

People and Work Unit

‘A Night on the Books’

Interim Evaluation of Build It

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Uned **Pobl a Gwaith**

“I sometimes have a night on the books instead of going out with the boys.

I study now ‘cos I see the need.’”¹

Executive Summary

Introduction: Qualifications matter, because without them, young people in Wales face a significantly higher risk of economic inactivity, unemployment and low pay. A key challenge is that by age 25, the majority of young people who left school or college with no qualifications, still have no qualifications, exposing them to the risk of poverty and social exclusion for the rest of their lives.²

Build It is an action research project that is exploring what it takes to enable a un- or under employed young person with no or low qualifications and negative experiences of school, who is living in one of the most deprived communities in Wales, to get the qualifications that will enable them to secure highly skilled and paid employment throughout their working lives.

The first phase of the project was primarily funded by the Rank Foundation, the Lloyds-TSB Foundation and the European Social Fund. The second phase of the project was funded by the Rank Foundation, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust and the European Regional Development Fund.

The project: Build It recruited four experienced construction workers, providing them with support and training to enable them to develop the skills they would need to work with young people as ‘Team Leaders’, supporting, encouraging and challenging the twelve young men the project recruited as apprentices in 2002.

In the first year the apprentices completed a general construction skills course at Ebbw Vale College and undertook a range of personal development activities. In the second year, the apprentices each chose a particular trade to specialise in, began an NVQ Level 1 in that trade and started working with contractors. In 2004 and 2005, the apprentices progressed to NVQ Level 2. Two of the original twelve apprentices were sacked for misconduct, and two more apprentices were recruited. In 2005, additional funding enabled the project to recruit another four apprentices, to take the total to 16.

¹ Comments from an apprentice to the external evaluator, Alain Thomas, May 2006

² JRF., 2005. Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Wales 2005, <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/0575.asp>

This report explores the challenges the apprentices and Team Leaders have faced, how they were overcome and the impact of the project upon both the apprentices and their communities.

Methodology: As a piece of action research, project workers are not only passive observers of the young people – apprentices – that the project works with, but active participants, shaping interventions in response to the needs of apprentices and reflecting upon how and why these interventions work. This evaluation draws upon their knowledge, complementing it with more formal fieldwork, involving semi-structured interviews and focus groups with project staff, apprentices and partners, conducted by the People and Work Unit's Senior Researcher and Researcher, Duncan Holtom and Rhodri Bowen respectively and an external evaluator, Alain Thomas.

Key Findings: The project has demonstrated that the failure of fourteen of the sixteen apprentices' to reach NVQ Level 2 at school, did not mean that they lacked the aptitude to succeed given a genuine second chance: by April 2006 all of the apprentices were on course to acquire the human capital they would need to access and sustain highly-skilled, well paid employment in their communities. This has transformed their **life chances** and **quality of life**. It has also impacted positively upon their communities, through **physical improvements**, enhanced **community relations** and the creation of **role models** for success. However their experience, along with that of the two apprentices who left school with NVQ Level 2, suggests that **multiple risk factors** with few compensatory **protective factors**, created **barriers** which were compounded by their own **limited resources**, left them with few if any options to access and sustain highly-skilled, well-paid employment.

Given the complex challenges all the apprentices faced, **Team Leaders** played a pivotal **protective role** that helped transform apprentices' life chances. They provided the support, encouragement and challenge that apprentices needed to overcome barriers, reduce their vulnerability to succumbing to fresh barriers and they helped develop apprentices' human capital. There is therefore a very strong case for arguing that without Build It, none of the apprentices would have achieved as much as they have.

The protective and supportive roles that team leaders played could be broadly classified as types of **direct practical support** to overcome barriers (e.g. help with

transport, negotiating the college system and finding contractors) and more indirect, **pastoral support**, that helped build apprentices' capacity to manage risk factors (their resilience) and helped develop their human capital.

The evaluation demonstrated that the project could reduce or eliminate many of the **practical barriers**, things like a lack of transport, information and complex college systems. By offering a pathway to a career and staff that apprentices could readily identify with, the project was also able to reduce many of the dispositional, cultural and efficacy barriers that would otherwise block initial participation in courses like the Modern Apprenticeship. However, it was much harder for the project to address barriers and risk factors, such as negative attitudes toward training, low expectations and drug and alcohol abuse, which were rooted in the **values, beliefs and behaviour** of **apprentices' communities**. These barriers significantly slowed some apprentices' progress.

The evaluation demonstrates that the pastoral support needed to help build apprentices internal resources, helping them overcome barriers and cope with risk factors, was not simply about advice and encouragement, but critically, about promoting **values and standards** and nurturing aspects of **self-awareness**, such as self-confidence and self-efficacy. In order to provide this type of support effectively, Team leaders needed to develop strong relationships of trust and respect with apprentices.

The evaluation also highlights the role the other elements of the project played in enabling the apprentices to succeed. **Contractors** played an important role in helping develop apprentices' vocational and practical skills. **Work in the community** was valued for the way it helped develop social skills, but criticised when it failed to develop vocational and practical skills, because the work was insufficiently challenging. **Personal development** activities were praised for raising self-awareness and apprentices' ability to handle relationships. **College** was valued primarily for the qualifications it offered.

The evaluation concludes with a set of **recommendations** for **learning policy** and **practice** and **economic** and **social development**. These recommendations are intended to remove the barriers that hinder young people's participation in education, training and employment and to provide targeted support to a minority who need additional help to cope with the risk factors they face. The costs of not providing this

support are likely to be considerable, including the human and social costs of stunted potential and social exclusion; and the financial costs of recruiting the one in five apprentices who drop out before completing their Modern Apprenticeships together with the costs of benefits and administration plus, losses in national insurance contributions and taxes, for every unemployed person, running to approximately £9,000/year.³

³ Cf. Lloyd-Jones, S., 2005. *A Map Of Transition In The South Wales Valleys*. Thesis ., Phd.) - University Of Wales Cardiff

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1. Introduction

1.1. The People and Work Unit (PWU) was established in 1984 in response to the economic dislocation caused by mine closures in South Wales.⁴ In the early 1990s, the PWU began working with disadvantaged young adults, through projects like the *Missing Link* (1992-1997). The lessons learned from this project, most notably the importance of the relationships that workers forged with young people, led to the development of the *Ladder* Project (1997-2002). The *Ladder* supported and enabled large numbers of young people to access education, training and employment.⁵ Despite its success, the project found it difficult to help many young men who were telling the PWU that the only qualifications that could make a real difference to them were in construction.

1.2. The Foundation and Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programmes (see boxed text), in fields such as construction, were and remain the main route for those unwilling or unable to pursue more academic post-16 education and training pathways⁶. Therefore they should offer a learning pathway for the young men the *Ladder* project worked with. However in practice, awareness and understanding of the programme remains low⁷, access to the MA is restricted by the requirement to have qualifications at NVQ Level 2 and to have an employer. Drop out rates are high and progression from National Traineeships onto the Modern Apprenticeship (NVQ Level 3) has been weak (see boxed text).⁸ In this context, *Ladders* workers found they lacked the capacity to provide the specialized support needed to help young men access and progress through the MA. The only courses open to the young people they worked were at NVQ Level 1 or below; courses offering qualifications at too low a level to enable people to

⁴ For more information please go to <http://www.peopleandworkunit.org.uk>

⁵ Lloyd-Jones, S., 2002. *D'you know what I mean? The Ladder project – A study in learning to meet young people's needs*. Abergavenny: People and Work unit

⁶ Wiseman, J., Roe, P., & Boothby, D., 2003. *Evaluation Of Modern Apprenticeships And National Traineeships In Wales: A Report To National Council For Education And Learning Wales (NC-ELWA)*. Unpublished Report; SEU., 2004. The impact of government policy on social exclusion among young people A review of the literature for the Social Exclusion Unit in the Breaking the Cycle series. London: ODPM

⁷ When young people and their parents were surveyed, two thirds had heard of the MA programme, but very few knew what its features were or how it operated (cited in Maguire, M. 1998. 'Modern Apprenticeships and Employers', *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 50, pp. 247–249.)

⁸ Training Standards Council (2000). *Modern Apprenticeships: A Survey Report by the Training Standards Council*. Cited in SEU., 2004. The impact of government policy on social exclusion among

find work and lacking the pathways that would have enabled young people to progress onto higher level courses. This problem provided the inspiration for Build It.⁹

The Modern Apprenticeship Programme

Modern Apprenticeships were introduced in 1994 in response to the decline in industry provided apprenticeships and the low skills levels of the UK labour force¹⁰.

Modern Apprenticeships were targeted at the “most able”, effectively excluding those leaving with school with few qualifications. Given the rise in the numbers of young people ‘not in employment, education or training’ (NEET), National Traineeships were introduced to provide a pathway from school into the Modern Apprenticeship programme for young people with low or no qualifications. More recent programmes have introduced another lower rung, through entry to employment schemes (E2E) in England¹¹ and the Youth Gateway programme in Wales.¹²

In 2001 National Traineeships were phased out, as the Modern Apprenticeship programmes were split into the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (FMA), which replaced the National Traineeship, and Modern Apprenticeship (MAs)¹³

FMA are aimed at young people aged 16-24 and provide the chance to gain work-related skills, usually up to NVQ Level 2, whilst continuing in employment.

The MA is also aimed at young people aged 16-24, but is a higher level programme, that usually requires qualifications at NVQ Level 2 or above (equivalent to 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above) and takes apprentices to NVQ Level 3 or 4.

Unless indicated otherwise, this report uses the term ‘Modern Apprenticeship’ to describe both the FMA and MA.

young people A review of the literature for the Social Exclusion Unit in the Breaking the Cycle series. London: ODPM

⁹ *Build It* was the title for the first phase of the project (2003-2005). It has been followed by a continuation project, *Communities Can Build It Too* that has followed the same principles and practice. This evaluation report examines their impact as if they were one single project, and the report uses the title ‘Build It’ to describe both Build It and its successor, Communities Can Build It Too.

¹⁰ Fuller, A. & L. Unwin., 2003. ‘Creating A ‘Modern Apprenticeship’: A Critique Of The UK’s Multi-Sector, Social Inclusion Approach’, *Journal Of Education And Work*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2003

1.3. Build It is a partnership between the People and Work Unit, Bryncynon Strategy, Cwmni (Treherbert), The Ebbw Vale and District Development Trust, Penywaun Enterprise Partnership, Rhondda Housing Association and United Welsh Housing Association and is funded by the European Regional Development Fund, The Coalfields Regeneration Trust and The Rank Foundation. It targeted young people aged 18-25¹⁴ with no or low qualifications (below NVQ Level 2)¹⁵ who were un- or under-employed (e.g. engaged in low skilled factory work) living in some of the most deprived communities in Wales - Abertillery, Bryncynon, Penywaun, and Treherbert. For example:

- Four apprentices are from communities in the highest 5% of the 2005 Welsh Index of multiple Deprivation (WIMD);
- A further six apprentices are from communities in the highest 10% of the WIMD;
- A further four apprentices are from communities in the highest 20% of the WIMD; and
- The remaining two apprentices are from communities in the highest 30% of the WIMD.¹⁶

1.4. The mix of apprentices in terms of the deprivation of their communities was also reflected in the qualifications they held before joining the project (see table 1.1).

¹¹ Learning and Skills Council website, [Hhttp://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Partners/PolicyandDevelopment/EntrytoEmploymentH](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Partners/PolicyandDevelopment/EntrytoEmploymentH) [Accessed 26th May 2006]

¹² Careers Wales Website, [Hhttp://www.careerswales.com/youngpeople/16to19_youth.aspH](http://www.careerswales.com/youngpeople/16to19_youth.aspH) [Accessed 26th May 2006]

¹³ SEU., 2004. The impact of government policy on social exclusion among young people A review of the literature for the Social Exclusion Unit in the Breaking the Cycle series. London: ODPM

¹⁴ The upper and lower age limit reflects the entry requirements for the MA programme

¹⁵ Equivalent to 5+ GCSEs/O-Levels A-C or 1 A-level or 2/3 AS Levels

¹⁶ See Appendix for Details

Table 1.1. Apprentices qualifications prior to joining the project	
Apprentice *	Previous qualifications reported by apprentices
A	GCSE English, Maths, Geography, Science, French, design and Technology (all below grade C)
B	GCSE Maths, Science, History, English (all below grade C)
C	GCSE English (B, C), Science Double Award (C, C).
D	GCSE Maths (C), Design and Technology (C), English, IT (D)
E	None
F	12 GCSE s (Grade not known), NVQ Level 1 in CAD
G	NVQ 1 Sanding
H	GCSE Art (B), English (C, E) Design and Technology (D), Welsh (D) Science, Drama (E), Maths (F)
I	NVQ Level 1 - Electronics
J	GCSE English (C), Science (D), Sociology (E), Resistent Materials (sic) (E), Maths (F)
K	COE - English, Geography, Traffic education City and Guilds in Gardening
L	English (C), Maths (C), Science (C), History (C), IT (C), Catering, Geography (C)
M	NVQ Level 1 (subject unknown)
N	GCSE Design and Technology and Art - (both below grade C)
O	GCSE Art (C), Maths (D), French (D), English (E), Welsh (E), Science (E)
P	None

** In order to protect the anonymity of apprentices the letters we have allocated to apprentices do not match the numbers we have allocated to apprentices in subsequent tables. Therefore for example, apprentices A and B in this table are not apprentice numbers 1 and 2 in tables 5.4. and 6.3.*

1.5. The mixture of apprentices that the project recruited, was partly by design, given the aim of forming mixed ability teams and partly due to the problems the project experienced initially in recruiting apprentices. Therefore whilst the project did turn down a number of potential applicants who were judged not to need the help and support of the project, it ended up recruiting two apprentices, who as noted reported having qualifications at NVQ Level 2 before joining the project.¹⁷

¹⁷ Apprentice L reported having 5 GCSEs at Grade C, and apprentice F reported having twelve GCSEs, whilst he was not sure what grade they were, we have erred on the side of caution and assumed that at least five were at Grade C.

A Brief History Of Build It

In order to develop Build It, the PWU initiated discussions with both the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and ELWA. The CITB were supportive of the principle, but unable to work with voluntary section organisations like the PWU. In contrast, whilst Education and Learning Wales (ELWA) were interested, they were very sceptical about the apprentices' prospects for achieving NVQ Level 3, suggesting that because the project targeted non-traditional learners, it should be aiming lower. The PWU disagreed, and decided, with the support of its funders (see below) and partners, the Bryncynon Strategy, Cwmni (Treherbert), The Ebbw Vale and District Development Trust, Penywaun Enterprise Partnership, Rhondda Housing Association and United Welsh Housing Association, to develop the project alongside mainstream provision.

In October 2002, with core funding from The Rank Foundation, The Lloyds-TSB Foundation and the European Social Fund, complemented by funding for training and equipment from ELWA and Action Team for Jobs, the project recruited four experienced construction workers. They undertook training in fields such as supervision skills, recognising drug and alcohol abuse, anger management and site safety, to help prepare them for their role as Team Leaders. In December 2003, the project recruited its first cohort of twelve apprentices. Following induction and team-building exercises, they began a General Construction Skills course at Ebbw Vale College.

In September 2003 the apprentices began an NVQ Level 1 in their chosen trade (plumbing x 8, brick laying x 2, carpentry x 1 and electrician x 1), for two days a week. They also began working with their Team Leaders in the community, for two days a week and with a contractor for one day a week.

In 2004 it became clear that apprentices progress was slower than had been hoped due to problems including a shortage of plumbing equipment at Ebbw Vale College. Changes to the NVQ programme in plumbing also meant that a number of modules in what had been the Certificate in Plumbing, the spring board for NVQ 2, were no longer recognised, forcing apprentices to complete additional

modules before they could progress. In order to try to accelerate the apprentices' progress, the eight plumbers moved to Pontypridd College and the two bricklayers and one carpenter moved to Ystrad Mynach College, with the sole electrician remaining at Ebbw Vale College where he continued to make strong progress.

In September 2004, and again in February 2005 the project was forced to sack apprentices for gross misconduct. The two apprentices were replaced and funding for phase two of the project (2005-2007) was secured from The Rank Foundation and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

In January 2005, with additional funding from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, the project recruited an additional four apprentices, giving the project eight plumbers, four painters and decorators, two bricklayers, one carpenter, and one electrician.

In 2005 the NVQ Level 3 courses were revised. Whereas previously they had been one-year courses, involving a small number of additional supervisory modules, they became more comprehensive two-year courses. With only eighteen months left, the project has been working with colleges in order to try to accelerate the progress of those apprentices wanting and able to complete NVQ Level 3 before the project's funding runs out.

1.6. Team Leaders are at the heart of Build It. They provide both practical and pastoral support to help the apprentices develop the human capital - qualifications at NVQ Level 2 and 3, skills, attitudes and beliefs and good health – necessary to access and sustain well-paid, highly skilled employment for the rest of their lives. By working with some of the most disadvantaged people within these communities and enabling them to succeed, the project also aims to challenge and ultimately change their communities' expectations of what it is possible for young people, who have left school with no or low qualifications, to achieve.

1.7. The helping hand that the project can give to the apprentices it works with, and the communities it works in, are central to the project's success, but they are only part of the story. The project is a piece of action research that works by testing

out theories in practice, reflecting on what happened and then using this understanding to develop both practice and our knowledge.

