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Publishing in the voluntary sector

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Publishing In The Voluntary Sector

by

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**A Master's Dissertation, submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the award of the Master of Publishing
degree of Loughborough University of Technology.**

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Publishing In The Voluntary Sector

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INTRODUCTION

Coser ⁽¹⁾ notes that publishing may be divided into two broad categories: the conspicuous trade publishing industry centering on the 'blockbuster'; and the rest of the scene which synchronises itself with a whole range of cultural and economic activities. This study is an attempt to illustrate some of the mechanisms involved in just one element of this complex synchronisation, specifically, how publishing and the voluntary sector interact. Publishing is seen as an integral process in the diffusion of ideas. The voluntary sector is credited with being a repository and transmitter of beneficial and valued concepts. The two seem to have a natural affinity, each complementing the other as creator and transmitter of ideas.

The project is based on a series of interviews with a selected sample of national and local voluntary organisations. The local organisations were selected from the *Leicestershire Information Network (LINNET) Directory*, a catalogue of information producing bodies in Leicestershire. As well as being chosen from the *LINNET Directory*, the national bodies were chosen from a list of voluntary sector publishers given in the *Public Library Journal* ⁽²⁾. A willingness to be interviewed was the prime criterion of selection. Fourteen organisations were visited. All of them were charities with the exception of

the Low Pay Campaign. (see chapter 3)

The national organisations were:

- 1) Bedford Square Press.
- 2) Cafod.
- 3) Community Development Foundation.
- 4) Directory of Social Change.
- 5) Mathematical Association.
- 6) National Youth Bureau.
- 7) National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.
- 8) Oxfam.

The local organisations were:

- 1) Age Concern Leicester.
- 2) Apex Leicester Project.
- 3) Leicester Shelter Housing and Research Project.
- 4) Low Pay Campaign.
- 5) '95'.
- 6) Voluntary Action Leicester.

Given the small sample of organisations consulted, this project cannot claim to be a comprehensive account of the field, though it does hope to give some insight into the practical and logistical factors involved in the maintenance

of publishing operations. The individuals interviewed had varying degrees of knowledge of the organisations they were a part. Thus incompleteness of information, particularly regarding the publications output given in chapters two and three resulted from interviewees having little to do with certain aspects of publishing in their normal range of duties. Where ever possible information is given regarding print-run and the nature of a particular publication. Throughout the project, unattributed quotes are used to protect the anonymity of interviewees.

For the purposes of this project, publishing is widely defined to include the production and dissemination not only of books, but also of publicity material such as leaflets, posters and fact sheets.

Chapter one surveys the voluntary sector's role in society, briefly comparing the underlying difference in rationale between commercial and voluntary sector publishing, and discusses some of the legal issues that have a direct influence on the ability of voluntary organisations to publish.

Given the old publishing adage that the list encapsulates a house's ethic and priorities, chapters two and three are snapshot overviews of the organisations' publishing operations,

describing the range of publications produced, and illustrate the general nature of different publishing activities.

Chapter four describes editorial and commissioning practice.

Chapters five and six surveys the logistics of publishing in terms of pricing strategy and production costs, examining the interplay between demands for cost-effectiveness, and demands for the existence of information.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Publishing in the voluntary sector is a place where opposites coalesce. Commercial publishers are noted for their adherence to private gain, where 'the-bottom-line', profit, and hence operational viability, take precedence over any vague notions of public good and cultural responsibility.

Voluntary sector publishing, for the most part, turns this commercial world view on its head. It is not involved in publishing for private gain but for what is subjectively seen as the 'common good'. The hard commercial connotations of publishing are redefined by a conscious decision making process which holds that the existence and transmission of knowledge and information are a priority.

In accounting for the publishing activities of the voluntary sector it is impossible to divorce them from the general operating environment of the sector, where various agencies scope and level of activity are determined by a variety of considerations, for example, the availability of staff; the agencies area of commitment; and the ability to raise sufficient funds for specific projects. Particularly apparent is the way in which the activities of the voluntary sector form a complex web of institutional relations which are found

reflected in the publishing activities.

The Voluntary Sector

The voluntary sector is a mix of campaigning groups, pressure groups and caring organisations. The sheer complexity of activities and working relations makes a detailed taxonomy problematic, though for convenience they may be lumped into 4 categories, in which there exists considerable overlap, where the total activities of an organisation may include any combination of these .⁽¹⁾ These are:

- 1) Service Providers - typified by Age Concern and the Spastics Society.
- 2) Research and Advocacy - such as the Child Poverty Action Group.
- 3) Self-Help Groups - invariably geographically parochial and *ad hoc* formed around specific concerns such as single-parenthood.
- 4) Intermediary Bodies - support and development organisations servicing voluntary organisations in an enabling role. Nationally there is the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), while in Leicester there is Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL).

The voluntary sector is the product of the philanthropic

reaction to the social conditions of privation precipitated by the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. Since then, this philanthropic instinct has passed through the various filters of mutual aid, evangelism, and secular materialism, retaining aspects of these on a collective level, to form the diverse sector of today operating from a variety of motives.

The advent of the Welfare State has not made the sector redundant. Instead of diminishing into an obscure anachronism the voluntary sector is now a core element within society, with an estimated income and expenditure 3 times that of the U.K agricultural industry.⁽²⁾ This importance stems from its perceived role within a pluralistic society where it complements, supplements, extends and influences the statutory system of government⁽³⁾, and as Beveridge noted, sustains something other than the pursuit of profit.⁽⁴⁾

This 'something other' performs a number of functions. Firstly it acts as a critical consciousness, where it compensates for cultural selectivity and overemphasis on values and courses of social action.⁽⁵⁾ Furthermore, it has been argued that adequate state provision is impossible, as commitment of resources and future generations cannot be guaranteed.⁽⁶⁾ Secondly, the voluntary sector serves the interests of minorities by promoting alternative values, acting as a palliative to bureaucratic centralisation with its attendant lack of

flexibility and responses to the differential needs of citizens. Within the last decade this role of the voluntary sector has intensified, as the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) states:

As greater limits have been placed on extending the activity of the state, the voluntary sector, as well as the private sector, has been expected to meet needs that, rightly or wrongly, were previously seen as within the ambit of Government activity.⁽⁷⁾

Campaigning

Having identified the key role of the voluntary sector as the promotion of alternative values, campaigning is thus central to its activity. As the NCVO states:

Campaigning is a crucially important aspect of the voluntary sector's contribution to society. The quality of peoples collective and individual decisions benefits greatly from the way in which voluntary organisations, formed around a particular cause, contribute their distinctive knowledge and expertise . . . voluntary sector campaigning has challenged the conscience of the nation and strongly influenced the views and policies of Government and other decision-takers.⁽⁸⁾

While Government welcomes voluntary sector intervention in the public arena, the rules of 'legitimate' influence are not clearly defined. This has marked implications on the publishing activities of the sector, in that being mostly composed of charities, any activity construed to be political may place

charitable status in jeopardy. This is problematic given that, for example, local community groups who generate and publish information in order to encourage and enable, could be accused of engaging in political activity, as such action is based on the philosophy that everyone has a right to equal access, to both information and society's resources.⁽⁹⁾ Clearly this dilemma stems from a question of definition, and - surprisingly - there has been little criticism from parliament of campaigning activities - The Charity Commission has criticised only 2% of charities in the last 2 years, and none of these more than once.⁽¹⁰⁾ Never-the-less the problem still remains that information is never in itself neutral, implicitly it can be used to either uphold or oppose a particular social perspective. Just how published output from voluntary bodies may be judged to be politically motivated is laid down in Part II of the 1986 Local Government Act.

Part II of the 1986 Local Government Act

It must be stressed that the Act only covers voluntary sector activity that is funded by a local authority, it does not cover activities funded by an independent source of income. However, since many voluntary bodies receive a significant portion of their funds from local authorities, provisions within this act have a direct bearing on voluntary sector ability to release material. These provisions relate to the prohibition of party political material, and the definition of areas of 'proper

concern' open to local government to fund activities in.

