

New Deal for Communities

The National Evaluation

Research Reports

Employment Strategies: NDC Case Studies

Research Report 37

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit is currently sponsoring the 2002-2005 national evaluation of New Deal for Communities. This evaluation is being undertaken by a consortium of organisations co-ordinated by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

Those wishing to know more about the evaluation should consult the evaluation's web site in the first instance
<http://ndcevaluation.adc.shu.ac.uk/ndcevaluation/home.asp>



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**Employment Strategies:
NDC Case Studies**

Research Report 37

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August 2004
ISBN: 1 84387 0908

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate the approach adopted in NDCs to the development of their strategies for addressing worklessness and assessing the effectiveness of these strategies. The NDCs studied - Bradford, Hartlepool and Coventry - are located in differing labour market contexts, with differing degrees of emphasis on supply-side and demand-side approaches. This report provides an early presentation of initial findings.

The three case studies illustrate approaches taken by NDC Partnerships to developing strategies and programmes to address worklessness in different labour market contexts. The NDC areas are suffering a range of similar problems, especially low levels of educational achievement, qualifications and basic skills, lack of interest and motivation to undertake further learning and training, high levels of benefit dependency, a significant level of 'informal economic activity', high levels of long-term unemployment amongst certain groups, especially young people. Certain barriers to employment figure prominently in all areas, notably lack of access to affordable childcare, the problem of the 'benefits trap', lack of access to appropriate training facilities and a resistance to travelling far outside the area to work. A notable similarity is the presence of significant industrial and commercial areas within the NDC boundaries.

There are significant differences between the areas, notably the ethnic mix of their populations and differences in labour market context - Coventry NDC is situated in a relatively buoyant local and sub-regional labour market whereas Bradford and Hartlepool are located in areas with lower levels of labour demand. This has had an influence on their employment strategies. Coventry is placing an emphasis on a strongly supply-side approach, focusing on action to address residents' problems and remove barriers allowing them to capitalise on the employment opportunities available to them in the wider labour market, while Hartlepool and Bradford have a more balanced approach, with a stronger emphasis on creating new job opportunities and promoting business start up.

Although the three NDCs display differences in influences on employment strategy formation, in all cases consultation with, and involvement of, local residents and key local stakeholders constituted the bedrock of the process. The Board/Steering Group and Theme Group structures appear to have worked well in including key local interests and stakeholders and a wide range of methods has been used to involve local residents; strong resident influence may result in a more 'inward-looking' approach, rather than the broader perspective on the potential opportunities in the wider labour market which is more likely to be encouraged by professionals from the various agencies involved in employment-related policies. The implication of this argument is that there is a need to ensure a balanced representation of interests in the processes of strategy and project development.

All three NDCs have outcome measures and targets relating to reducing unemployment but in Bradford and Hartlepool, in particular, there has been a growing recognition of the need for broader measures of worklessness and economic activity to reflect the impact of their programmes on the well-being of local residents. They also place some emphasis on household incomes. Only Hartlepool and Coventry have outcome measures relating to vocational qualifications and basic skills and only Bradford has targets for increasing the number of jobs and businesses, reflecting the strong demand-side element of the strategy. Bradford and Hartlepool have modified their outcome measures indicating processes of review and reflection on the effectiveness of their strategies.

There are differences the employment programmes of the three NDCs reflecting the differential emphasis on supply-side and demand-side approaches. Bradford has the most comprehensive 'suite' of projects, followed by Hartlepool, while Coventry's strategy is as yet the least developed, having faced delays in the implementation of a flagship project. The key element common to all three is a 'job brokerage' project. All provide some support for business start-up but this is strongest in Bradford and Hartlepool. The strategies differ most in terms of skills and

training provision (strongest in Bradford), support for childcare (strongest in Hartlepool) and support for new job creation (not part of Coventry's strategy). Bradford is developing ILMs which are also likely to be pursued in Hartlepool. Transport provision is seen as an issue only in Coventry which has provided support for new bus routes.

There is evidence in all three NDCs of good working relationships at the operational level with key agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and Business Link. These can be dependent upon the extent of personal links and networking. However, it would appear that relationships with mainstream agencies are less well developed at the strategic level. The situation is improving over time as the NDCs become established and relationships develop. All three NDCs recognised the need to improve these relationships in order to secure more influence over mainstream provision.

Judging the likelihood of success of the programmes developed in the three NDCs it is problematical at this stage. Hartlepool and Coventry are Round Two NDCs and, given various delays in implementing key projects, it is too early to draw conclusions, although, as a Round One NDC, Bradford is starting to demonstrate progress in achieving key outcomes. Some key issues relating to effectiveness which have emerged include:

- the extent to which the 'worklessness problem' is sufficiently well defined and understood (in terms of its various attributes, including social and personal problems, and how different groups are affected) as a basis for effective intervention that will address the circumstances and needs of those furthest from the labour market
- the extent to which the support provided through job brokerage, learning and training and enterprise support project is reaching and addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged groups
- the extent to which measures to create new jobs and encourage new business development on a sustainable basis can be successful in the context of a programme focused on a relatively small area
- the extent to which the strategies of the NDCs are able to take full advantage of the employment opportunities that exist and arise in the wider district and sub-regional labour markets
- the need to maximise the potential that exists for sustainable employment from linkages with other themes in NDCs' strategies, notably housing and environmental improvement
- the capacity of NDCs to influence mainstream agencies to change and develop their provision better to meet the needs of their areas on a sustainable basis in the context of the wider remits and agendas of these agencies

All the NDCs are well aware that they face a number of major challenges. These include:

- the need to combat the 'culture of worklessness', especially amongst young people subject to intense peer group pressures, reinforced by the strength of the informal economy and manifested in low levels of self-esteem and confidence and pessimism about the potential for change
- the need to overcome key barriers such as poor basic skills, a lack of affordable childcare, the 'benefits trap' and reluctance to travel to work beyond the immediate local area
- the need to ensure that people who obtain good quality jobs do not move out of the area

The latter constitutes a major potential threat to the sustainability of change and in all NDCs is being addressed through initiatives across other themes in the strategy, for example, housing and environmental improvements.

1. Introduction

Although the Government's welfare-to-work policies have helped to reduce unemployment and increase employment, there are nevertheless still problems of relatively high levels of unemployment and inactivity amongst certain groups of the population and in certain areas. The policy response has been to seek to focus provision through the New Deals on reaching and providing more intensive help for the more disadvantaged and in targeting areas with the highest levels of unemployment through Employment Zones and Action Teams for Jobs. However, the evaluations of these programmes, while broadly positive, indicate that they have been less successful in helping the most disadvantaged groups.

In this context debate has continued about the potential effectiveness of small area-focused regeneration initiatives in terms of addressing problems of worklessness. A key aspect of this debate concerns the relative effectiveness of supply-side and demand-side intervention at the local level. Critics of the supply-side emphasis of Government policies have argued that in low demand labour markets more attention needs to be given to how new jobs can be created in or near deprived neighbourhoods. But there is a lack of robust evidence about the effectiveness of such efforts at the local level to create new jobs.

The purpose of this study is to investigate these issues by analysing the approach adopted in NDCs to the development of their strategies for addressing worklessness and assessing the effectiveness of these strategies. The NDCs studied are located in differing labour market contexts, with differing degrees of emphasis on supply-side and demand-side approaches.

The purpose and objectives of this study are as follows:

- to analyse the rationale of, and assumptions ('theory of change') behind the NDCs strategies to address worklessness
- to analyse the approach adopted by the NDC Partnerships in designing and implementing these strategies
- to assess the way in which the strategies and their component initiatives relate to other strategies and provision at local, district and sub-regional levels
- to investigate the range of employment interventions introduced (and planned) by the Partnerships
- to investigate changes made to strategies over time and the reasons for such changes
- to assess the effectiveness of the strategies in addressing problems of worklessness in the NDCs

The case studies on which this report is based draw on a variety of data and information sources, including:

NDC Delivery Plans and other quantitative evidence about the basis of the NDC's employment strategy;

- qualitative discussions with NDC staff and Board members focusing on strategy development and the design and content of the current Delivery Plan
- qualitative discussions with representatives of mainstream agencies and other ABIs
- existing labour market statistics and evidence from local research and evaluation

- existing documentary information and evidence about district, sub-regional and regional-level employment issues and activities
- discussions with the national and local NDC Evaluation Team contacts for the case study Partnerships

This report presents the findings of the first stage of the study based upon three case study NDCs: Bradford Trident, West Central Hartlepool and Coventry (Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore). It discusses each case study NDC in turn. In each case a brief description of the area and its key problems is followed by a discussion of the labour market and policy context, a description of the approach to strategy development and an outline of the vision and key employment outcomes. A discussion of the rationale for the employment programme is then followed by an outline of the main initiatives and projects in this programme. Issues around relationships to mainstream provision are then summarised. The final section of the report presents an overview of the case studies and a discussion of key issues arising from the study. Information on the interviews conducted is provided in the Annex.

2. Bradford Trident

2.1. The NDC area and its problems

The Bradford Trident NDC area is largely based on the Little Horton ward in the south west of the city, the most deprived ward in Bradford and the 42nd most deprived ward in England on the Index of Deprivation 2000. It is bounded by the city centre in the north and bisected by the A641 Manchester Road, with the residential areas of Little Horton and Marshfield to the west and West Bowling to the east. These are densely populated with a mix of primarily terraced housing and local authority owned flats; the 2001 Census population estimate is 11,500. Some 40% of housing is owner occupied and 30% local authority owned. The north eastern part of the area comprises a commercial sector with a range of industrial units; there are some 375 companies within the NDC area employing about 5,100 people.