1.8. The structure of Build It enables project workers to build very strong relationships of trust with apprentices, working closely with them over many years, giving them access to a rich series of biographies. The level of access is similar to that achieved through ethnographic research, in which a researcher immerses himself in the milieu of the subject for a lengthy period of time, watching their behaviour, listening to what they talk about and asking questions.¹⁸ However, unlike traditional ethnographic research, as a piece of action research, the project involves not only passive observation, but the testing out of practical interventions to enable the young people on the project to change their lives.

1.9. This report summarises the internal evaluation of the Build It project, led by the Unit's Senior Researcher, Duncan Holtom and facilitated and reviewed by an external evaluator, Alain Thomas. This evaluation is only part of the on-going learning processes that are embedded within Build It. It provided a formal opportunity to take stock and reflect upon progress and lessons learnt, and it has drawn on new data collected specifically for the evaluation. Nevertheless, the interpretation of this data, and its transformation into information, then knowledge, understanding and finally wisdom¹⁹, was not conducted in isolation; the process drew heavily upon the institutional wisdom, held and shared by project staff.

1.10. The evaluation was essentially "contextual" in nature, that is to say, the evaluation sought to understand the lives of the apprentices and the project processes within their particular social, economic and cultural communities - their context or "locality" - rather than trying to understand them within a wider context, such as Wales or the UK as a whole.²⁰ Moreover, given the relatively

¹⁸ Bryman, A. 2001. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

¹⁹ Ackoff, R. L., 1989., 'From Data to Wisdom', *Journal of Applied Systems Analysis*, Volume 16, 1989 p 3-9.

²⁰ Booth, D. Holland, J., Hentschel, J., Lanjouw, P. J., Herbert, A. 1998. *Participation And Combined Methods In African Poverty Assessment: Renewing The Agenda*, issue Series (February), social Development Department, London: Department for International development. See also Holland, J & J. Campbell. 2005. 'Context And Challenges For Combining Methods In Development Research' in

small number of apprentices involved, the authority of this research rests not upon the breadth or representativeness of the study but upon its depth, specifically upon the length of engagement (to date, four years) and the level of access and the richness of detail. The nature of the study needs to be borne in mind when considering its wider implications of policy.²¹ Nevertheless, the study has been at least partially de-contextualised by reviewing findings within the wider literature, and given this and the richness of material, we are therefore confident, that the findings have a wider significance.

1.11. The report assesses the outcomes of the project and the role-played by key project processes in producing these outcomes. This report also documents and records how the analysis of project processes and outcomes, by the four Team Leaders – Steve Brookman, Anthony Griffiths, Wayne Morris and Mike Williams and the project team – Sarah Lloyd-Jones, Ann Churcher, Rhodri Bowen, Gillian Snelgrove and Duncan Holtom, developed and evolved. In particular the report discusses how the project team used and in some cases adapted existing theories, highlighting both the strengths and weaknesses of these theories. The report concludes by exploring the implications of the experience of Build It for policy and practice in the fields of adult learning, economic development and social justice.

Holland, J & J. Campbell (eds). *Methods in Development Research: Combining qualitative and Quantitative approaches*. Rugby: ITDG publishing

²¹ Cf. S. J. Ball, S. Macrae & M. Maguire., 1999. 'Young lives at risk in the futures market: some policy concerns from ongoing research', pp30-45 in Coffield, F. (ed). *Speaking Truth To Power: Research And Policy Into Lifelong Learning*. Bristol: the Policy Press

2. Aims, and Objectives of the Evaluation

2.1.Aims:

- To enable the People and Work Unit to inform policy with regards the recruitment and provision of support to young people, to ensure that they have access to the support they need to acquire jobs and skills as a pathway to well paid, skilled employment and
- To inform staff development processes in order to enhance the support the People and Work Unit is able to offer to its own learners.

2.2.Objectives:

- To document and analyse how the Build It project has nurtured the development of 'learners' (e.g. self-confidence, vision, self-identification, resilience, commitment/personal responsibility and motivation to overcome barriers);
- To document and analyse how the Build It project have nurtured the development of potential skilled workers (e.g. qualifications, work related skills, self-confidence, vision, self-identification, resilience, commitment/personal responsibility and motivation to overcome barriers);
- To identify the needs of the young men as (i) apprentices and (ii) learners (including how and why they change);
- To assess the different Team Leader and apprentice relationship model or models (e.g. what are their characteristics, how do they work? What works? What hasn't worked? How well do they meet learners and apprentices' needs);
- To identify the characteristics of an effective Team leader;

- To identify the types of support that an effective Team leader should offer learners;
- To assess the benefits of the Build It for (i) apprentices and (ii) their communities;
- To assess the suitability of the project's systems and processes; and
- To outline recommendations/lessons for future practice.

3. Methodology

3.1. The evaluation has taken approximately 18 months. This was partly by design, given the extensive period of planning and preparatory work needed to lay the foundations for the fieldwork. However, it also reflects the competing demands on the Unit's research Team's time. The process started in September 2004, with a review of the previous internal evaluation of Build It²² and consultations with Project Managers and project partners about the previous evaluation and the scope of the next evaluation. This was followed by a preparatory focus group with eight apprentices in March 2005 that helped clarify the evaluation's aims and objectives. A project plan and methodology was drawn up and reviewed by Alain Thomas²³, the external consultant, in April 2005 and following his approval, the evaluation team of Duncan Holtom and Rhodri Bowen interviewed:

- Twelve apprentices;
- Four Team Leaders; and
- Three Contractors

Over a six month period (April -October 2005).

²² Dunmore, P. 2003. Build It Project: Interim Evaluation. Unpublished People and Work Unit Report

²³ Alain Thomas has been a freelance consultant and trainer for 15 years. He specialises in community development and in participatory approaches to evaluation and organisational development and is a

3.2. In the period between February and April 2006, Duncan Holtom conducted further interviews with Project Partners, the Project Managers and members of Ystrad Mynach College, including the apprentices' Tutors.²⁴ In April 2006, Alain Thomas, with the support of Michael Warden conducted their own focus groups with Team Leaders and Apprentices, in order to enable the triangulation of findings and to minimise the risk of bias.

3.3. A semi-structured approach was used for all the interviews and focus groups, in order to ensure that the evaluation was flexible enough to enable the evaluators to follow up interesting and potentially unexpected lines of enquiry. Copies of the interview schedules used by Duncan Holtom and Rhodri Bowen are included in the appendix.

3.4. Where relevant, the number of people who commented on a particular issue, and the nature of their comments is described, in order to give a rough indication of weight that can be attached to their comments. So for example, where ten apprentices have highlighted a particular issue, we would generally consider that this was more significant than an issue that was only highlighted by one or two apprentices. Quotes from Team Leaders and apprentices, are also given where relevant, in order to illustrate the issues and themes discussed.

3.5. A draft report was presented to Team Leaders and Project Managers at a feedback workshop in April 2006 and to apprentices at feedback workshop in May 2006. In the discussion of the report, Team Leaders, Project Managers and apprentices endorsed the report's key findings, although they added additional detail on some points. Their comments are included in this final report. The report was then finalised and passed to Alain Thomas for external review in June 2006.

member of Pont Community Development Consultancy. For more information go to <http://www.pont.org.uk/>

²⁴ Interviews with staff at Pontypridd College were agreed in principle, but could not be completed within the timescale of the evaluation.

4. What An Apprentice Needs To Succeed

4.1. Team Leaders, apprentices and contractors were invited to identify the personal qualities, such as the range of skills, knowledge and beliefs that apprentices would need to have developed by the end of the project to succeed as (i) learners; and (ii) employed and self-employed professional trades people. Interviewees consistently identified a range of personal qualities that apprentices would need to succeed, including: coping skills and resilience, communication skills, commitment, empathy, honesty, negotiation skills, the ability to prioritise, practical skills, such as the ability to price up a job and manage money, punctuality, reliability, respect for others, self-belief and self-efficacy, staying calm (not losing your temper), thinking skills (e.g. the ability to analyse, synthesise, evaluate and reflect), understanding of what they needed to do to achieve their vision, understanding of appropriate body language, vocational skills (e.g. the ability to use tools) and the willingness to defer gratification.

4.2. There is a substantial body of literature exploring and documenting the range of personal qualities, typically labelled 'soft skills' that people need to succeed in work and study. Therefore, in order to help classify and describe these qualities, interviewees' responses were initially compared with typologies of 'soft skills' developed by Dewson, et al., (2000)²⁵ (see boxed text).

Soft Skills

- **Key work skills**, such as the acquisition of key skills, and language and communication skills;
- **Attitudinal skills**, for example, increased levels of motivation, confidence and self esteem;
- **Personal skills**, including improvements in timekeeping, attendance or personal hygiene;
- **Practical skills**, which may be indicated by the ability to complete forms, write a CV or to manage money.

4.3. Some of the qualities identified by interviewees could be readily mapped against Dewson, et al's (2000) typology of soft skills. For example, communication skills are examples of key work skills; motivation and self-efficacy are examples of attitudinal skills; punctuality and reliability are examples of personal skills; and the ability to price up a job and manage money, are examples of practical skills. However, this typology could not adequately describe or capture all the qualities interviewees identified. For example, qualities such as empathy or self-thinking skills could, at a stretch, be described as types of key work skills, but cannot be easily classified within this typology. Given the poor match, the qualities identified by interviewees were mapped against the five different domains of emotional intelligence identified by Goleman (1995).²⁶

Emotional Intelligence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness – Understanding of your self, your abilities (e.g. self-confidence and self-efficacy), and your emotions/feelings. • Mood-Management - Capacity to control your emotions (e.g. calm yourself down, shake off anxiety) and to respond appropriately to others (e.g. not getting angry/irritated with them). • Empathy - Understanding of others, recognising their emotions and responding appropriately (e.g. offering support). • Handling Relationships - 'Social competence' ability to work (team-working), communicate and socialise with others, negotiate, persuade and achieve consensus. • Self-motivation - The ability to focus upon a task, show interest, put in effort, not to get distracted, to defer gratification.

4.4. As table 4.1. below shows, there was a far better fit between the range of qualities identified by interviewees and the different qualities identified by interviewees.

²⁵ See e.g. Dewson S, Eccles J, Tackey ND, Jackson A (2000) Measuring Soft Outcomes and Distance Travelled: A Review of Current Practice DfEE Research Report RR219.

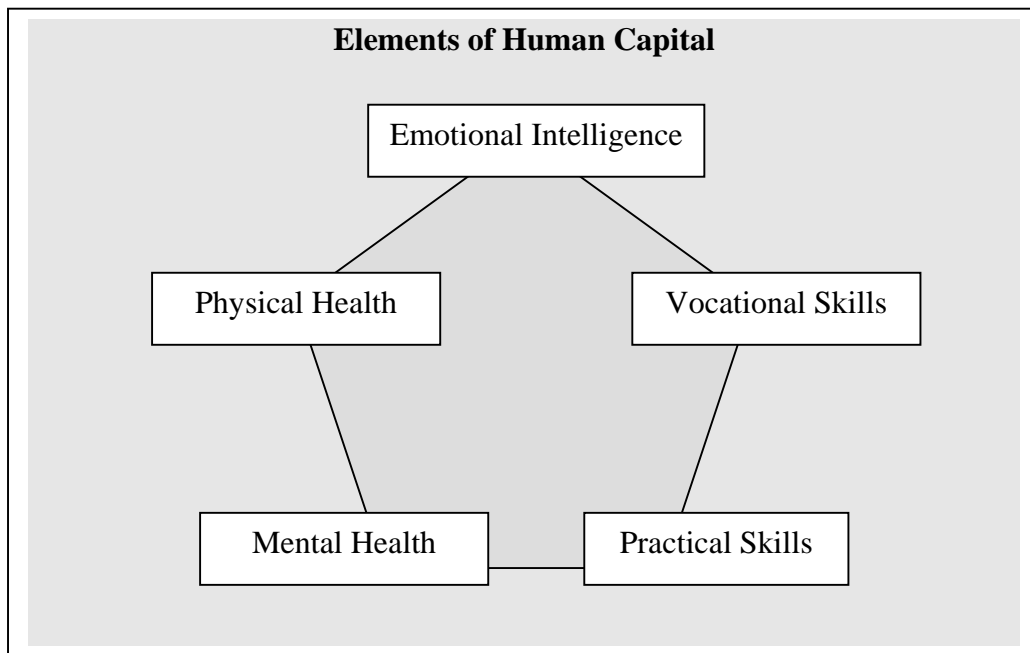
^H<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/H>

²⁶ Goleman, D. 1995. Emotional intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ. New York: Bantam

Table 4.1. Personal qualities identified by Team Leaders and the five domains of emotional intelligence	
Personal qualities identified by interviewees*	Emotional Intelligence
<p>Self-belief, thinking skills such as the ability to analyse, synthesise, evaluate and reflect. A realistic understanding of what they need to do to achieve their vision and the commitment to act upon that understanding. Self Esteem. The confidence to take risks, and in particular to accept mistakes and learn from them. The ability to accept success (many were used to failure and consequently frightened of success).</p> <p>Independence of thought to counter pressure from peer-groups, and sometimes family</p>	<p>Self-awareness – Understanding of your self, your abilities (e.g. self-confidence and self-efficacy), and your emotions/feelings.</p>
<p>Honesty, staying calm - not losing your temper. Coping with both success and failure. Not worrying about things.</p>	<p>Mood-Management - Capacity to control your emotions (e.g. calm yourself down, shake of anxiety) and to respond appropriately to others (e.g. not getting angry/irritated with them).</p>
<p>Empathy, an understanding of appropriate body language and respect for others. Being able to see different points of view and understand other peoples' perspectives.</p>	<p>Empathy - Understanding of others, recognising their emotions and responding appropriately (e.g. offering support).</p>
<p>Inter-personal communication skills, such as listening and negotiation skills. The ability to put people, and customers in particular, at ease.</p>	<p>Handling Relationships - 'Social competence' ability to work (team-working), communicate and socialise with others, negotiate, persuade and achieve consensus.</p>
<p>Coping skills, resilience, the ability to defer gratification, to prioritise and set goals, reliability, punctuality.. Getting the social and work life balance right, being strong enough to say 'I'm gonna do this'.</p>	<p>Self-motivation - The ability to focus upon a task, show interest, put in effort, not to get distracted, to defer gratification.</p>

*During interviews with Duncan Holtom, Rhodri Bowen and Alain Thomas

4.5. The only qualities that interviewees identified that could not be easily mapped against the five domains of emotional intelligence, were the **vocational skills**, evidenced by **qualifications**; and the **practical skills**, such as planning and management skills (e.g. the ability to manage your time and money and to ‘price up a job’), needed to perform a particular trade. In addition to these qualities, some interviewees identified the need for good **physical** and **mental health** in order to study and labour. Taken together, this report describes an individual’s health, their emotional intelligence, vocational and practical skills as their ‘**human capital**’.



4.6. Interviews with Team Leaders, contractors and apprentices themselves all demonstrated that at the start of the project, none of the apprentices on the project had the human capital they would need to succeed. All lacked the vocational and practical skills they would need. Most had weak emotional intelligence and a few suffered from poor physical health. As the following section highlights, there were significant differences in where apprentices were starting from and there are some significant differences in the progress they have made since then, in developing the human capital they needed to succeed (the journey travelled).

5. Apprentices' Human Capital - Supporting The Development Of Learners and Trades People

5.1. In order to assess the progress made by apprentices, the evaluation examined progress against both the project's 'hard' quantifiable targets such as numbers of qualifications gained and 'softer' more qualitative targets, such as improvements in emotional intelligence and health.

5.2. Hard Outcomes – Retention and Qualifications Attained. The first cohort of twelve apprentices was recruited in 2003 and a second cohort of four apprentices was recruited in 2004. The project aimed to ensure that the entire first cohort of twelve apprentices secured an NVQ Level 3 and that the entire second cohort achieved at least an NVQ Level 2. This was intended to ensure that every apprentice had a marketable qualification that would enable him to access and sustain well-paid employment.

5.3. Ten of the original twelve apprentices recruited in 2003 are still with the project. The two apprentices who left were both sacked by the project because of unacceptable behaviour. In each case a series of verbal and then written warnings were given, but both apprentices were unable or unwilling to change their behaviour. Two replacement apprentices were recruited and they together with the second cohort of four apprentices recruited in 2004, are all still with the project.

5.4. At the time of writing, April 2006, Team Leaders and Project Managers were confident about the prospects for all but one of the remaining sixteen apprentices, continuing on the project. The serious concerns raised about one apprentice, related to a serious family crisis that led to an unauthorised extended leave of absence and an escalation of alcohol abuse. Project Managers and Team Leaders were very keen to continue working with the apprentice but recognised that unless, with the support of the project, he was able to overcome his problems and change his behaviour, he would not be able to continue on the project. The problems that apprentices have faced are discussed further in Section Six.