The Bill itself is not targeted specifically at the voluntary sector, as the Under-Secretary of State for the Environment stated:

the Bill is not designed to impose restrictions on the activities of voluntary organisations. It is not intended to prevent voluntary organisations from putting their views on issues of political controversy, or from campaigning on them. We [the Government] seek only to prevent ratepayers' money being used by voluntary organisations for purposes that the authority itself will be prohibited from doing under Clause 2 (1).⁽¹¹⁾

Clause 2 (1) states that any material published by a local authority must not affect support for a political party. When Clause 2 (3) is taken into account as well the importance of the Act for the voluntary sector becomes apparent:

A local authority shall not give financial or other assistance to a person [this includes organisations] for the publication of material which the authority are prohibited by this section [Section 2] from publishing themselves.⁽¹²⁾

The Act involves the following considerations:

1) Political Content.

a) The determination of the legality of, for example, a leaflet or a poster, rests on testing the material itself to see whether it appears to be designed to alter political support. This is done regardless of the original intention. As Gutch and Percival note,

the material test is to be much preferred as an intentional test would subject the entire document collection of an organisation to scrutiny.⁽¹³⁾

b) Direct reference to political figures or parties is also prohibited when making points, however it is unlikely that an informative directory of local council services which mentions the allegiances of councillors innocently amongst other information will be illegal.

c) Any information, regardless of individual legal status - that is, whether it is seen to be political or not - may be banned if it is part of a campaign which, when taken as a whole, is seen to be political. Fortunately for the voluntary sector the definition of a further criterion, of banning material which could 'reasonably be regarded as likely to affect' political support, regardless of the material test, has been deleted saving potential legal wrangles and refusals for funds. (see below)

d) Anti-racist material designed to promote race relations could be challenged as being political, as they may reduce support for parties such as the National Front. Even though the Government acknowledged ⁽¹⁴⁾ that a distinction may be drawn between material designed to promote racial harmony, and material designed to 'affect support for a political party', Gutch and Percival⁽¹⁵⁾ recommend to avoid any potential legal complications by funding any potentially contestable material with capital gained from sources other than local government,

as these are not covered by the Act.

2) The Functions of local government.

a) Section 3 of Part II of the 1986 Local Government Reform Act amended Sections 142 and 137 of the 1972 Local Government Reform Act. As the amended sections now stand :

i) Section 142 now only allows local government to publish on matters relating directly to the functions of the authority. Previously local authorities could publish on a wide range of topics , and therefore by extension, voluntary organisations by way of grants. Now voluntary organisations are limited to publishing on matters directly concerned with a local authority's activity.

ii) Section 137 allows local authorities to spend money on publicity only if it concerns economic development, and can give grants to voluntary organisations for publicity only if such publicity is incidental to the main purpose of the grant.

b) These provisions, while clearly a limiting factor, do not severely threaten voluntary sector publishing. Local authority functions are so diverse that it would be exceptional not to be able to publish anything related to them, but, as Gutch and Percival note, caution is called for:

A campaign against a hospital closure could be funded by a local authority, because it would relate to the social services functions - but again, care would have to be taken to be sure that the material related the closure to social services.⁽¹⁶⁾

c) Even if the issue on which a group wanted to publish on

could not be adequately covered by Sections 137 and 142, there exist a number of other provisions in various acts which potentially give the local authority an almost unlimited field on which it can legitimately fund publicity. For example, Section 54 of the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 enables publicity to be funded on questions of disease. However, the problem still remains in finding the requisite enabling sections buried away in the statutes.

d) Section 137 (3) enables local authorities to fund charities in the furtherance of their work, and any organisations which provide a public service on a non-profit basis. Clearly this allows charities to produce material - assuming it is does not conflict with their status - but non-charities who concentrate on campaigning may be excluded, as such activity may not be seen as a public service.

While the Act is concerned with publicity funded by local authorities, many small locally based voluntary organisations rely heavily on such funds. There are legal ways to circumvent the publicity restrictions, but much depends on local authority interpretation of what is political and what proper concerns are. Since a local authority is held responsible for any offending material funded by them, understandably they scrutinize any grant application very carefully. Such caution requires the establishment of a closer dialogue between funder and beneficiary in order to forstall any misunderstanding of

intention which may result in non-grant giving and curtailment of publishing activity - especially so, given that the rules of influence are not clearly stated. As the NCVO state:

Government funding of voluntary organisations which campaign raises different issues, and we are aware of Government sensitivities in this area. Our impression is that there is confused thinking at different levels of central and local government about the circumstances in which it is a proper use of public money to support campaigning activity, or activities which include campaigning. We recommend that NCVO should undertake or commission work to carry this discussion forward, so that effective voluntary action of this kind does not suffer for want of clear and consistent thinking, within government agencies.⁽¹⁷⁾

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CHAPTER TWO : THE NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Part One: The Organisations Described

Community Development Foundation

Formerly the Community Project Foundation, the organisation is a national community development agency, Home Office sponsored, aiming to involve people in regenerating local communities through a programme of consultancies, research, training, local action projects, publications and conferences. (1)

The publications department has 1 member of staff, who was unique to the publication departments of the other agencies visited, in that she had had previous publishing experience in a commercial publishing house before entering into the voluntary sector. Catriona May was concerned with editorial and production matters. Other functions such as distribution were discharged by the secretary in the reception. The publications catalogue - of which 17,500 are produced - is sent to 15 specific networks in the voluntary sector, local government and occasionally central government. Marketing was handled by the communications department.

The organisation has no in-house production facilities. It takes between four and six weeks to physically produce a title, though total time from conception through to publication varies

according to the length of time taken to write material. Average print-runs of books are 1,000, which usually last two years. Although their *Community Group Handbook* had an approximate print-run of 5,000 and sells at a rate of 1,400 a year.

The 1989/90 Catalogue had a list of 32 titles, five of which were new for the year. The organisation produces:

1) **Practical Handbooks** (4 titles) - for example *Audio Visual Guide For Community Groups* by J. Munro and D. Lock .

2) **Information** (2 titles)

- *Community Currents* , a bi-monthly abstract of articles relating to community development in the press, journals and books.

- *Community Work In The U.K 1982 -86* , a review and digest of abstracts.

3) **General Publications** (8 titles) - for example *Resources Centre For Community Groups*.

4) **Project Publications** (4 titles) - accounts of community development programs, for example, *First Lap. Setting Up A Motorcycle Trail Park*. by M. Ball and J. Taylor and P. Blyord

5) Research and Policy Papers (5 titles) - providing a forum for discussion of development issues in community work, for example, *Community work in an area Of high unemployment.*

Additionally the organisation publishes jointly or in association with four other organisations:

- i) **Leeds TURIC** (1 title) - *A Woman's Health Bibliography.*
- ii) **Gwent Self-Start Foundation** (1 title) - *Self-Start in Business.*
- iii) **Bedford Square Press** (1 title) - *Breaking New Ground - Community Development in Asian Communities.*
- iv) **Clwyd County Council** (1 title) - *Bidding for Change? Voluntary organisations and competitive tendering for local authorities.*

Bedford Square Press

The Bedford Square Press is the commercial imprint of the NCVO. It has 1 full-time member of staff, Marian Harper, who deals with editorial and production, and there is one part-time secretary.

There are no in-house facilities. Distribution is carried out by trade distributors Harper and Row, giving the press direct access to stock-holding bookshops.

It takes the standard nine months to produce a book from

production to distribution. Average print-runs are 2,000 which last 2 years. *The Voluntary Agencies Directory* is now in its 11th edition.

The February-July 1990 catalogue listed a complete list of 48 titles, of which 10 were recent additions. The press produces books under the sections of:

1) **Community Action** (10 titles, 2 of which were new) - for example, *Community Work in the 1990s* by S. Jacob and K. Popple.

2) **Directories** (3 titles, 1 of which was new) - for example, *The Voluntary Agencies Directory*.

3) **Fundraising** (3 titles) - for example, *Fundraising and Grant Aid for Voluntary Organisations: A Guide to the literature* by S. Bates.

4) **Organisation and Management** (2 titles) - for example, *Planning together: the Art of Effective Teamwork* by G. Gawlinski and I. Grassils.

5) **Practical Guides** (11 titles) - for example, *Starting and running a voluntary Group* by S. Copper, J. Unell, and A. Weyman

6) **Real Lives** (1 title) - a new publishing heading examining

concepts of citizenship using actual accounts of individuals active in voluntary work. The title is - *Active Citizens*, M. Rankin (ed).

7) **Reports** (3 titles) - for example, *Social Workers: Their Role and Tasks*. The Barclay Report.

8) **Society Today** (8 titles, 2 of which were new) - documents of the contemporary state of Britain, for example *The Child in the City* by Colin Ward.

9) **Survival Handbooks** (7 titles, 2 of which were new) - self-help books, for example *"Just me and the Kids": A manual for lone parents*.

Directory of Social Change

The Directory of Social Change is an educational charity involved in research and the provision of information and training - fundraising, financial management and communications - to the voluntary sector.

The publications office in London has a total of 10 staff who who are all directly involved in all aspects of the editorial, production, marketing and distribution functions. Training is informal and acquired 'on-the-job'. The organisation also uses in-house writers such as Susan Forster who wrote *Business*

And Environmental Groups: A Natural Partnership?

Books are distributed by direct mail to a mailing network of 9,000 addresses drawn from the voluntary sector. Trade distribution is carried out by Turnaround Distribution. Average print-runs vary between 2,000-7000. The organisation uses external printers but produces all material up to camera-copy stage. Again, as with the Bedford Square Press, titles take a standard nine months to produce from receipt of the manuscript to eventual distribution.

The 1990 publication catalogue contained 62 titles, of which 12 were new, presented under the headings of:

1) **Grant Guides and Directories** (16 titles, 5 of which were new) - for example, *A Guide to Company Giving*.

2) **Fund-raising** (19 titles, 5 of which were new) - for, example, *Finding Sponsors for Community Projects*.

