Training for rural community development activists in rural United Kingdom and Ireland

Gary Craig, James Derounian and Ruth Garbutt

2005

A REPORT FOR THE CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST
Training for rural community
development activists
in rural United Kingdom and Ireland

Gary Craig, James Derounian and Ruth Garbutt

2005

Gary Craig is Professor of Social Justice, University of Hull
James Derounian is Senior Lecturer in Community Development and
Local Governance at the University of Gloucestershire
Dr Ruth Garbutt is a freelance researcher associated with the Centre for
Research on Social Inclusion and Social Justice at the University of Hull

Contact address:
Professor Gary Craig
CASS
University of Hull
Hull
HU6 7RX
Email G.Craig@hull.ac.uk

A REPORT FOR THE CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of contents</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Evidence, findings and recommendations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Scope and method of research</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Overall findings from country by country reports and interviews</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Key points and discussion</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Conclusions and recommendations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Country by country reports</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Community Development Training in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 England</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Scotland</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Wales</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Ireland</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Northern Ireland</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex: Methodology and research tools</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

This study was carried out with limited resources in a short period of time. It could not have been completed without the support and help of a very large number of people and organisations which provided information in response to questionnaires, telephone interviews and requests for written material, often within a very short timeframe. We are very grateful to them all. We would particularly like to thank the following respondents.

Interviewees and email correspondents

David Allen (CHEX, Scotland); Joan Asby (Planed); Alan Barr (SCDC, Scotland); Ros Boase (Independent Researcher); Sian Brace (Caerphilly County Borough Council); Sandra Bushell; Anna Clarke (Rural Community Network NI); Lindsey Colbourne (LCAssociates); Gwennan Davies (WCVA); Peter Day (Community Foundation for NI); James Derouin (University of Gloucester, England); Michael Dower (ECOVAST); Russell Elliott; Lucy Evans (WCVA); Duncan Fuller (Participatory Geographies Working Group); Peter Gray (Gray-King and Gray Ltd); Jane Hart (Northumberland Rural Community Council, England); Tara Haughian (Sustainable NI); Paul Henderson (Freelance Consultant); Mike Holden (Global Action Plan, Cork); Nick Holliday (Commission for Rural Communities, The Countryside Agency, England); Rhidian Jones, Nick Mack (Rural Development Council NI); Martineau (Independent Researcher); Cormac McAleer (Community Foundation for NI); Jim Phelan (UCD); Eilis O’Regan (NUI Galway); Frank Rennie (University of Highlands and Islands, Scotland); Sally Shortall (Queens University Belfast); Noel Camm (Bootstrap, England); Lindsey Colborne and Jeff Bishop (InterAct Networks, England); Eve Chung (The Glass House, England); Jan Crawley (South West Foundation, England); Mike Dando (RTPI, England); John Grayson (Northern College, England); Andy Dorin (HICCAP, Scotland); Dr. Jill Hopkinson (Arthur Rank Centre, England); Jonathan Hyams (Shropshire Rural Community Council, England); Liz Islam (Hyndburn and Ribble Valley CVS, England); Sue Lelliott (Real Strategies, England); Robin Paterson (Moray Action for Communities (Scotland); Bev Parker (Cambridgeshire ACRE, England); Karen Parkinson (LCDP, England); Liz Richardson (Trafford Hall, England); Catherine Sills (The Community Skills Project, England); Ian Sinker (St. Martin’s College, Lancaster, England); Fiona Stirling (Community Learning and Development, Scotland); Louise Stone (Working Together Project, England); Linda Tock (Community Focus, England); Pauline Urwin (South Warwickshire PIE, England); David Warren-Holland (Groupwork Consultants, England)

The contents of this report however remain the responsibility of the authors and neither any of our respondents nor the Carnegie UK Trust should be taken as accepting responsibility for its contents. The authors, of course, were entirely dependent in many instances on information provided by correspondents and we have not had the opportunity to cross-check the claims made by respondents about particular forms of provision. Inclusion of details within this report should not be taken as any indication of endorsement by ourselves or by the Carnegie UK Trust.

The following abbreviations will be used through the text:

RCD: Rural Community Development
VCS: Voluntary and Community Sector
CVS: Council for Voluntary Service
RCC: Rural Community Council
CD: Community Development
Executive Summary

This report outlines a small-scale research project commissioned in 2005 by The Carnegie UK Trust as part of its scoping work for the Commission for Rural Community Development. The purpose of the research was to identify any current training in rural community development, or aspects of it, for volunteers/local activists in England, Ireland, N Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The research was set within the context of national trends around the provision of training and capacity building to support communities to help themselves so that their citizens may become more active and responsible. It was also within the context of a greater national focus on lifelong learning, increasing the capacity of communities to participate in local projects and the promotion of volunteering (see DETR and MAFF 2000: 146).

The research was carried out through a mapping exercise involving stakeholder dialogue (via e-mail), telephone interviews with key players and web and literature searches. Because of limitation of time and resources, we cannot claim that the coverage of this report is comprehensive: however we do believe that it is representative of key centres of training provision and modes of training to be able to inform the ongoing work of the Carnegie Commission. If readers are aware of further examples of training examples or inadvertent gaps, we would be pleased to hear from them to correct any inadvertent gaps.

The key findings from the country by country reports were:

The research found that there were specific formalised qualifications in rural community development available within higher and further education centres, which tended to focus on community development as a career, looking at issues and debates, and which had networking as an important element of the courses. Distance learning and blended learning (including innovative IT approaches) seemed to be a good way forward for rural community development and reduced the travel problems in rural areas.

There were also short capacity-building/skills-based courses delivered in rural areas by CVSs/ RCCs and other Voluntary and Community Sector agencies. These tended to be within certain skills-based subjects and were seen as an important element of capacity-building in the community. Environmental organisations, which had traditionally provided training around environmental/farming issues, were diversifying into providing short training courses around community development-based subjects. Some of these were accredited to OCN level 2 or 3.

Network-based learning was useful in relation to rural community development. It was seen as an important element of community development training, including the sharing of good practice. This was of particular relevance in rural areas since workers and activists/volunteers could experience physical or social isolation within their work.

More modest/non-accredited training for activists was also available and had an important role in capacity-building in local communities.

The research identified some examples of good practice, with organisations showing expertise in the following areas:

- Targeting community activists;
- courses around specifically rural community development;
- having creative styles of teaching and provision;
- providing accreditation for courses; and
- building a networking approach into the learning environment.
**The key points and discussion** looked at the following areas:

**i) Style of course**
Several training styles were commended, with combinations of IT methods being popular and successful, particularly in rural areas. It was suggested that training courses should be adapted to local circumstances rather than a standard course being provided for every context or worker/activist.

**ii) Rural community development training vs. general community development training**
A great deal of community development training existed but far less was specifically rural community development training. However, there was a recognition that most courses were open to, and had, participants from rural areas. The research showed that there was a place for both combined training and also specifically rural training.

**iii) Training ‘on the job’**
Not all relevant training was formalised in terms of a series of sessions or ‘classes’. ‘Learning by doing’ can operate informally, inducing the development of RCD skills and knowledge as a by-product of community activity. However, the research indicated that although on-the-job training had its place, structured training was important for community development workers in rural areas and therefore further courses should be developed.

**iv) Volunteer-to-volunteer training**
The research indicated that volunteer-to-volunteer ‘training’ was also useful in community development training and could complement more formal approaches. This was as opposed to something done to/with volunteers by a (paid) trainer.

**v) Priority for funding etc**
The research showed that, in general, training in rural areas was not seen as a high government priority and needed to be put further up the agenda. This also needed to be put in a context of promoting a wider learning culture in UK society and not just sited within government agendas and training agencies.

**vi) Problems with terminology?**
The research showed that the term, ‘rural community development training’, as with the use of the terms ‘community’ and ‘community development’ more generally, could be problematic but no alternatives were offered. The overall feeling was that words should be carefully used and jargon avoided.

**vii) Gaps in provision**
Gaps were identified as: patchy provision; lack of training specifically around Rural Community Development; lack of provision for community activists/volunteers; the provision of short courses and degree courses but not much in between; lack of accreditation for short courses; lack of funding/priority for government and other funding agencies; and lack of a coherent approach to RCD training

The conclusions of this study suggest that, although there was a reasonably large spread of training in community development, there were obvious gaps in terms of training not being related to rural community development and not specifically around activists and volunteers. Much more needs to be done in this area.
The recommendations, therefore were:

- Those responsible for training provision should be aware that provision of courses at the moment is patchy and they should aim to deliver and promote training in all geographical areas in a coherent programme.
- There should be increased provision in specifically rural community development training, as opposed to general community development training since there are some specific elements unique to community development in rural areas.
- Providers should encourage and promote the participation of activists and volunteers on community development courses. Courses should therefore be delivered in creative, well-thought out styles to cater for different abilities and backgrounds. Again, examples of good practice from this research could be used as a model.
- Providers should offer a full range of courses in terms of level, from short local courses up to degree and postgraduate degree courses, and including the different levels in between, to accommodate the needs of all learners.
- Providers and those responsible for accreditation should make sure that courses are accredited to improve standards and professionalism within community development more generally as a career.
- The government departments involved (especially DfES and DEFRA in the UK and The Irish Department of Rural Affairs) should adopt a more coherent/strategic approach to rural community development training, using the examples of good practice indicated in this research as models on which to build.
- ‘a style of teaching using IT in combination with other methods seemed to be successful’ in rural areas. Where this encouraged group-working, the teaching boosted communication skills and reinforced ‘the importance of citizen participation’. The use of video and audio-conferencing is therefore recommended.
- There is also an argument for ‘community-proofing the organisations that groups are dealing with. There is no point in having those able people out there, for example, community activists, if the organisations they are having to deal with are not community-proofed to work with and respond’ to them. RCD training must therefore ‘fit’ with agency activities, approaches and policies.
Section 1: Evidence, findings and recommendations

1.1 Scope and method of the research

The Carnegie UK Trust commissioned a small-scale action research project in 2005 to inform the ongoing work of the Carnegie Commission on Rural Community Development. The brief was to:

- Identify any current training in rural community development (or aspects of it e.g. ‘leadership’ skills; making grant applications; report writing; project evaluation etc.) for volunteers/local activists (in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)

The focus was on rural community development training for volunteers/local activists (across the Carnegie Commission’s territories of interest), rather than formal training for those who were, or intend to become, professional workers. The coverage included one-off sessions, more formalised/extensive training, plus further and higher educational provision.

The research was conducted through stakeholder dialogue (via e-mail); telephone interviews with key players; web and other literature search. The web searches were undertaken by visiting websites of key organisations and by sending e-mails through relevant networking lists.

Section 1 of this report outlines the context to the research, the key findings from the mapping exercise and interview data, and finishes with conclusions and recommendations for future action. Section 2 lists the ‘country by country reports’, covering England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Northern Ireland. This list outlines the provision of training, for each course found, and further contextual details. Within the scope of the research, a comprehensive search of courses was attempted. However, it is recognised that it was not possible to access information about every available course in the country through this method. The results therefore may not be completely comprehensive, but the researchers are confident that they give a representative account of the overall picture.

Finally, there is a separate Annex at the end of the report giving further information on the methodology used in the study.

NB: Throughout the report, interview quotes will be denoted in italics (and are anonymised where necessary). This will distinguish them from quotes from other sources.

1.2 Introduction

1.2.1 Background and Policy Landscape

The present study attempted to identify current training in rural community development (or aspects of it) for volunteers and local activists in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It is important to set this research within the present context of policy and current thinking. Training is widely accepted as fundamental to community and individual empowerment and capacity-building. In the English context, the Government’s Rural White Paper (Our countryside: the future, DETR and MAFF 2000: 145) recognised that communities could play a much bigger part in running their own affairs, influencing and shaping their future development but they often lack opportunities, and support.
In particular the UK Government undertook to

help rural communities train and attract volunteers to support local projects.

Robert Chambers (in Warburton 1998: 121) argued that what people are capable of doing could be enhanced

through learning, practice, training and education.

Such support for training in pursuit of rural community development has found practical expression in programmes at the European and national levels. The EU LEADER (Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l’Economie Rurale) initiatives for example have, since 1991, supported vocational training to

...develop the skills of local people and so enable them to participate more fully in the local economy and socio-cultural life. (Ray 1996: 156)

Similarly, at a national governmental level, the English Countryside Agency has implicitly supported training via grant schemes like the recent Vital Villages programme that provided

...support to enable each village to make its own decisions and to implement some of the improvements needed locally. (Countryside Agency 2001: inside cover)

Furthermore Moseley (1999:6) identified a key role for training in fuelling innovation in rural development, via ...targeted training and education programmes... and in a manual on Mobilizing Local Communities (1994) in Sweden, the academic Alf Ronnyb contends (1994: 147) that

...the development of human resources is possibly the most important condition for local economic development’

A UK national pilot project encouraging Doing by Learning (Scott et al. 1989: 94) concluded:

...the combination of adult education and rural community development can be an attractive and effective catalyst to local community action.

1.2.2 Definition of RCD training

The Community Development Foundation defines community development as,

... any practice which results in the development of communities or community activity. It is also a specialist occupation with a considerable history, well-developed values and the flexibility to continually evolve in response to new challenges ... the purpose of community development is to help groups and networks of people to take joint action on matters that concern them for the public good ... (www.cdf.org.uk )

1 A much longer definition was constructed by delegates from more than thirty countries meeting in Budapest in 2004 at the annual conference of the International Association for Community Development. This Budapest Declaration on community development is available at www.iacdglobal.org and has been adopted by the Carnegie Commission itself.
The research undertaken in this project was seeking to establish the availability of training resources in specifically rural community development as opposed to community development in general. Thus, for the purposes of this research, and keeping in mind the Community Development Foundation’s definition, ‘Rural community development training’ was defined as,

... assistance with the development of knowledge and skills sensitive, and practically useful, to the progress and health of rural communities. (Derounian 2005)

Within the research, it was important to clarify that participants had an understanding of this term. The interviewees, therefore were asked:

What do you understand by ‘rural community development training for volunteers/ activists’?

The following are some of the replies

_A whole range of practical skills on the one hand, and also with grass roots community development workers, it gives them an opportunity to stand back and look at the wider picture ... Wider appreciation of where it slots into in terms of theory._ (Academic training provider, Scotland)

_Community Development is about empowering individuals to shape their futures and take action. So the training is about enabling those community activists to spread their net further, with like-minded individuals, equipping them with skills, knowledge, competence etc._ (Statutory training provider)

_As far as our rural community council is concerned, we would describe it as capacity-building. Groups come to us because they want money for funding but often they want help to improve their skills and knowledge to make a good case for applying for funding. They may not be constituted and need organising, they may not have skills and knowledge to carry out a project. We need to ensure they develop their skills._ (VCS training provider)

...defined mainly in terms of setting up courses and workshops to help develop skills - either for activists or workers. There may be differences between what activists need and practitioners need. You need a distinction, but roles change over time. Local activists are often looking for more practical training on the whole. Paid workers are looking to further their career.’ (Independent Consultant with considerable experience of rural training)

These comments show that participants emphasised the capacity-building/networking element of community development. They saw training in community development as a way of assisting workers to reflect on wider issues and to build up their skills. In this way, therefore, their responses reflect the elements found in the definitions from the Community Development Foundation and Derounian (2005).

Community development emphasises

... the importance of improvisation, adaptation, flexibility and learning analogous to jazz improvisation, involving the ability to think about an issue in a new light and to play
with ideas, to ‘make room’ for dialogue and participation with others. (Ellis et al. 2004: 49-50).

Clarke (2005) agrees with this emphasis on

... learning rather than training...training in a loose sense...that is fun.

The overall findings from the interview data will be discussed in a later section of this report, including discussions around the nature, and importance, of rural community development in contrast to general community development.

1.3 Overall findings from country by country reports/ interviews

The following discussion describes some of the overall findings that arose as a result of the country-by-country reports. It will look specifically at what types of provision were found, followed by a section on examples of good practice. Finally some key points from the research will be discussed. A separate section will outline the conclusions of the research and some recommendations.

1.3.1 Summary of provision

According to Denman et al. (1989: 93), Community Development Courses requires a complementary mix of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Education</th>
<th>Community Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Familiar approach (non-threatening?)</td>
<td>• Unfamiliar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time-limited</td>
<td>• Open-ended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information-based</td>
<td>• Action-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Personal focus</td>
<td>• Community focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Series of sessions accepted</td>
<td>• Need ‘excuse’ for visits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of the country-by-country investigations, it was found that there was a considerable array of RCD training opportunities that included some of the above elements – from informal ‘one-off’ events right the way through to formal further and higher education qualifications.

The following are some of the key points that summarise the type of training available specifically related to rural community development:

1.3.2 Formal qualifications

The research found that there were specific qualifications available in rural community development, such as:

• the Tipperary Institute’s (Ireland) National Diploma in Rural Development and Certificate in Community Development;

• University of Newcastle upon Tyne (England), MSc in Rural Development and Resource Management;
- **Lews Castle College (Scotland)**, HNC Working with Communities, with a progression route to BSc Rural Development Studies or BA Social Science degree;
- **University of Highlands and Islands (Scotland)**, BSc (Hons) in Rural Development Studies, MSc in Managing Sustainable Rural Development and lower level academic courses/modules relevant to rural community development.

These formalised courses tended to be structured around Community Development as a career, looking at issues and debates. There was also an emphasis on networking as an important element of the courses.

There were a number of undergraduate and post-graduate degrees in subjects related to community development, but not specifically to rural community development. Some of these were part-time/distance learning. They mainly focused on training practitioners for a career in community development, but were also open to students without formal qualifications. There was a recognition that these courses often filled a gap in training i.e. practitioners had been trained in other skill or policy areas and found themselves needing to use community development approaches. Students came from different sectors, eg. VCS and public sector and different geographical contexts (viz. rural and urban). Many courses were tailored/adapted to the needs of the local community. Within the more formalised courses, opportunities existed to work on/write about local issues/problems as part of assignments and therefore even if a community development course was not targeted at rural community development, opportunities existed for students to direct their assessments to rural community development. Distance learning/blended learning seemed to be a good way forward for rural community development and reduced the travel problems in rural areas.