5.5. The original target was for the entire first cohort to achieve NVQ Level 3 by the end of the project (June 2007) and for the entire second cohort, who were not expected to have time to complete NVQ Level 3, to achieve at least NVQ Level 2 by the end of the project. However, in 2005 Team Leaders in consultation with Project Managers, revised the target for the first cohort downward, to NVQ Level 2, given the problems apprentices' experienced in their second year at college, including:

- A change in the syllabus for the Plumbing MA, which led to some of the modules that apprentices had completed in their first year of study being eliminated, meaning that the credits they had accrued in their first year were no longer counted or transferable;
- The revision of the NVQ Level 3 course in plumbing from a one year "bolt on" course (as one Project Manager put it), to a more intense, two year programme of study; and
- A shortage of appropriate equipment at one of the colleges that apprentices were studying at.

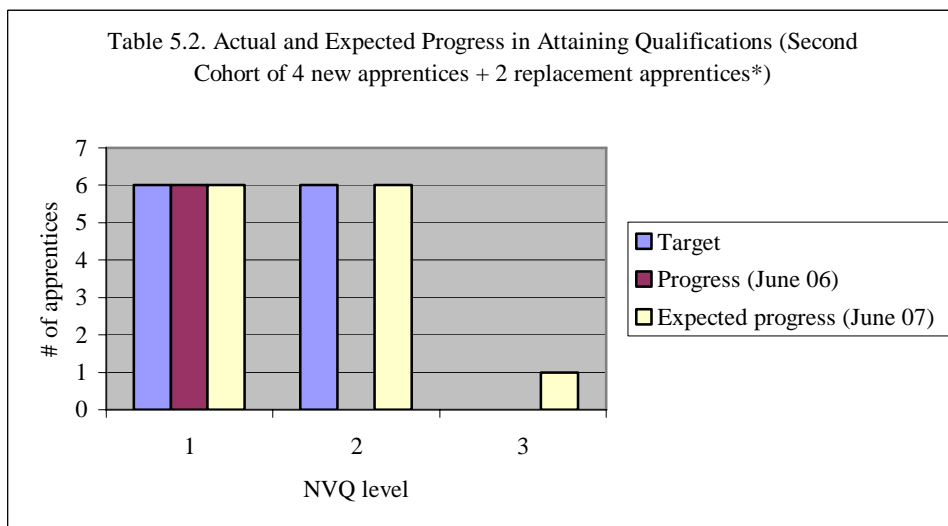
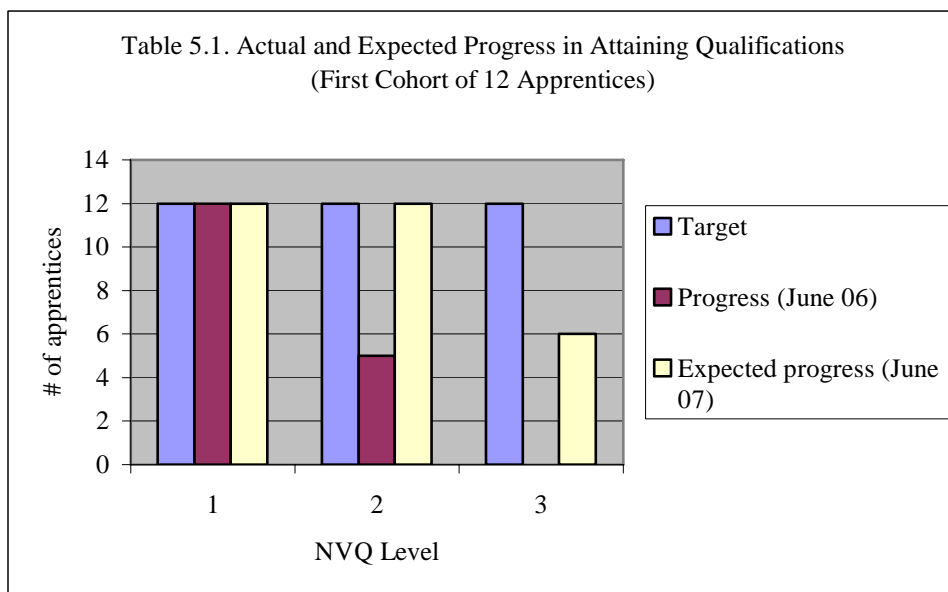
5.6. The delays meant that although Team Leaders were confident that all the apprentices had the potential to complete an NVQ Level 3 in their chosen trade, not all of the original twelve apprentices would have time to complete an NVQ Level 3, before the project finishes in August 2007. Nevertheless, at the time of writing, Team Leaders were confident that all the apprentices would achieve qualifications at NVQ Level 2 and that at least six of the original cohort and one of the second cohort of apprentices, would achieve qualifications at NVQ Level 3 by the end of the project.

5.7. Project staff were naturally disappointed that some apprentices will not have the chance to achieve NVQ Level 3 qualifications, although in the event a number of apprentices chose not to progress, intending instead to start work. Moreover, staff at Ystrad Mynach College explained that NVQ Level 2 remains the recognised, industry standard qualification that would provide all the craft skills apprentices would need. NVQ Level 3, whilst desirable, is significantly more demanding than Level 2, and is primarily about supervisory and inter-

personal skills required by those who would want to not only work on, but also manage sites.

5.8. Graphs 5.1. and 5.2. below, outline:

- the actual progress the first and second cohorts of apprentices had made in attaining qualifications by June 2006;
- the assessment of Team Leaders and Project Managers of their expected or estimated progress by the end of the project (June 2007); and
- the project's original targets.



* Two of the original cohort of twelve apprentices were sacked and replaced.

5.9. Graph 5.1. shows that to date, ten of the twelve original cohort of apprentices had achieved NVQ Level 2, with two sacked for gross misconduct. Six of these remaining ten apprentices are expected to complete NVQ Level 3 by the end of the project.

5.10. Graph 5.2. shows that the second cohort of four apprentices and the two apprentices who replaced two of the original cohort who were sacked, are expected to achieve their qualifications targets (six NVQ at level 2). One of these apprentices is expected to exceed the original targets, by reaching NVQ Level 3 by the end of the project

5.11. In interpreting the apprentices' achievements on Build It, it is very important to place this within the wider context. For example, the 2001 Report of the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (the 'Cassels Report') found that in England:

Only around half young people entering apprenticeship complete it, even in the limited sense of gaining the NVQ associated with it.²⁷

5.12. Regional studies within Wales suggest that over quarter of Modern Apprentices fail to complete their training²⁸ and ELWA's 2003 evaluation of the MA programme concluded that "it fails to generate a high level of commitment amongst its participants"²⁹.

5.13. ELWA's latest statistics (2003/04) suggest some overall improvement (see table 5.1. below), with 21% of learners on a Foundation Modern

²⁷ P. 15, MAAC., 2001. *Modern apprenticeships: The Way to Work. Report of the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee*. London: DFES and LSC, also available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ma.consultation/docs/MA_The_Way_to_Work.pdf [Accsed 3rd may 2006]

²⁸ ELWA., 2001. *An Analysis of Skill Sector Leavers in North Wales*; CRG, 2003. *Early leavers from training programmes for young people in Mid Wales* (CRG; Morris, D. (2001) *Early leavers from training programmes and further education courses in Gwynedd and Ynys Mon, 2000-2001* , all unpublished papers cited in Wiseman, J., Roe, P., & Boothby, D., 2003. *Evaluation Of Modern Apprenticeships And National Traineeships In Wales: A Report To National Council For Education And Learning Wales (NC-Elwa)*. Unpublished Report

²⁹ P. 9, Wiseman, J., Roe, P., & Boothby, D., 2003. *Evaluation Of Modern Apprenticeships And National Traineeships In Wales: A Report To National Council For Education And Learning Wales (NC-Elwa)*. Unpublished Report

Apprenticeship (FMA) and MA programme failing to achieve qualifications at NVQ Level 2 or above.³⁰

Table 5.1. Qualification Outcomes by Programme and Level (2003/04)							
	< Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Unknown	Total
FMA	50	5,425	12,750	125	0	370	18,720
MA	15	885	6375	4110	115	70	11500
Total	65	6,310	19,125	4235	115	440	30,220

Source: National Trainees Database³¹

5.14. Moreover, as Table 5.2. below shows, the failure rates within the construction industry in Wales are lower than the average of all the MA programmes, with 16% of learners failing to achieve NVQ Level 2 or above.

Table 5.2. Foundation Modern Apprenticeship and Modern Apprenticeship Qualification Outcomes for the construction sector (2003/04)							
	< Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Unknown	Total
FMA +MA	0	110	330	255	5	0	705

Source: National Trainees Database³²

5.15. Nevertheless this improvement was from a low base and the continuing high failure rate is regarded as a serious problem in Wales.³³ Build It's success rate looks set to be significantly higher, with sixteen out of eighteen original apprentices on course to get at least an NVQ Level 2 and seven on course to get NVQ Level 3, despite the projects active recruitment of 'non-traditional' learners, who were more likely to experience barriers to their continuation and were therefore more likely to drop out, when compared to the 'average' MA apprentice.³⁴

5.16. Given the low basic skills and lack of qualifications of a number of apprentices at the start of the project (see Table 1.1, three had no qualifications

³⁰ Calculated by excluding learners whose outcomes were not know.

³¹ Cited in ELWA. 2006. Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics 2003/04. Cardiff: The National Council For Education And Training For Wales (ELWA)

³² Cited in ELWA 2006. Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics 2003/04. Cardiff: The NATIONAL Council For Education And Training For Wales (ELWA)

³³ Welsh Assembly Government., 2006. *The Learning Country 2: Delivering the Promise*. Cardiff; Welsh Assembly Government.

³⁴ Cf. Furlong, A., & A. Forsyth., 2003. *Socio Economic Disadvantage And Experiences In Higher Education*. JRF Findings, May 2003 – Ref 563, <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/563.asp>

and a further eleven only had qualifications at NVQ Level 1), Team Leaders also pointed out that for some apprentices, achieving an NVQ Level 2 represented a greater achievement than others who were on course to get NVQ Level 3, because the journey they had had to travel to get to NVQ Level 2, was greater than others would have to travel to get to NVQ Level 3.

5.17. **Soft Outcomes – Improvements in Emotional Intelligence:** The 2003 Evaluation of Build It reviewed the progress made by the first cohort of apprentices in their first year, highlighting increases in “confidence”, “an increased understanding of what will be expected of them in their futures” (examples of self-awareness) and in their “ability to discuss things and string sentences together” (examples of the ability to effectively handle relationships).³⁵ When interviewed in 2005 and 2006, Team Leaders, Staff at the Ystrad Mynach College and apprentices themselves, were agreed that all the apprentices had continued to make significant progress. When initially asked to highlight what they saw at the main areas of improvement in apprentices’ human capital, they identified:

- Improvements in apprentices ability to **handle relationships**, evidenced by improved social skills such as increasing “professionalism”, confidence talking to customers, a reduction in swearing, and improved listening skills, attributed by Team Leaders to twelve apprentices. As one put it, it’s about “social skills with the customer and people skills to put people at ease”. Three apprentices also identified this, highlighting how they got on better with people like their family and customers now.
- Improvements in apprentices’ **self-motivation**, evidenced by a clearer focus and vision, such as changing priorities, like putting work before their social life, attributed by Team Leaders to four apprentices. As one put, they had to “Prioritise social life and work life balance, be strong enough to say I’m gonna do this, you get out what you put in, you must earn your trade. It’s personal sacrifice.” Three apprentices also identified this, commenting on how they had a “better attitude” toward work now or could better cope with disappointment.

³⁵ Dunmore, P. 2003. Build It Project: Interim Evaluation. Unpublished People and Work Unit Report

Staff at Ystrad Mynach College commented positively upon apprentices “attitude and time keeping”, comparing them favourably to other apprentices at the college.

- Increases in apprentices’ **self-awareness**, evidenced by increases in apprentices self-confidence, such as their ability to sort things out (e.g. talk to contractor, arrange transport), beginning to think things through, knowing what was expected of themselves, improvements in their appearance, attributed by Team Leaders to four apprentices. As one put it, “There’s a lack of understanding of what you have to do to get a trade.” Five apprentices also identified this, though they described it in terms of understanding how they’d changed for the better. For example as one put it, “I was a little bastard before”, others described how they could see now that they had “messed up” in the past.
- Increases in apprentices **mood-management**, evidenced by increases in “maturity” and becoming “calmer”), attributed by Team Leaders to two apprentices. Five apprentices also identified this, as one put it, before “someone’d say something wrong and you’d just fly off the handle.”
- Improvements in apprentices’ **physical health**, evidenced by the increasing fitness of apprentices and a reduction in harmful behaviour (e.g. smoking and drinking), attributed by Team Leaders to four apprentices.

5.18. When interviewed in 2005 no Team Leaders explicitly identified improvements in apprentices’ **empathy**. However in April 2006, when Alain Thomas interviewed them, Team Leaders commented on the ways in which:

“Their [apprentices’] point of view has changed. Instead of just saying ‘He’s a wanker’ when we talk about what happened and who did and said what they realise it wasn’t just him and that it was the two of them. Now they see different points of view it’s not all his fault.”

5.19. This was also linked to increases in self awareness, for example as one Team leader put it:

“They learn to see other people’s viewpoint. Before they were blinkered. They understand their actions cause reactions. Anything you do affects others. You are **not** the centre of the world.”

5.20. The difference in Team Leaders responses in 2005 and 2006 may be because the apprentices are only now beginning to develop in this area. It may also be because the project team began discussing the concept of emotional intelligence in early 2006.

5.21. When Team Leaders were asked what held apprentices back, they identified a range of types of behaviour, attitudes and beliefs such as:

- Weak self-motivation, manifested in a number of ways, such as a **lack of work focus or work routine**, evidenced by poor punctuality or unreliability, with apprentices turning up late or missing college, community jobs or work with contractors, attributed by Team Leaders to eight of their apprentices; a **lack of care or attention**, evidenced by a failure to be sufficiently methodical, attributed by Team Leaders to four of their apprentices; and a **lack of motivation**, evidenced by low levels of interest or enthusiasm in the job and the need to be pushed, attributed by Team Leaders to four of their apprentices. Staff at Ystrad Mynach College also identified a problem, shared by the majority of the other apprentices at the college, in the non-completion of portfolios of evidence. One apprentice’s lack of initiative was also highlighted.
- Weakness in apprentices’ ability to **handle relationships**, evidenced by one word answers; talking about inappropriate issues; not knowing when to be formal and polite and when to say “alright love, put the kettle on”, attributed by Team Leaders to four of their apprentices.
- Weaknesses in **self-awareness**, evidenced by a failure to delay gratification and/or understand the consequences of ones actions, evidenced by a ‘live for today’ attitude, not remembering/doing things, failing to prioritise work over one’s social life, attributed by Team Leaders to four of their apprentices; drug

abuse, attributed by Team Leaders to three of their apprentices and alcohol abuse, attributed by Team Leaders to two of their apprentices.

5.22. In addition to these weaknesses in emotional intelligence, Team Leaders also identified the poor literacy and numeracy skills of two apprentices and the lack of vocational ability (lack of manual dexterity) amongst one apprentice. To date, with support, both apprentices with basic skills problems were able to improve their skills, but at the time of writing, the apprentice who lacked vocational skills, was still struggling to acquire the skills he needed.

5.23. In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of apprentices' Human Capital, in March 2006, apprentices were asked to assess themselves against the different domains of human capital. Their Team Leaders then moderated their responses. In order to summarise their responses, their comments and analyses were used to develop a series of descriptors for the levels that apprentices were at (see Table 5.3. Below). Using these descriptors, the level each apprentice was at in May 2006, is summarised in Table 5.4. Because no baseline data was available, areas where an apprentice was judged by Team Leaders to have made significant progress, this was also recorded and is indicated using a *, in order to help illustrate their progress or journey travelled.

Table 5.3. Examples/descriptors of levels of Human Capital		
Element of Human Capital	Examples/Descriptors	Level
Previous qualifications ³⁶	NVQ Level 2 or equivalent ³⁷	High
	NVQ Level 1 or equivalent ³⁸	Medium
	No qualifications	Low
Qualifications (1 st cohort)	Completed NVQ Level 2, on course to get NVQ Level 3	High
	Completed NVQ Level 1, on course to get NVQ Level 2	Medium
	Completed NVQ Level 1, not on course to get NVQ Level 2	Low
Qualifications (2 nd cohort)	Completed NVQ Level 1, strong progress toward NVQ Level 2. Potential to progress to level 3 (see table 5.2).	High
	Completed NVQ Level 1, steady progress toward NVQ Level 2. Unlikely to complete NVQ Level 3.	Medium
	Completed NVQ Level 1, but unlikely to complete NVQ Level 2.	Low

³⁶ Self-reported on application to the project.

