion;
- youth offending issues (including vehicle crime); and,
- accessing harder to reach young people from deprived communities.

A number of the schemes were similar to the more familiar provision such as Firebreak, LIFE and Phoenix. Indeed, it appeared that some Authorities adapted an existing format with the aim of developing a clearer local 'brand' and tailoring activities to suit their local needs. The FIREFLY scheme in Greater Manchester is an example, where an intensive five-day work experience programme is offered to young people, with many of the key elements of Phoenix. However, the local FRA opted to develop its own quality standards and format, drawing on the expertise of local partners.

A further aspect of the work of the FRS with young people emerges at a local level – an emphasis on the provision of work experience placements and career development. Some FRAs provided the opportunity for young people to apply for a work placement, outside of the context of the larger training schemes. The BTEC accredited scheme in Essex provided an example of this type of activity. Here, the local FRS established partnership work with local schools, to provide career-oriented activities

for high achievers, to complement the school curriculum. Few such schemes were reported across the country, however.

It is perhaps a key issue to establish why certain Fire and Rescue Authorities opted to develop a new/different local scheme, whilst others favoured the more established schemes. There are clearly benefits and drawbacks of both approaches. Some FRAs reported the attraction of the main 'branded' schemes as offering a tried and tested set of tools and standards that are proven to be effective. In contrast, certain FRAs expressed some dissatisfaction with the pre-existing Young Fire fighter model and highlighted a need for the FRS to move into new areas of partnership work. The lower level of targeting of YFA on harder to reach groups was reported to be a key factor.

For those FRAs that provided additional information as part of the research, the rationale for developing a more 'tailored' local scheme included:

- to meet demand, where a partner organisation identified a gap in provision for local young people that the FRS might help to address;
- to add a 'fire awareness' element to a youth intervention that was already in place in the local area; and,
- as an offshoot of a more established scheme that was run by the FRS, such as where it was clear that a similar scheme would be beneficial for different age groups.

Examples of each of the above were found within the research. For example, several of the schemes listed in Table 2.2 were managed as part of a Youth Inclusion Programme. The SAFE scheme in Cleveland has been coordinated alongside the LIFE scheme, with the potential for young people to move between the two schemes. This has the advantage of providing the FRS with a greater number of referral options, to meet the needs of young people with whom they work.

The presence of a full time member of staff within the FRS with a remit for youth development work was a feature of many of the more innovative local schemes. Establishing a new pilot 'from scratch' was found to be time consuming, and to require good knowledge of other local funding and partnership activity surrounding youth work. The benefits of this approach were clear, however, with a number of the above schemes demonstrating 'good practice' methods such as peer education and outreach/detached work on estates. A central role for Connexions was also a common feature of these schemes, in bringing expertise on working from harder to reach groups. This includes young people who are Not in Education, Training or Employment (NEET).

CHAPTER 3

Partnership and Management

This section considers the evidence of partnership working for youth training and schemes that involve the Fire and Rescue Service, and how they are managed.

The research provides information on the main partner organisations involved and their roles. Examples are provided of more/less successful partnership working, and the factors influencing success. The management and coordination of the schemes is then outlined, including an overview of financial management.

3.1 OVERVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP WORK

The survey elicited considerable information on the partnership work undertaken within each Authority. This information was gathered from both a 'mapping' of the partners involved in the schemes across the Authority, and a more detailed consideration of the working arrangements that were in place for the 'main' schemes.

One of the notable points from the survey was that a proportion of schemes (7%) reported having no partners in place. This indicates that such schemes are planned and managed by the Fire and Rescue Service in isolation, with little input from external agencies. Even where a greater number of partners were identified, this did not always equate to direct involvement in the day-to-day running of the scheme. Partners were more routinely found to perform a more limited role in the capacity of funding body or referral agent.

These gaps in partnership present some real challenges for the Fire and Rescue Service. In a climate where there is a greater move towards multi agency work around youth provision at a local level, it is perhaps concerning that a proportion of schemes are effectively 'out of the loop' regarding partnership. This has implications for accessing funding and training opportunities – around Local Area Agreements, for example¹⁴.

¹⁴ Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are voluntary, three-year agreements between central Government and local authorities and their partners. LAAs have the aim of addressing national targets in a local way, by enabling partners to pool their funding within four local 'blocks'. LAAs are being rolled out nationally on a gradual basis, from 2005 onwards.

3.1.1 *The main partners, by type of scheme*

Based on the mapping data, the youth association badge schemes show the most consistent partnership arrangements across the country. Nearly two thirds of them were found to operate bi-laterally (e.g. with Scout or Guide Groups or the St Johns Ambulance Brigade). This was consistent with the qualitative evidence from the survey. Fire and Rescue Authorities routinely took the approach of providing access to these badge schemes from each of the fire stations in that area. This provided an operating base for the smaller schemes, and strengthened joint working.

Of the remaining 'national' schemes, the most frequently identified partners of the Fire and Rescue Service were:

- *Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme:* the involvement of schools was a key feature of partnership working. This reflected the work of the FRS with the 11-16 age groups, to deliver the Service aspect of the scheme. Youth and Community Services were also actively involved. Certain Fire and Rescue Authorities have further taken D of E into Young Offender Institutions, as an option for young people in custody.
- *Princes Trust scheme:* in addition to the partnership between the FRS and the Princes Trust to deliver the Team programme, Authorities routinely worked with colleges to deliver aspects of the course. This reflected the older age range of the main beneficiaries (16-25 year olds). Most Team programmes also drew upon a wide network of referral agencies, with local Learning and Skills Councils as the key funding partners.
- *Young Fire fighter Association scheme:* LEAs, schools and Pupil Referral Units are all key partners. The involvement of education professionals was encouraged through the scheme, to help deliver the BTEC accreditation. A proportion of Authorities reported working with the Fire Service Youth Training Association (FSYTA). The FSYTA performed a national coordinating role, offering support for newly established schemes.
- *LIFE:* access to external funding was a feature of LIFE schemes, as a means of delivering activities on a viable scale. Several LIFE schemes were linked to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) within the corresponding local area, whilst a further scheme had accessed European Social Fund (ESF) support. Other main partners varied and included the Police, Connexions and Local Authorities.
- *Phoenix:* only a small number of Phoenix schemes were identified by the research, making it difficult to identify 'typical' partnership arrangements. Partners included Local Authority Education teams, and Youth Offending Teams. One scheme was partnered with the local Sure Start.

- *Firebreak*: partnership work typically included close involvement with schools and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). Certain Firebreak schemes were delivered within the framework of other YOT interventions, such as Youth Inclusion Programmes. Less common partners included Primary Care Trusts, and the voluntary sector.

Connexions¹⁵ and Youth Services were recurrent partners across most types of schemes. Local Authority Housing teams have also been involved to an extent. On the Princes Trust Team programme in particular, access to rented Local Authority accommodation was an important factor in enabling access for young people who need to travel to participate.

3.1.2 *Partnership around crime and youth offending issues*

The involvement of crime and youth offending partners was a further notable characteristic of the research. There was particularly high involvement of the Youth Offending Service and Probation Teams, across a range of scheme types.

The research indicates a number of mutual benefits from this area of partnership working. In one Fire and Rescue Authority, for example, the Youth Offending Team (YOT) helped the Fire and Rescue Service to tailor modules of their training scheme around the needs of young people who were 'on their books'. In another area, the Service seconded a fire fighter to the YOT. Based at the YOT premises, this member of staff delivers group work in five locations throughout a local housing estate with young people who have been involved in car related offences.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) were less commonly reported to be partners than were Youth Offending Services. CDRP involvement was most evident for targeted schemes such as LIFE and Phoenix, and for multi-safety education schemes. They were less routinely involved with more universal provision, although several Young Fire fighter Association schemes did identify some kind of links to be in place.

Where they were involved, CDRPs often performed an important funding role for youth training and diversionary activities. In Cleveland, for example, Safe in Tees Valley has been a key strategic partner and funding body for a range of schemes that involve the Fire and Rescue Service. This has placed the FRS in a good position to link with other local partners working in the field of antisocial behaviour reduction.

Only a very small proportion of schemes reported having the Police as partners. The reasons for this are unclear. For the uniformed association schemes, it is feasible that the work of the Fire and Rescue Service runs in parallel to (rather than in partnership with) equivalent schemes that are operated by the police. The Police were also infrequently reported to be

¹⁵ The Connexions service is funded by central Government to deliver information, advice and guidance to young people in the 13-19 age range. This comprises both universal support (such as in schools), and more targeted support for vulnerable young people in the community. Local partnership arrangements for Connexions vary across the country.

partners on more targeted schemes such as Firebreak, however, so there are clearly other factors involved. Reassuringly, involvement with Youth Offending Teams is much higher, suggesting that this is the principal way of meeting the needs of young people at risk of crime/offending and that Police involvement is not always required.

3.1.3 Involvement of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) involvement appeared to be relatively polarised, with a higher level of involvement for the more individual schemes than for the main branded schemes. There were some exceptions to this, with the involvement of Councils for Voluntary Youth Services with certain youth association awards for example. The involvement of community organisations with the YFA was typically explained more in terms of 'liaison' than joint working. There is possibly greater scope for VCS involvement in the design and delivery of aspects of service provision.

In Shropshire, the Peer Education scheme that is managed by the Fire and Rescue Service has a clearer strategic link to the VCS. The Scheme was embedded as part of a larger out-of-school education programme, which was run by the national crime reduction charity NACRO. Communication between the FRS and NACRO was evident at an operational level. The latter provided support with behavioural issues. There was close liaison between key workers and the FRS scheme manager.

3.1.4 Priorities and key issues for partnership work

On balance, the research suggests that partnership work has been 'hit and miss'. Often, partner engagement was at least in part a legacy from historical partnership working in the community. In other cases, personal contacts appeared to be the main factor, particularly if a new member of staff had joined from a potential partner organisation.

This variable success of partnership working was reflected in feedback from scheme staff. In many cases, there was perceived to be an atmosphere of competition for funding between local agencies, and a lack of accountability when partners failed to commit the level of time or resources that were promised. When it is considered that some schemes have operated with no partners at all (see above), there is considerable scope for improvement in strengthening partnership work across the Service.

3.2 SCHEME MANAGEMENT

The survey explored the types of management arrangements that were in place for youth training and diversionary schemes.

Only a minority of the main schemes reported that a specific 'management board' was in place, to oversee the planning and delivery of the schemes. There was no discernible pattern among the types of schemes that were more/less likely to have such a 'board' structure. Arrangements appeared to be specific to individual Fire and Rescue Authorities irrespective of the type of scheme.

For the majority of the main 'branded' schemes, management arrangements were located internally to the Fire and Rescue Service, with little or no direct partner inputs at a strategic level. Young Fire-fighter Association schemes were typically managed by a single individual, with support from Fire and Rescue staff and/or under the guidance of the FSYTA. Duke of Edinburgh schemes were also predominantly managed internally to the local FRS, through the Brigade's Youth Inclusion Section or the Fire Education Manager.

Where no specific team was in place to oversee youth engagement activities, scheme management was typically undertaken within the central line management structure of the Service. For example, the scheme manager might be line managed directly by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer or Station Manager.

Arrangements for many of the 'other' local schemes were found to be more complex. Often, the relatively small scale of these schemes was insufficient to warrant a separate management structure, with the scheme manager multi-tasking to undertake each of management and delivery. Certain schemes were found to operate within the framework of a larger 'parent' intervention, such as an YJB Youth Inclusion Programme (see also section 2.5). In these instances, the FRS effectively provided just one aspect of the service. The wider intervention was managed externally by the funding body.

3.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

To obtain an overview of the total cost of running different schemes, Authorities were asked for details of the direct funding provided by the Fire and Rescue Service, and the estimated cost of in-kind support and the amount of financial support from partners. The detailed findings are presented in tabular format in Annex One.

Finance was a major 'grey area', with regard to the type and accuracy of information that was reported. The level of detail varied considerably, with some Authorities either not knowing or not providing any information on the funding of their schemes. It was not therefore possible

to capture a detailed picture of the financial management of all the scheme types. The summary findings in this section should be treated with caution.

3.3.1 Overall funding profile

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the scale of funding for the main schemes delivered at Authority level and summarises the number which fall within each cost ‘range’.

Table 3.1 Funding profile of youth training and diversionary schemes

| Total cost of scheme (£, annual) | Number of schemes within range | FRS funding not specified (No. of schemes) | Partner funding not specified (No. of schemes) | In-kind FRS support not specified (No. of schemes) |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 0-10,000 | 12 | 2 | 7 | 8 |
| 10,001 – 20,000 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| 20,001 – 50,000 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 50,001 – 100,000 | 4 | – | – | 1 |
| 100,000 + | 8 | 2 | - | 4 |
| Not specified | 13 | – | – | – |

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As the table shows, the majority of FRS schemes operated at or below a budget of £100,000 per year, with around a third costing less than £10,000 in total to run (excluding those schemes for which costs were ‘not specified’¹⁶). This profile is consistent with prior research, which suggests that a considerable proportion of FRS youth training activity is undertaken on a voluntary basis and that scheme costs are typically low. Feedback from partners to the schemes certainly attests to this. The Service was reported to provide access to equipment and premises, often at little or no expense to referral partners.

Many schemes reported a move towards the greater professionalism of their activities in recent years, such as employing full time staff to oversee youth training activities for the first time, and offering remuneration to former volunteers (see section four). In such instances, running costs were reported to have grown on a year-on-year basis.

¹⁶ It is important to note that the total costs may be affected by the high proportion of schemes for which in-kind support from the Fire and Rescue Service was not identified. Some Authorities may have under-estimated the full financial implications of the scheme which they deliver or manage.

3.3.2 *Funding by type of scheme*

The limited data from the survey places some limits on how far it is possible to gauge the *relative* costs of running/managing different scheme types. As above, key differences were found in the type of financial recording mechanisms in use, and their accuracy.¹⁷

The Princes Trust Team programme reported the highest overall costs per scheme, with an average (mean) cost of some £272,000 per year. This level of expenditure reflects the typically large size of Princes Trust schemes, drawing on a wide network of partner referrals. It is also consistent with the intensity of the twelve week programme, and running costs associated with outward-bound activities and rental of accommodation.

A much more variable range of costs was reported for Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes. A possible factor for the variation is likely to be the differences in numbers of young people registered at any given 'level' of Award (Gold, Silver and Bronze). Furthermore, some key differences can be observed in the scale and extent of Duke of Edinburgh Award activity, between Authorities that hold 'accredited access award' status, and those that contribute to the Award on a more ad hoc basis.

3.3.3 *Profile of 'in-kind' support*

For the purpose of the research, in-kind support was defined as non-financial contributions made by the Service, to reinforce actual scheme costs. Such costs included use of FRS premises or equipment, administrative support, or volunteer time.

There were some differences in opinion between Authorities that responded to the survey, with regard to what constitutes in-kind support, and how to measure it. Indeed, some twenty six Authorities could not provide an estimate¹⁸. Where an estimate was ventured, the main sources of support were identified as follows:

- residential support in a rural area;
- transport facilities;
- provision of fire fighting uniforms;
- use of facilities and equipment; and,
- volunteer time of fire-fighters.

¹⁷ For example, one Authority reported the cost of a scheme as £400, which worked with approximately 500 young people, offering them instructional support in motor vehicle maintenance. In contrast, another similar scheme reported costs of around £100,000 to work with 100 young people teaching them life skills and fire fighting activities.

¹⁸ Furthermore, it is possible that Authorities may have interpreted 'in-kind' support in the same way as others have considered it to be 'direct FRS funding'.

On balance, the Young Fire fighter and Youth Association ‘Badge’ schemes were found to draw-down the greatest proportion of in-kind support. For YFA in particular, Authorities reported that the scheme had always been volunteer-oriented. Similarly, much Youth Association Badge activity was reported to require small-scale and often ad hoc inputs.

Proportionately, Princes Trust Team programmes reported the lowest levels of in-kind support. Levels per scheme ranged between just 7% and 22% of the total costs. This partly reflects the highly professional structure of the programme. In-kind support was also reported to be low for many of the higher-end intervention schemes, such as LIFE, Phoenix and Firebreak. Authorities reported that it was not usually possible to resource work with more challenging groups of young people on an ad hoc or voluntary basis. This was due in part to the higher level of associated training and support costs.

3.3.4 Funding provided by partner organisations

External (partner) funding was a characteristic of many FRS youth training and diversion schemes, either from delivery or management partners or through a national funding ‘stream’ that was accessed via a tendering process.

Partner support ranged from small amounts of funding to 100% of scheme costs. Follow-on funding from Local Authorities (including Housing, Youth Services and LEAs) was one of the main forms of partner funding, in sustaining the schemes at a local level. This was found to be present for a whole range of different scheme types.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was by far the most significant source of funding for the Princes Trust Team programme, with payment on a ‘per outcome’ basis. LSC funding was found to sustain the majority of costs for delivery and resources. Individual Team programmes also typically drew in a range of smaller contributions from partner agencies, however. This partly reflected benefits of the programme for young people who were engaged on other interventions (e.g. New Deal).

External funding was routinely cited as the main driver for projects with a focus on socially excluded groups, such as LIFE, Phoenix and Firebreak. Typically, schemes were able to draw upon both ‘youth justice’ related funding streams (either in the context of an YJB funded programme or intervention such as Youth Inclusion Programmes) and regeneration funding. For example, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was found to be a major enabler for the LIFE programme. Clearly, the focus of the scheme on socially excluded groups is a factor in the capacity of FRS teams to access funding of this type.

There was also a strong 'community safety' theme to the sources of other funding reported by Authorities. For example, seven Authorities reported that local partnerships such as the 'Safe' partnership, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) or the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) had provided funds for the schemes involving the FRS. Other local partners such as the Youth Offending Team, Schools, Connexions, youth organisations and police were also contributing financial support to such schemes.

CHAPTER 4

Staffing and quality frameworks

The purpose of this section is to provide an insight to the arrangements within each Authority for staffing and co-ordinating the youth training and diversion schemes. The section first reviews the survey evidence for the human resource planning that takes place for the schemes, and the training that is in place for paid staff and volunteers. The approaches towards youth engagement and quality assurance are then profiled.

4.1 STAFFING AND PERSONNEL

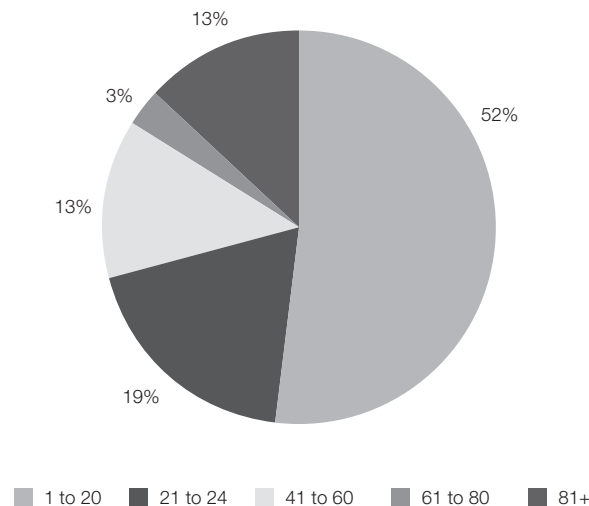
In total, some 1435 Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) staff (uniformed and non-uniformed) and a further 73 external personnel were reported to be engaged with youth interventions within the Authorities who took part in the survey. In addition, a proportion of Authorities noted that additional FRS staff could be pulled-in to any given project on a more ad hoc basis.