1.3.3 Short skills-based training

There were short capacity-building/skills-based courses delivered in rural areas by CVSs/RCCs and other Voluntary and Community sector agencies. These tended to be within certain skills-based, standard subjects and were seen as an important element of capacity-building in the community eg. First Aid, Health and Safety, working with volunteers, management committees, running a group, dealing with conflict etc. Some examples included

- **Suffolk ACRE Ltd (England)** which deliver an OCN certificated course on Community Development;
- **Cambridgeshire ACRE (England)** which offer an OCN accredited course in Community Development which is open to practitioners, activists, people considering going into community development work and who would mainly come from rural areas;
- **Highland Community Planning and Resources Project (Scotland)** which provide training in various aspects of community planning, community involvement and community development in the Highlands of Scotland.

These short, skilled-based training courses tended to be for people in rural areas, rather than for people training to work as rural community development workers and they did not address wider community development issues or debates. It is uncertain, however, how much networking and/or transferred learning there was between the RCCs and CVSs. This is a wider issue: it is certainly the case that, as
many respondents told us, ‘rural is different’\textsuperscript{2}, yet there are substantial commonalities in terms of training needs which would argue for better exchange of information between rural (especially peri-urban) and urban workers and activists.

Environmental organisations, which had traditionally provided training around environmental/farming issues, were diversifying into providing short training courses around community development-based subjects. They saw it as an important training need in rural areas. Examples of these are:

- \textit{Environmental Trainers Network (ETN (England)}, which run national training events, including courses around working with communities;
- \textit{Losehill- the Peak District National Park Study Centre (England)} which provides short courses in mainly environmental subjects, but also includes subjects related to community development. One interviewee in the research stated,

\textit{There is so much change in rural areas so you really have to think about what training was provided 25 yrs ago. It would have been mainly agricultural or environmental projects and maybe some training in how to run groups etc. but now other training is needed e.g. using computers, accessing web, and using online, internet radio stations etc. People need to be skilled in those things as well. That is a thing for the near future. (Academic training provider, Scotland)}\textsuperscript{3}

\subsection*{1.3.4 Network-based training}

The research also showed that network-based learning was useful in relation to rural community development. Examples of this include:

- \textit{The Countryside Agency (England)}, a statutory body, had set up ‘Learning networks’ for specific interest groups related to rural issues and
- \textit{Devon Race Equality Council (England)} had proposed the creation of rural peer support networks.

There were also many community development agencies (too many to list) which supported community development and signposted people to training providers or delivered training themselves. For many, community development training or working with rural areas was not a big part of their remit. This sharing of ideas and issues was commented on by an interviewee.

\textit{The only other thing to mention is that one of the things that [our local Network] is looking at is introducing action learning sets. It is bringing together people in an organisation and helping them to bring forward to the group issues and problems they have in their daily work and using that group}

\textsuperscript{2}We do not get into the debate about the meaning of rurality here although there is a substantial literature on the subject. Clearly there is a difference between rural (peri-urban) contexts and deeply rural or remote contexts for community development work. The difference between these two aspects of rurality is increasingly recognised in policy-making.

\textsuperscript{3}Interestingly, there is now substantial experience outside the British Isles of community organisations using IT to support community development work. The International Association for Community development has published two collections of case studies of this work from around the world. See www.iacdglobal.org
to solve their problems ... In some ways action learning sets are linked in with the mentoring idea. Mentoring is one-to-one, this is with groups. (VCS training provider)

In this way, therefore, networking was seen as an important element of community development training. The research indicated that this was of particular relevance in rural areas since workers and activists/volunteers could experience substantial geographical and/or social isolation within their work.

1.3.5 Non-accredited training

It was also found that more modest/non-accredited training for activists was available. Examples of this included:

- **The Rural Community Network (Northern Ireland)** which provided a ‘Building Community Development’ Practice programme of six sessions in rural community development;
- **Real Strategies (England)**, which delivered a model of neighbourhood work involving designing and conducting participative neighbourhood research, in rural areas;
- **The Plunkett Foundation (England)**, which provided specialist consultancy and training services to rural group enterprises;
- **Rural Youth Network, (England)** which brought together people working with young people as well as people working in rural community development and delivers training;
- **Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum (England)**, which provided Community Development Training for isolated rural women through their Amethyst Project;
- **Northern College (England)** which has the biggest residential training programme for community activists and voluntary sector activists in England, and which worked in the coalfield areas as part of their work in a rural context (however, their training attracted more urban activists than rural activists);
- **Teesdale Village Halls Consortium(England)** which provided short courses related to improving the effectiveness of Village Halls and community organisations; and
- **The Arthur Rank Centre (England)** which provided training for those new to working in ministry for the churches in rural areas.

Although the present study indicated that non-accredited courses had an important role in capacity-building in local communities, one interviewee in the research felt that some kind of national standard would be useful in community development training:

> I was heavily involved in the introduction of qualifications for parish clerks across England. I think there are similar parallels here. I think there should be a national standard with somebody awarding it, some sort of accreditation, and delivered locally.... (Statutory training provider)

1.3.6 Summary of stereotypical provision

On the basis of this research, the following summarises the main elements of provision found for the different providers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of provider</th>
<th>Type of provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CVS/RCC/other small agencies</td>
<td>• Short courses (1/2 day; 1 day; 2 days) usually skills-based, and capacity-building in the local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Generic subjects eg. First Aid, Health and Safety, working with volunteers, management committees, running a group, dealing with conflict etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sometimes OCN accredited at level 2 or 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Don’t address wider issues or debates around the role of community development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Either based in rural areas or open to people from rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some environmental organisations are now running short skills-based courses in relation to community development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities/other higher/further education institutions</td>
<td>• Undergraduate degree level and post-graduate degrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Longer courses, more formalised, based on wider picture, theoretical models, usually as part of a recognised degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Many part-time courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encouragement of open access/mature students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Many courses using internet/ distance learning/other IT styles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Based more around training practitioners but usually open to activists/volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not many courses specifically relating to rural community development but most courses related to people working in a rural area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Emphasis on networking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students used local issues in assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other agencies</td>
<td>• Other agencies provided network-based training/ non-accredited training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Network-based training was seen as an important element of rural community development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some non-accredited training was specifically related to rural community development and not just general community development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.7 Examples of best practice/good practice

Using the definition of community development by the Community Development Foundation, and the definition of rural community development also given at the beginning of this Section, a number of examples of best practice were identified. The following discussion highlights these examples under the section heading below:

- Targets community activists
- Specifically rural
- Creative style of teaching/ Part-time provision/flexible delivery
- Accreditation/standards
Networking approach

Targets community activists

The research found a large number of courses on aspects of Community Development (though only a few on Rural Community Development). Quite often these were targeted at people working in the field of Community Development. Since the research was specifically interested in finding out about training for activists/volunteers rather than workers, it is important to highlight those organisations which targeted/encouraged such groups. The following are some examples of good practice in this area:

- **NUI Galway (Ireland)** delivered a part-time Certificate/Diploma in Community Development Practice, designed for activists to gain a thorough understanding of community development combined with the practical skills to work effectively. Their course brochure states that:

  The Community Development Practice programmes are suitable for participants who are actively involved in community development work and who wish to obtain a formal qualification.

- **Northern College (England)** has

  ...the biggest residential training programme for community activists, and voluntary sector activists in England.’ (Grayson, J., 2005, personal communication)

  The coalfield areas have always been a major focus of their work in a rural context and they have agreements with local Authorities (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Wakefield, Leeds) to provide free residential courses to community groups and activists on organising, campaigning, fundraising, training, etc, from the villages in the peri-urban areas.

  Their mainstream programmes attract a large number of rural activists, but the training does draw in more urban than rural activists.

- **The Highland Community Planning and Resources Project (Scotland)** provide Highland Wellbeing Alliance Masterclasses’ in various aspects of community planning, community involvement and community development. The programme runs 60 short courses (eg. an evening or a day) across Ross and Cromarty areas. The courses are free and for people with no previous knowledge. Delivery involves discussion and informal teaching methods. They are specifically targeted at ‘community groups and budding activists’.

- **The University of Highlands and Island (Scotland)** delivers a number of undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses. There are also modules on other courses (all on-line) relevant to rural community development. A training provider involved in these programmes stated:

  *We have taken a lot of people who have begun as volunteers, wanted to get more involved, got a few certificates and then graduated to higher courses ...it*
is not necessarily geared towards volunteers but we get a lot of volunteers ...it is very flexible...’

They use mainly on-line/telephone/distance learning styles of delivery.

- **The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) (Scotland)** is the designated National Development Centre for community development in Scotland and is a partnership between the Community Development Foundation and the University of Glasgow. It works with communities, agencies/partnerships and policy. They provide programmes/courses offering a range of learning opportunities and support services to enable practitioners and community members make a greater impact on their communities. A training provider involved in this agency suggested that involving community representatives or activists was an important part of their work:

  *In the past we reserved one-third of places on training for community reps. This is really important.... In Scotland there is a commitment to seeing community reps as partners in training and learning. But training is not targeted mainly at community reps ... some programmes recruit people who have experience of community development but no academic background. It involves placements and some work on the job.*

- **The University of Gloucestershire (England)** provides various certificate, diploma and degree courses and modules in community development and rural community development that encourage community activists. A training provider involved in these programmes explained how students could start from the stage of trying out a module and then progress to higher qualifications:

  *You could, as a community activist, take one or two modules and try it out and then take further courses to get a certificate.*

- **Trafford Hall (National Tenants Resource Centre) (England)** delivers training in many topics, including: fundraising, project monitoring, group work, negotiation skills, celebrating diversity, setting up a community café, community involvement in urban design, involvement in housing, management issues, tackling anti-social behaviour, working with young people etc. The training is for all community volunteers, not just tenants. Courses are open to people from both rural and urban areas.

  *...in reality we found that groups were coming to Trafford Hall from as far away as Cornwall, and from Lincolnshire and Chichester, precisely because there wasn’t any training provision [locally].’ (Richardson, L., 2005, personal communication)*

These examples show that some agencies are successful in targeting community activists/volunteers. However, these were the exception and the large majority of agencies focused on training practitioners and community development staff.

**Specifically rural**
Although there were many courses in Community Development, few courses were found specifically around Rural Community Development. It is therefore important to highlight some models of good practice in this area. The following are examples of specifically RCD training:

- **University of Wales, Lampeter’s MA in Rural Community Re-generation** is an integrated programme of study relevant to vocational opportunities in the area of Community Regeneration in rural areas... especially in relation to economic development (www.lamp.ac.uk)

- **Real Strategies, (England)** is a development agency which has developed participatory work in rural areas:

  Over the past five years we have developed a model of neighbourhood work that we have delivered in rural areas. It is about getting residents involved in designing and conducting participative neighbourhood research....We have developed this with social landlords who have then taken on board the participative style of engaging rural communities. (Lelliott, S., 2005, Personal communication)

- **The Rural Community Network (RCN) (Northern Ireland)** has been running a programme of rural community development training since 2001 across Northern Ireland. They state that:

  ...the programme is targeted at local community group members and those within rural communities interested in becoming involved in community activity. (Clarke,A. 2005 personal communication)

  The programme is run
  ...
in each rural community, preferably within community venues at times and dates to suit the participants

  RCN offers financial assistance to provide travel, childcare and carer costs.

- **The University of Highlands and Islands (Scotland)** could be seen as a model of good practice in relation to specifically rural community development training. It covers a large rural and remote area and its degree courses and modules were designed specifically with students from a rural area in mind.

- **The University of Gloucestershire (England)** highlights its Local Policy degree and related awards course which

  ... primarily picks up parish clerks and some parish councillors ... majority have been from a rural background, though we do pick up some town clerks...

  (Academic training provider, England)

The number of courses focusing specifically on rural community development training was therefore quite limited. Many providers indicated that their courses were adaptable to a focus on rural community development and people from rural areas would attend the courses but few organisations held statistics on this and there was
little evidence of substantial involvement of rural activists. Providers also commented that assignments for course work were often about local issues and problems so that students from rural areas undertook work about rural issues. Within the section on ‘Key points and discussion’ (1.4 below) the debate around whether specifically rural community development training is needed is discussed in greater detail. The discussion suggests that there was a place for both combined training as well as specifically rural training.

Creative style of teaching/ Part-time provision/ flexible learning

Within the research, it became apparent that the use of technology and on-line resources greatly reduced the barriers found in rural, and especially remote, areas in relation to transport and distance between communities. The provision of part-time and flexible learning was seen as important, particularly for adult learners. Therefore, within the following examples of good practice, organisations that were creative in their approach to the learning experience are highlighted.

- **Connecting Communities Cymru, (Wales)** is a collaboration between the Department of Adult Continuing Education at the University of Wales Swansea and twelve community partners. It claims to deliver high quality ICT-based learning to some of the most deprived communities in South Wales...

  Its aim is to provide an online learning experience that is flexible, supportive, interesting and meaningful to people’s lives, where new technologies, such as videoconference and a virtual learning environment, are used to supplement face-to-face learning; learning that supports both personal and community development and raises people’s aspirations of what they can achieve.” ([http://aehindnt.swansea.ac.uk](http://aehindnt.swansea.ac.uk))

- **The University of Highlands and Islands, (Scotland)** specialises in distributed learning, which means that … the resources are on-line e.g. Lecture notes, handouts, and we put the context on-line. We also put reading materials on-line. We also have e-mail, interactive material, and conferencing on-line. We do telephone tuition, and video conferencing ….We don’t have formal lecturing on these particular courses …We use instant messaging and other technology….I don’t lecture to anybody now except when it is a guest lecture …This system works well, particularly with mature students and people in work. They cannot physically come to a university. I think it is the way forward for us because we have such a wide area to cover. Most people have computers in home or work. If they haven’t, we have over a 100 learning centres that they can access. E.g. IT room, video conference, small library. These are on different islands. (Academic training provider, Scotland)

- **The University of Gloucestershire (England)** used a ‘blended learning’ approach including internet and distance learning.
...style of delivery [of Local Policy and Community Development courses] mainly by distance learning, referred to as blended learning, a combination of course books, e-mail support, residential schools twice a year, local tutors scattered around, telephone support and tutorials and face to face if people want, an internet (Web CT). I think it works and is the best way of doing it... I think the blended aspect is critical, offering different ways of learning and training...I think it is also critical that you have some sort of human contact face-to-face.. (Academic training provider, England)

The point was also made by the interviewees that training courses should be adapted to local situations rather than providing a standard course for everyone. As indicated in the previous sub-section, it would probably be appropriate to adapt the style of course/teaching for rural and especially remote areas i.e. more distance learning/use of internet and IT resources to address the barriers of travelling distances.

Accreditation/standards

The research found that there were many courses in Community Development. It has been indicated that a great deal of short courses were put on by CVSs, RCCs and other community development agencies. A large number of these were skills-based and focused on capacity-building subjects. Some of these were accredited but a great deal were not. It was suggested that when courses are accredited, this can raise standards and give community development a more professional image. One interviewee in this study, for example, felt that ‘on the job’ training was not enough and that qualifications improved standards:

I think community participation is a profession. There are skills and competencies required to do that, so learning as a by-product isn’t quite enough. So qualifications are good - trying to improve things and obtain standards - how to engage with community and reach various parts. (Statutory training provider)

It is therefore useful to highlight a couple of those courses identified that were accredited.

- Cambridgeshire ACRE (England) had made a point of accrediting their training:

Cambridgeshire ACRE offers an accredited course in Community Development which is open to practitioners, activists, people considering going into community development work. It is based around the FCDL National standards for community development learning (although it does not fall within the new qualifications framework) and is accredited at level 3 by NOCN. (Parker, B., 2005, personal communication)

- Adept, (community development agency, England) delivered an accredited course, WICO (Working in Community Organisations), which was

...a comprehensive package of skills for people working in community organisations whether as leaders or advisers; and it is based on detailed and up-to-date expertise in community development and capacity building...It can be offered anywhere from OCN level 1, which is accessible to people with little or no relevant background, to a Coventry University Certificate (30 units at CATS level 1), where it is useful to people in relevant
paid employment who want to add to their abilities...we are currently working to extend it to University Diploma level, which will require not only added length but also higher levels, and hope to offer that from Autumn, 2005 (www.adept.org.uk)

The courses were both for people who are active in their own community and for professionally-employed people in the public, voluntary or community sector.

However, accreditation of short courses was the exception. Naturally, some courses were at undergraduate/postgraduate degree level and were accredited through standard higher qualifications, but most of the shorter, more local courses were not accredited. Although the research indicated that non-accredited courses had an important role in capacity-building in local communities, one interviewee in the research felt that some kind of national standard would be useful in community development training:

*I was heavily involved in the introduction of qualifications for parish clerks across England. I think there are similar parallels here. I think there should be a national standard with somebody awarding it, some sort of accreditation, and delivered locally....* (Statutory training provider)

**Networking approach**

Since the Community Development Foundation defined community development as concerned with building and strengthening networks, we also identified courses where this appeared to be a significant part of course content.

- **InterAct Networks (England)** is a Partnership of 4 experienced trainers and facilitators. It has established facilitator networks and facilitation training ‘for mixed groups which include volunteers’ (Colbourne, 2005 personal communication). Foundation and further training is offered, so that participants can

  ...
develop genuinely usable skills and experience and...learn and then practice together in a way that ensures they are able to apply their learning and make real progress in their skills development. (Ibid.)

- **Community Agents for Change in the Valleys (Wales)** is working towards

  ...
skill training and good practice sharing across the South Wales Valleys for existing and new community groups.

