

Academy for Sustainable
Communities

**Review of Skills for the
Delivery of Sustainable
Communities**

Technical Report 3 -
Case Studies

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1 Introduction

Arup have been commissioned by the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC) to undertake an analysis of the gap in supply and demand of skills required to deliver the Sustainable Communities agenda.

The delivery of sustainable communities depends upon the skills, capabilities and working culture of a wide range of built environment professionals. The formation of ASC marks a major recognition of the role and increasing demands upon the professional component. Yet ASC can only fulfil and focus its role if it has a clear understanding of the skills gaps that need to be addressed.

Creating sustainable communities implies wide ranging objectives that must necessarily demand a wide range of skills and disciplines. The Egan Report published in 2004 correctly recognised the importance of core technical skills – many of which fall into traditional professional “silos” together with generic skills associated with multi-disciplinary delivery.

The main findings report has been published separately by the Academy for Sustainable Communities. It draws information from our own primary research, as well as drawing in conclusions from previous studies across the sectors forming part of sustainable communities.

This report provides details of case studies undertaken for the purposes of this study.

2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The case studies were used to explore technical and generic skills gaps in more detail by focusing on the experience of twenty specific organisations that operate in the built environment and sustainable communities sectors. The findings from the case studies also provide input for the model.

2.2 General Approach

The approach to the case studies followed the project-based methodology set out in the scoping report, building in elements of the individual interviews approach.

The project based approach initially involved constructing a series of regional profiles which set the 'tone' for sustainable communities priorities in the particular region, setting out the key issues and challenges. Case studies were then selected for the individual regions which were representative of the issues particular to that region.

The interview team then sought to find out which organisations of varying types have been, or still are, involved in delivery of that specific project, what their skills profile is, how they interact, and where skills gaps lie. Significant individuals who are the 'champions' in the success of projects were identified and focused interviews were conducted with these people to provide 'profile' boxes of their organisations and their individual experiences. Similarly, where newly formed organisations, such as regeneration companies were interviewed, the team looked more closely at these to understand how they have decided on their skills requirements, and how this might differ from the skills profile of a more long-established organisation.

Key pieces of information drawn from this stage of work are:

- An understanding of technical skills– what skills are currently available, gaps expressed both as labour shortages and under-skilled people, past and future trends.
- An understanding of generic skills – which skills are really important in delivering sustainable communities, where serious gaps lie, prioritising skills and skills development, past and future trends, whether some skills are particularly important for particular professions, measures to address shortages.
- An understanding of vacancies, overwork and underwork of current staff, workload ratios and other information which could inform model assumptions.

2.3 Project Selection Process

A long list of projects of varying types was drawn up including growth area projects, housing market renewal, city centre regeneration, town centre improvement, private housing development (both good and bad), millennium communities schemes, SRB-style regeneration projects, neighbourhood renewal projects and others. Projects were long-listed which have been successful and are completed, projects where there have been difficulties (to understand whether labour shortages or skills gaps were a contributing factor), small projects and large projects. Many of the projects which were studied were either at, or near, completion.

The long-list was intentionally kept long and flexible as due to time and budgetary constraints the team did not envisage conducting interviews with all the identified organisations. There were certain organisations where the case studies proved difficult to carry out, for example due to key individuals being away on holiday / unable to find an interview slot in busy diaries / consultation fatigue. Therefore, it was helpful to have alternative case studies to fall back on.

2.4 Detailed Approach

Arup's starting point in each region was to develop the regional profile, for which they talked to key regional players including the Regional Assembly to help develop the overview profile and which gave a starting point for selecting projects. Arup then conducted the case study telephone interviews with the main actors involved in the delivery of the project.

On most occasions Arup spoke to the lead person on the project from each organisation; the person who had been immersed in the project in question, and had worked across organisations. Where key 'movers and shakers' emerged, Arup interviewed them personally and individually. It was the intention to get as complete a picture as possible of the inputs, skills and skills gaps within the projects and we also reviewed relevant documentation related to the organisations.

In total, Arup conducted twenty case study interviews, with not less than two case studies per region. In regions where they spoke to large, complex, multi-organisational projects, fewer interviews were conducted but in other regions, where there were smaller, more focused projects, Arup carried out two or three case studies.

In the course of this approach, we spoke to organisations involved in the three key sustainable communities themes of growth, regeneration and liveability. The projects selected included those working in growth areas and new growth points, UDCs and URCs, Northern Way Regions, Millennium Communities and Housing Market Renewal Areas. In addition, Arup spoke to those involved with the National Coalfields Programme, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and New Deal for Communities. In terms of those involved with the liveability agenda, Arup spoke to projects receiving funding from the Green Spaces Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund and those involved with implementing Local Area Agreements (see chart below).

2.5 Outputs

The case studies feed into the two major study deliverables; the nine regional reports and this final report. For each case study, a pro forma was completed and written up, setting out the key findings of the case study. These were structured as follows:

- A brief description of the project, its scale, aims and objectives, funding details.
- A profile of the organisations involved, and their role.
- How the project fits into the sustainability agenda in the region, and what is 'delivery' means for each of the different organisations involved.
- An audit of the personnel involved, their technical and generic skills, including workload ratios where possible.
- An assessment of what, if any, skills gaps existed and how these impacted on the delivery and success of the project.
- Profile boxes highlighting key individuals or interesting start up organisations in more depth, where appropriate.

The case study summaries are outlined below in Chapter 4 (Case Studies).

2.6 Project List

Region and Project	Area / Objective
North East	
• Hartlepool NDC	NDC
• Bridging Newcastle Gateshead	Housing Market Pathfinder
North West	
• New Islington / New East Manchester UDC	URC / Millennium Community
• The Grove PFI	Northern Way / Housing Renewal
Yorkshire and Humber	
• Southey Owlerton (SOAR)	Housing Market Renewal
• Norfolk Heritage Park, Sheffield	Heritage Lottery Fund
East Midlands	
• One Nottingham LAA	LAA / NRF
• Sherwood Energy Village	Coalfields
• West Northamptonshire UDC	UDC / growth area
West Midlands	
• Camp Hill	Regeneration
• Greets Green Housing Partnership	NDC
East	
• Great Yarmouth inteGREAT Project	Heritage Lottery Fund
• Opportunity Peterborough	URC
South East	
• East Sussex Economic Partnership	Rural regeneration
• Queensborough & Rushenden Regeneration Project	Growth area
London	
• London Riverside	UDC / Growth area
• Enfield / Lee Valley Green Spaces	Green Space (lottery) fund
• Arsenal Emirates Stadium	Growth area / Regeneration
South West	
• Millbay Regeneration Scheme	New Growth Point
• Norton Radstock Regeneration Company	Regeneration company

2.7 Project matrix

	Growth Area	New Growth Point	Northern Way City Regions	Millennium Communities Housing market renewal area	National Coalfields Programme	Urban Development Corporations	Urban Regeneration Corporations	New Deal for Communities	Local Area Agreements Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	Green Spaces Fund	Lottery funded
North East					X			X			
North West			X	X	X		X				
Yorkshire & Humber					X						X
East Midlands	X				X	X			X	X	
West Midlands								X			
East							X				X
South East	X										
London	X					X				X	
South West		X					X				

3 Case Studies

3.1 Introduction

Case study interviews were conducted with the chief executives or their appointed representatives of twenty organisations that operate in the built environment / sustainable communities sector. The organisations were selected from a longlist and were recommended by various sources including the ASC, RDAs, CABE and the Regional Centres of Excellence. The general approach to conducting these interviews is set out in the methodology section above.

The main role of these case study interviews was to identify the generic and technical skills gaps as well as labour shortages and recruitment problems by sector and by region. The results also provide inputs for the model. The findings are then analysed to identify trends, both through the sustainable communities themes of 'regeneration' 'growth' and 'liveability' and geographically by regional groupings.