³⁷ 5+ GCSEs/O-Levels A-C; 1 A Level or 2/3 AS Levels, BTEC First Diploma with merits/distinctions

³⁸ GCSE/O-Level D-G (or fewer than 5 passes at A-C or BTEC First Certificate

Practical skills	Able to successfully complete tasks unsupervised and without advice or support. Able to plan and price up a job.	High
	Able to successfully complete tasks unsupervised without advice or support, but unable to plan and price up a job.	Medium
	Needs support to complete even small tasks.	Low
Self awareness	Confident undertaking work. Recognises own strengths and weaknesses and is keen to rectify them (e.g. asking for help where required). Able to cope with unfamiliar environments.	High
	Some confidence in own ability, but also has concerns, leading him to try to avoid difficult tasks; and/or unaware of some of his weaknesses; and/or unable to evaluate and reflect upon situations. Finds it very difficult to cope with unfamiliar environments.	Medium
	Lacks confidence undertaking work and/or does not recognise own weaknesses and/or not asking for help to address weaknesses (e.g. using weaknesses as an 'excuse' not to attempt challenging tasks).	Low
Mood Management	Consistently calm under pressure. Able to take even unjustified criticism and respond appropriately. Always behaves professionally.	High
	Sometimes anxious, limiting his ability. May behave unprofessionally (e.g. showing off or sulking). Does not lose his temper when criticised or under pressure.	Medium
	Loses temper when criticised or under pressure. Can respond aggressively. Often behaves unprofessionally.	Low
Self-Motivation	Able to take initiative, work unsupervised, can cope with setbacks and take responsibility for self-directed study. Shows interest in work, sets goals.	High
	Able to focus upon a task unsupervised. Does not always cope with setbacks. Sometimes needs pushing to study (e.g. revising) or to develop practical skills.	Medium
	Often needs pushing and supervision to undertake both work and study. Easily distracted.	Low
Empathy	Always aware of other's feelings, shows concern, responds appropriately and show respect	High
	Sometimes aware of other's feelings, sometimes shows respect and responds appropriately	Medium
	Unaware of or ignores other's feelings and/or behaves inappropriately to other people.	Low
Handling relationships	Strong inter-personal communication skills. Good team player. Gets on well with apprentices and strangers. Able to negotiate and persuade others.	High
	Medium inter-personal communication skills, gets on well with other apprentices and family, but uncomfortable with strangers. Not always a good team player and/or doesn't always listen and act upon what he has been told and/or unable to negotiate and persuade.	Medium
	Weak inter-personal communication skills. Not a team player and not comfortable socialising with other apprentices.	Low

Table 5.4.	1 st Cohort (Recruited 2003)												2 nd Cohort (Recruited 2004)			
	Apprentice #															
Element of Human Capital	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.
Qualifications achieved on the project	*		*				*									*
Practical skills	*		*		*		*							*	*	
Self Motivation				*				*		*						
Self Awareness				*					*							
Handling Relationships														*		*
Mood Management															*	
Empathy																

Key:	
High	
Medium	
Weak	
Significant progress made	*

5.24. Table 5.4. highlights the diversity of apprentices in terms of their strengths and weaknesses and captures some of the progress they have made. The depth of the problems that some apprentices faced, has meant that even when they have made significant progress, elements of their emotional intelligence are still only at medium, or in one case (apprentice number 16) at a weak level. It is clear that some will need more support to help them develop their emotional intelligence, if they are to develop the human capital they will need by the end of the project. Nevertheless as one Team Leader observed, equating strong emotional intelligence with being ‘job ready’ was unfair, as it was normal for apprentices to continue to grow and develop in their first jobs.

5.25. Table 5.4. shows no clear correlations between the progress apprentices had made in securing qualifications and developing practical skills on one hand and their overall emotional intelligence on the other. This suggests that no single domain of emotional intelligence is strong enough to either ensure success in attaining qualifications and practical skills or strong enough to hold back the acquisition of qualifications and skills. There is some evidence in support of this in the wider literature, which suggests that, for example, self-motivation (in effect a proxy for ‘working hard’) is not, of itself usually sufficient to ensure success.³⁹ It may also suggest that Team leaders are a sufficiently powerful protective factor to enable apprentices with weak emotional intelligence to still succeed; a theme explored further in the following Section (7)

5.26. Whilst no single domain of emotional intelligence may be sufficiently powerful to either ensure or curtail success, there is some evidence that some aspects of emotional intelligence are more important than others. Table 5.5. below shows the results of a diamond ranking exercise conducted by Alain Thomas into the importance of the different elements of emotional intelligence.

³⁹ Ritchie, H., J. Casebourne & J. Rick. 2005., *Understanding workless people and communities: A literature review*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 255
[Http:// Hwww.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep255.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep255.pdf) [Accessed 15th March 2005].

Table 5.5.					
Rank	Team Leaders			Apprentices	
One	Understanding what they have to do, especially as regards theory			Commitment and dedication	
Two	Have a go attitude – it's ok to make mistakes	self – motivation, knowing what they want		Enthusiasm	Being willing to learn
Three	Self-belief, Self-esteem	Must immerse themselves, commitment		Good Attitude	Team work Ability to Listen
Four	Prioritise work and training	Accept success	Realise you never stop learning	Punctuality	Social skills and Communication
Five	-			Confidence	

5.27. The ranking exercise suggests that Team leaders place considerable emphasis upon aspects of **self-awareness**, such as understanding what you need to succeed, self-belief and a willingness to risk making mistakes; and **self-motivation**. In contrast, whilst apprentices share the importance attached to aspects of self-motivation, such as commitment and enthusiasm, they placed greater emphasis upon their ability to **handle relationships**, highlighting abilities such as listening skills, team work and social skills.

5.28. Table 5.4 provides additional support for Team Leaders' emphasis upon the importance of self-awareness and self-motivation, as none of the apprentices with weak self-awareness (numbers 10, 11 and 16) or weak self-motivation (numbers 9 and 11) have made strong progress in securing either qualifications or practical skills. In contrast, among those who have (numbers 1-6 and 14-15), all but one have all strong self-motivation and at least medium self-awareness.

5.29. The ability to handle relationships would, on the face of it appear to be important for someone wishing to enter an industry such as construction which frequently demands team work and face to face contact with customers. However, it is possible that Team Leaders are more willing to tolerate weak

emotional intelligence than more mainstream employers would be. Therefore issues such as weak mood management and poor skills in handling relationships, resulting, for example, in aggressive confrontations with Team Leaders, are less of a barrier than they might otherwise be. Indeed, some apprentices had ‘succeeded’, making good progress in securing qualifications and acquiring practical skills, despite their weakness, in domains such as mood management. The problems some apprentices have had retaining contractors, supports this thesis. as the project’s monitoring records show that those who have had weak emotional intelligence in the past, such as apprentices Number 11, 14 and 15, have ‘lost’ more contractors than others. In contrast, those who have ‘succeeded’ academically, such as apprentices, 2, 3 and 4, have also ‘kept’ their contractors. Following on from this, it is also possible that the remaining domains of emotional intelligence are of less importance whilst an apprentice is still being supported and trained, but will become more important as they move into employment and self-employment.

6. Human Capital Formation

6.1. In order to better understand the development of human capital, the evaluation explored the reasons why apprentices had or had not acquired the human capital they would need to succeed as learners and trades people; and the reasons why although many apprentices started with similarly low levels of human capital, some made more rapid progress than others.

6.2. **Barriers:** Team Leaders, and to a lesser extent, apprentices, identified a range of different barriers that had held apprentices back in the past and could still stop them from developing the human capital they needed. These included factors like poor experiences of school, poor public transport links, the difficulty that apprentices found in finding contractors and in particular, a lack of self-belief in their ability to become trades-people.

6.3. There is a large body of literature examining the range of barriers that hold back adult learners (See boxed text). Therefore, as with soft skills, in order to help classify and describe these barriers, interviewees' responses were initially compared with typologies of 'barriers developed by Veronica McGivney⁴⁰ (see boxed text).

Barriers to Education, Training and Employment

- **Situational Barriers** are linked to the current life circumstances of the person (e.g. caring responsibilities, shift work and a lack of money to pay for courses or transport).
- **Institutional Barriers** are created by learning providers (e.g. restrictive entry regulations, such as the requirement to pass a basic skills test, or other institutions (e.g. the way the benefits system operates).
- **Informational Barriers** are created by a lack of information so that potential learners' don't know enough about learning or employment opportunities in their area (e.g. they may not know that courses are free).
- **Dispositional barriers** are negative attitudes, beliefs or assumptions about learning and employment (e.g. a fear of returning to learn after negative experiences of school).

6.4. The typology proved a useful way of classifying and understanding many of the barriers that the apprentices faced. For example, the difficulties Project Managers identified for apprentices travelling across the valleys by using public transport, is a type of situational barrier.⁴¹ The need to have a contractor to progress from NVQ Level 1 to NVQ Level 2 of the MA programme and the restriction on claiming benefits if you study for more than sixteen hours a week, are examples of institutional barriers. Many apprentices did not understand the MA programme, or did not know what to expect before joining the project - a

⁴⁰ Adapted from McGivney .V., 1990. *Education's for Other People: Access to Education for Non-participant Adults*, Leicester: NIACE

⁴¹ For example to travel the twelve miles from Abertillery to Ystrad Mynach College (to arrive by 9am) on public transport would take 1 hour 20 minutes, would require an apprentice to leave by 7.04am, (arriving at 8.23am) and involve 3 buses (Travel-line Cymru). The same journey by car would take 25 minutes (AA Route Planner).

finding reflecting a major survey of the MA programme in England and Wales⁴² - and many were fearful of returning to learn after negative experiences of school: examples of informational and dispositional barriers respectively.

6.5. Interviews with apprentices suggested that before joining the project, dispositional barriers had compounded informational barriers. For example, seven apprentices discussed their fears of returning to learn and five of these described themselves in ways that suggested a lack of “educational self-identity”⁴³, before joining the project. This appears to have become the most significant barrier they faced. As one put it, “You leave school with no qualifications and you’ve had it.” These sort of barriers meant that whilst eight apprentices reported being interested in becoming a tradesperson before joining the project, only two of these had attempted to start construction courses at college and both had been forced to withdraw after the first year, because they could not find a contractor willing to take them (as noted, an example of an institutional barrier). Interviews suggested that the remainder had not taken any steps to find out more about the MA programme, as it was simply not relevant to them.⁴⁴

6.6. Although the negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviour identified by Team Leaders and apprentices as barriers could be thought of as examples of ‘dispositional’ barriers, the project team found the term ‘dispositional’ a somewhat unsatisfactory description. In particular, they concluded that the language – ‘dispositional’ – could imply that all that was needed was a change of attitude. Strictly speaking this was correct, but the team felt that it could disguise how embedded some negative attitudes and beliefs about learning could be, because a ‘disposition’ implies an “inclination or tendency”⁴⁵, that might be expected to be easily discarded or changed. The team also found that the term

⁴² The survey found that although two thirds of young people and their parents surveyed had heard of the MA programme, very few knew what its features were and how it operated. Maguire, M. 1998. ‘Modern Apprenticeships and Employers’, *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 50, pp. 247–249.

⁴³ Bowman, H. T. Burden & J. Konrad. 2000., *Successful futures? Community Views On Adult Education And Training*. York: JRF

⁴⁴ See also Crowder, M. & Pupynin, K., 1995. Understanding Learner Motivation: an overview of a Research project entitled ‘individual Commitment to Learning: understanding Motivation’, carried out by Crowder & Pupynin of Minds at work. Unpublished Paper on this

‘dispositional’ was pressed into service to describe a number of different types of distinct attitudes and beliefs, ranging from a dislike of hard work, through a lack of self-belief in ones’ ability to learn to cultural norms about who is and who is not a ‘learner’. The team therefore suggested separating out efficacy and cultural barriers from dispositional barriers (see boxed text).

- **Dispositional barriers** are negative attitudes, beliefs or assumptions about learning and employment (e.g. disliking tests and exams, not wanting to do certain types of study).
- **Efficacy Barriers** are created by a lack of self-belief in the ability to learn (e.g. a belief that ‘I’m thick’). This tends to reduce resilience, effort and motivation; meaning people are more vulnerable to failure and more likely to give up in the face of adversity.
- **Cultural barriers** are cultural norms and practices that are the antithetical towards participation in learning (e.g. a belief that ‘learning is not for people like us’; drug and alcohol abuse). These can be quite localised so within a single, even small geographic community, a number of different cultural communities may coexist. The more embedded someone is within their peer group, that is the more strongly they identify with it, the harder it is to change and challenge these cultural norms and the greater risk a learner faces, as by breaking the norms, they may exclude and alienate themselves from their peer group, isolating them from family and friends.

6.7. The literature on non-traditional learners, suggests that dispositional, and what we have called, cultural and efficacy barriers, are very powerful.⁴⁶ In particular, because many learners’ previous main experience of education, typically school, is negative, their self-belief in their ability to learn (self-efficacy) is often weak. For example, they may have been branded a ‘failure’ and have internalised the belief (or label) that they are a failure. As one Team Leader put it, “they’ve always been told they are a waste of space and they believed it.”

⁴⁵ Oxford English Dictionary

⁴⁶ Gorard, S. & Rees, G. (2002). *Creating a Learning Society: Learning careers and policies for lifelong learning*, Bristol: The Policy Press; McGivney, V. (2000). *Fixing or Changing the Pattern*. NIACE, Leicester; Cornwall, R. (1999), *The Significance of Self-efficacy in Enabling or Disabling the Participation of Long-term Unemployed Adults in Lifelong Learning*, Unpublished Mphil Dissertation, University of Wales Swansea

6.8. Weak self-belief is reinforced when people grow up in economically disadvantaged communities where there are few role models of success, that is to say, people who have succeeded through learning, creating cultural barriers. Returning to learn and exposing themselves to risk of further failure, and further damage to their self-image and therefore self-worth, takes courage.⁴⁷ Their confidence is often fragile, and they consequently have lower levels of motivation and resilience when confronted with barriers.⁴⁸ Their ability to sustain learning can also be undermined by other types of cultural barrier, such as patterns of behaviour, such as drug and alcohol abuse.

6.9. The challenge of external agencies in engaging people with dispositional, cultural and/or an efficacy barriers toward learning is considerable. For example, the exhortations of a Careers Wales or Job Centre Plus advisor that learning works, will be different to school, or will lead to well paid employment, will often not be enough to change the expectations and beliefs of those who have grown up in deprived communities where economic inactivity is the norm and few people are seen to succeed through learning. Their claims, can be easily dismissed (or accommodated) as those of outsiders who 'don't understand' the community and its problems, leaving people's underlying expectations and beliefs about learning unchanged.⁴⁹

6.10. 'Learning brokers'⁵⁰ can play a vital role in helping challenge dispositional barriers, if they have sufficient local credibility. Indeed, interviews suggested that personal recommendations from someone they trusted, like a friend, youth worker or community development worker, were important factors

⁴⁷ People and Work Unit., 2005. What are the True Costs of Community Learning? Final report. Unpublished research paper for the Community University of the Valleys Partnership.

⁴⁸ Crowder, M. & Pupynin, K., 1995. *Understanding Learner Motivation: an overview of a Research project entitled 'individual Commitment to Learning: understanding Motivation'*, carried out by Crowder & Pupynin of Minds at work. Unpublished Paper

⁴⁹ Lloyd-Jones, S., 2005. *A Map Of Transition In The South Wales Valleys*. Thesis ., Phd.) - University Of Wales Cardiff; Cornwall, R.J., 1999. *The Significance Of Self-Efficacy In Enabling Or Disabling The Participation Of Long-Term Unemployed Adults In Lifelong Learning*. Thesis (M.Phil.) - University Of Wales Swansea; Crowder, M. & Pupynin, K., 1995. *Understanding Learner Motivation: an overview of a Research project entitled 'individual Commitment to Learning: understanding Motivation'*, carried out by Crowder & Pupynin of Minds at work. Unpublished Paper)

⁵⁰ Owens, J., (2002) *A Review Of Different Approaches To Skill Development Within Communities*, <http://www.elwa.ac.uk/elwaweb/elwa.aspx?pageid=617>[Accessed, 22nd December 2004]

for eight of the apprentices. This reflects other studies, highlighting the importance of this informal ‘careers advice’ in shaping people’s choices.⁵¹

6.11. Although important, the influence of learning brokers should not be overstated. In particular, interviews with apprentices also suggested that it was important that Build It offered both a defined pathway to a career, and project staff who they could identify with. For example, as one apprentice put it “They’ve [the Team Leaders’] got the same background as us and they’ve had a few problems in their time too”. Therefore, even for those who had not considered the construction industry before joining the project, it promised a profession and managers that they could readily understand, respect and identify with.

6.12. Both the defined pathway into a credible career and the encouragement of learning brokers were important factors, but they were not ‘silver bullets’. Despite offering the equivalent to a MA at higher rates of pay than the industry norm, the project still struggled to recruit apprentices in its first year. In contrast, two years later when the reputation and profile of the project had grown, demand for the limited number of places offered was significantly higher.

6.13. Interviews with Team Leaders provided evidence that although apprentices had often overcome dispositional barriers, such as negative experiences of school, by joining the project, apprentices’ behaviour, attitudes and beliefs remained their most significant barriers to their **progression**. In section 5, these were classified as deficiencies in emotional intelligence. Some of these, such as a lack of work focus or work routine (attributed by Team Leaders to eight of their apprentices); and drug and alcohol abuse, (attributed by Team Leaders to three and two of their apprentices respectively), could also be thought of as types of cultural barrier. Whilst low levels of self-motivation (attributed by Team Leaders to four apprentices), might in some cases, be linked to efficacy barriers.

⁵¹ See e.g. Ball, S.J, S. McRae & M. McGuire (1999). ‘Young lives at risk in the ‘futures’ market: some policy concerns from ongoing research’ pp 30-45 in Coffield, F. (ed). Speaking Truth to Power:

6.14. The blurring of the boundary between weak emotional intelligence on the one hand and cultural and efficacy barriers on the other, may reflect the close relationship between causes and their impact. So for example, Team leaders linked growing up in a community where few people worked, with weaknesses in apprentices' work routine. They also linked weak empathy with growing up in communities where recognition of others' feelings was often limited.