Figure 4.1 summarises the range of FRS involvement, for the Authorities surveyed. As it illustrates, over half of them favoured a smaller team of (<20) vetted staff for working with young people on a regular basis. Factors included the costs of training and induction, and time inputs required to monitor and quality assure the relevant personnel. At the opposite end of the scale, some 13% of Authorities reported the involvement of 80 or more members of the Service¹⁹. Perhaps surprisingly, there was no obvious urban/rural correlation in this respect, with some rural counties among the highest.

Numerous Authorities retain a smaller 'core' set of full time staff for involvement on the day-to-day running of the schemes. Seven Authorities had full time members of staff in place. This typically related to staffing to support a Princes Trust franchise, or the deployment of more generic 'youth development' type posts, to oversee a number of different schemes. Other Authorities took a more open-ended approach, identifying the involvement of up to 75% of all personnel annually. A mix of both on- and off-duty activity was reported.

¹⁹ Indeed, this figure exceeded 200 personnel in several instances.

Figure 4.1 Numbers of FRS staff involved in the schemes, per Authority



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The survey respondents were asked to provide a breakdown of uniformed and non-uniformed personnel where possible, and about 60% of the Authorities who responded to the survey were able to do so.²⁰

A ratio of around 13:1 was observed between uniformed and non-uniformed personnel. This suggests that the level of administrative support required is relatively low, with uniformed personnel performing the majority of all activities. This trend may have been skewed by the Young Fire-fighter Associations, whereby authorities with a high number of schemes draw-in significant numbers of uniformed staff.

The following non-uniformed personnel were identified as participating in provision:

- Community Fire Safety support staff;
- Full or part time scheme coordinators;
- Youth Development Officers;
- Administrative staff;
- Community relations.

Information was also sought on the proportion of staff who are volunteers, and the proportion that are paid for their work with young people. Around two thirds of respondents provided this information.

²⁰ NB: this represents around 43% of all Authorities in England, although it is feasible that some Authorities that opted not to respond to the survey also hold this type of information.

Just over half (53%) of all personnel involved with FRS youth training and diversion schemes were reported to take part on a voluntary basis. In addition to the smaller number of full time paid positions, several Authorities reported that they had moved towards a system of remuneration for all uniformed staffs who take part in youth training schemes. Payment was less frequently reported for the Young Fire-fighter Association work, however, which appeared to be a predominately voluntary activity.

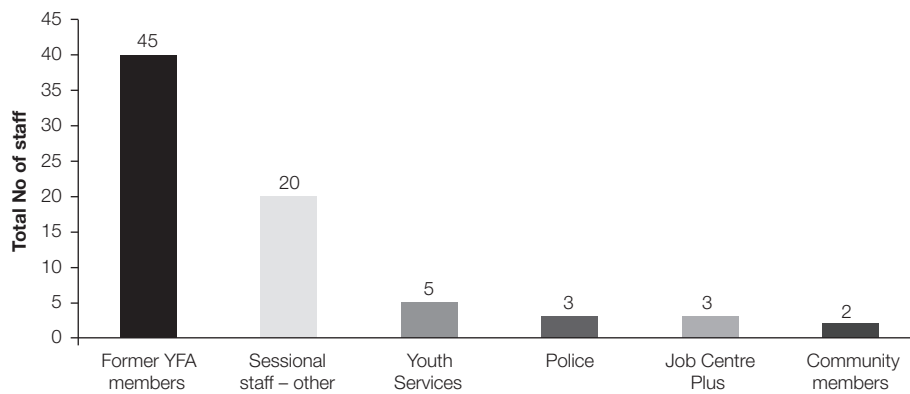
Volunteer recruitment took place by a variety of means, although most Authorities undertook the bulk of it internally. This included advertising in local bulletins or through the crewing office. Where schemes proved more popular, recruitment took place mainly by self-referral. Several Authorities reported that non-FRS staff such as Ambulance service personnel and Police had approached the Service in this way. Other respondents identified greater difficulties identifying volunteers, however, and some local Brigades had actively publicised opportunities in the local press. The application process typically involved the Station Manager in the process of interviewing potential volunteers.

Notably, Authorities made little reference to the ethnic profile of scheme personnel. It was unclear from the information provided, as to how/whether Authorities take positive action to recruit Black Minority Ethnic (BME) staff to their schemes. This under-emphasis on equality and diversity issues was recurrent throughout the survey data (as highlighted in section five). A proportion of schemes are operating in areas with a high BME population and with a focus on providing positive role models or mentoring through the Service. Yet, it is unclear as to whether the profile of scheme personnel reflects the socio demographic profile of the main target groups. This is significant, given that prior research shows the importance of recruiting scheme volunteers from the local community, and with a high level of understanding of the social and cultural needs of participants²¹.

The survey also collected information on the proportion of external staff involved with the schemes (Figure 4.2). The involvement of former Young Fire-fighter Association members as project staff was by far the most prevalent use of non-FRS personnel. Former members were routinely encouraged to return to the scheme at age 18 to train as instructors. Other approaches included the secondment of staff from the Police and Job Centre Plus, to input to individual schemes. Volunteers were also reported to have participated through the New Deal.

²¹ Sachdev, D. and Van Meeuwen, A. (Eds.), 2002. *Are we listening yet? Working with minority ethnic communities – some models of practice*. Ilford: Barnardo's.

Figure 4.2 Profile of external staff involved with the schemes



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The training arrangements for staff and volunteers proved to be a highly variable aspect of the work, not unexpectedly given the range of schemes that exist. The responses suggest a difficult balance between making training arrangements ‘fit for purpose’ at a local level and the priority to retain a core set of competences and standards. Schemes with a central set of formal guidelines, such as the Princes Trust and Duke of Edinburgh Award, were more likely to have core standards in place.

All Authorities implementing the Princes Trust ‘Team’ programme reported adhering to the required eight week Team Leader Training and three-week induction. This covered child protection and behaviour management as standard, in addition to more specific training on the programme. Other schemes varied in their arrangements. The permanency of staffing was one of the main factors. For example, one Authority identified a ‘two tier’ approach, with permanent staff enrolled on a more substantial two week induction, and temporary volunteers one or two days. This was linked to the type of activities to be undertaken with young people. Some level of screening for work with children was routinely applied. In Greater London, the Service was reported to screen for the suitability of applicants in addition to carrying out formal Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks as standard.

The training offer for new recruits was found to include certain core elements, and others that were offered to staff more selectively. Table 4.1 provides a summary.

Table 4.1 Training offered to new staff

| Common/standard topics covered | More specialised topics |
|----------------------------------|--|
| • Child protection | • Challenging behaviour |
| • Risk assessment | • Restorative justice |
| • First aid | • Substance misuse |
| • Health and Safety | • Basic Expedition Leader Award |
| • Driving skills (e.g. mini bus) | • Workplace Assessor Award |
| • Effective communication | • Drill yard supervision (Non-FRS Staff participating on the scheme) |
| • Scheme/course related | |

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The table draws attention to one of the main differences between schemes – the contrast between lighter diversionary work, and those schemes where FRS personnel are asked to accommodate young people with more challenging needs. External support was routinely brought in to provide expertise on behavioural and offending issues. In one case uniformed staff had been supported to achieve a Youth Work Certificate, through the ongoing support of the Youth Service.

There was very little evidence of a coordinated approach to providing diversity awareness training to scheme personnel. Whilst certain Authorities included training of this type as standard, others omitted any reference at all. Notwithstanding the possibility that FRS personnel might receive such training independently of the scheme, this raises concerns over whether more context-specific issues for working with young people are being addressed. For example, schemes working with BME communities did not routinely identify diversity training with a specific focus on these groups of young people. Furthermore, only a small proportion of schemes were found to offer training on mental health issues, autism or ADHD²². These are issues that might be encountered amongst wider populations of young people, and are not exclusive to more targeted work.

No specific reference was made in the survey, to the sharing of training ‘good practice’ between schemes. For example, whilst the majority of respondents made a reference to child protection training, the approaches appeared to be uncoordinated. Some schemes had developed an accredited module in-house, whereas others received the training from social services, NSPCC, or the Area Child Protection Committee.

²² Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder.

Arrangements for reviewing and updating training were also mixed. These ranged from a series of monthly updates, to an annual refresher course²³. Most of the longer-term schemes reported offering additional half-day training courses at the request of staff. With regard to accreditation, the Princes Trust provided the opportunity for personnel to complete a City and Guilds qualification. Other schemes were found to offer Open College Network (OCN) and BTEC accredited qualifications, along with their own internal awards and certificates.

4.2 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT WORK

To explore the extent to which youth engagement and development work is formally included in the Fire and Rescue Service, Authorities were asked whether they employed, or intended to employ, Youth Engagement or Development Officers. They were further questioned on the existence (or not) of a current Youth Development Policy.

4.2.1 *Schemes employing a Youth Engagement or Development Officer*

The research found that about two thirds of Authorities either had an officer with specific responsibility for youth engagement or development work (54%), or intended to employ one (15%). The remainder did not have an officer in place, nor intended to recruit one (31%).

The ‘Youth Development Officer’ post spanned a wide range of potential responsibilities within the FRS. The main focus of the role was to coordinate and manage the delivery of all youth schemes and in many cases this included the management of the team of staff or instructors delivering the activities.

A level of strategic responsibility was usually associated with the role. This took the form of the development and coordination of youth development activities in partnership with the other local agencies with a responsibility for children and young people, such as Children’s Trusts, YOTs and local authorities. Youth Development Officers were further reported to have a role in directing the internal strategic direction of youth development work. For example, this entailed drafting procedures or systems ‘... *for training FRS personnel to deliver training in targeted areas*’.

4.2.2 *Schemes with a youth development policy*

Fewer Fire and Rescue Authorities had a Youth Development Policy. The survey found that just 38% of Authorities claimed to do so, whereas nearly two thirds (62%) did not.

²³ One scheme was reported to have no arrangements in place for reviewing training, although this was unusual amongst the study sample.

The reasons for this disparity were unclear, although ‘Youth Development Policy’ was again a phrase which held a variety of meanings within the Fire and Rescue Service.

For some Authorities, the policy was clearly developed as an overarching document designed to give guidance and advice on local youth development activities. One Authority explained it as aiming to *‘Develop, implement and support fire service personnel in the delivery of the Service Education Programme’*. In these cases, policies were also linked to other internal FRS strategic plans such as the Service Performance Plan and/or the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

Other Authorities placed more importance on the use of a youth development policy as a vehicle for developing and building the relationships developed with local partnerships. This might be undertaken in order to maximise the impact their combined work was having on local communities, for example.

Whether ‘inward’ or ‘outward-facing’, however, the research suggests that having a dedicated staffing role was a greater priority for most Fire and Rescue Authorities than an underpinning strategy. Scheme-level documentation was afforded immediate attention, with more practical arrangements around delivery taking precedence over plans and strategies.

4.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Each Authority was surveyed on four main aspects of quality assurance, for each of the three main schemes that they had identified. The survey established whether or not quality systems/policies were in place (Table 4.2), and asked respondents to comment on aspects that had been effective or required further development.

Table 4.2 Quality Assurance arrangements

| Risk Assessment | Child Protection Policy | Criminal Records Bureau checks | Staff training policy and procedures | Quality Systems |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 100% | 92% | 86% | 83% | 73% |

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As the table identifies, Quality Assurance arrangements were generally well established across the programmes. Risk Assessment is a central aspect of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service and this activity was reported to be in place for all schemes.

Where gaps were identified in the quality systems, respondents typically reported steps to address them. For example, several schemes had been temporarily suspended, pending the outcome of a review/evaluation. A Child Protection Policy was absent for two Authorities, though in one case, the Authority was in the process of drafting an appropriate Policy. Even so, in both instances, it is concerning that activities have been delivered for any period without an approved Child Protection Policy in place. One scheme had significant gaps, and was without a Child Protection Policy, CRB checks, quality assurance or staff training, but it was anomalous amongst those reviewed.

One of the key issues raised was the difficulty in standardising provision. Several Authorities were involved with schemes at very different stages of development, so certain systems were less well established than others. One Authority reported the challenge in monitoring schemes that were designed and delivered by a range of different local fire stations. Steps were in place to develop stronger 'central governance' for these schemes, including a common staff training policy.

'Evaluation' arose as a key theme for Quality Assurance. The Authorities who took part in the survey were roughly divided between those that perceived it as an area for development and those that were already undertaking extra participant tracking and considered it to be invaluable. In a number of cases, a main priority was to more accurately measure soft outcomes and to follow-up with learners after completion. One respondent commented on the need for a more holistic set of indicators for the Princes Trust scheme, to broaden the main focus on attendance and achievement.

Other perceived strengths included the regularity of review/partner feedback in several Authorities, and Service Level Agreements that were felt to work particularly well. Where the Princes Trust 'Team' programme was in place, respondents commented on the benefits of a common set of tested protocols. Arrangements in Norfolk typify this approach. Here, each Prince's Trust scheme is visited three times over its duration by an internal verifier from a partner college. The verifier uses a City and Guild checklist as the basis of the formal assessment. The verifier is further responsible for maintaining the standards and quality of the team programme through feedback to Team Leaders.

The ability to offer accredited provision was also found to have benefits. One Authority jointly delivered an accredited programme with a local college and received a contributory Grade 1 from an Ofsted/Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) inspection. Another reported seeking Open University Network accreditation for training developed locally.

In a further example, Avon FRA drafted a five-year '*Education Strategy*', to map-out the learning pathways available through its various schemes. The

strategy uses the Key Stage model that is applied in schools. It highlights the potential contribution of the FRA for 'alternative curriculum' delivery at Key Stage 4, using a range of different forms of accreditation – BTEC, ASDAN, Duke of Edinburgh Award and Key Skills. The Strategy was drafted in consultation with the Local Education Authority.

CHAPTER 5

A profile of the main target groups

The purpose of this section is to identify the types and number of young people that are involved with the youth training schemes, and the issues around their participation. It starts by reporting on the key characteristics of participants and then considers the different methods of recruitment and referral, using case study examples to highlight how this worked in practice.

5.1 NUMBERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN YOUTH TRAINING SCHEMES

The research aimed to capture information on the numbers of young people currently ‘on the books’ of individual Fire and Rescue Authorities, and (where possible) to consider how the various types of scheme differ in their size.

The findings from the survey suggested that any efforts to put a robust ‘figure’ on the numbers of young people involved with FRS schemes are fraught with difficulty. One of the key issues is the fluctuation in participants for any given scheme. Another is the varied way in which data on participant numbers is recorded and presented.

For the Duke of Edinburgh Award and youth association ‘badge’ schemes in particular, the numbers of young people were found to vary considerably across any given FRS. This was compounded by the often ‘dispersed’ basis on which such schemes were delivered, with all fire stations in a given Authority involved in some capacity.

In contrast, Authorities were able to report with greater accuracy on the numbers of young people on the Young Fire fighter Association (YFA) or Fire Cadet Schemes. This reflects their longer duration in working with a team of young people (potentially over a number of years). The Princes Trust Team programme also elicited more precise numbers as FRS teams worked with a pre-selected group of young people over a structured twelve week programme.

The greatest throughput of young people was found in some of the ‘high-end’ preventative schemes. Firebreak and Phoenix are typically repeated over the course of the year, for example, with targets set for numbers of courses delivered. A characteristic of both schemes is the lower number of participants per course (i.e. 8 – 12), but very high number of courses per year (often fifteen or more). The role of these schemes appeared to

be to maximise the numbers of ‘at risk’ or excluded young people who are able to benefit from short-term intensive training.

Based on the data provided by individual Authorities, it is possible to provide some broad figures to show how the numbers of young people differ by type of scheme. This data is summarised in Table 5.1.

It should be noted that numbers of young people were given as ‘estimates’ by most respondents, and were not always shown in a ‘like for like’ way²⁴. Totals have been calculated for those types of scheme where a sufficient number of Fire and Rescue Authorities reported the data in a common format to enable useful comparison. This applies to YFA, the Princes Trust Team Programme, Firebreak and most ‘unbranded’ local schemes.

Table 5.1 Estimated numbers of young people, by type of scheme

| Young Fire fighter Association (n=17) | | Princes Trust Team Programme (n=6) | | Firebreak (n=4) | | ‘Unbranded’ local schemes (n=13) | |
|--|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Range | 10-350 current per FRA | Range | 20 – 330 annually per FRA | Range | 100 – 250 annually per FRA | Range | 10-50 current per FRA |
| Median | 46 current per FRA | Median | 99 annually per FRA | Median | 185 annually per FRA | Median | 12 current per FRA |

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The table provides a useful basis for gauging the ‘typical’ size (in numerical terms) of particular schemes. For example, membership of YFA rests at close to fifty young people in any given Authority area. Much larger schemes were less commonplace, although some schemes were found to operate over a wide area through a network of smaller ‘units’.

The Princes Trust Team programme was typically larger in scope than YFA, although the number of young people on any given 12 week programme was unlikely to exceed twenty or so participants. Numbers were found to be lower only in a minority of FRAs, where the very rural profile of the local area posed difficulties in bringing together the

²⁴ For example, the number of young people was shown on an annual basis in some instances and ‘per scheme’ in others.

participants. Rented accommodation was routinely used, to enable young people to stay overnight.

Local schemes that fall outside of the main 'branded' types tended to be of much smaller size, often with ten to fifteen young people each. In many cases, the scheme originated in a bi-lateral partnership between the FRS and another local agency (e.g. the Youth Offending Team). The scheme had 'evolved' from this partnership, often working with small groups of socially excluded young people.

5.2 PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

The survey aimed to establish the broad criteria used to select participants. As highlighted in section two, certain schemes had fixed requirements, whereas others were more open-ended in approach. For example, the Princes Trust 'Team' programme requires young people to be unemployed, aged 16-25, educational under-achievers, care leavers or ex-offenders. In contrast, the Young Fire-fighter Association scheme has a more general personal development ethos which extends to any number of potential groups.

As part of the survey, respondents were asked to identify whether one or more of the following applied to the schemes identified within their Authority:

- open to all groups;
- open only to those undertaking an award;
- targeted on deprived areas; and/or,
- membership-based.

The findings highlight the degree to which the role of 'diversionary' provision can be interpreted in a number of different ways. Even for the Princes Trust 'Team' programme, views were mixed on the degree to which the focus emphasised open access, and the extent to which there should be more of a targeted approach for deprived communities.

Similar issues were encountered for the Young Fire-fighter Association. Those Authorities who were running several schemes identified that, whilst common elements existed, each had been set-up to meet local needs. It was therefore feasible to encounter a project on a deprived estate with a stronger preventative role, and another offering lighter-touch youth participation work. In contrast, one Authority presented their Young Fire-fighter Association work as *'one scheme, ten branches, and 350 young people'*.

Considered on aggregate, some differences in response can be identified between the different scheme types. The Duke of Edinburgh Award and Youth Association badge schemes were the most likely to emphasise open access for all groups. This contrasts with the LIFE, Firebreak, and Phoenix schemes, which placed a far greater emphasis on targeting more deprived areas. The 'award' aspect was afforded high priority for all scheme types, although especially so for the Duke of Edinburgh and Princes Trust.

The Young Fire-fighter Association was the only scheme to place a strong emphasis on 'membership'. As the scheme with the longest duration, this is an important aspect of retaining young people and building an identity. In contrast, no respondents associated the Princes Trust 'Team' programme with 'membership' per se.