  They offer free Network Training Days on topics such as ‘making groups work’. Plus ‘exchange of practice visits’ e.g. to Scottish/English coalfield regeneration projects.

- The **Community Development Foundation (England)** is a national organisation with a variety of roles including advising the UK Government, supporting networks and undertaking research.
• The Community Development Exchange (CDX), (England) is a national membership network organisation for those involved in community development. Their website states that:

CDX acts as a catalyst for change by sharing information, experience and practice through a variety of means. (www.cdx.org.uk)

CDX supports networks of community development workers around the UK, including regional, sub-regional and specialist networks.

• The Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL) (England) supports,

...the development of communities through advancing and promoting community development learning at local, regional and national levels and creating relevant opportunities for good quality training and qualifications. (www.fcdl.org.uk)

Special interest groups within the Federation meet to share good practice, although there does not appear to be a specific focus on rural community development.

One interviewee suggested that the networking element and the use of technology went hand in hand and were particularly important in relation to rural community development training:

\[
\text{Networking is important. This is why online discussion groups and networking is important...} \quad (\text{Academic training provider, Scotland})
\]

Networking is one way of increasing capacity, sharing ideas and learning about community development issues. In many courses it was seen as a key element of Community Development training.

The examples of good practice highlighted in these sub-sections, therefore, show that there were some innovative ways of working, based on the aims and values of Community Development, with a number of organisations specifically focused on Rural community development training and some on training for activists/volunteers.

The following section outlines some of the issues arising from the research, and draws in further information from the interview data.

1.4 Key Points and Discussion

The following is a discussion of some of the key points that arose from the mapping exercise and the telephone interviews. The areas for discussion are:

• Style of teaching;
• Rural community development training vs. general community development training;
• Training ‘on the job’;
Volunteer-to-volunteer training;  
Priority for funding rural community development amongst funding agencies;  
Problems with terminology; and  
Gaps and barriers.

1.4.1 Style of teaching

The interviewees in the research were asked about the style of training used in their respective institutions/agencies. Several training styles were advocated, with on-line facilities being popular e.g.:

We are still looking at what kind of delivery is most suitable in rural areas. We are looking at whether on line resources would be useful. I think the essence of this course is for people to be together so I think that is important rather than people being stuck on the end of a computer, but we could put some resources on line over and above the group work. We are exploring this. I am not sure about it. I think for this course a huge part of it is the experience and what the individual brings to it. We could have things on line that enhances that .... (Community development and health training provider)

In [our academic institution] we specialise in distributed learning, which means that in an on-line course, the resources are on-line e.g. Lecture notes, handouts, and we put the context on-line. We also put reading materials on line. We also have e-mail, interactive material, and conferencing on-line. We do telephone tuition, and video conferencing....We don’t have formal lecturing on these particular courses...We use instant messaging and other technology ... I don’t lecture to anybody now except when it is a guest lecture ...This system works well, particularly with mature students and people in work. They cannot physically come to a university. I think it is the way forward for us because we have such a wide area to cover. Most people have computers in home or work. If they haven’t we have over a 100 learning centres that they can access. E.g. IT room, video conference, small library. These are on different islands. (Academic training provider, Scotland)

Distance learning should be in there. Through my work with getting parish councillors qualified, distance learning has been a great asset, but the distance learning means it can be slower in uptake. If you wanted to move something in place quickly, you might want to do something that takes training to the community, e.g. Make it as easy as possible for people to participate. ICT is good for certain people but not everyone. Have it in the toolkit, but don’t rely on it. I also like peer mentoring/peer review - I would prioritise that more than ICT. E.g. Learning on the job.’ (Statutory training provider)

4-5 yrs ago we started using the internet and people didn’t want it because they didn’t have access to a computer and internet, but now we have no students who don’t have access. (Academic training provider, England)

...style of delivery [of Local Policy course and Community Development course] mainly by distance learning, referred to as blended learning, a combination of course books, e-mail support, residential schools twice a year, local tutors scattered around, telephone support and tutorials and face-to-face
if people want, an internet (Web CT). I think it works and is the best way of doing it … I think the blended aspect is critical, offering different ways of learning and training … I think it is also critical that you have some sort of human contact face-to-face…’ (Academic training provider, England)

This shows that a style of teaching using IT in combination with other methods seemed to be successful, particularly in rural areas.

Probably the biggest problem is getting people, for example volunteers and community activists, from A to B to look at what other people are doing. Getting people around the countryside can be restricted. People are working on projects thinking they are the only ones doing it, but then find someone else 50 miles down the road is also doing it and they didn’t realise. Networking is important. This is why online discussion groups and networking is important… (Academic training provider, Scotland)

The point was also made that training courses should be adapted to local situations rather than a standard course for everyone:

How you deliver in Cornwall might be different in Cumbria. There needs to be different ways. The key is local delivery, each locality to make its own choices. (Statutory training provider)

You need to tailor the training to where people are geographically and to what they are doing in their locality, so they can draw on what they are doing for academic credit and see their training informing their practice. (Academic training provider, England)

One organisation showed how community development training increased the skills and capacity of the individuals to such an extent that they were able to be active in delivering courses themselves:

We also bring back our graduates into our teaching, strongly – e.g. They would become a local tutor - so they have been through courses themselves. We draw them in for guest lectures. (Academic training provider, England)

The interview data shows that it was important that courses were designed with the needs of the students in mind. This is reiterated by Johnstone et al. (1990:124):

Too much in the past has been run to suit the providers, with insufficient attention paid to market research and considering innovative ways of organising training to fit better the needs of trainees, in terms of…the timing, content and venues of courses. It is also important to demonstrate that training will lead somewhere: to a better job, or higher-level training.

Fitzduff (cited in Henderson and Francis 1993: 40) emphasises the importance of starting “where people are at”, working within the local cultural tradition…’ The power of ‘local history’ as a base for RCD should be recognised and exploited to the full. As Fitzduff (1993: 2) observes in the Northern Ireland context community development can start with
...an exploration and evaluation of people's own experience in their own place...there was an obvious power generated from hearing the expression of shared experiences and knowledge acquired over a lifetime...

The crux of the matter is to mobilise

...the local population and cultivate an understanding of the past and present as a prelude to the gradual implementation of a viable future. (Moseley 2003: 204)

This links on to the need for training to be attuned and sensitive to local cultures e.g. sectarian issues in Northern Ireland (Haughian, T., 2005, personal communication). Efforts should therefore be made to improve the RCD ‘dimensions of non-specialist training courses’ rather than ‘attempting to promote specialist courses.’ (Barr 1991: 172). This could link in England, for example, to the Commission for Rural Communities’ emphasis on ‘rural proofing’ as well as to electronic learning networks such as Ruralnet and the UK network of participatory practitioners.

Denman et al., (1989: 92) emphasise the importance of

individual pre-course interviews to ensure that the format is suited to prospective students.

and

‘open courses’...whose success largely depends upon a wide recruitment from throughout a community'.

Furthermore it is essential that the trainer

travels to the project promoter and not vice versa. (Moseley 2003: 192)

Providing accessible information about training is deemed important: for example via community newsletters or websites and local radio. There are also apparent benefits from ‘hand-holding’ in certain circumstances:

Many French training agencies offer what they call ‘accompagnement’ – ‘training’ viewed not as ‘sending people off on a course’ but as working alongside groups of individuals as they grapple with introducing something new...” (Ibid. : 39,190).

Training thereby ‘becomes a core tool in the implementation of a development programme’. Such ‘handholding “ensures the provision of wide-ranging support and not just “training” in a narrow sense’. (Ibid: 191). The mission is not ‘to train’ as such but to ‘engineer solutions’ – to be the interface between problems and needs arising from the development process, and responses based on skills and competence. Our approach to training and learning is tailor-made ‘action training' for a particular project. (Froment interview cited in Moseley, 2003: 192)

Rural community development (training) is, ultimately, then about ‘enabling local people to define, articulate and resolve issues of concern to them’. (Barr 1991: 24).

The Rural Community Network (Northern Ireland) manages a Rural Community Estates Programme that has a team of community workers operating in 12 clusters of rural estates across Northern Ireland. The role of the worker is similar to that outlined above and comprises support and animation as well as training.
Group-work is necessary as it advances communication skills, reinforces the importance of citizen participation ... utilise ... controversy which is thus turned to a source of conceptual change.

Teachers are viewed as facilitators and co-learners. They facilitate learning by providing learning experiences that induce change through debate and dialogue.

Teachers need the qualities of 'transformative intellectuals' (Wals et al. 2004:14, 59) in order to foster 'transformative learning'. Wals et al. also indicate that RCD training should emphasise

- Thinking outside ‘the box’;
- communication skills and the ability to put yourself in the frames of others in an understanding and empathic way;
- critical thinking e.g. related to policy-making;
- project management, creative thinking and working in (interdisciplinary) teams (Ibid.: 17)

Melo (in O’Cinneide and Cuddy 1992: 206) also emphasises the need for courses to be relevant to local situations:

Formal school curricula in rural areas should include subjects and activities of immediate relevance for the process of local development.

National curriculum ‘citizenship classes’ in particular offer one useful ‘peg on which to hang’ rural community development learning for young adults. In this way, therefore, the style of community development training courses, and particularly Rural community development courses, needs to be considered carefully in order to be relevant to the needs of a local area. This discussion suggest that this is a key element of rural community development training.

1.4.2 Rural community development training vs. general community development training

A great deal of community development training exists but far less was specifically rural community development training. There was a recognition that most courses were open to, and had, participants from rural areas. This begged the question – does it matter? In a Northern Ireland context Clarke (2005:7) strongly advocates an approach tuned to the ‘nuances’ of living in rural areas, and to overcome ‘the uphill struggle of ensuring that rural issues aren’t overlooked in training’.

Many providers indicated that their courses were adaptable to a focus on rural community development and people from rural areas would attend the courses but few organisations held statistics on this. They also commented that assignments for course work were often about local issues and problems so that students from rural areas undertook work about countryside issues.

There was an issue as to how and whether to isolate ‘rural’ community development training inputs and outcomes from generic training of value to community activists/volunteers e.g. related to team working,

---

4 Of course we have had to accept the assertion by course organisers that their courses are about community development: given the contested nature of the term, this may not always be the view of others.
committee work, leadership and so on. In a Northern Ireland context, for example, it is argued that there are

nuances to living in the countryside, that demand a different approach.
(Clarke, A., 2005: personal communication.)

Interviewees in this study also pointed out, fairly fundamentally, that a definition of ‘rural’ could be problematic:

I’m not sure that there is something that can accurately be called rural community development training, any more than urban community development training. That starts bringing into play the debate about what is rural. I think the definition is on a continuum, for example, there are urban peripheral settings where the impact of cities is affecting rural areas. I think it is slightly unhelpful to have this rigid distinction. ...Mining areas can be termed rural because they are villages, but they are former industrial villages. They have the problems of rural isolation, such as transport, access to services, but the origins of the village are industrial- what is their culture? It is conditioned by their industrial background, and they are quite deprived. They don’t have the affluent influence of some villages. I don’t think it is about an urban or rural set of skills. (Community development partnership training provider)

Interviewees were asked whether they felt that specifically rural community development training was needed. There was no overall agreement on the answer to the question. The following show a cross-section of the range of arguments for specifically rural community development training:

Yes definitely- to the extent that we are now having advanced discussions with other sectors in terms of providing rural community development training for them, e.g. for surgeons, for teachers, for admin people within health, for local authority etc. e.g. Rural context modules for midwives - it is different to being in a big city ...We think it is very important. (Academic training provider, Scotland)

There are key differences in rural areas that are different to urban areas and are not taken on board by urban workers. There are real barriers of living in rural areas, for example the sheer logistics of putting on a course in a rural area. There are key things to be shared. I want to get people networking and sharing information across different perspectives- rural and urban.
(Community development and health training provider)

People do come into the cities to access training but there is more of a demand to base it in the villages so they don’t have to travel. (Community development and health training provider, interview)

I think rural training is necessary. It needs to be different to urban, and to do with the nature of rural communities. There are significant differences. E.g conservatism in rural communities. It’s also to do with resources - a tiny number of community workers covering huge areas, so the strategy for working with activists is different to working in urban areas. There are issues around accessing training - e.g. It could be 20 miles away. You need to organise transport and childcare, and to have more lateral thinking. Much
preparation and thought is needed. Distance learning and on-line training is a good idea. (Independent Consultant with considerable experience of rural training)

On the other hand, some interviewees felt that there was something to be gained from having people from rural areas and urban areas mixing:

I don’t think the courses need to be different in rural or urban areas. In rural areas there are additional considerations to bringing people together or taking the services out to them, and you deal with small numbers of people. But the need is just as great. (VCS training provider)

Rural and urban workers can gain a lot from each other. You do have to be careful in the detail. We deal with this through the assessments - for most of these modules the students will use a live project that they are familiar with in their home territory - a live issue from their own patch that concerns them, which also means there is a chance that something practical will happen as a result of the project. Assessments concentrate on either the rural or urban - so use of assessment will be different depending on urban or rural. Some modules are generic. Some are specific to the rural context e.g. applying for grants for rural community development. (Academic training provider, England)

I think community development training should be relevant to the context in which it practices. Different areas are different- one rural area is different to another. You need a diverse range of applying common skills. I don’t think there is a particular rural community development training. I think the same skills are needed for urban and rural. There are similar ways of working with communities of interest and geographic communities. I think there is an issue about access to learning opportunity. The more remote you get the more difficult the access is. Therefore we need to make sure we develop distance learning options. (Community development partnership training provider)

This range of views seems to show that there is a place for both combined training and also specifically rural training. As indicated in the previous sections, it would probably be appropriate to adapt the style of course/teaching for rural areas i.e. more distance learning/use of internet and IT resources to address the barriers of travelling distances. The Carnegie Commission may wish to test this further in practice, as to whether rural community development sessions should be tailored and specific, as opposed to materials and sessions being run for activists from both rural and urban areas. This could be in the form of a pilot initiative.

1.4.3 Training ‘on the job’

Not all relevant training was formalised in terms of a series of sessions or ‘classes’. ‘Learning by doing’ could operate informally, inducing the development of RCD skills and knowledge as a by-product of community activity e.g. as a school governor, community councillor, Women’s Institute chair; or completing a grant application; project design etc. Within the research it was suggested that more notice and recognition should be given to implicit training, that is
learning ... arising from the process of action rather than being offered in more formal ways. (Barr 1991: 151)

This links to the approach of *Planed* in Wales. Fitzduff (1993) notes how a woodwork workshop, where I had daily contact with people, was a useful starting point...discussion was encouraged in the classes on other topics which might form the basis for other classes or projects. (Fitzduff 1993: 41)

This was a process of action, reflection and understanding, leading to adjustment and refinement. Specialist training, for example by the BTCV or the Welsh Ystradgynlais and District Environmental Forum (related to practical conservation work), can engender community development capabilities such as teamwork, managing volunteers etc.

Interviewees were asked their opinion on whether RCD training was necessary, or whether it was adequate as a by-product of e.g. completing a grant application, project design etc or training through process. In general, training ‘on the job’ was seen as an important element of practising community development, but could be complemented by more formalised courses, as the following examples show:

*I think a structured training course is good but I also know that a lot of other things help build confidence and develop empowerment eg. Filling in grant applications in an unstructured way. So I think you need both.’ (Community development and health training provider)*

*I think training and by-product are both needed, particularly volunteers who don’t see why they need training. This is why a lot of the sessions we do we don’t call training, e.g. We will help someone to tidy up an application form, but if we called it training they would be put off. Now there is accreditation available there is value in getting the piece of paper to validate what they have been doing for umpteen years. Some of it is giving the people confidence to believe what they are doing is OK. (VCS training provider)*

*Definitely a role for on the job training ...I think training is necessary. It is crucial for people to learn on the job, but this needs to be reinforced in a learning context, and everybody needs time out for reflection and share with other people and to be challenged by a facilitator. It increases opportunities for real learning, and the opportunity to mix with other people, and sharing ideas with others - this seems to be the way most people prefer to learn. It is comfortable and also effective - a positive way of learning. You need a good facilitator to encourage that. (Independent consultant with considerable experience of rural training)*

*There is definitely a case for people learning on the job. I am a big fan of the idea of community consultants. I like the idea of existing community activists sharing their knowledge and information and being paid for it in order to help and train others. My hunch is that it would be alongside structured training. One of the key problems that rural activists have is that they are volunteers and also very busy people- e.g. sometimes juggling a day job with family commitments and community help. If you train on the job you learn as you go along, but there again you don’t have the opportunities for reflection, so some*
sort of drawing back, comparing notes, meeting other people, sharing ideas is also good. - a blended approach. (Academic training provider, England)

I have mixed opinions on how useful courses are, but you ... only get specific skills when you use them e.g. filling in grant applications. So people learn by doing. So there is a lot to be said for creating networks of expertise when they need it. No-one said training wasn’t useful, but the training might not make them confident to do things. You need to do practice as well. I think training where you have the majority of time in a work setting is more useful, that is applying it to the job and the context of work. (Community Development Partnership training provider)

However, one interviewee felt that ‘on the job’ training was not enough and that qualifications improved standards:

I think community participation is a profession. There are skills and competencies required to do that, so learning as a by product isn’t quite enough. So qualifications are good - trying to improve things and obtain standards- how to engage with community and reach various parts. (Statutory training provider)

This showed that although on-the-job training had its place (a minority view amongst our respondents), structured training was important for community development workers in rural areas and therefore courses should be developed. There is a strong argument for providing training which allows workers time away from the everyday pressures of the office to reflect on what they do in rural community development and why and how they do it.