3) **Action and Research** (5 titles, 2 of which were new) - research papers and reports, for example, *Charity and the National Health*, a Directory of Social Change Report.

4) **Promotion and Public Relations** (6 titles) - for example, *Marketing: A Handbook for Charities*.

5) Finance, Law and Charity Status (8 titles) - for example, *A Guide to the benefits of Charity Status*.

6) Getting Organised (8 titles) - non of the titles listed were published by the organisation (see below).

A point to note is that the organisation did not originate all of the titles in the publications list. The Directory of Social Change buys books that are of relevance to their sphere of activity from other publishers, and sells them as part of their service provision function to the voluntary sector. For example the organisation receives a 40% discount from the Bedford Square Press. The buying activities may be summarised as follows:

<u>Published Topic</u>	<u>Titles</u> * ¹	<u>'In-House'</u> * ²	<u>'Out-House'</u> * ³
Grants	16	15	1
Fund-raising	19	15	4
Finance	8	6	2
Promotion	6	4	2
Action	5	2	3
Organisation	8	0	8
Total	62	42	20

*1 refers to the number of titles sold under each topic

*2 refers to the number of titles from each topic published by the Directory of

Social Change.

*3 refers to the number of titles from each topic published by other organisations.

It is interesting to note the preponderance of financial enabling guides which appear to be a house speciality. Of the titles from external publishers: 9 came from the NCVO; 2 from LVSC; and 7 titles came from 7 other separate organisations (space forbids a full listing).

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)

NIACE provides information, support, and development services for any organisation involved in the education and training of adults. Members range from Government departments, educational institutions, to churches and voluntary organisations.

The publications department has a staff of three, who have received no formal training in publishing other than what is gained from experience. Distribution is by direct mail to an extensive network of professionals and related organisations in the field, and by exhibitions at conferences and seminars.

There are no in-house production facilities, although a desk top publishing system is used to produce internal policy documents. These internal policy documents take between three

and four weeks to produce, while other items on the list take between five and six months to produce from receipt of the manuscript to eventual distribution. Print-runs vary according to target audience: 15,000 for core-training material for educationalists and researchers; 3,000 for the general public; and a minimum of 5,000 for policy paper documents circulated to government departments and the core decision-takers in the field. Authors are obtained out-house, though Christopher Feeney the managing editor edits the journal *Adult Learning*.

The catalogue contained 16 titles and 2 journals. These fell into the following categories:

1) **Directories** (1 title) - a directory of resources and contacts in adult education, *Year Book of Adult Continuing Education*.

2) **Bibliographies** (1 title) - *A Bibliography of Adult Continuing Education*, J. Davis (ed).

3) **Research Monographs** (12 titles) - for example, *Mature Students: Review of research in issues relating to Adult Education*.

4) **Reports** (1 title) - *Education for the Adult Unemployed : Some Responses*, by A. Charnley.

5) **Booklets** (1 title) - *Time to Learn* , twice-yearly details of summer schools, study tours available to the general public.

6) **Journals** (2 titles) - *Adult Learning*, 10 times a year.
- *Studies in the Education of Adults*, bi-annually, an international learned reference journal.

National Youth Bureau

The National Youth Bureau offers information, advice, training and curricular resources to any individual or organisation involved with young people. Thus the organisation's target audience for its published output ranges from statutory and voluntary youth services to teachers and community workers.

In the publications department there are: 6 editorial staff and 4 production designers. There is no formal experience of publishing other than that acquired whilst working in the department. Average time to produce a book is nine months - three months writing, three months printing, and three months to deal with various delays and revisions. It has been known for a book to take two and a half years to get published, however, a major title has been written and produced in 12 weeks. There are in-house facilities where material is produced to camera ready copy. If there is any bottleneck in the print unit the publications department gets material printed outside. The

print unit cannot provide perfect binding or deal with laminated covers. For these the organisation goes out-house. Minimum print-runs are 1,000 , maximum 2,500. Titles are distributed by the organisation to relevant networks by direct mail.

The organisation produces titles under the following themes:

1) Youth Work Agenda (11 titles, 4 of which are information packs) - introductory material and general discussion titles on issues regarding youth concerns , for example, *Making Connections: Youth Participation In Inner Cities* by I . McKendry.

2) Anti-Racist Youth Work (3 titles, 1 of which is an information pack) - for example, *Black Youth Futures: Ethnic Minorities And The Youth Training Scheme* M. Cross and D. Smith (eds).

3) Training (4 titles, 1 of which is an information pack) - Training issues for youth workers, for example, *Professionals : A Misleading Myth?* by J. Holmes.

4) Management (13 titles, 1 of which is an information pack) - for example, *Step In Time: A Guide To Agency Planning* by W. Feek.

5) **Policy Matters** (5 titles) - for example, *The Education Reform Act: What it means for the Youth Service* by G. Swain.

6) **Young People and the Law** (4 titles) - for example, *Helping with Enquiries: How to assist young people troubled by the Law* by D. Boyd.

Mathematical Association

This is a learned society which aims to further the teaching and understanding of mathematics amongst students and teachers. The members are primarily teachers across the entire spectrum of the educational system. The publishing activities are divided into seven autonomous editorial boards taking their names from the periodicals they produce. These are:

1) *Mathematical Gazette* - a quarterly learned journal for professional teachers and lecturers. Print-runs are approximately 9,500.

2) *Mathematics in Schools* - published 5 times a year for secondary school teachers.

3) *Plus* - An informal magazine of mathematical problems and quizzes. Published tri-annually with the *Newsletter* which itself is produced in co-operation with all the departments and has a print-run as that of *Plus*, 8,000.

4) *Maths Round the Country* - published tri-annually for

non-maths teachers in primary schools.

5) *Struggle: Mathematics for Low Attainers* - Published tri-annually with a print-run of 1,300 for teachers interested on a practical level, ^{with} the problem of low attainment in maths.

6) *Mathematical Pie* - published tri-annually, it is an informal 4-page pamphlet of maths problems.

7) *Prism* - no information was obtained.

The seven editorial sections comprise in total 10 staff, some of whom are part-time. Distribution is by direct mail to members, and serviced by a commercial mailing house. The organisation has no in-house printing facilities.

The publications list contains 50 (inclusive of the periodicals) titles composed of small booklets and books. The list may be divided into:

1) **Practical Guides** (14 titles) - for teachers, an example being, *Choosing a Primary School Mathematics Textbook or Scheme*.

2) **Teaching Resources** (17 titles, 5 of which were work sheets) - for example, *Calculators in schools*.

3) **Booklists** (12 titles) - bibliographies of source material for teachers.

The Mathematical Association has also engaged in 2 joint publications with publisher Stanley Thornes and Hullon, these

are: *Maths Talk* and *Sharing Mathematics*. The organisation also distribute a title privately published by its author, *Magic of Numbers* by K. Irieson.

Oxfam

The Oxford Committee For Famine Relief (Oxfam) is a development agency which pursues its aims of addressing poverty and starvation through a series of overseas campaign projects and a home-based educational campaign. It comprises 5 sections, each of which produces and publishes its own material.

Oxfam Publications has a staff of four. Two are editorial, while the marketing function and administration functions are each discharged by one person. Titles take between six and nine months to process from receipt of the written manuscripts. From conception it can take three years for a title to be published, especially if it is an involved report taking time to write. The books are distributed by direct mail to area officers, and trade distribution services are provided by Central Books. Oxfam is part of a development agency publishers consortium, Global Books, which will be dealt with in the comment section at the end of this chapter. The department has access to in-house printing facilities, though in the case of bottlenecks prints outside. Print-runs of books vary from 3,000 - 6,000. Some are in their fifth edition and have reached sales of 16,000

copies. The department uses in-house and out-house authors.

Oxfam has cornered the market in development education. Oxfam Education publishes titles and sells books under the following categories:

1) **Primary and Middle Schools** (28 titles) which break down into -

i) 6 titles and 1 activity pack/educational game published by Oxfam Education. For example, *The World in a Supermarket Bag*.

ii) 1 joint publication with Leeds DEC, *Disaster in the Classroom: Teaching about Disaster in the Third World*.

iii) 20 titles from other publishers, where 6 came from Birmingham DEC; 3 from Oxford DEC; and 11 came from 11 separate publishers.

2) **Secondary Schools** (49 titles) which break down into -

i) 1 title, Recipes from around the World, and 8 A2 fold out information sheets, for example, *Population. Whose Problem?* published by Oxfam Education.

ii) 40 titles from other publishers:

<u>Publisher</u>	<u>Quantity Sold</u>
Leeds DEC	9
British Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa	2

Birmingham DEC	5
Minority Rights Group	2
Latin American Bureau	2
Manchester DEC	13
Others	7*1
Total	40

*1 7 titles from separate publishers.

3) Youth Workers (17 titles) aimed at youth workers which break down as follows:

i) 1 title, *Some Crafty Things to do*, and 10 issues of *Bother* magazine published by Oxfam Education.

ii) 3 titles from *The Woodcraft Faith*; and 3 titles from 3 separate publishers.