The information on the main schemes provides a detailed insight to the specific target groups, as follows:

- Young Fire-fighter Association schemes recruited young people aged up to 17, but with the starting age varying between Authorities. Around a third recruited young people described as 'disaffected';
- all of the Princes Trust 'Team' programmes recruited young people aged 16 to 25. The national guidelines were consistently applied, with applicants required to be educational under-achievers, unemployed, care leavers, or ex offenders;
- the Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes included young people aged 13 to 25 or 14 to 25. The scheme was 'open to all', with no evidence of any specific requirement for young people to be disadvantaged or at risk;
- the LIFE scheme worked with young people aged between 13 and 19; and concentrated on those who were disaffected, disadvantaged or vulnerable; and,
- for Firebreak, the age range was typically 13-15 or 13-16; while Phoenix worked with 13-17 year olds. Both of these schemes were targeted at more vulnerable groups, including those at risk of offending.

A smaller number of local schemes worked with very specific target groups, such as care leavers and young parents, but this level of targeting was unusual within the range of schemes that were considered by the research. The involvement of organisations with a more established remit in working with such target groups was a common feature of such schemes. For example, Sure Start in Cornwall approached the Fire and Rescue Service to suggest a possible role in doing confidence and motivational work with young mums.

Whilst Fire and Rescue Authorities reported working with young people from a broad cross-section of society, their strategy for promoting equality and diversity was not always clear. This was a particular issue regarding the cultural and ethnic profile of the participants. Only a very small minority of schemes claimed to focus on Black Minority Ethnic (BME) young people, despite many of the schemes operating in local areas with high BME populations. Furthermore, where a focus on BME groups was identified, it was not always clear from the survey which communities were targeted or how they were supported. These findings suggest that there has been an overwhelmingly 'homogenised' response to the needs of different BME young people. Furthermore, this response has more commonly been a 'passive' rather than an 'active' one. Fire and Rescue Authorities were far more likely to place stress on equality of access than to identify coherent equality and diversity measures.

Individual schemes with a more robust approach stand out. For example, the Madani Youth Training Scheme works with young people of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin aged 10 – 20 years, within the Humberside area. The scheme is managed in partnership between the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, and a local community organisation – the Madani Youth Association. The scheme highlights an effective response to strengthen relationships with Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, by working with a grassroots organisation to engage and support young people. The scheme has been successful in raising levels of smoke detector ownership and fire safety awareness in the local area, whilst reporting an improved understanding of the issues facing young people.

5.3 RECRUITMENT AND REFERRAL

Recruitment practices emerged as particularly significant for Princes Trust schemes. One of the reasons for this was that schemes are paid on the basis of outcomes achieved. Getting candidates of the right profile for the schemes is therefore a key priority, to maintain numbers and match the needs of the individual with the programme. A majority of Authorities reported recruitment 'networks' in place, to identify and refer young people to the scheme. The profile of these networks varied by local area, including for example the Youth Offending Team, Social Services, Connexions and VCS partners.

The main source of referral for the Young Fire-fighter Association schemes was local schools, and/or Pupil Referral Units. In many cases, the criteria for referral were left to the discretion of the school who were also involved in the assessment and review process. There was a notable difference between over-subscribed schemes and those where expansion was planned. In the latter instance, open evenings and community press were used to encourage extra applications. Some Authorities had developed links with BME community organisations to encourage applications from wider sections of the community.

Connexions and Youth Offending Teams were principal referral agencies for the LIFE, FIREFLY and Firebreak schemes in particular. Unlike the YFA, however, a proportion of referrals were described as being 'compulsory'. This typically occurred where young people were referred as part of a youth justice intervention. Operational staff in two separate Authorities asserted that often the young people on the schemes viewed attendance '*...as a punishment*'. On commencing the course, however, most young people were said to respond well and enjoy it more than they were expecting.

In certain Fire and Rescue Authorities, extensive individual assessments were reported to take place prior to placement. Scheme staff identified that this could have a positive impact on participation and retention. In Greater Manchester, for example, personnel from the YOT undertake assessments to check the suitability of the young person for group work. The assessment is also designed to identify whether the young person should progress onto the scheme directly or undertake further work at the YOT first. In Cleveland, similar practices were reported for the LIFE scheme. It is the responsibility of all referral partners to pass-on key information relating to the behavioural issues of particular young people.

In a minority of cases, referrals were made directly between different types of scheme within an Authority. For example, a young person might get involved with the Fire and Rescue Service on the basis of a behavioural issue, and subsequently progress to a Young Fire-fighter scheme. Many such referrals have been undertaken in an ad hoc way, although certain FRAs have taken a more strategic approach. In Durham, for example, this kind of progression is a development objective. Scheme personnel identified the future potential for young people to progress from the pilot 'Archon' scheme for socially excluded young people, through Firebreak, and on to the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Fewer incidences were reported of young people progressing to other (non Fire and Rescue Service) schemes, although progression into employment or training was central to LIFE and the Princes Trust. One scheme highlighted the benefits of its partnership with a local voluntary sector project, and had used these contacts to boost the range of options available to participants on completion. This included referrals to the Entry to Employment (e2e) initiative, offering a mix of work experience and personal development. Considered across the Fire and Rescue Service, however, there was little evidence of young people progressing to schemes run by local youth services or to volunteer programmes. This is perhaps indicative of the room for improvement for partnership work per se.

CHAPTER 6

The local evidence base – performance and outcomes

The purpose of this section is to review the arrangements that are in place to monitor and evaluate youth training and diversion schemes, and to consult with young people who have taken part. The section considers the extent of monitoring and evaluation, and the types of indicators used. An overview is provided of the targets set for individual schemes, and the types of impact and outcomes reported.

6.1 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONSULTING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Respondents to the survey were asked to identify whether monitoring and/or evaluation are carried out, the format and frequency, and whether young people are consulted. Table 5.1 summarises the overall levels of activity.

Table 6.1 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

| | Monitored | Evaluated | Young people consulted |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|
| Yes | 65% | 32% | 74% |
| No | 23% | 56% | 10% |
| Not known | 12% | 12% | 16% |

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Monitoring was well established, with arrangements in place for two thirds of all schemes. In contrast, evaluation activity was only in place in a third of schemes. Yet fewer (11) were using ‘independent’ evaluators.

Consultation with young people was a strong aspect of many schemes; respondents identified the importance of this activity and used a wide range of methods to do so.

6.1.1 *Monitoring and evaluation*

The majority of Authorities provided some detail on how and when monitoring took place, and the staff that were involved with this process. In the small number of instances where monitoring was reported not to take place, there were few details to explain why this was the case.

However these Authorities tended to be the ones with a smaller number of schemes and/or fewer other quality procedures in place.

Where monitoring was reported, the scheme instructor took the lead role. Where a number of different schemes were in place an FRS Youth Initiatives Team (or equivalent) was typically involved in conducting monitoring for all schemes. Certain Authorities also reported involvement of:

- Community Safety Teams;
- FRS Management (e.g. Divisional Officer); and,
- FRS Health and Safety personnel.

External agencies were involved in helping to design and implement monitoring arrangements. The survey identified that it was common practice for the referral agent to provide assistance, for example where the Fire and Rescue Service was providing a service that was likely to have positive outcomes for a young person 'on their books'. A typical partnership arrangement involved the Service and local schools, colleges or LEAs. Indeed, the survey indicated that the involvement of education professionals significantly enhanced the ability of Fire Service personnel to demonstrate outcomes.

In a small number of cases Youth Offending Team (YOT) staff advised on behavioural or crime-related measures. This involvement tended to be concentrated in schemes which overlapped with offender-related activities. A number of schemes focused on tackling antisocial behaviour reported no direct involvement with partners from the youth justice sector, however, and had devised their own monitoring tools.

Whilst many of the schemes were attempting to monitor the same things, the terminology and measures used were varied. Table 6.2 groups some of the criteria that were identified through the survey, applying common headings.

Table 6.2 Monitoring criteria

| Educational achievement | Participation and attendance | Behaviour and attitudes |
|--|--|---|
| General ‘attainment’ measures, as distinct from more specific measures of educational achievement (e.g. value added) Specific accreditation: | Attendance Retention (scheme level) Learner numbers Participation of hard to reach groups (YFA instructor scheme) | School attendance and behaviour Antisocial behaviour (including numbers of Hoax Calls) Offending behaviour (e.g. from testimonials) Self esteem/motivation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key skills ● NVQ L1 ● BTEC (modular) ● Duke of Edinburgh – Bronze/Silver Awards Progress against Individual Learner Record (ILR) targets Progression: training or employment | Community related | Quality and systems |
| | ‘Integration to the community’ Community volunteering | Internal verification Franchise review (compliance) |

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One of the key issues to emerge from the survey was the small proportion of schemes that used monitoring to establish levels of participation of different ethnic groups. There was scant reference to measures for reviewing monitoring data in order to adjust recruitment, and few schemes reported taking positive action to recruit from under-represented (e.g. Black Minority Ethnic) communities. Monitoring was typically broader in focus and the schemes adopted a more general definition of ‘hard to reach’ young people.

The funding or coordinating agency shaped the approach to monitoring for certain schemes. For both Duke of Edinburgh Award and Princes Trust, the franchise arrangement was reported to have a standardising effect on what was measured. This included a requirement to record sessions delivered, numbers of young people, retention rates and outcomes. Similarly, Fire and Rescue Authorities reported tight monitoring criteria where European Social Fund (ESF) funding was secured.

The Young Fire-fighter Association schemes commonly – although not always – applied a general definition of overall ‘attainment’. A number of the schemes used the guidance in the FSYTA manual as a benchmark for

measuring success. This applied a broad set of principles and goals relating to the operation of the schemes. In contrast, YFA schemes involving educational partners tended to demonstrate more specific measures.

The use of 'before and after' questionnaires was a recurrent feature of the schemes. These were used with young people, and with parents and schools staff to collect testimonials of progress. There was a particular focus on tracking attitudes towards school, and evidence that the young person had become more engaged with their community. The methods used for tracking attitudinal change were rarely identified, however, and few schemes reported the capacity to follow-up with young people after they have left.

More formal evaluation arrangements were less evident. Indeed, the absence of evaluation in over half of the schemes that were covered by the survey gives cause for concern. Without a robust approach to performance management, Fire and Rescue Authorities lack a basis for making critical judgements on the success of the schemes that they deliver. This is an area where there is clear scope for improvement.

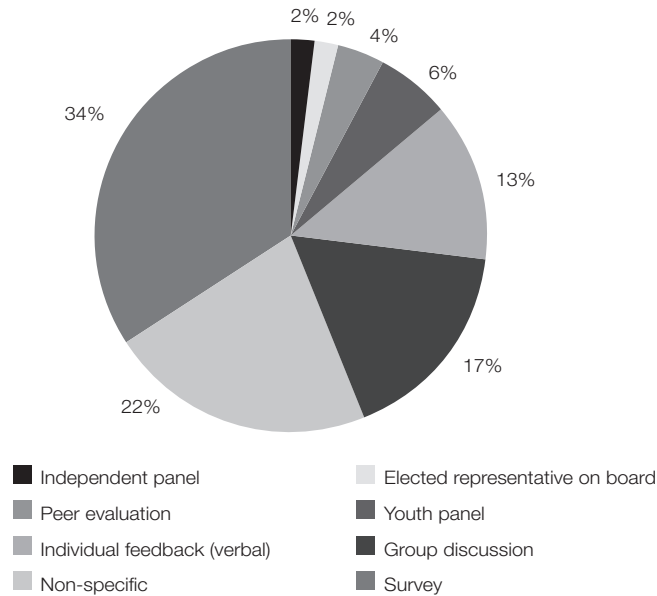
A total of nine Authorities reported commission of an independent evaluation for one or more of their schemes, covering eleven schemes in all. The evaluators included a University, a national crime related organisation and a number of independent consultants. Two of the Princes Trust schemes had delivered activities in partnership with local Further Education colleges, and had therefore featured in the OfSTED/ALI report. This was cited as an important independent source of evidence for the success of the schemes.

Less evidence was provided, where schemes had undertaken an evaluation internally. It is therefore unclear as to how widely such evaluations vary in their quality and consistency. There was no evidence of a common framework for evaluative work undertaken by the Service, and few schemes reported adhering to any recognised guidelines for this activity.

6.1.2 Consulting with young people

According to the survey, around three quarters of schemes involved some kind of direct consultation with young people. This ranged in frequency from daily/weekly, to fixed intervals (e.g. mid-point), and upon completion. Both verbal and written methods were described by the respondents. Figure 6.1 summarises them.

Figure 6.1 Methods used to consult with young people



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The principal method for consultation was the use of post-course surveys or evaluation forms. Examples were not reviewed as part of the current study, so it is not possible to comment on their quality. Notably, much consultation was reported to take place in the context of group work. Some methods were in place to enable young people to provide feedback more confidentially and in a minority of cases, a representative was supported to participate in YFA board meetings.

Respondents identified a high level of receptiveness to feedback provided by young people, and this had often been used to amend aspects of the schemes. One of the main changes was to amend the timetabling, to provide shorter classroom-based sessions. Fire and Rescue Services had also sought to incorporate new themes where there was a demand. This included the addition of sessions, such as 'peer pressure' and 'citizenship' in one example. Some limitations were identified in amending the more structured schemes, where this would mean disrupting the learning programme.

6.2 TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE

Each Fire and Rescue Authority was asked to provide an indication of current performance, for the three main schemes within their Authority.

On balance, performance data was found to be the strongest for the Princes Trust. Success rates were found to be high for the 'Team' programme, ranging from 80% to 95% course completion and achievement of the City and Guilds award. These measures reflect the structure of the programme, and the impact of the system of payment on evidence of completion. In Dorset, follow-up was also undertaken with all young people three months after completion of the programme. This enabled the scheme to record 'destinations'. In 2004, for example, 84% of young people went on to full time employment or training.

Other schemes were at an earlier stage of moving towards more robust target-setting. This was often found to be in response to new funding sources. In Tower Hamlets, for example, a successful ESF bid for the LIFE project means that the FRS has challenging targets for achievement in 2005. These targets relate to numbers of young people re-engaged with school within two weeks of completing the programme, and an increase in the (NVQ) level of learning for 50 beneficiaries. The scheme will track progress against these targets by providing Individual Learning Plans for each young person.

The Phoenix and Firebreak projects were characterised by their work with excluded groups of young people, including young offenders and those at risk of offending. This shaped the nature of the performance measures used by the schemes. For Phoenix in particular, the short (five week) duration placed limits on the scope for delivering qualifications. The longer (twelve week) Firebreak schemes had more of a focus on learning outcomes. Achievement levels for the NVQ Level 1 and Key Skills were therefore reported to be as high as 80% on certain Firebreak schemes.

The targets for Phoenix and Firebreak focused on behavioural/crime-related measures to a greater degree. Individual schemes experienced varying success in demonstrating impact, with evidence strongest for those schemes that had been independently evaluated. In Tyne and Wear, for example, the Phoenix project was evaluated by Newcastle University using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The project was found to be achieving its aim of reducing offending and antisocial behaviour, citing evidence that 44% of participants did not re-offend. The review also found that the majority of the scheme participants returned to school or other forms of training upon completion.

Similar data was not routinely available for the Young Fire-fighter schemes, which provided a more general assessment of progress against course objectives. Examples include statements of the type; *'100% course aims achieved'*. Without the same funding-led approach to outcomes as the Princes Trust, it is perhaps unsurprising that data was not analysed in the same way. The long-term nature of the YFA scheme was also a factor, entailing a greater focus on long-term development than short-term outcomes. Nevertheless, staff from YFA schemes reported that most young people successfully completed a number of accredited modules, including First Aid and Information Technology.

A number of schemes reported setting targets for recruiting *'harder to reach groups'*. On one scheme, for example, the scheme manager felt that as Fire and Rescue Service resources for youth training were relatively modest, they should be concentrated in helping those groups of young people that need it the most.

CHAPTER 7

‘What works?’ Good practice methods and approaches

This section reviews the evidence for what has worked well/less well in the planning, development and delivery of youth diversion schemes. It identifies challenges faced by the Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) and explains how these were overcome, including lessons learned. Illustrations of good practice are included.

7.1 PLANNING AND DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE SCHEMES

The case study evidence suggests that partnerships were key to developing the capacity of Authorities to run successful schemes. Partnerships helped to overcome three main challenges to the establishment of effective schemes by:

- developing management capacity;
- integrating youth diversion schemes into core activities; and,
- meeting the training needs of FRS personnel.

The subsequent sections highlight what worked well/less well in meeting these challenges.

7.1.1 *Management capacity*

Interviews with scheme managers and practitioners found a number of common issues around the development of management capacity for youth diversion work:

- i. recruitment;
- ii. staffing; and,
- iii. gaining support from senior management.

● **Recruitment and staffing**

A clear recruitment strategy, with an appropriate mix of staff in place from the start helped Authorities to meet the challenge of managing schemes and resources. A systematic approach to screening potential staff, and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks were also core aspects of most recruitment practices.

A key challenge for the FRS was to recruit staff to deliver schemes. Scheme staff and managers felt it was important that a balance of operational and non-operational staff were involved, providing a mix of skills, knowledge and experience. Staff reported the need to secure a level of fire-fighting expertise for practical exercises and health and safety, prior to starting schemes. Fire fighters also enjoyed role model status amongst young people.

To complement the fire fighters’ role, participants in the case studies noted that non-operational staff brought other strengths to a team, such as organisational, monitoring and/or management skills. On the whole, a gender mix amongst teams helped to reflect the needs of the main target groups as staff felt young people were able to approach someone they felt comfortable with.

Scheme managers and staff reported difficulties in recruiting team members, particularly fire fighters. One of the reasons for this was highlighted by a team co-ordinator: *“There is a thing in the fire service that they joined to be a fire fighter, and that is the opinion of 90% of fire fighters, ‘I joined to be a fire fighter’ and they don’t want to know, necessarily, what we are about”*.

Authorities used a variety of approaches to recruit staff. Some relied on word of mouth, others marketed the scheme internally and another recruited from partner organisations. For example, the Next Steps worker on the Princes Trust Team programme in Dorset used to work for Jobcentre Plus and was an experienced youth worker. Recruiting staff with prior experience and contacts proved effective, as the section on staffing illustrates.

Table 7.1 Recruitment – effective practice

| Dagenham Fire and Rescue Service – LIFE |
|---|
| In Dagenham, the LIFE Team Leader identified that a Deputy Team Leader should be in place six months before the start of the course. This (potential) role was important to help the scheme manager with activities such as any applications for planning permission; recruitment, and training for fire fighters; and recruitment of young people for the first programme. |

In line with an increased commitment to youth diversion work following the Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004), a number of Authorities recruited (or seconded) staff with a specific role to develop youth diversion work.

Respondents found that this worked well as it had the advantage of providing a nominated 'project manager', with access to suitable resources in order to develop new activities. Arrangements were therefore able to develop quickly, with the scheme benefiting from a more formal footing.

In the absence of this type of dedicated team, the development of schemes was often more difficult. Fire and Rescue staff reported greater problems in organising work around shift patterns and emergency rotas. Where resources were simply not available for this type of project resource however, other measures were taken. For example, the Oldham 'FIREFLY' scheme was able to draw on a wider pool of staff within the Authority with some skills in working with young people. This arrangement effectively meant that there was always a 'back up' team in place.