6.15. Team Leader's analysis suggests that the project has successfully dismantled or removed many of the practical barriers, such as a lack of transport, difficulties finding a contractor (although even Team Leaders have struggled at times), surviving without benefits (apprentices are paid) and not understanding training in skilled trades, situational, institutional and informational barriers respectively, that apprentices' would otherwise face. The main exception to this was the requirement for apprentices to either have qualifications at NVQ Level 2 or to pass a basic skills test, before starting the MA programme; an institutional barrier that was, as noted, for a time a significant problem for two apprentices. Although even here, the additional academic support the project was able to offer, helped apprentices overcome it.⁵²

6.16. In interviews, apprentices broadly supported Team Leaders' assessment of the barriers and problems they faced. For example, seven apprentices identified behavioural problems such as not revising enough, missing college, drink and drug abuse and a "lack of focus" – examples of dispositional barriers. In contrast, only two identified poor physical health, an example of a situational barrier, and no apprentices identified any examples of informational or institutional barriers. Their comments were also supported by their descriptions of the role of a Team Leader. For example, eleven apprentices emphasised Team Leaders' role in "organising things", helping get them from 'A to B', finding contractors and so on; in effect removing the practical barriers they would otherwise face.

6.17. The way that efficacy, cultural and dispositional barriers can compound each other may help explain the lack of “interest” that studies have suggested many trainees have in completing a MA.⁵³ Certainly, evidence from Build It, supports other studies in suggesting that people’s motivation to keep going in the face of adversity and their ability to cope with challenges - their resilience - is a key explanatory factor in explaining why some people succeed and sustain their learning whilst others drop out.⁵⁴

6.18. The salience of efficacy, cultural and dispositional barriers means that the change in apprentices’ attitudes toward education and training is a significant success. A number of apprentices faced significant challenges given their negative experiences of school, their lack of self-belief and the absence of role models, people who had they could identify with who succeeded through education and training. This meant that until recently, a number of apprentices did not value or were fearful of college and exams, leading them to find excuses to miss both. Now, with the support and encouragement of the project, all have begun passing exams, in some cases confounding the expectations of their tutors. They have begun to take on what may be thought of as ‘educational self-concept’ to believe they can learn and to see themselves as learners.⁵⁵

6.19. **Beyond barriers: Risk and Protective Factors:** The evaluation team concluded that although it is useful to think about the barriers to learning and employment, this was not an adequate description of all the different types of factors that can make education, training or employment more difficult. It also largely ignored the factors that could help or make it easier for people to succeed in education, training and employment. Therefore, rather than only thinking in terms of barriers, the team begun thinking about Risk and Protective factors (see boxed text).

⁵³ Wiseman, J., Roe, P., & Boothby, D., 2003. *Evaluation Of Modern Apprenticeships And National Traineeships In Wales: A Report To National Council For Education And Learning Wales (NC-Elwa)*. Unpublished Report

⁵⁴ Bandura, A. (1994) Self-efficacy. In Ramachaudran, V. S. (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Human Behaviour*. Vol. 4. New York: Academic Press, pp.71-81; Bandura, A. (1997), *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company), cited in Cornawll, R. 1999, *The Significance of Self-efficacy in Enabling or Disabling the Participation of Long-term Unemployed Adults in Lifelong Learning*, Unpublished Mphil Dissertation, University of Wales Swansea

⁵⁵ Bowman, H. T. Burden & J. Konrad. 2000., *Successful futures? Community Views on adult education and training*. York: JRF

Risk and Protective Factors

The language (and concept) of ‘risk’ and ‘protective’ factors was developed as a way of helping to understand offending by young people.⁵⁶ However, it now being used to explore why some young people achieve worse life outcomes than others in a range of domains (e.g. health, education, housing and employment).⁵⁷

In the context of learning and employment **risk factors** are the things that make it harder for people to succeed in education, training and employment. They include things like unsupportive or hostile parents and step-parents, poor housing and negative experiences of school. In contrast, **protective factors** are the things that help, or make it easier for, people to succeed in education, training and employment. These are often the reverse of risk factors, and include things like supportive and interested parents, good quality, secure housing and positive experiences of school. However, they are not always mirrored, for example, a protective factor for drug or alcohol abuse can be supportive families.

6.20. In crude terms, the project team initially suggested that barriers could be thought of as the things that block participation and risk factors, thought of as the things that make continuation and progression in learning more difficult. Risk factors would therefore tend to compound barriers. Whilst protective factors would tend to reduce barriers or help apprentices overcome them themselves (e.g. by improving access to information and support). However, the distinctions the team sought to draw between barriers, risk and protective factors proved difficult to draw in some cases, because some types of barrier could continue or recur throughout a learners’ journey. For example, learners might have weak self-confidence at the start of a course (an efficacy barrier). Success through their

⁵⁶ Farrington, D., 2000. ‘Explaining And Preventing Crime: The Globalization Of Knowledge’. The American Society Of Criminology 1999 Presidential Address’, *American Society Of Criminology* Vol. 38, No. 1, February, 2000, pp. 1-24

⁵⁷ Haines, K., S. Case, E. Isles, I. Rees & A. Hancock., 2004. *Extending Entitlement: Making It Real*. Cardiff: WAG; Social Exclusion Unit., 2005. *Transitions: Young Adults With Complex Needs*. [Hhttp://www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=785H](http://www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=785H) [accessed 2nd December 2005]

participation in learning would tend to build this, but they could still suffer from periodic crises of confidence throughout their learning journey.⁵⁸

6.21. As the evaluation progressed, it also became clear that risk factors could also increase the probability that an apprentice would face a barrier. For example, peers who abused drugs and who had low aspirations themselves, could increase the chances that an apprentice would face a cultural barriers (Sarah-Lloyd-Jones, Pers. Comm). Therefore risk and protective factors were re-conceptualised as factors that could increase or decrease the disposition (or 'risk' or vulnerability) of an apprentice both facing a barrier and/or lacking the capacity or support to overcome it.

6.22. Discussions with Team Leaders, led to the identification of five broad categories of risk or protective factors – money, health, housing, family and relationships and life experiences - outlined in the table 6.1. below.

⁵⁸ Jones, C. 2003. Apprehension and Achievement: twin poles of the adult learning experience, GWERIN Occasional Paper. 4. also available at <http://cuveast.newport.ac.uk/aboutpublications.htm> [accessed 13th march 2005]

Table 6.1. Risk and Protective Factors		
Area	Examples of risk factors	Examples of protective factors
Money	Unwillingness to defer gratification (i.e. to accept a lower income now in return for a higher income in the future).	Willingness to defer gratification.
	High levels of debt (apprentices are tempted or compelled to give up and get a higher paying job to pay off their debt more rapidly).	Low/no debt.
	Unable to prioritise expenditure effectively (e.g. putting paying rent before funding your social life).	Able to prioritise expenditure.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor Health (e.g. limiting long term illness)/unhealthy lifestyle (e.g. poor diet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy/healthy lifestyle.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable/unwilling to cope with ill-health or suspect absenteeism (e.g. pulling a sickie). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to manage minor health problems, reluctant to allow them to stop work or study.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unstable housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable housing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over-crowding/poor quality housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Own, warm, quiet space to study in
Family & Relations hips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hostile or disinterested parents/step parents who don't want/have no interest in an apprentice succeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive and interested parents/step parents.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hostile or disinterested partners who don't want/have no interest in an apprentice succeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive and interested partners who want an apprentice to succeed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peers abuse drink/drugs during the week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peers working, have high aspirations.
Life Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative Experiences of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive, rewarding experiences of school
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience restricted to low skilled/low waged/temporary work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of work experience, including highly skilled, highly waged employment

6.23. These risk and protective factors could shape the barriers an apprentice faced by increasing or decreasing an apprentices' propensity to face a barrier by influencing:

- The internal resources that an apprentice could draw upon to overcome or cope with the impact of a barrier; and
- The external support that an apprentice could access in order to overcome or manage a barrier.

6.24. For example, **risk factors** such as the inability to prioritise and high levels of debt can all create situational barriers such as a lack of money to pay for or sustain participation in learning. The benefits system can create institutional barriers by disincentivising participation in learning. In contrast, **protective factors**, such as supportive and interested parents and partners can help eliminate situational barriers, such as caring responsibilities, by taking over the responsibility themselves. They can also provide support and encouragement that can help apprentices overcome dispositional, cultural and efficacy barriers. Table 6.2. below summarises some of the possible relationships between risk, protective factors and barriers.

6.25. Table 6.3 summarises Team Leaders' mapping of the risk and protective factors their apprentices faced. As the table shows, there were some consistent patterns, where the majority of apprentices faced the same risk factors, such as negative experiences of school (eleven apprentices). Nevertheless it makes it clear that some apprentices (such as numbers 5, 10 and 14) face a far more complex set of risk factors and fewer protective factors than their peers.

Table 6.2. Risk, Protective Factors And Barriers	
Risk/Protective Factor	Relationship to Barriers
Money	The inability to prioritise and high levels of debt can create situational barriers , such as a lack of money to pay for or sustain participation in learning. An unwillingness to defer gratification can create dispositional barriers , by making learning and therefore forgoing income, less attractive than work.
The Benefits System	Can create institutional barriers , by creating financial disincentives that discourage participation in learning
Health	Ill-health can create situational barriers by forcing people to suspend or delay participation in learning. By making learning less enjoyable or more difficult, it may also create dispositional barriers .
Housing	Poor housing can create situational barriers , if for example, someone is forced to suspend or delay participation in learning in order to sort out housing problems. Temporary or insecure housing (e.g. sofa surfing) may also create dispositional barriers , by depriving people of sleep and places to study, making learning less enjoyable.
Family & Relationships	Peers, families and partners can deny or provide support, creating or removing situational barriers , such as caring responsibilities, transport and money. By for example, sharing their experiences and encouraging or discouraging others, their attitudes toward and experiences of education or training, can also create or help dismantle informational, cultural and efficacy barriers .
Life Experiences	Poor or limited life experiences can create cultural, efficacy, informational and dispositional barriers . In contrast, positive life experience can broaden people's horizons, understanding and build self-efficacy, enhancing motivation.

Table 6.3. Apprentices' Risk and Protective Factors																	
		1 st Cohort												2 nd Cohort			
Apprentice No.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Current qualifications >>		Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Current level of practical skills >>		Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
Family & relationships	Supportive and interested (want you to succeed) parents/step parents	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red
	Supportive and interested (want you to succeed) partners	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red
	Peers working, have high aspirations	Green	Green	Green	Light Blue	Green	Green	Light Blue	Green	Green	Green	Light Blue	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green
	Peers abuse drink/drugs during the week	Light Blue	Light Blue	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Light Blue	Red	Green	Light Blue	Green	Red	Red	Green
Housing	Stable housing	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Own, warm, quite space to study in	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red
Money	Willing to defer gratification (e.g. accept a lower income now in return for a higher income in the future)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Unsustainable level of debt	Red	Light Blue	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Light Blue	Red	Red	Light Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Prioritises effectively (e.g. paying rent)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Light Blue	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green
Health	Unhealthy lifestyle (e.g. poor diet)	Green	Green	Red	Light Blue	Red	Red	Light Blue	Red	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green
	Longer term, limiting ill-health	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Light Blue	Red	Red	Light Blue	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Suspect absenteeism (e.g. pulling a sickie)	Light Blue	Light Blue	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Light Blue	Red	Green	Light Blue	Red	Green	Green	Green
Life Experiences	School	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
	Restricted to low skilled/low waged/temporary work	Light Blue	Light Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Light Blue	Red	Red	Light Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red

Key: Qualifications and Practical Skills	
High Level	Green
Medium Level	Yellow
Low Level	Red

Key: Risk and Protective Factors	
Protective factor/able to manage potential risk factor	Green
Risk factor/unable to manage potential risk factor	Red
Neutral/not known	Light Blue

6.26. It may be significant that some of the most ‘successful’ apprentices (numbers 1,2, 4 and 13) also tended to face the fewest risk factors. Nevertheless, other apprentices, such as numbers 7 and 9, faced similarly few risk factors, but were less ‘successful’. It is also possible that the internal strengths, such as strong emotional intelligence, that helped them succeed in acquiring qualifications and practical skills, also helped them cope with and reduce their exposure to risk factors. For example, apprentices 1 and 13 are judged by their team leaders/judge themselves to have relatively strong emotional intelligence (see table 5.4).

6.27. Nevertheless, as with the analysis of the impact of emotional intelligence upon progress in acquiring qualifications and practical skills, (table 5.4), no single risk factor or factors or protective factor or factors, appears to explain the differences in apprentices’ success. This provides strong evidence that Team Leaders are a sufficiently powerful protective or compensatory factor, which helps apprentices reduce their exposure to, and cope with, risk factors that would otherwise hold them back. For example, as one Team Leader put it when interviewed by Alain Thomas, “Build It was a constant in their lives”, a source of support, they had previously lacked. Certainly during interviews, most apprentices suggested it was a very important factor and nine commented that they would have dropped out without their support.

6.28. There is robust evidence from other studies that indicates that risk factors are significant and would be expected to hold back apprentices. For example, Communities That Care (CTC)⁵⁹ has done significant work identifying significant risk and protective factors for school age children. CTC defines these in a different way: it focuses upon a wider range of risk factors, such as a lack parental guidance, inconsistent parenting, weak affective family relationships, poor quality experiences of school, alcohol and drug use, negative peer influence, and a narrower range of protective factors – pro-social involvement in school and with the family, family attachment and rewards for pro-social involvement⁶⁰. Nevertheless, despite the differences in definition and age group, the types of risk

⁵⁹ <http://www.communitiesthatcare.org.uk>

⁶⁰ Pers Comm. Pat Dunmore, Communities That Care

and protective factors identified by CTC and this evaluation are broadly comparable.

6.29. There is also some evidence from other studies suggesting that an apprentice with strong human capital would be better placed to manage or cope with risk factors.⁶¹ Evidence from the evaluation supports this and also suggests that apprentices with strong emotional intelligence may also find it easier to secure help from statutory services who may, for example, be more predisposed to help a polite, articulate client when compared to an aggressive and inarticulate one. Nevertheless, the literature suggests that emotional intelligence alone will not usually be sufficient in the absence of other protective factors, such as encouragement and support from others. This would support our thesis that Team Leaders have an important role in effectively replacing or extending the support traditionally provided by the family.⁶²

7. Different Relationships Between Team Leader And Their Apprentice

7.1. Team Leaders and apprentices were invited to describe their role. They identified a number of different facets, each of which was linked to:

- **Direct practical or “instrumental”⁶³ support.** For example, they might remove situational, informational or institutional barriers, by for example,

⁶¹ de Certau, M. (1988). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley, University of California Press cited in Jones, G. 2005. The thinking and behaviour of young adults, Literature review for the Social Exclusion Unit, London: ODPM, also available at <http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794>

⁶² Cf. Bancroft, A., Wilson, S., Cunningham-Burley, S., Backett-Milburn, K & Masters, H. (2004). *Parental drug and alcohol misuse: Resilience and transition among young people*. York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Schoon, I. & Bynner, J. (2003). 'Risk and resilience in the life course: implications for interventions and social policies', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 6(1) pp. 21-31., both cited in Jones, G. 2005. The thinking and behaviour of young adults, Literature review for the Social Exclusion Unit, London: ODPM, also available at

[Hhttp://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794](http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794) [Accessed 15th March 2005];

Ritchie, H., J. Casebourne & J. Rick. 2005., *Understanding workless people and communities: A literature review*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 255

[Http://Hwww.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep255.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep255.pdf) [Accessed 15th March 2005].

⁶³ Clayden, J. & M. Stein., 2005. *Mentoring young people leaving care*

arranging transport for apprentices and helping them find contractors, highlighted by all the Team Leaders and eleven of the apprentices; and

- **Indirect pastoral or “expressive”⁶⁴ support:** work to enable apprentices to overcome barriers themselves, enhance their human capital and their resilience (their ability to cope with risk factors) – what might be thought of as capacity building. For example, they might work with apprentices to help build their self-belief in their ability to learn, or to improve their punctuality and appearance, highlighted by all the Team Leaders and by thirteen of the apprentices.

7.2. These two roles have some similarities to those of ‘Lead Professional’, someone able to ‘join up’ the response of statutory agencies, proposed by the Recent English Green Paper, *Youth Matter*⁶⁵ and the concept of a ‘Trusted Adult’, someone who can provide advice and guidance, proposed by the Princes Trust. As table 7.1., below illustrates, these descriptions, as they are commonly understood, are inadequate for describing or capturing the complex roles that Team Leaders perform in practice. However we have chosen to use them in this report as shorthand to describe the two broad dimensions of Team Leaders’ roles, in preference to the full list of roles, which are further explored in Section 8.