More attention, and perhaps a pilot project, should concentrate on parallel and joint training packages designed to foster a collaborative approach, involving

... local community organisations as well as professional staff ... In the light of the blurred distinctions of work between many community activists and paid community workers. (Barr 1991: 156, 172)

This would emphasise RCD training as a 2-way street on which professionals and activists can learn with and from each other. The practicability of this approach could be funded as a ‘test initiative’ by the Carnegie Commission or the Trust – in one or more of its territories of interest. Possibilities for joint training might

… include local further education college staff, voluntary education coordinators, local citizen’s advice bureau staff. (NIACE 1989: 16)

1.4.4 Volunteer to volunteer training

Following on from discussions about ‘on the job’ training, the research indicated that volunteer-to-volunteer ‘training’ was also useful in community development training. This was as opposed to something done to/with volunteers by a (paid) trainer. A Residents’ Consultancy Pilots Initiative, for example, investigated
...the extent to which residents with experience of effective community-based regeneration could play a valuable role in providing advice and inspiration to others, as well as promoting good practice to bring about change.' (Hampshaw 2005: 22).

Clarke (2005, personal communication) reinforces the value of unintended outcomes, from activists learning together and opening up to each other.

Within the present study, interviewees suggested that volunteer-to-volunteer ‘training’ was usually very useful and could complement more formal training as the following shows:

*I think peer training is central to training in this issue. It is about working out how people work. In our work we don’t use the bureaucrats to stand up and talk, we get people from the communities who talk from the heart.* (Statutory training provider)

*Yes, I would describe it as mentoring. We do it on an ad hoc basis at the moment, e.g. a village hall looking for refurbishment, we will put them in touch with someone who has already done it. We do it on a case by case basis. We have had some discussion with colleagues about doing it on a more formal basis, e.g. having a register of people prepared to do this mentoring etc. so if we came across a need we would have someone to go to. But we haven’t developed that yet, mainly because the informal way we do it has been adequate.* (VCS training provider)

There is, however,

...a significant problem...there is no clear system to recognise and accredit such skills. This means that career and employment pathways are not always clear for residents involved in regeneration projects’. (Hampshaw *op.cit.*)

and

Consistent and long-term funding for community development education and training provision, both accredited and non-accredited continues to be an issue. (CWETN, Northern Ireland, 2005)

This is particularly so since

...participation has to be induced by means of a slow, intensive, educational process [to ensure that] ...a significant proportion of the local population has reached the threshold of ‘a collective will to change’. (Melo cited in Ó Cinnéide and Cuddy 1992: 201-202)

This highlights a potential/actual collision between sustainable action and short-term funding.

There is a conundrum surrounding the effort and time in

*... inducting people only to have them move on to 'higher' things after a short stay.* (Barr 1991:151)
This personal stepping-stone through training and improvement is very positive, but the consequent overall loss of skills, drive and experience to the community may well be negative. Education and/or training for inclusion can...

...raise horizons, widen the range of opportunities and possibilities, and enrich lives. (Moseley 2003: 91)

But the ‘trick’ is to foster both personal fulfilment and community progress. There may also be...

...resentment that some local people have found relatively secure paid employment in work apparently not dissimilar to that undertaken by community activists...[but often]...those involved in local communities or professionals were not concerned to pass on skills and knowledge or to help people ‘learn to learn’. (Barr 1991: 150)

1.4.5 Community activists

Views about training for rural community development were that it should help activists:

...respond to treatment which seeks to bring out their potential rather than impose ideas on them. (Denman et al. 1989: 98).

and that

...to participate effectively, community representatives required a high level of political sophistication, a developed knowledge base and considerable self-confidence. Workers expressed concern about the lack of assistance to community organisations to develop the knowledge and skills for effective involvement. (Barr 1991: 138)

As a result of their participation in volunteer-volunteer training, some residents have been ‘able to make the transition from volunteer to regeneration professional’. It is also clear that...

...enhancing residents’ skills is sometimes simply about building confidence and identifying previously unrecognised skills. (Hampshaw 2005:22)

1.4.6 Priority for funding

If rural communities are to innovate then, according to Moseley, it is necessary to provide or part-fund...

...the provision of appropriate training for management and for the workforce. (Moseley 2003: 52)

Simmons (1997) and others notes a range of particular factors preventing women...

... from taking up training in rural areas. Childcare and transport came top, but... also included: lack of self-confidence, cultural expectations, lack of provision, lack of motivation, timing, perception, family expectations, lack of finance, lack of jobs, the venue, access, and not being asked what their own requirements were. (Simmons, 1997: 63)
When any programme is started in a rural area, identification very quickly rests with the person who has initiated the programme ... Trying to shift ownership was a central objective and has been a weakness ... (Fitzduff cited in Henderson and Francis 1993: 43)

... education/training ... must be an ongoing priority in the overall development process. This is generally under-recognised by public agencies and funding bodies, but it is central both to the empowerment process ... and to maintaining the momentum of the initiative through development of the human potential of the community. (Arkleton Trust 1990: 12)

Interviewees were invited to comment on this last quote in particular and gave the following responses. A couple of interviewees felt that the present policy landscape was now conducive to rural community development training.

*I think Government agendas are supportive in terms of policy. The support is implicit. I think there should be greater financial resources for community development training for rural workers. There is a need for that sort of assistance.* (Academic training provider, England)

*I think they are an ongoing priority and a lot of funding bodies have put money into these areas. They are recognised by public agencies- we have a lot of these people [from public agencies] on our courses now.* (Academic training provider, Scotland)

However, most interviewees felt that training in rural areas was not a government priority and needed to be put further up the agenda:

*I think training in rural areas should be a priority across the board. Access to training and education should be a priority, for example, it should be subsidised, and there should be training delivered on-line.* (Community development and health training provider)

*I think it is under-recognised by public agencies and funding bodies. I think community development in itself is under recognised. Although we are established as a profession, authorities don’t see us as that. Part of our role is to raise awareness of the use of community development and that it has validity.* (VCS training provider)

*On the whole it is not a high priority on the government agenda. There is pressure on organisations to deliver to targets, so training gets left behind. It is not seen as a top priority. There is not enough funding for delivering training. People from rural organisations struggle to get together the money to go to training. People feel guilty about taking money out to go on a training course. I think when an organisation is making decisions about grants, building in a training element into budgets is a way to do it.* (Independent Consultant with considerable experience of rural training)

In general, therefore, this research demonstrates that RCD training needs to be given a higher priority. Finally, the comment was made that there needs to be a wider
learning culture in present society and that it should not just be around government agendas and training agencies.

I think education and training must be an ongoing priority, but issues are around about how it is done. How do people acquire the competence to do things? More training and education isn’t always the answer. What we need is a learning culture that informs all agencies in doing their business, a continuous practice style encouraging people to reflect on and share experience. I don’t think it’s about qualifications. There is a lot of training around competency-based learning now - this is a tick box, rather than critical and analytical skills – it’s not around the capacity to be an effective community development worker. More education and training, yes, but it depends who is doing it and how. (Community Development partnership training provider)

NIACE (1989) reiterates this by stating that education

...ought to be seen as something useful for the whole community, to which we all have a right - and which can take many forms, often highly informal and in the most unlikely situations. (NIACE 1989: 14)

In a Northern Ireland context the

... issue of consistent and long-term funding for community development education and training provision, both accredited and non-accredited continues to be an issue. The proposed task force emanating from the Harbison Report recommendations will inform future thinking on this issue throughout the next number of years. (CWETN 2005)

Clarke (2005, personal communication) went on to highlight a

...desperate need for a coherent approach to rural community development training in Northern Ireland. There is too much competition between providers, and there are gaps in provision between one-off sessions and lengthy formalised training, and in terms of fostering a more critical look by activists at what they are doing and why.

However, Ellis et al. (2004) assert that

...community development is, and should be, both challenging and unsettling...‘capacity building’ may involve a ‘capacity to resist’. (pp. 44/45)

There is an issue therefore in terms of agencies equipping/perceiving or fearing that they are enabling communities to ‘bite the hand that feeds’.

There are very significant ameliorations of a variety of social problems which can be achieved through the development of the latent skills and talents of local people in community care activity in their own communities. (Barr 1991: 167)

One of the interviewees in this study reiterated this by saying,
I think the biggest thing is to community-proof the organisations that groups are dealing with. There is no point in having those able people out there, for example, community activists, if the organisations they are having to deal with are not community-proofed to work with and respond to that individual. So any strategy has to have a mirror strategy working on the organisations. They have to be receptive to dealing with those sorts of people. If you are a bureaucratic organisation, you are often working against communities, i.e. against empowering individuals, people taking risks, people doing things for themselves. You need to address the environment change.... You could pursue things like compacts, local development frameworks, statements of community participation. The organisation can make a compact with the local community - what is it going to do, is it going to have identified officers? This needs to be set down, in terms of customer care style. It needs to be applied to rural community development. We can learn lesson form urban environments.’

(Statutory training provider)

1.4.7 Problems with terminology

Interviewees were asked if the term ‘rural community development training’ was problematic in any way. Some interviewees felt that, although the term was not ideal, there were no other terms to describe it:

I think most of these terms are problematic, it means certain things to certain people. Having said that, what other words can we use? It all comes down to empowering people to take action for themselves. I wouldn’t get hung up on it. We are talking about the same thing usually. (Statutory training provider)

RCD training- no more problematic than anything else. (Community development and health training provider)

One interviewee pointed out that the term ‘rural’ could be misinterpreted in a narrow way:

It is problematic only in the sense that it tends to be marginalized by big urban areas. E.g. If it is a rural development course in Glasgow, people think it doesn’t relate to them, but they don’t see that what they do has an effect on rural areas as well. It may send the wrong signals. When we began in 1991 with a rural development undergraduate programme, it took a while for people to realise it wasn’t about farming or shearing sheep. People may devalue it if they don’t understand it. (Academic training provider, Scotland)

Other interviewees suggested that the term ‘training’ could be a problem and could put people off:

The term ‘training’ can be a problem and you need to be careful about using it. You need to be careful about using any jargon term. If you say capacity-building training it puts people off - they don’t understand the concept. You need to find out what area they need help on and direct what you call it to that. (VCS training provider)

Training might be a problem term - ‘learning’ seems to be a more favoured word. Exchange and sharing are also better words. The word ‘training’ can be off-putting. ‘Community development’ is OK to keep, but it can be vague.
Definitely keep the word ‘rural’ in. ‘Workshops’ is a more friendly term than training. (Independent Consultant with considerable experience of rural training)

Although there are some difficulties around the term ‘Rural community development training’, therefore, no alternatives were offered. The overall feeling was that words should be carefully used and jargon avoided.

1.5 Conclusions and recommendations

1.5.1 Conclusions

Although this research identified a large amount of training in community development, the previous discussions show that there were gaps, in terms of training not being related to rural community development and not specifically around activists and volunteers. The research therefore has indicated that more work needs to be done in the area of training for community development activists in rural England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The interviewees in this research reiterated this key point:

_There is still a need for community development in rural areas. We have only scratched the surface. There is such a diversity of rural areas in Scotland. There are some quite remote areas that are close to cities but they are still remote and isolated. They are overlooked ... some areas are more affluent but isolated ..._ (Community development and health training provider)

_I think RCD training needs to be given a push and moved up the agenda. We also need to be a bit sharper on how to deliver training. There is also the question of what we want to train people in, and how to do it differently to urban community development. We need to think about how to link the training on rural community development to rural literature. Training needs to be of higher quality, and more sophisticated. We don’t want to get stuck in a groove. There is a divide between rural development and rural community development. We need to make links between the two._ (Independent Consultant with considerable experience of rural training)

This review of training for rural community development activists in rural United Kingdom and Ireland cannot claim to be absolutely comprehensive given constraints of resources. There will be courses missing and, in the time allowed, the authors have had to be highly derivative, relying on networks of contacts, websites, e-mails, and phone calls. Nevertheless it is hoped that there is adequate information here to indicate a representative picture of overall provision, issues of significance when considering rural community development training, and key pointers for future priorities in the development of training.

This section summarises the positive aspects arising from the research, expands on the gaps and barriers highlighted in this report, considers some
concluding remarks and gives suggestions for recommendations as a result of the research. The following section will suggest recommendations that arise from this study.
As suggested in the Introduction, the Government proposes that communities could play a much bigger part in running their own affairs, influencing and shaping their future development but they often lack opportunities, and support. (DETR and MAFF 2000: 145)

One way of doing this could be through training and a focus on community development:

... the combination of adult education and rural community development can be an attractive and effective catalyst to local community action. (Scott et al. 1989: 94)

Given this emphasis, the need for community development training is important. On a positive note, this research has identified a large amount of current training provision. The country by country reports in Part II of this report list the training provision identified in Rural Community Development (or just in Community Development, but including participants from rural areas). They were categorised in terms of:

- Learning by doing;
- Localised RCD training;
- Funding for Projects incorporating RCD training;
- Learning via networking;
- RCD formalised training courses;
- Specialist services offering incidental RCD training; and
- Other/miscellaneous.

Despite limitations on coverage, the country by country reports nevertheless indicate that there was a significant amount of training available. Interestingly, overall, the majority of training provision available fell within the following categories:

- Localised RCD training;
- Formalised training courses; and
- Learning via networking.

with ‘formalised training courses’ being the most popular category. This shows that formalised training courses do in fact play a large part in present provision. However, as discussed in the main body of this report, many of the formal courses were focused on practitioners/paid workers rather than volunteers/activists and, in general, few were specifically focused on rural community development. The fact that ‘localised RCD training’ and ‘Learning via networking’ were popular indicates that a good deal of RCD training is being placed within a local context and using a networking base. The discussion within this report suggests that this ‘localised/networking’ based training courses is important e.g.:
How you deliver in Cornwall might be different in Cumbria. There need to be different ways. The key is local delivery, each locality to make its own choices.
(Statutory training provider)

You need to tailor the training to where people are geographically and to what they are doing in their locality, so they can draw on what they are doing for academic credit and see their training informing their practice.
(Academic training provider, England)

The research has provided, we believe, a reasonably representative picture of RCD training. There are examples of good practice and much of the training that is in existence upholds the emphasis on responding to the needs of the participants of the training by being local and using networking as an important element. There are formal courses in community development, but fewer courses in rural community development.

The data collected within the country by country reports seems to suggest that there is more provision in RCD in England than in the other countries. However, this could simply be due to England being a bigger country and there being more available information. The amount of information collected from Ireland and Northern Ireland was relatively small, possibly indicating a need for further more detailed investigation within these countries.

The research, however also showed that there were significant gaps around RCD training, particularly in terms of training not being related to rural community development and not specifically around activists and volunteers, among other things. The following summarises the main gaps and barriers identified in the research:

- **Patchy provision** as the following participant suggests:
  Generally I’ve found that community development support in rural areas is patchy (but same story in urban areas) and very much depends on the area as to what’s going on. Most of the community groups I’ve visited in rural areas have had support from Rural Community Councils ... local CVS, and various community development workers from the local authority... (Richardson, L., 2005, personal communication)

- **Lack of training specifically around Rural Community Development.** It was found that there were numerous formalised qualifications in Community Development but very few specialising in Rural Community Development. This was seen as a large gap. One interviewee suggested:

  There is still a need for community development in rural areas. We have only scratched the surface. There is such a diversity of rural areas in Scotland. There are some quite remote areas that are close to cities but they are still remote and isolated. They are overlooked ... some areas are more affluent but isolated...(Community development and health training provider)

  Another participant reiterated this:
There is little in the way of stated Community Development Training in the region [South West English Region]. This was borne out by the very large demand that we had for the training we delivered. This is particularly true in rural areas. (Crawley, J., 2005, personal communication)

Within the analysis of the country-by-country report, there were some examples of good practice around provision of RCD training, which could be models on which to build future training courses. However, the research indicates the lack of provision in this area. Although participants from rural areas were accessing courses, in general, the research found that there was also a need for specifically rural community development training.

- **Lack of provision for community activists/volunteers.** Again, there were some models of good practice, but these were the exception. A large majority of courses were designed with paid workers in mind rather than activists/volunteers.

- **There were short courses and degree courses but not much in between.** There were many courses on the half-day/one-day/two-days training end of the scale and there seem to be a number of higher education courses, but not much in between.

- **Lack of accreditation for short courses.** The OCN (Open College Network) was sometimes used as an accrediting body for community development courses. Courses tend to be level 2 or 3 OCN where accredited. This seemed to offer a bridge between the short/day courses and degree courses, perhaps through accreditation links. Another suggestion was to make use of the National Occupational Standards in Community Development to standardise accreditation. However, accreditation for courses (particularly short courses) was the exception rather than the rule.

- **Lack of funding/priority for government.** In a Northern Ireland context, for example, the issue of consistent and long-term funding for community development education and training provision, both accredited and non-accredited, continues to be an issue. The proposed task force emanating from the Harbison Report recommendations will inform future thinking on this issue throughout the next number of years. (CWETN, 2005 online)

This was reiterated by some of the interviewees:

> Although we are established as a profession, authorities don’t see us as that. Part of our role is to raise awareness of the use of community development and that it has validity. (VCS training provider)

In response to this problem, therefore, the Arkleton Trust suggests that, education/training ... must be an ongoing priority in the overall development process. This is generally under-recognised by public agencies and funding bodies, but it is

---

3 Shortly before this study commenced, a hitherto major training provider with an extensive rural hinterland, offering formal qualifications (Plymouth University), closed its community development course claiming lack of demand.
central both to the empowerment process ... and to maintaining the momentum of the initiative through development of the human potential of the community. (1990: 12)

• Finally, there was seen to be an overall lack of coherence in the (coherent) approach to RCD training. Clarke (2005, personal communication) highlights this by saying that there is a desperate need for a coherent approach to rural community development training in Northern Ireland. There is too much competition between providers, and there are gaps in provision between one-off sessions and lengthy formalised training, and in terms of fostering a more critical look by activists at what they are doing and why.

