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Youth Cultures in the Mixed Economy of Welfare: Youth Clubs and Voluntary Associations in South London and Liverpool 1958-1985

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Abstract

Young people in post-war Britain have grown up in a context of fast-paced change and constant attention; from transformation in state welfare in the 1940s and 1950s, concern about delinquent and subcultural youth in the 1960s and 1970s, and the consequences of recession and youth unemployment in the 1980s. Youth clubs at this time provided a space where young people could figure out myriad influences on their lives and emerging identities.

To date, these significant organisations have been woefully under-examined by historians who have largely failed to look at youth groups except in uniformed or religious contexts, or as part of the solution to youth crime. Much practitioner research remains ahistorical in its approach. Early histories of youth movements such as John Springhall's are being built upon by exciting new interdisciplinary research, for example by Sarah Mills. This thesis contributes to this emerging body of work and restores the place of the youth club in our understandings of youth in the post-war period.

This research set out to establish the full range of roles that youth clubs and their membership associations had in the post-war period and how they linked with other forms of voluntarism, welfare and youth provision. Additionally, this research wanted to look at how youth clubs fitted into the lives of young people at a time when their leisure and cultural pursuits were the subject of much scrutiny.

In uncovering the complexity and distinctiveness of youth voluntary organisations, local case studies are essential. They allow this research to demonstrate the local factors at work in shaping young lives and youth cultures and provide much-needed evidence about how voluntary service-providing organisations have contributed to the history of voluntarism and welfare in contemporary British history. Papers of clubs and associations held privately and in archives have been complemented by oral history interviews and a range of other sources to examine fully the voluntary youth club in South London and Liverpool. These sources show that clubs were shaped by unique mixes of geography, welfare politics, social issues, international influences, and young people themselves to create spaces for fluid youth cultures and clubs which could blend roles and relationships in order to adapt to local needs and experiences.

Youth voluntary organisations were central to networks of youth welfare in London and Liverpool. By looking at how these organisations operated and their relationship with the state, this thesis establishes that voluntary youth clubs were on the frontier of the mixed economy of welfare. They were dynamic in the face of social change and effective in accommodating and responding to the cultural needs of the young consumer in the post-war period.

The evidence presented here shows that youth clubs and associations had a pivotal role in helping young people navigate myriad problems. Furthermore, this thesis argues that the category 'youth' has concealed the way in which a wide variety of factors such as class, gender, race, and locality have shaped the experiences of young people. Finally, this thesis reveals the crucial role played by a new generation of youth workers, who challenged traditions rooted in uniformed organisations and older youth movements, in embedding permissive and radical approaches in to youth clubs. Ultimately, this thesis argues that the unfixed and contested identity of the youth club could react, respond and adapt to changing welfare, social and cultural pressures. This has given them an undefinable but central status on the very borders of local mixed economies of welfare in South London and Liverpool where the state, voluntary, consumer and cultural were all interconnected to create not only uniquely situated organisations but also micro-local youth cultures.

The research presented here contributes to debates about civil society and the making of citizens. It aids understanding of how the category of youth has been constructed and used in wider society in the post-war period. It also adds to our understanding of what welfare provision has looked like and the boundaries between different types of provision. This in turn informs contemporary discussion of who should provide youth and wider welfare services and what forms this should take.

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I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the men and women who gave their time to me in oral history interviews. Your patience, testimony, and insight truly brought this research to life and offered huge depth to my understanding of the work you did and the young lives you lead.

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Any errors are, of course, my own.

Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	3
List of Tables	5
List of Figures	5
List of Images	5
List of Abbreviations	6
Introduction.....	7
Chapter One – Contemporary Britain, the ‘Youth Problem’ and the Mixed Economy of Welfare: Literature Review and Research Design.....	15
Chapter Two – Structure and Operation of Youth Voluntary Associations and Clubs in Liverpool and London 1958-1985.....	47
Chapter Three – The Roles of Youth Clubs and Associations.....	85
Chapter Four – Anything more than a ‘sticking plaster’? - Youth Clubs, Young People and Society	115
Chapter Five – ‘Everybody Scouser’ - Youth Clubs and Youth Cultures	176
Chapter Six – ‘Why don’t you stop pissing about here and help us run the place?’ - Youth Workers and Volunteers	201
Chapter Seven: Conclusions.....	244
Bibliography	249
Appendices.....	266
Appendix One: Oral History Interviewees	267
Appendix Two: Club ‘Biographies’	270
Appendix Three: Maps.....	272

List of Tables

	Page	
1.1	Membership of selected youth organisations, 1951	32
2.1	London Federation of Boys' Club Affiliation Conditions 1971	50
2.2	Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs Affiliation Fees, 1961-1966	52
2.3	Examples of grants from other charitable bodies to London and Liverpool Youth Voluntary Associations, 1958-1985	70
3.1	Liverpool Boys' Association Sample of Club Participation in Association Activities (out of thirty categories), 1965-66	91
4.1	Membership figures of Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs and Merseyside Youth Association 1967-69	118
4.2	London Union of Youth Clubs Membership 1976-1985	119
4.3	Summary Court figures: Juveniles Guilty of Indictable Offences, 1950-1980	121
4.4	London Union of Youth Clubs CEP members, 1983	150
4.5	Estimated Immigrant population of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, with London-wide average 1966	161
4.6	Estimated Immigrant population of Merseyside, 1966	161
6.1	Leader and Helper numbers in the London Federation of Boys' Clubs 1958-1967	204
6.2	Leader and Helper numbers in the London Union of Youth Clubs, 1976-1985	205

List of Figures

	Page	
1.1	Birth Rate and Total Fertility Rate 1941-2011	20
1.2	Total membership of various organisations arranged by category, 1951-2009	32
2.1	Affiliations to the London Federation of Boys' Clubs and London Union of Youth Clubs 1958-1985	54
2.2	Affiliations to the Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs, Liverpool Boys' Association and Merseyside Youth Association 1958-1983	55
2.3	London Union of Youth Clubs Paid Staff Levels 1958-1985	80
4.1	Unemployment among those 16-65 years old by percentage 1958-1985	134

List of Images

	Page	
A	Photograph of Young people in the canteen at Alford House Youth Club, Kennington, South London	7
B	Photograph of St. Andrews Gardens exterior	127
C	Photograph of St. Andrews Gardens courtyard	127
D	Image of the cover of Detached Youth Work Conference Report on Education and Work, 1977	148
E	Photograph of Youth Club building attended by Keith in Lambeth	189
F	Photograph from John Goto's <i>Lover's Rock</i> (taken in Lewisham Youth Centre, 1977)	196

List of Abbreviations

Black Cultural Archive (BCA)

Community Enterprise Programme (CEP)

Department of Education and Science (DES)

Detached Youth Work (DYW)

Greater London Council (GLC)

Inner London Education Authority (ILEA)

Liverpool Boys' Association (LBA)

Liverpool Record Office (LRO)

Local Education Authority (LEA)

London Federation of Boys' Clubs (LFBC)

London Metropolitan Archive (LMA)

Liverpool Council of Social Service (LCSS)

Liverpool Union of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs (Liverpool Union)

Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs (Liverpool Union)

London Union of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs (London Union)

London Union of Youth Clubs (London Union)

Liverpool Youth Organisations Committee (LYOC)

Manpower Services Commission (MSC)

Merseyside Youth Association (MYA)

National Association of Boys' Clubs (NABC)

National Association of Youth Clubs (NAYC)

Standing Conference of National Youth Voluntary Organisations (SCNYVO)

Special Temporary Employment Programme (STEP)

Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP)

Introduction



Image A: Young people in the canteen at Alford House Youth Club, Kennington, South London, c. 1960¹

The image above shows a group of young people in the canteen of their youth club in South London in the 1960s. It is a scene which might have been familiar to many who went to post-war youth clubs: sitting around, drinking coffee, chatting and laughing with friends. In another part of this club were large rooms used for activities such as football, table tennis and billiards. A fascinating glimpse of the life of this club was captured in Karel Reisz's 1959 film *We are the Lambeth Boys*. The film shows young people working or at school, as well as the place of the club in their life, with scenes showing cricket practice, debates, dances and a post-club visit to the local chip shop. The viewer is introduced to several young members who are given the chance to voice their opinion about club life, amongst other things.

Over twenty-five years later, in 1985, BBC Manchester produced two hour-long programmes revisiting the club, interviewing the former members from 1959 and offering a further look at youth club life in 1985. Former members had contrasting fortunes. One owned a string of businesses, attended art auctions, and was director of a local football club. Another was a successful business executive long moved out of the inner city. A third was a street cleaner and a

¹ Alford House Youth Club Archive, undated, (1960s)

fourth had just found work cleaning trains after four years on the dole. This was Thatcher's Britain and much had changed. Yet, the Club was still there and while the membership had diversified, reflecting changes in the local area, young people were still using the club; taking part in activities, talking about social issues, and hanging around. These films, one made in 1959 and the other two in 1985, show that while many things in Britain altered between the late-1950s and mid-1980s, Alford House Youth Club still had a role in the community and in the lives of its young members.

The 1985 programmes, *We were the Lambeth Boys*, chart some of the changes in young lives between 1959 and 1985, looking at employment, education and youth culture. They show the youth club as a useful prism through which to examine young lives and contemporary Britain in a specific context. A scholarly examination of youth clubs along similar lines has not yet been undertaken and doing so allows this thesis to contribute to several areas of scholarship. The research presented here demonstrates how youth clubs in the post-war period departed from the traditions of uniformed organisations and the boys' club movement to build a more innovative and progressive idea of youth work. It is important to make sure this change is examined alongside emerging scholarship on youth groups such as work on the Scouts by Sarah Mills.² By examining the expertise of the youth worker and attempts to professionalise local service-providing voluntary organisations this thesis also shows that non-governmental organisations (NGOs), were not the only type of voluntary body to attempt professionalisation in the 1960s.³ In addition, this research contributes to how scholars have understood the mixed economy of welfare in the Twentieth Century. By looking at policy intervention, the relationship with the state at local level, and youth clubs' interaction with commercial leisure this thesis shows how youth associations and clubs were on the very boundary of voluntary, state and commercial provision for youth at this time.