From the 2002 MORI Household Survey, 52% of respondents were of Asian origin, primarily of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin; 40% were white. In relation to worklessness, the following issues have been identified:

- high levels of youth unemployment
- low levels of educational attainment at ages 16 and above
- low take-up of training credits and Modern Apprenticeships
- BME groups experience particular disadvantage in terms of educational attainment access to employment and inappropriate jobs for those with higher qualifications
- asian women and elderly experience problems of isolation
- lack of childcare
- difficulties attracting new businesses to the area
- problems of road access for local firms
- low investment and recruitment difficulties amongst local firms

2.2. The labour market and policy context

Labour market context

Overall, the Bradford economy is generating very little net growth in jobs; between 1998 and 2000 total employment increased by only 0.7% compared with 3.4% in the West Yorkshire sub-region (NOMIS). However, this aggregate figure masks differential sectoral change, with significant declines in primary and manufacturing employment being offset by growth in services, especially financial and other services. Within the manufacturing sector, still important with some 20% of employment, the main declines have been in traditional textiles and mechanical engineering, while there has been growth in chemicals and electronics.

Bradford has a relatively high proportion of small firms and overall business performance is well below the national average in terms of gross value added per head in manufacturing (80% of UK average in 1997). Survival rates for new businesses have increased but, with only 54% surviving to three years, are below national and regional averages. Average rates of pay in the District are only 88% of the national average.

Unemployment in Bradford District is somewhat higher than regional average. On the ILO definition, the average rate for 2001 was 6.7% compared with 5.1% for Yorkshire and the Humber. Over the past five years, unemployment in Bradford has declined less than in other parts of the sub-region and within Bradford there are particular groups and areas who suffer disproportionately high levels of worklessness, for example ethnic minorities, young people and inner city wards.

The sub-region generally under-performs in terms of basic skills and school achievement relative to the national average and Bradford has the lowest levels in the sub-region. Some 28% of the population aged between 16 and 60 have low levels of literacy and numeracy and these levels are higher amongst ethnic minority groups. Performance of school children at Key Stages Two and Four and at A/AS level is well below the sub-regional average. These problems are particularly prevalent in the NDC area, with only 56% of adult residents having any qualifications compared to 73% nationally. Moreover, local research found that 37% of respondents had no desire to undertake further training.

While there is little net employment growth in the Bradford economy, processes of economic change provide continual job opportunities but in sectors with different skill requirements from those that are shedding jobs. Growth in such sectors as chemicals, electronics and financial services is creating jobs but significant proportions of employers report recruitment difficulties due to skill shortages and lack of interest. It is likely that significant job opportunities will be provided in the planned redevelopment of the city centre by the new Urban Development Company.

There are also potential job opportunities provided by growth in the economy of Leeds. Some 14% of Bradford's resident workers currently commute to work in Leeds and strong growth in employment, especially in the service sector, is forecast to continue. However, the potential for Bradford's NDC residents to access jobs in Leeds depends upon preparedness to travel, availability of transport and capacity to develop the skills and attributes required by Leeds employers.

Policy context

This labour market context provides significant policy challenges for regional, sub-regional and local institutions. At the regional level the policy framework is provided by the Regional Development Agency's (Yorkshire Forward) Regional Economic Strategy

(RES), which sets out key actions and targets relating to the objectives of improving business competitiveness, increasing new business formation and survival rates, attracting and retaining more investment, improving educational attainment and skills, regenerating deprived communities and improving environmental assets.

The local authorities of West Yorkshire are collaborating to develop a sub-regional action plan to provide a framework for delivering the RES and, in this context, particular attention is being given to closer integration between Leeds and Bradford. Bradford NDC has developed an Economic Strategy, which is designed to be the 'Bradford chapter of the RES with consistent action plans and targets. A business-led Economic Partnership has been established to provide the framework for implementation of the economic aspects of the District Community Strategy. The implications of the latter for regenerating Bradford's most deprived communities are addressed in the Council's Local Regeneration Strategy, which provided the framework for the NDC bid.

Responsibility for strategy and action on post-16 educational attainment and skills lies with the West Yorkshire LSC and a draft Strategic Plan has been produced to provide a framework for action to address the acknowledged problems of Bradford within the sub-regional framework. The key focus of LSC strategy is contributing to delivery of national targets but the LSC is working with the RDA to address the skill needs identified in the RES. Support for businesses from the Small Business Service is also organised sub-regionally through the West Yorkshire Business Link.

2.3. The approach to strategy development

The NDC Board has 25 members, of whom 14 are community representatives (12 elected and two nominated by faith groups). The remainder represent the local business community (three nominations from the local Business Forum), Bradford Metropolitan Council (3), West Yorkshire LSC, housing associations, Police, Health Authority and the voluntary sector (all one each). The Board has good ethnic minority representation although it is considered that women, and especially ethnic minority women, are under-represented. However, to develop the involvement and contribution of all stakeholders, four Forums in addition to the Business Forum have been developed covering the voluntary sector, faith groups, young people and women.

Agencies not represented on the Board have tended to be involved in Working Groups identified by community representatives and charged with identifying issues and developing proposals for action. These have operated as sub-groups of the Board and comprised Directors and co-opted advisors from relevant agencies and voluntary organisations; these groups are chaired by community directors. One of these working groups dealt with Jobs and Business which involved representatives from Jobcentre Plus and local businesses. The Jobs and Business Working Group also has two Youth Ambassadors nominated by the Youth Parliament.

These working groups undertook extensive consultations with local residents and businesses during the process of strategy development. For example, the Jobs and Business Group organised three forum meetings attended by representatives of some 40 local firms. Community meetings in different parts of the NDC area obtained views of local residents. Particular efforts were made to involve 'hard-to-reach' groups through 'Problem Tree Workshops' organised in conjunction with Bradford University. Three day-long problem-solving workshops were held for women, the elderly and homeless.

Research was also undertaken amongst both local residents and businesses to obtain representative information on problems and issues. The Jobs and Business Group bought into Bradford TEC's 1999 Employer Survey to obtain information, for example,

on the characteristics of the workforce, recruitment difficulties and the nature and location of markets. ONS were commissioned to undertake a household survey which provided demographic and household information and data on the nature of employment and worklessness.

The above surveys contributed to the baseline data that was used as the basis for an analysis of the conditions, problems and opportunities of the NDC area. As in many other NDCs, some reliance had to be placed on 1991 Census data, which was outdated and in most cases applied to Little Horton ward and not the NDC area as such. Other data was obtained from administrative sources including unemployment (NOMIS), New Deal work placements (Employment Service), benefit claimants (Benefits Agency), school leaver destinations (Careers Service) and business start-ups and survivals (DTI). It was acknowledged that there were gaps in the baseline data at the delivery planning stage but subsequent surveys were undertaken to fill these; for example MORI were commissioned to undertake a survey of training activity and needs.

An assessment of existing provision for the NDC area through mainstream services was undertaken and estimates were made of current spending through the employment New Deals, TEC training and support programmes, Business Link and Benefits Agency. From consultation exercises and surveys it was found that there were no serious negative perceptions of existing services but that satisfaction levels were variable. Some of the issues identified were:

- the need for better information on availability of job-related education and training opportunities
- the need for better childcare provision
- some concerns from local businesses about road access

2.4. The vision and key outcomes

Through the range of processes of consultation and analysis, a vision for the NDC community and area was derived:

“...by the year 2010, the New Deal for Communities area will be:

- a desirable place for people to live, work and play, within a safe, attractive and sustainable environment, created through new models of neighbourhood management
- a place where high quality, varied and affordable housing exists alongside a strong dynamic and successful business community
- a confident, healthy and culturally diverse community where all are able to fulfil their needs, aspirations and ambitions” (Delivery Plan)

In developing more specific long-term outcomes, it was reasoned that reductions in the levels of unemployment will be the key to the regeneration of the area but that improvements to the environment, facilities and living conditions in the area were also necessary to prevent the economically better off moving out of the area. Therefore, there were important linkages between, for example, housing improvement and the achievement of reductions in unemployment.

In relation to the Jobs and Business theme, the following key outcomes were originally specified:

- by 2010 reduce the level of unemployment to the District average, and if possible to the regional average
- over the lifetime of the project to increase the number of jobs accessible to the New Deal area by 10%
- increase the number of businesses within the NDC area by 20% over the lifetime of the scheme

However, there have been concerns about the extent to which these outcomes reflected the impact of the Jobs and Business programme and improvements to the quality of life of local residents and the Year Five Delivery Plan proposes the following additional outcomes:

- increase economic activity rates for the Trident area, reducing the gap between the Trident area and the District to 12 percentage points by 2010
- reduce the level of benefit dependency in the Trident area
- increase average household incomes in the Trident area by 10% more than the District increase by 2010, and increase the proportion of households with income more than £300 per week to 18%

2.5. The rationale for the employment programme

In developing a programme of interventions for the Jobs and Business theme, a number of key challenges were highlighted:

- to target unemployment among young people and link them in to the needs of the area
- to overcome barriers to work, be they a lack of knowledge as to what is available, or factors which inhibit individuals' ability to access employment
- to encourage new business to move into the area and enable existing businesses to expand

The programme originally placed considerable emphasis on the demand-side - on creating new jobs in the area that could be accessed by residents. This resulted in an early focus on the provision of support for existing and new businesses and the attraction of relocating businesses to the area. Subsequently, it was recognised that this position gave insufficient attention to the potential to secure jobs for NDC residents in the wider labour market in Bradford and even in Leeds. Therefore, the balance in the programme has tended to shift somewhat to accommodate a stronger supply-side element than was originally planned.