‘Someone for me’, [Hhttp://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354025.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354025.pdf) [Accessed 12th March 2006]

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Department for Education and Skills, 2005, *Youth Matters*, [Hhttp://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth/H](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth/H) [Accessed, 11th October 2005]

Table 7.1. Team Leaders' Roles			
Example of Team Leaders' Work	Why it is required	Most accurate description of Team Leaders role	Skills/qualities/knowledge Required of Team leader
Arranging transport to and from college and to contractors (e.g. driving apprentices, facilitating car sharing)	Poor public transport and no access to private transport – <i>situational barrier</i>	Events organiser, chauffeur	Planning, management and negotiation skills
Talking to colleges, helping apprentices find places, finding them contractors, charting learning pathways.	Many apprentices don't understand the college system and MA programme – an <i>informational barrier</i> . Many find the rules and regulations of the MA programme (e.g. the requirement to pass a basic skills test and to have a contractor in order to Progress to NVQ Level 2) makes it difficult for them to access and sustain learning – an <i>institutional barrier</i> .	Advocate, Personal tutor, Broker, Careers advisor	Understanding of the College system and MA programme, negotiation Communication and networking skills
Talking through academic and/or personal problems	Many apprentices have had negative experiences of learning in the past (primarily school) and dislike of revision – <i>dispositional barriers</i> . They may lack self-belief in their ability to succeed – <i>efficacy barriers</i> and be subject to peer group pressure and have an inappropriate lifestyle (e.g. drink and drug abuse) – <i>cultural barriers</i> or <i>risk factors</i> . Some apprentices lack supportive and interested partners, parents or friends, other have experienced problems with housing – <i>risk factors</i> - that makes it difficult for them to access effective advice, guidance and support to help them cope with and overcome these problems. They may need one to one support and mentoring, confidence building activities (e.g. encouragement, support, praise) if they have weak <i>emotional intelligence</i> and/or lack <i>protective factors</i> such as supportive families and partners.	Motivator/ animator, Learning broker Role model, counsellor/life coach, mentor, youth worker, 'lead professional'/'trusted adult'	The ability to motivate and inspire people; energy, enthusiasm, someone who will push you if necessary Understanding of the cultural context, ability to build a relationship. A good listener, ability to build trust and rapport, 'one of us', shared life experiences Patience, approachable, non-judgemental, Ability to model the skills and competences required, ability to build trust and rapport and work with someone and help them change their behaviour. Confidence to hold someone accountable where appropriate and support their own reflection and understanding of their life.

7.3.Overall, there was a consistency in approach in the way in which practical support, such as support with transport, college and contractors, was provided. This appears to be due to the project's shared structures and processes. For example, all Team Leaders all participated in a short induction programme upon joining the project and in the first year completed a foundation course in Youth and Community work at the George Williams YMCA College before progressing on to the University of Newport where all four obtained a diploma in Youth and Community work. One team leader is currently completing a degree in youth work. The team meets once a month and is encouraged to share experiences and good practice. There is also regular supervision to enable Team Leaders and project managers to reflect upon and learn from their work.

7.4.The consistency in the type of practical support offered did not extend to the intensity of that support. For example, some Team Leaders provided more transport directly (e.g. picking up apprentices to take them to college and contractors, rather than encouraging car sharing) and some were more involved with the college and contractors (e.g. actively monitoring and discussing apprentices' progress with their tutors and contractors). This reflects the experimental nature of Build It, which as piece of action research has encouraged Team Leaders to identify themselves what support they felt was appropriate, so that the project could observe and learn from the different models developed by each of them.

7.5.The evaluation demonstrated that in order to deliver **practical support**, team Leaders required a number of practical and vocational (trade) skills. For example, both Project Managers and Team Leaders, stressed the importance of trade skills to enable them to undertake work in community and to help them establish credibility with the apprentices. They also identified planning and organisational skills, whilst retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to the unexpected.

7.6.Two over-arching themes emerged when Team Leaders described their approaches to their **pastoral support** role - nurturing the development of values and standards and building self-confidence – although as noted below, there were differences in the ways in which Team Leaders approached these themes.

7.7. *Values and standards*: All four Team Leaders highlighted the importance of **modelling appropriate behaviour**, although two cautioned about not trying to recreate apprentices in their own image (of not “creating ‘mini-mes’” as one put it). This covered both their work as professional trades people and their role as learners themselves, undertaking college and university courses. Three Team Leaders highlighted the importance of treating apprentices as adults and showing them **respect**, discussing the need for self-awareness and critical reflection; of not being too judgemental of apprentices; of understanding them and of talking things through with them. As one put “you can’t keep ordering them”, explaining that ultimately, apprentices need to choose to adopt – or reject - the values Team Leaders promoted themselves. Two Team Leaders highlighted the importance of setting and maintaining **high standards** (“kick ass when you need to”, as one put it).

7.8. *Self-confidence*: Three Team Leaders highlighted the importance **starting by working with what apprentices were comfortable with** and keep going until they could do it, whilst not letting them kick up a fuss. Nevertheless, as discussed further in Section 9, two praised the role of outdoor pursuits activities in taking apprentices out of the comfort zone, although one of these was keen to stress that this should not happen until apprentices were ready. Three Team Leaders highlighted the importance of **explaining** what you’re doing and why – not just telling apprentices what to do. Two Team Leaders explicitly highlighted the importance of nurturing the development of **self-belief** (or “self-efficacy” as one put it). Two Team Leaders highlighted the importance of **providing positive reinforcement** where it is merited and **constructive criticism** where it is not. Two Team Leaders highlighted, the importance of showing **interest** in apprentices

7.9. When apprentices were asked about Team Leaders’ roles, they chose to emphasise two subtly different aspects of the role:

- **Challenging apprentices** (e.g. to “push you”, to “keep you in line” and “on the straight and narrow”), highlighted by ten apprentices; and

- Showing an **interest** and **encouragement**, highlighted by seven apprentices;

7.10. Staff at Ystrad Mynach College also highlighted the crucial role played by Team leaders in providing “support”. When asked to elaborate further, they explained that good support was primarily about an employer “**pushing**” apprentices and talking to college to **identify problems** and make sure that as soon as a problem arose (e.g. apprentices turning up late or not completing their portfolios), they were talking to apprentices about it and addressing the problems. The Council was highlighted as another employer that provided this type of support. However, they explained that most employers (contractors) are small one-man bands, with little time to become engaged in their apprentices’ training. This “support” was felt to be particularly important because, as one staff member explained, although some lecturers would continue pushing apprentices until an apprentice got there (“push and push and push” as they put it), others who would say, “well I’ve tried” and stop. Staff also highlighted the specialised help and encouragement that Team Leaders provided to apprentices with basic skills problems.

7.11. The aspects of the role identified by apprentices and staff at Ystrad Mynach, clearly overlapped with those identified by Team Leaders – challenge could be interpreted as a way of setting and maintaining standards and both challenge and encouragement could be interpreted as ways of building self-efficacy. Nevertheless, they suggested slightly different interpretations of the role, placing greater emphasis upon a more directive role that contrasted with the more youth work oriented approach that Team Leaders’ described. Albeit a direction from an interested and caring adult, possibly akin to a strong and strict but fair father figure.

7.12. Project Managers analyses broadly reflected that of apprentices, in that they stressed that Team Leaders’ organisational role included both planning and what could be thought of as surveillance. For example, Project Managers emphasised the importance of taking the work seriously, of “treating it like a ‘real job’”. Project Managers also stressed that whilst it was important to monitor

apprentices' progress through their day-to-day contact with them on the work they organised for them in the community, this also needed to be confirmed through independent checks (e.g. by talking to the college).

7.13. It was clear that a failure of surveillance was potentially very serious, as it meant that Team Leaders were not always aware of problems that their apprentices were experiencing, or causing, such as not turning up to their contractors. This in turn meant that they were not being as pro-active as they could be in dealing with problems before they became more serious. The strongest evidence of this was the failure of one Team Leader to identify the problems one of the apprentices was having with his contractor until they had become very serious. In the event, the project was not able to resolve the problems and the apprentice was ultimately sacked.

7.14. Team Leaders themselves acknowledged the potential tension between enabling apprentices – what might be thought of as a youth work type approach - and making sure that they were making the most of the opportunities – a more directive, managerial or teachers' role. All were clear that a purely voluntary, client led approach would not have been enough to ensure that apprentices' progressed, but equally they were all clear that their role went far beyond simply telling apprentices what to do. Whilst apprentices made it clear that it was important that they were paid.

7.15. The differences in the aspects of the Team Leaders' role that Team Leaders themselves, apprentices, College staff and Project Managers chose to highlight, may reflect the things they valued in their work or felt apprentices needed. So, for example;

- Team Leaders focused upon the broader personal development of their apprentices, suggesting a youth work type approach;
- College staff focused upon the need for well-managed apprentices who turned up on time and completed their work;
- Apprentices focused upon their need for boundaries; and
- Project managers focused on early diagnosis of problems

7.16. Although all the Team Leaders reported increasing confidence in their roles, some Team Leaders appeared to be more confident with the more directive dimension to their work, than others. For example, when they discussed their pastoral support role, they variously described it as that of a “buddy”; a “shoulder to cry on...but ultimately [you] can’t be a friend: [you’re] not a youth worker”; “life coach” and quasi “parent”. These did not represent fundamental differences, but they did help highlight some of the differences in emphases in the way that Team Leaders approached their roles. Some of these differences appear to reflect the different biographies of Team Leaders⁶⁶ and others the differing needs of apprentices and the active encouragement of project managers for them to experiment and try new approaches. The following section explores some of these differences in greater depth.

8. Characteristics Of An Effective Team Leader and the Support Offered by Team Leaders

8.1. In performing both their direct and pastoral support roles, Team Leaders have drawn upon, and needed not only practical and vocational skills, but each of the different domains of emotional intelligence. For example, Team Leaders identified three key dimensions of human capital they needed in order to perform their multiple roles:

- self awareness, highlighted by three Team Leaders;
- empathy (and “understanding”), highlighted by three Team Leaders; and
- the need for effective mood management (e.g. the need to be able to accept apprentices’ failures and their criticism, and not take it personally), highlighted by three Team Leaders.

⁶⁶ They have all interpreted and learnt different things from their lives, having worked in a number of different contexts including Working as a manager at The National Coal Board; a supervisor at a construction site; a self-employed builder and as a self-employed bricklayer.

8.2.Apprentices' analysis of the qualities required by a Team Leader broadly reflected Team Leaders' analyses, although they were more willing to identify attributes such as "hard work" (self-motivation) than Team Leaders, who appeared to be too modest to identify it themselves:

- The need for self motivation (e.g. "gets the job done", "sorting things out"), highlighted by nine apprentices;
- The need for effective mood management (e.g. remaining "calm", "not losing his rag", "patient), highlighted by seven apprentices;
- The ability to handle relationships (e.g. "having a sense of humour", being "friendly", "able to communicate at our level", "respect", being a team player), highlighted by seven apprentices;
- The need for empathy (e.g. "understanding us", "knows you"), highlighted by five apprentices; and
- The need for self-awareness (e.g. "confidence", "setting a good example"), highlighted by four apprentices.

8.3.Given their solidarity, apprentices and Team Leaders were understandably reluctant to openly discuss the relative strengths or weaknesses of different Team Leaders. Project Managers also emphasised that it would be difficult to generalise about the most effective approach or approaches, because the needs of individual apprentices varied. Therefore, each apprentice might therefore be expected to respond differently to different approaches. Subject to the these caveats, the interviews and observation of the way teams worked, helped clarify the diversity of approaches and some tentative conclusions emerged:

- Those apprentices who have families that were not supportive or interested and whose peers had limited aspirations could gain a lot from a Team Leader who represented a **strong father figure** or **role model**. Nevertheless, Team leaders stressed that if a young person's relationship with their father had been very negative, this negativity might be transferred to a Team leader who sought to play a similar role.

- Those apprentices who lacked self-discipline and self-motivation and might need micro-management, could also gain from a strong Team Leader. One apprentice even described the role as that of “Drill Sergeant”, “getting me up in the morning”, although it was clear that Team Leaders needed to remain calm, controlled and consistent if they were to effectively fulfil this forceful role. In contrast those apprentices with stronger human capital, might gain more from a **lighter touch**, which required them to take more responsibility for their own development.
- Those apprentices who struggled academically, could gain a lot from a Team Leader who would take on a role similar to a **tutor** or **mentor**, asking questions and setting tests. This role could also encompass informal education that could help broaden apprentices horizons and outlooks, by not only focusing upon academic and vocational skills, but by for example, discussing what was in the news, or the history of the area that apprentices were working in.
- Those apprentices who lacked self-belief in their vocational skills, could gain a lot from a Team Leader who would take on a role similar to a **supportive contractor**; someone who would encourage them to have a go, would not criticise them for trying but failing, but would help them learn from their mistakes.
- Apprentices facing personal problems could gain a lot from a Team Leader who would take on a role similar to a **youth worker** or **‘trusted adult’** who they could easily talk to and confide their problems to. Nevertheless, in order to be effective, the Team Leaders needed to be careful not to suspend critical judgements about “my boys” or become too protective and to continue, where appropriate, to **challenge** an apprentice and expand their horizons, confidence and comfort zone.
- Those apprentices who experienced problems such as poor housing and physical and mental problems, could gain a lot from a Team Leader who took on a **‘Lead Professional’s** role. Someone who would not only sympathise, but

would help ensure that statutory services like housing and health responded effectively to an apprentice's needs. In some cases, they would need to act directly to get things done.

- Those apprentices with family problems might benefit from a **social work** type approach, which involved working with their parents or guardians.

8.4. The one role that Team Leaders play with all apprentices is that of **employer**. The employment of apprentices helps recruitment by giving apprentices an income and status in communities that still value and respect the male 'bread winner'. It also gives Team Leaders' greater leverage over apprentices than they would have in a purely voluntary relationship. For example, they can require apprentices to turn up to college, and can impose sanction, such as deducting a day's pay and initiating formal disciplinary proceedings. It also means that apprentices have more to lose (their job) by ending the relationship, which can enhance their motivation, commitment and co-operation.

8.5. Nevertheless, the employer/employee relationship also limits Team Leaders' flexibility. It is for example, considerably less flexible than the voluntary relationship of Build It's sister project, Life Support.⁶⁷ As employees, if for example apprentices' consistently fail to turn up for work without good reason, they must ultimately be sacked; Build It can support and challenge people to change their behaviour but has few options when, as has happened twice, an apprentice is unwilling or unable to change at that point in their lives. In contrast, if a learner on Life Support experiences a crisis and withdraws, the project can more easily suspend their participation and keep in touch, until they are ready to return. The employment of apprentices also significantly increases the cost of the project (due to apprentices' wages).

8.6. Although less flexible than the relationship that Team Leaders and Tutors have with learners on Life Support, it is arguable that in some ways, Build It Team Leaders have greater **flexibility** than many other support workers, such as careers advisors and youth workers, who work through voluntary relationships

have. In particular, Team Leaders are typically less constrained by rules, regulations and job descriptions and are only required to refer apprentices on to others in exceptional circumstances, when compared to most careers advisors and have more intense and more sustained contact than most youth workers have. This flexibility alongside sustained involvement is crucial; one size does not fit all needs and the ability of Team leaders to take on any one of a number of roles is what makes them so effective.

8.7. Overall, the evaluation suggests that although it creates tensions, the progress made by apprentices demonstrates that Build It's hybrid approach, that blurs the boundaries between management and youth work, is very powerful. It harnesses the material incentives of employment, enriching it with a relationship that must also be founded upon respect, understanding and communication, if it is to work.

8.8. Team Leaders ability to perform multiple roles rests upon the skills and abilities of an individual team leader and the strength of the **relationship** they could forge with apprentices. This relationship was both the foundation of trust and communication that enabled them to better understand apprentices' needs and the basis upon which they could, where necessary, challenge apprentices. This capacity to challenge could be conceptualised in terms of their **authority**, as without authority, apprentices are unlikely to accept a Team Leader's right to challenge them as valid. Authority is not intrinsic, it must be bestowed through recognition by another.⁶⁸ For Team Leaders, it can be based, at least in part, upon apprentices' acceptance of their position and role, as both their employer and a qualified tradesperson, someone who has traditionally had 'status' within their community (examples of 'rational-legal' and 'traditional' authority), but also must be based upon a Team Leaders' 'charisma'.⁶⁹

8.9. Interviews with Team Leaders and Project Managers made it clear that the strong relationships that Team Leaders forge with apprentices was vital, but could cause problems. For example, three Team Leaders explicitly drew parallels between their own lives and those of their apprentices, investing considerably in

⁶⁷ Life Support also provides support for non-traditional learners who want to

⁶⁸ Weber, M. 1921 [1968]., *Economy and Society* . Totowa, New Jersey: Bedminster Press

trying to help them, as they themselves had been helped in the past. The person Team Leaders identified was credited with enabling them to fulfil their potential and was usually a professional, such as a teacher, college lecturer or tradesperson; someone who they trusted and respected, and who showed an interest in them and gave them the encouragement they needed - in effect a proto 'Team Leader'. Two Team Leaders discussed this in the context of the break down of the traditional apprenticeship route, and the consequent destruction of the pathways that they and their fathers had travelled.⁷⁰

8.10. The traditional apprenticeship model was described as one that involved far greater involvement of the mentor in not only passing on vocational skills, but also, for example, getting apprentices up in the morning. This was contrasted by its more modern manifestation, in which individual apprentices had far greater responsibility for developing, directing and motivating themselves.