Table 7.2 Staffing the schemes – effective practice

| Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service – LIFE |
|---|
| A youth development manager leads a team of four. Each member of the team manages one of the following programmes: LIFE; SAFE; YFA; and the Princes Trust. The core team is responsible for the day to day running of schemes and works together to ensure a back up staffing system is in place. |

- **Gaining support from senior management**

A common message from interviews with scheme managers and staff was that gaining high level, internal Fire and Rescue Service support for schemes was a key issue for Authorities locally. The role provided a focus for raising the profile of schemes, securing funding, and developing partnerships with key agencies.

Some interview respondents felt that support from senior management convinced partners of FRS capacity to undertake youth training. In turn, their support helped to secure funding and to raise the profile of youth development work. Scheme managers found that early senior management engagement was also a factor in gaining the commitment of partner agencies.

Where support from senior management was lacking, the FRS was more likely to experience challenges in building its capacity to deliver. It was more difficult to overcome negative perceptions of youth diversion work amongst operational staff, recruitment was also problematic in some areas, and a minority of fire fighters did not understand why the service should invite young people to the station who might have been involved in attacks on the FRS in the community. Support from senior management was important to challenge these perceptions, and to ensure that schemes became fully integrated into the aims and objectives of the organisation.

Table 7.3 Gaining support from senior management – effective practice

Dagenham Fire and Rescue Service – LIFE

In Dagenham, the LIFE team undertook a series of presentations in local fire stations, to raise the profile of activities and combat cynicism. This approach worked well and proved successful in recruiting additional fire fighters to the scheme.

7.1.2 Integrating youth training schemes

Respondents identified a further key challenge for the FRS – the need to integrate youth diversion schemes within wider community strategies and core services. Increasingly, Authorities were required to consider the children’s services agenda, to secure a strong position for their schemes in the local area. Representation on key children’s services’ partnerships was one way to achieve this profile, and to keep abreast of other funding and planning issues; a key advantage of multi-agency working.

Overall, there were three main ways that Authorities sought to integrate schemes:

- i. youth development strategies;
- ii. a youth policy unit; and,
- iii. linking with the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process.

• **Youth Development Strategies**

To secure a strong position for their schemes in the Fire and Rescue Service and the local area, some Authorities began to link them together. For instance, in County Durham, FRS personnel responsible for the Duke of Edinburgh scheme built up a network of contacts that they used to strengthen the delivery of the Firebreak course. In Cleveland, staff developed progression routes between LIFE and the Princes Trust, as part of a joined-up approach. This led to clear benefits, for example, with one disadvantaged young person progressing through both schemes to secure a place at college.

The practice of joining-up schemes was challenging at times, however, and arrangements were not always easy to manage. Fire and Rescue Service staff in Cornwall highlighted the example of the local Phoenix project. There was a high level of demand from other agencies to link-in to the scheme, due to its early success. This led to a scenario where too many other schemes were felt to have ‘bolted on’ to Phoenix, without sufficient funding to sustain all of the links. A more strategic approach was subsequently taken, to select appropriate partners.

- **Youth Policy Unit**

A youth policy unit provided a structured approach to integrating youth diversion work in the Fire and Rescue Service. The Authority in West Sussex had particular success in this respect. A Senior Policy Unit for youth was created which explored how staff could help to develop the Fire Cadet scheme. Sub-groups were tasked to explore how the scheme contributed to fire-related targets, and linked to the Strategic Corporate Plan. The profile of youth work was raised as a result, and the Cadet scheme was fully mainstreamed.

- **Developing links through the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)**

The CPA was cited as a particular area where youth training activity made a planned contribution. For example, managers in Buckinghamshire made links with the local 'Skidz' motor vehicle project after the Integrated Risk Management Plan highlighted the prevention of road traffic accidents as a priority. Staff found the formal partnership worked well because partners complemented each other.

7.1.3 *Meeting training needs*

Managers and delivery staff highlighted a number of issues that the FRS faced, in determining an appropriate package of training for staff working with young people. These were:

- i. developing core training; and,
- ii. providing opportunities for capacity building, including continuous professional development (CPD).

- **Developing Core Training**

The survey showed that it was important to draw upon prior expertise within the Service, when planning schemes. This meant that existing skills were utilised, and capacity built within the organisation through the transfer of knowledge. As individual schemes expanded additional training needs arose. Some Authorities found this to be a barrier to further development, due to their relative inexperience of youth work. In particular, it was not always clear how or where the right training might be located.

To develop appropriate training, many Authorities joined with partner agencies. In Cleveland, FRS personnel accessed training in antisocial behaviour from Safe in Tees Valley. In Warwickshire, courses on managing challenging behaviour were identified through the local council. Overall, staff felt it was important that they received core training before starting work, and that multiple methods of training and ongoing support were in place, including formal training courses and reference guides. Staff welcomed the opportunity to shadow colleagues, to gain further insights to engaging young people.

Table 7.4 Developing core training – effective practice

| Durham Fire and Rescue Service – Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme |
|---|
| <p>A successful approach was often to recruit/second an individual with prior experience of working with young people, such as in a youth or social work setting. In some Authorities, this enabled good practice in youth work to be adapted to meet the needs of the Service. A member of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme in Durham took the following approach: “[I] developed a simple A4 sheet of paper into a simple course guide, which could be delivered flexibly to a range of young people by all FRS officers in the county”. (Scheme Personnel)</p> |

• **Providing Opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

Where additional training needs were identified, Fire and Rescue Service personnel felt that it was useful when provided at the start of schemes to prepare them for working with a wide range of young people. Comprehensive training delivered to staff on programmes like the Princes Trust Team Programme and Duke of Edinburgh Award was successful, and highlighted clear benefits for participating staff. In particular, schemes offered an attractive career development route.

Table 7.5 Providing opportunities for Continuous Professional Development – effective practice

| Dorset Fire and Rescue Service – Princes Trust Team Programme |
|--|
| <p>The Princes Trust Team programme offered comprehensive package of training for staff. The success of the package was evidenced by promotion within the scheme – Fire Fighters who started as Team volunteers and progressed to Team Leaders, and within the wider FRS structure – staff who felt that the skills learned on the programme had contributed to their promotion.</p> |

7.1.4 *Summary – success factors in planning and developing schemes*

The evidence from both survey and case studies outlined above suggest that youth diversion schemes benefited from the following measures:

- a core, dedicated team to take forward youth diversion activities;
- a link worker within the community;
- clear lines of responsibility with support system in place;
- a team with operational fire fighters and non-operational staff to ensure good mix of skills and experiences;

- mixed gender team to be role models; and,
- a formalised training programme from induction stage.

7.2 WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The study considered the approaches taken by the Fire and Rescue Service to work with young people aged 10 and 25 years inclusive. As outlined in Section Five, target groups ranged from all young people to disadvantaged groups and included:

- young offenders and those at risk of offending;
- young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN);
- BME groups; and,
- young parents.

7.2.1 *Work with diverse groups of young people*

A significant number of schemes ran with diverse groups of young people who were engaged by a variety of means, including self-referral and referrals from partner agencies. In practice, this brought together young people who would not normally mix socially. There were benefits and drawbacks from this approach.

Staff felt it was important to have a broad mix of age, gender and social characteristics as diversity was felt to be an important factor in challenging the preconceptions of young people and staff alike. This was a key aspect of the Princes Trust Team programme:

“It is the ethos of the Princes Trust that you get a 16 year old young offender who cannot read and write, a 24 year old throw them in together, and you think its not going to work. But you will be surprised that the 24 year old helping the 16 year old will boost his confidence...”

(Co-ordinator, Princes Trust Team programme)

On the whole, staff were effective in developing young peoples' communication and team working skills when they partnered young people who would not necessarily choose to be together. Participants on the LIFE scheme in Cleveland for example, worked in pairs, selected to include one more confident than the other. Here, the less confident young person was asked to lead their partner blindfolded through the smoke house to a safe exit. Team leaders recalled that young people learned a lot about themselves and each other by being made to challenge their perceptions of others.

Certain schemes targeted single gender groups to ensure that boys and girls were given equal opportunities. This approach proved successful where over-representation of one gender group had a negative reinforcing effect on new recruitment to the scheme, for example.

7.2.2 *Working with specific groups of young people*

Fire and Rescue Service staff identified a number of key success factors for working with disaffected young people, such as young offenders. These included the need for an approachable style, clear ground rules and standards of behaviour.

Both staff and participants felt that where young people were 'allowed to be themselves', they were comfortable attending schemes because they were not judged, treated as adults and respected in the same way as team leaders.

Leaders set out the structure of LIFE in Cleveland from the start. Each day followed a similar pattern, designed to ensure that young people ended on a high so they wanted to return. For instance, young people studied first aid one morning and went out on a trip in the afternoon. They found this motivating and were encouraged to complete and achieve. On average, at least eight out of ten young people took part in the passing out parade for each five day scheme.

Managers of the Skidz programme in Buckinghamshire found young people were more relaxed when leaders sat down and wore casual clothes when delivering sessions. Staff were prepared to talk to young people and take their lead, even when this led them off track. This element of flexibility helped to explore the groups' interests, characteristics and history which were important for developing trusting relationships and informed leaders' approaches to delivering the programme.

Good practice was evident in Dagenham, where young people on the LIFE programme operated within a yellow and red card system to manage behaviour. If a young person received a yellow card for poor behaviour they were given a chance to have it revoked, however receipt of a red card meant they had to leave the course, although they were able to return to another course at a later date. Anecdotal evidence suggested this system worked well as it was transparent and simple to enforce.

A number of schemes worked with young people with special needs, whether educational and/or physical impairments. In most cases they were able to undertake most of the same activities as others on the schemes. As one team leader described it was 'the process not the task' which young people went through that was important. For instance, a young person on the LIFE programme in Cleveland was not able to climb a ladder in the same way as the able bodied participants so he took the hydraulic platform instead.

To engage under-represented groups effectively in youth diversion schemes, interview respondents reported that it was beneficial to use outreach workers in the local community. The Positive about Young People (PAYP) scheme for young Asian women in Warwickshire successfully engaged young people in this way, by using an outreach worker to 'personalise' the scheme by word of mouth. Prior to young people receiving a formal invite, community consultation was undertaken to identify barriers and needs. Many young peoples' families wanted to become familiar with the purpose and the content of the scheme before they were happy for their children to take part.

In Cornwall, the Fire and Rescue Service worked in partnership with Sure Start, to provide a course tailored to young parents. A key factor in the initial referral was to communicate the project to young parents via their Sure Start support workers, who had established relationships with them. The local fire station was used both as a base for the main training sessions, and for an arts and crafts project, to provide a less formal basis for young people to access the Service. Young parents were found to be encouraged by the programme of activities, because the project focused on them and not just their children.

7.2.3 *Summary – success factors in working with different groups of young people*

In summary, youth diversion schemes benefit from:

- support for young people to be themselves;
- a clear course structure with some element of choice for young people;
- taking young people out of their comfort zone by mixing groups;
- adoption of a behaviour management system; and,
- engagement of community link staff who are already working with the target group of young people.

7.3 **METHODS OF DELIVERY**

The research found that schemes varied in their content, approaches to working with young people and duration. Across schemes, young people felt it was important for staff to set the scene at the start of a programme. This helped them to feel comfortable, particularly when the programme was based at a FRS site. *"The welcome was good: people smiling and introducing themselves and telling things about each other...if it had just been jump straight into the activities I would have been all over the place"* (Young person, Phoenix scheme). Other successful methods of delivery included using practical exercises, working in smaller groups, involving parents, and recording achievement.

- **Practical exercises**

On the whole, young people engaged effectively with practical exercises and and/or visual aids. *“I think practical work is a lot better and you learn a lot more than through written work or verbal work or whatever”* (Young person, Phoenix Scheme). Fire fighters from the LIFE programme in Cleveland showcased the scheme in schools and provided real life examples of the activities young people could expect from the course. This helped raise awareness of the Service amongst young people who had not previously considered its role in education and employment, and attracted young people to join who were not interested before. Young people in County Durham on the DofE scheme commented on the “good mix” of class work and practical work which alternated week to week. In addition, they felt there was an appropriate degree of choice built into activities which made them feel trusted and responsible.

- **Smaller groups**

Youth inclusion support workers on the Duke of Edinburgh scheme in County Durham felt smaller groups helped to keep sessions focused and recommended a maximum of twenty young people to give them the opportunity to feedback at the end of each session. A lesson learned was that good session planning was necessary to keep young people active and motivated. Officers who assumed a “type of mentoring role” gained respect by treating young people like adults. One benefit of this scheme was its potential to be delivered to all groups of young people. D of E helped the most motivated young people to achieve at the same time as offering less motivated young people an accredited qualification.

- **Parental involvement**

Parental involvement was a more variable aspect of youth training and diversion schemes, but when managed effectively, was beneficial. In Warwickshire, for example, an open evening was held for parents and young people at the start of the Firebreak course. This helped to establish young peoples’ needs, aspirations and to set boundaries. Such parental involvement was found to be relatively limited amongst other schemes, with the exception of passing-out parades. In Dagenham, significant time was invested in encouraging parents to attend the passing-out parade for the LIFE scheme. Their attempts were not always successful as parents often had their own problems and the scheme manager felt that it would be useful to link with a parenting programme, to extend support to other family members.

- **Recording achievement**

Materials were assessed for certification which helped young people to achieve. The work book for young people on LIFE in Cleveland included sheets on “what about after LIFE” to encourage them to think about the future. Every day young people completed a “Joshua tree” which was a diagrammatic representation of their feelings. Mornings and afternoons, they circled a character on a tree which best showed how they felt. Team leaders used this as a basis for discussion. Other schemes provided records/portfolios of achievement; still others formal accreditation.

On the whole, young people were motivated by the opportunity to achieve certificates for their achievements on programmes, as highlighted by one young person on a Skidz programme *“I did it to get a reference or a certificate”*. Whilst most were unlikely to base their reason for attending the scheme on certification/accreditation, many young people and scheme staff cited their certificates as a key output of schemes. *“...they get a certificate. It switches young people to learning and achieving, gives them self confidence and shows them they can achieve things”* (Team Leader, Phoenix scheme). In September the Phoenix project in Cornwall will be accredited through ASDAN and will help young people to transfer credits as part of the Cornish Baccalaureate Extended Schools Programme.

7.3.1 Key success factors – working with young people

In summary, young people typically benefit from:

- the use of practical exercises and/or visual aids for engagement;
- working in smaller groups;
- officers assuming mentoring roles;
- recognising and recording achievement; and,
- certification/accreditation.

7.4 SCHEME DURATION

Broadly speaking, schemes divide into three main ‘types’: short term intensive programmes; medium term interventions; and longer term personal development programmes. The benefits of each approach are discussed below showing what worked best, how it was achieved, where it was delivered and why it worked.

7.4.1 *Short term intensive support for young people in high risk groups*

A number of one day and week long programmes were offered to young people. Scheme personnel were able to identify the key benefits to this type of short-term approach. On balance, it was suggested that shorter schemes made it easier to engage harder to reach young people due to the shorter time commitment required. There was evidence to suggest that some young people saw intensive schemes as an achievable challenge. One young person on a LIFE scheme strongly agreed on wanting to learn discipline and said *“I also wanted to see if I could stick to it and be disciplined”*.

Shorter schemes also provided a period of ‘thinking space’, which helped young people to consider the consequences of their behaviour in a neutral environment. Young people on a LIFE programme recalled that the consequences session was difficult to watch but was good, one said it *“teaches you to be responsible”* – *“it was very shocking and sad”*. Young people’s commitment to these types of programmes created a more positive image of them with their teachers, social workers or other professionals. For instance, the Phoenix scheme offered a platform for young people to achieve in a non-conventional setting, showing them in a more positive light.

In addition, a week was typically long enough for staff to develop relationships with young people who took part in activities over the equivalent of a school day, each day. Some FRAs reported the achievement of tangible results in this time frame and felt that young people routinely learned discipline, routine, life skills and gained certificates to evidence achievement. Young people gave evidence to support this viewpoint and said of a FIREFLY scheme *“it’s different you get instruction at FIREFLY”*, when compared with standard youth provision. *“I won’t lose my temper that much and will watch my language...the fire fighters told me to treat other people as I’d like to be treated”*. Staff also felt that once young people were engaged, they were more likely to stay in contact and to attend other schemes when opportunities arise.

However, there were potential disadvantages to shorter schemes. Staff across the FRS felt some agencies viewed shorter schemes as a way of ‘getting rid’ of young people for a week. In Oldham, staff sought to overcome this problem by presenting the scheme to schools, so they understood what was involved. Another potential disadvantage to shorter schemes was less scope for meeting individual needs. It was therefore important for viable alternatives to be in place in the longer term, or early trust could easily be lost and young people could fail to access more sustained support to build on their achievements.

7.4.2 *Medium term interventions*

Medium term interventions might be classified as those lasting a period of weeks, with a structured programme of learning/training in place to achieve an end objective. The twelve week Princes Trust Team programme is one such example, although 'other' local schemes such as the Skidz project in Buckinghamshire favour such an approach.

There were a number of benefits of medium term interventions. One benefit was the requirement for commitment and adherence to a routine. For young people who were estranged from education, or from their community, this was an important step towards re-engagement. *"I came out of prison unsure what to do with my life. After I completed rehab I felt I was going down hill. I joined the Princes Trust and haven't looked back since. It's given me the chance to give something back"* (Young person, Princes Trust Team programme). In contrast to shorter schemes, there was scope for working with young people to identify their interests and aspirations, and for the content to be adjusted to meet individual needs.

Medium-term schemes were also well suited to delivery in holiday periods, when young people were often at the greatest risk of engaging in crime and antisocial behaviour. In Buckinghamshire, the Skidz road safety project engaged young people in practical activities over a five-week period during the summer holidays. Participants were able to take part in renovating a car, with support from the FRS and partners. The scheme aimed to promote the ongoing involvement of young people during term time, by offering workshop sessions for two days per week and additional informal learning sessions. Young people were able to work towards a national qualification, or to access the project on a less formal basis to participate in positive activities.

In addition, medium term schemes enabled support to be put in place for transition. For instance, in Dorset, the Princes Trust 'Team' programme used a 'Next Steps' worker to support young people over the duration of the twelve weeks. This involved goal-setting, a one-to-one progression interview, and an exit interview. The worker further assisted young people in developing an action plan, and followed individuals up after they had left the course. Staff felt the approach was effective in making the most of the time spent with young people on the course by encouraging them to 'think ahead' from the outset.

Some disadvantages to these schemes were highlighted by staff and young people. Primarily, the time and commitment required meant that harder to reach groups were not easily engaged. Furthermore, schemes of medium term duration proved too challenging for some, again highlighting the importance of cross-referral to more appropriate schemes.

7.4.3 Longer term personal development programmes for young people

Longer term personal development programmes for young people ranged from months, to years in duration. This mainly applied to the Young Fire fighters Association and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. In each instance, however, age restrictions applied. The maximum age of participants was reported to be 16 for YFA, with 25 forming the upper limit for the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The overarching benefits of longer term programmes were identified mainly in terms of their 'sustained support' for personal development in the broadest sense. Young people supported this assertion. For instance, one young person on a Young Fire Fighters scheme thought that they were given a lot of responsibility and highlighted that staff knew they could trust young people, and gave them more responsibilities.

These programmes also typically provided greater scope for progression. For instance, a number of participants in County Durham successfully progressed from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme to enrol on a Public Services course at a local college. College referrals were given physical and written tests on their ability to carry out tasks. The scheme kept a Record Book for each young person, tracking attendance and task completion. Young people felt that the D of E programme was well-organised and flexible, with a degree of choice built-in to the activities undertaken; therefore none wanted to change the programme. Furthermore, longer term personal development programmes like these had the advantage over other shorter schemes because they could track distance travelled.