3.2 Review

The main areas that were explored through the interviews were:

- The scope of the project including measurable outputs.
- The organisations involved in the project.
- The number and occupations employed by each organisation linked to the project.
- Any technical skills gaps affecting the project (e.g. knowledge, processes and technical procedures).
- Any generic skills gaps affecting the project (e.g. leadership and project management).
- Interventions required to improve the supply of skilled professionals for operational areas and projects.

Outlined below are short summaries of the case studies conducted including basic facts and main skills gaps:

3.3 North East - Hartlepool New Deal for Communities (NDC)

3.3.1 Project / Organisational Profile

This is a Government funded ten year regeneration initiative. The NDC Neighbourhood Action Plan will enable local residents, elected representatives and people who provide services in the area to work together to achieve lower unemployment and crime, better health, skills, housing and environment and a stronger community with improved culture and leisure opportunities.

The NDC is resident led - every decision taken about which projects to fund, or what priorities are established, is taken by a Steering Group made up of a majority of local residents, who work alongside other key partners. The Steering Group consists of four Local Authority representatives, twelve resident representatives elected annually, five service providers (police, housing association, economic forum, education authority, PCT), a faith group representative, and a voluntary sector representative.

The core staff team that supports the Steering Group is shrinking as NDC funding comes to an end (the project is currently six years into NDC programme). Activity was concentrated in first three or four years in terms of project spend and management, and therefore the peak staffing level was two years ago. The team have established a separate company,

Hartlepool Revival which will continue beyond 2011 but is likely to have a low staffing level of around 10 people.

3.3.2 Labour Shortages

The NDC enjoys a high degree of stability and ability to retain key people. They reported no particular recruitment problems. Jobs tend to evolve as individuals grow in their jobs – there is a trend of people moving from specialist to more generic roles.

3.3.3 Skills Gaps

The primary generic skill lacking was project management, covering technical, contract skills and management experience. The NDC occasionally uses consultants to fill gaps but with mixed results. It has a good relationship with Hartlepool Borough Council as its accountable body, but it is a small unitary authority which lacks resources, and some departments are not very strong which can cost the NDC both time and money.

3.4 North East –Housing Market Pathfinder

3.4.1 Project / Organisational Profile

The Housing Market Renewal pathfinder is one of nine set up by the government to tackle problems caused by low demand housing. It is a 15 year project that aims to create great places to live in an area covering around 77,000 properties, and is due to complete in 2018.

By 2018, organisation will have:

- Improved well over 10,000 sustainable homes.
- Worked with builders to develop around 7,000 new homes, with around 13,900 new homes being built in the area in total.
- Demolished up to 4,300 obsolete houses, having successfully rehoused people to their home of choice.
- Increased the population to almost 175,500.
- Increased satisfaction with the area to around 85% (from 70%).

In total, £64 million has been allocated from Housing Market Renewal funding for the years 2006-8, which is augmented by a range of complementary funding (both public and private sector) estimated at £412 million.

The Board oversees the work of the core team. It comprises of the Chair, four Council representatives, 2 LSP representatives, two independent members, and English Partnerships. Observers to the board include the Housing Corporation, Audit Commission, New Deal for Communities, Government Office, and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The core staff is usually 13 or 14 strong with four heads of service (programmes/research/finance/ development). The team grew recently after a capacity evaluation where two new heads of service and support staff were recruited.

3.4.2 Labour Shortages

There is a fairly high turnover which is attributed to the high marketability of the skills/experience that are gained. However, there are no particular recruitment difficulties or vacancies reported.

3.4.3 Skills Gaps

Communication, partnering and softer ‘personality’ skills were cited as important and areas that need to be built upon. The organisation is able to access the training courses provided by its local authority partners, but is considering more tailored training specific to the needs of the organisation.

3.5 North West - Grove/Ardwick PFI in Manchester

3.5.1 Project / Organisational Profile

Grove Village is a housing Private Finance Initiative (PFI) which is successfully transforming a run down, inner-city housing estate in Manchester into a sustainable, mixed tenure, well-managed urban village - a place where people are now choosing to live. The PFI is a Special Purpose Vehicle which consists of a partnership between Harvest Housing Group, Gleeson Homes and Nationwide Building Society, has received £15m PFI funding from central government. The Board consists of representatives from the 3 investor companies and is supported by a core management which consists of three surveyors, one lawyer and one accountant, plus support staff. Its objectives are to:

- Manage and maintain 663 homes over 30 years.
- Build new homes for sale (660).
- Demolish 40% of existing homes (436).
- Redesign the estate to make it safer and greener.

Manchester City Council continues to own the social housing and thus service delivery is monitored by a panel made up of tenants and residents, local ward councillors and members of the City Council's Housing Department.

3.5.2 Labour Shortages

Turnover is low but team is changing as at advanced stage of project (moving from construction to housing management). High occupational mobility within the organisation as people move away from their core professional background into project management.

3.5.3 Skills Gaps

Although the core team is small (5), they have most of the skills required because of the SPV structure - there is a large pool of people and resources back office/ management functions to select from the parent organisations. The core team oversees the project leadership whereas the sub-contractors oversee the detailed management of refurbishment / repairs / rebuild. The partnership has worked well as each of the sub-contractor organisations have put their best, most competent teams forward to work on the project, since it is a high profile, high-value contract and the first social housing PFI - no-one wants it to fail. However, project management skills could still be improved and are useful both in the construction and housing management phases of the project. There is a belief generally that employers are not properly training their staff in project management, are not spotting talent, developing it and retaining people.



Ian Perry, Chairman of Grove Village and Chief Executive of Harvest Housing Group

Ian Perry says of Grove Village:

"Nothing like this has been achieved before. It is a unique partnership because of the different skills that were needed, but it is working incredibly well. It would have been very easy to draw a line through the estate and keep the social housing on one side and the private ownership on the other, but we have learned from other regeneration areas and the best way is to spread the mix of housing. People who live there tell us that they are delighted with their new homes and that is the big test"

3.6 North West - New East Manchester URC (New Islington)

3.6.1 Project / Organisational Profile

New East Manchester (NEM) URC was set up in 2000 to lead the comprehensive regeneration of a segment of the city, extending from the edge of the City Centre to the administrative boundary of Manchester. It has initiated regeneration projects for the last 7 years, including the New Islington Millennium Community for Manchester which aims to develop a truly mixed community on a 10ha 1970s low density housing estate.

NEM had a Board of 12 directors and a core staff of approx. 25/30 who act as a strategic lead of projects but they work very closely with other initiatives (e.g. NDC, HMR) which brings staff up to approx. 90. The core staff team consists of:

- Development team (planners / surveyors).
- Marketing & promotion team.
- Social & community projects team.
- Finance & admin team.

3.6.2 Labour Shortages

Turnover is low as staff have a good sense of loyalty and commitment. However, experience with the URC makes people very marketable and therefore some more junior staff are poached by consultancies or other regeneration projects.

The organisation has experienced some problems recruiting people on the development side. Seeking rigid professional qualifications was part of the problem, especially at more senior levels. Realisation that experience, broader project management skills and ability to think-out-of-the-box are more important than written qualifications. Rather than focusing on purely academic qualifications, there is a need to recognise the value of personal qualities - enthusiasm, commitment, an understanding of aims of the project and a willingness to learn and develop.

There is also a broad range of organisations chasing a limited pool of people to fulfil similar roles. Therefore there is a need to 'grow your own staff' but this is difficult in a fairly small time-limited organisation.

3.6.3 Skills Gaps

The URC calls in consultants in a number of professional areas and uses the technical competence of the City Council (planning, valuation, legal advice, finance etc.) for specific projects as it cannot afford to staff up to peaks of workload. Ideally would like to recruit people with programme and project management skills and the technical underpinnings (e.g. PRINCE 2). They would like to recruit people who have the skills to appreciate the physical, economic and social elements of urban renewal.