4) Games and Simulations (11 titles) which break down as follows:

i) 7 games from Oxfam Education, for example, *The Farming Game*.

ii) 2 games from *Christian Aid*; and 2 games from 2 separate publishers.

5) Background Reading (16 titles) - 13 titles from Oxfam Publications, and 3 titles from 3 separate publishers.

Cafod

The Catholic Fund for Overseas Development is a Roman Catholic Christian approach to development issues seeking to understand "... the nature and causes of underdevelopment and the Christian responses to it in the light of the Church's teaching".⁽²⁾

Like Oxfam, Cafod is composed of various sections each with producing its own published output. The Publications Department has a staff of 4 engaged in mixed activities relating to the editorial and administrative functions. Training is informal and acquired while working. The department produces a twice-yearly newsletter, *Link*, which has a print-run of 250,000. Cafod sells and distributes by direct mail to 3,000 parishes throughout the country. There are no in-house printing facilities but there is a design and graphics department.

Material is produced by all the departments to coincide with campaigns. Titles produced by other publishers covering the same areas of commitment are also bought and sold to support the campaign.

The organisation's output is geared around the following formats and topics:

- 1) **Leaflets** (10 produced) - information leaflets about

Cafod's work, for example, *Fasting with Cafod*. Typical print-run is 3,000.

2) **Factsheets** (15 produced) - examples are, *Child Labour* and *Debt Disaster*.

3) Newsletters:

- i) *Link* - quarterly, covers campaigns and spirituality.
- ii) *Cafod Journal* - published bi-annually , news and résumés of Cafods activities.
- iii) *Friday* - quarterly newsletter for Cafod supporters.
- iv) *Cafod Bulletin* - monthly newsheet giving information on development projects and emergency funding.

Books are produced under the following headings:

1) **The Church** (29 titles) - practical applications of Christian ethics in social action. The title/publisher breakdown is as follows:

- i) 8 titles from Cafod, for example, *The Passion of Political Love* by T. Cullinan; and 1 joint publication with Collins, *Proclaiming Justice and Peace: Documents from John XXIII to John Paul II*, M. Walsh, B. Davies (eds)
- ii) 7 titles from the Centre for Concern; 2 from Hodder and Stoughton; and 2 from CIIR.

2) Third world Theology Series (9 titles) - theological ideas from around the world . Cafod's joint publication on this topic breaks down as follows:

i) 7 titles with CIIR, for example, *The Way Forward for the First World Churches* by C. Doff.

ii) 2 titles, being 1 joint venture each with 2 separate publishers.

3) Church in the World Series (15 titles) - booklets documenting statements of position on social issues by Catholic Churches around the world. For example, *The Option for the Poor* by the Bishop of Chile.

4) Cafod also obtains material from CIIR for the following series:

i) **Justice Papers (6 titles)** - comment and reflections on work for justice.

ii) **Comment Papers and Profiles from the South (26 titles)** - booklets containing comment on issues and development information on countries.

5) Africa (20 titles) - titles centring on religious and development issues relating to Africa. The title/publisher breakdown is as follows:

i) 8 titles from Cafod, for example, *Justice and Development in Africa* by Bishop Sarpong; and 1 map of Africa.

ii) 1 title - Cafod joint publication with CTS, *Africa's Crisis and the Church in Britain*.

iii) 1 title - Cafod treble publication with CMO/Andes Press, *I was Hungry*.

iv) 2 titles from AFJN; and 7 titles from 7 individual publishers.

6) Latin America (9 titles) - titles centering on religious and development issues relating to Latin America.

Title/publisher breakdown is as follows:

i) 1 title - Cafod joint publication with CIIR, *Good News to All*, by J. Pitt.

ii) 4 titles from CIIR; and 4 titles from 4 individual publishers.

7) Asia (6 titles) - titles centering on religious and development issues pertinent to Asia. Cafod produces none and obtains 6 titles from 6 individual publishers.

8) Development Issues (18 titles) - title/publisher breakdown is as follows:

i) 2 titles from Cafod, for example, *Debt and Poverty Booklist*.

ii) 16 titles from 16 individual publishers.

9) Environmental and Development (15 titles) - Cafod

obtains all titles from other publishers. The title/publisher breakdown is: 3 titles from Earthscan; 2 titles from IIED; and 10 titles from 10 individual publishers.

10) Simulation Games (8 games) - the title/publisher breakdown is as follows:

- i) 2 titles from Cafod, for example, *Food or Arms Role Play*.
- ii) 2 titles - joint Cafod publications with Nottingham Justice and Peace Commission, *Land Reform in Brazil. Role Play*, and Christian Aid, *The Grain Drain*. (1 title from each co-operation).
- iii) 3 titles from Christian Aid; and 1 title from 1 other publisher.

11) Liturgical (10 titles) - The title/publisher breakdown is as follows:

- i) 5 titles from Cafod, for example, *A True Christmas - A new Carol Service*.
- ii) 1 Cafod joint publication with the Thomas Moore Centre, *Celebrating One World Jubilee Liturgy Book*.
- iii) 5 titles from 5 individual publishers.

12) Cafod produces the following material for its special campaigns:

- i) **Working in Partnership Campaign** - Cafod supporters engage in fundraising activity for communities in chosen countries. There are 7 countries in the campaign, and for each

country is produced: a photo display pack; programme leaflets introducing campaign participants to the country; a poster displaying the projects; a prayer sheet; a recipe sheet; a map and an information pack on how to start a Working in Partnership Campaign Group.

ii) **Renewing the Earth Campaign** - self-explanatory title. Three titles are produced, for example, *Renewing the Earth Study Guide* ; a campaign information pack; and a treble publication information pack in conjunction with ILEA and Christian Aid, *Handle With Care Schools Pack* .

13) **Education** - resource guides for teachers, curriculum materials, and moral issues for teachers. Cafod produces the following:

i) 1 title - *Taking Care: Environment from a Christian Perspective*.

ii) 2 treble publications - *Act Justify* with Christian Aid and Collins Liturgical; and *Assemblies for development* with CWIE and Christian Aid.

iii) 2 information packs, for example, *The Schools Pack on Africa*.

iv) 1 joint pack with Christian Aid, *We Are Asking Why They Are Happy: A GCSE Pack* .

The total quantity of titles by publisher bought by Cafod may be summarised below:

<u>Publisher</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
CIIR	43
Latin American Bureau	2
Centre for Concern	8
Christian Aid	6
Oxfam	3
Oxford University Press	2
Earthscan	3
IIED	2
Others	46*1

*1 46 titles from 46 separate publishers.

Part Two: Commentary

Publishing is just one activity amongst many others, for example advocacy and service provision, forming a complementary and in most cases a vital activity. In the larger national charities composed of many different sections, publishing is not their *raison d'être* but does form an important ancillary function of information provision furthering operational objectives.

All the national agencies used various combinations of advance information, cataloguing in publication, Whittakers and British Book News. Advance information is usually sent out two months in advance of publication. For example the Directory of

Social Change does not send out information any earlier as they do not wish to be inundated with orders they may not be able to meet if an expected delay occurs.

Mailing of catalogues was standard practice amongst all the organisations. Since they mailed to very specialised markets they were able to achieve a higher return than the two per cent response rate associated with mailing to general lists. This is not universal however. The Community Development Foundation sends its catalogue to fifteen distinct networks within the voluntary sector and local and national government at a cost of £30 per network. One problem associated with this is that 600 catalogues are sent to a network of health workers to advertise two health related titles on their list. Sending the catalogues is costly for the return of potential orders.

Apart from mailing lists, the aforementioned bibliographic registrations and conferences, another way of getting titles advertised is by press reviews. Review copies are sent to core people in the national and specialist press. The Directory of Social Change, Oxfam and the Community Development in particular make full use of their contacts in the national press. Certain material is almost guaranteed a review, and a mention as a news item if it is of 'newsworthy' status. Thus a report on Asian access to housing is highly likely to at least get mentioned, if not reviewed.

Particularly notable about some of the campaigning organisations which produce many leaflets, pamphlets and booklets besides books, is their tendency to become publishing dinosaurs, with confused information departments wondering what pieces of organisation generated information should be prioritised for public dissemination. As was mentioned in an interview:

We've got about 450 separate bits of paper floating around, and it's difficult to keep track of them.

This is an issue which some organisations are addressing, as this situation is seen as potentially counter-productive to public campaigns, with unco-ordinated output from autonomous sections presenting the public with a confusing image.

In pursuing their information and education objectives, some charities also become bookseller as well as publisher. Cafod when conducting a campaign such as its Renewing the Earth Campaign, scans publishers output acquiring any title which is consonant to a campaign issue, or simply accords with their sphere of commitment. Similarly with Oxfam Education and the Directory of Social Change. Frequently these titles are from other voluntary organisation. Such practice not only saves staff time in unnecessary duplication but also forges a beneficial

chain of symbiotic relations:

1) The purchaser is provided with material for an on-going concern, and receives extra campaign revenue if any profits result from sales - assuming of course that buyer and seller operate above a cost-recovery basis. The campaign also draws attention to the buyer's own list of relevant titles, and, hopefully, by positive association, the rest of the list.