However, staff and young people reported a number of potential pitfalls to longer schemes. Whilst they were typically found to be open to all young people, a number of Authorities reported an overall weighting towards 'middle class' participants, indicating schemes were not successful in engaging a broad range of young people. In the case of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, one scheme manager noted that it was 'too challenging' for some young people who might have additional learning support needs. This viewpoint was supported by a young person who felt he would not have coped on a longer term programme and instead was happier to be in the process of completing a medium term scheme.

7.5 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE

Support for young people on the FRS youth training and diversion schemes came from a range of sources which included fire fighters and seconded staff like youth workers and learning support assistants.

The majority of support was provided by FRS personnel. Fire fighters were routinely viewed by partners and young people alike as positive role models, with some degree of autonomy from other 'authority figures' such as the Police and Social Workers. One young person who had successfully progressed from a LIFE course through a Princes Trust programme said of the fire fighters – *"they still give advice and talk to you if you need to. They are classed as my mates. I wouldn't even say hello to teachers on the street but these are different"*. Youth workers and teaching assistants often assumed a 'passive' role on schemes, and took the opportunity to observe. Most young people were happy to have a support worker present as it ensured they were given the support and understanding they needed on and outside of schemes. It also helped when on-going support was offered to young people because young people needed to maintain the enthusiasm, confidence and motivation they gained from taking part in activities to ensure they did not become at risk of offending.

The table below highlights some of the key aspects of support from the youth training schemes, that young people and staff considered the most important.

Table 7.6 Key qualities/types of support for youth training and diversionary work

| What was important? | Why? | Who said? |
|---|---|---|
| <p>1) To have strong interpersonal and communication skills</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people respected and trusted FRS staff who they could talk to. As a result they engaged with the team better. • Young people needed to feel like their views were taken seriously. Good listening skills helped engage young people in activities. | <p><i>“You need to be a social worker, a friend, a carer, a disciplinarian, parent and deliver a programme”</i> (Team Leader, Princes Trust).</p> <p><i>“Young people agreed the instructors were approachable, always helped them and gave advice but didn’t tell them what to do”</i> (Fire-fighter, YFA scheme).</p> <p><i>“The young people say that the fire fighters treated them as a human being, not a naughty kid and respected them and didn’t tell the young people to do things but said ‘I’d like you to do this”</i> (YOT Officer, FIREFLY scheme).</p> <p><i>“they made us feel comfortable and they seemed genuinely interested in us and wanted to know and listen to us”</i> (Young person, local diversionary scheme).</p> <p><i>“The staff are interested enough in the individuals to encourage them and find that spark that can be developed...”</i> (Partner, Princes Trust scheme).</p> |

Table 7.6 Key qualities/types of support for youth training and diversionary work (continued)

| What was important? Why? | Who said? |
|--|---|
| 2) To be enthusiastic and committed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and delivering schemes was challenging and time consuming. <p><i>"...willingness to keep going even when things aren't great..."</i> (Youth Liaison Officer, Phoenix scheme).</p> |
| 3) To engage with young people in a non-confrontational and constructive way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone needed time to reflect. There were different ways of communicating information. <p><i>"...you have to give people their personal space"</i> (Instructor, Firebreak scheme).</p> <p><i>"...they need to be able to separate people from their behaviour and no hang ups or prejudices"</i> (Partner, Princes Trust scheme).</p> |

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Young people on diversion schemes were supported to complete and achieve on programmes in a number of other ways, some of which proved more successful than others. These included: different types of mentoring; peer education. The benefits and challenges to each approach are shown below.

7.5.1 Mentoring

Young people received a mix of formal and informal mentoring support on the schemes. Informal mentoring support was routinely offered by FRS staff on an ongoing basis on short, medium and longer term schemes. Informal mentoring included support to complete work books, chats to young people as part of activities and referrals to other schemes. *"We try and raise interest levels. 99% don't leave because we show and guide them through, tell them they're achieving"* (Team Leader, LIFE scheme). Young people on a FIREFLY scheme reflected this viewpoint:

"the staff are all brave because they don't know what kind of people we're like, they've helped us, they've given up their [time] for us, they're doing it to help us." 'It means a lot to us because most people wouldn't take time off to work with children".

Mentoring was not always successful, however. *“The idea was to support the wider young person...they would have to send a worker with the young person. The long term support to the young people on LIFE hasn’t worked”* (Youth Development Manager, LIFE scheme). Connexions in Cleveland referred some young people onto the LIFE programme with mentoring support from Kick Start Connexions. In practice, the support did not materialise because of resource limitations. A lesson learned is to secure a service level agreement prior to the start of the scheme.

7.5.2 Peer education

The involvement of older youths in supporting younger children is an established practice in certain mainstream youth interventions. The method raised self esteem by empowering the young person with a sense of responsibility and being ‘looked up to’; often where they had few other experiences of positive reinforcement. The approach was evident in several of the youth training schemes that were considered for the research.

In Shropshire, young people aged 13-15 on the Crucial Crew project took part in role plays to help younger children realise the consequences of their actions – exploring the dangers of hoax calls, for example. The project was delivered on neutral ground, which personnel believed to be key success factor. Positive outcomes were experienced both for the ‘peer educators’, and younger children on the scheme. *“Peer education also makes the child who is acting feel valued and enables them to act as a role model”* (Youth Officer, local diversionary scheme). For instance, one young peer educator felt the skills he had learnt on the scheme helped him to get ideas for a career and increased his confidence.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions

This report has presented the evidence from a research study to establish the effectiveness of youth training and diversion schemes involving the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) in England. The focus of the research was on schemes that are targeted at young people aged 10-25, excluding individual fire-setter interventions and mainstream fire safety education in schools.

The preceding sections of the report outlined the findings from the three main phases of the research – a national level survey of individual Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA), interviews with key stakeholders, and a series of case study visits. Section two mapped-out the baseline position with regard to schemes across the country. Section three to five then provided a critical assessment of current arrangements for planning, management and delivery. The monitoring and evaluation of schemes was considered in section six, prior to reviewing key success factors and barriers encountered in practice in section seven.

8.1 THE TYPE AND RANGE OF YOUTH TRAINING AND DIVERSIONARY SCHEMES

A key aim of the study was to establish the range and number of schemes that currently involve the Fire and Rescue Service in England. The research shows that youth training activities are now widespread, with all Authorities who took part in the research reporting some type of scheme in place. In total, some 332 schemes were identified, based on a cross-section of nearly three quarters of all FRAs (n=33). This figure is likely to be higher for all (47) Fire and Rescue Authorities, although it is difficult to calculate the margin of this difference with any degree of accuracy.

In absolute terms, this is a moderate figure. An average of ten schemes per Authority is a small proportion of all youth provision within any given sub-region. This must be considered in context, however. The Fire and Rescue Service does not have a core remit to undertake youth training, and a high proportion of services are provided on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, the throughput of young people for many types of scheme is high, averaging more than one hundred per year in some instances. Taken across all 47 Fire and Rescue Authorities, it is feasible that this might represent a total of some 5,000 – 6,000 young people participating in the various schemes annually. This suggests that the Service is engaging a significant number of young people across the country, even without the statutory basis that is enjoyed by many other youth-related organisations.

The research shows that the geographical distribution of schemes is uneven. Whilst some influence can be seen from urban/rural and other socio-demographic factors, there is no neat correlation with the level of youth training activity along these lines. Individual scheme types are frequently 'clustered' within certain groups of Authorities, reflecting their historical development. This has led to positive local adaptations of older models such as the Young Fire-fighter Association scheme, but it has also risked a 'post code' approach to accessing provision in some areas. There is a clear priority for wider sharing of good practice, to avoid similar schemes developing in parallel and without an exchange of lessons learned.

The main types of scheme reflect the findings of the HMFSI Thematic Review which was based on 2002 fieldwork. The Young Fire-fighter Association (YFA) scheme remains the most prevalent membership-based scheme for young people involving the Fire and Rescue Service. It is also the most widespread scheme for which the Service is the lead partner and oversees the main activities. The YFA scheme is outnumbered only by the Duke of Edinburgh Award, for which the FRS is a delivery partner. The Award is typically delivered from a large number of individual fire stations within participating Authorities. Whilst also high in number, other Youth Association 'Badge' schemes were found to be delivered mainly on an ad hoc basis, with little strategic input from the FRS and patchy knowledge on participant numbers. This first group of schemes are the main 'universal' schemes for young people.

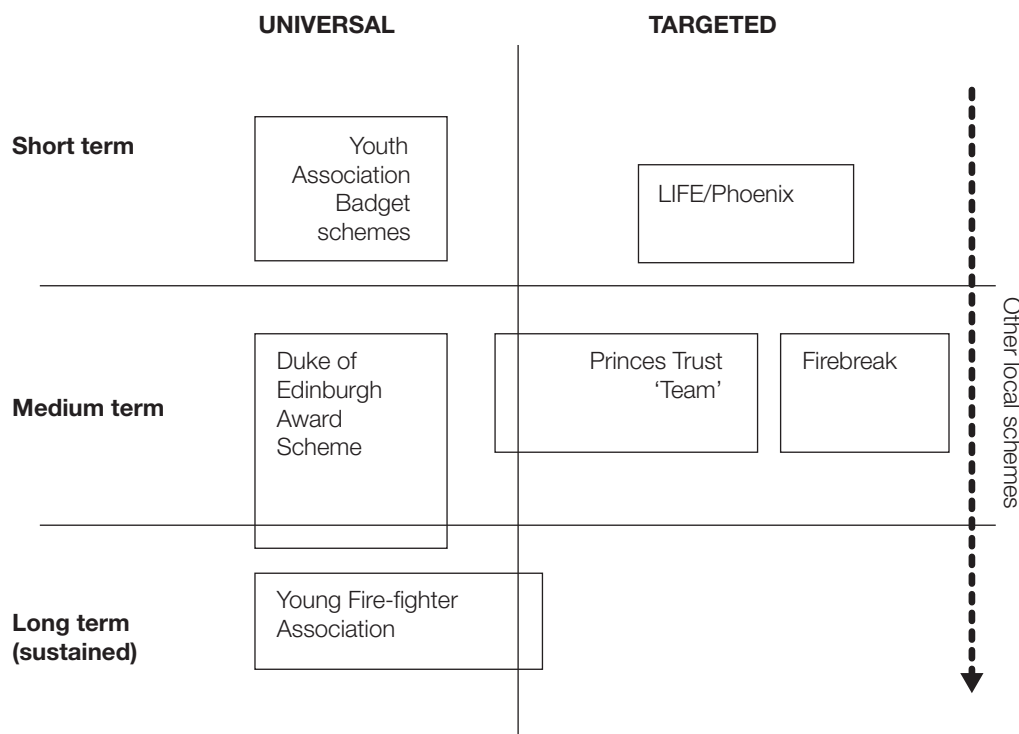
The more 'targeted' youth training and diversionary activity involving the FRS shows a different profile. The Princes Trust 'Team' programme is the most widespread of the targeted schemes, with its focus on unemployed or educationally under-achieving young people. The programme was found to play an important anchor role for much other youth training work involving the FRS. Individual schemes are large in size and scope, attracting both external funding and wide networks of partners. In contrast, the LIFE, Phoenix and Firebreak schemes were found in a more limited number of Authorities, and with significant variations in format across the country. The latter comprise the main schemes with a focus on socially excluded groups, including young offenders and those at risk of offending. There is some evidence that such schemes are on the increase, with an overall shift in the focus of the FRS to concentrate efforts on the hardest to reach.

A further important finding of the research was the level of activity that has occurred at a local level, independently of the main 'national' schemes described above. The study found that Authorities across the country have engaged in various types of pilot schemes, typically on a partnership basis. While the overall number of these schemes is proportionately low, their methods and approaches are diverse. Indeed, the research suggests that they are often a source of new and innovative ways of working for the FRS. The schemes ranged from fire-fighter work experience, to more targeted interventions for young parents, care leavers, young offenders and a range of other groups.

The pattern of schemes described above has implications for the future development of youth training activities involving the FRS. It is clear that the Service has played an important role in engaging with groups of young people at all levels of the spectrum of diversionary work. The FRS operates on a day-to-day basis within and for the local communities that it serves, and as such it has unparalleled access to young people from all cross-sections of society. The Service has the capacity to provide both universal and targeted support, and is a valued partner for many local youth interventions.

In taking forward both of these universal and targeted aspects of its work, it will be important for the FRS to review the existing ‘suite’ of youth training and diversion provision to ensure that efforts are concentrated where they are most needed. The research has shown that the Service offers a cross-section of short, medium and long term interventions, with varying objectives for young people’s personal development. Figure 8.1 summarises the current arrangements.

Figure 8.1 Universal and targeted schemes provided by the FRS



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As the diagram highlights, the current ‘matrix’ of youth training and diversion provision is quite broad in scope. The FRS has a long established track record of providing universal activities for young people. It is able to offer a sliding scale of involvement, from delivering modules of other ‘badge’ schemes (e.g. Scouts and Guides) to varying levels of Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, and long-term membership of Young Fire-fighter brigades. This aspect of youth training and diversion activity is tried and tested, with little evidence of need to fundamentally change what is already in place. The priority for universal provision is perhaps to

ensure the transfer of good practice, and to consider how the YFA model can be made attractive to a greater number of harder to reach groups.

The current range of targeted provision is also diverse. The LIFE and Phoenix schemes offer a valuable short and intensive phase of training for socially excluded young people, often with the benefit of preventing further disaffection and addressing immediate risk factors. The Firebreak scheme offers a more sustained phase of training for the same groups of young people, developing life skills and with a focus on re-engagement in education, training and employment. The Princes Trust scheme strengthens this 'medium term' provision, with an important over-arching role in meeting the needs both of more severely disaffected young people (including those from the youth justice system) and those at lower levels of risk. The potential threat to the Team programme would thus leave a gap in provision, especially with regard to the contribution of the FRS in meeting the needs of young people who are Not in Education, Training or Employment (NEET).

The diagram underlines the importance of continued investment in Phoenix, LIFE, Firebreak and similar schemes, to ensure that the Service is able to offer this type of provision to young people and access harder to reach groups, to meet local needs. It also demonstrates the importance of sustaining benefits that are achieved. Whilst short-course provision has an important role to play in reaching large numbers of young people, the Service must consider how their continuing development needs are met.

For certain local schemes, this means setting in place effective referral mechanisms onwards to other agencies (such as Connexions or voluntary sector). Other FRAs have identified the potential for cross-referral between their own schemes, however, and there is growing evidence that this is a viable model to adopt. Where effective over-arching planning is in place, Authorities reported the scope to engage socially excluded young people with a short term course (e.g. Phoenix; LIFE), and build their capacity to progress on to a longer scheme (e.g. Firebreak; Team). Numerous success stories were identified through the research, where young people benefited from sustained support from the Service. This approach requires dedicated resources, staffing and commitment.

In particular, the diagram highlights a potential gap in longer term schemes for socially excluded groups. It might be that longer term schemes with harder to reach groups are less viable without increased levels of funding to address support needs. Evidence at a local level suggests that the approach is being tested out, however, with the FIRE scheme in the West Midlands piloting a uniformed association that is targeted at young people at risk of offending, for example. Fire and Rescue Authorities might also seek to learn from the 'Next Steps' approach that has been developed by the Princes Trust, to include transition planning as an integral part of youth training schemes and provide the necessary follow-up support to ensure that transition is sustained after contact with the FRS ceases.

8.2 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUTH TRAINING AND DIVERSION SCHEMES

The second key aim of the research was to assess the effectiveness of the youth training and diversion schemes, including the arrangements that are in place for staffing and funding the schemes, recruitment and referral, partnership work, monitoring and evaluation.

The research has found that staffing arrangements for youth training work differ considerably between Fire and Rescue Authorities. Whilst over half of Authorities use a dedicated team of some <20 vetted staff to work with young people, other Authorities deploy much larger numbers of staff. For certain Young Fire-fighter Association schemes in particular, upwards of 80 operational staff might be involved over the course of a year.

This has clear training and quality assurance implications. There is a priority to ensure that core competencies for working with more vulnerable young people in particular are mapped-out consistently, and that the right training can be accessed at the right time. The survey identified that key topics such as Child Protection training are routinely addressed, but uncertainties exist around how and when to access more specialist topics (such as behavioural issues). The FRS would benefit from a clearer set of guidelines on meeting the needs of higher risk groups, and how external support is best accessed.

Recruiting a dedicated Youth Engagement Officer or equivalent, and setting in place a strategy for developing schemes were found to be important factors in delivering local schemes and accessing funding. Around half of Authorities were found to have created this type of post, but only a third had a Youth Engagement Policy in place. Practice shows that far greater leverage can be gained when youth training schemes are embedded in other FRS and community plans and are therefore perceived as part of a wider agenda. It will be important for the FRS to get this type of infrastructure right, and senior level backing within individual Authorities is a key part of this.

Most Authorities now have a sound quality framework for working with young people, including risk assessment and training procedures as standard. The research found a minority of Authorities where there are some fundamental gaps, however, and there is an immediate priority to address these prior to further expansion. In certain Authorities, for example, FRS staffs are delivering training to young people without CRB checks or a Child Protection Policy in place.

The approach of the Fire and Rescue Service to equality and diversity monitoring is also an area of concern for the effectiveness of its youth engagement work. Very few Fire and Rescue Authorities reported measures in place which monitored and reviewed the participation of young people or staff from different ethnic groups. The overall response for engaging with Black Minority Ethnic (BME) young people was typically 'homogenised', with few examples of schemes that engaged with

BME representative organisations or tailored activities according to specific cultural needs. There are benefits to be achieved from transferring good practice from the smaller number of schemes that have been more proactive in this area. More targeted recruitment of scheme personnel from BME communities is one way in which the needs of BME young people might be appropriately addressed.

Partnership work involving the FRS shows mixed effectiveness. Across the country, the Service is engaged with a broad cross-section of partners ranging from schools and colleges, to local authorities, crime reduction and youth offending organisations. Where it has been the most effective, partnership work has raised the profile of the FRS in the community and as a provider of services for children and young people. On balance, partnership work remains too focussed on referral and funding, however, with fewer examples of the FRS involving partners in the design and management of schemes. This is an area of work where the Fire and Rescue Service is perhaps behind the wider 'youth work' sector in its thinking. The Service might look to the model developed for schemes such as Millennium Volunteers and Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP), for example, whereby a core ethos and objectives are delivered through active 'grassroots' partnerships. Similarly, the Children's Fund provides an established source of good practice in designing and running diversionary schemes on a manageable (local) scale.

Notwithstanding this area for attention, however, it must be noted that some of the more 'bottom up' schemes that involve the Fire and Rescue Service are more progressive in the ways in which they have been conceived and executed with other agencies. This practice would benefit from wider rollout. In particular, there is greater scope for schemes to involve Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners, to strengthen the support that is in place.

The research has shown that youth training and diversion schemes still rely heavily on volunteer time and in-kind support for their day-to-day operation. This has many positive aspects. There is a genuinely progressive ethos in the FRS, which perceives youth engagement as a worthwhile and important aspect of the work of fire-fighters in the community. Around half of the total 1435 FRS personnel involved with youth training activities were found to participate on a voluntary basis. Many were happy to do so. Where adequate attention was given to training and quality assurance, a volunteer-led approach was often found to be a flexible and cost effective way to engage with youth development.