3.7 Yorkshire and Humber - SOAR - Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration

3.7.1 Project / Organisational Profile

A community-led regeneration partnership in north Sheffield, Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR) was set up in 1999 to help revitalise neighbourhoods in the north of the city of Sheffield and developed an award-winning Neighbourhood Strategies process (part of Transform South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder). £20.53m of government funding and a further £4m from Europe was allocated for regeneration in the period 1999-2006. SOAR Enterprises, a wholly owned subsidiary of the SOAR Board set up as the trading arm was established to continue the work of SOAR.

The SOAR team supports the work of the SOAR Board, the Theme Groups and the Neighbourhood Action Groups. 8 people - 3 managers (partnership / enterprise / employment), 2 community engagement staff, 3 staff in monitoring, finance and admin. Individuals in core team recruited on basis of aptitude / understanding of the subject rather than purely professional qualifications.

3.7.2 Labour Shortages

Low level of turnover as have a committed team who is dedicated seeing the project through to a conclusion. Philosophy of organisation to grow from within, and therefore if a senior staff member leaves, the organisation considers developing / reconfiguring existing staff and then recruiting at lower levels – home-growing staff.

3.7.3 Skills Gaps

Have an appraisal system that assesses skills gaps, both those that are technical and the softer/generic skills. Staff are sent on tailored courses as required e.g. finance, facilitation/engagement.

SOAR employs consultants of different projects e.g. economic viability studies of managed workspace/land assembly, which means they don't have to take people off projects on which they're already working / can add value to have an independent appraisal. They buy in this capacity not because of a shortage of skills but because of a shortage of time.

3.8 Yorkshire and Humber - Norfolk Heritage Park (Sheffield City Council)

3.8.1 Project / Organisational Profile

Three things started the regeneration of Norfolk Heritage Park: the forming of a park 'friends' group concerned about the decline of the park, an arson attack on the café in 1995 and the start of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). From 1999 to 2005 the park was regenerated through a £3.6 million restoration project (£2.3m from HLF). New visitor facilities have been constructed, including the Centre in the Park, a multi-purpose community building.

Team consists of 2 staff managing / developing the park (development officer and an assistant ranger). Development team sits within the Parks Department of Sheffield City Council. However, can call upon expertise of rest of Council e.g. architects / planners etc. and much voluntary group input.

3.8.2 Labour Shortages

Turnover is high as project coming to an end and HLF support ended in 05/06. Moving to park management rather than regeneration roles.

3.8.3 Skills Gaps

Park can call on the resources of all the Council department and volunteers and therefore is well covered with technical skills. In terms of generic skills gaps the park needs someone with talent in marketing / event management / sponsorship. Staff members have annual appraisals where gaps in training are identified have are given access to the internal training programme e.g. aggression / conflict management. However, these programmes are not available to volunteers who sometimes lack the skills base (e.g. chairing meetings/ committee procedures).

3.9 East Midlands - One Nottingham (overseeing the LAA)

3.9.1 Project / Organisational Profile

One Nottingham is Nottingham's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). It brings together the public, private, community and voluntary sectors based in Nottingham, so that every one living or working in the city has the chance to have their say about its future. It is a relatively new organisation since the Community Strategy was only agreed in spring 2006. Despite its wealth and commercial success of Nottingham, many of its residents live in areas of deprivation. Over 60% of Nottingham's population lives in an area of deprivation. 13 of the 20 city wards are within the 10% most deprived nationally.

NRF Funding

2003/04	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8
£11.8m	£11.8m	£15.8m	£14.2m	£14.2m

One Nottingham has a small executive team that facilitates the work of the Partnership on behalf of the board. The core staff consist of: 1 Chief exec (and PA), 2 partnership officers focused on development activities, 1 performance manager, focused on LSP outputs and 1 business broker, who liaises with the private sector. Others are employed by the Council and other agencies and the LSP has several themed partnerships.

3.9.2 Skills Gaps

Lack of generic skills in project management and hard to find people in policy development with skills/experience in partnership working with a range of agencies and sectors (public/private/voluntary). Also need people with experience of analysis, who are able to translate that into policy and interventions on the ground and people with skills in commissioning.

One Nottingham is planning to conduct a skills audit to ascertain in which areas people need training. Many organisations in the Nottingham / Midlands area offer workshops / lectures / courses in regeneration, which may be useful training, but because the organisations are so disparate and un-coordinated, it is difficult to ascertain which are the most relevant. One expert centre providing a menu of bespoke training would be useful for practitioners.

One Nottingham's main partner is the City Council which is the Accountable Body for the partnership's funding and delivers many of the services needed to achieve the partnerships objectives. However, the City Council lacks policy officers who have dedicated time to both assess national policy and concentrate on local city policy development. The lack of policy officers within the Council may hinder the work of the LSP.

3.10 East Midlands - Sherwood Energy Village (SEV)

3.10.1 Project /

Organisational Profile

Regeneration of Ollerton Colliery which closed in 1994 into SEV, an environmental enterprise park for industrial, commercial and tourism uses. The local community were instrumental in accessing funding and driving the project forward. Exemplar of sustainable development, has won awards including the first Enterprising Britain competition in 2005.

Project is sharing its expertise with organisations in UK and abroad. Vision was to create 'a hub for green business' (buildings have highest standards of energy efficiency and environmental performance).

£4.2m in total was raised to support the project, £2.6m from the National Coalfields Programme (EP), and the balance from EMDA, Nottinghamshire CC and EU funding. The National Coalfields Programme (which celebrated its 10 year anniversary in March 07) was designed to breathe new life into coalfield communities following pit closures.

SEV is an Industrial and Provident Society run for the benefit of the community. Surplus profit is applied to regeneration aims and play a vital role in enhancing the local economy. The organisation elects its directors annually and all directors are share-holding members of the Society. Other organisations are not represented on the Board. This helps to ensure the integrity of the SEV vision. Board is supported by 6 office based staff.

3.10.2 Labour Shortages

Planning to grow the consultancy arm - SEV solutions, but usually try to grow people internally - for example, an individual who started as a admin assistant is now running the head office. Investing in people, using people's experience of different areas helps to develop the organisation.

3.10.3 Skills Gaps

SEV fills any technical knowledge gaps by using associates. SEV has been established for 14 years and thus has an extensive network of associates with diverse skills - structural engineering / architecture / planning / sustainable urban drainage - therefore there are no skills shortages, and this is cost efficient.

In terms of generic skills, staff need more experience in project management and partnership skills in working with the regional assembly / Coalfields Regeneration Trust. Also large gap in IT skills, learning to use latest software.

In terms of working with partners, it is not so much capacity that hinders outputs than bureaucracy in the decision making processes. Aware that planners have very large caseload of applications and thus delays are commonplace.



Stan Crawford – Champion – Sherwood Energy Village

Stan Crawford Managing Director of Sherwood Energy Village was honoured with an OBE in this year's New Year's Honours List. It has been awarded for Services to Business in recognition of the years spent in a number of regeneration initiatives in the former coal-mining area of Ollerton, Nottinghamshire, in the northern area of the East Midlands. Stan has consistently maintained the position that regeneration is 'playing the long game' – there is no quick fix to declining industries and associated social implications.



“One-off projects do not generally work because there has to be commitment and money for ongoing maintenance”. This has now been recognised, and since 1994 (when Ollerton colliery shut, as part of the national pit closure programme) there has been a steady flow of other organisations, national and international, to consult the SEV organisation as to how regeneration can be used for local benefit. The work goes on – it has to. Stan is pleased with the award but says that the essential factor is that this might help in the continuation of the ‘long game’. Stan says, “I’d like to thank everyone who has, over time, given support to this initiative. Ollerton is an example of how things can be turned around and I am thankful to all the people that have signed up to the vision of creating a nice place to live, work and play.”