Furthermore, this research contributes to debates around youth cultures and young

² Sarah Mills, 'An instruction in good citizenship': scouting and the historical geographies of citizenship education,' *Transactions of the British Institute of Geographers*, Vol. 38, Issue 1, January 2013, pp. 120-134

³ Nick Crowson, Matthew Hilton, James McKay and Jean-François Mouhot, *The Politics of Expertise: How NGOs shaped modern Britain*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; Virginia Berridge and Alex Mold, 'Professionalisation, new social movements and voluntary action in the 1960s and 1970s', Matthew Hilton and James McKay eds, *The Ages of Voluntarism – How we got to the Big Society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press and British Academy, 2011

consumers. Services providing informal education and leisure opportunities to young people must be seen within a wider context of activities available to young people at the time. Literature on youth, youth cultures, subcultures and social issues in the post-war period have offered myriad definitions of youth, understandings of visible youth cultures and subcultures and analysis of young people.⁴ This thesis shows that, for members, youth clubs created and sustained local youth cultures alongside commercial outlets.⁵ Furthermore, by showing the variety of young people within youth clubs, this thesis questions whether the term 'youth' has supposed young people to have been more homogenous than they were. Similarly, at a time when young people were being scrutinised and problematised in wider society, the role of youth clubs in social control, citizen-making and youth cultures is examined, showing the ordinary and everyday experiences of youth, including subcultural youth.⁶

The voluntary element within the Youth Service reacted to changes in society, such as a rising birth rate and post-war housing redevelopment.⁷ A study of local youth clubs and voluntary organisations also offers a prism through which to examine contemporaneous changes and the way they impacted young people. While the institutional histories of clubs and associations are important, charting their development, structure and operation in the context of state welfare, so too are the social histories of clubs. Probing clubs and associations' intersection with class, gender, identity, race and a range of post-war changes to education, employment, housing and welfare shows how these things shaped the lives of young club members.

The social and institutional histories of youth clubs and youth voluntary organisations in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 are not only historically important. They have contribution to make to current discourses and social policy debates: about how society defines youth and youth problems and engages with them; the way youth are impacted by wider social

⁴ Phil Cohen, *Sub-cultural Conflict and Working Class Community*, Working Papers in Cultural Studies, No.2, Birmingham, University of Birmingham, 1972; Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson eds., *Resistance through Rituals – Youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, 2nd ed., London, Routledge, 2006; Dick Hebdige, *Subculture – The Meaning of Style*, London, Methuen & Co., 1979

⁵ Bernard Davies, *A History of the Youth Service in England*, Volume 1, Leicester, National Youth Agency, 1999, p. 90

⁶ See for example Staley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, 3rd Ed., London, Routledge, 2002

⁷ Ministry of Education, *Report of the Committee Appointed by the Minister of Education on The Youth Service in England and Wales* (hereafter Albemarle), Cmnd. 929, London, HMSO, 1960, p. 16

issues; the impact of welfare retrenchment on voluntary organisations, and the potential of the Youth Service and youth workers to make meaningful interventions in the lives of young people.

The Youth Service

The non-statutory Youth Service, under the direction of the Ministry of Education (1944-1964) and later Department of Education and Science (DES, 1964- 1992), fitted into a range of welfare and educative services provided by state- and non-state agents. In the post-war period there were also more opportunities for education beyond compulsory schooling as higher education and technical education expanded following the Robbins Report of 1963.⁸ In the later 1950s and 1960s, economic prosperity and low unemployment rates provided young people with an expanded array of work and leisure opportunities. In the period between 1958 and 1970, the unemployment rate was never above 2.6% and was as low as 1.5% in 1965. This contrasts with figures of between 2.6% and 6.2% over the 1970s and 13.1% by 1984.⁹ With the advent of the NHS, children were healthier; remarked upon in the significant 1960 Youth Service policy report as a cause of earlier puberty.¹⁰

Many local youth organisations were part of a network of local, regional and national umbrella bodies, single-issue groups and campaigns on policy issues. Such networks involved a complex interplay between the national agenda, local needs and the guiding hand of large umbrella bodies. While existing voluntary organisations adapted to the changes in state welfare and society in post-war Britain, new voluntary organisations and NGOs also entered the fray.¹¹ While only some of these groups were explicitly designed for young people, many had significant input into the lives and issues of young people. Examples included those offering contraceptive advice, including to the young and unmarried, such as the Brook Advisory Service founded in 1964 specifically for young

⁸ Committee on Higher Education, *Higher Education: Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961-63* (Robbins Report), London, HMSO, 1963

⁹ A.H. Halsey, eds., *British Social Trends since 1900 – A Guide to the Changing Social Structure of Britain*, Hampshire, Macmillan Press, 1988, p. 174

¹⁰ *The Albemarle Report*, p. 14

¹¹ For examples discussing the richness of NGOs since the Second World War see Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*; Nick Crowson, Matthew Hilton, James McKay, James and Jean- François Mouhot , *A Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012

people to access sexual health services.¹²

One of the results of many of these emerging strands of service provision, coupled with concern about a growing youth population, was the expansion of the field of professionals concerned with youth. Forums such as the Standing Conference of Juvenile Organisations, founded in 1936, were one of the most obvious places to see this expanded, professionalised group in action: teachers, representatives of religious groups, civil servants, youth club leaders, youth workers, social workers, academics, magistrates, judges and many more (and yet often excluding young people) could be found on committees, steering groups and at conferences focused on issues of youth and the 'youth problem'.¹³ The McNair Report in 1944 outlined expectations of higher demand for teachers and youth workers.¹⁴ The number of Child Welfare Officers and Social Workers working in local authorities grew from 2,438 in 1956 to nearly 11,000 by 1971 and over 17,000 by 1983.¹⁵ Accordingly, an expanding professional class joined the traditional guardians of young people (such as the army, churches and schools) to form a louder and wider pool of opinions in which traditional voices no longer had the largest influence. The pool of professionals around youth are vital for understanding changes and tensions in youth clubs and association in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985.

The post-war Youth Service included 14 national voluntary organisations which were formally brought under the umbrella of the Youth Service by circulars issued by the Government in 1939 and 1944 to supervise the young during the war.¹⁶ The original organisations which made up the Youth Service were the Boys' Brigade, Boy Scouts Association, Church Lads' Brigade, Girl Guides Association, Girls' Friendly Society, Girls' Guildry, National Association of Boys' Clubs (which

¹² Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, p. 36

¹³ Originally founded in 1936 by 11 organisations with over 10,000 members such as the Scouts and National Association of Boys' Clubs, it became the National Council for Youth Voluntary Services (NCYVS) in 1972. To give some idea of its scope, in 1947 it represented roughly 2 million young people from member organisations. For a fuller history see Catherine Green, *In the Service of Youth: A History of the NCYVS*, Leicester, NCYVS, 1986; Harry Hendrick: *Child Welfare: Historical Dimensions, Contemporary Debate*, Bristol, Policy Press, 2003; *Child Welfare and Social Policy: an essential reader*, Bristol, Policy Press, 2005

¹⁴ *Report of the Committee appointed by the President of the Board of Education to consider the Supply, Recruitment and Training of Teachers and Youth Leaders (known as the McNair Report)*, London, HMSO, 1944

¹⁵ Halsey, *British Social Trends*, p. 485; see also David Burnham, *The Social Worker Speaks: A History of Social Workers through the twentieth century*, Surrey, Ashgate, 2012

¹⁶ Albemarle, p. 4

included the Association for Jewish Youth), Girls' Life Brigade, National Association of Girls' Clubs, Welsh League of Youth, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association and the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs.¹⁷ These organisations collectively provided a range of services to train, educate and entertain youth. They were staffed by a mixture of full- and part-time, professional and amateur leaders, and assisted by a vast array of volunteers.

In post-war Britain, voluntary services were sometimes thought unnecessary due to the expanding reach of the Welfare State meaning the Youth Service was in a particularly weak position in the 1950s.¹⁸ As the poorer, non-statutory partner alongside the formal education sector, the Service was in a dilapidated state in the 1950s.¹⁹ This prompted the Ministry of Education to put together a committee under the leadership of Lady Albemarle in 1958 to examine if the service was still needed, and if so, what form it should take.²⁰ The outcome of this report was an attempt to revive the Youth Service and as such it features heavily in this thesis. To give some idea of what the Albemarle Report was supposed to be reviving and for whom, Davies suggests that in the 1960s the Youth Service made contact with up to 68 percent of young people at some point in their lives, but that regular attendance may have been approximately 26 percent.²¹ Hilton et al. give some indication of membership levels of some of the largest youth organisations in 1951.²² They estimated that in all forms Boys', Girls' and Youth Clubs were thought to be reaching 237,000 young people a year in 1951.²³ This thesis examines some of these young people, their youth clubs and the associations they affiliated to in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985.

Structure of thesis

Youth clubs and voluntary associations sat at a crucial intersection between the state, voluntarism, local youth cultures and the everyday lives of young people between 1958 and 1985. In what

¹⁷ Davies, *A History*, p. 7

¹⁸ Frank Prochaska, *Christianity and Social Service in Modern Britain: The disinherited spirit*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; the weakness of the Youth Service was highlighted in *the Albemarle Report*, p. 1

¹⁹ *Albemarle*, pp. 11-12

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.1

²¹ Davies, *A History*, p. 90

²² Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 18

²³ Figure obtained by adding Methodist, Boys' and Girls' Youth Club totals from Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 18

follows this thesis will examine clubs and associations and their young members from several perspectives. Chapter two introduces the local associations, and examines who they were for and how they worked, putting them in the context of the policy environment for youth work between 1958 and 1985. It demonstrates that clubs and associations were a fluid part of the welfare economy. It charts how they were dynamic and responsive in the face of local and national developments, yet at the mercy of wider economic and social change as they sought to mitigate its effect on the young.