Steps have been taken to professionalize many of the schemes, however. A growing proportion of Authorities have moved towards a system of remuneration for staff, in recognition of the demands that are placed on individuals. Participation in youth development has become a career development opportunity in many FRAs, with personnel seeking to take additional training and assume full time posts. Furthermore, Authorities have successfully accessed a range of external funds to support scheme development. This includes LSC, NRF, ESF, and Youth Justice Board

funding. The success of many local schemes in accessing funding is testimony to the value of the service provided. The diversification of funding has helped to introduce a more robust project management cycle for many local schemes, and further professionalized them.

One of the outstanding areas for attention for youth training and diversion schemes is the use of monitoring and evaluation. Whilst two thirds of all schemes were found to be monitored, only a third used any form of evaluation. This has significantly diminished the capacity for the FRS to demonstrate the impact of many of its schemes. For Young Fire-fighter Association schemes in particular, measures of success have often been insufficiently broad to underline the full benefits for participants. Capacity for monitoring and evaluation has often been improved, where partners are involved directly. For example, educational impacts were most clearly demonstrated where schools, colleges, and LEAs were involved. Impact on offending behaviour was most clearly demonstrated, when the FRS drew on the expertise of YOTs or crime reduction organisations.

The strongest evidence for impact was found, where schemes were evaluated independently. There are examples of LIFE, Phoenix and Firebreak projects that have achieved clear and demonstrable outcomes achieved for young people. Here, the FRS has been successful in boosting young people's confidence and motivation, changing attitudes towards offending and antisocial behaviour, and achieving re-engagement with education. Furthermore, all Princes Trust 'Team' programmes use a thorough evaluative approach and were able to show firm rates of course achievement, ranging from 80% to 95%. Capacity for monitoring and evaluation will need to be further improved, as schemes seek to draw-down increasing levels of external funding (such as ESF or NRF).

8.3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

This section has summarised the overall findings of the research, and highlighted where the work of the Fire and Rescue Service is currently the most or least effective. The section first concluded on the findings of the research, with regard to the type and range of scheme that are in place in England. A summary was then provided on the effectiveness of these schemes, with reference to the main aspects of their operation.

Overall, the report concludes that the Fire and Rescue Service has been actively engaged with youth training and diversion schemes. Whilst the origins and prevalence of different types of schemes are varied across England, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of working with young people in the context of Community Fire Safety. All Authorities now have some type of provision in place, and some exciting local approaches have emerged alongside the more established schemes.

There is a strong case for youth training and diversionary activities to be placed on a greater footing, within the Fire and Rescue Service, and perhaps linked more directly to core processes such as IRMP. The

experience of individual Fire and Rescue Authorities shows that these schemes play an important role in conveying fire safety messages, and particularly to disadvantaged communities. This is part of the core remit of a modern Fire and Rescue Service and should be adequately resourced and supported.

The research further concludes that the Fire and Rescue Service has a wider role to play, in the emerging framework of services for children and young people. The traditional strength of the FRS is its proximity to local communities, enabling it to deliver universal and targeted interventions alike. The Service is a valued partner of many established youth related organisations such as Connexions, Youth Offending Teams, in addition to schools and LEAs. The FRS is well placed to draw down other sources of funding, to contribute to the development of multi-agency provision, and to provide additional diversionary activities (around school holidays, for example). It will be important to secure involvement with Local Area Agreements and Children's Trusts, in order to guarantee this.

Much of the effectiveness of the work of the FRS is drawn from its local knowledge, and a bottom-up approach is perhaps a key aspect of the future development of youth training and diversion schemes. Given that many of the existing types of scheme have a core purpose and structure, however, there is considerable scope to share good practice from different parts of the country. The FSYTA and Fire Service Support Association for the Prince's Trust have proved important in sustaining networking between schemes in the past and this type of ongoing national coordination might continue to be beneficial. Individual schemes would benefit from access to a central set of tools and guidance, and the dissemination of ideas and approaches.

The immediate priorities for the FRS are to address gaps in existing provision, and particularly to safeguard those children and young people who are already involved in different schemes. It is paramount that all Authorities that work with these groups do so within the appropriate framework of Child Protection and Criminal Record Bureau checks. Attention might then be given to monitoring and evaluation, and to the medium and longer term development of youth training and diversion schemes.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The report shows that there are a number of key areas for attention, in taking forward youth training and diversionary work involving the Fire and Rescue Service. Whilst there is considerable diversity in the type of schemes and the issues that they face, the over-arching recommendations from the study are as follows:

- To set in place adequate safeguards, to protect young people who are engaged in youth training activities involving the Fire and Rescue Service; to include a Child Protection Policy, Risk Assessment and Criminal Record Bureau checks as standard;
- To strengthen the existing partnership work for the schemes, by promoting the involvement of partners in design and delivery, and developing a more strategic approach for Fire and Rescue Authorities in linking with Children's Trusts and LAAs;
- To improve the performance management framework for youth training schemes, by placing a greater emphasis on evidence based practice; to include more widespread use of monitoring/evaluation and a place for youth diversion schemes within local Integrated Risk Management Plans and performance assessment;
- To encourage more widespread links with other local youth provision, in order to provide an effective basis for referring young people to/from the Fire and Rescue Service, and to ensure that any positive outcomes are sustainable;
- To promote a more active approach for the Fire and Rescue Service in working with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, by consulting with BME representative organisations on opportunities and priorities for development; and taking positive action to recruit BME scheme personnel and volunteers;
- To develop guidance on effective staff training and career opportunities for youth training schemes, including information on where and how to access training, and promoting the role of Youth Development Officer; and,
- To extend and develop networks for sharing of good practice in youth diversion, and to consider how effective schemes, especially those designed for disadvantaged young people might be disseminated more widely.

ANNEX 1

Summary financial data

Funding by type of scheme

| Type of scheme | Total annual cost of scheme (£ range) | Average (mean) | Average (median) | Number of schemes* |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Young Fire-fighter Association | £9,000 – £267,000 | £65,300 | £30,000 | 11 |
| 2. Princes Trust 'Team' | £46,400 – £700,000 | £271,600 | £140,000 | 8 |
| 3. Duke of Edinburgh Award | £2,000 – £250,000 | £59,670 | £38,400 | 6 |
| 4. Other branded schemes (e.g. LIFE; Firebreak; Phoenix) | £2,000 – £100,000 | £35,794 | £16,000 | 11 |
| 5. Other (locally specific schemes) | £400 – £200,000 | £65,986 | £13,000 | 9 |
| 6. Youth Association Badge schemes | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided | 3 |

**figure relates to number of schemes providing data in a useable format.*

In-kind support as a proportion of total scheme costs

| Type of scheme | Proportion of total annual scheme costs provided 'in kind' (% range) | Average (mean) (%) |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Young Fire-fighter Association | 16 – 100 | 59 |
| 2. Princes Trust 'Team' | 7 – 22 | 7 |
| 3. Duke of Edinburgh Award | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided |
| 4. Other branded schemes (e.g. LIFE; Firebreak; Phoenix) | 17 – 48 | 13 |
| 5. Youth Association Badge | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided |
| 6. Other (locally specific schemes) | 2 – 100 | 33 |

Partner funding as a proportion of total scheme costs*

| Type of scheme | Partner funding as proportion of total total annual scheme costs (% range) | Average (mean) (%) |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Young Fire-fighter Association | 24 – 100 | 51 |
| 2. Princes Trust 'Team' | 78 – 100 | 93 |
| 3. Duke of Edinburgh Award | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided |
| 4. Other branded schemes (e.g. LIFE; Firebreak; Phoenix) | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided |
| 5. Youth Association Badge | Insufficient data provided | Insufficient data provided |
| 6. Other (locally specific schemes) | 15 – 78 | 36 |

**It should be noted that nine Authorities were unable to specify the amount of partner support, and two gave no details.*

A total of seven Authorities indicated that no partner support was received at all.

ANNEX 2

Selected case studies

| 'Skidz' | |
|---|---|
| (Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
| Brief description | |
| <p>Skidz is a scheme which aims to give young people aged 14 upwards in Buckinghamshire the opportunity to develop their confidence, gain access to a workshop environment and develop skills for employment, as well as developing attitudes towards safe and legal driving. Skidz was formed in 1998, began operating in 1999, and in October 2004 a partnership was established between Skidz and Buckinghamshire FRS so that from September 2005 the delivery of Skidz will be shared. The FRS became involved with Skidz in an attempt to reduce the high number of road traffic accidents in Buckinghamshire. Skidz is 80% self-funded, but also receives funding from the FRS (£4,000), the ESF, the LSC, schools and the YOT. Courses are run daily during term time, evenings and also during school holidays.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>Skidz originated to give young people in Buckinghamshire the opportunity to participate in challenging activities that build self-esteem, allow access to a workshop environment, teach skills in motor mechanics and allied trades to assist in gaining employment, and to create opportunities for young people to develop responsible attitudes to safe and legal driving. Buckinghamshire FRS became involved because they wanted to raise young people's awareness of road traffic accidents and reduce the high number of road deaths in Buckinghamshire. Buckinghamshire FRS also hopes that Skidz will reduce anti-social behaviour. Data protection was a barrier to setting Skidz up because the Skidz team were unable to obtain all of the information they required about the background of young people.</p> |

| 'Skidz' (Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | Skidz aims to provide opportunities to young people such as training in practical skills, educational support, safe driving and riding opportunities. The aims of each course that Skidz offers varies, from building confidence to the more advanced motor vehicle training classes which aim to help young people secure employment. Skidz acts as a hook to enable other agencies such as the FRS to become involved with young people. Buckinghamshire FRS became involved with Skidz in an attempt to raise the safety awareness of young people, reinforce the consequences of their actions and ultimately to reduce anti-social behaviour and the number of road traffic accidents in Buckinghamshire. |
| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | Buckinghamshire FRS' role in Skidz is to organise a programme of six sessions to be delivered by one of the four Watches' during term-time. Each Watch is assigned a group of ten young people, to deliver sessions to. Each Watch delivers sessions to the same group for continuity. No partners are involved in the planning or management of Skidz. Risk assessments are undertaken prior to all sessions and personal protection equipment is made available. |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | The FRS delivers the course content on Road User Education to groups of young people who are already engaged with Skidz on a two year Road User Studies course, which is a nationally recognised qualification. Each watch must have representatives delivering the course content for Skidz and the partnership managers are responsible for encouraging staff from each watch to volunteer for this. The partnership managers have not received any training for their role, but are selected based on their suitability and experience. The FRS officers involved with Skidz have experience with the YOT, the police, delivering presentations and an understanding of how to talk to people. |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | Anyone can attend Skidz, but the target group 'consists of all young people in the community, with an emphasis on the less advantaged and those at risk' (from website). Referrals to Skidz can be made by anyone, but tend to be from schools, the YOS, YIPs, Connexions or self-referrals. Most of the Skidz participants are young males, but Skidz welcomes diversity. There is little family involvement in Skidz, however parents are invited to attend a presentation event at the end of the course. |

| ‘Skidz’ (Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | Skidz runs different classes to cater to varying levels of interest and ability. Most of the courses focus on hands on practical activities, with some time spent in the classroom. Wycombe Skidz runs three workshops which offer motor-related practical sessions and lessons for 400 young people per week during term time. 10% of these young people are involved with sessions delivered by the FRS. Buckinghamshire FRS delivers a vehicle crime awareness package through Skidz. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>No evaluation of Skidz has taken place yet because the FRS has not formally become involved with it. Little information about the outcomes of Skidz for young people is available, because Skidz is practical based and not designed with assessment in mind. Participants complete self-assessment forms and have individual learning records which include information on the work undertaken during each session. Similarly Skidz staff complete feedback reports on the achievement and behaviour of the young people, which are sent back to schools.</p> <p>The Skidz Manager emphasised that ‘students at Skidz have achieved some of the highest marks in the country in the Welsh Joint Education Committee Road User Studies Exam (at the end of the two year course).’ (Skidz Newsletter for Summer 2005). Young people enjoy taking part in Skidz and feel like they are treated like adults. 66% students achieved a distinction grade when taking the Road User Studies and one Skidz student in 2004 was granted an apprenticeship with Porsche.</p> |
| vi. Key messages – ‘what works?’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – Involvement of FRS allows young people to develop a rapport with them and see beyond the uniform. > <i>Message two</i> – The informal nature of Skidz courses helps to engage young people. > <i>Message three</i> – Although Skidz is largely self-funding, mainstream funding would help to make the scheme more robust. |

| 'LIFE' (Cleveland Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
|--|---|
| Brief description | |
| <p>The LIFE programme was set up to target hard to engage young people. It aims to provide training and development opportunities through FRS related activities. Ten week-long LIFE programmes are delivered over a year. It costs £5,500 a week to deliver. The scheme is planned and delivered through the FRS, with partners involved in management, funding and referrals to the scheme. Referrals are made by agencies including Safe in Tees Valley, Connexions and the Youth Offending Team.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>LIFE originated to build on the SAFE and the YFA programmes and further develop the FRS' relationship with young people. The rationale for LIFE was that a shorter scheme would engage harder to reach young people, such as offenders and those at risk of offending. LIFE is part of a youth development strategy that links to the FRS community plan.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>LIFE aims to provide development opportunities to young people through FRS related activities. It also aims to break down barriers between young people and their communities. Young people are encouraged to make the most of their physical and mental capabilities and to become safer, more responsible, caring members of their communities. More broadly, LIFE aims to combat anti-social behaviour and raise the self-esteem of the young people involved, improve attitudes towards the FRS, decrease fire-setting behaviour and make young people aware of the consequences of their actions. LIFE is accredited with TROCN Level 2 award.</p> |
| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | <p>The LIFE programme is planned in line with the Youth Development Strategy and the Community Safety team. A Youth Development Manager leads a team of four. Each member of the team manages one of the following programmes: LIFE; SAFE; YFA; and Princes Trust programmes. The core team is responsible for the day to day running of schemes and works together to ensure a back up staffing system is in place. The Police Youth Manager is involved in the strategic management of funding LIFE via Safe In Tees Valley. Partners have little involvement in the day-to-day management of LIFE, but refer young people to the scheme. Communication between Cleveland FRS and partners has been effective. Team meetings are held as a forum to share information and discuss any issues with LIFE.</p> |

| ‘LIFE’ (Cleveland Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
|---|---|
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | <p>The core team which includes a mix of operational and non-operational FRS staff. Staff received core training on health and safety and an introduction to youth work. This covered anti-social behaviour and management and child protection provided through the partner agency Safe in Tees Valley. The team is supported by the Youth Development Manager who has extensive experience as a youth worker.</p> |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | <p>The target groups are: young offenders or those at risk of offending; young people exhibiting anti-social behaviour; and those at risk of exclusion or disengagement from education. The FRS receives referrals from a number of agencies including Safe in Tees Valley and Connexions. On the first day of LIFE programmes, young people are accompanied by a member of staff from the referral organisation who informs the team if the young person has behavioural problems or has a history of violence.</p> |
| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | <p>A range of activities are offered as part of the LIFE programme. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety • Team building • Hose and hydrant work • Fire Safety – hoax calls • Anti-social behaviour • Fire Awareness and Extinguisher training • Basic life support • Basic drills • Visit to Brigade Control • Brigade smoke house • High ropes training <p>At the end of the week, young people take part in a pass out parade. They receive a certificate, which they can use to build their CV.</p> |

| 'LIFE' (Cleveland Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
|---|--|
| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>On a day to day basis, young people complete personal evaluation files. Here, they evidence what they have learned and rate each activity on a likert scale of 1 to 10. Young people also complete a 'Joshua tree' morning and afternoon to record how they feel before and after the day's activities. Staff use this as a basis for discussion with young people on the programme.</p> <p>Scheme personnel keep a log book to record any changes in young peoples' behaviour that have occurred. At the end of each day, the team discusses which aspects of the scheme they believe are working and which are not to inform future planning. Three to six months after the scheme, the FRS contacts the referral agency and asks them to complete a post course questionnaire. The individual also has a post course meeting to reflect upon the course and the direction they want to take themselves. This is intended to measure any changes that have taken place.</p> <p>An external evaluation undertaken by Crime Concern in June 2004 indicated that LIFE was highly successful. Young people enjoyed the LIFE scheme. They learned more about of the dangers of fires and felt discouraged from lighting fires. Young people were more confident and learned how to communicate more effectively.</p> |
| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – Programmes need to be rooted in the FRS objectives to be effective, and a structured team and facilities need to be in place in order to deliver the scheme. > <i>Message two</i> – The personality of the fire-fighters really makes the scheme work, young people need to be able to see them as human which helps to break down barriers. > <i>Message three</i> – The personal evaluation files and 'Joshua tree' are a useful way of collecting information on the impact of the LIFE programme. |

| 'Phoenix – Young Parents' (Cornwall County Fire Brigade) | |
|---|---|
| Brief description | |
| <p><i>The Phoenix – Young Parents</i> programme, introduced by Cornwall County Fire Brigade (CCFB) in 2004, developed out of the existing Phoenix scheme for young people which had been established in 2002. This one-day scheme targets young parents and aims to improve community safety and break cycles of anti-social behaviour within the Cornwall community. The scheme aims to do this by delivering a one day course that offers young parents a range of team building activities and encourages them to think about their parental responsibilities. Phoenix also offers young people the opportunity to gain a 'wider skills programme' qualification. The scheme initially received £200k in funding from NRF, but going forward is hoping to secure funding from other sources such as schools as it is now ASDAN accredited. The FRS provides in kind benefits to Phoenix such as the use of facilities and equipment.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>Phoenix – Young Parents was set up in 2004 as part of Cornwall County Fire Brigade's (CCFB) objective to make the community a 'better' place in which to live. The scheme was introduced following changes in the leadership of the Phoenix delivery team and as a result of discussions between the Phoenix programme manager and local Sure Start schemes which had identified a need for support for young parents in particular. Phoenix – Young Parents was set up as a preventative measure to address the cycle of anti-social behaviour and lack of parental support which had been observed in the delivery of the Phoenix programme for young people. The scheme is intended to benefit young parents, their children and ultimately the communities in which they live.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>Phoenix – Young Parents, is delivered on the premise that the home environment and the relationships which young people have with their parents are a significant factor in their personal development, life chances and indirectly, the anti-social behaviour which negatively affects local communities. The scheme has two main aims: to improve young parents understanding of the impact of their parental relationship on their children's life opportunities and to broaden their own aspirations.</p> <p>The scheme aims to demonstrate CCFB's commitment to fostering social inclusion through maintaining practical and positive links with its communities. Phoenix – Young Parents achieves this through the use of physical and discussion-based activities as well as information sessions. The intended outcome is to improve community safety by targeting disadvantaged groups to prevent cycles of anti-social behaviour continuing.</p> |