2.6. The key employment initiatives

The Jobs and Business programme comprises four main components:

- supporting business
- supporting residents into work
- skills development
- Intermediate Labour Markets (ILMs)

Supporting business

This component was the first to be developed, reflecting the strength of the demand-side focus on creating jobs for local residents and the perception that some 'quick wins'

could be provided to demonstrate progress. It was considered that there was a sound evidence base for action to support and advise existing and new business and create jobs that could be accessed by local residents. The New Deal for Business project was developed to provide a 'one-stop-shop' business advice and support service. Local consultations and research had demonstrated the need for the project, indicating that existing employers in the area had concerns about crime, security, physical appearance of the area, road access and the difficulty of attracting new businesses. Existing provision from mainstream services was assessed and gaps identified in terms of their capacity to provide the level of support needed by small businesses in deprived areas, especially those owned and/or managed by people from BME groups.

The objectives of the project focused on increasing the number of local businesses, their turnover, the number of jobs provided, and on reducing burglaries against businesses. The delivery of the project was contracted to Business Link Bradford until March 2001, when the new Small Business Service (SBS) came into operation. This was intended to maximise the benefit from targeting available mainstream services on the area and ensuring that NDC resources added value to meet local needs. It was also felt that working in partnership with Business Link enabled the NDC to influence the activity and operation of the new SBS service.

The project comprises two core elements. The first, Business Advice and Support, provides assistance in identifying suitable sites and premises for new business start-ups and help preparing business plans; encouragement to existing businesses to bring forward investment plans; information and advice on business, marketing, finance and IT to improve competitiveness. Through these means the programme is intended to safeguard jobs and create new employment opportunities for local people. The second element, Financial Support for Business, provides direct financial assistance to businesses to create and safeguard jobs in the area through: a Business Development Grant to encourage businesses to bring forward investment plans in terms of setting up new businesses, improving premises and product development; a Business Security Grant to improve security and ease the task of obtaining insurance; and Customised Training for Businesses to help owner/managers obtain training vital for business success. These forms of financial assistance are assessed on the basis of need and are intended to be additional to what businesses would have undertaken in their absence.

The above support is provided through a Personal Business Advisor with Asian language skills who is able to access mainstream and other provision where appropriate and ensure the NDC resources are used to add value. The Advisor also runs a local Business Forum to ensure that the views of local businesses are continuously taken into account. This consultation process has resulted in stronger emphasis being given to environmental improvement and work is proceeding to develop a Business Environment Grant to meet this need. Feedback from the local community has also resulted in a stronger emphasis being given to ensuring that support for businesses is tied more rigorously to job creation for local residents.

Other elements have also been added to the 'Supporting Businesses' theme in response to analyses of local needs. The New Enterprise Development project provides financial support and advice for NDC residents wishing to start up their own business, seeking to channel energies currently directed into the 'informal economy' and tap into local aspirations and aptitudes for self-employment. A Development Loan Fund provides loans for business development activities to plug a gap left by the major banks. A Wage Subsidy of £60 per week for one year is also now available, plus a contribution to training costs, for employers creating a new job and taking on an unemployed local resident. This is backed up by a 'retention bonus' if the employee is still in post after 18 months. These new projects reflect an ongoing process of

development in response to assessments of local needs and feedback from residents and businesses.

Supporting residents into work

Development of this element of the programme lagged behind the New Deal for Business but Bradford Trident job brokerage is now seen as a 'flagship' project, reflecting the shift of emphasis towards a broader perspective on the potential job opportunities available for NDC residents in the local labour market. This project has been contracted to @Work Recruitment, who are providing a similar service in other NDCs, including Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Hackney and Southwark. The purpose of the project is to address the perceived need for high quality jobs for local residents, offering reasonable wages and training so as to encourage sustainable participation in the labour market. It is intended to add value to existing services provided by Jobcentre Plus and Connexions and to address their limitations in providing outreach services to reach the most disadvantaged.

The project has main road shop-front premises to achieve a high profile in the area and the service is also provided in community-based outreach centres. The service operates in a similar way to a professional recruitment service by sourcing vacancies from employers and matching suitable candidates from the local area. Complementarity with mainstream provision is achieved through signposting residents to New Deal provision where appropriate. One Jobcentre Plus employee is based @Work and a second works on an outreach basis in the NDC area providing benefits advice. Account managers work with employers to obtain vacancies and arrange submission of suitable candidates. There are arrangements for cross-referral with the New Deal for Business and Wage Subsidy projects. Post-placement support is also provided for people obtaining jobs to maximise their prospects for sustainable employment.

The focus of the project is getting local people into jobs with employers anywhere in the local labour market and recently attention has been given to the potential to place people in jobs in Leeds. The project itself does not provide additional support for those who are less 'job-ready' although it can signpost people to relevant provision. This aspect is now being addressed more formally through Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) project which run alongside the job brokerage project, providing a more dedicated service for those needing additional support and training before applying for vacancies. Provision has also been made to meet childcare needs through signposting to a project developed by the Health and Social Care theme; also a Children's Development Worker is now based at the West Bowling Community Centre with a remit to develop childcare provision in the area. Jobstart Bursaries provide financial help (up to £500) with the transition costs associated with obtaining work (e.g. travel costs, equipment, and clothing) and thus help to overcome potential problems associated with loss of benefits. This provision is additional to that provided by Jobcentre Plus where justified by need.

Skills development

As a basis for developing a strategy for skills development, MORI were commissioned to undertake a Training and Skills Survey. This survey found that 45% of respondents had no qualifications and 31% reported problems with basic skills. Problems were most prevalent amongst those aged over 25, those of Pakistani ethnic origin and the unemployed. Over a third of all respondents indicated that they would not be interested in further training and lack of childcare was reported as a significant barrier. Generally, there was a lack of awareness of available training and how to access it.

While the strategy was being developed, some specific initiatives were put in place as a 'stop-gap' to cover immediate needs: for example, a Training Award Scheme to provide funding for training if it was not available from other sources; and IT Skills training at the local college (match funding provided to ESF) in response to an approach from the college (the latter is now completed).

A Training Plan has been developed to fit into the context of the West Yorkshire LSCs Strategic Plan and also to meet the local labour market needs as set out in the Bradford and District Learning Partnership Learning Plan. The plan emphasises the need to complement existing mainstream provision, to raise people's awareness of learning opportunities, to build capacity within the local community to provide training, and to target those groups who have been excluded from learning by providing accessible and manageable 'first-rung' training in local facilities.

In addition to the IAG and Training Award projects referred to above, a number of projects have been developed. A Work Skill Training project covers confidence-building and generic personal and communication skills; sectoral Youthbuild projects are focused on construction and financial services, providing training, work placement and employment opportunities; and support is available for Vocational and Customised Training where residents can access job opportunities in Bradford arising from new employment developments.

Intermediate Labour Markets (ILMs)

This element of the strategy has developed to provide training and work experience primarily for longer term unemployed and more disadvantaged residents, undertaking work that meets defined needs in the local area. There are three current projects, all providing one year's training and salaried work experience followed by support in finding work in the mainstream labour market.

In the Community Build project, young people work on refurbishing semi-derelict properties, which are then let to provide an income for the Youthbuild Trust to employ and train unemployed residents in the future. The Green Team project operates alongside Council cleansing services to improve the local environment; funding for this comes from the Jobcentre Plus StepUp programme. The Impact project combines a social enterprise selling mobile phones and airtime with an ILM.

It is evident, therefore, that the NDC has made considerable efforts to develop a programme for Jobs and Business that meets the needs of the local area, will be effective in addressing the identified problems, builds on the knowledge and perspectives of local residents and businesses, and complements and adds value to existing mainstream provision, involving relevant local agencies. Use has been made of evidence of 'what works' but it is clear that such evidence has to be interpreted in the context of consideration of the views and aspirations of the local community and stakeholders in order to arrive at a programme that is appropriate for the area. Initially, it is possible that insufficient consideration was given to the wider labour market context and the opportunities it provides for NDC residents, but this has been addressed over time through the stronger development of supply-side aspects of the programme.

2.7. Relationship to mainstream provision

The above outline of the Jobs and Business programme has indicated how the development of NDC provision has taken into account and been related to existing mainstream provision by statutory agencies:

- the Jobs and Business Working Group includes key agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, Business Link and the Learning and Skill Council
- the New Deal for Business projects are delivered through Business Link to ensure that mainstream business support can be applied to the needs of the area and NDC resources provide additional support. The arrangements also bring in support from the Princes Trust for the unemployed aged under 30, from the Asian Business Bureau under Objective Two, and from the Council's Community Economic Development Unit (for community enterprise) and Regeneration Unit (for sites and premises)
- the job brokerage project is designed to draw existing mainstream services into the area to meet local needs, with workers from Jobcentre Plus and Connexions who can direct people to mainstream training provision where it is appropriate and provide tailored advice about benefits
- the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) project is operated in conjunction with Connexions
- training provision has been developed to complement mainstream provision, with a focus on seeking to bend mainstream post-16 provision to meet the needs of the area

It is evident that, in particular, very good working relationships have been developed between the NDC and Jobcentre Plus. The Business Manager of the local Jobcentre attends the Jobs and Business Working Group, thus having an input to the development of the programme, and has established a good working relationship with the Programme Manager. Good communication and a good working relationship has been established with the @Work job brokerage project; one Jobcentre Plus worker is based at the project and another works on an outreach basis in the NDC area. There are also other existing and potential 'synergy benefits' between Jobcentre Plus and the NDC. Thus, the NDCs Green team LM is funded through StepUp and @Work deliver the Jobcentre Plus Ethnic Minority Outreach service, which has allowed them to extend the job brokerage service.