These gaps and barriers, therefore suggest that, although the research has identified a significant number of training courses in community development, there are further, specific issues that need to be addressed. These issues will need to be taken into account when planning future courses. Following on from these issues, within the main body of the report, we have identified pointers to improve training provision in RCD such as:

- the need to be creative and responsive in the style of course/teaching;
- the need to consider rural community development training separately to general community development training;
- the recognition, by employers in particular, of on-the-job training and volunteer-to-volunteer training;
- the need to be clear about terminology; and
- the need for rural community development training to be a higher priority for funding within all relevant funding regimes.

The research therefore has indicated that more work needs to be done, lessons need to be learnt, and specific issues need to be taken into account in relation to training for community development activists in rural England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

It is worth repeating the comment of one interviewee:

*There is still a need for community development in rural areas. We have only scratched the surface. There is such a diversity of rural areas in Scotland. There are some quite remote areas that are close to cities but they are still remote and isolated. They are overlooked ... some areas are more affluent but isolated ...* (Community development and health training provider)

This is reiterated by Barr, who stated more than ten years ago:

*Much more attention should be given to training opportunities for voluntary community activists.* (Barr 1991: 173)

This, therefore, suggests that rural community development training is an area that needs further investigation and commitment. There is a need for more courses.
focusing specifically on the rural aspect and on volunteers/activists, and more thought needed in the design of such courses, as another interviewee pointed out:

*I think RCD training needs to be given a push and moved up the agenda. We also need to be a bit sharper on how to deliver training. There is also the question of what we want to train people in, and how to do it differently to urban community development. We need to think about how to link the training on rural community development to rural literature. Training needs to be of higher quality, and more sophisticated. We don’t want to get stuck in a groove. There is a divide between rural development and rural community development. We need to make links between the two.* (Independent Consultant with considerable experience of rural training)

The conclusions of this research, therefore, imply that RCD training does indeed need to be ‘given a push and moved up the agenda’ and also needs to be ‘of a higher quality and more sophisticated’.

The following section suggests recommendations that arise from the conclusions of this study.

### 1.5.2 Recommendations

The research indicated that some of the gaps identified around rural community development training included:

- (geographically) patchy provision;
- lack of training specifically around Rural Community Development;
- lack of provision for community activists/volunteers;
- there were short courses and degree programmes but not much at an intermediate level;
- a lack of accreditation for short courses;
- lack of funding/priority by relevant government departments; and
- a lack of a coherent approach to RCD training.

As a result of these findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

- government and funding agencies should be aware that provision of courses at the moment is patchy and deliver and promote training across (in) all geographical areas in a coherent programme.
- there should be moves to increase provision in specifically Rural Community Development training, as opposed to general community development training since there are some specific elements unique to community development in rural areas.
- The Carnegie Commission should be encouraged to test out whether community development training, across its territories, should be tailored to rural circumstances; as opposed to materials and sessions being run jointly for urban and rural activists.
- course organisers should encourage and promote the participation of activists and volunteers on community development courses currently targeting community development workers. Courses should therefore be delivered in
creative, well-thought-out styles to cater for different abilities and backgrounds. Again, examples of good practice from this research could be used as models.

- it is important to provide a full range of courses in terms of level, from short local courses up to degree and postgraduate degree programmes (courses), and including the different levels in between, to accommodate all potential learners.
- RCD training should adopt ‘oblique’ approaches, that build on community concerns; for example, training that originates from local history classes, or investigating local traditions, can provide an attractive, indirect and ‘softer’ way in to consideration of rural community development.
- RCD training should be piloted through unconventional routes e.g. via the school (‘national’) curriculum; citizenship classes; and young adults taking ‘gap year’ work of benefit to their communities (and perhaps linked e.g. to the UK Government’s Year of the Volunteer.)
- accrediting bodies and course organisers should make sure that courses are accredited where feasible to improve standards and professionalism within Community Development as a career.
- At the same time, the research has ‘indicated that non-accredited courses had an important role in capacity-building in local communities’.
- The government departments involved (especially DfES and DEFRA in the UK and The Irish Department of Rural Affairs) should adopt a more coherent/strategic approach to rural community development training, using the examples of good practice indicated in this research as models on which to build.
- ‘a style of teaching using IT in combination with other methods seemed to be successful’ in rural areas. Where this encouraged group-working, the teaching boosted communication skills and reinforced ‘the importance of citizen participation’. The use of video and audio-conferencing is therefore recommended.
- There is also an argument for ‘community-proofing the organisations that groups are dealing with. There is no point in having those able people out there, for example, community activists, if the organisations they are having to deal with are not community-proofed to work with and respond’ to them. RCD training must therefore ‘fit’ with agency activities, approaches and policies.
Bibliography

Denman, J. et al. (1989) Doing by Learning, Cirencester: ACRE.
Section 2: Country by country reports

2.1 Rural Community Development Training in England

Learning by Doing

Association of West Kent Tenants (AWKT),
101 London Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1AX
01732-749400
www.westkent.org/extra
This was set up in 1996, with the brief to promote tenant participation and set up services for the benefit of tenants and their families. AWKT have set up in partnership with West Kent to create a jointly managed company called West Kent Extra, which is the community development arm for both organisations.

Real Strategies,
14 Federation Road, Abbey Wood, London, SE2 OJU
020 84738741
www.realstrategies.co.uk

Over the past five years we have developed a model of neighbourhood work that we have delivered in rural areas. It is about getting residents involved in designing and conducting participative neighbourhood research. It is a way of getting planned and representative community involvement where there is none. The research becomes a tool to motivate residents to be activists, represent other residents and develop local action plans with agencies. It involves training sessions, but largely is about training through the process of doing and reflecting. We have developed this with social landlords who have then taken on board the participative style of engaging rural communities.
(Sue Lelliott, Real Strategies, personal communication)

Localised RCD training

Ladder4learning,
Room 112, Saltmaker’s House, Hamble Point Marina, Hamble, Hampshire S031 4NB
www.ladder4learning.org.uk
enquiries@ladder4learning.org.uk
023 8045 8659

Ladder4learning promotes ‘learning’ for people and organisations in the community and voluntary sector in South East England (www.ladder4learning.org.uk)

They provide a database of vocational short courses delivered by different providers (including day courses/distance learning) relevant to the voluntary and community sector in the South East (English) Region. Courses on the database include: community volunteering, staff development and training, personal development, supervisory development, time management, assertiveness, working with groups, equal opportunities, managing change, supervision skills, risk assessment, food hygiene etc.
Most courses are delivered by voluntary sector umbrella agencies in the region. Some are delivered by local further/higher education establishments.

**Adept**  
Community Development Agency, 3, Market Way, Coventry, CV1 1DF  
024-7623 0606  
www.adept.org.uk  
This is a small specialist Community Development agency based in Coventry but with an England and Wales remit. Consultancy and training about setting up as a charity or company, chairing meetings, regeneration skills etc. They deliver a course, WICO (Working in Community Organisations):  
a comprehensive package of skills for people working in community organisations  
whether as leaders or advisers; and it is based on detailed and up-to-date expertise in community development and capacity building...It can be offered anywhere from OCN level 1, which is accessible to people with little or no relevant background, to a Coventry University Certificate (30 units at CATS level 1), where it is useful to people in relevant paid employment who want to add to their abilities...we are currently working to extend it to University Diploma level, which will require not only added length but also higher levels, and hope to offer that from Autumn, 2005 (www.adept.org.uk)  
The courses are for both people who are active in their own community and for professionally employed people in the public, voluntary or community sector.

**Community Matters,**  
Training Unit, 6-8 York Place, Leeds, LS1 2DS.  
0113 244 3844  
020 7837 7887  
www.communitymatters.org  
They offer bespoke short training courses (1-3 days), at a client’s own venue, that are specifically designed to support community organisations. Various courses around technical and legal matters, policies, procedures and developing skills, developing community buildings, strategic planning, community profiling, equal opportunities, marketing, managing staff, resolving conflict, working with volunteers, leadership skills, committee skills, communication skills, time management, funding, managing change. Costs range from £360 to £1800 (for a 3 day course)

**The Plunkett Foundation**  
The Quadrangle, Woodstock, Oxon OX20 1LH  
www.plunkett.co.uk  
info@plunkett.co.uk  
01993 810730  
The Plunkett Foundation is an educational charity, based near Oxford, which supports the development of rural group enterprise world-wide. The Foundation draws on 80 years practical working experience of working with partners from the private sector to promote and implement economic self-help solutions to rural problems...[it is] the UK’s leading provider of specialist consultancy and training services to rural group enterprises ... consultancy and training services are provided either directly to the client on a fee-paying basis or delivered as part of integrated development projects, usually financed by and external public-sector donor...’ (www.plunkett.co.uk )  
They are also involved in networking, project management, study tours, library/information centre, publications, conferences, policy development and research
Environmental Trainers Network (ETN)
C/O BTCV, 47-50 Hockley Hill, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 5AQ
0121-507 8390
www.btcv.org/etn
This is a network of trainers and training managers in environmental organisations. They have been running successful national training events on a network basis since 1994. They provide short courses in the following topic areas: working with communities, promoting diversity, communication and interpretation, fundraising and income generation, regeneration and sustainability, youth, education and play, training and personal effectiveness, supervision, management and safety. These are usually one day or two-day courses and there is a fee to attend.

Bootstrap Enterprises
35 Railway Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1EZ.
01254 680367
www.bootstrap.org.uk
Bootstrap Enterprises Community Development Training Programme is for anyone involved in activities with community, voluntary or faith organisation. (Community Development training Programme 2005-2006, brochure)
They work primarily with people in Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley (Lancashire). The courses are generic in nature and hence we would classify it as Community Development and not rural community development. We have had a few people from rural community groups attending these sessions. These participants have become aware of the sessions via our collaborative promotion of the programme with CVs. (Noel Camm, Bootstrap, personal communication)
The training is within different levels- level 1 (OCN recognised) for those who are involved in community activities, or new to the subject, level 2 for those who have experience of community development work, with some knowledge of the subject, and a Community Development Work accredited NVQ Level 3. Most courses are one day or half day long and cost between £55 and £65 with some discounted rates for member organisations. Topics include: community development, working with groups, assertiveness, planning projects, evaluation, fundraising, working with volunteers, personal development, organisational development.

Community Focus
84-86 12th Avenue, Hull HU6 9LE
linda@ourcomms.org
01482 807492
They provide short courses in the following: participatory appraisal, listening skills, research skills, help with identifying funding, participatory training in photography, media images, drama etc, stress management, relaxation, volunteer training, group work and action planning. In terms of involvement with the East Riding [of Yorkshire], I personally managed a number of projects over the period of 10 years. Before we could develop a number of projects we had to use a community development approach. There is a massive gap in this throughout the East Riding.’ (Linda Tock, personal communication)

Rural Youth Network
Eastgate House, 19 Humberstone Road, Leicester LE5 3GJ
0116 242 7441
www.ruralyouth.com
Rural Youth Network is a unique organisation bringing together a diverse membership representing both the voluntary and statutory sectors who are engaged in work with young people as well as rural development. It promotes the inclusion of young people in rural areas and supports those working with them. (Rural Youth Network Information Leaflet)

They have conferences, newsletters, and training opportunities (no details for the forthcoming year).

Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum
Unit 12, Eccles House, Hope, Derbyshire, S33 6RW
01433-621822
forum@pdrdf.freeserve.co.uk
www.pdrdf.org
This organisation is a network of about 250 Peak District workers who are concerned to tackle the problems of hidden deprivation in the area. They provide Community Development Training for isolated rural women through their Amethyst Project.

Suffolk ACRE Ltd
Suffolk House, 2 Wharfedale Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 4JP
01473 242500
www.suffolkacre.org.uk
They deliver the following course:
Community Development Certificate of Attendance - 20 weeks Part-time day or evening course (Open College Network accredited)
They also do short courses in various topics, including: community engagement skills, facilitation skills, financial management, constitutions, contracts, interviewing, managing stress, resolving disputes, health and safety, computer skills etc. They also offer a bespoke training service.
They have an equal opportunities policy and a specialist support service. The courses are open to anybody who wishes to participate. There is a fee. Some discounts are available.

LCDP
Voluntary Sector Hub, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln. LN1 1UW
lcdp1@btopenworld.com
We are a community development and training organisation working within Lincoln city and its surrounding areas, some of which fall into a rural category. Most of the training we offer, or are asked to deliver, is specifically for members of community groups and voluntary organisations. We also design and deliver training to groups who have specific needs such as evaluating projects or writing business plans. (Karen Parkinson, LCDP, personal communication)
They deliver the following course:
Free Community Work Skills 10 week Course, 3 hours a week, for people actively involved in their community. It is accredited through the Open College Network (OCN) at level 1 and level 2.
They also do other short courses in roles and responsibilities of committee members, book keeping, and money management.

RTPI’s Yorkshire Planning Aid Service
8 Woodhouse Square, Leeds, LS3 1AD
www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Mike.dando@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Historically, we have offered training on various aspects of the town and country planning system for community/voluntary groups, parish councils, communities, individuals in rural areas throughout Yorkshire and The Humber, particularly in North Yorkshire. We have also done training with farmers on planning and farm diversification. Currently Yorkshire Planning Aid is focusing much more on deprived/disadvantaged communities, which is tending to push us much more to our urban authorities in South and West Yorkshire, plus Hull and North/North East Lincs to some extent ... we have also done some training on community participation techniques, e.g. Planning for Real, for communities we have worked with on Parish Plans for example ...

[Mike Dando, Personal Communication]

South Warwickshire PIE/ CVS
c/o 19 North Street, Rugby, CV21 2AG
rcs@rugbycvs.org.uk
tel. 01788 553331

In South Warwickshire (Stratford and Warwick districts) I am initiating Open College Network accredited training in understanding Community Work and community Development skills, and possibly Community work principles and practice. This year we will train 25 people, and next year, hopefully 40 people. We are using freelance trainer this year...and next year I hope to roll it out over the whole of Warwickshire delivering it myself. (Pauline Urwin, personal communication)

Working Together Project,
Action in Rural Sussex, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG.
01273- 234773
www.workingtogetherproject.org.uk
info@ruralsussex.org.uk

This project offers training (day and half-day free courses) to people involved in all community groups or voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove and the surrounding area. The training is open to volunteers, paid workers and management committee members. It is free to participants. we don’t specifically target people in rural communities, but our training is open to them’ (Louise Stone, personal communication)

Most of their courses can be OCN accredited and are OCN quality marked. Courses include Time management, PQASSO, running meetings, book keeping, managing staff, communication skills, planning, fundraising etc.

The Community Skills Project,
Borough of Redcar and Cleveland
Redcar Education Development Centre, Corporation Road, Redcar, TS10 1HA
www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk
01642 490409

The Community Skills Project offers a variety of Community Development training, including the NVQ2 and 3 in Community Development work, which of course is adaptable to those working in rural areas, particularly in our case rural East Cleveland. (Catherine Sills, Personal communication)

Project North East, Newcastle
Business Support centre, 7-15 Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DW
This organisation is said to be doing some development work around Community Development training infrastructure across the North East. (personal communication from Catherine Sills: above)

Cambridgeshire ACRE
32 Main Street, Littleport, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 1PJ
www.cambsacre.org.uk
01353 860850

Cambridgeshire ACRE offers an accredited course in Community Development which is open to practitioners, activists, people considering going into community development work. It is based around the FCDL National standards for community development learning (although it does not fall within the new qualifications framework) and is accredited at level 3 by NOCN. (Bev Parker, personal communication)

Hyndburn and Ribble Valley CVS
21 Cannon Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1NJ
01200 422995
ribblevalleycvs@ic24.net

They provide free short training courses for local voluntary and community groups in the Ribble Valley, a predominantly rural borough in Lancashire. Subjects include child protection, food hygiene, publicising and promoting your group, first aid, housing rights, health and safety, equal opportunities, cultural awareness.

TWICS
284, Burgess road, Swaythling, Southampton, SO16 3BE
023 8067 1111
www.twics.org.uk

TWICS (a VCS agency) provide short courses for individuals involved in their communities or in a community group. Subjects include: Community work skills, food hygiene, training the trainers, listening skills, managing a voluntary/community organisation etc.

Voluntary Action Sheffield,
69 Division Street, Sheffield
www.vas.org.uk
0114 249 3360

They deliver the following course:
Achieving better Community Development- half day short course.

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)
163 Barlby Road, Doncaster, South Yorks., DN4 0RH
www.btcv.org
01302 572 244

They run a part-time Community Development course for environmental volunteers.

Also - most CVs/RCCs and several other VCS agencies provide short courses in various skills related to community development, which are aimed at both practitioners and volunteers/activists. These are usually a half-day or a full-day and involve a networking element. The CVs/RCCs quoted above are examples. There are too many CVs and RCCs to list each one individually.
Funding for Projects Incorporating RCD Training

South West Foundation
The Old Railway Station, Sea Mills Lanes, Bishop, Bristol BS9 1DX
info@southwestfoundation.org.uk
0117-9680111

We are a grant-giving body with a very strong interest in Community Development. Our particular focus for grants is in rural areas, market and coastal towns with a strong emphasis on the smaller VCS. We hope to deliver, along with our grants, a range of services that support the organisations that we work with. (Jan Crawley, personal communication)

They recently delivered ‘bitesize’ community development training to around 90 organisations in the South West Region and look to do similar again.

Learning via Networking

Community Development Foundation.
Suite 49, Joseph’s Well, Hanover Walk, Leeds, LS3 1AB
0113-246 0909
www.cdf.org.uk

This is a national organisation with a variety of roles including advising Government, supporting networks and undertaking research. It regularly publishes a National Training programme with a selection of short courses delivered around England and Wales. They aim to enhance community development work practice eg. Assessing Community Strengths, Community Projects not Community Income, and the Achieving Better Community Development (ABCD) planning and evaluation model.