Chapter three scrutinises the role of the youth association and youth club alongside other youth groups and wider youth networks. It provides evidence that youth clubs benefitted from having a less fixed identity than other youth organisations because it allowed them to blend a range of roles including education, citizen-making, recreation and welfare. This chapter also makes it clear that associations were crucial links in the wider network of local and national youth provision.

Chapter four considers the contribution of youth clubs to tackling the social issues of youth in Liverpool and South London between 1958 and 1985. Youth unemployment, post-war urban renewal, race and immigration loomed large and the local youth club and association had a unique opportunity to intervene in the lives of young members. However, the scale and effectiveness of these contributions varied. This chapter examines this variation and demonstrates the welfare role that clubs could have in young lives.

Chapter five considers the youth club alongside commercial culture in the mixed economy of welfare. It proves that youth clubs were interconnected with not only state and voluntary provision, but also wider commercial provision. This reinforces how youth clubs and associations sat on the intersection of three elements of the mixed economy of welfare at local and national level. It establishes that young people experienced clubs as a cultural space that fitted in with their other pursuits. Moreover it demonstrates that clubs were spaces where youth cultures could develop and diffuse.

Finally, chapter six examines the adults involved in youth clubs; the youth worker and volunteer. This chapter charts a generational change and conflict in youth work, whereby work

associated with traditional youth movements contrasted with an emerging generation of youth workers with competing political, practical and professional approaches. It reveals that a vital factor in the development of post-war youth work has been the emergence of permissive and radical approaches.

Together these chapters serve to demonstrate the unique contribution of the youth club within the local community, but also aid our wider understanding of the social and cultural histories of youth, voluntarism and welfare. In the conclusion this thesis looks at the key changes over time and differences between the case studies in South London and Liverpool. The research presented here proves that youth clubs were unique in the mixed economy of youth welfare and deserve a scholarly examination to put them alongside other youth organisations and voluntary bodies in the history of contemporary Britain.

Chapter One – Contemporary Britain, the ‘Youth Problem’ and the Mixed Economy of Welfare: Literature Review and Research Design

In the years following 1945, Britain was characterised by economic and social changes which shaped the environment in which young people grew up. After the deprivations of war and rationing, material conditions improved for many in Britain. Affluence and consumerism, though not new, expanded with technological and economic change bringing new household and consumer goods to the market, and now more widely available on consumer credit.¹ As bombed-out and slum housing was cleared and redeveloped, the face of Britain’s inner cities changed dramatically.² New state support for welfare offered people free healthcare and a range of services to relieve poverty, improve housing, and educate the young.³ Changes in the social fabric, under the contested term used by contemporaries, ‘permissiveness’, offered more tolerant legal approaches to divorce, homosexuality, abortion and a range of other moral issues while some argued that traditional moral guardians like the church were declining in influence.⁴ Issues of race and racism, following a wave of immigration and alongside the decline of empire, further challenged social mores and British identity.⁵ Rapid economic and social change continued in the

¹ Melanie Tebbutt, *Making Ends Meet- Pawnbroking and Working-Class Credit*, New York, Leicester University Press and St Martin's Press, 1983; Paul Johnson, *Saving and Spending - the Working-Class Economy in Britain 1870-1939*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1985; Peter Scott, "The Twilight World of Interwar British Hire Purchase," *Past & Present*, Vol. 177, 2002; Kate Soper and Frank Trentmann eds., *Citizenship and Consumption*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008 and Frank Trentmann, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012

² Peter Willmott and Michael Young, *Family and Kinship in East London*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957; Geoff Dench, Kate Gavron, Kate and Michael Young, *The New East End – Kinship, Race and Conflict*, London, Profile, 2006; David M. Muchnick, *Urban Renewal in Liverpool – A study of the politics of redevelopment*, London, G Bell and Sons, 1970

³ Helen Fawcett and Rodney Lowe, eds., *Welfare Policy in Britain: The Road from 1945*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1999; Derek Fraser, *The Evolution of the Welfare State*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1973; Hendrick, *Child welfare*

⁴ Marcus Collins ed., *The Permissive Society and its Enemies- Sixties British Culture*, London, Rivers Oram, 2007, p. 2; Prochaska, *Christianity and Social Service in Modern Britain*

⁵ Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black In the Union Jack – The cultural politics of race and nation*, London, Hutchinson, 1987; John Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and The State – The Politics of Ideology and Policy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988

1970s and 1980s, with a global economic crisis and intense industrial disputes.⁶ In the post-war period it has not been just the scale, but also the pace, of change that has captivated historians.⁷

Technological innovation combined with a buoyant economy and consumer credit increased the availability of consumer and household products to working class buyers.⁸ Historians have contested the extent to which this did in fact herald the dawn of a consumer society, and also whether mod-cons such as electric washing machines really did increase the leisure time of many (especially women).⁹ However, contemporary perceptions of working class affluence can be seen in the sociology of the period, such as *The Affluent Worker*, published in 1969, which looked at workers from new estates in Luton working on car production lines.¹⁰ Anxieties about consumers, especially young working class people, were present, such as those presented by Hoggart in his pen portrait of young men in a milk bar.¹¹

Interpretations of affluence in post-war society and consensus on the limits of new state-provided welfare proved short lived. In the 1960s, Peter Townsend and Brian Abel-Smith were able to demonstrate not only the persistence of poverty in British society, but also that the gap between the rich and poor was growing.¹² The dismantling of illusions around poverty and welfare at the end of the sixties was accelerated by Britain's economic fortunes in the 1970s and 1980s. Added to this

⁶ Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: Britain in the Seventies*, London, Faber and Faber, 2010; Richard Vinen, *Thatcher's Britain – The Politics and Social Upheaval of the 1980s*, London, Pocket Books, 2009

⁷ For example Arthur Marwick called the Sixties no less than a 'cultural revolution' in *The Sixties*, Oxford, OUP, 1998, p. 15; this sense was also evident in contemporary use of 'quake' to describe changes in youth, Kenneth Leech, *Youthquake-The growth of counter-culture through two decades*, Sheldon Press, 1973

⁸ See for example Avner Offer, *The Challenge of Affluence – Self-Control and Well-Being in the United States and Britain since 1950*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, Soper and Trentmann eds., *Citizenship and Consumption*; Trentmann, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*

⁹ For example, Jane Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945: women, family work and the state in the post-war years*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1992 and also Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: The search for a Historical Movement*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003

¹⁰ John H. Goldthorpe et al., *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1969 which was part of a series exploring the idea of the embourgeoisement of the working classes.

¹¹ Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, London, Penguin Modern Classics, 2009 (originally published in London, by Chatto and Windus, 1957)p.220-1; Joe Moran, 'Milk Bars, Starbucks and the Uses of Literacy', *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 6, 2006, pp. 552-573

¹² Brian Abel-Smith and Peter Townsend, *The Poor and The Poorest, Issue 17 of Occasional papers on social administration*, G. Bell and Sons Ltd, 1965, Peter Townsend, *Poverty in the United Kingdom – a survey of household resources and standards of living*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1979, Selina Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street: Reinvestigating the Post-War Working Class', *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 2008, pp. 501-518

was the reform of the welfare state under Margaret Thatcher. While these events have received much attention from contemporary historians, for the people included in this research they had local variants and impacts.¹³ In Liverpool, particularly, the scale of local industrial decline impacted the city particularly harshly, with a 33 percent fall in employment in all age groups in the city between 1971 and 1985.¹⁴ South London too was transformed as London's economy became geared towards services, especially finance.¹⁵ In these cases high unemployment, especially youth unemployment, was not a headline or a national event, but a local and personal tragedy.¹⁶

Within this rapidly changing context, a concern with the problems of youth re-emerged. Pearson has demonstrated how fears about young people have recurred and been constantly reshaped.¹⁷ However, the emergence of the 'teenager' and fears about teddy boys and other visibly subcultural groups were part of what marked out post-war youth for special attention.¹⁸ Adolescent psychology began to be applied to examination of the ways in which the development of young people was vital to their future stability, linking bodily and mental changes to the emotional and social transitions they needed to make to achieve adulthood.¹⁹ While historians now understand that the ways problematic youth were framed after the Second World War were not novel, at the time, after the social upheaval of war and a spike in the juvenile crime rate, the size and shape of the youth problem seemed unprecedented.²⁰

¹³ Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out*; Vinen, *Thatcher's Britain*; Michael Parkinson, *Liverpool on the Brink – One city's struggle against Government cuts*, Berkshire, Policy Journals, 1985

¹⁴ Parkinson, *Liverpool on the Brink*, p. 13

¹⁵ On the history of the City of London: David Kynaston, *City of London – The History*, London, Vintage, 2012

¹⁶ Liverpool Record Office (LRO), M367/MYA/M/6/1/4, 'Education and Work: The Consumers Viewpoint', *Report of the SHARE Conference March 1977*, p. 11

¹⁷ Geoffrey Pearson, *Hooligan – A History of Respectable Fears*, London, Macmillan, 1983

¹⁸ Jon Savage, *Teenage – The Creation of Youth 1875-1945*, London, Chatto and Windus, 2007

¹⁹ C.M Fleming, *Adolescence: its social psychology*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1948

²⁰ Fleming, *Adolescence*, p. 239; T.R. Fyvel, *The Insecure Offenders – Rebellious Youth in the Welfare State*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1961; Louise A. Jackson, with Angela Bartie, *Policing Youth – Britain 1945-70*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2014; Pearson, *Hooligan*, Kate Bradley, 'Becoming delinquent in the post-war Welfare State: England and Wales, 1945-1965' in Heather Ellis ed., *Juvenile Delinquency and the limits of Western Influence, 1850-2000*, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014; Andrew Davies, *Gangs of Manchester: The Story of the Scuttlers, Britain's First Youth Cult*, London, Milo Books, 2011; Cohen, *Folk Devils*

I. Who were young people?

In both academic and political debates, 'youth' has not had one firm meaning. Legal and state-mandated age boundaries intermingled with a more fluid set of understandings of who young people were and what defined their 'youth' status. Even the vocabulary of youth has been contested in the way terms like 'teenager' and 'juvenile' have been used. Scholars such as Olsen, Springhall and Savage have discussed how the category of youth was constructed as involving certain meanings around development, vulnerability and future citizenship-making and how these meanings had specific connotations of both gender and class in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focussing attention on the working class male.²¹ As already mentioned, studying the development and psychology of young people in the post-war period only served to underline their status as a social group worthy of particular attention.