3. West Central Hartlepool

3.1. The NDC area and its problems

The West Central Hartlepool NDC area is located on the western fringe of Hartlepool town centre from the Belle Vue area in the south to Hart Lane in the north. Most of the area falls within Stranton ward but the northern part falls within Jackson ward. Both these wards are amongst the worst 5% on the 2000 Index of Multiple Deprivation (Stranton is ranked 102 and Jackson 228). The area comprises a mixture of residential and industrial land use. The residential areas are densely populated with a large proportion of terraced housing. A relatively high proportion of housing is private rented (23% compared with 7% in Hartlepool Borough) and just over half is owner occupied. The condition of the housing stock is quite poor. To the south east of the NDC area the Longhill/Sandgate Industrial Area takes up about a third of the total land area. This was formerly a British Steel plant before the site was sold and ownership fragmented. The area contains a range of businesses, including some large firms but mainly SMEs. Uses include commercial and showrooms, manufacturing and engineering, and waste handling. The overall estate environment is quite poor.

The population of the NDC area in mid-2001 was between 10,500 and 11,000. It is predominantly in white ethnic groups - in both Stanton and Jackson wards the proportion is 98%. The area has a higher proportion of young people than in Hartlepool

as a whole - 41% aged under 30 in Stanton and 44% in Jackson compared to the Borough average of 38%. There is a relatively high proportion of single person households (42/43% compared with the Borough average of 30%) and lone parent households with dependent children (12/13% compared with the Borough average of nine%).

In relation to worklessness, key problems faced by the area include:

- high levels of unemployment (c. 2.5 times that of the UK)
- low levels of qualifications, skills and educational attainment
- low household incomes and high proportion of people on benefits

According to a recent report (*Vision and Plan for Longhill Industrial Estate*, Hartlepool Borough Council, 2002, p.10):

“Unemployment is a major issue in the NDC area. A culture of worklessness is potentially developing in the area and is continuing through generations. Skills attainment levels for the NDC area of Hartlepool are lower than those for the town as a whole. Within the wider Tees Valley which is recognised as having high unemployment levels, Hartlepool has the highest unemployment rate out of the five boroughs...and the NDC area has the highest unemployment in Hartlepool.”

3.2. The labour market and policy context

Labour market context

According to a report by CLES (*Unemployment in Hartlepool*, 2000, p.22), “low demand for labour is a key feature of the Hartlepool labour market...” Between 1998 and 2000 total the number of jobs in the Borough increased by 3.7% compared with 1.8% growth in the North East region (ABI, NOMIS). Most of the growth in jobs was in the service sector, especially transport and communications, public administration and financial services. There was a small increase in manufacturing jobs (4.8%) but a decline in the primary and construction sectors. Manufacturing remains an important sector in Hartlepool, providing some 23% of jobs, compared with 18% in the North East region. The main manufacturing industries are food products, metal, rubber and wood products and chemicals. Public services provide the largest source of employment, with nearly a third of all jobs in the Borough.

Hartlepool has a relatively high proportion of jobs in larger employers: some 61% of jobs are provided by employers with 50 or more employees compared with 54% in GB (ABI, 2000, NOMIS). Conversely, the area has a low level of entrepreneurship: in 1999 the number of VAT registrations per 1,000 populations was half the national (GB) average (13.5 compared with 27.8) and in 2001 only 6% of the working age population was self-employed compared with 11% in GB. In 1995, GDP per head was just 78% of the UK average. Average gross weekly earnings in 2001 were only 80% of the national average (New Earnings Survey).

Hartlepool suffers from relatively high levels of unemployment and inactivity. In 2001-02, the employment rate was 66.5% of the working age population compared with 74.6% for GB. The ILO unemployment rate in 2000/01 was 9.2%, nearly double the rate for England; in January 2004 the JSA claimant count was 5.1%, again double the national (GB) average. Youth unemployment is particularly high - 32% of all JSA claimants are in the 18-24 age group compared with 26% nationally. The economic inactivity rate in 2001-02 was 27% compared with 21% nationally (GB). In August 2000 there were 7,055 claimants of Incapacity Benefit, approximately 13% of the working age population (and double the average for GB).

Levels of educational attainment, qualifications and skills in Hartlepool Borough are relatively low. At secondary level in 2000, 36% achieved five or more GCSE AC grades compared with 49% nationally (England). Amongst the working age population in 2000, 25% had no qualifications compared with 16% in England (LFS, NOMIS, 2000). Survey data for the NDC area indicate that 40% of the working age population had no qualifications in 2000. Data from the Basic Skills Agency relating to 1998 indicate that 20% of the working age population in the NDC area had low literacy skills and 26% low numeracy skills compared with 15 and 21% respectively in England.

In terms of the occupational breakdown of the workforce, Hartlepool has a relatively low proportion of employers, managers and professionals (18% compared with 28% nationally) and a relatively high proportion of manual workers: skilled 36% (30% nationally); semi-skilled 21% (14% nationally) and unskilled 7% (4% nationally).

A MORI Household Survey in 2000 found that travel to work patterns for employed NDC residents are quite localised, with 51% working within the NDC area and a further 27% within Hartlepool. As indicated above, there has been some growth in employment in the borough, mainly in the service sector, with new pubs, clubs and restaurants around the Marina, a new call centre and some growth in public administration and education. There have also been some new jobs in the manufacturing sector, for example, on wood and metal products. However, the MORI survey found that residents perceive a mismatch of skills to jobs and a lack of high quality jobs.

Policy Context

The North East of England has Objective Two status and the current Programme runs from 2000 to 2006. One North East is the Regional Development Agency (RDA) and the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) aims to rejuvenate the regional economy, creating a net additional 90,000 jobs by 2010 with an emphasis on building the knowledge/electronic economy, developing an entrepreneurial culture and improving the adaptability and skills of the workforce. The Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA) supports the RES with an action plan to improve educational attainment, skill levels, flexibility, productivity and entrepreneurship amongst the workforce.

At the sub-regional level, the Tees Valley Joint Strategic Unit is responsible for producing the Structure Plan to provide a strategic land use development framework which aims to facilitate economic development whilst protecting environmental quality and ensuring social well-being. The Structure Plan aims to provide an appropriate range of sites for industrial and commercial development, encouraging the creation of employment opportunities within existing urban areas that utilise existing infrastructure.

The overarching policy framework for the development and regeneration of the town of Hartlepool is the Community Strategy, published in 2002. The preparation of the Community Strategy has been overseen by the Hartlepool Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership) and has been developed both to be consistent with regional and sub-regional strategies and to provide the framework for 'joining up' and rationalising functional plans and promoting Partnership working. Two of the seven priority aims relate to the local economy and labour market:

- **Jobs and the Economy:** Develop a more enterprising, vigorous and diverse local economy that will attract investment, be globally competitive and create more employment opportunities for local people

- **Lifelong Learning and Skills:** Help all individuals, groups and organisations realise their full potential, ensure the highest quality opportunities in education, lifelong learning and training, and raise standards of attainment

The Community Strategy comprises a range of objectives relating to the development of industrial sites, encouraging new business start-ups in strategic clusters, supporting tourism and leisure, improving educational attainment, qualifications and skills and ensuring that disadvantaged groups gain access to the benefits of economic growth. The Hartlepool Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy has been developed as part of the Community Strategy specifically to achieve the regeneration of the most deprived areas of the town, designated Neighbourhood Priority Areas (NPAs). The NDC area is an NPA but has been assigned low priority for additional resources due to the substantial funding through the NDC programme. Neighbourhood Action Plans target resources on the NPAs to reduce the gap between them and the rest of the town. Priorities for action under the Jobs and Economy and Lifelong Learning and Skills themes include business development, education and training, and initiatives to link residents with available jobs and address barriers to employment and training.

3.3. Approach to strategy development

The NDC Steering Group has 23 members, of whom 12 are local residents, all elected through the Community Forum. The remainder are local community councillors (3), a member of the Council's Executive, voluntary group (1) and faith group (1) representatives, service providers from the education, health, crime and housing fields, and one private sector nominee. An independent facilitator has been appointed as chair. Resident members have their own sub-group to discuss issues prior to full Steering Group meetings.

Structures have been developed to ensure that a wide range of groups, interests and stakeholders can input their views to the Steering Group and to the development of the NDC programmes and projects. The Community Forum is open to all residents and its views have been sought on all key elements of delivery planning. Resident Issues Groups have provided a more focused approach for considering needs and potential solutions. Task Groups comprising residents, service providers, private sector representatives and interest groups have fed into the development of the strategy and projects while Project Development Groups, open to all members of the Steering Group, Forum, Issues Groups and Task Groups have undertaken the work of producing detailed specifications and costings for prioritised projects.