Stan Crawford is currently Managing Director of Sherwood Energy Village and a Director of SEV Solutions Ltd. He is also Chair of the Boughton Pumping Station Partnership Trust. Previous positions held include board member of the Alliance Sub Strategic Partnership (SSP), Leader of Newark and Sherwood District Council, Mayor and Leader of Ollerton and Boughton Town Council and is a past President of Nottinghamshire's National Union of Mineworkers. He holds no other Ministerial appointments. Stan Crawford was previously Manager of Ashfield Links Forum and before that Project Manager for Mansfield CVS.

He is a member of the Labour Party, Leader of the Labour Group of Newark and Sherwood District Council, elected Councillor for the Ollerton Ward of Newark and Sherwood District Council and Town Councillor for the Ollerton North Ward of Ollerton and Boughton Town Council.

3.11 East Midlands - West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC)

3.11.1 Project / Organisational Profile

The UDC in West Northamptonshire was established in December 2004 to deliver sustainable regeneration and growth in the West Northamptonshire towns of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester. West Northamptonshire has been identified as one of the flagship areas to help generate economic growth and success in the region. The Government, working with local partners agreed that the scale and intensity of the task of land assembly required an Urban Development Corporation (UDC) with special powers, focus and ability to generate increased private sector confidence.

WNDC received £25m of GAF2 capital funding from DCLG during 2006-08 plan period, initially profiled as £10m to be spent by March 2007, £15m to be spent by March 2008, and by end of August 2007 have minimum of £30m worth of projects appraised and approved ready for GAF3.

By February 2007, £19m of the GAF2 funding had been allocated to major schemes. The Key Outputs arising from this funding are:

Key Outputs:	Original Forecast (£25m)	Secured (£19m)
Housing (units)	2,540	2,490
Commercial floorspace (m2)	17,755	26,470
Jobs created (FTEs)	555	915
Private sector investment	£290.5m	£307.5m
Public sector investment	£8.75m	£13.8m

WNDC has a Board of 13 members with experience in regeneration and development and a core of staff of 37 headed by a Chief Executive (see core staff diagram).

The core team brings together expertise from urban planning, projects and delivery, central government, local government and financial management. The core team is supplemented by contract staff, managers for individual projects and expert consultancy advice as required. WNDC officers also work closely with all key stakeholders who form part of the wider West Northamptonshire team. In addition to core staff, WNDC fund a member of staff one day a week for six months to provide strategic input into the development of land capture arrangements. Outsourcing - HR services, IT, PR. WNDC encourages training - £57,000 allocated in 2006/07 and a training liaison officer will be appointed to co-ordinate activity.

3.11.2 Labour Shortages

WNDC set up Dec 2004 as a small core team of 19 staff. 2006/07 decision to bring DC in house, cancelling SLA's with Local Authorities for planning services. Therefore have recently recruited 18/19 planners in the last 6/7 months. Intend to expand team to about 48 staff, focusing on delivery side of infrastructure projects (currently have 3 regeneration managers) but need those with skills in managing capital projects (surveyors, economists, legal, policy managers).

WNDC has experienced problems attracting qualified planners in the £30-£50k mark, due to many competing organisations for small pool of people. Since WNDC is intended to be a legacy organisation, it wants to increase the planning pool, not poach staff from their partner organisations. Therefore, they have taken the decision to recruit the majority of planners (90%) from outside the West Northamptonshire area. Have recently recruited 3 new

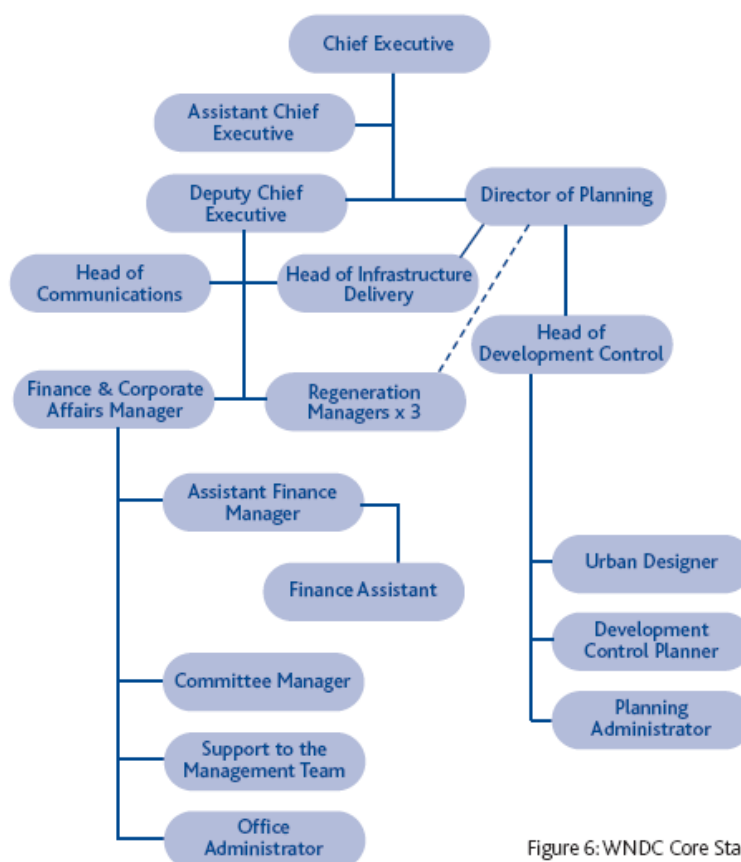


Figure 6: WNDC Core Staffing 2006/07

graduates and are sponsoring them through planning masters to become MRTPI.

3.11.3 Skills Gaps

Technical skills – in addition to planners, the team appointed an economist but only after prolonged recruitment process. Vacancy advertising includes focusing on the fact that WNDC is only one of 3 UDCs in the UK. Also need to employ surveyors to be involved in infrastructure project delivery. Currently WNDC gets consultants to write surveyors reports etc, but keen to get expertise in-house.

In terms of generic skills, the organisation is currently undertaking further training in partnership working, project management and the ability to realise results on the ground. There is a focused internal training programme with a large budget for courses, conferences, lectures, ongoing CPD requirements, covering all staff in Planning, DC, Finance, Support and so on.

3.12 London - Arsenal Emirates Stadium

3.12.1 Project / Organisational Profile

The new Arsenal 60,000 seat stadium is one of the largest regeneration projects in London which encompasses a new waste recycling plant, 2,500 new homes, a new health centre and nursery, 50,000m² of business, commercial and leisure area, new green spaces along with road and public transport improvements. Arsenal Regeneration Team (ART), a partnership between Arsenal FC / Islington Council / Newlon Housing, was established to harness the social and economic regeneration opportunities arising from the Arsenal Development Scheme in a way that reflected the aspirations of local people. ART received financial support for its costs and initiatives from the Islington Strategic Partnership, the London Development Agency and a £500,000 community development from Arsenal FC. The ART core team was very small and consisted of two representatives seconded from Islington Council (finance and monitoring manager) and Newlon Housing (community involvement manager).

In terms of working with their partners at Islington Council, ART liaised with the Arsenal Business Enterprise Team (2 staff), the construction works team (2/3) and reported to the Head of Regeneration, who was supported by regeneration officers (2) who spent 1/3 of their time on Arsenal projects. At Newlon Housing, ART liaised with the business development team (4) who spent between 50%-100% of their time on Arsenal.

3.12.2 Skills Gaps

ART involved their partner organisations for additional skills as and when required i.e. for built environment projects they used the skills of the planners at Islington Council who took the lead. On various construction projects ART used the services of consultants who had a wider skills base than the team (for example visioning – consultants were employed to develop an Action Plan for the area).



3.13 London - Green Spaces, Enfield (Lee Valley)

3.13.1 Project / Organisational Profile

British Waterways cares for and manages 100 miles of canals and rivers and 110 acres of docks in London. In 2004, it was lead partner of a programme of green space initiatives funded by the Sustainable Communities Fund (Growth Areas Round 1), working with Enfield, Haringey, and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority in the Upper Lee Valley. The improvements have provided better access to local green spaces along the River Lee Navigation corridor.