The legal boundaries between youth and adulthood changed in this period as the category of 'youth' was re-evaluated.²² The minimum school leaving age was raised twice in this period, while the voting age was reduced from 21 to 18 in 1969.²³ Cinema too, via the British Board of Film Censors has, since the 1920s, issued guidance on the ages at which cinema-goers could view certain types of content in films.²⁴

However, pre- and post-war understandings of youth also conceived it as involving a set of supposedly common experiences associated with transitions to full adulthood. Changes perceived as part of the 'youth' trajectory were transitions from childhood to adulthood in certain areas, with school to work, parents' home to own home, marriage and parenthood being the principal

²¹ Stephanie Olsen, *Juvenile Nation - Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen, 1880-1914*, London, Bloomsbury, 2014, John Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*, London, Croom Helm, 1977, Jon Savage, *Teenage*

²² See for example Home Office, *Children in Trouble*, London, HMSO, 1968; Michael Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, London, 1965

²³ The School Leaving age was raised twice in the post-war period via The Education Act 1944 (Butler Act) to 15 and subsequently, in 1972 to 16 years of age with The Children Act 1972. The age of majority was reduced to 18 following the Latey Committee in 1968, papers held at The National Archive, HO 328/115, House of Commons Debate 10 April 1968, Hansard, Vol. 762, cc1401-8, implemented in the *Family Law Reform Act 1969*

²⁴ British Board of Film Classification, BBFC History, <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/education-resources/student-guide/bbfc-history>, accessed 29th May 2013

examples.²⁵ In several ways, 'managing' youth was about managing these transitions successfully through state and social agencies. Youth has also been equated with certain ages, for example, in youth clubs, where junior and senior membership were tied roughly to the school leaving age and changed over this period.²⁶ This reflects some fluid understandings of youth in wider culture, for example, in some dance halls the minimum age was 12-13 years of age and highlights that state and commercial identifications of youth did not always agree.²⁷

Understandings of youth were often underpinned by assumptions about class, gender and situation. For example, young married couples were not always included in discussions of youth, showing that it was single, working (and working class) youth who were the focus of concern.²⁸ Young people attracting attention were predominantly figured as male and working class – a group for whom managing transitions to adulthood was seen as particularly important.²⁹ For some, 'youth' emerged as a distinct economic and social group during the post-war period.³⁰ Similarly, 'teenager' has been used to describe post-war youth shaping teenagers as a market as well as a social group, drawing on understandings which grew out of how youth has been constructed over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³¹ Assumptions within terminology around youth require a critical awareness when examining sources to uncover precisely to whom they refer.

For the purposes of this thesis, with a focus on youth voluntary organisations, being led by the definition they used is sensible. Many youth clubs and groups sought to provide facilities and services to young people who were leaving the structure of full-time education and so 14 or 15 were often used as the lower boundary, with junior clubs often open to those younger than that.

²⁵ Bill Osgerby, *Youth in Britain since 1945*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1998, pp. 27-8

²⁶ LRO, M367 MYA G/3/4-49, Liverpool Union of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs Annual Reports, and London Metropolitan Archive (LMA), LMA/4283/A/2/4-9, London Federation of Boys' Clubs (LFBC) Annual Reports, (junior members were under 14 in these clubs)

²⁷ David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain c.1920-c.1970*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 76

²⁸ Mark Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, London, The London Press Exchange, 1959;

²⁹ See for example Pearson, *Hooligan*; Cohen, *Folk Devils*; Davies, *Gangs of Manchester*; see also the early work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) such as Phil Cohen, *Sub-cultural Conflict*; Dick Hebdige, *Subculture – The Meaning of Style*, London, Methuen & Co, 1979, Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson eds., *Resistance through Rituals – Youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, 2nd ed., London, Routledge, 2006

³⁰ Osgerby, *Youth in Britain since 1945*, pp. 27-8; Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, Savage, *Teenage*, p. xiii

³¹ Savage, *Teenage*, p. xiii; Christian Bugge, 'Selling Youth in an Age of Affluence': Marketing to Youth in Britain since 1959', Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton eds., *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War 'Golden Age' Revisited*, Hampshire, Ashgate, 2004

Membership tailed off at around 19 years of age, though could continue up to 25 for some clubs and focused projects. Therefore, this thesis principally refers to 14 to 20-year-olds, but shows awareness of where youth groups and services worked with different definitions.

When defining young people in this period, a demographic note is necessary. The people who were ‘young’ in the period under examination included a group referred to in the Youth Service policy report of 1960 as ‘the bulge’.³² This term referred to the ‘baby boomer’ generation born in 1946 and 1947 when the birth rate had been unusually high, reaching nearly 900,000 births per year.³³ A more gradual but similar trend was also discernible in the 1960s, meaning that for much of the period, youth services were catering for large and growing numbers of young people.³⁴ The bulge not only produced a strain on the Youth Service, but also made youth a larger, potentially more significant, proportion of the population. That the generation about whom there was so much concern was large only added to the importance of solving the ‘youth problem’.

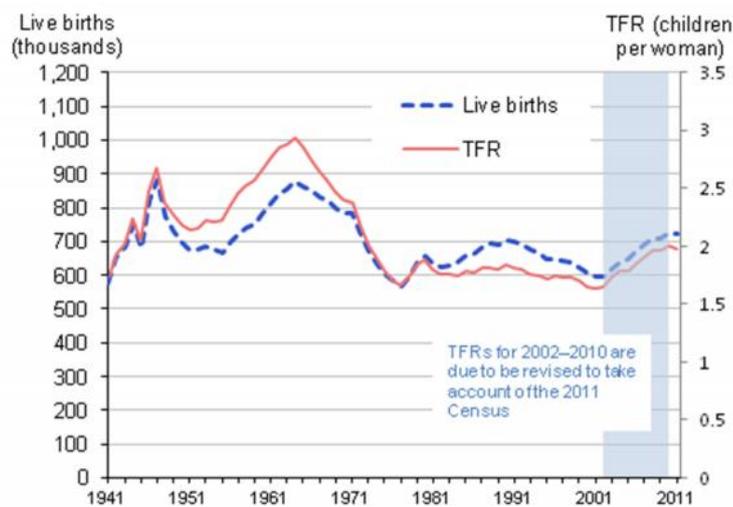


Figure 1.1: Birth Rate and Total Fertility Rate 1941-2011³⁵

³² Albemarle, p. 16

³³ Albemarle, p. 129, Jennie Bristow, *Baby Boomers and Generational Conflict*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, Selina Todd, and Hilary Young, ‘Baby-Boomers to ‘Beanstalkers’: Making the Modern Teenager in Post-War Britain’, *Cultural and Social History*, Volume 9, Issue 3, 2012, pp. 451–467

³⁴ Office for National Statistics, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-276693>, accessed 16th April 2013

³⁵ Office for National Statistics, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/vsob1/birth-summary-tables--england-and-wales/2011--final--sb-births-and-deaths-in-england-and-wales--2011--final.html#tab-Key-Trends-in-Births-and-Deaths--Numbers-and-Rates->, accessed 31st March 2013

II. Problematic youth

There are three particularly clear elements of the way that moral panic about youth was framed by adults in the post-war period: culture, consumption and crime. Youth culture, particularly visible youth culture, was a motif for teenage rebellion. Cohen showed how the consumer goods which formed the uniform of the mod and rocker subcultures became associated with the crimes committed by a few youths in seaside resorts which fed the response by the authorities to the phenomenon.³⁶ The work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at Birmingham University under Richard Hoggart, however, pioneered the study of youth, particularly working-class youth, on something approaching their own terms and offered a different way of looking at cultural phenomena and subcultural groups.³⁷ In this regard Hoggart himself emerges as a key figure. *The Uses of Literacy*, published in 1957, examined aspects of working class and emerging mass culture against the backdrop of changes in society at the time.³⁸ While drawing on Hoggart's own background it portrays a nostalgic view of working class culture threatened by mass produced and mass consumed culture. His expertise in mass culture and its appeal to youth was recognised in his inclusion in the committee responsible for producing the Albemarle Report in 1960, which was to prove an important watershed in the history of the Youth Service.³⁹

As director of the CCCS, Hoggart, alongside a group of central personnel, including Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige and Phil Cohen, began to study elements of culture, both widespread and subversive. Their working papers, *Resistance through Rituals*, *Subculture - the meaning of Style*, *Subcultural Conflict and Working Class Community* were influential in marking out the field of study in its first phase and offered a more sympathetic view of working class youth culture than Hoggart had offered in his earlier work.⁴⁰ By examining subcultures, class and resistance, they argued that youth manufactured consent to their own hegemony by middle class adults by appropriating their

³⁶ Cohen, *Folk Devils*; Howard Parker, *View From the Boys*, London, David & Charles, 1974

³⁷ Hall and Jefferson eds, *Resistance through Rituals*, Cohen, *Sub-cultural Conflict*, Hebdige, *Subculture*

³⁸ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*

³⁹ Albemarle, p. iii

⁴⁰ Hall and Jefferson eds., *Resistance through Rituals*, Hebdige, *Subculture*, Cohen, *Sub-cultural Conflict*; Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*

signs of resistance from approved consumer goods.⁴¹ Yet within this work a particular type of youth came to be studied: male, white, working class and often transgressing social norms, like Arthur Seaton, the working class hero of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*.⁴² It took later developments to include female cultures, gangsta, rasta and hippies in the mix, uncovering alternatives to the white male working class cultural hero, yet the contribution of the first wave of youth and subcultural studies should not be undervalued.⁴³ In most cases, studies have begun with a conspicuous sub-cultural group of youth in mind, and have worked backwards to examine class and resistance, via symbols within fashion and music, or examined particular moments within group histories.⁴⁴ Local case studies, like Cohen's in London's East End are rarer, though complemented by Willmott and Young who also examined the East End.⁴⁵ This body of scholarship can be used retrospectively by historians to interrogate other primary sources on young people, such as the preserved papers of their youth clubs, and oral history interviews with people who attended them at the time.