Community Development Exchange (CDX),
Floor 4, Furnival House, 48 Furnival Gate, Sheffield, S1 4QP.
0114-270 1718
www.cdx.org.uk

This is a national membership organisation for those involved in community development. CDX acts as a catalyst for change by sharing information, experience and practice through a variety of means. (www.cdx.org.uk)

CDX support networks of community development workers around the UK, including regional, sub-regional and specialist networks.

Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL),
4th floor, Furnival House, 48 Furnival Gate, Sheffield, S1 4QP
0114-276 2377
www.fcdl.org.uk

This organisation supports,
...the development of communities through advancing and promoting community development learning at local, regional and national levels and creating relevant opportunities for good quality training and qualifications. (www.fcdl.org.uk)

The Federation develops materials and training resources to support good practice in community work training. It produces regular training bulletins and information sheets and training packages. Special interest groups within the Federation meet to share good practice. They work at a national level to develop new arrangements for community work training and qualifications that are accessible and relevant to those involved in community work activities.
Shropshire Rural Community Council,
5 Claremont Building, Claremont Bank, Shrewsbury, SY1 1RJ.
www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk
01743-360 641

Shropshire has a generic community development network...[at] our next meeting ... we will be looking at community development qualification routes, accreditation, OCN and unaccredited activist training, community development training and development needs across the rural W. Midlands, and where we go from here ... FCDL will be facilitating the event ... (Jonathan Hyams, Personal communication)

InterAct Networks
www.interactnetworks.co.uk
info@interactnetworks.co.uk

I am one of four people who run InterAct Networks. We set ourselves up to initiate what we call facilitator networks in areas, sectors or in organisations. There are around 15 of these up and running around the country now. To get them going we do a three-day training course then a one day network setting up day. Networks then share skills, build their own capacity and provide facilitation to whoever wants it. Most groups are professional but one is now based on a Community Empowerment Network in Coventry and comprises all local residents. In another case we have trained a team of Market and Coastal Towns advisers who now operate as an informal network. We are keen to see the model extended to rural areas ... and to non-professionals ... (Jeff Bishop, Personal communication)

InterAct Networks is an initiative which aims to increase the capacity of local communities and organisations to deliver effective consultation and consensus-building, involvement and partnership working across the UK. It will achieve this through the establishment of Local Facilitator Networks throughout the UK and through providing them with continuing support. (www.interacts.co.uk)

The Countryside Agency
Head Office, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA
www.countryside.gov.uk

The Countryside Agency is the statutory body working to make the quality of life better for people in the countryside and the quality of the countryside better for everyone. (www.countryside.gov.uk)

This includes the development of ‘Learning networks’ which are,...closed communities working towards a commonly held goal or objective and bringing together experts and practitioners to debates and discuss in a secure environment...it allows specialist groups to set up and focus on a specific issue and share best practice and lessons learned...

They have the following learning networks:
- East of England Rural Affairs Forum
- Rural Links North East
- Rural Transport Partnership Officers
- Network Finest Countryside

---

At the time of writing, the Countryside Agency was being abolished and replaced by two new bodies, one of which, the Commission for Rural Communities, may pick up some of this work.
- Walking the Way to Health
- Public Procurement of food and Drink (South West)
- Greenspace Management
- Community Renewables Initiative
- Woodlands Initiative

Devon Racial Equality Council (REC)
15 York Road, Exeter, Devon, EX4 6BA
01392- 422566
www.devonrec.org.uk
Devon REC is proposing the creation of rural peer support networks, facilitated by community development workers, through which members will be enabled, in a systematic but creative fashion, to continuously identify the issues of concern to them in their lives, as they arise, and to put these issues to service providers ... an innovative consultation mechanism that will ... increase quantity and quality of consultation data available to agencies and multi-agency forums. It will ... enable the Black and Minority Ethnic population (rather than the service providers) to set the consultation agenda ... it will also enable people to become aware of services, initiatives and employment opportunities and be supported in gaining access to them ... (www.devonrec.org.uk)

Community Development North East (CDNE)
www.cdne.org.uk
cdne@hotmail.com
This is a network of practitioners and policy-makers from the North East who meet to develop and promote community development. This includes promoting and sharing good practice, and improving support and training in community development in the region.

RCD Formalised Training Courses

St. Martin's College
Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 3JD
01524 384355
i.sinker@ucsm.ac.uk
Courses offered include:
• Dip HE/ BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Development Studies (2 years full-time, or equivalent) aimed at practitioners.
• Dip HE/ BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Development Studies (3 years full-time, or equivalent) aimed at less experienced practitioners, including fieldwork placements.
• Dip HE in Youth and Community Development Studies, accelerated, part-time course (2 ½) years for experienced practitioners. There is opportunity to Progress to a BA (Hons). Foundation Degree in Youth and Community Development Studies (Carlisle campus), 2 ½ years part-time, work-based. Opportunity to Progress to a BA (Hons.).
They also offer postgraduate programmes (Graduate Diploma, MA) for practitioners. In September 2004...the area of work was purposefully changed to 'Youth and Community Development' [from youth and community work]. This was done as the name recognises the fact that the last few years have witnessed significant changes within the youth and community work sector, with the increased emphasis on
community development work ... (St. Martin’s College (2005) Youth and Community Development Studies Prospectus)

The Department of Youth and Community Development Studies provide various courses. *Community Development is embedded within all these programmes.* (Ian Sinker, personal communication)

*University of Bradford*
Bradford, BD7 1DP
enquiries@bradford.ac.uk
01274-233210
www.brad.ac.uk

Course offered:
Foundation Degree in Active Citizenship and Participation, (vocational degree, includes work-based learning) 2 year full-time, 3 year part-time, intended for those who would like to, or are currently working to, encourage active citizenship and greater participation either within local communities or within local services. Opportunity to progress to honours degrees within the university.

*University of Bradford (School for Lifelong Education and Development), Bradford*

Courses offered:
Community Development and Regeneration BA - 3 year full-time or 9 year part-time course held in Bradford.
Community Development and Regeneration DipHE - 1 year full-time or 6 year max part-time.

*University of Newcastle upon Tyne*
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU
www.ncl.ac.uk
0191-222 6900
www.ncl.ac.uk

Course offered:
MS in Rural Development and Resource Management, which,
Provides graduates with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to contribute to the practice of, and further research into, issues of rural development and environmental management...it...is designed to cater for students with a variety of different backgrounds. (www.ncl.ac.uk)

It includes a module on rural society and development, though its emphasis is more on countryside management.

*University of Gloucestershire*
The Park, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 2QF
www.glos.ac.uk
01242 539700

Courses offered (normally in Cheltenham):
- Community Development BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time.
- Community Development and Heritage Management BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time
- Geography - Community Development with Options BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time.
- Community Development- Environmental Management with options BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time.
- Community Development with options BA (Hons) - 3 years full-time
- Community Development- Local Policy with Options BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Psychology - Community Development with options BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development and Sports Development - 3 year full-time course.
- Landscape Design- Community Development with Options BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Sociology- Community Development with options BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development - Human Resource Management with options - 4 year full-time course.
- Community Development- Health, Community and Social Care with options BSc (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development and Marketing Management BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development and Events Management BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Business Development and community Development BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development and Religion, Philosophy and Ethics BA (Hons) - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development Cert.HE - 3 year full-time course.
- Community Development Dip.HE - 2 year full-time course.

They also do part-time courses in Local Policy and in Community Development. There are progression routes from certificate, diploma and degree.

You could, as a community activist, take one or two modules and try it out and then take further courses to get a certificate. (Academic training provider, England, interview)

Local Policy course ... primarily picks up parish clerks and some parish councillors...majority have been from a rural background, though we do pick up some town clerks ... (Academic training provider, England, interview)

They use a ‘blended learning’ approach (see interviews in Section 1 for more information)

Horsted Centre
Mid-Kent College, Maidstone Road, Chatham, Kent ME5 9UQ
www.midkent.ac.uk
01634 830633
Course offered:
Community Development Foundation Degree - 2 years full-time course run by Mid Kent College in Chatham.

London College of Community Development Studies,
Tower Hamlets College, Poplar High Street, London E14 0AF
www.tower.ac.uk
020 7510 7510
Course offered:
Community Development Studies: Diploma in Project Development, Admin and Management- 3 years, full-time course run by London College of Community Development studies and computer sciences in Tower Hamlets.

Clapham Centre
45 Clapham Common South Side, London SW4 9BL
www.lambethcollege.ac.uk
020 7501 5010
Course offered:
Community Development Level 2 certificate - 1 year part-time evening course run by Lambeth College in Lambeth.
Courses offered:

- Organisation and Community Development MSc- variable length part-time day or evening course held in London North Campus, London Metropolitan University.
- Foundation Degree in Individual and Community Empowerment

**City College, Norwich**
Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ
www.ccn.ac.uk
information@ccn.ac.uk
01603 773773
Course offered: Certificate in Community volunteering

**Ruskin College, Oxford**
Walton Street, Oxford, OX1 2HE
www.ruskin.ac.uk
01865 554331
Course offered: Foundation Degree in Youth and Community Work.

**University of Hull**
Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX
www.hull.ac.uk/cll
01482 346311
Course offered: Diploma in Youth and Community Work
This is a 3 year part-time course for youth and community workers.

**University of Westminster**,
Marylebone Campus, 35 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5LS
020 7911 5000
www.westminster.ac.uk
Course offered: MA in Community Development.

**Trafford Hall**
Ince Lane, Wimbolds, Trafford, Nr Chester CH2 4JP
www.traffordhall.com
01244-300246
(National Tenants Resource Centre)
They deliver training in many topics, including: fundraising, project monitoring, group work, negotiation skills, celebrating diversity, setting up a community café, community involvement in urban design, involvement in housing, management issues, tackling anti-social behaviour, working with young people etc. The training is for all community volunteers, not just tenants. Courses are open to people from both rural and urban areas. Courses are designed to help individuals build skills and confidence to help them improve their neighbourhood. Most people who come on the courses get a bursary to help with the costs.

---

7 Although it is beyond the scope of this study, LMU also accredits the course for the MA in Social Development Practice, which covers many rural contexts, and is run by the Development School in East and Central Europe (www.development-school.org)
All courses are held at the centre (residential), the idea being to bring people together from across the UK to share experiences.

...in reality we found that groups were coming to Trafford Hall from as far away as Cornwall, and from Lincolnshire and Chichester, precisely because there wasn’t any training provision [locally]. (Liz Richardson, personal communication)

Their programmes come under the main headings of ‘Capacity Building “Making Things Happen”’, ‘DIY Community Action’ and ‘The Glass-House Programme (see separate entry under ‘Other/Miscellaneous’).

_Losehill - the Peak District National Park Study Centre_,
Losehill Hall, Castleton, hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 8WB.
www.losehill-training.org.uk
01433-620373
Provide short courses (2-3 days long and some residential) in mainly environmental subjects, but also includes subjects such as: Project management, A non-planner’s guide to the planning system, tools and techniques for engaging communities, environmental community action, managing your time and team effectively etc. They also have a consultancy service providing training, development coaching and facilitation to individuals and organisations.

_Voluntary Sector Skills_
c/o Workforce Hub in England, Regent’s Wharf, All Saint’s Street, London N1 9RL
www.voluntarysectorskills.org.uk
0207 713 6161
They provide training in the following courses:
- National Open College Network (NOCN) Level 3 Award in Managing volunteers
- NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Managing Voluntary and Community Organisations
- NOCN Level 3 Award in Managing Voluntary and Community Organisations.
The qualifications are aimed at those working in the sector and wanting to progress to learning managerial skills.

Learners may work in a variety of organisations and settings in the voluntary and community sectors. Individuals may be in paid or unpaid positions within organisations. (www.voluntarysectorskills.org.uk)

_ASDAN_
Wainbrook House, Hudds Vale Road, St George’s, Bristol BS5 7HY
0117 941 1126
Course offered:
Certificate in Community Volunteering.

_Northern College_
Wentworth Castle, Stainsborough, Barnsley, South Yorks S75 3ET
www.northern.ac.uk
01226 776000

_Northern College has the biggest residential training programme for community activists, and voluntary sector activists in England._ (John Grayson, Personal Communication)

They deliver short courses (Usually 3 residential days) on a wide range of skills and Community Development topics. They specialise in community regeneration programmes and they have a two year part-time diploma (weekends) course which gives Level 3 and Level 4 qualifications.

They undertake NRU National Training programmes.
They have specialised in Tenant Training Programmes since 1979 and offer the Chartered Institute of Housing National Certificate in Tenant Participation and Neighbourhood Renewal. The coalfield areas have always been a major focus of their work in a rural context and they have agreements with local Authorities (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Wakefield, Leeds) to provide free residential courses to community groups and activists on organising, campaigning, fundraising, training, etc, from the former pit villages. Their mainstream programmes attract a large number of rural activists, but the training does attract more urban activists than rural activists.

Workers’ Educational Association
Quick House, 65 Clifton Street, London, EC2A 4JE
www.wea.org.uk
020 7426 3450
The WEA is the UK’s largest voluntary provider of adult education. It provides education and learning to adults from all backgrounds, and in particular to those who have missed out on formal education. Courses are created and delivered in response to local need, often in partnership with local community groups and organisations. See entry under ‘Ireland’ for more details on type of courses offered.

The Community Work Training Company
Prospect House, Prospect Business Centre, Prospect Street, Huddersfield HD1 2NU
www.community-work-training.org.uk
01484 455060
The Community Work Training Company is a ‘not for profit organisation’ that provides training and support to individuals, groups, organisations and agencies working in the community sector. We operate within a community development framework providing courses in community work skills at all levels of knowledge and experience. (www.community-work-training.org.uk)

They provide a coordinated programme of training courses ranging from short introductory courses through to Certificate and Diploma programmes for people active in their communities across west Yorkshire. They provide short ‘bite size’ courses from 2 to 12 hours long. Some are accredited. They also run the Involving People in Community Development Level 2 Certificate (OCN).

YMCA
George Williams College, 199 Freemasons Road, Canning Town, London, E16 3PY
020-7540 4900
www.ymca.ac.uk
They offer taught programmes at all levels, including:
Introductory studies- OCN level 2 certificate
Foundation studies in informal and community education - NVQ Level 3
DipHE/ BA Hons in informal and community education- full-time or part-time (distance learning)
DipHE for qualified Personal Advisors (Connexions)
Special study programmes and tailor-made programmes
The courses are particularly for people wanting to into youth work, but they also cover community development, lifelong learning, children’s work, housing and hostel provisions, health and fitness and economic regeneration.
Students are also able to study to MPhil and PhD level with the college (in association with Canterbury Christ Church University College)

* at the time of writing, funding for this innovative agency was threatened.
PEANuT (Participatory Evaluation and Appraisal in Newcastle upon Tyne),
Division of Geography, University of Northumbria, Newcastle NE1 8ST
Ge.peanut@northumbria.ac.uk
www.northumbria.ac.uk
0191 227 3848

PEANuT’s aims are:
- to support those using participatory appraisal and develop a sustainable PA network in the north-east of England;
- to raise the profile of PA in NE England;
- to provide a range of training courses in PA; and
- to become a regional focus point for participatory research and consultation initiatives.

They run the following courses:
Introduction to Participatory Appraisal 1- day release, 1 day a week or evening sessions, weeks
Introduction to Participatory Appraisal 2 - running a participatory appraisal-based project
Bespoke training

There are, in addition to these course, a number of Youth and Community Work courses, specialising in working with young people.
There are also several postgraduate courses- but not for community volunteers/ activists.
Most formalised community development courses cater for people from rural areas, but few are specifically focused on community development in rural areas.

Specialist services offering incidental RCD training

Teesdale Village Halls Consortium
Enterprise House, Harmine Enterprise Park, Barnard Castle, Co Durham DL12 8XT
01833-696650
www.teesdalehalls.co.uk

This is a registered charity whose aim is,
to promote and improve the effectiveness of Village Hall and community organisations in Teesdale by the provision of relevant funding, training and information.
(www.teesdalehalls.co.uk)

They provide short courses in various subjects, including First Aid, Risk Assessment, Food hygiene, Health and Safety, Managing Community Premises, and computing.

Charities Information Bureau
93 Lawefield Lane, Wakefield, WF2 8SU
www.cibfunding.org.uk
funding@the-cib.demon.co.uk
01924 239063

The Charities Information bureau (CIB) is a training and information organisation with expertise in funding and funding related matter for the community and voluntary sector.
The CIB has a training programme for voluntary organisations and community groups within West Yorkshire which is delivered through partner organisations. (CIB website)

They run short courses on funding-related topics and they also run Open College Accredited Courses in West Yorkshire.
Groundwork UK
85-87 Cornwall Street, Birmingham, B3 3BY
0121-236 8565
www.groundwork.org.uk

We make a long-term commitment to supporting neighbourhoods viewed by many as disadvantaged and work closely alongside other organisations and existing initiatives to help improve the quality of life for people living there ... We provide training and support to help people get more involved in making decisions about where they live and to understand the benefit that sustainable development can bring...
(www.groundwork.org.uk)

The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation,
The Poplars, Lightmoor, Telford, TF4 3QN.
www.nif.co.uk
info@nif.co.uk
0870 770039

The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation is a UK charity based in Telford, Shropshire, specialising in community participation, training and development. Working with local authorities, housing associations, voluntary agencies and community groups, we offer an independent, quality service to improve the well-being of communities.
(Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation leaflet)
They offer courses on: developing a community newsletter, planning for real, anti-racism, becoming an employer, and building participation in community events.

Other / Miscellaneous

Groupwork Consultation and Training Limited (Private Company)
PO Box 363, Southsea, Hampshire. PO4 0YP
02392 750030
www.groupct.demon.co.uk

Founded in Greenwich London in 1987, Groupwork Consultation and Training Ltd (GCT Ltd) has developed a respected, proven, track record in offering social group-work education and training. They hold short courses in London and Brighton and are consistently asked to run in-house courses all over the British Isles.