| 'Phoenix – Young Parents' (Cornwall County Fire Brigade) | |
|---|--|
| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | The Phoenix team is a self-managing unit within CCFB and has three members of staff, two of which are seconded, operational fire-fighters. The team includes an Administrator, a Phoenix Scheme Instructor and is led by a Project Manager employed to manage the scheme overall. Additional strategic support is provided by the Youth Liaison Officer from Cornwall County Fire Brigade who co-ordinates the range of youth programmes delivered across Cornwall County. This team has recently expanded its remit, and now also delivers the Phoenix–Young Parents scheme. This scheme is delivered in partnership with Sure Start. Sure Start provides catering, transport and crèche support and CCFB provides the scheme instructors, facilities and. CCFB also works in partnership with the local authority, local schools, Youth Intervention Officers, and the police to ensure that they are informed and up to date. |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | The scheme is delivered by the Phoenix team project manager and its programme instructor with voluntary assistance from fire-fighters on the Watch at each Fire station. When selecting staff to be involved, the Project Manager consults with the fire-fighter's Watch officer in order to assess whether volunteers have appropriate skills to work with young parents, including empathy, interpersonal and communication skills. 30 Fire Fighters across the county have been trained in child protection awareness. The Phoenix project manager and the Youth Liaison Officer have received 'multi-agency training', which includes an understanding of child protection responsibilities. |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | Young parents are currently identified and referred to Phoenix-Young Parents by local Sure Start partnerships which to date have included Penryn and Falmouth. The main criteria in choosing young parents to refer is that they have not yet fulfilled their potential and are likely to benefit from taking part in a one-day programme. |

| ‘Phoenix – Young Parents’ (Cornwall County Fire Brigade) | |
|---|--|
| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | Phoenix-Young Parents is a one day course. The first half of the course includes an introduction and physical fire-fighting activities at the Fire Station. These activities are all followed by a de-briefing session from the team instructor. The instructor shows where the young adults responded well to either their team-mates or to the physical tasks which they have been set. During the second half of the day, young parents watch a DVD of young people that have offended and their life stories, which is followed up with a discussion. The young parents are encouraged to reflect on their responsibilities and the impact of their actions on the opportunities for their children. The main Phoenix programme offers young people the opportunity to gain a ‘wider key skills’ qualification, which is worth 80% of a D-G GCSE qualification, in terms of credits. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | ‘Phoenix-Young parents’ encourages and receives verbal feedback from Sure Start on its impact. The scheme has also begun to monitor the profile of young parents attending the programme and has plans to introduce more formal evaluation systems. Outcomes of the project for the young parents include improved levels of confidence; an increase in ambition and aspirations, support in personal development and considering their future options with a more positive approach. Specific outcomes have included young parents being offered the opportunity to return to the scheme to assist the Phoenix project manager and instructor in delivering future programmes. |
| vi. Key messages – ‘what works?’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – Enthusiastic, entrepreneurial and pro-active staff within the Phoenix team and volunteers make the scheme work and ensure the young people feel at ease and able to benefit from the structured programme of activities. > <i>Message two</i> – A more formalised structure with additional staff will improve communications within CCFB, support the identified need to formalise evaluation systems and acknowledge the Phoenix-Young Parents scheme as separate, but complementary, to the main Phoenix programme. > <i>Message three</i> – The potential for low attendance at the scheme highlighted that it may be beneficial to visit young parents prior to the day of the programme to encourage them to participate and improve achievement rates. |

| 'Princes Trust – Team Programme' (Dorset Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| Brief description | |
| <p>In 1997, a franchise was established between the Dorset FRS and the Princes Trust to deliver the Team Programme. The Team Programme is a national scheme for young people aged 16 to 25 years, including young offenders, ex-offenders, the long term unemployed, educational under-achievers, and young people in or leaving care. In Dorset, ten schemes run throughout the year across four sites in the county. The programme runs for 12 weeks and offers a range of outdoor and community based activities, work experience and information, advice and guidance. It aims to get young people's lives working and to increase progression in education, training and employment. At present, the programme is funded by the LSC. Referrals are made by a number of partners including local colleges, the Connexions Service, Jobcentre Plus, the Youth Offending Team, and Social Services, amongst others.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>The Team Programme began after the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 gave the FRS the responsibility to engage with all members of the community. It was seen to be a way into the community, in particular to engage with 'challenging' young people. The perceived neutrality of the FRS helped staff to build rapport with young people and to help them progress.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>The Princes Trust aims to help young people to get their lives working by improving their confidence and soft skills and helping them to secure employment or further education and training. The programme also works with relevant agencies to meet their needs, for instance by providing information on housing benefits which might impact on their future circumstances.</p> |

| 'Princes Trust – Team Programme' (Dorset Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| <p>iii. How is the scheme planned and managed?</p> | <p>The Scheme Manager has overall responsibility for delivery of the programme. This includes responsibility for health and safety, finance and personnel training through the Princes Trust. Each team has a Team Leader who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the scheme and the young people in their team. Team Leaders are supported by Co-ordinators. Leaders also receive some help from employed volunteers whose employers have paid for them to be involved, although their role often involves supporting team members by acting as role models.</p> <p>Team Co-ordinators' responsibilities include: programme equipment and paperwork; health and safety; conducting risk assessments; young peoples' portfolios; the log book and risk assessments; basic skills screening; arranging work placements, taking part in the residential; staff development; and maintaining contacts in the community.</p> <p>The Princes Trust and Dorset FRS have established policies for the scheme.</p> |
| <p>iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported?</p> | <p>Team Leaders, supported by Co-ordinators and employed volunteers deliver the scheme to young people. Team leaders are recruited internally via word of mouth, an internal FRS magazine, e-mails, and staff notice boards. One month prior to leading their first team, FRS staff attend a two week training course at the Princes Trust in Derby. This covers team leader training and dealing with challenging behaviour. Team leaders also spend time learning from Team Co-ordinators. Staff involved in the delivery of the programme felt they needed a range of skills including: good listening skills; sensitivity; the ability to set boundaries; and a good sense of humour.</p> <p>A 'Next Steps' worker makes contact with young people and up to three months after completion to help them progress in education, training or employment. There is also a network of contacts in the community, developed by the team. This network supports the scheme by enabling young people to be placed as volunteers/work experience.</p> |

| ‘Princes Trust – Team Programme’ (Dorset Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| v. How are young people identified and referred? | Some young people self-refer having seen adverts in the local papers. Others are referred through partner agencies including the Youth Offending Team, the Foyer (a local sheltered housing scheme); Job Centre Plus and Connexions. Recent changes narrowed the target group, which means the majority of young people are young offenders, ex-offenders, the long term unemployed, educational under-achievers, and young people in or leaving care. Overall the scheme tends to attract young people with a lack of direction and low levels of confidence or self-esteem. Applicants complete an application form; undergo an interview; a skills assessment; and a Police check. |
| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | During the programme, young people complete goal setting activities, discuss aspirations, practice CV writing and mock interview techniques. Young people’s progress is discussed during one-to-ones throughout the scheme. They complete a community project which might be to improve the local environment, raise money or to take older people out on an excursion. Young people also do work experience. Outdoor activities on the residential include abseiling, canoeing, climbing, kayaking, cooking, cleaning, and map reading. During the last week of the scheme, young people complete exit interviews and discuss next step action plans. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>Throughout the scheme young people complete an individual learning record which helps to monitor their progress, profile activities and certificates. A skills self-assessment rating sheet is included and young people identify key areas which they want to improve on such as problem solving and leadership. Feedback is provided on the young people from staff on work experience placements. In addition, young people complete an end of programme review sheet and set goals for the coming year.</p> <p>Young people reported that they felt more confident, motivated, learned new skills, improved their job prospects, developed their communication skills, and were more involved with the community, although did not feel they learned a lot about the dangers of fire. One young person said <i>‘it has really changed my life actually’</i>, and has become an assistant team leader for the Princes Trust.</p> |

| 'Princes Trust – Team Programme' (Dorset Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none">> <i>Message one</i> – Staff felt the Team Programme was more effective when a wider range of young people were involved as role models. Young people learned from each other.> <i>Message two</i> – Next Steps helped to ensure the benefits of the Team Programme continued once it ended. Young people often needed additional support for a successful transition to further education, training and employment.> <i>Message three</i> – The Team Programme offered an excellent personal development opportunity for operational fire fighters, many of whom were promoted on the basis of skills they gained as Team Leaders. |

| 'Duke of Edinburgh Award' (Durham Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| Brief description | |
| <p>Durham FRS runs activity schemes for young people aged 14 to 25 as part of their Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Awards. The DoE aims 'to provide an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding programme of personal development for young people.' To date, Durham FRS has delivered the service section at bronze and silver levels. However, they plan to offer the full range of activities at all levels (including gold) in the future. A range of activities are undertaken by the FRS for the 'service' section of the Award, including: visits to fire stations; fire safety drills; emergency call procedures; and helping out with other youth schemes. Efforts are made to highlight the community safety and partnership work of the FRS in addition to fire-fighting. The DoE activities are funded by the FRS and delivered internally by operational staff.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>Young people have been coming to the FRS as part of DoE awards for about 20 years. However, the scale of activities significantly expanded about two years ago when two permanent Youth Inclusion Officers were appointed. The range and nature of activities developed was informed by existing partnerships and awareness-raising work in schools. Input from partners, in particular Connexions, was also very valuable on issues surrounding working with young people.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>The central aim of the service activity offered by the Durham FRS is for young people 'to learn and gain an understanding of the Fire Service, its organisation and responsibilities to the people and community it serves, and the importance of fire safety.' By the end, participants should have a basic understanding of a range of fire safety issues and practices, as well a broad overview of FRS' more general Community Safety work. Clearly, the central objective of these activities is that the young people complete, and pass, one of the five Duke of Edinburgh activity sections. More generally, however it was felt that engaging young people and communicating community safety messages had benefits for the FRS and wider community.</p> |

| ‘Duke of Edinburgh Award’ (Durham Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | The programme of activities was put together and is managed by the two YIO’s The central co-ordination of youth activities and structured timetable for DoE that was introduced following their appointment has had a positive impact on the quality of delivery – prior to the YIO’s’ appointment DoE activities were not consistent across all stations in the County. Partners are not generally involved in the management of activities for Duke of Edinburgh but, as mentioned above, Connexions does provide considerable advice on specific issues such as child protection. However, access to some facilities is dependent on being granted access by other organisations (e.g. permission from local airport for a visit there). In future, the FRS in Durham hope to deliver all levels (bronze to gold) and all five components of the DoE Award. |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | The programme is mainly delivered by operational staff. They are supported by the YIOs, who also deliver activities at Durham FRS Headquarters. Because the programme of activities is intended to be flexible, it can be delivered by operational staff on duty – which is not the case for the more resource intensive diversionary scheme Firebreak. As such, the Duke of Edinburgh has relatively minimal funding implications. However, there is a need to train up more operational staff – at the moment the FRS is limited in what it can deliver by limited staff capacity. |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | The activities are open to anyone undertaking the Service component of the DoE Award, which is open to anyone aged 14 (15 for silver and 16 for gold) and 25. Young people can be referred from any number of agencies, although in Durham the majority have come from the Public Services course at New College Durham. Some young people already have a fairly clear idea of what they want to do when they arrive at the Fire Station. Others don’t really know what is available and the FRS fills them in. There is a feeling that the recent change at national level to allow young people to undertake the DoE in modules – rather than having to do all four sections back to back – has widened the net a bit in terms of the young people attracted. Previously, it was seen as very much for high achievers, whereas now it seems more accessible. |

| 'Duke of Edinburgh Award' (Durham Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | Activities include: visiting fire stations across the North East; FRS duties/drills; helping out with Youth Inclusion Project 'Firebreak'; physical and written tests; fire safety – extinguishing fires; helping out with set-up for bonfire night; knot-tying; phonetic alphabet/call signs; learning about Appliances (fire engines); emergency call procedures; and fire prevention leaflet drops. The young people tended to find the more "hands-on" activities the most useful but appreciated the "good mix" of class work and practical work. One negative point raised was that occasionally sessions were cancelled due to senior-level permission required for an activity or the busy schedules of officers involved. However, the young people understood the reasons for these. Overall, they enjoyed activities more than those experienced elsewhere (e.g. college, air cadets, police) because they felt they were trusted; had more freedom and experienced a greater variety of activities. They also expressed a great deal of respect for officers who, in some cases, performed a mentor-like role. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | There is limited monitoring and evaluation. However, young people are given opportunities to feedback and are asked how they feel the course went before they leave. All feedback was generally positive. Staff felt that the activities had a positive impact on confidence and motivation of young people. |
| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – Youth schemes are extremely important for communicating the Community Safety message to young people. > <i>Message two</i> – Central co-ordination of activities is important for consistency and quality of delivery across all stations. > <i>Message three</i> – If a wider programme of activities can be developed, then the FRS could retain enthusiastic and motivated young people for longer. |

| ‘LIFE’ | |
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| London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority | |
| Brief description | |
| <p>Local Intervention and Fire Education (LIFE) is a week long course delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). It is designed to reduce hoax calls and attacks on fire-fighters and encourage community fire safety. LIFE offers a range of activities to young people aged 13 to 19, with a focus on disadvantaged groups. In Tower Hamlets, funding has been received from a range of sources, including the Government Office for London (GOL), Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and New Deal. The Fire and Rescue Service contributes ‘in-kind’, by allowing young people to use fire station property and by releasing fire fighters to each course while on their normal salary. The pan-London running costs are around £1Million.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>LIFE originated in response to the involvement of young people in making hoax calls, setting malicious fires and attacking fire fighters. The aim of the scheme was to reduce the number of these types of incidents, by bridging the gap with local communities.</p> <p>The initial drive for LIFE in London came from the borough of Tower Hamlets, after one incident where two fire fighters were hospitalised as a direct result of a conflict with young people. Senior Officers decided to set up a scheme in response, to build relationships. The London LIFE programme was established after a review of other examples of schemes. A key emphasis of the scheme is to keep it ‘local’, by running from a specific fire station, and led by fire fighters from within the borough.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>LIFE has two main aims: to reduce the number of hoax calls and attacks on fire-fighters in London and to encourage community fire safety. Initially, the FRS wanted to support young people to understand the consequences of their actions, as well as targeting unacceptable and anti social fire setting behaviour. Over time, the focus of the scheme has expanded, to raise young people’s self-belief, self-esteem, self-value, motivation, and to give a sense of achievement. Records of achievement are presented at the end of each course in a formal passing out parade. The community fire safety element is also important and LIFE sets out to encourage participants to be ambassadors within the community; ‘spreading the word’ about fire prevention.</p> |

| 'LIFE' | |
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| London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority | |
| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | LIFE takes place in a range of London boroughs. There is a central management function, which co-ordinates the programme across London (policy, planning, and strategy). A Project Board has been set-up at Assistant Commissioner level, providing high level direction and support. Each borough has a Team Leader and instructors who manage/run the scheme within that area. A London-wide team of three trainers support and provide training to the instructors, one of whom is a specialist youth consultant. The central LIFE team meets regularly. Local partners are involved in referral and progression, but not in the management of the scheme directly. |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | <p>When LIFE is set up in a new borough, a presentation is delivered on the scheme to all stations within the borough. Interested fire-fighters must complete an application form, and are then selected via an interview – assessment process. Applicants are tested in group exercises, to determine their suitability. At present some 200 trained instructors are available (approx 26 in each borough).</p> <p>Before instructors deliver a course, they receive an initial three days of training followed by five days further development. The aim of the training is to help them learn about the young people they will be working with, in particular the issues likely to affect vulnerable young people, those living in deprived areas and/or living with parents with serious emotional and/or financial problems. All instructors are volunteers, although they do receive an additional LIFE payment for the additional hours worked.</p> |

| ‘LIFE’ | |
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| London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority | |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | <p>Originally LIFE targeted young people who had problems such as anti-social behaviour, truancy, school exclusion, or offending behaviour. It now also takes young people that may have victim of crime or with low self esteem. Young people are referred by a wide range of agencies and bodies, including self-referral, the Police, the Youth Offending Team, Connexions, schools, Pupil Referral Units, their parents and even their peer group. There is a diverse ethnic profile amongst participants.</p> <p>Parents contribute to LIFE by providing feedback on the young people’s behaviour. They are also invited to an initial induction evening, at which the pass-out ceremony is explained to them. The evening also provides an opportunity to involve the young people in setting the rules for the group. There is a red card, yellow card system for young people participating in the scheme to deter anti-social behaviour.</p> |
| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | <p>LIFE focuses on fire brigade oriented activities, and is based at a local fire station. The courses cover activities such as drills practice; breathing apparatus chamber exercises, first aid training, and hose drills using the fire station drill tower. There is also a ‘consequences’ session; this involves videos on the dangers of fire and driving stolen vehicles using real life footage. A debrief is held at the end of each day, where participants and instructors discuss the issues that have arisen. These sessions also include positive feedback on the successes of the day.</p> |

| 'LIFE' | |
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| London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority | |
| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>An assessment sheet is used daily to feedback to young people. This enables them to choose areas for self-review. The form also comprises part of the young person's portfolio of achievement, which is presented to the young people on the passing-out ceremony. The Team Leaders are planning to run a follow up event for young people after they have participated in LIFE, to provide continuing support and contact.</p> <p>Questionnaires have been developed for young people, parents and partners. Among the operational staff who took part in the case study, LIFE was said to make the young people more trustworthy, loyal and respectful. Young people reported that the LIFE course enabled them to learn new skills; they enjoyed the course activities; felt more confident and importantly felt that they were treated as equals by the instructors.</p> |
| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – A mix of young and enthusiastic instructors are needed to make the scheme work. Providing positive role models was a strong feature. > <i>Message two</i> – Debrief sessions work well in developing the skills of the young people. Having clear ground rules on behaviour, such as the red and yellow card system set clear boundaries. > <i>Message three</i> – Six months is required to set up and organise LIFE in a new borough. This development time should be taken into account. |

| 'FIREFLY' – Fire service Intervention, Response and Education to improve the Future Lives of Young people (Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| <p>Brief description</p> <p>Set up in 2004, the FIREFLY scheme is run by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority. It is based at Oldham Fire Station, but run throughout the county and funded annually from a variety of sources. FIREFLY works with 'hard to reach' young people aged 10 to 18, including those at risk of offending. The scheme provides them with the opportunity to take part in a five day course which offers a range of activities. FIREFLY aims to reduce attacks on fire-fighters and hoax calls, by offering participants practical work experience and a chance to learn new skills. The scheme received start-up funding from Oldham Community Safety Unit. Between 2004 and 2005, it has also received funding from Tameside CDRP and the Greater Manchester Against Crime Tactical Partnership Business Group.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| <p>i. How did the scheme originate?</p> | <p>FIREFLY was developed by Greater Manchester FRA in response to the Oldham riots in 2001, in an attempt to reduce anti-social behaviour and inter-community tensions, as part of a multi-agency approach. The role of the FRS within this strategy was to develop partnerships with the local community and contribute to the wider community safety agenda by targeting 'hard to reach' young people.</p> |
| <p>ii. What does it aim to achieve?</p> | <p>Broadly FIREFLY aims to make a difference in young people's lives, make them more aware of and, responsible for, their actions and to raise the profile of the FRS in Oldham. The key aim of FIREFLY is <i>'to provide an intensive work experience course within a disciplined uniformed team'</i>. (FIREFLY marketing leaflet).</p> <p>More specifically, FIREFLY's objectives are to: increase community safety; address home and fire safety; address anti-social behaviour; instil discipline; promote team spirit; teach life skills and values; improve the life chances of young people; evaluate students to offer forward strategies; reduce re-offending rates; reduce non-accidental fires and malicious calls, and reduce attacks on fire-fighters.</p> |