Fowler argues that there were two 'Swinging Sixties' divided by class: the working-class variant occupying the Palais de Danse in South London and the other, trendy discotheques frequented by the middle class and social elites in the West End.⁴⁶ In some ways this thesis starts from the same assumption, that spectacular youth culture as epitomised by the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and the fashion outlets of the Kings Road was not the sixties of the majority of youth in Britain.⁴⁷ However, it goes further by suggesting such pop-cultures were in many ways far removed

⁴¹ Hebdige, *Subculture*, pp. 15-16

⁴² Alan Sillitoe, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, London, Grafton, 1985 (originally published in 1958); *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, directed by Karel Reisz, 1960

⁴³ David Muggleton in particular critiqued the approach of Hebdige in *Inside Subculture – The Postmodern Meaning of Style*, Oxford, Berg, 2000, and later sociology has looked to be offer more inclusive interpretations, for example Mike Brake, *The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures – sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll?*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980; Ken Gelder eds., *The Subcultures Reader*, London, Routledge, 2005. Other work has sought to recover female and black subcultures too, such as Lauraine LeBlanc, *Pretty in Punk: Girls' Gender Resistance in a Boys' Subculture*, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1999, Ross Haenfler, *Goths, gamers, and grrrls : deviance and youth subcultures*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, Horace Campbell, *Rasta and Resistance: from Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney*, London, Hansib, 1985,

⁴⁴ Hebdige, *Subculture*; Cohen, *Folk Devils*

⁴⁵ Cohen, *Sub-cultural Conflict*; Willmott and Young, *Family and Kinship*

⁴⁶ Fowler, *Youth Culture*, pp. 174-79

⁴⁷ This approach is evident in Marwick, *The Sixties*

from the cultures associated with urban youth in South London and Liverpool. In this way, the thesis draws on Fowler's research on aspects of youth culture tied to specific places, for example Cambridge.⁴⁸ Following Fowler, this thesis explores locality as an influence on youth culture, and considers how the everyday setting of the youth club (alongside the Palais de Danse, Wimpy, Cafés, Milk and Coffee Bars) was a local meeting point for working-class youth at the same time that this group drew on international influences (e.g. from America and Europe) to create localised youth cultures.⁴⁹ In this sense it also complements the work of Adrian Horn on local variants of Americanisation.⁵⁰ He suggests that while there were important American influences on post-war youth cultures, they were not all-pervasive and there were local 'bottom-up' cultures too. Indeed, via the 'British Invasion', there is evidence that Merseybeat went both ways and that Liverpool musicians were also influencing the sounds being produced in America in the 1960s.⁵¹

However, there are a couple of areas where this thesis will counter Fowler's main arguments. He argues that youth culture was formed and disseminated by middle class youth and while in some of the cases he presents this is self-evident, he does not thoroughly examine working class youth from large cities from the 1960s onwards, indeed he stops in c.1970.⁵² While boys' clubs and youth clubs welcomed members from all classes, that certain clubs had a definite class base, or that in general clubs were used more by working class youth, is clear. Similarly, his assertion that youth culture and its dissemination belonged to the 18-25 age group is countered by existing literature such as Parker's ethnography of Liverpool juvenile delinquents which focusses more on under 18s; arguing that looking at young people from age 16 misses prior factors shaping their behaviour and identifying age-bounded groups beginning delinquent behaviour at 11 years old.⁵³

Yet a focus on that which was distinctive about youth cultures has failed to consider the

⁴⁸ Fowler, *Youth Culture*, pp. 30-58

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 177

⁵⁰ Adrian Horn, *Juke Box Britain- Americanisation and youth culture 1945-1960*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2009

⁵¹ Marion Leonard and Robert Strachan eds., *The Beat Goes On: Liverpool, popular music and the changing city*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2010, Sara Cohen, *Rock Culture in Liverpool – Popular Music in the Making*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1991, Eric Wooley, *The Golden Years of Merseybeat*, Liverpool, The Bluecoat Press, 2008, André Millard, *Beatlemania – Technology, Business and Teen Culture in Cold War America*, Baltimore, John-Hopkins Press, 2012

⁵² Fowler, *Youth Culture*, p. 8

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 5, Parker, *The View From The Boys*, pp. 45-61

totality of young people's everyday experiences.⁵⁴ By looking at youth clubs as sites shaped by youth where youth culture was performed, a greater understanding of multiple overlapping, fluid and dynamic cultures can be gained. In the variety of clubs in Liverpool and South London there were clubs 'belonging' to one or more subcultural type, gender or ethnic group; encompassing simultaneously the petty criminal and the aspirational middle-class youth. This helps us to understand the dynamic relationships whereby youth identities were shaped by the spaces (i.e. clubs and streets as well as schools, workplaces and commercial venues) they inhabited and allows us to see a more rounded version of youth culture, or rather cultures as messy, overlapping, with local bases and expression.

A hitherto commercial focus on youth cultures has utilised market research such as Mark Abrams' *The Teenage Consumer*, which took the concept of consumerism and examined its application to youth issues.⁵⁵ Largely an analysis of working class teenagers, though aiming to cover youth more broadly, his general conclusion was valid to a certain extent: broadly speaking teenagers, as a consumer group marked by the boundaries of leaving school and getting married, had more disposable income to spend on leisure than previous generations – their discretionary spending was thought to have increased 100 percent between 1945 and 1959.⁵⁶ Moreover, what working-class teenagers were spending their money on differed from their elders, with an emphasis on music, fashion, hair and beauty, and leisure pursuits: for example, Abrams claimed youth were responsible for 44 percent of the market share for records and 39 percent for motorcycles.⁵⁷ Pinpointing youth markets in this way is somewhat unsurprising given his audience. However, there were some fears that the attitude of responsibility-free leisure and spending were fuelling moral decline and leaving young people less well equipped to take on their adult

⁵⁴ This is the antithesis of the approach taken in Savage, *Teenage*,

⁵⁵ Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*

⁵⁶ Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*. Abrams defined youth as 13-19 years old, though up to 25 if unmarried. Selina Todd and Hilary Young have also argued that part of this affluence came from parents wanting young people to have leisure and opportunities that they had not had, and therefore asked for less housekeeping money in "Babyboomers' to Beanstalkers – Making the modern teenager in post-war Britain', *Cultural and Social History*. Vol. 9, No. 3, 2012, pp. 451-467

⁵⁷ Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 10

responsibilities and plan for the future.⁵⁸ The spending power of the affluent teenager was also of concern to those working around young people who felt that they needed luring away from the moral dangers of hedonistic consumption to spend their leisure time building character in a process of self-improvement, linking back to nineteenth century ideas of 'rational recreation'.⁵⁹ The youth club, particularly the boys' club was framed at least partially as a space for the proper use of leisure in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and this thesis looks at the extent to which this framing continued in the post-war period.⁶⁰

In reviewing the historical and sociological literature on youth culture and subculture it becomes clear that using the term 'youth cultures' in the plural better fits the understandings of youth and culture in this thesis. 'Youth cultures' does more to convey that youth lifestyles, cultural and subcultural activities were muddled, intersecting, fluid, local and constantly changing. This sense of plural youth experiences between 1958 and 1985 has room for local and temporal variants, and when combined with the idea of youth lifestyles, allows the everyday site of the youth club to be considered as a space where different ideas of youth were negotiated, contested and reproduced.

III. Histories of welfare and voluntary action

Historiography on welfare and voluntarism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries uses well-established phases to describe how society looked after its citizens and the parameters of voluntary effort in Britain. Immediate post-war welfare histories reflected the reforms to state-provided welfare underpinned by the Beveridge Report.⁶¹ After the Report in 1942, the Labour General Election victory of 1945 and the creation of the Welfare State, the state took an expanded role in

⁵⁸ Sociology looking at adults emphasised a certain amount of economic continuity over this period, with spending focussed on family and home, even where consumer credit became available, such as Goldthorpe et al., *The Affluent Worker*. Also Christian Bugge has argued that commerce was happy to have more fragmented groups to target with advertising and products in "Selling Youth in an Age of Affluence", p. 186

⁵⁹ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*; Kate Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'; Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*; Mark Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth': the early history of Outward Bound 1941-1965', *History of Education*, Vol. 40. No. 1, January 2011, pp. 21-43; Melanie Tebbutt, *Being Boys - Youth, Leisure and Identity in the Inter-war years*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012

⁶⁰ Terry Powley, *Getting on with it - A History of London Youth*, London, London Youth, pp. 6-19

⁶¹ *The Social Insurance and Allied Services Report*, London, HMSO, 1942

co-ordinating and providing welfare.⁶² Historiography that followed in the 1960s and early 1970s focussed on state welfare to a large extent and marginalised the role of voluntary organisations. The literature depicting the linear progress of welfare from voluntary to state control idealised the latter as heralding a new high-watermark of progress. Works proposing a ‘Welfare State escalator’ model include those by Bruce, and Fraser, both written while the post-war settlement remained relatively intact.⁶³ They drew on nineteenth-century histories of philanthropy and charity which highlighted voluntary provision during the Victorian period and contrasted that with the improvements supposedly wrought by the new welfare settlement.

By the late 1950s and in the 1960s the welfare consensus was not only challenged, but severely undermined by social policy researchers. Peter Townsend’s research into living standards in Britain showed that there were huge disparities between the richest and poorest, and that the welfare state had failed to cure poverty.⁶⁴ *The Poor and The Poorest* led to the foundation of the Child Poverty Action Group.⁶⁵ At the same time the Ken Loach film *Cathy Come Home* was linked to the foundation of the homelessness charity Shelter.⁶⁶ The 1960s saw a surge of attention and campaigning around the issue of poverty.⁶⁷ In this thesis, the welfare consensus as it applied to youth, the acknowledgement of persistent poverty and the breakdown of consensus are important within the context of the case study locations and periodization.