We have had many different people attend our courses over the years, some of these may well have been community workers and volunteers in rural areas... (David Warren-Holland, personal communication)

Arthur Rank Centre
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2LZ
www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk
info@arthurrankcentre.org.uk
024 7685 3073
jill@rase.org.uk

The Arthur Rank Centre provides training for those new to working in ministry for the churches in rural areas. Training is offered to both lay and ordained people, but the majority of participants are ordained. The training covers issues such as the current state of rural England, how to understand and engage with rural communities, networks and organisations, and the current status of British agriculture ... Many
Church of England dioceses run courses open to everyone (especially lay people) to help with the development of rural initiatives and facilities... (Dr. Jill Hopkinson, Church of England National Rural Officer, personal communication)

Labyrinth consultancy and Training (private company),
7-9 Prince Street, Haworth, West Yorkshire, BD22 8LL.
01535 647443
www.freespace.virgin.net/labyrinth.consultancy
Our aim is to provide high quality, reasonably priced research, consultancy and training, particularly in the fields of community development and participation, organisation development, change management, inter-sector alliances, equal opportunities and social change.
(www.freespace.virgin.net/labyrinth.consultancy)

The Glass House, Community-Led Design,
2a Kingsway Place, Sans Walk, London.
020 7253 3334
www.theglasshouse.org.uk
The Glass House is a national design service, a charity offering advice, subsidised design training, and free follow-up project support to tenants and residents groups throughout Britain, enabling them to exert informed influences on physical regeneration projects with which they are involved. Short courses run throughout the year for a small fee. Professionals pay more. They are held at Trafford Hall in Chester, the National Tenants Resource Centre. The courses are aimed at people who are involved in, or want to be involved in, the regeneration of their area.

Our training courses offer to raise aspirations on what they can achieve as a group, our area of work specifically looks at the importance of good design of a project so that it works for the neighbourhood long term and also what's involved in that process.’ (Eve Chung, personal communication)

There is also a wide range of individuals working as freelance trainers/consultants, offering courses in many subjects; and some useful books, some of which are listed in the bibliography in Section 1. Some are focused on community development aspects of other sectoral concerns, such as Town Planning: for example:
1.0 Rural Community Development Training in Scotland

**Localised RCD training**

*Community Learning and Development (CLD),*
Shetlands Islands Council, Town Hall, Lerwick, Shetland  ZE1 0HB
www.shetland.gov.uk/community
info@shetland.gov.uk
01595 693 535

Here in Shetland, we work with various organisations eg. Volunteer Centre Shetland, Shetland Childcare Partnership, to ensure a range of training and development opportunities re available to community groups and activists...
(Fiona Stirling, CLD, personal communication)
Examples of courses are: book-keeping, engaging and consulting communities, stewarding/ licensing/ risk assessment (for Hall committees), funding, first aid, working with young people etc.
We have a team of community workers who tend to identify the needs and then we work with others in arranging the training/ workshops. (Fiona Stirling…)

**Highland Community Planning and Resources Project**
c/o Council Offices, High Street, Dingwall, IV15 9QN
Andy.Dorin@highland.gov.uk
01349-868 637
They provide ‘Highland Wellbeing Alliance Masterclasses’ in various aspects of community planning, community involvement and community development. The programme runs 60 short courses (typically an evening or a day) across Ross and Cromarty areas. The courses are free and for people with no previous knowledge. Delivery involves discussion and informal teaching methods. They are specifically targeted at ‘community groups and budding activists’

**Funding for Projects Incorporating RCD Training**

Moray Action for Communities
Room 245, Council Offices, High Street, Elgin IV30 1BX
www.moraygateway.com
01343 563353

This is a Leader Plus project based in the north-east of Scotland. Their focus is on improving the capacity of the voluntary sector. This means offering both grants and extensive training, which they offer for free. They provide the following:
- Short training courses (2-3 days each) on Training the trainers,
- Speak Up! (2 hours a week for 10 weeks) (developing confidence in speaking in public), and
- The Institute of Leadership and Management Level 3 Introductory Certificate in First Line Management- a free, flexible programme of study- 34 guided learning hours and tutorial workshops- about 2 a month. No specific entry requirement except basic literacy and numeracy, and involvement in a community based organisation.
- Other short workshops.
**RCD Formalised Training (Courses)**

*Community Health Exchange (CHEX)*  
Suite 329, Baltic Chambers, 50 Wellington Street, Glasgow G2 6HJ  
www.scdc.org.uk/chex  
janet@scdc.org.uk  
0141- 248 1990

CHEX is based in the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) which is a partnership between the Community Development Foundation (CDF) and the University of Glasgow. The main initiative that is run by CHEX is Health Issues in the Community Training Initiative:

*This is a cascade training initiative that aims to roll out community development approaches in tackling health inequalities and targets local volunteers, community reps and activists in localities. This is not specifically aimed at rural areas but there has been a reasonable amount of delivery in rural areas over the past 2-3 years...* (David Allen, personal communication)

The course, ‘Health Issues in the Community’ is delivered throughout Scotland. It is designed to develop community capacity and build confidence, develop workforce skills and community involvement. The course is accredited through the University of Edinburgh. 16 units. It is tailored to suit individual needs/needs of a group. Community activists are encouraged. They cite many examples of community activists/volunteers participating in the course which then lead onto other things. It was based on a training pack that has been out since 1996 and is mainly based on community development. Style of teaching is participatory, group work, discussion, case studies, feedback, written exercises and using fun. There is a fair amount of reading. Since 2001 it has been promoted and used widely in rural areas.

*The course creates a huge upsurge in confidence... People use us a kick start to build up confidence and go onto other things. A lot have gone onto become tutors on the course. They feel enthused by it...* (Community Development Partnership training provider, interview)

*University of Glasgow,*  
Glasgow, G2 8QQ  
0141 330 2000

They deliver the following course:  
Community Development and Social Inclusion: Adult and Continuing Education PhD- 3 year full-time course or MPhil, 1 year full-time.

*Lews Castle College*  
Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0XR, Scotland  
www.lews.uhi.ac.uk  
01851 770000

They offer the following course:  
HNC Working with communities- on-line courses with tutor support, part-time, two years. Progression route to BSc Rural Development Studies or BA Social Science degree.  
Access course: Introduction to Community Learning and Development- on-line course with tutor support.  
Students from voluntary and community sectors are welcome.

*University of Highlands and Islands,*  
Scotland  
01851 770451
www.lews.uhi.ac.uk
They deliver a number of courses, including:
BSc (Hons.) in Rural Development Studies - on-line
MSc in Managing sustainable rural development - on-line
Less advanced academic courses e.g. Access course in Community Development for people working in community groups wanting to do more - some of it is on-line.
HNC - Working with communities, Level 1, for people working with community groups.
There are also modules on other courses (all on-line) relevant to rural community development.

We have taken a lot of people who have begun as volunteers, wanted to get more involved, got a few certificates and then graduated to higher courses ...
... it is not necessarily geared towards volunteers but we get a lot of volunteers ...
... it is very flexible... (Academic training provider, Scotland, interview)
They use mainly on-line/ telephone/ distance learning style of delivery (see interviews for further information).

**Specialist services offering incidental RCD training**

*The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC),
Suite 329, Baltic Chambers, 50 Wellington Street, Glasgow, G2 6HJ
0141-248 1924
info@scdc.org.uk
www.scdc.org.uk*

This is the designated National Development Centre for community development in Scotland and is a partnership between the Community Development Foundation and the University of Glasgow. It works with communities, agencies/ partnerships and policy. It provides the following programmes/courses:

‘Doing it Better’ - a programme offering a range of learning opportunities and support services to enable practitioners and community members make a greater impact on their communities. Training courses cover a wide range of topics. All training events are in-house (i.e. organisations buy in training from SCDC) with a cost.

*In Scotland, we’ve had a tradition of community education- youth work, adult learning and community work. For a lot of people they specialised in youth work or adult learning and now find the world they are working in requires more of a community development approach. So they don’t have the training in this area. So our training compensates for this. It is not formally accredited. In the past we reserved a 3rd of places on training for community reps. This is really important ... In Scotland there is a commitment to seeing community reps as partners in training and learning. But training is not targeted mainly at community reps ... some programmes recruit people who have experience of community development but no academic background. It involves placements and some work on the job. (Community development partnership training provider, interview)*

**Other Resources**

*HICCAP*
HICCAP, Highlands and Islands Community Capacity Partnership, Fairways House, Fairways Business Park, Inverness, IV2 6AA
www.hiccap.org.uk
0131 474 6167
This is a partnership project with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness, that provide details of all community and voluntary training opportunities across the Highlands and Islands.
www.hiccap.org.uk
2.3 Rural Community Development Training in Wales

Learning by doing

Planed
http://www.planed.org.uk/homemain/Ehomemain.htm
Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise and Development –
This is a community-led local development partnership. It adopts an integrated rural development approach “linked to local heritage or the environment” and
encourages local people onto new knowledge and learning pathways, but we
do not often call it training or learning, as we have learned that this is not the
best way to encourage community engagement. (Asby, personal
communication).
For example Planed produces a DIY guide to developing and supporting community led sustainable tourism (2004) that provides a simple step-by-step approach to
enable local people to work together with key partners to develop tourism opportunities
which give maximum added value benefits to communities, whilst enhancing and
interpreting their rich heritage, environment and culture.
This is a ‘can do’ guide (available in electronic form) covering processes of community engagement as well as ‘products’ – project development and so on. It covers some generic RCD training issues such as
PR and project planning. (Planed 2004:75)
This approach helps to make projects and communities sustainable because it assists local people to
become articulate and confident, encourages local people to think long term and strategically.

University of Glamorgan
The Department of Community Regeneration
http://www.glam.ac.uk/regeneration/intro.html
produces a searchable web-based Community Development directory that
provides a comprehensive listing of a wide range of community development organisations, groups and
projects.
It details over 2,500 organisations in Wales; includes information on community development policy, plus 11 case studies of community regeneration programmes. Contact details are included for entries.
The case materials represent a resource so that
community development groups can learn from each other’s experience.
Furthermore, a lot of rural community development learning
is probably being delivered through the process/structures of Community Strategies in Wales. (Brace personal communication).

Localised RCD training

Aberfan and Merthyr Vale Youth and Community Project
http://www.amvycp.co.uk/
aycp@Merthyr-Tydfil.co.uk
01443 692020
At a community level this project works to combat high levels of crime in the villages ‘principally
caused by young people’, seeks personal development through IT training.

Llanharan Community Development Project (LCDP)
http://www.llanharan-community.co.uk/index.php

is another community-based regeneration initiative (serving ex-mining villages with a combined population of some 8,000 in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough). LCDP provides services for 11-25 year olds, a range of computer courses, Welsh language classes and creche facilities. The young people also run their own Youth Council.

**Funding for projects incorporating RCD training**

The [Welsh Assembly Government](http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/comfirsthome_e.htm) ‘Communities First’ programme facilitates the ‘development of skills’ to ‘break down the barriers to community led regeneration. In the case of Ystradgynlais and District Environmental Forum, for example, a £21,000 grant aid funded capacity building for people … who feel neglected in the area, and wish to engage in the Environmental Project. This project will act as a pilot for other projects in the area.

**Learning via networking**

The [Community Action Network (CAN)](http://www.can-online.org.uk/) is a mutual ‘learning and support network for social entrepreneurs and aims to strengthen communities and attack deprivation’ in Wales and the UK. CAN encourages the use of web and email-based technology.

[Community Agents for Change in Wales](http://cac.newport.ac.uk/intro.htm) is working towards

- skill training and good practice sharing across the South Wales Valleys for existing and new community groups. It is EU funded and sponsored by the University of Wales College (Newport) and based in Tredegar.

They offer free *Network Training Days* on topics such as ‘making groups work’. Plus exchange of practice visits e.g. to Scottish/English coalfield regeneration projects.

The [Wales Council for Voluntary Action](http://www.wcva.org.uk/dsp_home.cfm?initapp=1)

help@wcva.org.uk

0870 607 1666

offers ‘training’ via its constituent Councils for Voluntary Service. Including courses throughout Wales, conferences, seminars and briefings; a database of trainers and consultants, plus a trainers Support Network. Topics covered include ‘Building our communities’; ‘Media and promotion’; ‘European funding’; ‘Lobbying and representation’.

There seems to be

> relatively little formal community development training in Wales and what there is may not be focussed on rural work. (Davies, personal communication)

[Community Development Cymru - CDC](http://www.cdc.cymru.org)

www.cdc.cymru.org

is a pan-Wales member-led independent organisation. It aims to work across sectors to:
• Strengthen support for community development workers and others engaged in community development.
• Play an active role in the advancement of standards in community development practice.

CDC has produced a *Community Development Manifesto for Wales*. It highlights the need for:

**A range of creative approaches:** ‘investment in creative and participative methods for the involvement of people in democratic processes and to raise the level of Emotional Literacy of communities and individuals in order to build capacity in sustainable ways such as community creative theatre and/or open space technology.’

**Recognition of Community Learning:** ‘People should be entitled and encouraged to claim recognition of the learning and development they have gained through participation in community development activities’.

**Training Standards:** ‘the establishment of a Community Development Training/Education standard.’

CDC promotes

- peer support and good practice sharing and learning opportunities…communities and workers to learn, plan, take action and review progress together’
- and supports
  - community based learning and development across local sectors, communities and partnerships.

*Community Enterprise Wales*
http://www.communityenterprisewales.com/dsp_about.jsp?SectionDataID=901495 356734
is a network of organisations and individuals committed to developing community enterprise. It includes grass roots groups that are proposing/operating community businesses, plus the bodies that support them. A key aim is ‘networking and partnership between members’.

*Gwent Education and Research and Education Network (GWERIN)*
http://gwerin.newport.ac.uk/
supports the needs of individuals and groups who nurture abilities in the community, promote education, regeneration and development in communities, and those who do voluntary work.
The website publishes development reports, contact details and a discussion forum.

*Webster.uk.net*
http://webster.uk.net/optimalview/wrd/run/portal.show
is an online community portal for Torfaen. It seeks to increase internet use and skills and offers access to a range of information and services directly contributed by local community groups, clubs, voluntary and charity organisations, small businesses and public service providers, via direct training and ongoing support by the project’s outreach workers.
This EU-backed project aims to stimulate economic and social regeneration, improve social inclusion and encourage collaboration whilst providing an invaluable online resource.

**RCD formalised training (courses)**

*Wales on the Web*
has a searchable database of adult education/lifelong learning opportunities:

- It is an online guide to high quality, validated websites offering dependable information relating to Wales and all aspects of Welsh life.

Many of the following initiatives can be accessed via this portal.
University of Wales, Lampeter MA in Rural Community Regeneration.
http://www.lamp.ac.uk/postgrads/prospectus/archaeology.htm
An integrated programme of study relevant to vocational opportunities in the area of Community Regeneration in rural areas... especially in relation to economic development

University of Wales, Bangor
http://www.bangor.ac.uk/courses/undergrad/browse/content/pu159.php
Community Development Certificate/Diploma/BA (Hons). Available on a part and full-time basis, and taught in both the Welsh and English language. Modules include ‘Understanding Community’, ‘Community Analysis’ and ‘Community Enterprise’ – these are available ‘in the University and in the community’. Community Development also features in the M.A. in Countryside Management. A part-time H.E. Certificate, that can lead up to a Foundation Degree, in Community Development Studies (Llandrillo College) enables direct entry on to the Bangor Diploma course. Applicants need ‘at least two years' work, either paid or unpaid, in the sector’. http://www.llandrillo.ac.uk/courses/leaflet.asp?LEA=528
There now exists an all-Wales Community Learning Consortium to coordinate training in the field.

The University of Glamorgan
http://www.glam.ac.uk/coursedetails/685/137
01443 483680
offers a Foundation Degree in Community Regeneration, aimed at 'community development workers, community volunteers, staff in statutory agencies working with the community, and anyone with an interest in community-based regeneration strategies. The course delivery is flexible and allows students to maintain an active community role.’ An MSc in Community Regeneration is also offered.

http://www.anturteifi.org.uk/e_index.html
01239 710238
‘Founded in 1979 as a grassroots community initiative to promote economic and social development...Antur Teifi now operates throughout Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and beyond.' Trac, the training arm of the organisation provides specialist and business-related training. Including courses on personal development and team leadership.

Cynnal Ceredigion
http://www.cynnalceredigion.com/
01239 621828
is a rural community action programme for Ceredigion (West Wales) managed by Antur Teifi and Menter a Busnes and funded by the Welsh Assembly.
The aim is to develop local, social and economic activity throughout the county.
An Analysis of voluntary sector training needs was undertaken in 2004. A series of workshops promoting entrepreneurism amongst young people was also staged last year. Work in 2005 includes ‘a series of training workshops using the Telecabana, Antur Teifi's mobile computer unit.’

The Community University of the Valleys Partnership
http://www.cuv.org.uk/
involves the higher education and voluntary sectors in West Wales and the valleys, working to develop appropriate community based lifelong learning opportunities ... by bringing learning closer to home and ...making it more relevant to all parts of our
communities. Our activities specifically target isolated communities, providing innovative community based learning opportunities, from informal to degree level study, offering accessible options to gain higher-level qualifications and improve skill and employability levels.

There are free training events for workers and volunteers. We aim to integrate the provision of different learning providers to the benefit of communities and to minimise duplication of effort.

The partnership also funds research into issues affecting adult learners. By understanding the needs of learners and communities, we can work towards making learning opportunities fit”.

**Participation Cymru**

0870 607 1666
http://www.wcva.org.uk/content/policy/index.cfm?sub=4&display_sitetextid=129
help@wcva.org.uk

is a project hosted by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action. It provides support, information and training on issues around participation, consultation and facilitation to the public, private and voluntary sector in Wales...The courses are suitable for those working or involved with Local Government, Communities First, community activism...other public bodies and the voluntary and private sectors.