The Upper Lee Valley Green Spaces Programme was set up following a successful partnership bid for funding from the Growth Areas Fund (£1¼ million funding package from GAF1). Among these and other recent projects are:

- Further improvements around Tottenham Marshes and Enfield Island Village.
- Access to the waterside in Tottenham to be improved, including a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Lee Navigation at Hale Wharf.
- The development of four new office barges at Hale Wharf.

British Waterways' Regeneration team in London comprises a core staff of 3 people including a Regeneration Manager, a Projects Manager and Projects Administrator, and is supported by a Technical team of engineers, designers, heritage and ecology advisers. The work includes bidding for external funds, procurement of contracts, leading project teams, financial control, securing statutory and other consents for development, and monitoring and reporting progress to funders. The work is supported by an in-house Technical team of. External consultants may be used when skills or resources are not available in-house e.g. naval architect, site investigation contractor.

3.13.2 Labour Shortages

There has been a reduction in staffing nationally following DeFRA (statutory body) grant having been reduced recently, although this has not affected the London Regeneration team directly. There have been no recruitment difficulties in the past as the organisation offers a wide variety of interesting work in a range of disciplines.

3.13.3 Skills Gaps

Day-to-day technical skills required are carried among the in-house staff. This may be complemented by external temporary appointments when required. In terms of generic skills - project management (on a broad basis - both technical and financial) was mentioned as a vital requirement for the regeneration projects with which the organisation is involved, and is an area of skill that could be improved through training. British waterways has an in-house training programme and individuals may take courses both within their immediate discipline and in other areas.

3.14 London - London Riverside - London Thames Gateway UDC

3.14.1 Project / Organisational Profile

To date London Thames Gateway DC has received £100 million from CLG in the period to April 2008 for its projects, with the CSR07 settlement for 2008/11 currently awaited.

One programme area for London Thames Gateway DC is the London Riverside, the vision for which is to be a new urban centre with a mixed-use, high-density environment. It will accommodate high-tech industry, leading-edge businesses and residential communities in sustainable housing. There will also be new leisure and community facilities, all of which will be designed around new and existing public transport. By 2016, the London Thames

Gateway DC Programme is expected to deliver over 4,400 new jobs and an extra 10,000 homes in London Riverside.

London Thames Gateway DC is managed by a Board and an Executive team of 5. There are currently 41 staff, 33 permanent and 8 temporary. The business has 3 main teams which are:

- Development – including surveyors.
- Planning – mainly planners.
- Operations – including finance, business planning and project support.

Each team is lead by a director. The development team has a Director and 2 deputy directors (1 for the Lower Lea Valley Programme and 1 for London Riverside Programme).

Much of the support work is outsourced (IT / HR / PR).

3.14.2 Labour Shortages

Turnover is low (relating predominantly to support staff so far). The UDC is currently recruiting five posts (deputy director, project manager, programme manager (trained in PRINCE), planning officer and communications manager. The organisation does not anticipate any recruitment difficulties since it is a new body with an exciting remit that has close links to the Olympics. The most recently advertised post (Committee Clerk) attracted 67 applicants for the one job.

3.14.3 Skills Gaps

The organisation does not have any core skills gaps, although they are aware that the whole organisation needs to become better at communicating actions given the planned upturn in activity. The UDC may seek short-term consultancy advice on occasion where there are gaps, such as on property matters or financial frameworks, but these are not on a sufficient basis for permanent roles.

3.15 West Midlands - Pride in Camp Hill, Nuneaton, Warwickshire

3.15.1 Project / Organisational Profile

A former mining community with a recent history of low employment, poor educational standard, high crime. Camp Hill is among the 10% most deprived wards in the UK. The project aims to bring social, economic and physical change and to introduce service delivery improvements. The project has received £2 million SRB funding in 2000 and a further £8.5 million from AWM for capital works from 2001, as well as grants and payment in kind (e.g. land and property), since then, from other partners (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council, English Partnerships, European Regional Development Fund and the Housing Corporation), as well from the private sector. Its key outputs are to:

- Build up to 1,200 new dwellings.
- Improve 750 existing homes.
- 930 square metres of retail space and industrial units.
- Create 130 new jobs.

The organisation consists of a Board and a core delivery team of 4 full time and 5 part time staff. 2 of these are full time project managers (one is from a community development background, the other comes from a project management background). Only three out of the team work on physical regeneration - service delivery is more resource intensive as most of physical work is sub-contracted whereas they already have good technical skills in socio-economics and service delivery. Physical regeneration just requires good management skills.

3.15.2 Labour Shortages

Turnover is low in that only 2 staff have left on the last 6 years. Current core team have a predominantly community development / housing backgrounds and none trained as 'regeneration professionals'. The board of members possess technical skills and knowledge to enhance the core team.

3.15.3 Skills Gaps

Technical skills - the organisation has strong socio-economic skills, knowledge of funding mechanisms and SRB. However, they lack some of the detailed professional skills / knowledge needed for physical regeneration, such as quantity surveying, detailed design etc. Consequently they buy in help from consultants to provide technical skills rather than recruiting staff direct. The reasoning behind this is that 20hrs of a consultancy's time can include 5 hours from a planner, 5 from architect, 5 from engineer and 5 from surveyor for example and is therefore more cost effective. It is estimated that the body spends between 20%-30% of the annual staffing budget on external consultancies.

It was noted that those that come into regeneration do so from varied backgrounds and learn on the job. They therefore lack some detailed technical knowledge required. It was suggested that earlier intervention in the skills market to deliver specific skills and knowledge required for regeneration would be of benefit, for example specific university degrees, training courses, even schools/college curriculum.

In terms of generic skills, people skills were seen as important. Also the ability to project manage, lead and monitor budgets was seen as paramount to the success of projects, especially when numerous consultants are involved in physical regeneration and delivery. The organisation provides project management training to staff, focusing on leadership skills, financial management and decision making.

3.16 West Midlands - Greets Green Housing Partnership, West Bromwich

3.16.1 Project / Organisational Profile

Greets Green Partnership is the organisation delivering the government funded New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme of regeneration projects for the Greets Green area of West Bromwich, in Sandwell, West Midlands. Greets Green is benefiting from the investment of £56 million over a 10-year period, under 5 key theme areas; Housing & Urban Form, Health & Well Being, Crime & Community Safety, Jobs & Skills and Community Services. They are working to make Greets Green a place where people live, work and grow together in a safe and secure environment, where opportunities and the skills of the community are harnessed to maximise the potential for the benefit of the whole community.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council employs approximately 95% of the staff-responsible for project co-ordination. The Core Delivery Team consists of 45 staff and the Wider Programme consist of 150 staff. The Partnership Board comprises of 17 local residents, 4 local businesses, 3 LA members and a range of agencies such as PCT, Police and Job Centre Plus.

3.16.2 Labour Shortages

Turnover has been low, the organisation currently has one vacancy and recruitment difficulties have been described as moderate. The organisation had to advertise 3 times to recruit a Community Safety Officer and also found it very difficult to recruit a housing manager and had to use a recruitment agency. The Partnership experienced no difficulties in terms of planners or building specialists as the council already had the skills available. It was noted that there is a real difficulty in the West Midlands and the Black Country to retain good staff as there is a high demand and a lack of experienced supply of staff.

The shortage of experienced regeneration staff was attributed to the reduction of opportunities in the public sector (e.g. apprenticeship schemes and graduate courses in public sector management are now limited) limiting the opportunity for young people to gain valuable experience.

In addition, over the past 3 decades, the 'yo-yo' nature of public policy, where the government has constantly changed its mind in terms of house building and regeneration strategies, has led to a lack of stability and has had a negative impact on those who may have considered a career in regeneration. Now there is a demand for regeneration professionals but not a sufficient supply of staff.