Revisionist historiography sought to clarify the contribution and changes in the roles of voluntarism in post-war welfare arrangements. The term ‘mixed economy of welfare’ was coined

⁶² Ibid. Geoffrey Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994; Pat Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, 2nd Ed., Abingdon, Routledge, 1996; Rodney Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain since 1945*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004; Lowe, Rodney, eds., *Welfare Policy in Britain: The Road from 1945*, London, 1999

⁶³ Maurice Bruce, *The Coming of the Welfare State*, London, Batsford, 1961; Derek Fraser, *The Evolution of the Welfare State*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1973

⁶⁴ Pearl Jephcott, *Some Young People*, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1954; Pearl Jephcott, *A Troubled Area – Notes on Notting Hill*, London, Faber and Faber, 1964; Abel-Smith and Townsend, *The Poor and The Poorest*; Peter Townsend, *Poverty in the United Kingdom – a survey of household resources and standards of living*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1979

⁶⁵ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, pp. 122-3; Rodney Lowe, ‘The rediscovery of poverty and the creation of the child poverty action group 1962-68’, *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1995, pp. 602-611

⁶⁶ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, pp. 224-5; Nick Crowson, Matthew Hilton and James McKay eds., *NGOs since 1945: Non-state Actors in Society and Politics since 1945*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 38-58, *Cathy Come Home*, Ken Loach, 1966

⁶⁷ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, pp. 122-3 and pp. 224-5; Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*; Hilton et al. eds., *NGOs since 1945*

by Lewis to describe the combination of state, private, informal and voluntary involvement in the provision of welfare services.⁶⁸ Finlayson borrowed a term from a later report by William Beveridge on voluntarism, that of a 'moving frontier,' to describe the interrelation and constant flux between the state, voluntarism and citizens whereby the voluntary element could pioneer new approaches and adapt to changes in state welfare.⁶⁹ Thane and Lowe similarly have contributed to an important critical literature, examining the Welfare State, continuity and change in voluntary organisations and the challenges of the policy landscape in post-war Britain.⁷⁰

Beveridge applied a wide definition of voluntary action encompassing all non-state action and the definitional difficulties around voluntary action are reflected by the oft-used phrase from Kendall and Knapp of a 'loose and baggy monster'.⁷¹ Within the organisations covered by this thesis, defining their voluntary nature can be challenging on several fronts: for example, variations in how they were funded, how the state exercised control over their activities and the level of paid and professional staffing all varied immensely. For the purposes of this research, there is a sense that 'voluntary' means non-state, but this over-simplifies the constitutional arrangements and ideals behind the voluntary organisations in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. While the terms 'voluntary action' and 'voluntarism' have been problematic, so too is charity, which since 1960 has fallen under an ever-tightening legal definition, so much so in fact that most of the organisations examined in this thesis chose not to formally register with the Charity Commission during this time.⁷²

As welfare literature has restored the place of the voluntary organisation and contested how we define voluntary action, this has allowed sustained attention to be given to the history of voluntary and non-governmental organisations. Within this strand of the revisionist historiography

⁶⁸ Jane Lewis, 'The Voluntary Sector and the State in Twentieth Century Britain' in Fawcett, Helen and Lowe, Rodney, eds., *Welfare Policy in Britain: The Road from 1945*, London, 1999

⁶⁹ Geoffrey Finlayson, 'A Moving Frontier: Voluntarism and the State in British Social Welfare 1911-1949', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1990, pp. 183-206

⁷⁰ Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain since 1945*

⁷¹ William Beveridge, *Voluntary Action – A report on methods of social advance*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1948 and Jeremy Kendall and Martin Knapp, 'A loose and baggy monster: boundaries, definitions and typologies' in Rodney Hedley, Colin Rochester and Justin Davis-Smith eds., *Introduction to the Voluntary Sector*, London, Routledge, 1995

⁷² Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, pp. 1-3; Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 195-200

certain foci, such as on high-profile poverty and international development organisations, have taken centre-stage.⁷³ Scholars looking at particular topics and welfare issues have analysed the voluntary organisations working in their field. For example, Thane and Evans examined the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child (now Gingerbread) in their analysis of single motherhood. Mold has looked at Release in her work on drugs, highlighting the advocacy role played by voluntary organisations in the post-war period.⁷⁴ Instead of trying to paint a picture of a 'golden age' of voluntarism, the most recent wave of scholarship on voluntary organisations seeks to explore it in all its variety, argue its contribution to contemporary policy debate, and examine themes such as advocacy, activism, campaigning and the relationship to state welfare.⁷⁵

Of particular note here are two major research projects by Matthew Hilton and colleagues at the University of Birmingham, one aimed at producing a Database of Archives of Non-Governmental Organisations and another focusing on NGOs since 1945, which have done much to develop the study of voluntary action.⁷⁶ In *The Politics of Expertise*, Hilton et al. had a particular focus on high profile and campaigning NGOs such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Save the Children and Shelter.⁷⁷ One of their key contributions in this regard was to look at the rise of the high-profile NGO and how such bodies became the professionalised organisations which we have come to recognize in contemporary lobbying and policy. They have done this in part by looking at NGOs' political career and their use of the media, fundraising and public campaigning. Hilton et al. argue that NGOs have increasingly come to rely on professional staff, technocratic planning and

⁷³ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*

⁷⁴ For example, the literature on unmarried motherhood covers not only mother and baby homes, but the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and Her Child and its development to Gingerbread. See for example Thane and Evans, *Sinners, Scroungers, Saints: Unmarried Motherhood in Modern England*, Oxford, Clarendon, 2012 and Alex Mold, 'The Welfare Branch of the Alternative Society': The Work of Drug Voluntary Organisation Release 1967-1978', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol., 17, No. 1, 2006, pp. 50-73

⁷⁵ An important link in this regard is History and Policy which seeks to link historian's work to contemporary political debate, <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/>, accessed 4th June 2013; on advocacy; Mold, 'The Welfare Branch of the Alternative Society'; on activism: Virginia Berridge and Alex Mold, 'Professionalisation, new social movements and voluntary action in the 1960s and 1970s', in Matthew Hilton and James McKay eds., *The Ages of Voluntarism*, on campaigning: Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise* and the relationship with the state see for example Pete Alcock, 'Voluntary Action, New Labour and the 'third sector'', in Hilton et al. eds., *Ages of Voluntarism*

⁷⁶ Hilton et al. eds., *NGOs since 1945*; Hilton et al. eds., *Ages of Voluntarism*; Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*; Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*

⁷⁷ Ibid.

expert forms of knowledge to execute their fundraising, lobbying, campaigning and management functions.⁷⁸ Their thesis about the professionalisation of NGOs and their increasing expert status draws on Perkin's assessment of wider professionalization in post-war society.⁷⁹ In looking at youth workers and youth voluntary organisations, this thesis will address the lack of examination of the penetration of the professionalisation agenda into service providing and local organisations after 1960, nuancing and challenging several areas of Hilton et al.'s analysis.

IV. Voluntary organisations, the state and the youth problem

Alongside histories of welfare and the youth problem, scholarship has examined the ways that charities, the state and voluntary organisations have attempted to tackle 'problematic youth' in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although boys' and girls' clubs predated the Scout and Guide movements by up to fifty years in some cases, the conception of Scouting (and Guiding, to a lesser extent) as a highly successful national and international movement was founded on the philosophy of its charismatic founder, Sir Robert Baden-Powell.⁸⁰ As Mills, Warren and others have illustrated, the quasi-militaristic structure of the Scouts enabled them to provide 'top-down' training in what Baden-Powell and his acolytes believed a 'good citizen' was.⁸¹ As Mills has demonstrated, this view of citizenship took in physical health as part of the wider agenda to tackle the deterioration of (especially) working class health, as evidenced by the poor state of conscripts to the South African Wars.⁸² The structure of the Scouts and their quasi-militaristic uniformed nature meant, as Springhall shows, that they could learn to be inculcated as citizens of empire via outdoor activities

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp.3-10

⁷⁹ Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880*, London, Routledge, 1989; Harold Perkin, *The Third Revolution: Professional Elites in the Modern World*, London, Routledge, 1996 and on professionalisation in criminal justice, David Garland, *The Culture of Control*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2001

⁸⁰ Tammy Proctor, *"On My Honour": Guides and Scouts in Interwar Britain*, Philadelphia, APS, 2002; Nelson Block and Tammy Proctor eds., *Scouting Frontiers: Youth and the Scout Movement's First Century*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009; Allen Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the Scout Movement and Citizen Training in Great Britain, 1900-1920', *English Historical Review*, vol. 101, 1986

⁸¹ Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell'; Sarah Mills, 'An instruction in good citizenship'

⁸² Mills, 'An instruction in good citizenship'

and learning self-sufficiency.⁸³ A love of the outdoors was also enshrined in the work of Outward Bound, the Woodcraft Folk (etc.), as explored by Freeman and others, though we should be careful to not to assume that youth clubs ignored the outdoors.⁸⁴ Historians have tended to look at the Scouts and other groups as examples of civil society movements, and thus draw upon new and old social movement theory. However youth clubs have been omitted from this framework after John Springhall specifically excluded them from his study of youth movements because;

Either they do not aim at comprehensiveness in membership or training, or they lack an explicit ideological framework, or they do not include sufficient degree of youth involvement in leadership and organisation.⁸⁵

This emphasis on social movements has led to the neglect of youth clubs, meaning that the full implications of class dimensions in youth organisations in particular have been under-examined by failing to include all young members.⁸⁶ Similarly gender and religious differences remain relatively poorly represented in the literature.⁸⁷ Youth clubs served a much more working class audience around whom much of the youth question was framed and were broad in their religious affiliation and practice.