A substantial programme of research was undertaken in order to develop a good understanding of the baseline conditions and problems in the area:

- **Household Survey:** MORI were commissioned to undertake a survey of 700 people in the NDC area (plus 500 outside the boundary)
- **Ethnic Minority Survey:** in-depth interviews were undertaken in their homes with all members of ethnic minority communities in the NDC area
- **Young Peoples Survey:** a survey of 324 young people aged 10-16 from three secondary and nine primary schools serving the NDC area
- **Business Survey:** telephone interviews were undertaken with 150 companies and postal self-completion questionnaires were sent to 932 companies

These surveys contributed to the baseline data used in the analysis of conditions, problems and opportunities of the NDC area and helped to support a comprehensive analysis. Only limited reliance had to be put on 1991 Census data, while other sources

used included ONS (employment and unemployment), Benefits Agency (benefit claimants), Hartlepool Council, the Basic Skills Agency and Careers Service (education and skills). It was argued in the Delivery Plan (p.5) that "...the data from this survey work...(was) considered along with the perceptions of residents, businesses and service providers to establish a strong and firmly founded basis for our proposals."

3.4. The vision and key outcomes

Based upon an extensive foundation of consultation processes and analysis, a long-term vision for West Central Hartlepool was formulated:

"...through a joined up and inclusive approach..."

- the potential of the area will be fully unlocked
- residents and other 'stakeholders' will increasingly be able to maximise opportunities to participate in the continued regeneration of their area in a sustainable and integrated manner
- the West Central neighbourhood will re-emerge as the strategic backbone of Hartlepool - a vibrant, lively and economically viable and diverse place with a safe, healthy, clean and attractive environment where people want to stay
- key services will be easily accessible, affordable and effectively co-ordinated in a way which best meets the needs of the local community
- expectations will have been raised and fulfilled, genuine partnership and trust will be developed across all sectors and a stable, confident community will be established" (Delivery Plan)

From this vision, a number of key broad objectives were developed:

- develop people so they can make a positive contribution to the regeneration process including becoming more involved in improving, maintaining and managing their neighbourhood
- improve aspirations, self-esteem and the image of the area to create a confident community
- reduce poverty and disadvantage, address inequalities and promote inclusiveness
- reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and improve personal and community safety
- improve physical and mental health and well-being
- develop education, training, personal development and lifelong learning for all
- increase economic diversity and levels of activity and reduce barriers to employment
- improve housing (including balancing supply and demand) and enhance the environment
- change services to be more integrated, accessible, flexible and 'customer oriented', responding to locally determined priorities
- promote and support partnership working and develop effective communications and networks to assist in achieving a well managed neighbourhood

Long term outcomes for the Employment Theme were selected in relation to three key defined problem areas: high unemployment; low household incomes; and poor skill levels. The outcomes as specified in the Delivery Plan were as follows:

- reduce claimant unemployment rate to Hartlepool average by 2011 (upper target)/to 10% above Hartlepool average by 2011(lower target)
- reduce proportion of low income households (in receipt of IS and JSA) to 10% above Hartlepool average by 2011
- increase proportion of working age population qualified to NVQ Three or above to Hartlepool average by 2011

A related outcome in the Education Theme was also relevant to employment, addressing the problem of low levels of participation in post-16 education and training:

- increase proportion of people aged 16 and over completing education or training in the past year to the Hartlepool average by 2011

However, the three original defined employment outcomes have been reviewed and modified as experience over time has raised questions about their appropriateness. Thus, it has been recognised that a falling unemployment rate does not necessarily reflect changes in levels of worklessness and household income. Moreover, experience with training indicated that NVQ Level Three was too high a standard to reflect progress in developing residents' skill levels. Therefore, the following outcomes are now in place:

- increase the proportion of working age reporting that they are in paid work to Hartlepool average by 2011 (upper target)/to within 6% of Hartlepool average by 2011 (lower target)
- reduce the proportion of households claiming to be workless to within 10% of Hartlepool average by 2011 (upper target)/to within 20% of Hartlepool average by 2011 (lower target)
- increase the proportion of working age population qualified to NVQ 1, 2, 3 or above to Hartlepool average by 2011

3.5. The rationale for the employment programme

In the Delivery Plan it was argued that the approach required to address the problems of the area and achieve the agreed employment outcomes would comprise a balanced approach with measures addressing both the demand-side and supply-side of the labour market:

“If we are to achieve our employment outcomes we need a broad based approach which will encourage the creation of more jobs, reduce barriers, and equip New Deal residents to compete for jobs that become available” (Delivery Plan, p.10)

A number of priority areas for action were identified reflecting this approach:

- making people aware of the opportunities, raising aspirations and self esteem and motivating and supporting people to pursue opportunities
- tackle second and third generation worklessness to create an employment confidence in children
- developing a flexible, adaptable, appropriately skilled workforce
- providing local, accessible advice, targeted where appropriate to reach those most in need of assistance
- maximising employment opportunities and linkages outside of the NDC area
- addressing ‘benefit trap’ and ‘fast tracking’ issues, especially in relation to low pay, part-time opportunities, casual work, transition to work and voluntary work

- addressing affordable childcare provision
- working with local employers to improve the quality and security of jobs
- continuing to bring more jobs into the area, particularly encouraging the creation of quality, sustainable jobs for a range of careers so people (especially young people) do not have to leave the area to progress
- meeting transport, communications and property needs especially in relation to key industrial, commercial and tourism sites
- encouraging an enterprise culture, business and self-employment formation
- building a diversified economy targeting growth sectors
- promoting the assets and image of the area

3.6. The key employment initiatives

A range of projects has been developed in the Employment Theme in the context of the above defined priority areas. These projects can be grouped in the following five areas:

- support and access to work
- training and skills
- removing childcare barriers
- business support and advice
- creating employment opportunities

Support and access to work

This 'job brokerage' project was competitively tendered and @Work Recruitment secured the contract, providing a model similar to that implemented in other NDCs, including Bradford, Newcastle, Middlesbrough, Hackney and Southwark. The project, which has been operating for about 18 months, provides an 'intermediary' service, working with both employers and local residents. It is now operating from a high street location in the town centre although there was some delay in securing these premises and the service had to operate for several months in a temporary base in a more peripheral location.

The project works closely with the Jobcentre Plus Action Team for Jobs, the Connexions service and the Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership. A Link Worker funded by NDC provides benefits advice and residents have access to an NDC Training Bursary Fund which provides financial support for accredited training. @Work place considerable emphasis on developing good relationships with local employers and monitor employees progress after they obtain jobs to promote sustainable employment.

Training and skills

Provision for learning and training is being developed in conjunction with the Education Theme. An early project was developed to provide Service Sector Training to NVQ Level Three, relating to the original target structure (see section 3.4 above) and addressing a need identified by local employers. However, this training was discontinued due to low take up and it has been agreed that provision should be more flexible; this reflects the revised target relating to NVQ Levels 1-3.

The main focus of provision is now the Post-16 and Adult Education and Training strategy, funded jointly by the Employment and Education Themes and overseen by a Panel which seeks to identify and fill gaps in provision. Under this strategy, a Bursary

Fund is available to cover training costs for NDC residents (including fees, travel and childcare, books and equipment, up to £250), and a Block Fund is available for organisations to deliver NVQ accredited training in identified areas of need.

Two Community Learning Centres are being developed in Stranton and Lynnfield to provide an 'outreach' approach to learning provision. These centres encourage a 'drop-in' approach, providing opportunities for NDC residents to engage with education and learning, and provide childcare. These facilities also provide the opportunity for outreach work by the Link Worker, providing benefits advice, and also by an Enterprise Development Worker, to be appointed in 2004 to encourage business start-up, who will be based at Hartlepool College. There are also plans to introduce provision for basic skills that can be accessed through these centres.

Removing childcare barriers

There is a strong focus in the strategy on seeking to address problems due to lack of affordable childcare. A Flexible Childcare Fund has been established, providing a grant of up to £500 to enable local residents and groups to access good quality, affordable childcare to enable them to take up education, training or employment. The Childcare Training project provides initial basic training for women residents required for employment in an official childcare setting, which can lead to further accredited training up to NVQ Level Three. As with the Service Sector Training discussed above, there have been problems attracting residents to undertake Level Three training and the project has been broadened to accommodate training at any level. Consideration is being given to providing incentives to take up childcare training, for example, through job interview guarantees in new childcare provision.

Proposals for a Play Centre and Creche in the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre have been postponed due to problems of converting premises for disabled access and questions regarding its viability in supporting employment and training. An alternative approach is being considered, which would involve purchasing sessional crèche places in existing nurseries for parents returning to work for fewer than 16 hours per week and therefore ineligible for tax credits.

Business support and advice

An Enterprise Development Package provides a number of elements of support for local residents to start their own business. An Enterprise Development Worker is to be recruited during 2004 to manage provision in this area and to play a proactive role in the community to encourage business start up, for example through outreach work in the Community Learning Centres. The EDW will signpost people to existing mainstream support services where appropriate and working relationships have been established with Business Link and Hartlepool College. Additional support will be provided by the NDC in the form of a Bursary Scheme for people undertaking training related to business start up and a Loan Scheme to fund business expansion.

Efforts to promote business start up are to be closely linked to the activities of Hartlepool Revival, a company established by the NDC to deliver its Housing Plan, which will involve substantial work on demolition, refurbishment and new building. This is seen as providing considerable opportunity for local residents to secure employment and develop businesses in construction-related activities and also activities relating to the relocation of people (e.g. furniture removals).

The Enterprise Development Package will also incorporate a project called Andbedammed Music Promotions established early in the life of the NDC to promote the music of four local bands over the internet. The bands were selected by a judging

panel and given financial assistance to produce and market a CD. Another early project involved the recruitment of a Youth Enterprise Development Worker, employed by the Owten Fens Community Association (OFCA) to deliver an alternative programme of enterprise promotion to school children in years 7-11 and to provide advice and guidance for disaffected young people aged 16-25. The service was designed to be delivered through schools and community centres in the NDC area but has been discontinued due to lack of effectiveness. An initiative focused on young people may be re-introduced as part of the Enterprise Development Package at a later date.