2) The seller is provided with a ready market for the stock of titles and is able to dispense with intermediaries, thus reducing costs.

There is also a marked tendency for organisations sharing similar aims and fields of interests to co-operate with joint publications. This is in stark contrast to commercial trade publishing where there is ruthless competition for authors and rushes to dominate the share of a particular market segment.

The products of voluntary sector publishing are also valued, for example Cafod's treble publication with Christian Aid and ILEA indicates success in their role as publishers of educational materials. Similarly with Oxfam, who receive requests from established schools publishers to reproduce copyright material in their text books. Cafod is also taken seriously by commercial publishers, as evidenced by the joint publications with Hodder and Stoughton, and Collins.

Clearly for the commercial publishers the possibility of opening up new markets , particularly to the various special interest markets that some voluntary organisations cater for, must be a dominating factor. Not all voluntary sector markets are of interest to the commercial publishers however. The National Youth Bureau has attempted to produce joint publications with Longmans who have a number of youth titles on their list, but laments that it will be accepted only on author/publisher terms. This experience is clearly an example where commercial considerations and market possibilities are playing a decisive role. Though it is a matter of individual commercial publishers strategy, perhaps the development issues and their relation to the education market are considered to have more potential than the youth market. NIACE produces the core information in their field but has found little commercial value in it.

It is possible that this situation will change. Publishers, ever responding to new trends, may find that, for example, youth related titles are in demand, and could be accordingly accommodating to any organisation with experience in this field. However publishing is also about creating markets, and given the educational mission of some voluntary organisations, some are setting out to actively promote their wares. In an attempt to realise the full market potential of publishing of

non-profit altruism a development agency publishers' consortium, Global Books, has been established. Set up in July 1990 the initiative combines the resources of four organisations: the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR); the Latin American Bureau; Oxfam; and Panos. These organisations have considerable experience in their fields. As the press release announcing the venture states:

Too often, important and painstaking research and writing end up as boxes of publications gathering dust for want of effective promotion and distribution . . . by combining the expertise of the four organisations and borrowing the best of commercial publishing practice, Global Books intends to demonstrate that not-for profit books can match, and improve upon, the quality of those from much larger publishing organisations. ⁽³⁾

Global Books uses Central Books and Trocare for general trade distribution in the U.K; is putting overseas distribution to tender; and is making a conscious effort to represent itself at the established trade fairs. What is clear, is that not only do the national organisations have their own specialised infrastructure, but now steps are being taken to connect this infrastructure to the national and inter-national publishing and book trades.

Expansion is also occurring in other areas. The Community Development project is setting up a Parliamentary Affairs department and plans to become more market and campaign oriented. It would be interesting to see if publication output rises correspondingly.

While there has been expansion in voluntary sector publishing there is also a surprising decline. Bedford Square Press is being restructured in April 1991 to be scaled down and subsumed into the communications department. It was decided that it did not contribute to the aims and objectives of the NCVO. This is ironic, as the Bedford Square Press is seen as a model for publishing in the voluntary sector and is being scaled down right at the moment while others such as the Directory of Social Change is increasing publishing activity. The problem according to staff is that there has never been in the press's 22 year history any clear statement of brief:

There has been along the line a change in rationale. At the moment the rationale is being redefined and it is unfavourable to Bedford Square Press integrity.[That is, to the autonomous existence of the Press]

Arguably the benefit of the Bedford Square Press is in its contribution to greater public awareness of the voluntary sector. Inevitably in matters such as these value judgements

appear. This situation is one of a brick wall conundrum: individual bricks may be taken from a wall, but eventually there comes a stage when it is not known which brick, when removed, will cause the wall to collapse. Or put more directly, how does one cost a benefit?

References

- 1) Community Development Foundation *Annual Report*.
- 2) *Cafod Resources Catalogue 1990*.
- 3) Global Books press release.

CHAPTER THREE : THE LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Part One : The Organisations Described

Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL)

Voluntary Action Leicester is a development agency servicing the needs of voluntary and community organisations in the city of Leicester, offering information, advice, training, development support, and practical services.

The organisation has no publishing department per se. The staff of 28 produce material when and as required during the course of their activities. Even when material needs to be produced, they often have little time to devote to writing/compiling information in between their other duties.

Printing is out-house, though a self-help news letter is produced in-house using a small reprographic machine.

Distribution is by direct mail and personal contact.

VAL produces the following:

1) **Newspaper** (A4 format, 8 page) - *Monthly News Bulletin* sent free to 800 groups in the city, providing news, information resources and comment for voluntary organisations.

2) Newsletter (A4 format, 1-2 sheets) - *Self Help*

Newsletter, an informal information and comment circular sent to 200 specific groups in the city.

3) Directories (2 titles) :

i) *Directory of Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups in Leicester.*

ii) *Who's Who in Leicester Government*, a guide to various posts in local government detailing their areas of municipal responsibility.

4) Booklet - *Asian Carers*, an A5 24 page booklet offering advice and a list of helpful organisations for Asians looking after relatives at home. Produced in five languages, Bengali; Gujarati; Punjabi; Urdu; and English.

5) Leaflets - a range of leaflets centring on specific activities of VAL, for example:

i) *Business Links 90* - describing equipment and service donational activity of local business to voluntary groups in Leicester.

ii) *Practical Placements for Social Work Students* - describes areas and possibilities work placements in VAL.

iii) *Self Help Groups Project* - advertising the services VAL has to offer to self help projects.

iv) *Retirement Planning Courses* - promoting courses run by

VAL to minimise the financial and personal upheaval when entering retirement.

6) **Books** (1 title) - *Self Help through the Looking Glass* by S. Duddy and M. Landu-North. Print-run 1,000. Comment and analysis of self help groups and their activities.

VAL has also co-written a report *Plastic Power* a report on electricity token scheme in the Braunstone area of Leicester with '95'.

Age Concern Leicester

Age Concern Leicester is one of 1,400 autonomous Age Concern groups throughout the U.K offering a range of welfare and care services to the over 50s. It is composed of a number of sections, each producing its own material for publication.

Access was gained to the welfare rights section. It has one full-time worker, Chris Marvel, who in-between providing information and advice services produces the the publications. The material is produced in-house using directories, and there is help in some research matters with E.T placements.

There are in-house facilities for photocopying - many of the publications are photocopies - though out-house printers, Commuinty Press, are also used.

Publications are distributed by mail to Age Concern members and information points - libraries, community centres etc. - around Leicester.

The welfare rights section produces the following:

1) Directories (4 titles, A4 format, photocopied and ring bound) -

- i) *Directory of Age Concern Leicester Services .*
- ii) *Winter Care: A directory of services relating to the winter care of ederly people.*
- iii) *Day Care: A directory of day care provisions for elderly people in the city of Leicester.*
- iv) *Directory of Sport and Recreation.*

2) General Information (1 title) - *An introduction to Age Concern Leicester*, A4 format, a history of the organisation.

3) Fact Sheets (4 titles) - A3 photocopied sheets folded in half to produce 4 page A4 booklets -

- i) *Chiropdy* - produced in Gujariti, Punjabi, Urdu, and English.
- ii) *Housing.*
- iii) *Residential and Nursery Home Care for Elderly People.*
- iv) *Keeping Warm in Winter.*

4) Leaflets - a range of leaflets for all activities. For example:

i) *Age Concern Leicester Winter Warm Leaflets* (30,000 print-run)

ii) *Care 99* - introducing a neighbourhood service disabled care scheme run by Age Concern Leicester.

iii) *Clarence House* - information leaflet giving a timetable of activities in the main building of Age Concern Leicester.

Age Concern Leicester has also co-published two A5 27 page booklets on caring for older people with the Leicester Rights Centre:

i) *Someone to talk to* - useful contacts if one is looking after someone.

ii) *Time for a break* - information and advice on looking after old people at home.

Leicester Shelter Housing and Research Project

Shelter is an autonomously run section of Shelter U.K. There are four full-time staff, two-long term volunteers, and two short-term volunteers. There are no specific provisions for publications, material is produced intermittently during the course of discharging other duties. Completed publications get sent to advice centres and the local authority.

The small range of publications are:

1) **Leaflets** - basic information leaflets. Nine are produced, approximately 2,000 are printed of each.

2) **Fact Sheets** - basic housing statistics on Leicester. Eight

are produced.

3) Research Documents - reports on housing trends in Leicester. Five are produced, for example, *Housing in Leicestershire* and *Hostels in Leicestershire*. Another two are currently being produced at the time of writing (August 1990).

4) Annual Report - 300 are produced.

Shelter Leicester Project also writes articles for the Leicester Rights Bureau which appear in the latter's *Leicester Rights Bulletin*.

'95'

'95' is a regional branch of the Family Service Unit, taking its name from the address of its base in the Braunstone area of Leicester which it serves. The Family Service Unit works with disadvantaged families offering a range of services such as counselling, and practical advice to address the personal and economic problems associated with deprivation.