The history of working class youth and welfare has looked at the ways that the state and voluntary associations have tackled youth problems. For example, Bradley has analysed university settlements, juvenile courts and cafés as spaces for guiding the young via welfare, judicial and recreational facilities.⁸⁸ She has highlighted the commitment of those working with young people

⁸³ Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*

⁸⁴ Mark Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth': the early history of Outward Bound 1941-1965', *History of Education*, Vol. 40. No. 1, January 2011, pp. 21-43; Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*; Sarah Mills and Peter Kraftl eds., *Informal Education, Childhood and Youth – Geographies, Histories, Practices*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014

⁸⁵ John Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*, p. 13

⁸⁶ Scouts came to associated with middle class youth: Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*, p. 16

⁸⁷ Exceptions include Sarah Mills, 'Scouting for Girls? Gender and the Scout Movement in Britain', *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 18, 4, pp. 537-556, 2011; Sarah Mills, 'Muslim Scouting in the United Kingdom' in Nelson Block and Tammy Proctor eds., *Scouting Frontiers*, pp. 190-206; Jean Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education in Youth Work with Girls and Young Women, 1975-85', in Peter Kraftl and Sarah Mills eds., *Informal Education*

⁸⁸ Kate Bradley, *Poverty, Philanthropy and the State: the University Settlements and the Urban Working Classes, 1918 – 1979*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2009; Bradley, 'Becoming delinquent'; Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'

and the interplay between voluntary and state welfare and commercial leisure.⁸⁹ Studies of juvenile delinquency like *Policing Youth* have also argued for the dominance of a 'penal welfarist' approach which involved a range of state and voluntary agents, in the immediate post-war period.⁹⁰ The structure of the mixed economy of youth welfare in post-war Britain is central here to understanding how important the work of youth clubs was in attempts to manage youth at this time. In particular the funding and management of youth clubs was entwined with the state in a way not reflected in the literature for other youth organisations.

Writing on the Youth Service and youth voluntary movements is piecemeal and fails to look at some of the key roles and achievements of youth work in post-war Britain. Davies has published several volumes on the history of the Youth Service, attempting to produce an institutional memory of youth work in the twentieth century.⁹¹ His work takes a national perspective, with a certain focus on the national umbrella associations, recording the emergence of a professional identity for youth work. While a useful perspective on the issues within youth work at this time, it does not give an account of youth work on the ground, which is needed to link the spaces and roles of youth clubs to the everyday lives of young people.⁹²

For this reason, Hilton et al.'s figures on youth organisation membership form a better starting point for examining the post-war Youth Service.

⁸⁹ Kate Bradley, 'Juvenile Delinquency, the Juvenile Courts and the Settlement Movement 1908-1950: Basil Henriques and Toynbee Hall', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 2008, pp. 133-155; Bradley, 'Rational recreation in the Age of Affluence'

⁹⁰ Louise A. Jackson with Angela Bartie, *Policing Youth*; David Garland has also discussed penal welfarism in *The Culture of Control*

⁹¹ Davies, *A History*

⁹² Two examples of work looking the place of youth in clubs have been Melanie Tebbutt, *Being Boys*; Marcus Collins, *Modern Love – An Intimate History of Men and Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, London, Atlantic Books, 2003 however, they look in isolation at particular elements of youth work not the totality of club life within a local area

Youth Organisation	No. of Members (000s)
Cub Scouts	192
Brownies	184
Scouts	237
Girl Guides	221
Sea Cadet Corps	19
Army Cadet Corps	64
Air Training Corps	38
Boys' Brigade	58
Methodist Association of Youth Clubs	101
Boys' Youth Clubs (continuous)	58
Girls' Youth Clubs (continuous)	78
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,392</i>

Table 1.1: Membership of selected youth organisations, 1951⁹³

Hilton et al. provide estimates of how memberships changed 1951-2009 compared with other sectors. This indicated that voluntary youth services grew between 1951 and approximately 1981. While Davies asserts that 'if the youth service ever had a golden age then the 1960s was certainly it', this contradicts Hilton et al. More accurately pinpointing the origins of decline may help to uncover reasons for it, such changes to youth cultures in the 1970s or wider 1980s welfare reform.

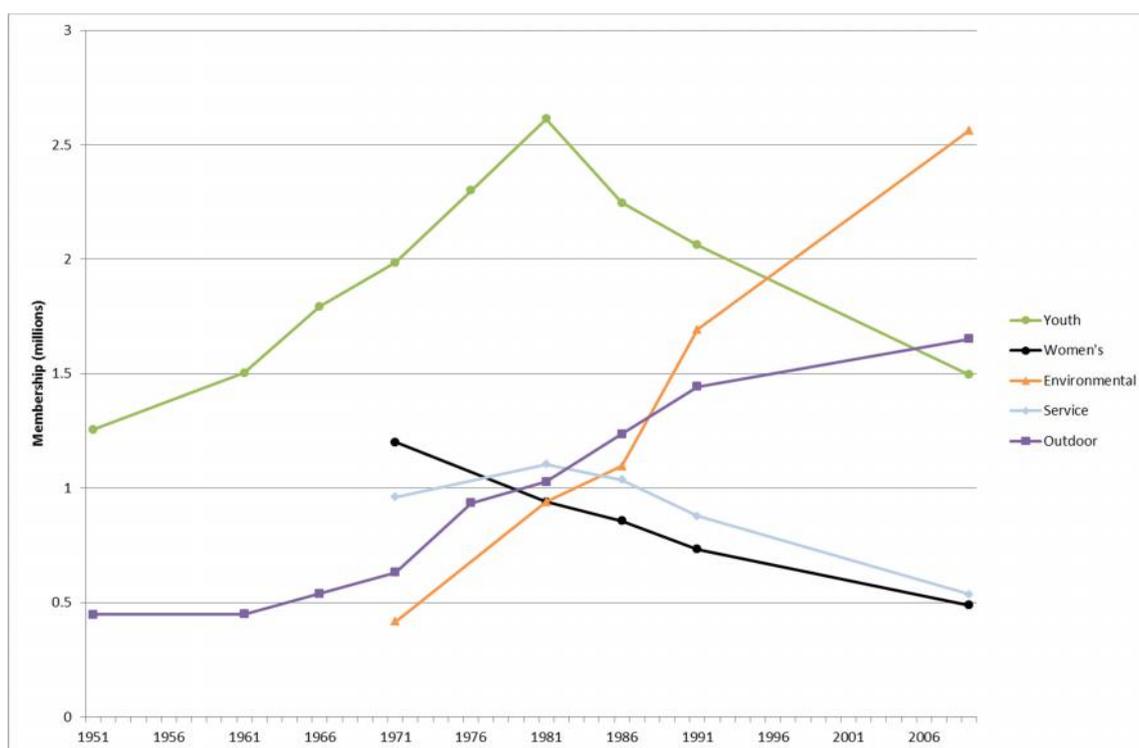


Figure 1.3: Total membership of various organisations arranged by category, 1951-2009⁹⁴

⁹³ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 18

⁹⁴ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, p. 28. The original datasets, sources and a copy of this graph are available at http://www.ngo.bham.ac.uk/appendix/NGOs_handbook.htm, accessed 24th October 2014

V. Approaching the research

This thesis focuses on the period 1958-1985. Contained within this periodization are important social changes shaping youth and society (as outlined above) leading to the questions posed at the end of the introduction and previous sections. How this thesis will answer those questions is considered in what follows.

Beginning in 1958, this thesis looks at people born during and shortly after the Second World War and the first generation to grow up in the post-war period under the new welfare settlement, including the demographic 'bulge'.⁹⁵ The disruption of war had been cited by the Albemarle Report as a causal factor in the problems of post-war youth, for example, due to the absence of fathers in the household, the experience of evacuation, the impact of rationing, the housing shortage, changing patterns of women's lives and different expectations of work and leisure.⁹⁶

The Albemarle Report's characterisation of the post-war generation is important in the periodization of this thesis and the Report itself is crucial. Davies places much significance on it in providing momentum and resources to the Youth Service in the post-war period. While the Report was published in 1960, the committee was convened in 1958 coinciding with the spike in the birth rate after the Youth Service had been allowed to wither after the war.⁹⁷ This choice of starting point also fits with some of the long sixties interpretations found in contemporary British historiography examining social change, such as Marwick for example.⁹⁸

With the Albemarle Report anchoring the beginning of the period covered by this thesis, recommending development and expansion via state funding, quite different policy currents anchor the choice of endpoint. The election of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister in 1979 (formerly Education and therefore Minister in charge of the Youth Service 1970-74) and

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 129

⁹⁶ Albemarle, pp. 13-29

⁹⁷ Albemarle, p. 1, pp, 13-29

⁹⁸ Marwick, *The Sixties*; his characterisation of the long sixties is evident in the subtitle of the book 'Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c. 1958-c.1974'

subsequent public service reform marked a significant change of direction for welfare services.⁹⁹ In order to see if the same was true of youth services in London and Liverpool, looking at Thatcher's early years is necessary. The early 1980s is also the period marked out by Hilton et al. as a point where voluntary youth movements' membership began to decline. Analysis up to 1985 allows this thesis to examine how the two were related, and how this fits wider understandings of the boundaries of the state in post-war Britain.¹⁰⁰

a. Case studies

One of the absences in the steadily-growing literature on voluntary action history has been examination of the differences found in service provision across the country. This is an area where historians and social scientists can make a valuable contribution to understanding the history of voluntarism and how the uneven development of local organisations affects present day provision. As mentioned earlier, the focus of a significant proportion of this work to date has looked at NGOs' trying to influence central government policy and engaging with the national media in order to raise awareness of and funds for their causes.¹⁰¹ Taking a 'national' approach to an emerging field was appropriate, and has allowed significant insights into the role of campaigning single issue groups in post-war civil society. However, it leaves us with little sense of how charities, NGOs and their statutory counterparts operated at the grassroots level.