The NDC commissioned a feasibility study for a Business Incubator or managed workspace project, to provide low cost business start-up facilities. The study considered a number of options and sites but concluded that new provision in this area was not justified in the short term. This project has therefore been put on hold by the NDC, to be reviewed at a later date.

Creating employment opportunities

This element of the employment strategy is receiving the most substantial funding, focusing on the potential for employment for NDC residents from employment, commercial and housing redevelopment and renewal schemes. Reference was made above to the Hartlepool Revival housing renewal scheme and the intention to maximise the potential for NDC residents to obtain jobs and develop new businesses in a range of construction-related activities. Two other large initiatives with considerable potential to provide employment opportunities are the development of the Longhill Industrial Estate and the Commercial Areas and Strategic Buildings Study.

As discussed above, the Longhill Industrial Estate covers about a third of the NDC area and is occupied by a range of manufacturing, commercial and retail uses. Since about 80% of employees live within two miles of the estate, it is seen as providing considerable potential for new jobs for NDC residents. However, at present the environment on the estate is poor and is considered unattractive to new businesses. The NDC commissioned consultants to develop a strategy for improving the estate in consultation with local businesses and residents and a number of projects have been agreed. A Site Manager has been recruited and is working with the Longhill Business Association to plan future improvements.

The projects include improved street lighting, grants for security and environmental works, CCTV, access and road improvements and zoning of businesses to improve the environment (e.g. separating retail and waste management) and generate benefits from 'clustering'. In terms of employment the major focus is on preserving existing jobs but a number of projects are being developed to encourage employment growth. An ILM has been set up for work on environmental improvement and landscaping; grants are available for businesses that train or recruit NDC residents; steps are being taken to encourage business growth through a Business Directory to promote the use of local purchasing and efforts to encourage tendering for public sector contracts.

A study on Commercial Areas and Strategic Buildings has been undertaken by consultants and a strategy has been developed to redevelop and refurbish defined areas and buildings in the town centre. It is intended that employment opportunities for NDC residents from these developments should be maximised relating both to construction activity and recruitment initiatives targeted on new office and retail developments.

3.7. Relationship to mainstream provision

The NDC has developed good relationships with key organisations and agencies responsible for mainstream service provision. @Work have good working relationships with Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and IAG; the local authority Economic Development Service are involved in delivering key employment projects (e.g. Longhill Industrial Estate) and the Regeneration Team assist with project development and appraisal; working relationships have been established with Business Link for the Enterprise Development package; the Principal of Hartlepool College is co-chair of the Employment Theme. Considerable attention is given to ensuring that NDC projects complement and add value to mainstream provision.

However, although the NDC strategy is considered broadly to fit well into the wider patchwork of strategies and policies for regeneration in Hartlepool, there are some concerns about the linkages at the strategic level between the NDC and key mainstream agencies. The Employment Theme co-chair is nominated onto the NDC Steering Group by the Hartlepool Economic Forum (established by the Local Strategic Partnership to lead on economic aspects of the Community Strategy) but the NDC does not have direct membership of the Forum. At the strategic level, relationships with Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and Business Link are not very well developed, although the NDC is reviewing this issue to establish how it can gain greater influence over mainstream provision. There is also an acknowledged need to secure a better level of engagement from the local business community.

4. Coventry

4.1. The NDC area and its problems

The Coventry NDC area is situated at the northern-eastern edge of the city of Coventry and is constituted by four neighbourhoods - Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore. These neighbourhoods are 'outer estates' built in the 1950s and 1960s. However, in terms of national transport infrastructure the area is by no means characterised by the poor accessibility that is a feature of some outer estates: the NDC area is close to the Coventry Eastern By-Pass, the M6 and the M69 (to Leicester).

Over the years various housing design faults have emerged, and despite investment in the housing stock the area has suffered cumulative decline and concentrated deprivation, as particularly vulnerable sections of the population have become concentrated in the area. The NDC Delivery Plan points to the fact that the area's problems first emerged in the 1960s, and since then the area has been characterised by difficult to let social housing, often filled by vulnerable people who are not able to choose. The residualisation of social housing has exacerbated this process. The general tendency has been for people to move out of the area as and when they have the means to, to be replaced by more vulnerable people. Drugs, crime and disorder problems contribute further to the cycle of decline.

There is an external view of the area, not wholly denied by residents, that housing allocation policies have led to 'dumping' of people in the area, who give it a 'bad name', and that the people themselves are primarily to blame for the area's plight. As the local evaluation report highlights, this view involves sweeping and stigmatising assumptions about the area's people, and reinforces exclusionary processes - including worklessness. Despite the fact that the area is popularly characterised by a transient population - with people 'moving in at the bottom, and out at the top', there is a core of long-term residents with strong family ties who are committed to the area. According to

the 2002 MORI/NOP Household Survey 91% of residents are White; indeed, the NDC area may be characterised as a 'poor White area'.

The Coventry NDC area falls below the regional and national averages on worklessness indicators. Moreover, on many NDC-relevant indicators the 'gap' between the NDC area and Coventry is wider than that between other West Midlands NDCs and the local authority areas in which they are situated - highlighting the intensity of problems locally relative to the city-wide and regional context.

4.2. The labour market and policy context

The NDC area is characterised by high levels of worklessness. It is salient to note here that the numbers of lone parents and numbers of Incapacity Benefit easily outnumber the numbers claiming Job Seekers Allowance - hence, the issue is more one of high levels of inactivity than high levels of unemployment.

Both an initial household survey undertaken to inform the delivery plan and a MORI/NOP household survey conducted in 2002 show low numbers of people in paid work. The latter found 30% of adults in paid work, compared to 42% for NDCs as a whole. Other survey statistics highlight the incidence and extent of worklessness and poverty in the area:

- 60% of households have no one working in them, compared with the average of 51% across NDC areas
- 17% of people in the Coventry NDC area are long-term sick/disabled, compared to the NDC average of 9%
- 53% of those of working age lack formal qualifications, compared with 35% across all NDC areas
- 63% of households interviewed in the MORI/NOP survey had a gross income of less than £10,400 a year, compared with 46% across all NDC areas

As well as low incomes, the area is also characterised by high levels of debt. It is recognised that financial exclusion - including lack of a bank account, in some instances - can be a barrier to taking work.

Despite high levels of basic skills needs, 87% of the population of the NDC area had not taken part in education/training in the last 12 months. 72% of residents in the NDC area do not wish to take part in learning/training, compared to the average across NDC areas of 59%. Hence, on the basis of qualification levels, many residents will be competing for unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, often associated with minimum level wages.

Administrative data back up many of the survey findings. In April 2002:

- the proportion of workless adults in the NDC area was nearly 29% (compared with 11% in Coventry, 10% in the West Midlands and 9% in England)
- Nearly 9% of working age adults in the NDC area was claiming JSA, compared with 9.6% one year previously, and the numbers have since continued to decrease
- Just over 18% of working age adults was claiming out of work illness-related benefits (IB or SDA)

None of those interviewed, and none of the available secondary evidence, points to a lack of jobs in, or within reach of, the NDC area as being a major problem; rather the view was expressed that 'there are loads of jobs'. There are three industrial estates in the NDC area, and a number of major employers - including the Walsgrave Hospital

and some big retailers - close by. Many of these employers are known to have vacancies, at various occupation/skill levels. The NDC area is adjacent to the M6 and to the Walsgrave Triangle - a major concentration of employment in northern Coventry.

Looking to the short - and medium-term future, the prospect is one of increasing opportunities in northern Coventry (i.e. potentially accessible to NDC residents). The *Coventry Arena* - a major multi-purpose development, encompassing a 32,000-seater stadium for Coventry City Football Club, a 6,000-sq metre exhibition/events hall, major banqueting facilities including a 1,000-seater banqueting hall, and a health and fitness complex, etc - is set to provide job opportunities in both construction and operation phases. As well as the Arena, there is a district centre and a major Tesco development, providing further job opportunities. Also in north-east Coventry, the Coventry 'Super Hospital' is to be built at the Walsgrave site. Within the NDC area itself, new employment opportunities should emerge associated with masterplanning activities, which are at the centre-piece of the NDC regeneration strategy.

4.3. Vision and key outcomes

The key outcome indicators that will be used to assess the success of the Employment Strategy in addressing worklessness are:

- **JSA claimants into work:** the aim is to increase the number of JSA claimants moving into work
- **Unemployment levels:** the aim is to reduce unemployment levels towards the Coventry average, with particular reference to youth unemployment
- **IB claimants:** the aim is to reduce the number of IB claimants
- **Basic skills needs:** the aim is to reduce the number of individuals with basic skills needs

Given the deep seated nature of problems in the NDC area, the local evaluation project team suggests that in judging progress some notion of 'distance travelled' needs to be developed, not just movement into jobs.

4.4. The rationale for the employment programme

The Employment Strategy is informed by household surveys conducted in the NDC area and secondary data - mostly from administrative sources. It is also informed by experience of professional 'experts' in working on initiatives to combat worklessness (mostly elsewhere in Coventry) prior to the advent of the NDC. In comparison with most other themes (such as Education and Crime), resident interest in the Employment Strategy has been limited, but local people have been involved in planning specific projects/services.