8.11. Team Leaders personal identification with apprentices was a source of great strength, helping enhance their empathy and credibility. However this also meant that Team Leaders could, for example, experience intense disappointment when apprentices 'failed' them. It could also mean that they were willing to overlook the failures of "their boy". This problem was widely acknowledged and despite their differences, all the Team Leaders discussed the tensions between their multiple roles.

9. The Other Elements: College, Contractors, Work in the Community and Personal Development

9.1. Team Leaders may be at the heart of the project, but they are not the only component. Indeed, it was clear that some apprentices assessed themselves as more dependent or valued their team leader more than others. For example, as

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Maguire, M. & S. Maguire. 1997. 'Young people and the Labour Market', pp. 26-38 in Macdonald, R. (ed.). *Youth, The 'Underclass' and Social Exclusion*, London: Routledge

noted, nine apprentices conclude that without a Team Leader they would have dropped out, while in contrast, one apprentice explained that in his judgment, he hadn't needed his Team leader yet, beyond the practical support he offered, setting things like transport up. The other key components of Build It are community work, work with contractors, college and periodic personal development activities such as outdoor pursuits courses.

9.2.Contractors: Overall, apprentices valued the two days a week they spent with their contractors. For example, five apprentices spoke very highly of their contractors, using terms like “excellent” and “tidy”, whilst two of these wanted to spend more time with their contractor and another apprentice explained that he “learnt most” with his contractor. Nevertheless, in general, the relationship that apprentices had with contractors was judged to be significantly less important than their relationship with Team Leaders. For example, three apprentices explained that there were problems that they didn't think they could go to their contractor with, and that they therefore went to their team leader. As one put “he [the contractor] might turn around and say ‘not my problem’”.

9.3.Apprentices highlighted a range of different things they learnt from contractors, although there was relatively little consistency in the things they chose to highlight. These included: “practical stuff” that couldn't be learnt at college (highlighted by 4 apprentices); experiential learning (2 apprentices); help with college work (1 apprentice) working with other contractors (1 apprentice); Craftsmanship (1 apprentice) and “working outside your comfort zone” (1 apprentice).

9.4.One Team leader commented on how a contractor could help develop apprentices' basic skills, self-awareness and ability to handle relationships. One Team Leader commented on how a contractor could help a team leader identify apprentices' “real needs”. One stressed the way in which a “good placement” had helped one of his apprentice's progress in his NVQs and another commented on how particular types of experience, such as ‘new builds’ (new housing developments), would have been particularly beneficial to apprentices.

9.5.Despite the positive feedback, four apprentices highlighted problems they had experienced with their contractors (e.g. contractors not turning up, taking on too much work or not having enough work for them to do). In total ten of the current apprentices had had more than one contractor, indicating either they and/or their contractor had experienced problems.

9.6.Work in the Community: Overall, apprentices had mixed feelings about the work they undertook for two a days a week in the community. For example, they highlighted a range of different things they learnt or gained from work in the community, including:

- Five apprentices commented on talking to people, enhancing their communication skills, a point that was also highlighted by one team leader;
- Three apprentices commented on learning more trades: a “bit of everything” as one apprentice put it;
- Three apprentices commented on Job satisfaction from “a job well done”, particularly when it was in their own community; and
- Two apprentices commented on changing their image in the community: I’ve “lived down here of twenty years, people see me differently...no one says a word [they all know me. Bit more respect – older people don’t think I’m trouble; used to be [Name omitted] the waster, now people see me differently”, as one apprentice put it, a point also highlighted by one Team Leader.

9.7.Work in the community was also a time when Team Leaders could work with them, and therefore many of the comments made about their relationship with Team Leaders would also apply here. Work in the community and the personal development activities, discussed below, are also the main times when the team comes together. This is important because Team Leaders and Project Managers believe that the teams themselves have played an important role in supporting apprentices’ progress. For example, Team Leaders and Project Managers commented on the ways in which apprentices would support and encourage each other, and in particular, the way in which the second cohort of apprentices progressed faster than the first cohort because they were joining a mature team.

This reflects the literature on team formation which suggests that teams need to progress through developmental stages (“storming”, “forming” and “norming”) before becoming effective (“performing”).⁷¹

9.8. Nevertheless, seven apprentices were very critical of the type of work they did in the community, describing jobs like “litter picking”, “grass cutting”, “dusting the church”, “snow shovelling” and “changing the tap” as “tedious” or “boring, like community service”. It was striking that three of these were from the same team, although this may also have reflected the trades they were engaged in, as one apprentice explained “for me...[it’s not relevant, but]...for the painters it’s great”. Two apprentices stated that they wanted to spend less time working in the community and more time with their contractors and two stated that they wanted to spend less time working in the community and more in college. One Team Leader also suggested that some apprentices would gain more from spending less time working in the community and more with their contractors.

9.9. Team Leaders’ and apprentices’ comments about the value of work in the community reflects the problems that Team leaders have experienced in finding work that can continue to challenge apprentices as they develop their skills. Team Leaders explained that at the start, the sort of “quick fix” jobs that partners and community organisations asked them to do, were fine, because apprentices’ technical skills were still limited. They also stressed that apprentices would inevitably have to do work they found boring in the future and accepting it and getting on with was an important dimension of self-motivation. However, they acknowledged that now it was causing problems for those apprentices who needed more challenging work experience for their NVQs.

9.10. **Personal Development:** Overall, apprentices were positive about the outdoor pursuits and personal development activities, such as overseas work experience and Tall Ships voyages that they were involved in. For example, they highlighted a range of different things they learnt or gained, including:

- A team spirit or a sense of “bonding” (highlighted by twelve apprentices);

⁷¹ Tuckman, B., 1965. ‘Developmental sequence in small groups’. Psychological bulletin, Vol. 63, pp. 384-399

- Increases in self-confidence and self-belief, by overcoming challenges (highlighted by six apprentices);
- “fun” (highlighted by four apprentices, two of whom explained that as they were having fun, they were more likely to continue on the project. Their enjoyment was also highlighted by one team leader); and
- New opportunities and ways of doing things and trying new things (highlighted by three apprentices).

9.11. Although, as noted, overall apprentices were positive, in a minority of cases, the outdoor pursuits in particular, created very strong negative feelings. Three described it as “waste of time”, “silly” or “pointless”. One of these apprentices also explained how hard they had found it being away from home and their family during an overseas placement.

9.12. Project Managers and three of the Team Leaders were positive about personal development activities, highlighting its role in broadening apprentices’ horizons and enhancing their confidence. However, one Team Leader was very sceptical about the value of personal development activities such as outdoor pursuits and overseas placements.

9.13. The differences in Team Leader’s views on the value of personal development activities, appears to reflect the differences in their ethos. Some believed in building confidence by taking people out of their comfort zone. Others believed in starting from where people were comfortable and working to expand their comfort zone. The differences in apprentices’ responses suggest that while some apprentices gain significantly by being placed outside their comfort zone, other do not. The problem Team leaders have found, is that it is difficult to identify in advance who is likely to benefit and who will not.

9.14. **College** was recognised as necessary to get qualifications, but for seven apprentices, the thought of going to college had been very daunting, with six of them explicitly linking this fear to their negative experiences of school. For example as one put it “school’s just glad to get rid of me and I was glad to go”. Nevertheless four of these were pleasantly surprised by their return to education,

describing it “fun” or “enjoyable”. Two apprentices also identified passing their exams as their biggest success. As one put it, I “don’t think I’ve ever passed an exam before. Nice to know I could!”. Another apprentice expressed his surprise at how well they’d done. In contrast, two apprentices described college as “easy”. However, not all apprentices were positive about their experiences of college. For example:

- Four apprentices discussed the problems they had experienced at Ebbw Vale College (e.g. a lack of equipment);
- Two identified it as the hardest part of the project and another highlighted the key skills tests as particularly difficult;
- One explained that they thought college was only about qualifications, suggesting they actually learnt how to do the job with their contractor and in the community; and
- One explained how he hadn’t got on with the other people on the course.

10. The Project’s Systems And Processes

10.1. As noted in Section One, Build It is structured as a piece of action research. It is by necessity an experimental, evolving project with considerable responsibility devolved to team leaders so that they can respond to individual need as they see fit. The flexibility and learning opportunities this creates are central to the project’s success, but it places considerable pressure upon Team Leaders, who are often unsure about whether they are doing the right thing. In this context, three of the four Teams Leaders highlighted the importance of support and supervision in providing reassurance and opportunities to reflect and learn from what they were doing.

10.2. In addition to flexibility, the project could not operate without the support of partners, who, for example, provide accommodation and help identify work in the community and contractors who provide opportunities to develop

vocational skills. Indeed, the one Team Leader who was left without a partner after the development trust he was based at closed, highlighted the problems caused by the lack of a base to meet apprentices and work from. He explained that this forced him to rely upon cafes and his front room for meetings.

10.3. The evaluation found that in general the project's partnerships work, in the sense that partners provide what is asked of them. Nevertheless, Project Managers, Team Leaders, and contractors and partners themselves, all identified problems with partnership working. The most significant and recurring problem was that of a failure to share information, with three partners and one of the contractors asking for more information. Project Managers have tried to address this in the past by scheduling more meetings, but these have had little success due to poor attendance, and it would appear that new ways of communicating are required.

10.4. In line with the literature on successful partnerships⁷², the most successful Build It partnerships are those where the institutional culture and the objectives of the partner organisation and the Unit are closest. Where these are aligned, partners are more likely to feel a sense of ownership of 'their apprentices'; where they are not, partners appear more likely to view the project in terms of the help it can give them with construction and maintenance work in their community.

10.5. Two significant practical problem were identified by Team Leaders and apprentices:

- Problems finding contractors willing and able to take on apprentices and provide the type of work experience they needed for their NVQs, identified by two Team Leaders and two apprentices; and

⁷² See e.g. Hudson River Centre (N.D.). *Guide for Managers of Adult Education Programs: Collaboration, Cooperation, and Partnerships*. Available online at http://www.hudrivctr.org/apmg/apmg_06.htm [Accessed, 27th April 2006]

- Problems finding constructive community work, particularly as apprentices develop and require more advanced work, identified by two Team Leaders and seven apprentices.

10.6. Project Managers and Team Leaders are aware of these problems, which are discussed further in the following section (11). Unfortunately, neither problem appears easy to resolve. Team Leaders have worked hard to build a reputation and profile for Build it, and contractors who have had Build It apprentices in the past, will sometimes contact them to ask them if they are still available. Nevertheless, given the difficulties they have in finding in sufficiently challenging work in the community, the breadth and type of work that contractors are able to offer to apprentices, becomes ever more important. Team Leaders have therefore had to become more selective, despite the small pool of contractors. In the past many of these contractors were unwilling to take on young men who represented an unknown quantity and who would not become productive for at least a year. Now that apprentices have more to offer, it has become a little easier, but it remains a serious challenge for the project.

10.7. In response to the shortage of contractors willing to support apprentices, the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) provides allowances for those who take on apprentices. However these allowances are relatively small, are restricted to CITB registered contractors and encourage contractors to work with those apprentices who are the easiest to work with. They also fail to address the underlying problem: the shortage of qualified contractors in South Wales.⁷³

10.8. Work in the community has also proven harder to find than was expected. When the project was being planned, it was thought that Build It's community partners, The Bryncynon Strategy, Rhondda Housing Association, CwmNi, The Ebbw Vale and District Development Trust and the Penywaun Enterprise Partnership, would be able to identify work in the community for the

⁷³ Cf. Future Skills Wales 2003., Future Skills Wales Generic Skills Survey 2003. Unpublished Paper, also available at <http://www.futureskillswales.com/uploads/documents/282.pdf> [Accessed 5th may 2006]

Build It Teams. In practice however, this has not always worked. There are a number of reasons for this, including:

- The restrictions on project funding which mean that Team Leaders even if they wanted to, they could not be seen to be placing themselves in open competition with commercial contractors;
- The Teams' limited capacity in terms of their budget (much of the work is funded by the project), skills and time; and
- The sometimes poor communication between Team Leaders and their community partners.

10.9. The problems have tended to compound one another, so for example, the limited range of jobs that Teams can take on has meant that they have not always been able to respond to requests from community partners. This has led to frustration on both sides that contributed to the sometimes poor communication between Team Leaders and community partners.

10.10. Despite the problems, in April 2006, when Alain Thomas asked Team Leaders and apprentices "If the project were to start again, what would you change?" the almost unanimous response, was "not much" The only discussion was over whether the project should have been stricter at the start of the project. Opinion amongst the apprentices was divided, with some suggesting that they would have benefited from it and others arguing that they would have been sacked if the if the project had been stricter at the start. As noted in Section 8, this probably reflects the differing needs of apprentices.

11.The Impact of the Project on Apprentices and their Communities

11.1. When asked what positive impact the project was having upon themselves as individuals, in addition to the increases in human capital discussed in Section Five, apprentices identified a range of benefits including:

- Enhancement to their career prospects, often expressed as “having a future” (identified by eleven apprentices);
- Enjoyment or an increase in their happiness and well-being (identified by seven apprentices);
- Increased income compared to previous employment (identified by six apprentices); and
- Personal development (e.g. becoming more friendly or outgoing) (identified by three apprentices).

11.2. When interviewed by Alain Thomas in April 2006, comments included:

“I wasn’t going nowhere just to the factory or the dole. Now I’m in college and I ‘ve got qualifications.”

“Getting this job was the best thing that ever happened to me. I can see a future now otherwise I was going nowhere.”

“My aims then? [i.e. before joining the project] --Get money, get drugs, and get out.”

“I was wrecked at weekends and in no fit state to do anything then I realised what I want, to get qualifications.”

“I sometimes have a night on the books instead of going out with the boys. I study now ‘cos I see the need.”

11.3. When asked what positive impact the project was having upon their communities, Team Leaders and Apprentices identified a range of benefits including:

- Physical improvements (identified by ten apprentices and two Team Leaders); and

- Bringing the community closer together, by for example, encouraging Inter-generational contact (identified by ten apprentices and two Team Leaders); and
- Creating role models of success/ripple effect (identified by three Team Leaders);

11.4. The letters of thanks, received from community-based organisations by the teams, since the project started, attest to the project's valuable contribution to the physical regeneration of the communities it works in. Nevertheless, as noted in the previous section, Build It has struggled at times to find work and Team Leaders suggest that because apprentices' are not always able to use their skills, the added value of this work, has not been as great as hoped. So for example, while litter picking may be important, it is not necessarily the best use of an apprentice who is now effectively a qualified plumber or electrician.

11.5. The extent to which the project is creating **role models** is an important one. Project Managers and Team Leaders often talk about the "pebble in the pond" or "ripple effect", the idea that by investing in some of the most disadvantaged people in the community, you can create role models who can begin to challenge and change local cultures of learning. In principle, it is reasonable to expect that there might be an effect of this kind. Because, although direct experience is the most powerful way in which educational self-concept and self-belief (self-efficacy) can be nurtured, it is not the only way; encouragement and the observation of 'near peers', people you identify with, succeeding can also help nurture it.⁷⁴ The theory of learning brokerage⁷⁵, also supports this thesis, as although learning brokerage works through recommendation and matchmaking,⁷⁶ rather than emulation, the principles are similar in that each approach aims to engage people who would not otherwise have considered returning to learn or who might be fearful of it (e.g. because of low levels of self-efficacy).

⁷⁴ Bandura, A. 1994. Self-efficacy. In Ramachandran, V. S. (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Human Behaviour*. Vol. 4. New York: Academic Press, pp.71-81

⁷⁵ Owens, J., (2002) *A Review Of Different Approaches To Skill Development Within Communities*, <http://www.elwa.ac.uk/elwaweb/elwa.aspx?pageid=617>[Accessed, 22nd December 2004]

⁷⁶ Yarnit, M., D. Sachdev & R. Zwart. 2005. *Understanding learning brokerage*. London: Learning and Skills Development Agency.

11.6. Role models might be catalysts for “fateful moments”⁷⁷, an event or experiences in someone’s life that leads them to reevaluate and reassess their life and change direction or behaviour because of it. Evidence suggest that for this to happen, the ‘fateful moment’ needs to come at the right time in a persons life, when they are not only receptive to new ideas, but ready and able to act upon them.⁷⁸

11.7. There is some evidence of a ripple effect in practice, but it remains patchy and incomplete. Two pieces of evidence stand out:

- Recruitment of the first cohort of learners in 2003 was difficult. In total there were only twenty-one applicants for the twelve places. In contrast in 2005, when another four places were advertised, there were over twenty applicants; and
- Team Leaders, and to a lesser extent, apprentices, report that they are frequently asked by people in the community how they can get on the project and/or go to college.