| 'FIREFLY' – Fire service Intervention, Response and Education to improve the Future Lives of Young people (Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | <p>The Fire Service Community Liaison Officer (FSCLO), initially appointed by Greater Manchester FRA, manages FIREFLY on a daily basis; this role includes delivering activities and managing the scheme instructors. The Delivery Partner Manager for the GMFRA's Prince's Trust Team provides support with the strategic management and development of FIREFLY. FIREFLY has a borough focused management approach, and this is designed to focus the manager's attention on local needs.</p> <p>The primary role of partners is to refer young people, although some partners (such as the Youth Offending Service) also have a role in discussing the programme content and the appropriateness of modules to different groups of young people. Partners further provide post-course support to young people.</p> |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | <p>FIREFLY is delivered by the FSCLO and seconded, operational fire-fighters, some of whom were trained as team leaders on the LIFE programme run by London Fire and Rescue Service. Fire-fighters involved in FIREFLY must be positive role models to young people; be able to deal with challenging behaviour, and be motivated. Fire-fighters interested in participating put their names forward, and the FSCLO requests their release from operational duties.</p> <p>Fire-fighters receive a series of training before taking part in FIREFLY, including; first aid, drugs, hygiene, child protection, dealing with aggressive behaviour, and lecturing techniques. Fire-fighters are paid by GMFRS when taking part in FIREFLY however commitment to the scheme is such that some often take days off to observe the culmination of the project activity in the final day's 'passing out' parade.</p> |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | <p>FIREFLY targets young people aged 10 to 18 who are difficult to engage with. This might include young people displaying low self esteem; disengaged from education or employment, or displaying anti-social behaviour. Referrals are made via networks, including Oldham Youth Offending Service (YOS), Connexions, and local schools. The YOS is currently the main referral partner, and also carries out a risk assessment. At the end of the five-day programme parents, families and friends are invited to the 'passing out parade' of FIREFLY.</p> |

| ‘FIREFLY’ – Fire service Intervention, Response and Education to improve the Future Lives of Young people (Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | During the 5 day course, participants take part in team building exercises and learn about a range of topics including basic first aid; practical use of fire equipment, and human behaviour in fire. The scheme finishes with the passing out parade. Benefits to participants include learning in a disciplined environment; fire-fighting skills; home safety awareness skills; personal development; and a physical challenge. At the end of the course, participants receive a portfolio of achievement. This includes certificates of attendance and certificates of life skills (an accredited aspect of the course). Young people reported that they enjoyed the activities and found them useful. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | FIREFLY measures the young people’s interest in the activities, by asking young people to rate completed activities on a form. Since FIREFLY began in March 2004 a number of improvements in community safety and in re-offending rates have been observed. There has also been a corresponding reduction in car fires, hoax calls and a reduction in the number of attacks on fire-fighters. The scheme was focussed on these outcomes, and is therefore considered to have played a key contributory role. |
| vi. Key messages – ‘what works?’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – It is necessary to have a fully-funded, core team of instructors seconded from operational duties for effective scheme management. > <i>Message two</i> – Risk assessment is necessary prior to young people attending scheme to ensure that the scheme is appropriate them. > <i>Message three</i> – FIREFLY is linked to improvements to a number of key FRS performance indicators, and is therefore contributing to the community safety improvement agenda. |

| 'Peer Education Project' (Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin FRA) | |
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| Brief description | |
| <p>The local district councils have run Crucial Crew for eight years in Shropshire, as a multi-agency scheme providing everyday safety messages for young people aged 10 to 11 years. The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) is a partner on the scheme. It offers a presentation on fire safety issues and 'scenarios' for young people, with the aim of reducing fire setting and hoax calls. The scheme is attended by a range of different schools in the county. As an extension of Crucial Crew, the FRS has more recently involved older pupils (14 – 16) as 'peer group educators'. This entails role play, and awareness-raising. The peer education method aims to strengthen Crucial Crew, whilst building confidence and raising self-esteem.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>The FRS originally became involved in delivering youth training schemes in Shropshire, due to the high proportion of deliberate fires, involving young people. Crucial Crew is just one scheme that is supported financially by the FRS. Its format was re-developed two years ago by the FRS Youth Officer, to bring the activities up to date. More recently, the FRS has expanded its work to include a greater focus on young people with challenging behaviour (e.g. a fire-fighter experience day).</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>Crucial Crew aims to provide experience of 'everyday' safety situations to children aged 10 to 11. The main focus of the FRS element is on the implications of hoax calling. The scheme gets young people to consider their own behaviour and actions.</p> <p>The new peer education method was added to Crucial Crew, to test whether fire safety messages are more effective when they come from young people. Peer educators might be young people on the fringes of social exclusion, those with challenging behaviour, or from mainstream school. The scheme aims to build self-esteem, offer an insight to the FRS, and develop communication skills. Peer educators who complete the course are provided with a reference and certificate.</p> |

| 'Peer Education Project' (Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin FRA) | |
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| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | <p>The scheme is managed overall by the local district councils. The FRS manages its own presentation, and has developed the associated training/resources. In order to recruit 'peer educators', the Service has developed a referral arrangement with NACRO, as part of the 'Madely Moves' project for socially excluded young people. The FRS Youth Officer maintains ongoing communication with referral agencies.</p> <p>The scheme is run over a two month period at three locations in Shropshire, so that a large number of children can participate. It uses a 'simulated' environment, including a mock telephone kiosk, control room and information tents. Pupils are guided through a series of scenarios, where they are engaged in role play by the peer educators. Learning is reinforced with a final presentation on 'hoax calls' by FRS personnel.</p> |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | <p>The scheme is delivered by a core team of four Operational crew members and two supporting Community Safety Officers. A wide range of training is offered to the FRS staff, for working with young people. Core training on the Crucial Crew scheme is provided internally, by the Youth Officer. FRS personnel support the young people who participate as peer educators, supervising them and providing secure transport.</p> |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | <p>Young people aged 14 to 16 are eligible to participate as peer educators. The partnership with NACRO focuses specifically on socially excluded young people, who might benefit from the scheme as a means of boosting their confidence and self esteem. Young people at NACRO are introduced to the FRS Youth Officer through a short fire setter awareness course. Following the course, the opportunity is provided to be further involved. NACRO selects participants on the basis of their interest, and from their behaviour/attitudes towards the initial course. The 'informal' approach taken by the Youth Officer was felt to be an important factor in engaging with the young people, and building a relationship.</p> |

| 'Peer Education Project' (Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin FRA) | |
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| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | The Crucial Crew scheme involves role play, with a focus on hoax calling. The peer educators are fully briefed by FRS personnel in advance, who support them to take a lead on the role play. The peer educators make use of a mock telephone kiosk, to persuade the younger school pupils to make a 'hoax call'. The implications of the call are then explored, when the pupils receive a call from the mock 'control room'. To conclude the session, the pupils receive a series of fire safety presentation from FRS staff. Each peer educator participates in a number of sessions, therefore improving their confidence over time. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>The impact of the scheme is tracked in a number of ways. For the peer educators, ongoing communication is maintained between the FRS and NACRO. The key worker at the 'out of school' project monitors any benefits in terms of behaviour, confidence, and communication skills. Several of the first peer educators have progressed from the scheme to achieve positive outcomes. This includes access to f/t employment, and enrolment on an Apprenticeship training course as part of e2e.</p> <p>The FRS has further collated data on the number of fires set and hoax calls, over the corresponding period. Although difficult to 'prove' impact in this way, the data shows a relationship between the running of Crucial Crew (and other FRS schemes) and fire setting/hoax call rates.</p> |
| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – Peer education has 'triple' benefits – both for the target audience, for young people acting as educators or mentors, and for the Fire and Rescue Service in reducing hoax calls. > <i>Message two</i> – The potential to 'get something at the end' is often important for young people with little prior educational achievement. A certificate or reference can have real benefits in helping to get a job. > <i>Message three</i> – Working in close partnership with other agencies can enhance FRS youth training schemes, by providing access to a wide range of professional expertise and support. |

| 'Fire Cadets' (West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| Brief description | |
| <p>Previously a Young Fire-fighter scheme, Fire Cadets was re-branded and re-launched in 2003 by the Community Safety Unit and Fire and Rescue Service. The scheme aims to help West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority to interact more with the community, to increase awareness of fire safety by working with young people aged 13 to 17. The re-structured scheme has been reduced in length from 4 years to 40 weeks. The rationale is to enable more young people to participate in the scheme but over a shorter period of time and with more structure. The scheme was funded by the CDRPs and DAAT from 2003 to 2005. A large part of this funding funded an individual to oversee youth development work at 'West Sussex' level.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>West Sussex Fire Cadets was launched to enable the FRS to interact with the local community, and to engage socially excluded young people specifically. The scheme reinforces the FRS role in reducing anti-social behaviour, by ' using the fire service as a vehicle to do all the other things, like discipline, involvement with other people, team work, and personal development skills.' Setting up Fire Cadets was time consuming, and there were issues with young people joining the scheme at different ages.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>West Sussex Fire Cadets aims to improve the relationship between the FRS and the local community in particular young people, tackle anti-social behaviour and to transfer fire safety knowledge to young people, making the community a safer place to be. West Sussex FRS believes that Fire Cadets is part of the FRS role to provide a community service and encourage young people to work with the FRS. It is intended that the scheme be deployed across other districts across within West Sussex.</p> |
| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | <p>West Sussex Fire Cadets is co-ordinated at a strategic level by a Youth Initiatives and Schools Education Manager (YIM) employed by the FRS. This individual ensures that all Fire Cadets' procedures are standardised across each unit. A member of core staff co-ordinates each fire cadet unit by managing the resources and volunteers involved. Two effectiveness groups have been set up within FRS and will also review West Sussex Fire Cadets and how far it meets the objectives of the FRS. An informal planning and debrief session is held at the beginning and end of term respectively, to measure the effectiveness of the scheme.</p> |

| 'Fire Cadets' (West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | Fire Cadets is delivered by operational and non-operational volunteers. Operational staff lead on drills and other FRS activities, whilst non-operational staff assist with non-FRS activities. When setting up a new unit, recruitment takes place internally and externally. Operational personnel undergo a formal interview process before being able to take part in Fire Cadets. Training needs for instructors are identified on an individual basis, but instructors typically receive a range of training including child protection, health and safety, first aid, and substance use, to enable them to deal with any situation in a professional way. Performance of the staff participating in Fire Cadets is reviewed and fed back to them. |
| v. How are young people identified and referred? | Young people aged 13 to 17 who are able to undertake physical activities, are not involved in any other uniformed schemes and would benefit from being involved in Fire Cadets are targeted to take part in the scheme. The FRS aims to reflect diversity in its selection of young people by selecting a mix of males and females etc. The scheme is advertised in newspapers, via a website, and by word of mouth. There is an application and interview process which candidates must undergo to become part of Fire Cadets. Although not primarily referral based, strong links with the Youth Offending Teams has meant that some young people do get referred through this route. Other referrals are also made through other FRS schemes working more within schools like the Firebreak scheme. |
| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | Fire Cadets used to focus on FRS training, but now focuses more on personal development, communication, interaction and team building. Activities are selected on a weekly basis to develop these skills and include group discussions, first aid training, sailing, rock climbing, canoeing, charity events, timed search and rescue practice, computer software training and drills. When Fire Cadets first started, there used to be lots of classroom time, but now Fire Cadets visit other FRS sites as most cadets dislike classroom based activities. Delivering more physical activities as opposed to classroom based activities, has worked well because young people enjoy these. |

| 'Fire Cadets' (West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>The scheme is monitored and evaluated internally. A record sheet is completed after each session and a management team meets fortnightly to look at the future of the scheme. The scheme is affiliated to Youth Services, which also helps to benchmark its effectiveness 'externally'.</p> <p>Cadets complete evaluation sheets each term, which help to monitor the impact of the scheme. At the end of each cadet evening, an activity record is filled out for the whole group, and both the volunteers and cadets receive a de-brief. The impact of Fire Cadets is demonstrated in the increased self-esteem of the young people that have taken part. Following the scheme, young people felt motivated, self disciplined, confident, part of a team, better at communicating with people and had more fire safety knowledge. Parents also provide feedback on young people's behaviour. The scheme has impacted FRS culture, as there is more acceptance of the FRS role in being involved with young people. Fire-fighters involved in cadets find it rewarding.</p> <p>The success of the Bognor Regis and Worthing Fire Cadet branches means that the West Sussex FRS now intends to expand the scheme to cover other districts within the FRA, especially in areas where there is high demand.</p> |
| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – The young people prefer physical activities to classroom based activities, although the two approaches can be combined effectively. > <i>Message two</i> – Most young people are not necessarily interested in gaining a formal qualification, preferring a focus on personal development. > <i>Message three</i> – Committed advisors are important in making the scheme work. It is particularly important to have commitment from a person with an understanding of young peoples needs to complement the skills of FRS staff. |

| 'Young Fire-fighters Association' (Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| Brief description | |
| <p>The Young Fire-fighters Association (YFA) was developed in 1992 in response to the riots in Newcastle where fire-fighters were abused by young people. The scheme is delivered in partnership with Fire Services Youth Training Association and is core funded. The scheme runs for one evening on a weekly basis and offers young people opportunities in personal development, the chance to learn more about the FRS and the chance to gain a BTEC. The scheme is open to anyone aged 13 to 17.</p> | |
| Case study details | |
| i. How did the scheme originate? | <p>The YFA scheme was set up in response to riots in Newcastle in the early 1990s, where fire-fighters were assaulted by young people. It was felt that the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) needed to be more involved in the local community, to prevent this from happening in future. The Fire and Rescue Service Act (2004) consolidated this, by putting Community Fire Safety on a higher profile. The FRS encountered some initial barriers to establishing the scheme, including some difficulties in recruiting fire-fighters to take part. This issue was overcome by showcasing the scheme to Fire Brigade Union Chair, so that it could be promoted more widely through the union.</p> |
| ii. What does it aim to achieve? | <p>The purpose of the Young Fire-fighter Association (YFA) scheme is to engage young people aged 13 to 17 in a uniformed organisation run by the FRS. The scheme aims to provide a number of benefits for participants. These include: social and physical personal development; self discipline, social conscience, community awareness, leadership qualities, teamwork, life skills, and offer the opportunity for young people to try new things. The scheme further aims to keep the FRS in contact with young people, to maintain a good relationship with the local community.</p> |

| 'Young Fire-fighters Association' (Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| iii. How is the scheme planned and managed? | <p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer is responsible for the strategic management of the scheme. A Co-ordinator who is based in the community safety department manages the day-to-day running of the scheme. This individual oversees budgets, kit and administrative arrangements. Instructors (operational and non operational) deliver the actual scheme, and assess the BTEC that some young people undertake.</p> <p>The scheme operates on the basis of a clear ranking structure, which works upwards from the junior fire-fighters (young people) to the instructors. This is intended to instil structure and build a sense of responsibility and self discipline into the young people who attend. A Youth Issues Officer, recruited from a local YOT, was recently recruited to the scheme and will develop formal working policies, procedures and practices to role out through the Tyne and Wear FRA. The first task as part of this role is to review all the youth services delivered within the Authority, and pull these together into an overarching youth strategy.</p> |
| iv. Who delivers the scheme, and how are they supported? | <p>The scheme has operational and non-operational personnel, drawn mainly from the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). Arrangements differ between individual fire stations (scheme 'branches'). This includes some access to external funding. In one branch, for example, two FRS instructors are part funded through the New Deal for Communities, which also covers two extra volunteer instructors. The arrangement for other scheme staff is based on more ad hoc volunteering. A number of these volunteers were reported to have expressed an interest in taking up full time posts, although the scheme does not yet have the capacity for this. All personnel who are involved in the scheme complete an application form and undergo an interview. CRB checks are carried out as standard by the Co-ordinator.</p> |

| 'Young Fire-fighters Association' (Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority) | |
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| v. How are young people identified and referred? | The Young Fire-fighter Association is open to all young people aged 13 to 17 and welcomes diversity. Young people who are interested in taking part must go through an interview with two core instructors, and explain their reasons for wanting to join the scheme. Instructors recruit young people by visiting local schools, although a smaller number of young people have been successfully referred from other FRS schemes. This includes examples of young people who have joined via the local Phoenix scheme and the Princes Trust Team programme (for which Tyne and Wear FRS is delivery partner). |
| vi. What are the main activities delivered? | The main programme of activities centres on fire-fighter experience, including physical training such as hose running, ladder drills, first aid, and manual handling. The YFA scheme also offers recreational activities such as abseiling, camping and canoeing from time to time. Fundraising is undertaken for this purpose. There is also the chance to take part in charity events, and fundraising. Young people are supported to work towards BTEC accreditation if they express an interest. |
| vii. How is impact measured? | <p>The FRS obtains written and verbal feedback from young people on the scheme, with the aim of addressing any areas for development. The scheme is also monitored and assessed informally and anecdotally by instructors. The team is currently in the process of putting in place a more formal monitoring and evaluation system, to be devised by the Youth Issues Officer.</p> <p>A number of the branches of YFA keep in touch with young people following their participation, to track those who have been able to find employment or training. There are no standardised procedures for capturing longer term outcomes, however, and the approach differs at present. Most young people who have left the scheme reported improved social skills, and greater awareness of safety issues. Other benefits included self-discipline, motivation and confidence.</p> |
| vi. Key messages – 'what works?' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Message one</i> – Gaining support from the Chair of the Fire Brigade Union helped to promote the scheme to operational fire-fighters and raise its credibility. > <i>Message two</i> – Funding needs to be in place from the outset, to set in place the necessary infrastructure and equipment. |

ANNEX 3

Fire and Rescue Authorities responding to the survey

| Fire and Rescue Authorities responding to the survey | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Avon | Kent |
| Bedfordshire and Luton | Lancashire |
| Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes | Leicestershire |
| Cambridgeshire | Lincolnshire |
| Cleveland | Norfolk |
| Cornwall | Northumberland |
| County Durham & Darlington | Shropshire |
| Cumbria | Somerset |
| Devon (Princes Trust schemes only) | South Yorkshire |
| Dorset | Surrey |
| East Sussex | Tyne and Wear |
| Essex | Warwickshire |
| Greater London* | West Midlands |
| Greater Manchester | West Sussex |
| Hampshire | West Yorkshire |
| Hertfordshire | Wiltshire and Swindon |
| Humberside | |

**Participating London Boroughs were as follows:*

London Borough of Ealing

London Borough of Enfield

London Borough of Hackney

London Borough of Lambeth

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

ANNEX 4

Glossary of terms

| | |
|--------|--|
| ALI | Adult Learning Inspectorate |
| BME | Black Minority Ethnic |
| CDRP | Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership |
| CFS | Community Fire Safety |
| CPA | Comprehensive Performance Assessment |
| CRB | Criminal Records Bureau |
| DAAT | Drug and Alcohol Action Team |
| D of E | Duke of Edinburgh |
| ESF | European Social Fund |
| FRA | Fire and Rescue Authority |
| FRS | Fire and Rescue Service |
| FSSAPT | Fire Service Support Association for the Princes Trust |
| FSYTA | Fire Service Youth Support Association |
| HMFSI | Her Majesties Fire Service Inspectorate |
| IRMP | Integrated Risk Management Plan |
| LAA | Local Area Agreement |
| LEA | Local Education Authority |
| LIFE | Local Intervention and Fire Education |
| LSC | Learning and Skills Council |
| NEET | Not in Employment, Education or Training |
| NRF | Neighbourhood Renewal Fund |
| NSPCC | National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children |
| NVQ | National Vocational Qualification |
| OCN | Open College Network |
| ODPM | Office of the Deputy Prime Minister |
| OfSTED | Office for Standards in Education |
| PAYP | Positive Activities for Young People |
| PRU | Pupil Referral Unit |
| SEN | Special Educational Needs |
| VCS | Voluntary and Community Sector |
| YFA | Young Fire-fighter Association |
| YJB | Youth Justice Board (for England and Wales) |
| YOT | Youth Offending Team |