3.16.3 Skills Gaps

The generic skills gaps were identified as partnership building, project management, budgets, project monitoring and evaluation. The Partnership currently provides 2 weeks of project management training a year to ensure managers have a common understanding and abilities. People and project management skills are seen as paramount as regeneration is designed around human interaction because of the number of parties involved: 'you can be the best architect in the world but if you can't communicate then you're useless'.

3.17 East - Great Yarmouth inteGREAT Programme

3.17.1 Project / Organisational Profile

Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) run the 'Integrate' Programme, focused on physical regeneration, environmental change, an enhanced tourism offer and other economic benefits. The physical renewal encompassed the seafront, town centre, heritage quarter, market place, high deprivation wards and other ad hoc public works. The original project was based on EU Objective 2 funding, but the project has since widened its scope through leverage and partner-working.



Public funding sources include Objective 2 (EU), Heritage Lottery Fund, EEDA, GYBC, Norfolk CC, and amounts to £20m.

Integrate staff are within the Regeneration Unit within GYBC. At the same level are Economic Development, Conservation, Tourism, Culture, Sports & Leisure teams. They are able to pool resources across groups fairly fluidly. The current core staff team consists of 3 individuals (1 manager, 2 regeneration co-ordinators) although the team is likely to grow to 6 FT posts.

3.17.2 Labour Shortages

Low turnover and no recruitment difficulties to report – organisation has the ability to offer permanent contracts and compete with private sector offer.

3.17.3 Skills Gaps

Technical skills gaps were noted in urban design, engineering and quantity surveying. It was noted in certain fields, the rising age of staff coupled with declining number of people entering professions could lead to a resource deficiency. The organisation has attempted to retain retired resources on a part-time basis but they are aware of the need to pull in new professionals to the public sector through training / apprenticeships to "grow your own" staff.

In terms of generic skills, the areas identified as skills gaps were inclusive visioning, team working/leadership, process change/management, stakeholder management and customer awareness/communication.

3.18 South East - Queensborough and Rushenden Regeneration Project, Thames Gateway

3.18.1 Project / Organisational Profile

The Queenborough & Rushenden Regeneration project is a redevelopment that will breathe new life into the Isle of Sheppey, a unique area situated at the very heart of Thames Gateway in North Kent. The project aims to create a vibrant environment in which to live and work, combining superb new transport links, hundreds of employment opportunities, community and leisure facilities, environmental improvements and new housing. The project is funded by CLG £7m and SEEDA £3m.

The Steering Group/Board of Directors provides the project with strategic direction, in depth technical knowledge in relation to delivery objectives and project vision. It comprises of representatives from: SEEDA, Kent CC, Swale BC, DCLG and Amicus Horizons (Social housing landlord).

The core team (5 staff, 1FT and 4PT) consist of 3 Surveyors, 1 Engineer and 1 Civil Servant who are supported by a large team of specialist consultants. In terms of the overall balance

of staff, 80% of staff are private consultants and 20% are project staff. The consultants consist of:

- Cost consultants.
- Project advisors.
- Environmental consultants.
- Planning.
- Sustainability.
- Engineers.

3.18.2 Labour Shortages

There are no vacancies and turnover has been low but there have been problems attracting and recruiting certain staff due to the location of the project in a 'not very glamorous' area.

3.18.3 Skills Gaps

With such a diverse project with a range of activities and outcomes to be delivered the team has a broad knowledge of the key hard regeneration processes such as planning, land acquisition, engineering. However the team lacks knowledge of the softer skills such as community engagement and consultation. Project management skills (financial management, leadership skills) are seen as the most important skill to have due to the large number of consultants on the project. Where skills gaps do exist, it is due to the lack of financial resources that the project does not have appropriate skills needed. It was noted that there are plenty of people out there but the organisation can't afford them. In terms of working with partners, the local authority has never been involved with a regeneration project of this scale before, and therefore they are understaffed, especially in terms of planners.

3.19 South East - Small Rural Town Programmes- East Sussex Economic Partnership (ESEP)

3.19.1 Project / Organisational Profile

ESEP is a business led independent body which acts as a channel to co-ordinate communication between the representatives from the business community on issues affecting economic development in East Sussex; it is responsible for managing the delivery of a number of programs including from 2003-2010: East Sussex Area Investment Framework; Small Rural Towns Programme; Locate East Sussex. Strategic activity to be undertaken over the next 12 months includes the establishment of a Business Leadership Team and the refresh of the East Sussex Economic Development Strategy. ESEP is sponsored by SEEDA (£590,000 match funding).

SEEDA Economic Outputs:

- New jobs.
- People assisted to find work.
- New businesses.
- Use of brownfield land.
- Businesses advised.
- New training/learning opportunities.
- New or improved community infrastructure.
- New or improved services.

The organisation is managed by a Board of Directors that makes comments on applications for programme funds to identify most feasible/best bids and has a wealth of technical knowledge to bring to the project from a broad range of backgrounds. The Board is supported by the ESEP Management team (chairman, chief executive, delivery manager, investment services manager, project development officer, monitoring and evaluation officer, administrative officer).

3.19.2 Labour Shortages

In terms of recruitment, the organisation finds it difficult to fill middle management 'economics' roles due to the need to have a knowledge of local affairs, structures and issues etc. There are reported to be many qualified/skilled economists/economic regeneration officers but they 'lack and intimate knowledge of local issues'.

3.19.3 Skills Gaps

Further knowledge is required in the fields of:

- > State aid rules, legal knowledge of funding/finance regulations.
- > Business start up, development and incubation.
- > Benchmarking.
- > Project management skills (delivery structures, quality assurance and ensuring projects stay on track).

3.20 South West - Millbay Regeneration Scheme, Plymouth, Devon

3.20.1 Project / Organisational Profile

The Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy sets out an exciting and ambitious vision for the development of the area over the next twenty years, with the aim of creating a high quality, vibrant, sustainable community, providing:

- A high quality urban environment which will attract investment and new residents.
- Good quality residential communities.
- A mix of places to work, leisure facilities, specialist retail facilities, new employment opportunities and support for existing employers.
- The infrastructure to connect and integrate existing communities with those which will be created.

The scheme includes an outline planning application has been submitted by the English Cities Fund for around 1,270 industrial units, 9,000 sq m of shops, 12,000 sq m of cafes and restaurants, 1,700 sq m of bars and leisure uses, 40,200 sq m of offices and employment units, 2 hotels and a remodelling of the Pavilions Arena. English Partnerships is partly funding the scheme (£12m in land acquisition – the land will have eventual value of £200m after development).

The scheme is overseen by 3 tiers of management:

1. Millbay Management Group- makes strategic decisions, helps 'unblock' stalling blocks to project.
2. Millbay Implementation Team- work part time on project and acts as the core team.
 - EP (1 member) - broad skills base- planning, urban design, public engagement.
 - English Cities Fund (2) - House building, surveying skills.
 - City Council (1) - Planning Skills.

- Housing Corp - not yet involved but will bring housing knowledge.
- RDA (1) - Surveying Skills.

3. Millbay Advisory Forum- Local Stakeholder Group.

- Public bodies.
- Local residents and businesses.
- Local stakeholders.
- Act as a check and balance to ensure objectives of project are met.

3.20.2 Skills Gaps

Organisation has hard (generic) skills covered but lacks soft skilled people who have an understanding of what regeneration is and what it requires - there is a lack of integration/ understanding between hard and soft regeneration practitioners. Soft regeneration skills are lacking include community engagement, assessing community benefits, social development.

- Financial, monitoring and evaluation skills are also very important - leaders need to have the ability, from the outset of a project, to match finances to objectives to ensure they are not sacrificed at a later stage when budgets become more constrained.
- Need project champions with leadership skills who can lead by example.