The emphasis of the Employment Strategy is on the supply-side, with the central aim of helping individuals move towards 'overcoming fear' of going to work through individualised and customised support (over the long term, if necessary), in a culture of entrenched worklessness. As highlighted by the local evaluation report (p.21) workless adults:

"Are often labouring under considerable material difficulties associated with poverty, unemployment, lack of skills and qualifications, disability and poor health. These are compounded by people's own lack of confidence that action they could take might make a difference. There is thus a vicious circle in which area disadvantage and individual disadvantage reinforce each other."

Those interviewed emphasised the prevailing perceptions such as 'it does not pay to work' and 'my application will not be considered because the area has a bad name' that are at the heart of the 'its pointless working culture'. Hence, it considered important that rather than aim to move individuals into 'any job', an important component of the Employment Strategy must be to try to move people into 'quality jobs' - with above 'minimum wage' levels and with prospects for development and advancement.

4.5. Key employment initiatives

The Workshop

The centrepiece of the strategy to address worklessness is an Employment Centre project, popularly known as The Workshop, designed to provide a base for employment and training advice and support services to local residents - including specialist support for lone parents and for those with health issues. An outreach programme will also be provided inside the NDC area from the Workshop. One interviewee described The Workshop as "the lynch-pin of the whole Employment Strategy. Undoubtedly, it is a 'flagship' project, not only for the Employment Theme, but for the NDC as a whole.

Although originally conceived as a Year 1 project, there have been ongoing difficulties in getting the project off the ground. Although a local contractor - Solutions Recruitment - was appointed in late 2002 to run the services at The Workshop, there have been continuing delays in finding and acquiring suitable premises for The Workshop. It was clear that a site with 'foot fall' was required, and various options have been considered. Finally, a site at Riley Square - a shopping centre close to, but outside the boundaries of the NDC area - was selected. There have been general concerns expressed amongst NDC staff and some residents about selecting a location out with the NDC area and about how many of the total number of customers will come from outside the area.

The Workshop is due to be opened in April 2004 (although a precise launch date had not been set at the time interviews were conducted), and so there are some concerns about what contingency arrangements will be put in place in the event of further slippage. The staff complement for The Workshop is in place, including a Manager, an employment adviser seconded from Jobcentre Plus, two trainee employment advisers, a training adviser and a health employment adviser, and budgets have been established for 'barrier breaking' (for example, purchase of specialist clothing, provisions of childcare when individuals attend interviews, help with transport costs, etc).

The Workshop is intended to have a two-year life (from 2004 to 2006). The key idea is to learn about the issues as the Centre moves along, with a view to try to 'bottom out' exactly what the 'key issues' are in addressing worklessness, so as to 'shape' supply-side policies. In order to 'understand' about the supply-side and how to 'shape' future provision, it is important that there is 'trust' all round - and that good relations are built between the local residents and staff at The Workshop.

Activities at The Workshop will not be solely supply-side oriented. The Workshop Manager will spend at least half of his time marketing employers (both locally and city-wide) for vacancies - both generically and on behalf of specific individuals. He will also broker deals on customised training. The Workshop will share vacancies with a city-wide community coalition known as Recruitment Network, so giving further access to job vacancies. They will also receive notification of all Jobcentre vacancies and those of partner organisations.

In the same way that The Workshop will evaluate and adapt to the needs of clients (as outlined above), there is recognition that there is a need for evaluation and adaptation to the needs of employers. The emphasis is on 'learning from experience', with post employment support for both the employee and company providing an additional dimension.

Rather than move individuals into 'any job', the aim of The Workshop is to try and move people into 'quality jobs'.

Business Network Project

The Business Network Project is designed to establish local networks, to share resources to co-ordinate environmental improvements, target crime reduction and to be "good neighbours." Some of the local businesses face recruitment difficulties and skill shortages, partly because of difficulties of travelling to the area for those reliant on public transport. Another aspect of the Business Network Project is concerned with addressing skill needs and encouraging and supporting employment of local people. There is increasing recognition from employers of a need to be 'flexible' as labour markets are fairly 'tight'.

This Project started in 2003 and 14 out of 76 businesses in the NDC area have attended meetings. The businesses are quite diverse in character, including engineering, warehousing, media/publishing, woodworking, food manufacture, community transport, etc. Tackling anti-social behaviour is the immediate priority for the Network. However, it is intended that vacancies from this project can feed into The Workshop, in order that 'local people' can have a chance of filling 'local jobs.'

Other initiatives

Aside from The Workshop and the Business Network Project, the NDC has engaged in the following activities:

- **A Pamper Day** targeted at lone parents: This event gave lone parents a chance to have hair cuts, etc, as well as providing advice and guidance. 40 people attended, and there were six positive outcomes from that event
- **A Jobs Event/Fair** targeted at claimants to find out about/discuss employment and training issues: Of 1,507 invitees, 80 people attended this event in September 2003. Interest in the event from larger employers was described as "rather disheartening." Three IB claimants who attended the event have since moved into work
- **Surgery:** Over the last two years, a Jobcentre Plus representative has been holding a weekly surgery at the NDC office. The 'Surgery' was open to anyone looking for work to come and talk about advice and guidance. It has proved difficult to attract attendees, although some individuals have attended regularly over prolonged periods
- **Addressing transport barriers:** A new bus route, designed to improve access to workplaces, has been identified and agreed with Travel Coventry and the local authority
- **Construction initiative with Whitefriars:** This initiative aims to provide employment opportunities for local people in conjunction with Whitefriars
- **Walsgrave Hospital:** This large hospital is close to, but outside, the NDC area. Attempts are being made to capture some of the vacancies for NDC residents
- **Business Start-Up project:** This project is running as a one-year experiment and is designed to provide grants up to £5K

- **Workforce Development project:** This project, designed to provide post-employment support for residents of the NDC area (wherever they work) and post-employment support for workers at businesses in the NDC area (wherever they live) is in development. Currently, work is being undertaken to identify precise 'gaps' and associated needs

Despite the undoubted commitment of staff, progress on the Employment Strategy has been slow too date - with problems in securing premises for The Workshop being a key external constraint. It is clear that there are frustrations that more progress has not been made in the interim. It remains to be seen how The Workshop will be 'perceived' and 'received'. Those interviewed were hopeful and confident that the Workshop would work "for those who want to work". However, it remains to be seen how many of the workless in the NDC area want to work. Indeed, 'identifying who wants to work' is possibly the key challenge.

Aside from the projects/activities identified above, it is relevant to note that involvement with the Employment Task Group and with the NDC more generally, has been instrumental in leading a small number (35) residents into employment on the basis of experience gained in NDC activities. For example, the resident chair of the Employment Task Group now works in an Economic Development role elsewhere in the city, having previously been unemployed for a very long period. The figures for job entries from Jobcentre Plus surgery sessions at the NDC office are much higher, and many of these people were referred by NDC staff members or attracted by NDC events.

4.6. Relationship to mainstream provision

The NDC benefits from a continuing commitment and good working relationships with Jobcentre Plus. There is Jobcentre Plus involvement in NDC at Board level, in terms of staff secondment, and support with events. The establishment of a SLA with the Department for Work and Pensions (covering Jobcentre Plus and the Pension Service) and extra funding through the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit will provide increased impetus and ability to undertake mainstreaming activities. Conversely, there are no significant interactions with the Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council. However, Henley College has proved very supportive of NDC.

Relationships with Coventry City Council (the accountable body) are described as "helpful" and "unhelpful" at different times", and there is a link to the Local Strategic Partnership. Interviewees reported that it had proved difficult for the NDC to get linked into city-wide initiatives, and this was attributed mainly to there being "too many agendas", rather than to a lack of 'fit' between the objectives of the Employment Strategy and those of other initiatives. However, while there are few joint initiatives with other ABIs, this does not mean that there is an absence of joint working.

In terms of wider engagement, the NDC Improvement Plan prioritises the need to enhance engagements with the LSP, Advantage West Midlands, the Sub-Regional Partnership (Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership (CSWP)), Connexions and larger voluntary organisations. It is also salient to note that the National Evaluation Report highlights the fact that some partners consider it is important for the NDC more generally to strengthen its links with stakeholders at a more generic level. This is particularly the case in relation to issues beyond the boundaries of the NDC area that have a potentially important impact on the lives of residents.

5. Overview and Discussion

The three case studies illustrate approaches taken by NDC Partnerships to developing strategies and programmes to address worklessness in different labour market contexts. The NDC areas are suffering a range of similar problems, especially low levels of educational achievement, qualifications and basic skills, lack of interest and motivation to undertake further learning and training, high levels of benefit dependency, a significant level of 'informal' economic activity', high levels of long-term unemployment amongst certain groups, especially young people. Certain barriers to employment figure prominently in all areas, notably lack of access to affordable childcare, the problem of the 'benefits trap', lack of access to appropriate training facilities and a resistance to travelling far outside the area to work. A notable similarity is the presence of significant industrial and commercial areas within the NDC boundaries.

Nevertheless, there are certain important differences between the areas, notably the ethnic mix of their populations, with Hartlepool and Coventry having predominantly white populations while Bradford has a majority Asian population. Differences in labour market context are also significant. Coventry NDC is situated in a relatively buoyant local and sub-regional labour market whereas Bradford and Hartlepool are located in areas with lower levels of labour demand. It is evident that this has had an influence on their employment strategies. Coventry is placing an emphasis on a strongly supply-side approach, focusing on action to address residents' problems and remove barriers allowing them to capitalise on the employment opportunities available to them in the wider labour market, while Hartlepool and Bradford have a more balanced approach, with a stronger emphasis on creating new job opportunities and promoting business start up. Thus, in Bradford, the first projects to be established aimed to create new jobs in local businesses, attract new businesses to the area, and encourage new business start-ups, while in Hartlepool a strong early focus has been on the projects to refurbish and develop Longhill Industrial Estate and the Commercial Areas and on the potential for a business incubator facility.