There are three full-time staff who produce material as a supplement to their daily work. They are also writing detailed reports about the the community they serve to add to informed debate in anti-poverty campaigning. Printing is done by a variety of arrangements (see commentary).

'95' produces the following:

1) Posters - three are produced and 50 copies photocopied of

each.

2) **Community Newspaper** - 2,000 are produced for the Braunstone area.

3) **Pamphlets** - on practical subjects and welfare issues.

4) **Reports** - two have been written:

i) *There's no money in my meter.*

ii) *Plastic Power* - This was co-written with Cathi Rae from VAL.

Apex Project Leicester

Apex is a consultancy offering advice counselling and support to ex-offenders helping them find employment. It not only advises ex-offenders, but also employers.

The organisation has four full-time staff. All published material is written by the project co-ordinator, Bob Skidmore. Production is done by a number of arrangements, which will be discussed later. Distribution is by mail and personal contact to Job Centres, prisons, and probation services. Publication operations are very small scale and are geared to release the following:

1) **Posters** - two posters are produced advertising the services of Apex. Two hundred are photocopied of each.

2) Leaflets - two information leaflets for -

i) ex-offenders and prisoners - describing what Apex can help them achieve in the employment field.

ii) employers - telling employers about the work of Apex and how from discrimination of ex-offenders they could be losing valuable assets.

3) *JobsLink Newsletter* - a catalogue of success stories of ex-offenders who have found employment with Apex's assistance. Published quarterly.

4) Annual Report - two thousand are produced.

Low Pay Campaign

The Leicester Low Pay Campaign is in the unique position of being the only low pay unit that is part of a local authority.

While it is not therefore a voluntary organisation, it provides a useful comparison with the other local voluntary agencies it would normally be associated with. It is also instructive in that it can show how well services are provided which authorities are not obliged to meet. This will be discussed in part two of this chapter.

The unit is part of the Economic Services Branch of Leicester City Council. It has a full-time staff of three devoted specially to compiling information on pay levels and employment rights.

The unit uses a mixture of in-house and external origination and production. All material is written in-house with the exception of the training notes. Printing is executed by the council print unit, though external printers for the posters and *Low Pay in Leicester*.

The unit produces the following for the general public:

1) **Information Pack (1)** - composed of 16 A4 sheets giving information on employment and benefit rights. It is printed in 6 languages, English; Bengali; Guyardi; Hindi; Punjabi; and Urdu. Five hundred are produced for each language.

2) **Posters** - three are produced in A3. One was for a specific campaign, while the other two are more general advertising the information provision services of the unit. One general poster is produced in the five Asian languages mentioned above.

3) **Low Pay in Leicester** - an annual summary of compiled data relating to, for example, pay agreements; comparisons of pay by industry and occupation; and a survey of wage levels of job centre vacancies.

For more specialised and specific audiences of council working parties and welfare advice workers the following are produced:

1) Briefing Papers (4) - information and rules for advice workers providing a forum for internal points of debate and clarification of technical details relating to employment legislation. Four have been produced to date, an example being *Redundancy*. Two hundred and fifty copies of each paper are photocopied.

2) Training Notes (10) - produced for training courses being guides to technical details, and are produced on a course attendance basis. Six guides were written in 1989 and four in 1990.

3) Internal Reports:

- i) Quarterly progress reports.
- ii) Reports on particular subjects produced on an *ad hoc* basis.
- iii) Annual Report - being a resume of work carried out in the previous year with a statement of intent for the forthcoming year.

The unit also writes a one page article for Leicester City Councils free magazine *Link*. Core material is translated out-house by a translation service.

Part Two: Commentary

Staff in all the local organisations had no formal training in producing publications. Publications, though seen as vital to all, because of lack of funding and time due to pressure from other

duties was not as developed or as extensive as the organisations would have liked. All the staff performed a mixture of roles so actually having time to produce material was a problem. This situation is aggravated with organisations of few staff, where in covering for absences, tasks had to be performed at the expense of others. Many organisations could not afford to employ much needed staff as they were not funded sufficiently. For example, VAL has been unable to get an information worker, who amongst other roles would co-ordinate the diffuse publishing activities of the different sections. Low Pay has had an information post left unfilled due to funding not taking into account rises in the level of inflation.

All the organisations had no specific funds for publications. Some agencies arranged sponsors. VAL received a £42,000 grant from the Kings Fund Centre to produce their booklet on Asian carers. Age Concern are currently deliberating over the possibility of producing leaflets with sponsors.

Translations were also a problem. The provision of leaflets in languages other than English is limited. Given the ethnic composition of Leicester such a situation is regrettable.

Translation facilities are available in Leicester but their cost is beyond the price range of most voluntary organisations.

Shelter said it would translate material if it could get staff, volunteers or an increase in funding. Leicester Rights Centre, Leicester Welfare Benefits Take Up Campaign produce their own

material.⁽¹⁾ However, the possibility of inter-organisation co-operation in this respect is remote given that these agencies are usually themselves short of time and staff, being too busy with their own work. All the organisations interviewed stated that translations were expensive and time-consuming, quite apart from the issue of fidelity to the original meaning.

As with the national organisations there was a lot of co-operation. Many of the organisations wrote articles for the *Leicester Rights Bulletin*. Booklets are co-written. *Asian Carers* was written by staff from VAL and Leicester Rights Centre. VAL co-wrote a report with '95'. These are just examples of how the voluntary organisations intermesh with each other. In fact there was concern expressed, especially in disablement circles, that organisations in Leicester could be duplicating much information in their separate activities. To avoid this an Information Federation was established in February 1989, composed of organisations involved in providing services for the disabled. It has three main aims:

- i) to exchange information and news,
- ii) the avoidance of information duplication,
- iii) co-ordination of information provision policies.

Although there have been as yet no further developments the foundations of a co-ordinated publishing operation utilising the skills and resources of member organisations have been laid. On a larger scale is the establishment of the Leicestershire

Information Plan, an advisory body composed of voluntary organisations which provide consultative material to the local authority. That the project was initiated by Leicester County Council testifies much to the value placed on the information produced by the sector.

Distribution of published output was by mail and personal contact to very clearly defined audiences, or if very general, that is 'the general public' to localities where people who may be interested in such matters could easily find them - libraries, advice centres and so on. Apex literally had a captive audience for its newsletter.

Even though the Low Pay Unit did not produce some of its material for the public it can still by a round about way reach them. For example the internal Annual Report is referred to in council anti-poverty working parties composed of council officials and representatives of voluntary organisations. The reports are thereby formally recorded as existing within the council structure in the minutes of the meetings, thereby making them available for public scrutiny.

None of the material produced by the organisations had ISBNs, with the exception of Self Help Through the Looking Glass by Shirley Duddy. The problem inherent here, is that much valuable

information becomes grey and therefore unobtainable unless people know what they are looking for, and are connected to the right formal and informal information networks. Quite simply material is produced by the organisations for the Leicester area and they do not see the need for introducing such tools of bibliographic control. Surprisingly, the *Asian Carers* booklet produced by VAL has received more orders from outside Leicester than in. Perhaps this may be attributed to a combination of the efficiency of informal information networks and the merits of the proverbial title that always sells itself.

The reports written by '95' despite having no standard book number may not become grey as distribution is handled by the national organisation. From here they may be picked up by the British Library or included in the Community Development Foundation's abstracting service which deals with the conventional and non-conventional output of the voluntary sector. However staff at '95' acknowledge that a book to all intents and purposes, does not exist if it does not have a standard book number and are currently addressing the situation. Arguably it is imperative that they do so as their work is designed to provide informed debate over very real issues.

Lack of resources forced the local organisations to live up to the reputation of the voluntary sector as being innovative and flexible. All, depending on circumstances, such as sponsorship

and staff levels, produced material in a number of ways. Often each publication was produced in a different way from the others on a list. Photocopying was standard throughout the organisations.

Age Concern photocopied its directories and used plastic binders. For the sports directory, the laminated two colour covers were produced out-house, while the text was photocopied on coloured paper coded for specific reference. This was part of a concerted attempt at making it an attractive document to use by information workers in libraries and sports centres.

Fact sheets and information leaflets were invariably A3 or A4 photocopied sheets folded to form four paged A4 and A5 documents respectively. If sponsors were available then leaflets were printed.

Some organisations would not release photocopied leaflets. VAL was promoting a very definite corporate image and had all leaflets externally printed in two colours on high quality paper bearing the organisations distinctive logo - which was designed for them by a marketing agency.

Apex is a good example of the resources an agency with limited funds can draw upon. The posters were 'cut and paste jobs' enlarged and reproduced on the office photocopier. The

graphics for one of them was donated by a client, while the distinctive text of the other was produced on an Amstrad pc in-house. One information leaflet after being written in-house, was desk top published by prison staff in payment for a lecture given by the project co-ordinator, Bob Skidmore. It was then printed by Apex at County Hall. The leaflet aimed at employers was typeset outside and then printed by yet another organisation in return for a 'favour' previously given. This latter example illustrates a careful mix of using resources where necessary to produce something professional for a valued and important audience, and the use of contacts to get material out at a low cost as possible.