3.21 South West - Norton Radstock Regeneration Company (NRR), nr Bath, Somerset

3.21.1 Project / Organisational Profile

Development of former railway land to provide mixed use scheme. NRR aims to contribute to the future of Radstock by providing a regeneration scheme in conjunction with its Joint Venture partner, Bellway Homes, that not only strengthens the "heart of Radstock" but provides an implementable scheme that achieves a balance of the community's needs and aspirations and contributes to the overall regeneration of the area. Outputs include:

- 210 dwellings.
- Community and leisure facilities.
- Commercial and Retail development.
- 42 Permanent Jobs.
- Generate £2million additional annual spend in local economy.

The scheme has received £2.9m SRB funding, funding from RDA and revenue generated from sale of land to Bellway Homes.

The Norton Radstock Regeneration Company Board of Directors is made up of 12 people who bring a variety of skills and experience from many different backgrounds. Some of the Board Directors gained useful experience working on regeneration projects through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). Other Directors have been appointed to provide

specialist skills such as business or financial management. The Board replaces the need for a full staff team and plugs the technical skills gap and significantly reduces costs.

The Board is supported by a team of two members of staff – 1 full time (administration) and 1 part time (general manager). They are responsible for acting on the Company's behalf to manage the affairs of the Company leading to the development of the former railway land in Radstock. In addition to the core staff team and consultants, NRR and Bellway employ a team of specialist and professional consultants who are appointed to deal with all matters relating to the development. This includes ecology, planning, transportation, master-planning etc. NRR prefer to sub-contract work as it is easier to control costs. They can be brought in as and when needed rather than full-time staff who might lack the range of skills sets required. 95% of staff budget goes on private consultants / 5% on NRR staff.

3.21.2 Labour Shortages

In terms of recruitment, the organisation has always had a strong field of candidates for all posts. In terms of recruiting consultants, the RDA provides a shortlist of approved consultancies and although this limits choice the consultants are usually of a high quality. In terms of recruiting people in the wider regeneration sector, it was felt that university degrees do not provide enough training or knowledge and the best route into the industry is through experience of working with linked industries to understand how they interact.

Skills Gaps - The organisation notes technical skills gaps in the following areas:

- Knowledge of planning system: regeneration practitioners/voluntary sector do not know how to use it to their advantage and therefore lose out to developers.
- Community participation, development and consultation- general lack in understanding of good practice.
- Lack of land development knowledge.

In terms of generic skills, it was considered that the most important skill to have is business management - an understanding of project management, finance and budgets. It is also very important to know how to set up contracts with sub consultants. It was noted that because most of technical work is undertaken by consultants, generic skills become very important.

4 What does this mean for delivery of sustainable communities?

4.1 Summary of case study results

In terms of overarching findings from the case studies, a summary of issues falling out of the interviews is outlined below:

Organisational Profile:

- Most organisations consist of a Board and a small (5-10 staff) core team supported by a range of consultants / associates who can be called upon for particular projects.
- Clear about funding streams to date although CSR07 means future funding uncertainty.
- Organisations which are reaching the end of their funding periods are setting up their own companies to continue the work.

Labour Shortages:

- In terms of internal mobility, individuals within organisations move from technical to generic skills i.e. they are more likely to use their skills as project managers rather than specific skills as surveyors / economists or planners.
- Low turnover of staff across the board – sense of commitment to seeing the (often time-limited) project through to the end. Similarly few recruitment problems are regeneration is perceived as very ‘current’ ‘green’ & ‘sexy’.
- Organisations cited a recent move to be increasingly more flexible in their appointments, focusing on experience and aptitude rather than professional qualifications.
- Tendency to promote from within and ‘grow your own’ staff – internal promotion although little sideways mobility into other work areas.

Technical Skills:

- Many interviewees spoke of a shortage of planners within their public sector partner organisations, which can delay the work of the project.
- Most organisations stated no technical skills shortages as use consultants / associates where there are skills gaps (organisations stated that consultancy work constitutes up to 90% of the budget).

Generic Skills:

- Lack of project management skills (both technical and financial – business management, budgets, monitoring & evaluation) within organisations. The other areas that were frequently mentioned in which projects lacked generic skills were partnership working / IT / engagement / facilitation / communication / marketing.
- These skills (particularly project management) were seen as increasingly important as consultants now carry out more of the technical work and thus the core team needs more generic skills.
- Bodies conduct appraisals on a regular basis to identify skills gaps (both generic and technical) and establish personalised training programmes.

4.2 Skills gaps in addressing growth, regeneration and liveability

In the course of this research, we spoke to organisations involved in the three key sustainable communities themes of growth, regeneration and liveability. The projects selected included those working in growth areas and new growth points, UDCs and URCs, Northern Way Regions, Millennium Communities and Housing Market Renewal Areas. In addition, Arup spoke to those involved with the National Coalfields Programme, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and New Deal for Communities. In terms of those involved with the liveability agenda, Arup spoke to projects receiving funding from the Green Spaces Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund and those involved with implementing Local Area Agreements.

Theme 1 - Growth: (Growth Area, New Growth Point, UDC)

Technical skills gaps:

- Problems attracting qualified planners in the £30-£50k mark, as many competing organisations for small pool of people.
- Legacy organisation want to increase the planning pool, not poach staff from partner organisations. Therefore recruit planners from outside.
- Recruit new graduates and sponsor them through planning masters (MRTPI).
- Economists and surveyors also needed – currently use consultants but keen to get in-house expertise.
- Few technical skills gaps in some organisations as use consultancy advice when necessary (not sufficient workload for permanent position).

Generic skills - need further training in:

- Partnership working.
- Project management.
- Ability to realise results on the ground (actions not just words).
- Communication (including press/events/media acumen/presentation skills).

Partners skills gaps:

- Shortage of local authority planners is the most visible problem (some bodies recognise they have contributed to this, others have tried to redress the problem by recruiting nationwide).
- Recruitment problems caused by poor performance and rating of authority, subsequent restructuring and demoralisation - has led certain organisations to cancel SLA and bring planning services in-house.
- Council officers can get tied up in internal politics and can find it hard to see the bigger picture.
- English Partnerships/Central government departments – considered by some organisation to be very good at project and risk management. However, other organisations believe that central government (CLG), in contrast to local authority planning departments, appears to be overstaffed with non specialists who are meant to be just providing support and sponsorship.
- In addition, one organisation has noted that project management skills are deteriorating in partnering organisations.

Theme 2 – Liveability: (Local Area Agreements, Green Spaces Fund, Lottery Funding, Millennium Communities)

Technical skills gaps:

- Many organisations have close links to local government can use the resources/technical skills of all the Council department.
- If rare technical skills are required, many organisations do not hold a permanent position in the area, but seek the skill on an as-and-when basis from consultancy.
- Certain organisations plan to conduct a skills audit to ascertain in which areas people need training. Many organisations in the Nottingham / Midlands area offer workshops / lectures / courses in regeneration, which may be useful training, but because the organisations are so disparate and un-coordinated, it is difficult to ascertain which are the most relevant. One expert centre providing a menu of bespoke training would be useful for practitioners.

Generic skills - need further training in:

- Marketing / event management / sponsorship.
- Internal training programmes (e.g. aggression / conflict management) are not available to volunteers who sometimes lack the skills base (e.g. chairing meetings/ committee procedures).
- Project management (on a broad basis - both technical and financial) was mentioned as a vital requirement for regeneration projects and is an area of skill that could be improved through training.
- Need people with skills in policy development with skills/experience in partnership working with a range of agencies and sectors (public/private/voluntary).
- Require individuals with experience of analysis, who are able to translate that into policy and interventions on the ground.
- Skills in commissioning.

Partners skills gaps:

- Local authority deficit of policy officers who have dedicated time to both assess national policy and concentrate on local city policy development, which hinders the work of their strategic partners.