However, it is notable that in Bradford, in particular, there has been a shift in the orientation of the strategy over time with an increasing focus on the wider labour market context (including potential employment opportunities in Leeds) as the job brokerage project has been developed. This might be attributable to a number of factors, for example the influence of new professional staff in the NDC bringing a wider focus, discussion with the Government Office and the expertise of @Work Recruitment, brought in to manage the job brokerage project. Early evaluation of the Support for Business projects also indicated that many new jobs created through NDC support were not being taken by NDC residents, a classic problem of 'leakage.' It is also notable that greater attention has been given over time to links with Bradford Council and the District policy context. A further impetus for this has been developments in the local labour market which have created more job opportunities, thus bolstering the shift towards a stronger supply-side element in the strategy.

Notwithstanding the differences in the influences on strategy formation in the three NDCs, it is clear that in all cases consultation with, and involvement of, local residents and key local stakeholders constituted the bedrock of the process. The Board/Steering Group and Theme Group structures appear to have worked well in including key local interests and stakeholders. A wide range of methods has been used to involve local residents, including traditionally 'hard-to-reach' groups, and obtain their views on local problems and issues and on their aspirations for the future, which fed into visions and key outcomes. Some areas have been identified for further attention, for example, the involvement of representatives from business, of young people and of the voluntary and community sector and steps have been or are being taken to address these. For

example, in Bradford young people have been included in the Jobs and Business Working Group.

The influence of residents may be a factor explaining some differences in employment strategies. A number of interviewees argued that residents tend to be less comfortable with employment issues than those relating, for example, to housing, environment and crime. It is quite a complex area and may be less immediate for many of those involved in the NDC, who may not be fully representative of those experiencing the worst problems of exclusion from the labour market. Those facing the worst problems of exclusion may be disinterested in taking a strategic approach. Strong resident influence may result in a more 'inward-looking' approach, rather than the broader perspective on the potential opportunities in the wider labour market which is more likely to be encouraged by professionals from the various agencies involved in employment-related policies. The implication of this argument is that there is a need to ensure a balanced representation of interests in the processes of strategy and project development.

An interesting issue arises about the balance in the strategy process between resident and stakeholder views on the one hand and 'analysis and evidence' on the other. There are clearly some tensions that arise and 'muddy the waters' somewhat in terms of the notion that the process should be evidence based. Certainly, in all the NDCs, the local research that has been undertaken using both administrative data and local surveys has been important in providing a more robust underpinning to the views of local residents and stakeholders in developing an understanding of the conditions and problems in the area and of people's views on what needs to be done to address them. However, the use of evidence of 'what works' (or more specifically 'what is likely to work in local circumstances') is more ambiguous; it has clearly been brought to bear on the process but not in a particularly systematic way - largely through professionals' awareness of previous research. What is clear is that the interpretation of evidence is conditioned by the local context, and particularly by the framework of views, aspirations and values of local residents and stakeholders. Thus, the key is deciding what is appropriate for the area taking into account all considerations, of which evidence of what works is but one amongst many.

All the NDCs have undertaken local research and drawn on the 2002 MORI Household Survey to help them analyse and understand the nature of the problems that local residents face. This has provided statistical profiles and baseline data upon which to base outcome measures and targets relating to levels of unemployment, broader definitions of worklessness, benefit dependency, employment, household income and qualifications. However, the discussions undertaken to date indicate some degree of uncertainty about the extent to which the defined outcome measures and targets reflect the true nature of the problem and about the extent to which defined projects will address the problem in all its complexity. In all NDCs there was some reference to the problem of a 'culture of worklessness' but it tends to be defined in general terms. This raises the issue of the extent to which the 'worklessness problem' is sufficiently well defined and understood (in terms of its various attributes, including social and personal problems, and how different groups are affected) as a basis for effective intervention that will address the circumstances and needs of those furthest from the labour market.

Judging the likelihood of success of the programmes developed in the three NDCs is problematical at this stage. Hartlepool and Coventry are Round 2 NDCs and, given various delays in implementing key projects, it is too early to draw conclusions, although Bradford is starting to demonstrate good outputs from its job brokerage and business support projects and some progress in reducing the gap between the District average and the NDC area in terms of key outcome measures. Also, Bradford and Hartlepool are modifying their key outcome measures and targets based upon experience to date, especially concern about the degree of impact on aggregate levels of worklessness (or

economic activity) and household income. In all cases the extensive programmes of resident and stakeholder consultation and involvement and local research and analysis can be seen as providing a good foundation for programmes that address the key problems and needs of the areas.

However, it is possible to identify a number of issues. The job brokerage projects (@Work in Bradford and Hartlepool and The Workshop in Coventry) are based on sound evidential support but there are question marks over their likely success in getting the most disadvantaged groups and those facing the greatest barriers into sustainable, high quality jobs. Previous evaluations suggest that there are dangers of such projects 'creaming' those best placed to achieve employment. In both Bradford and Hartlepool @Work appear to be achieving impressive results in terms of job entries but it remains to be seen what the level of 'deadweight' is and what impact they are having on the most disadvantaged groups and on aggregate levels of worklessness in the NDC areas. A similar point can be made about enterprise support projects. There is a need for close attention in these projects to ensuring the provision of the intensive, focused and sustained help needed by the most disadvantaged people.

Another area of some uncertainty relates to the potential success of measures to create new jobs and encourage new business development. There are uncertainties in the evidential basis for such intervention relating to deadweight and 'leakage' effects and also to the long-term sustainability of jobs created. Bradford's New Deal for Business project is exceeding its output targets but, as indicated above, concerns about the degree to which jobs created are being taken up by NDC residents has contributed to the shift towards a stronger supply-side orientation. Hartlepool's experience will be informative in this respect, given the major emphasis that is being placed on the employment creation potential of the Longhill Estate Strategy. Thus, it will be important to evaluate the degree of success of the various measures in generating new jobs and the extent to which those jobs are taken up by NDC residents.

It is evident that there are strong concerns in all the NDCs that existing mainstream provision has failed to address the more severe problems and barriers faced by particular disadvantaged groups - those 'furthest away' from the labour market. There is a well developed understanding about the need to ensure that NDC resources are used to 'bend' mainstream provision and to supplement and 'add value' so as to focus more intensive 'holistic' help tailored to the specific needs of such disadvantaged groups. However, it is recognised that this kind of help requires intensive resource inputs, good joint working across all the relevant agencies, effective outreach provision and sustained help on a 'caseload' basis for people possibly over a long period of time. Again, this is consistent with available evidence on 'good practice' but what is less clear is the prospect for success in terms of effectiveness in achieving sustained employment and in terms of cost-effectiveness.

There is evidence in all three NDCs of good working relationships at the operational level with key agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and Business Link. These can be dependent upon the extent of personal links and networking. However, it would appear that relationships with mainstream agencies are less well developed at the strategic level. To some degree this is inevitable for an ABI which has to compete for attention in the broader remits and agendas of a range of agencies. From this perspective, the 'institutional geography' can appear very complex and daunting, with 'too many agendas' and 'fraught relationships' (terms used by some interviewees). From our discussions it would appear that the situation is improving over time as the NDCs become established and relationships develop. In Hartlepool it was argued that the situation was because in a relatively 'small town' key individuals are on several Partnerships so there is a lot of informal contact. All three NDCs recognised the need to improve these relationships in order to secure more influence over mainstream

provision; as one interviewee put it, “NDC money is running out so we need to influence mainstream funding more.”

All the NDCs are well aware that they face a number of major challenges. These include the need to combat the ‘culture of worklessness’, especially amongst young people subject to intense peer group pressures, reinforced by the strength of the informal economy and manifested in low levels of self-esteem and confidence and pessimism about the potential for change; the need to overcome key barriers such as poor basic skills, a lack of affordable childcare, the ‘benefits trap’ and reluctance to travel far to work; and the need to ensure that people who obtain good quality jobs do not move out of the area. The latter constitutes a major potential threat to the sustainability of change and in all NDCs is being addressed through initiatives across other themes in the strategy, for example, housing and environmental improvements.

All three NDCs indicate an awareness of potential benefits from linkages between the various themes of the broader strategy. In Coventry the Employment and Education themes are being combined to create a Lifelong Learning theme. However, thinking about this from the employment perspective has progressed furthest in Hartlepool and Bradford where it is recognised that substantial job opportunities for local residents arise from the projects funded through NDC resources. Perhaps the major potential lies in housing improvement and renewal and in both NDCs attention is being given to developing training, employment and business start-up opportunities for local residents. Both Hartlepool and Bradford NDCs are developing ILMs to maximise the potential to improve the employability of local residents on projects that address defined needs of the area. Childcare is another example where NDC-funded developments are seen as provide training and employment opportunities for local residents.

Appendix 1: Interviews Conducted

Bradford Trident

Resident Director, Chair Jobs and Business Working Group
Jobs and Business Programme Manager
Jobcentre Plus Business Manager
Principal Officer, Regeneration Department, Bradford MBC

West Central Hartlepool

Chair and Resident Co-chair, Employment Theme
NDC Programme Director
NDC Employment Programme Manager
NDC Employment Theme Co-ordinator
Head of Economic Development Team, Hartlepool Borough Council

Coventry

NDC Operations Manager
Resident Chair, Employment Task Group
Jobcentre Plus representative