Material is also produced which fulfills a number of functions simultaneously. Apex's *Joblink* newsletter is produced as part of a desk top publishing exercise by prison inmates, contributing to its programme of assisting offenders as well as providing providing a document which further contributes to its programme. Similarly with '95' which has its newsletter produced on a desk top publishing system by local residents at a community centre. Not only is the letter put out, but the method of production furthers the agency's aims of making the people in the area it services more computer literate.

Desk top publishing enables publishing to become accessible to untrained people, enabling them to produce professional standard material. Many national and local organisations use it

to produce camera ready copy. Others such as the Community Information Project produce publications entirely by desk top publishing. The disc is given to a printer who prints straight from a disc. It is estimated that producing publications this way saves 25% of the cost of typesetting. However much depends on the individual circumstances of an organisation. Would an organisation whose staffs time is always limited be able to spare the time to learn and insert the codes required for the text to be compatible with the printer's machinery? Additionally the savings are only of value if typesetting is always external to the organisation. With the organisations surveyed it does have its uses where for example VAL has its leaflets typeset outhouse. The problem remaining for them is the ability to spare staff time. As Sally Burke comments on the use of printing direct from disc

However, these savings will mainly depend on the time spent preparing the text and entering the codes before it even goes near the typesetters. Anyone considering producing a publication in this way should consider carefully whether they have the time to spare - especially in the beginning.⁽²⁾

There is also the consideration of the time and expense involved to printer and organisation alike when the inevitable mistakes occur during the learning process.

The Low Pay Unit illustrates the advantages to be gained by

taking an activity which is usually the preserve of the voluntary sector and making it part of the local government machine.

The unit came into being as a result of external pressure from the Child Poverty Action Group, trade unions and councillors to set up a Low Pay Unit in response to 'irregularities' in local labour agreements. A voluntary grant was refused with the council creating its own internal unit.

Essentially the unit is in a more financially secure position than most local voluntary organisations who exist in a sector renowned for the short lived nature of some concerns. The unit has access to assured funds; staff receive management training; and there are funds to replace reference works which date quickly and pay for translations. Overwhelmingly there is direct access to decision makers.

The arrangement is a balance of forces. The gains in terms of efficiency , security , resources , ability to publish and direct access are tempered by a certain loss of autonomy. The unit does more responding than campaigning and is clearly limited by law to the scope of its activities. (see chapter one) However this situation is ameliorated by the unit being part of, and contributing to a climate of rational and informed debate . Some in the voluntary sector would decry such a situation happening for all parts of the sector as what is gained in

resources is lost in autonomy and the ability to freely choose and pursue objectives. What is clear is that the unit would be disbanded if there is ever a change in the Councils political complexion - thus a full circle return to the argument that the voluntary sector will always be required.

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CHAPTER FOUR: PUBLISHING PRACTICE

Active publishing programmes are seen as one of the prime means by which organisations further their aims and objectives. As the NCVO states:

Publications continue to be one of the most important media through which NCVO promotes the voluntary sector and provides the support which many organisations need⁽¹⁾

Publications are invariably used to support campaigns by providing timely and relevant information in an organisation's field of activity. As one interviewee commented:

We produce books for relevant issues and to co-ordinate with campaigns.

However publications are not always viewed as the optimal means of campaigning. One agency drew up lists of priority issues and decided whether each was best addressed by either a conference or a book. If the target group was small, the subject material would be of narrow interest, so conferences were arranged instead. The book was seen to be a medium of mass communication inappropriate in certain instances.

Some organisations do not use publications at all in campaigning, preferring to keep all activity on a low key

outside of the public arena where direct consultative access to decision makers is available. Publications are usually the products of working projects between the voluntary organisation and decision making organisations. In this respect publications were still seen to provide a forum of debate, creating a tangible dialogue, developing areas of debate and acting as a filter opinions. This is particularly important as a publications department in order to justify its existence to its host organisation and any outside sponsors, must demonstrate that it can produce information and not just report.

Organisations which aim to serve the information needs of their specialised members usually have their own parochial list of priorities, but inevitably end up doing responsive publications when outside developments intervene in their sphere of interest.

Publications can form a vital fundraising function keeping an organisation operational. Approximately fifty eight per cent of the Directory of social Change's income was generated by the sales of books in 1989 - total income in that year was £430,000 of which publications revenue accounted for £250,000.⁽²⁾

This raises a dilemma that some publishing sections have had to consider, particularly those which run at a loss and are

subsidised, relating to the question of whether a list should support itself or be the organisations useful, but loss making venture. Responses to this question will be discussed later(Chapter Five). To become self-financing involves asking questions of publishing priorities in terms of publications released. One strategy may involve producing a plethora of publications unrelated to the activity of the organisation - assuming of course, that these themselves can be sold at a profit. This is problematic if it is seen that the published output must relate to an organisations activities; that there must be no mismatch between overall campaigning strategies and published output. Such a consideration is a matter of individual agency strategy, but there is the danger if such a policy is pursued, that self-financing is achieved at the expense of credibility.

Commissioning

A number of arrangements and practices are evident in obtaining material for publication:

- 1) The commissioning of authors on a full commercial basis.
- 2) Internal origination by agency staff (paid or voluntary).
- 3) Authors sympathetic to the organisation's work either accept nominal gesture fees or donate their writing services.

Organisational practice can fall into one or any of these categories. For example Bedford Square Press acquires writers on a full commercial basis paying fees commissions and royalties. Community Development Project's commissioning is informed by all three approaches taking every proposed publication individually.

Despite the resources to do so, some do not seek authors, do not commission and do not read unsolicited manuscripts. All material is written internally. Conversely others always read unsolicited manuscripts. This commission/non-commission dichotomy can be attributed to a number of factors.

Non-commission can result from the conscious logistical editorial decision to prioritise issues of interest and then arranging strict allocation of time and resources in implementation. Allied to this, but not always so, is a strong belief in the knowledge and expertise of the in-house staff.

Not all agencies, however, are confident about the quality of in-house written material. One organisation with many sections producing their own material commented:

People who have no understanding about publishing decide what goes in. The results can be boring.

In this respect commissioning is seen as away to get better authors, who work strictly to a brief providing the organisation with the informative and readable copy it desires.

Particularly noteworthy is that commissioning was a luxury of the national agencies, all the local agencies relied on material being internally written. Shelter was fortunate in that a professional marketing writer donated his services for two publicity leaflets.

There are occasions where the impetus to publish originates from outside the agency. Funding bodies have been known to recommend authors and suggest that a particular agency publish a piece of work. Usually, in the interests of good relations the piece is published.

Voluntary sector funding is also replete with experimental budgets, and it has been known for an organisation to publish the results of another body's project when the short term funding has run out.

Matching publications to intended audience: some examples

1) Oxfam Education produces a range of publications highly differentiated for different school age groups, presenting information and opinion in varied format suitable for formal classroom situations and informal youth groups. However the information department is currently in the process of tailoring

its information leaflets to different audience levels. It was found in particular that the information was often too technical for the general reader. Since January 1990 the information leaflets, have gradually began to be revised and consciously written for the general reader as well as for the specialist. The information for the general reader is also gradually changing format. Formerly consisting of, for example, two A4 typed sheets stapled together, they are being transformed from dull typed colourless artifacts into eyecatching colour leaflets capable of being folded out into display posters.

Oxfam News has also changed format from a black and white newspaper into a four colour magazine format printed on quality paper. It is still issued free and funding for the first six issues comes from sponsorship.

All this is all part of a conscious policy of being more audience conscious, strengthening the ability of their information to compete with other information in gaining the attention of a general public bombarded with information.

2) Even though Apex's published output is very small scale in comparison with that of a large concern like Oxfam, just as much attention goes into ensuring that all material is presented in a form suitable for its intended audience.

The *Jobslink* newspaper consists of anonymous case studies

of people who have been assisted by the organisation. It is written in a deliberate humourous racey style in an attempt to counteract the pessimisim and negativity of the prison envirnoment where inmates are often exhorted by others to re-offend once a sentence is served.

A rough draft of an information leaflet targeted at employers persuading them to re-think their attitudes towards ex-offenders was was taken round the personnal departments of local organisations in order to invite comment and gauge how best to word it. Many useful comments were received and the whole exercise contributed positively to the promotion of the organisation amongst local employers. This was a cheap and effective way of market research and promotion frequently denied to larger organisations whose target audience is more general, that is the public at large.

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CHAPTER FIVE : PRODUCTION COSTS AND PRICING

Production costs are at the centre of a publishing operations cost-effectiveness, in terms of return on titles selling in sufficient quantities at particular prices . Production costs and their relation to cost-effectiveness is problematic in the voluntary sector. As the NCVO state:

The priority put on good financial management comes a very poor second to the implementation of the organisations charitable projects. ⁽¹⁾

In this respect there are three basic pricing strategies regarding production costs and their recovery.⁽²⁾ Pricing strategies can be:

1) Direct costs only (cost-recovery) - Pricing policy is designed to cover production and distribution costs. These can be divided in two:

- i) Those costs involved before titles are sold, such as author fees, typesetting, printing, marketing and storage.
- ii) Those costs involved in selling titles, such as distribution, trade discount and royalties.