This is general community development/participation training rather than specifically tailored to rural circumstances. Courses cover group facilitation skills; engaging with hard to reach groups and participatory evaluation. 

http://www.wcva.org.uk/content/policy/index.cfm?sub=4anddisplay_sitetextid=129

**Connecting Communities Cymru**

http://aehindnt.swansea.ac.uk/ccc/en/default.asp
01792 513095

is a collaboration between the Department of Adult Continuing Education at the University of Wales Swansea and twelve community partners. It delivers high quality ICT-based learning to some of the most deprived communities in South Wales...the project has equipped, and is supporting twelve community training centres and two on-campus labs, with a state of the art computer network linked to the University for access to the Internet, World Wide Web, the main Library and other learning resources.

The aim is to provide an online learning experience that is flexible, supportive, interesting and meaningful to people’s lives, where new technologies, such as videoconference and a virtual learning environment are used to supplement face-to-face learning; learning that supports both personal and community development and raises people’s aspirations of what they can achieve.

**Specialised services offering incidental community development training**

**Community Mediation Services**

http://www.mediationrcct.co.uk/
01443 485587

seeks to enable people in Rhondda Cynon Taff to
have a direct impact in preventing, managing and resolving conflicts in their community. A website includes information about volunteering and training opportunities. Courses range across those completed in a day or less (e.g. *assertiveness skills*) to a 40-hour *Community Mediation Course*.

**Creative Rural Communities** (or the Vale of Glamorgan Rural Partnership)  
[http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Business%20And%20Work/Rural%20Regeneration.aspx](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Business%20And%20Work/Rural%20Regeneration.aspx) is led by the local council in partnership with agencies across the sectors. Development of ‘rural enterprise and skills’ is a key development theme for the partnership and the website acts as a portal to a range of lifelong learning opportunities.

**Development Trusts Association Wales (DTAW)**  
[http://www.dta.org.uk/Content/theDTA/rural.htm](http://www.dta.org.uk/Content/theDTA/rural.htm) is based at Penarth. The aim is to assist in the creation of a sustainable development trust in every community in Wales that wants one. There are now 28 full member trusts in Wales. DTAW is an offshoot of the DTA which has 43% of its members working in a range of rural settings. DTA fosters ‘exchange of practitioner skills and experience’. *Tredegar Development Trust* is one such ‘non-profit initiative working with the community to provide brighter prospects for future generations’.

**InterAct Networks**  
[www.interactnetworks.co.uk](http://www.interactnetworks.co.uk) is a Limited Liability Partnership of 4 experienced trainers and facilitators. It has established facilitator networks and facilitation training for mixed groups which include volunteers (Colbourne, personal communication). ‘Facilitation’ is the skill of drawing out and on community preferences. The aim is to increase the capacity of local communities and organisations to deliver effective consultation and consensus-building, involvement and partnership working across the UK. Foundation and further training is offered, so that participants can develop genuinely usable skills and experience and ... learn and then practice together in a way that ensures they are able to apply their learning and make real progress in their skills development.

**The Wales Rural Observatory**  
[http://www.walesruralobservatory.org.uk/eng/main-e.html](http://www.walesruralobservatory.org.uk/eng/main-e.html) monitors long-term trends and changes in the countryside and provides solutions to issues identified. The site offers downloadable summaries of statistical and research reports, relevant to the social and economic conditions of rural Wales. It is operated by specialist researchers at Cardiff and Aberystwyth Universities who are e.g. studying ‘capacity-building and local leadership in rural Wales’.

**Groundwork Wales**  
[http://www.groundworkwales.org.uk/](http://www.groundworkwales.org.uk/) seeks to build community capabilities in decision making and provide ‘opportunities for training and participation in environmental action’. The work includes ‘learning initiatives with schools, opportunities for youngsters to develop through project-based tasks, and involvement of local people in decision making and practical initiatives’.

**WEA South and North Wales**  
form part of the overall Workers’ Educational Association, a democratic, voluntary adult education movement, committed to widening participation and to enabling people to realise their full potential through learning.

It is the UK’s largest voluntary provider of adult education. WEA runs over 10,000 courses each year, for more than 110,000 adults of all ages and backgrounds. The WEA Community Programme, in particular, is designed to meet local community needs.

We work in partnership with more than 1,500 community groups, voluntary and statutory organisations to provide over 5,000 courses annually.

Much of this work seeks to tackle exclusion.

Courses are run in some of the most disadvantaged urban and rural communities, in local venues such as community centres ...

The curriculum is negotiated with the individual group of learners, and a wide range of subject areas are offered:

Arts and crafts, health and personal development, family learning, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Basic Skills are the most popular courses.

In North Wales a Peripatetic Outreach Programme delivers courses to ‘isolated rural areas’ and is aimed at those in danger of becoming economically inactive.
1.0 Rural Community Development Training in Ireland

Localised RCD training/ learning by doing

The Global Action Plan (GAP) for Cork
identifies
  participants who have the potential to deliver the programme themselves…to
  spread the programme more efficiently but also to embed it in communities by
  encouraging local delivery by local people’ (Holden, personal
  communication).

The GAP incorporates occasional training days ‘to empower potential team leaders’, plus mentoring and
‘back up’. The focus is on environmental issues – ‘a really safe and easy place for people to start group work
in order to become confident community leaders’ centred on ‘saving money and saving the planet.

Learning via networking

Action Aid Ireland ‘Learning Zone’.
www.actionaidireland.org
They
  conduct development education including methods of outreach and engagement (Gray, personal
  communication).

RCD formalised training (courses)

  In terms of courses for adults interested in RD in Ireland the market is probably saturated.
  (Professor Jim Phelan UCD, personal communication)

The National University of Ireland (Galway)
http://www.v-learn.ie/introduction.htm
http://www.nuigalway.ie/adulteducation/programmes/masters_rural_development.html
delivers a diploma/BSc degree in Rural Development by Distance Learning that is web-based (‘blended
learning’). It is equivalent to three years full time study (worth 180 credits). Students engage via a virtual
campus and communicate using Blackboard.com. Students also attend workshops every 5/6 weeks. The
programme is a collaborative venture between four universities (NUI Dublin, NUI Cork, NUI Galway
and NUI Maynooth) and targets those involved in rural development in a professional or voluntary
capacity.

  ... but most are professional rural development officers (Phelan, personal communication).

It provides participants with the knowledge and skills to manage local/rural community development
initiatives. Currently there are some 50 degree and 70 diploma students.
There is also a Distance Learning Masters course in Rural Development (MRD), started in 1985 with
FÁS, the Training and Employment Authority. It is delivered by three of the four NUI colleges. The
MRD is
designed to train personnel in both general and specific aspects of rural development,
in order to facilitate the coordination and participation in ‘bottom-up’ initiatives, while
also strengthening the delivery of ‘top-down’ policies.
Although the MSc has a stated aim to cater for ‘community leaders’ as well as development staff, in practice it seems unlikely to attract activists since candidates must normally possess a degree or equivalent professional qualification and have at least 3 years experience in development-related activities.

The fee of around €4,900 per year (circa £3,400) may also be prohibitive for those on low income. Elsewhere Wals et al. (2004: 33) note that the EU LEADER model ‘[of partnership, local stakeholder involvement and participatory development] matches very closely the ideology of the programme’ (Ibid.).

NUI Galway also delivers a part-time Certificate/Diploma in Community Development Practice, designed for activists to gain a thorough understanding of community development combined with the practical skills to work effectively.

The Community Development Practice programmes are suitable for participants who are actively involved in community development work and who wish to obtain a formal qualification.

As far back as 1989 Denman et al. (p. 95) commented on Galway’s diploma courses in Social Action: These 2 hour evening classes ran for 12-20 weeks and fostered participation. They were located in the village or small rural town for which they were designed and usually took place in a local school or community hall … The yardstick of success was ‘practical achievement and personal development’ (Ibid.).

Tipperary Institute
http://www.tippinst.ie/courses/srd/index.htm
‘has a special remit in promoting Sustainable Rural Development.’ It runs a number of training programmes in RD. These include a BA (Hons) in Rural Development; Certificate in Community Development and National Diploma in Rural Development.

**Specialised services offering incidental community development training**

Tipperary Institute’s
http://www.deri.ie/outreach/education/
Digital Enterprise Research Institute (DERI) delivers an educational outreach programme – DERI Óg – to help community groups and schools in the Galway region utilise the World Wide Web as an interactive communication and information-gathering system. In particular, the programme is designed to ensure young people develop the technological skills necessary to secure future career success in our increasingly knowledge-based society.

It does, however, look technically ‘heavy’ and not easily accessible to ‘generalists’.
2.0 Rural Community Development Training in Northern Ireland

The *State of the Sector III* report (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, 2001) notes that there are approximately (sic) 29,168 paid employees within the community and voluntary sectors in Northern Ireland. Further, there are approximately, 73,000 volunteers engaged in some form of formal volunteering for voluntary and community groups.

**Localised RCD training/ learning by doing**

- **Community Women’s Education Initiatives**
  [http://www.peacewomen.org/campaigns/NorthernIreland/NorthernIreland.html](http://www.peacewomen.org/campaigns/NorthernIreland/NorthernIreland.html)
  cwei@eircom.net provides a mobile training unit for outreach, plus online resources.

- **Interaction Associates**
  is a private consultancy, offers training in collaborative change/leadership.

**Funding for projects incorporating RCD training**

- **The Rural Development Council**
  targets project implementation support to grant recipients. (Mack, personal communication)

**Learning via networking**

- [www.communityplanning.net](http://www.communityplanning.net) gives examples of outreach activity on the basis of ‘self-taught learning’ (Gray, personal communication).

- **The Community Work Education and Training Network (CWETN)**
  promotes the development, maintenance and promotion of good quality, relevant and accessible education and training in support of community development values and practice principles.
  CWETN seeks to address
  issues of poverty, marginalisation, racism and disadvantage through community development education and training provision.

- **Community Change (Belfast)**
  offers outreach training and development support.

- **The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland**
  [http://www.communityfoundationni.org/home.htm](http://www.communityfoundationni.org/home.htm)
works to strengthen and ‘build peace in the divided communities of Northern Ireland.’

Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
http://www.nicva.org/
adopts
a partnership and community development approach … so that we can share our ideas and knowledge as well as learning from others … NICVA will … consider new and challenging ways of working.
It represents the interests of over 5000 voluntary and community groups in Northern Ireland.

RCD formalised training (courses)

Workers Educational Association (Northern Ireland)
http://www.wea-ni.com/
research ‘has shown that Northern Ireland has the lowest uptake of adult education in the UK and 24% of adults have only the most basic literacy standards.’

The Rural Community Network (Northern Ireland)
http://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org/links.htm
has been running a programme of rural community development training since 2001 across Northern Ireland. To date over 30 ‘Building Community Development Practice’ programmes have been delivered to some 500 participants. Funding is provided by the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland. Each training programme consists of six sessions of around three hours each:
1. Introduction to community development
2. Encouraging community participation and involvement
3. Group working and decision-making
4. Tackling disadvantage
5. An introduction to networking
6. Building relationships and planning ahead

The programme is targeted at local community group members and those within rural communities interested in becoming involved in community activity. (Clarke, A. personal communication).

The programme is run ‘in each rural community, preferably within community venues at times and dates to suit the participants. RCN offers financial assistance to provide travel, childcare and carer costs.
In 2003 RCN developed an ‘accredited training programme’ for community capacity-building trainers:
18 community workers/practitioners have participated…as a means of rolling out the basic programme. (1-6 detailed above).
The second run of the BTEC Professional Certificate (an HND equivalent) in ‘Community Capacity Training’ is due to start in September 2005. RCN also offers a ‘training programme for community groups managing community venues that explores many similar aspects in terms of linking with the wider community’. Additionally the programme encourages community groups managing venues/halls to explore the use of the building for community education provision by linking with local education providers.
Furthermore, RCN runs an annual 3-day ‘Rural Community Development Summer School’ for practitioners and activists. About 90 people attend each year, participating in a variety of workshops focusing on aspects of practice. Guest speakers and workshop facilitators, from across Ireland and the UK, share experience of good practice and new ways of working.

Queens University Belfast
http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/GibsonInstitute/TaughtCourses/
delivers an MSc in Rural Development and Project Management. There are links to the National University of Ireland Masters in RD.

The Rural College at Draperstown
http://www.ruralcollege.co.uk/
runs a diploma in Community Development Practice, which is in the evening and geared at people already working in the area. (Shortall, personal communication)

The Workers Educational Association (Northern Ireland)
http://www.wea-ni.com/
organises adult learning, mostly in community settings, with around 6000 people participating in programmes each year. Most programmes are taught through our pool of part-time tutors … Even with the huge increases in community development of recent years there are still many areas and interest groups that are lagging behind in their ability to organise and access resources. Those communities with a weak infrastructure require training and support that makes a practical difference. A focus for the WEA’s capacity building programmes is on developing collaborative skills that will assist organisations in achieving sustainability.

The WEA’s Building Communities Team
provides learning opportunities to groups to assist them to develop their work.

As well as offering high quality courses in facilitation skills, negotiation and conflict management, the team works with other agencies to ensure the strengthening of the community infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

Building Communities

Listed below is a selection of recent WEA courses relevant to RCD

Effective Fundraising
Exploration of Identity/Culture
Facilitation
Facilitative Leadership
Increasing Community Participation
Introduction to Community Relations
Lobbying
Mediation
Negotiation Skills
Paths Through The Past 1
Paths Through The Past 2
Peace and Reconciliation
Planning to Achieve
Political Education
Practical Politics
Prejudice Awareness
Preparing for Change
Principled Negotiation Skills
Us and Them
Us and Them Too
Victims and Survivors
Working on a Committee
Annex: methodology and research tools

The Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development commissioned this small-scale action research project in Spring 2005. The brief was to:

- Identify any current training in rural community development (or aspects of it e.g. ‘leadership’ skills; making grant applications; report writing; project evaluation etc.) for volunteers/local activists (in England, Ireland, N. Ireland, Scotland and Wales)

The focus of the study was to be on rural community development training for volunteers/local activists (across the Carnegie Commission’s territories of interest), rather than formal training for those who are or intend to become professional workers. The coverage included one-off sessions, more formalised/extensive training, plus further and higher educational provision.

The research was conducted through stakeholder dialogue (via e-mail); telephone interviews with key players; web and other literature searches. The web searches were undertaken by visiting websites of key organisations and by sending e-mails through relevant networking lists.

Approximately 40 interviews were conducted, mostly by telephone.

Below we include examples of
  a. a typical telephone interview
  b. the interview schedule itself.

Anonymised sample completed key player telephone interview

1. What do you understand by ‘rural community development training for volunteers/activists’?
   How individuals can work in their own communities, based on community development principles, such as ‘ownership’. Training I’d rather call a ‘learning journey’ that involves self-learning.

2. What RCD training do you provide?
   We undertake participatory planning and facilitation work. Such as community visioning, leading up to the production of a ‘community-based plan’.

3. How is it delivered? (Occasional sessions, online etc?)
   A lot of our ‘training’ has been in the form of ‘one-off’ undertakings; for example funded by the Community Foundation Northern Ireland. But these haven’t tended to embrace community development principles and we became uneasy and disenchanted with this funding-led approach, of ‘parachuting’ in ‘experts’ for a short period.

4. Is specifically RCD training necessary? Why/not?
   I’m not convinced that specifically rural community development training is necessary. What’s more important is that ‘training comes when you do other things first’. This allows trust to build up, people to see practical results (from project work) that then can more naturally lead on to ‘training’.
And there are many similarities e.g. between inner city estates and remoter rural areas in terms of people feeling excluded and so on. I think volunteers from both ‘camps’ can learn a lot from each other.

5. Does more general RCD training cater for rural volunteers? Explain answer
Not certain.

6. Is there a role for volunteer-to-volunteer ‘training’ as opposed something done to/with volunteers by a (paid) trainer?
Definitely; it’s what we’re working towards. It’s realistic to expect this to happen and to some extent this is already taking place in the [place name] – a mixed urban and rural area.

1. Is RCD training necessary (or is it adequate as a by-product of e.g. completing a grant application, project design etc; Training through process? I would favour ‘learning by doing’; skills development shouldn’t be compartmentalised in to ‘training’ divorced from action. The process and the product are important – with people seeing things done.

7. Is the term ‘rural community development training’ demeaning or problematic in any way?
Not demeaning but scary; people are anxious about training in terms of what is expected of them, time commitment, cost, literacy required, time off work, childcare, and uncertainty about ‘what’s the point’, ‘where will training lead?’

8. Any other ideas/issues related to effective RCD training for volunteers?
The protestant church in particular has a tradition of community-based work – for example maintaining community meeting places and village halls. There remain sectarian issues relevant to rural community development training. Volunteer training would need to be planned sensitively; for example alternating locations, finding neutral venues, being alive to certain times of the year (the ‘marching season’), and requiring liaison across the communities"
Interview Guide: Rural Community Development Training

1. What do you understand by ‘rural community development training for volunteers/activists’?

2. What RCD training do you provide?

3. How is it delivered? (Occasional sessions, online etc?)

4. Is specifically RCD training necessary? Why/why not?

5. Does more general RCD training cater for rural volunteers? Explain answer

6. Is there a role for volunteer-to-volunteer ‘training’ as opposed something done to/with volunteers by a (paid) trainer?

7. Is RCD training necessary (or is it adequate as a by-product of eg. Completing a grant application, project design etc; training through process?)

8. Please give your brief reaction to the following statement:

‘Education/ training … must be an ongoing priority in the overall development process. This is generally under-recognised by public agencies and funding bodies, but it is central both to the empowerment process of the development initiative, and to maintaining the momentum of the initiative through development of the human potential of the community’ (Arkleton Trust 1990: 12)

9. Is the term ‘rural community development training’ problematic in any way?

10. Any other ideas/ issues related to effective RCD training for volunteers?

11. Contact/ details of other RCD training?