Theme 3 - Regeneration: (Northern Way, Housing Market Renewal, National Coalfields Programme, Urban Regeneration Corporation, New Deal for Communities, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund)

Technical skills gaps:

- Use consultants in a number of professional areas and use the technical competence of the local authority (planning, valuation, viability, legal advice, finance etc.) for specific projects as organisations cannot afford to staff up to peaks of workload.
- Employing consultants for specific tasks means organisations don't have to take people off projects on which they're already working / can add value to have an independent appraisal. Buy in this capacity not because of a shortage of skills but because of a shortage of time.
- Some organisations use a network of associates with diverse skills - structural engineering / architecture / planning / sustainable urban drainage to fill any technical knowledge gaps.
- Many organisations are able to access the large pool of people and resources backoffice/management functions from parent and partner organisations.

- These organisations are also able to access the training courses provided by their (local authority) partners, but others are considering more tailored training specific to the needs of the organisation.

Generic skills - need further training in:

- Project management skills, covering technical, contract skills and management experience (e.g. PRINCE) (useful both in construction and management areas of regeneration) Belief amongst certain organisations that employers are not properly training their staff in project management, are not spotting talent, developing it and retaining people.
- Communication.
- Partnering.
- Softer 'personality' skills.
- IT skills.
- Skills to appreciate the physical, economic and social elements of urban renewal.
- Realisation that experience, broader project management skills and ability to think-out-of-the-box are more important than written qualifications. Rather than focusing on purely academic qualifications, greater emphasis now placed on personal qualities, enthusiasm, commitment, an understanding of aims of the project.
- Generic skills important as core teams mainly oversee the project leadership whereas the sub-contractors/partners carry out the technical work.

Partners skills gaps:

- Small local authorities can lack resources/capacity, which can cost their partners both time and money.
- Other organisations felt it was not so much capacity that hinders outputs than bureaucracy in the decision making processes.
- Awareness that planning departments have a very large caseload of applications and thus delays are commonplace.
- If the regeneration scheme is a high profile, high-value project, no partners want to see it fail, so put their best teams forward.

It is noted that the key issues falling out of all three of the key sustainable communities themes of growth, regeneration and liveability are remarkably similar. This suggests that the technical, generic and partner's skills gaps across the wide spectrum of regeneration-related organisations and projects are largely comparable and thus a similar effective response can be developed for organisations across this sector.

4.3 Regional variation in labour shortages and skills gaps

As noted above, there were few variations in skills gaps between organisations working in different sectors under the sustainable communities umbrella. This may be due to the fact that the divisions of growth, regeneration and liveability are largely academic and in reality most organisations deal with a combination of these issues. In addition, there were also few variations of note on a regional basis. It may be that further case studies would need to be conducted in order to pull out greater regional trends and variations. However, a number of issues did arise that appeared to differ on a regional basis:

- Several organisations based in the Midlands and northern regions reported problems with recruitment. These difficulties were attributed to factors as diverse as the title of role, the lack of senior individuals with right experience, a small pool of talented

individuals and therefore competition to recruit the best people and government policy yo-yoing, dissuading people training in certain professions in certain periods. Individuals mainly chose to work for the high profile projects in large cities. The northern and Midlands organisations that reported recruitment difficulties have taken the decision to 'home-grow' staff by training them on the job.

- Planners – certain organisations admitted, albeit unintentionally, poaching staff from neighbouring organisations. Other organisations in contrast invested in comprehensive training programmes to train staff internally through day release etc. These differences were more likely to be related to the public/private/voluntary/time-limited nature of the organisation, rather than necessarily a specific geographical divide.
- Certain organisations placed much more reliance on consultancy advice and the knowledge of associates, rather than on the core team of the project. The percentage of budget dedicated to consultancy work varied from 20 – 90%. Again, this may have been less to do with geographical variation than type of organisation, although more organisations in the southern regions referred to reliance on consultancy advice.
- Weight given to professional / academic qualifications – projects based in the north / midlands appear to adopt greater flexibility in recruitment, with more weight given to experience, aptitude and generic skills than professional qualifications. This was particularly apparent in the recruitment of more senior staff.

4.4 Conclusions and recommendations

4.4.1 Areas for further research

Labour Shortages:

- Individuals enter the field of regeneration with a range of different backgrounds (housing, social work, geography, planning, surveying etc.) However the regeneration bodies themselves appear to be focused on project management, monitoring, bidding for sponsorship etc. and the 'technical' regeneration work is carried out by consultants / sub-contractors / partners. This might lead to a technical 'de-skilling' of these regeneration professionals – need to have both generic and technical skills, and be able to exercise both skills sets.
- Difference in levels of staff turnover by seniority. At senior level, it is apparent that individuals want to see projects through to the end and high level of commitment, but at the more junior level, experience in a key regeneration body makes people very marketable and these individuals are often 'poached' by private sector consultancies.

Technical skills:

- Very few organisations stated any internal skills gaps as they rely on the skills/resources of partner / parent organisations, or buy-in skills from consultants / associates on a project basis. This is seen as a model that works, and since it is replicated by organisations across the country, it appears to be an effective and financially efficiency business model. Bringing in consultants for individual projects also gives a degree of independence to the work and it also means the organisation does not have to re-organise their structure to take on additional workloads. It was stated by many bodies that they "buy in this capacity not because of a shortage of skills but because of a shortage of time".
- Overwhelming focus on shortage of planners. However, different organisations adopt a different approach to recruiting planners – some bodies recognise they have contributed to the shortage by poaching individuals from other local planning

authorities, whereas others (for example legacy organisations) have tried to redress the problem by recruiting nationwide / offering sponsorship on planning courses.

- Most of the organisations interviewed regularly conduct a skills audit / annual reviews of individual's skills and have in-house training schemes. However, it was noted that these training schemes are not always available to all individuals associated with organisation e.g. volunteers, and these are sometimes the individuals who most need the training.
- It was noted in the Midlands that many organisations offer workshops / lectures / courses in regeneration, which may prove to be useful training, but because the organisations are so disparate and un-coordinated, it is difficult to ascertain which are the most relevant. One expert centre providing a menu of bespoke training was considered to be useful for practitioners.

Generic Skills:

- The lack of project management skills was mentioned by every case study (although definitions of what this meant varied between organisations). Certain organisations focused on the technical side of business management whereas others focused on the financial side (budgets, monitoring & evaluation). Many organisations referred to PRINCE training. These skills are seen as vital by most regeneration bodies, particularly those that employ consultants to carry out the more technical work, as therefore the core team needs more generic project management skills. There was a belief amongst certain organisations that employers are not properly training their staff in project management, are not spotting talent, developing it and retaining people.
- Other generic skills mentioned: Partnership working, IT skills, Engagement / facilitation, Actions not just words, Communication / marketing.
- General realisation that in the regeneration sector, experience, broader project management skills and ability to think-out-of-the-box are now more important than written qualifications. Rather than focusing on purely academic qualifications, greater emphasis is now placed on personal qualities, enthusiasm, commitment, an understanding of aims of the project.

4.4.2 Recommendations for action

- Attract and retain more junior staff by offering comprehensive training packages / academic sponsorship. This is particularly important in sectors experiencing people shortages (e.g. planning).
- Encourage organisations to offer internal training courses to all those who work with and for them (including partner bodies and volunteers).
- Give equal weight to generic and technical skills, particularly in recruitment, to recognise that experience and aptitude are equally important as professional qualifications.
- Carefully monitor the impact of focusing on generic skills as this may lead to a technical 'de-skilling' of regeneration professionals as project work is transferred to consultants as organisations focus on management, monitoring and finance.
- Aim to provide a co-ordinated 'one stop shop' service for training in regeneration – plethora of courses, bodies, workshops considered confusing.
- Focus generic skill training on improving project management skills as there was widespread recognition amongst all case studies that these are the skills sets that are most crucial to the sustainable communities professions and yet are currently the most lacking.