11.8. Neither of these is conclusive. They may, for example, simply reflect the way in which a successful project such as Build It, that is sustained, slowly builds up a reputation in deprived communities who may be cynical of yet another development project⁷⁹ (although the very cynicism of communities might be thought of as a possible example of a negative ‘ripple effect’). It is also possible that there is a ripple effect, but it is limited, so that for example, it is nurturing the belief that with support of a project like Build it people can achieve - the problem is that this support is not more widely available; or that, the ripple effect will only begin in several years time, as apprentices get qualified and begin working in their communities. Further research is therefore needed to assess the magnitude of any ripple effect, and to explore, for example, any preconditions for this impact.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ People and Work Unit., 2005. What are the True Costs of Community Learning? Final report. Unpublished research paper for the Community University of the Valleys Partnership; Pers Comm. Martin O’Neill

⁷⁹ Pers Comm. Dave Adamson

12. Conclusions

12.1. The decline in traditional industries such as coal and steel, stripped out many of the first rung employment and training opportunities that unqualified young men could use as a pathway into skilled, well-paid employment.⁸⁰ In the mid 1990s, the MA programme was introduced together with lower level courses, such as National Traineeships and its successor the FMA, E2E and the Youth Gateway, designed to provide stepping stones into the MA⁸¹, following steep increases in the numbers of young people not in education, training or employment (NEET). These were intended to both engage young people and increase the skills of the UK workforce⁸²; objectives that remain high priorities for Wales.⁸³

12.2. The WAG's current aspiration is for at least 70% of working age adults to hold qualifications at NVQ Level 2 or above, such as five or more GCSEs at Grade C or above, by 2010⁸⁴. In support of this, the WAG is investing in schools and support, such as Learning Coaches⁸⁵, so that more young people leave school with qualifications at or above NVQ Level 2 and trying re-engage those who have failed to achieve this at school, supporting them onto programmes like the FMA and MA.⁸⁶ This latter group is important, as the majority of young people who at age 17 do not have qualifications at NVQ Level 2 or above, have not

⁸⁰ Maguire, M. & S. Maguire., 1997. 'Young people and the Labour Market', pp. 26-38 in Macdonald, R. (ed.). *Youth, The 'Underclass' and Social Exclusion*, London: Routledge; Williamson, S. (1997). 'Is there an emerging British Underclass? The Evidence From Youth research', pp. 39-54 in Macdonald, R. (ed.). *Youth, The 'Underclass' and Social Exclusion*, London: Routledge

⁸¹ Social Exclusion Unit., 2005. *Transitions: Young Adults With Complex Needs*.

⁸² <http://www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=785H> [accessed 2nd December 2005]

⁸³ Fuller, A. & L. Unwin., 2003. 'Creating A 'Modern Apprenticeship': A Critique Of The UK's Multi-Sector, Social Inclusion Approach', *Journal Of Education And Work*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2003

⁸⁴ National Assembly for Wales. 2003. *Wales: A Better County*. The Strategic Agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government., Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales

⁸⁵ Welsh Assembly Government., 2006. *The Learning Country 2: Delivering the Promise*. Cardiff; Welsh Assembly Government.

⁸⁶ National Assembly for Wales. 2002. *Learning Country: Learning Pathways 14-19*. Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales

⁸⁷ National Assembly for Wales. 2001. *The Learning Country: A Comprehensive Education and Lifelong Learning Programme to 2010 in Wales*. Welsh Assembly Government., Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

acquired any more qualifications by the age of 24.⁸⁷ This substantially increases their risk of financial poverty and social exclusion, because, for example:

“Those aged 25 to 50 with no qualifications face a 25 per cent chance of economic inactivity, an 8 per cent chance of unemployment and a 60 per cent chance of low pay (below £6.50 an hour).”⁸⁸

12.3. All of the Build It Apprentices had left school with few or no qualifications. Before joining the project, they were all either unemployed or working in poorly paid, low skilled employment with few prospects for advancement. As a result they appeared condemned to a life at the margins⁸⁹; their life chances stunted.⁹⁰ What Build It has demonstrated is that their failure to get qualifications at NVQ Level 2 at school, does not mean that they lacked the aptitude to do so later in life. Indeed there was little or no correlation between the qualifications that apprentices had achieved prior to joining the project and the progress they have made in acquiring qualification on the project. Research suggests that the reasons for their failure at school are complex and cannot be reduced to a lack of academic ability⁹¹; what young men like the apprentices needed, was a second chance. Unfortunately, their experiences suggest that the MA is failing to offer young people like them a viable second chance.

12.4. This evaluation highlights the hard work of apprentices; examples of good practice amongst colleges who were taking learning seriously and who were pro-active in trying to identify and address apprentices’ problems; contractors who were keen to give something back to their communities; and families who were encouraging their sons to succeed. However, the evaluation demonstrates that this was not enough for young men like the apprentices growing up in economically disadvantaged areas, who left school with few qualifications, and who faced multiple barriers and risk factors. With few compensatory protective

⁸⁷ JRF., 2005. Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Wales 2005, <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/0575.asp>

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Cf. Lloyd-Jones, S., 2005. *A Map Of Transition In The South Wales Valleys*. Thesis ., Phd.) - University Of Wales Cardiff

⁹⁰ Cf. Sen, A. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Random House.

factors and often weak emotional intelligence, they were at greater risk of facing barriers, had fewer internal resources and were less able to access support, making it harder for them to overcome or cope with those barriers. They consequently found accessing and progressing along the programmes such as the MA, extremely difficult.⁹²

12.5. Given the complex challenges apprentices faced, Team Leaders played a pivotal protective role that helped transformed apprentices' life chances. They provided the support, encouragement and challenge that apprentices needed to overcome barriers, reduce their vulnerability to succumbing to fresh barriers and they helped develop apprentices' human capital. There is therefore a very strong case for arguing that without Build It, none of the apprentices would have achieved as much as they have.

12.6. Team Leaders, with the support of the project, successfully reduced or eliminated practical barriers to training. By offering a pathway to a career, and staff that apprentices could readily identify with, the project also broke down some of the dispositional, cultural and efficacy barriers that would otherwise block initial participation in programmes such as the MA. However, the project had less success in reducing or eliminating dispositional, cultural and efficacy barriers and their underlying risk factors, that were either rooted in the values, beliefs and behaviour of apprentice's communities, or in their previous experiences of education, training and employment. These barriers significantly slowed some apprentices' progress.

12.7. In response to dispositional, cultural and efficacy barriers Team Leaders provided indirect pastoral support, but did so, in different ways. The evaluation suggests that different types of support will be important to different apprentices because their needs will differ. If some types of support were more effective than others, this would help explain some of the variation in the progress that apprentices facing similarly weak emotional intelligence and/or risk

⁹¹ Cf. Home Office (National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal), 2000. *Report of Policy Action Team 12: Young people*. H<http://www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/downloadaddoc.asp?id=125H> [accessed, 27th April, 2006]

factors, have made. However, it does not appear sufficient to explain all the variation. Team leader's support is a powerful protective factor, but cannot cancel out the impact of all risk factors or weaknesses in emotional intelligence; the strength of the emotional intelligence that an apprentice has and develops and the risk and protective factors they experience, also appear to be important factors in explaining the differences in progress that apprentices have made in acquiring the human capital they will need to succeed.

12.8. This evaluation has concluded that the Team Leaders' role was "pivotal". This does not however mean that the apprentices' progress can be directly attributed to the work of Team Leaders. There is no question that apprentices have worked extremely hard. The other components of the project, college, work with contractors and in the community and personal development activities were also important. Nevertheless, the evaluation strongly suggests that without the support of Team leaders, it is probable that many of the apprentices would have dropped out, and therefore not benefited from the other components of the programme. This conclusion is in line with much of the literature exploring the ability of individuals to help themselves. This suggests that while an individual's internal resources, what we have described as their emotional intelligence, is important, it is not of itself usually enough to guarantee success. A minority may succeed 'against the odds', but most will not without significant additional support.⁹³

12.9. Build It demonstrates that the problems young men, such as the apprentices who live in deprived communities and who left school with few or no qualifications, are both cultural and practical: there is a poverty of aspiration

⁹² See also Lloyd-Jones, S., 2005. *A Map Of Transition In The South Wales Valleys*. Unpublished PhD. Thesis, University Of Wales Cardiff

⁹³ Furlong, A., Cartmel, F., Biggart, A., Sweeting, H., & West, P. (2003). *Youth transitions: patterns of vulnerability and processes of social inclusion*, Central Research Unit, Scottish Executive, Edinburgh cited in Jones, G. 2005. The thinking and behaviour of young adults, Literature review for the Social Exclusion Unit, London: ODPM, also available at [Hhttp://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794](http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794)H see also Ritchie, H., J. Casebourne & J. Rick. 2005., *Understanding workless people and communities: A literature review*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 255 [Http:// Hwww.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep255.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep255.pdf)H [Accessed 15th March 2005].

amongst both the people living in their communities⁹⁴ and amongst the agencies working with them. This in turn means that too little is invested by either young men or the agencies that should be helping them, in overcoming the practical barriers they face. Build It demonstrates that by taking a risk and investing in the young men on the project, thanks to their hard work, by April 2006 all of them were on course to acquire the human capital they will need to access and sustain highly-skilled, well paid employment in their communities. In the process, they have transformed their life chances.

12.10. Of course, only a minority of young people face the depth and complexity of barriers and risk factors that the young men on Build It confronted. The numbers of apprentices is increasing in Wales⁹⁵ and currently over 80% the apprentices on a construction MA 'succeed' and get NVQ Level 2 or above.⁹⁶ We believe that many more could also succeed, if for example the institutional barriers, such as the requirement that apprentices pass a basic skills test, were removed and if all training providers were as professional as the best, ensuring that learners are not let down and that problems are followed up. Nevertheless, even with these changes, the experience of the apprentices on Build It suggests that in order to succeed, a minority is likely to need additional, targeted support, similar to that offered by Team Leaders.

12.11. The type of support offered by Team Leaders, could, in crude terms be likened to an idealised middle class parent, someone who is supportive of and values further education for their children, who understands and can work with the system, can provide both practical support, such as financial contributions and help with transport and indirect support, such as encouragement, and where necessary exhortation.⁹⁷ The traditional apprenticeship model was also

⁹⁴ See also e.g. Gorard, S. & Rees, G. (2002). *Creating a Learning Society: Learning careers and policies for lifelong learning*, Bristol: The Policy Press

⁹⁵ Welsh Assembly Government., 2006. *The Learning Country 2: Delivering the Promise*. Cardiff; Welsh Assembly Government., also available at [Hhttp://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/4038232/403821/the_learning_country_2/Learning_Country_2_English.pdf?lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/4038232/403821/the_learning_country_2/Learning_Country_2_English.pdf?lang=en)H [Accessed, 27th April 2006]

⁹⁶ ELWA 2006. Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics 2003/04. Cardiff: The NATIONAL Council For Education And Training For Wales (ELWA)

⁹⁷ Cf. Jones, G. 2005. The thinking and behaviour of young adults, Literature review for the Social Exclusion Unit, London: ODPM, also available at [Hhttp://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794](http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=794)H

suggested as another possible model. The problem that the young men on the study faced was a lack of what might be thought of as cultural capital⁹⁸ and that modern mentors (contractors), are not only extremely difficult to find, but also tend to take less responsibility for the personal development of their apprentices.

12.12. If parents and contractors are unable or unwilling to provide this support, the fundamental question raised by the evaluation is who should provide this support? Schools, quite rightly complain when asked to take on the role of social worker and even if they wanted to, would not have the capacity to invest so heavily in a limited number of individuals. Colleges and Universities are quite rightly reluctant to introduce positive discrimination in which some people receive more support than others simply on the basis of their postcodes. We would argue that the only people who can, are people from their communities, with the community 'looking after its own'.

12.13. The costs of not providing this support are considerable. In addition to the human cost of stunted potential and social and economic exclusion for apprentices, their communities and future families, the financial costs are considerable. These include the costs of recruiting and training the 21% of apprentices who currently drop out of the MA before achieving NVQ Level 2 and the costs of benefits and administration plus, losses in national insurance contributions and taxes, for every unemployed person, running to approximately £9,000/year⁹⁹. Whilst all the apprentices were employed when they joined the project, as they began to settle down with homes and families to support and therefore needed a stable income, it is probable that continuing in poorly paid, insecure work in factories would become ever less attractive. Without Build It, most apprentices would have faced a bleak future of poorly paid, low skilled work interspersed with periods of unemployment.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Social Exclusion Unit., 2002, *Reducing Re-Offending By Ex-Prisoners*, London: ODPM also available at <http://www.Socialexclusion.Gov.Uk/DownloadDoc.Asp?Id=64H> [Accessed, 9th August 2005]

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Lloyd-Jones, S., 2005. *A Map Of Transition In The South Wales Valleys*. Thesis ., Phd.) - University Of Wales Cardiff

12.14. Moreover, without the project, exclusion and deprivation would have been likely to have not only stunted the apprentices' life chances, but also those of their children, through the inter-generational transmission of poverty¹⁰¹ and their communities, through area effects.¹⁰²

13. Recommendations for Learning Policy and Practice

13.1. Recommendations for Learning Policy:

- The WAG Department for Education and Lifelong Learning, should consider reviewing the type of support that Learning Coaches will provide under Learning Pathways 14-19. In particular, Learning Coaches should have time to build an on-going relationship of trust and respect with the young people they are working with; their support should be targeted at those most in need; and they should be able to provide both the pastoral support of a 'Trusted Adult' and the practical support of a 'Lead Professional'.
- The WAG Department for Education and Lifelong Learning, should consider reviewing the type of support that is offered to young people aged 20-25 as one of their entitlements under Extending Entitlement. Workers able to act as 'Trusted Adults' and 'Lead Professionals' should be identified, and practical and pastoral support should be targeted at young people aged 20-25 with few or no qualifications and little prospect of further progression in education, training or employment (ETE). These could include youth workers, Job Centre Plus staff and community development workers.

¹⁰¹ Paterson, L & Iannelli, C. 2004. *Patterns Of Social Mobility: A Comparative Study Of England, Wales And Scotland*. Unpublished Working Paper (Number 3), ESRC Research Project, Social Mobility in Scotland in the Twentieth Century.

¹⁰² Lupton, R. 2006. How does place effect education? Unpublished research report, London: IPPR, also available at [Hhttp://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=444](http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=444) [accessed, 26th May 2006]

- The Youth Justice Board (YJB) for England and Wales and the National Probation Service (under the auspices of the National Offender Management Service – NOMS), reviews the type of support that is offered to young people aged 16-17 and 18-25 in the youth and adult criminal justice systems, in the both custody and the community. Workers able to act as ‘Trusted Adults’ and ‘Lead Professionals’ should be identified, and practical and pastoral support should be targeted at vulnerable young people with few or no qualifications and little prospect of further progression in ETE
- The WAG Department for Education and Lifelong Learning, should consider abolishing the requirement that apprentices pass a basic skills test before starting a Foundation or full MA. Instead, basic skills provision should be embedded into the Foundation and Full MA programmes.
- The WAG Department for Education and Lifelong Learning, should consider relaxing the current time limits for completion of a MA from two to three years, in order to include those who have the aptitude, but who have weak human capital and therefore have further to travel and need more support to get there.
- The WAG Department for Education and Lifelong Learning should ensure that in future, transitional arrangements are in place to guarantee that those currently completing a MA are not disadvantaged by changes in the MA programme.
- The WAG should consider giving Estyn a more robust remit to inspect the quality of support services offered to students.
- The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) should consider changing its rules to enable it to work collaboratively with non-construction industry bodies, such as development trusts and housing associations.

13.2. *Recommendations for Learning providers:*

- All learning providers need to take learners as seriously as the best currently do. This means recognising that many learners experience significant barriers and risk factors that make them more vulnerable and liable to drop out. Therefore, learning providers should consider both ways to minimise the institutional barriers they erect and ways to proactively help learners overcome barriers and manage risk factors.
- Learning providers need to work together to ensure that there are accessible pathways between providers, so that, for example learners can transfer from one provider to another.
- Learning providers should form partnerships with community organisations to target recruitment at communities currently under-represented on qualifying courses and agree support processes to enable learners from these communities to complete

13.3 *Recommendations for Economic and Social Development*

- Agencies such as the Job Centre Plus, Careers Wales, the WAG Departments for Social Justice and Education and Lifelong Learning and their counterparts in Local Authorities, consider reflecting upon their expectations of what people from deprived communities can achieve, in order to ensure that they do not perpetuate the poverty of expectation prevalent in many disadvantaged communities.
- The WAG and Local Authorities consider the complex needs of young people from disadvantaged communities with few qualifications, and bear this in mind when designing social benefit clauses intended help them into education, training and employment.

- The WAG and Local Authorities considers how long term project funding can be made available to enable projects like Build It to embed the support in communities that young people with complex problems and the weak human capital need to succeed.
- The WAG considers working with bodies such as the CITB to ensure that financial incentives are available for contractors to encourage them to take on and support people from disadvantaged communities who are likely to need more support and take longer to complete a MA.

Interviewees

- Christopher Beecham Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Steve Brookman, Build It Team Leader, People and Work Unit
- Rhys Burton, Director, CwmNi (Treherbert)
- Ann Churcher, Build It Project Manager, People and Work Unit
- Adam Collins Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Damien Creedon Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Morgan Davies Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Stuart Davies, Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Geraint Evans Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Aaron Ford Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Gary Foreman, Director, Penywaun Enterprise Partnership
- Anthony Griffiths, Build It Team Leader, People and Work Unit
- Gareth Jones Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Kristian Morgan Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Wayne Morris, Build It Team Leader, People and Work Unit
- Kevin Phillips Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Gavin Potts Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Christopher Price Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- David Pritchard, Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Andrew Redman Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Jayne Smith, Ystrad Mynach College
- Jordan Toomer Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Dr Sarah Lloyd-Jones, Director, People and Work Unit
- Christopher Williams, Build It Apprentice, People and Work Unit
- Mike Williams, Build It Team Leader, People and Work Unit