2) Direct costs plus a contribution to overheads (full cost-recovery) - Pricing aims to recover the direct costs, as listed above, and cover the agencies running costs (overheads), such as salaries, stationary, phone calls, heating, rates and so on.

The contribution could include a small surplus to generate a profit though this may not be applicable in organisations avowedly non-profit making.

3) Market Based - essentially that of commercially based publishers, where pricing is for profit and set as high as the market can bear.

Clearly in the interests of economy full cost-recovery is the optimal strategy. The voluntary agencies interviewed displayed all three pricing strategies.

Pricing Strategies

In the interests of confidentiality the following pricing strategies are presented anonymously.

1) The agency was undecided about pricing strategy, and was undergoing a careful review of pricing policy. Cost-recovery and full cost-recovery options were being considered, though it was sceptical regarding the possibility of ever realistically including full costs in the eventual pricing of books under the latter strategy without pricing titles out of their market.(see below)

2) Full cost-recovery and an income producing basis. The profit would be worked out by a formula to produce a profit of between 22% - 60%.

3) Market orientated. Pricing was a composite of production overheads and author costs for 'an acceptable' margin of 40%.

4) Direct cost-recovery and a partial contribution to overheads. The contribution included salaries but not stationery.

5) Full cost-recovery. A blanket 20% was costed in for overheads. The organisation was still debating whether or not to produce for profit. Though 20% was the figure given, one may question whether this really was full cost-recovery, given that overheads can contribute to as much as 50% of the eventual pricing of a publication.

6) Direct cost-recovery with no question of selling for profit.

Production Costs - some examples

The following are some estimates quoted to me of the typical costs involved in producing material. It was difficult for staff to be precise as arrangements were often unique for each title produced and costings carried out by other sections. Examples of costs for the national agencies are:

1) Gesture fee to authors, usually 'in the £100s'. In an exceptional case an author was paid £2,500 to write a report.

2) £6-8,000 to produce a book with a print-run of £15,000.

3) Production costs £3,500 for a print-run of 1,000. Average author advance £1,000. Fees are negotiated for a chapter contribution, average payments being £200.

4) £3,000 to produce 15,000 four colour posters.

5) To print 10,000 copies of an A5 format 100 page quarterly journal cost £10,000. To print a newsletter with a print-run of 8,500 cost £1,800.

Examples of costs from the local agencies are:

1) £50 to print 1,000 leaflets. Laminated covers for directories cost £200 per 150. Much photocopying was carried out. One department spent £480 on photocopies in the first quarter of a financial year.

2) Annual Report £300 for 300.

3) £10 to photocopy 3,000 posters. One leaflet cost £40 to typeset and £20 for a print-run of 2,000. To photocopy 200 newsletters (A4 format 4 pages) cost £10.

4) Report £900 to print 1,000.

5) Monthly Bulletin, A4 format, 8 page, cost £300 for a print-run

of 800. If it was typeset by the printers instead of being presented as camera ready copy then it was £10 a page to typeset.

6) Translation fees for a half-page article for an A4 format magazine were £90.

Overall in terms of cost authors did not represent a significant portion of the productions cost. Many authors provided their services free, or if they were part of the agency were not paid as the writing was seen as part of their position. In the latter case, pricing strategy was usually direct cost-recovery with the salary coming under office overheads. (Some agencies make a big issue out of this, see below)

Author costs were a major consideration for agencies which paid the going commercial rates. Advances averaged at £1,000 . Given the small print-runs advances of £5,000 were never paid as it was highly unlikely that the costs would be recuperated.

Much variance was evident in printing practice. Some national organisations refused to photocopy over 100 copies of a document on the grounds that above this number it was more cost-effective to print. Local organisations regularly photocopied over 200 copies of document.

Printing costs were a major consideration for all organisations. Agencies with no in-house facilities paid the going commercial

rates, though some, such as Community Development Foundation used Community Press who produced at special rates for voluntary organisations.

For some organisations the only budgetary consideration was to decide how much information was of value and should be disseminated. The covering of costs was a limited factor. As was commented "we don't cost, we just do". This was an adequate arrangement considering the organisation produced information on a very small scale, however in a major publishing venture such practice could be a recipe for disaster. In one section, the staff did not cost in advance, ordered a print-run and waited for the printers to invoice them at a later date. It had been known for a section to run out of money half way through producing campaign leaflets.

If the cost accounting of the various departments is erratic, so too are their funding arrangements for specific projects sponsored by outside bodies. If they have an issue, some voluntary agencies look for a commissioning body. Funds usually come in the form of a discretionary lump sum. Frequently these do not cover overheads, where in some instances, after production a third or less of an agency's operating costs are provided for. Thus the agency has to find the money elsewhere. Some arrangements can be legalistic where any revenue generated over and above the production costs have to be returned to the funders.

Recovering costs is a risky business as each title's appeal is unknown. When pricing for full cost-recovery it is not a simple matter of dividing the print-run by production cost and overheads. If a print-run of 1,000 came to £7,000 it would not do to price each book at £7. Such a method assumes that all 1,000 copies will sell. Review copies can be a burden on return. For example Shelter produced 300 annual reports at a cost of £300, but found itself giving 100 copies away. Some organisations did not include them in their list of overheads.

Attempting to strike a balance between an optimal price and the recovery of costs can pose problems for marketing. One agency believed that it was impossible to recover the true costs of production, since if they were all included in the eventual publication price no one would buy them. They gave a hypothetical example of an internal report written in-house by someone on a salary of £17,000 per annum. If it took six months full-time to write the report and 1,000 were eventually printed, the author costs alone would add £8.50 onto the unit cost. If the book was aimed at community groups, who generally have little resources, the addition of this author cost would price it out of their reach, thereby defeating the whole object of the operation. This is real dilemma in publishing circles and it is one in which there has been found no satisfactory answer, though one response to this problem is to have differential pricing for different groups.

Another response is the establishment of a commercial list to

offset the losses from providing material which is expensive to produce but seen as vital to disseminate . One of the organisations interviewed was setting about putting this plan into operation.

Clearly concepts of cost-recovery are inappropriate in situations where information is given out free. The overriding concern in this case is to determine whether such material leads to more costs than benefits. NIACE believes that the cost of providing free material - policy discussion papers - to professionals is worth the return in comment and response.

If there is an assured market there are no problems in selling at cost-recovery. Oxfam by virtue of its strong position in development education can afford to be avowedly anti commercial.

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CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

It is impossible to separate voluntary sector publishing from the general context of the way it operates in society. Since the voluntary sector is highly differentiated, the publishing is highly differentiated. It is difficult to speak of 'voluntary sector publishing' as each publishing activity operates under distinct material and ideological conditions.

Voluntary organisations must produce, market and distribute their output with slimmer resources than those available to any ^{large} commercial publishing house. However they are able to compensate for this disparity by tapping into resources that the commercial publishing house cannot.⁽¹⁾

There is a growing awareness in the sector of the need to become more proficient in financial management. Not only does effective management of financial resources allay funders fears of wastage, it also performs the functional imperative of managing effectively what little funds some organisations have. However, cost-effectiveness as related to publishing in the sector attempts to unify uncertainty with precariousness and handicap.

Publishing is by its nature an uncertain undertaking, involving risk and the investment of time, money and resources in

producing artifacts whose appeal is not absolutely known. Even the most profitable market-aware commercial publishers incur losses from poor sales.

The voluntary sector is largely underfunded where funds often do not cover the costs of carrying through projects. The imposition of strict demands of cost-effectiveness on publishing operations is therefore to a great extent unrealistic. As the NCVO state:

It is untenable to will the end, that is effective use of a grant, without willing the means.⁽²⁾

Endeavours to quantify the benefits and effectiveness of publishing are attempts to impose understanding on uncertainty. Inevitably value judgements enter. As Healey reports outcomes are not evident, and it is difficult attribute them specifically to the work of an organisation.⁽³⁾ This is particularly the case with individual publications, especially when trying to assess their contribution to a campaign. As Healey explains:

One of the features of campaigning is that organisations are trying to influence a process of change in which many external and sometimes inscrutable factors are a part. These may also be processes of change on a very large scale, so that campaigning is not an area of work where control of events or results can be guaranteed.⁽⁴⁾

However the voluntary sector must beware of using this situation as a blanket justification for mismanaged projects.

Specific publications have had specific effects. '95' 's Plastic Power report on the experimental use of electricity tokens in the Braunstone area of Leicester played a major consideration in East Midlands Electricity decision to extend the scheme.

As Healey⁽⁵⁾ points out, there is a need for organisations to develop ways of assessing the effectiveness of their publishing activities, but equally this must also be balanced by the need for unfettered production and dissemination of ideas - the voluntary sector's hall mark.

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