Most service provision was organised at the city or county level, in response to local needs. Different geographical spaces, economic and working environments, demographic variation, political representation, policy and much more gave each locality a specific character as well as resources to meet local needs. The local welfare mix and its relationship to national voluntary organisations and government resulted in varied funding and local networks in Youth Service

⁹⁹ Paul Pierson, *Dismantling the Welfare State? Reagan, Thatcher and the Politics of Retrenchment*, Cambridge, CUP, 1994; Mark Walsh, Paul Stephens and Stephen Moore, *Social Policy and Welfare*, Cheltenham, Stanley Thornes, 2000

¹⁰⁰ Useful here, has also been the approach taken in Jackson, *Policing Youth*

¹⁰¹ Hilton et al., *NGOs since 1945*

provision, for example, as different areas were targeted by the Urban Aid programme.¹⁰² While some common understandings of youth work were shared across England, youth provision was not homogenous. One of the sets of interactions which the case study approach will examine is that of the local organisation providing different types of services using local networks and the national policy framework. Uncovering similarities, differences, and specificity in two in-depth examples will aid understanding of how (and perhaps indicate why) provision varied, changed or remained the same. It will also uncover how the local picture related to the national agenda or where the national agenda masked significant local variation.

This thesis concentrates on the three present day London Boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham in South London and the City of Liverpool as its case studies.¹⁰³ This provides further focus to the research. One of the primary considerations in this choice has been availability of primary source material. While not the only methods and sources to be used, the fragmentary nature of local voluntary organisation archives meant that establishing viable case study locations was dependent on sufficient material of this type being available. During the preliminary stages of research much time was spent gauging the extent, quality and availability of archival material. Both Liverpool Record Office and London Metropolitan Archive proved to have reasonably comparable, extensive, in-depth and wide-ranging material which could be used for this research, which is outlined in greater detail below.

A further significant factor in the case studies chosen has been that South London and Liverpool had their own distinct youth cultures during the time that this thesis covers. In Liverpool, 'Merseybeat' around the Matthew Street area of Liverpool was home to many bands that made Liverpool a vibrant place for young people to be.¹⁰⁴ London had a youth culture differentiated across many areas of the city and marked also by the emergence of several distinct youth

¹⁰² Davies, *A History* p. 158; Urban Aid was designed to target areas of high social need in inner cities and delivered funding for special projects such as nursery provision in the first instance, House of Commons Debate, 2nd December 1968, Hansard, vol. 774 cc1107-66 and the discussion of urban areas chosen linked to immigration, House of Commons Debate, 12th December 1968, vol. 775 cc557-8

¹⁰³ There were local government changes in both South London and Liverpool at this time. The present borough system in London was adopted in 1965 and Liverpool reorganised in 1974. For a summary of changes see, David Wilson and Chris Game, *Local Government in the United Kingdom*, 4th ed., Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, pp. 49-62; see maps in appendix three

¹⁰⁴ Leonard and Strachan eds., *The Beat Goes On; Woolley, The Golden Years of Merseybeat*

subcultures.¹⁰⁵ South London was associated with the teds, mods and rockers, amongst others.¹⁰⁶ Being able to trace youth cultures and subcultural elements in these areas alongside conducting archival research into their voluntary youth organisations will be useful when examining how the two were linked, how voluntary organisations viewed them and how young people divided themselves into groups.

Immigration too has shaped both of the areas under consideration, but not in the same way. Liverpool received a significant influx of Irish Catholic immigrants throughout the nineteenth century. A smaller number of black immigrants also arrived in Liverpool in the nineteenth century, associated with the shipping trade.¹⁰⁷ London's history as a place of immigration has been long and diverse. South London in the second half of the twentieth century saw tens of thousands of immigrants particularly from the West Indies and Pakistan, which were concentrated predominantly within a few areas such as Lambeth.¹⁰⁸ However, in the twentieth century, both cities have had to deal with violence that was described as racial in origin, for example, in Brixton and Toxteth in 1981.¹⁰⁹ Immigration and race is a point of comparison which demands scrutiny as it may have affected the membership of youth clubs. In Liverpool this is complicated by the declining population of the city due to economic migration and the relocation of some citizens to newly built suburban housing estates.¹¹⁰

The two cities make for useful comparison because, while having some broad similarities, they have fared quite differently in the post-war period. Examining historical examples cannot offer strict comparisons, but it can anchor the research and social contexts of youth work and young people in specific examples which add nuance to how we currently understand welfare economies and young people. While the case studies chosen cannot be viewed as equivalent, awareness of

¹⁰⁵ Hall and Jefferson eds., *Resistance through Rituals*; Hebdige, *Subculture*; Cohen, *Folk Devils*

¹⁰⁶ Frank Mort, *Capital Affairs: London and the making of the Permissive Society*, London, Yale University Press, 2010, p. 86

¹⁰⁷ John Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse: A history of the Liverpool-Irish 1800-1939*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2007

¹⁰⁸ Report of the Race Relations Board for 1967-68, London, HMSO, 1968, p. 42. Local government reorganisation and records in the mid-1960s make it difficult to pinpoint numbers more accurately prior to this.

¹⁰⁹ Brixton and Toxteth both saw 'race' riots in 1981, racial violence in London dates back to the Notting Hill Riots in 1958. See chapter four.

¹¹⁰ Muchnick, *Urban Renewal*

this prevents this thesis from making broad assumptions about the comparativeness and wider applications of the findings of the research.

b. Methods and sources

Earlier in this chapter the research questions of this thesis were framed and outlined. The periodization and case studies show when and where examination of these questions takes place. In what follows it is explained how these questions will be answered. For this thesis an iterative and reflective methodology was needed to bring together a wide variety of sources; to synthesise data at each stage of collection and continue to uncover the information and themes needed to write this thesis. Adopting this approach allowed continuous evaluation of the sources and provided the flexibility to follow-up unexpected leads. It encouraged inventiveness in looking for and analysing sources and promoted awareness of the limitations of each method or source in turn. In bringing together sources and methods from different disciplines, this thesis furthermore shows the relevance of this research to those from historical, social science, and social policy disciplines.

The policy context within which the local associations were working forms a backdrop to examining their own archives. Therefore national policy documents regarding the Youth Service and national bodies have been consulted.¹¹¹ The papers of the national associations where they appear in local association archives are used to explore the relationship between national and local organisations.¹¹² As a non-statutory service, there was no formal legislation on the Youth Service, though the Children and Young Person's Act 1969 has been included. Hansard debates have also been used. The policy reports examined come predominantly from government-appointed committees assembled to examine a particular topic and make recommendations which the government of the day either accepted and acted upon or ignored. As official documents, they

¹¹¹ Albemarle; Mary Morse, *The Unattached*, Leicester, NAYC, 1965; Ministry of Education, *Youth and Community Work in the 70s* (Fairburn-Milson Report), London, HMSO, 1969; *Children in Trouble*; Department of Education and Science, *Experience and Participation* (Thompson Report), London, HMSO, 1982

¹¹² Parts of the NAYC/NABC archive are in the Modern record Centre at Warwick, some are with the Standing Conference of National Youth Voluntary Organisations (SCNYVO) papers (uncatalogued) at the UCL Institute of Education, but much is missing or inaccessible

have been heavily mediated in line with the political priorities of the day. This makes them useful for assessing the official agenda, but limits their utility as evidence of local activity.

The Liverpool Record Office (LRO) hold the archives of the Merseyside Youth Association (MYA) and its predecessor bodies, the Liverpool Boys' Association (LBA), Liverpool Union of Girls' and Mixed Clubs and the Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs (Liverpool Union).¹¹³ The papers of this group of organisations are extensive covering annual reports, financial records, internal publications, and minutes from several committees, giving a very detailed picture of the internal workings of the organisations. Correspondence is detailed, often including multiple copies of letters between all parties corresponding, alongside the documents pertaining to the issue under discussion. In addition some of the everyday papers have been preserved including examples of annual returns and club visit forms. A particularly detailed set of papers held by the MYA archive are those of the Detached Youth Work (DYW) project. The surviving documents here include original grant proposal documents, correspondence, recruitment paperwork, management and advisory committee papers, reports written by the detached youth workers and documents produced for and by the conferences held about the project. In addition, one of the workers published an account of the project, and the academic from Edge Hill who supervised the project also wrote an account of its early years.¹¹⁴ Both have been used for comparison and reveal how differences over the project remained a matter for internal discussion only. It has also been possible to interview two of the workers from the project. The DYW papers are particularly useful in giving an account of young people as the youth workers anonymously discuss individual young people they worked with.

The London Metropolitan Archive (LMA) holds the remaining archives of the London Federation of Boys' Clubs (LFBC) and the London Union of Youth Clubs (London Union). These papers are less comprehensive than the corresponding archives for Liverpool, but are useful

¹¹³ In London and Liverpool 'Unions for Mixed and Girls' Clubs became 'Unions of Youth Clubs' between 1961-62, for consistency, 'Union' is used throughout

¹¹⁴ Denis Ince, *Contact: A report on a project with unattached young people in an area of high social need in Liverpool*, Youth Service Information Centre, Leicester, 1971

nonetheless, comprising annual reports, financial statements, internal publications and some committee papers. It has been possible to reconstruct and triangulate information from other sources, to help where the documentary record is weak. The publication of London Youth's 100-year history (focusing initially on the LFBC) has been particularly useful to compare to surviving documents and to understand in more detail some of the key personnel from the post-war period.¹¹⁵

The LRO and LMA holdings pertaining to individual clubs are patchy at best. In Liverpool, a series of papers on individual clubs remains, but these were clubs undergoing post-Albemarle developments or redevelopments sponsored by the MYA in the early 1960s. This means that their papers must be considered as a product of youth work developing at this time, and considered critically in comparison to more established clubs, many of whom do not have accessible archives. This does not devalue their use as case studies, indeed they are excellent evidence of developing strands of youth work in the post-war period, but they must not be taken to be representative of all youth clubs.

Club-level papers, suitable for use as case studies are available in several instances. In Liverpool, incomplete archives have been located for the Bronte Street Youth and Community Centre, Florence Institute, Shrewsbury House Youth Club and Anfield Boys' Club in addition to the personal papers of a worker who worked at the Rock Youth Club and later the DYW project. In London, the papers of Alford House in Kennington have been examined as well as holdings in the Black Cultural Archive pertaining to Moonshot Youth Club in Lewisham. Short 'biographies' of case study clubs are in appendix two. It has been possible to locate the papers of some individual clubs, often due to the club having a present-day incarnation and a permanent building where such records could be housed. In the case of Shrewsbury House Youth Centre in Everton, having a long-standing presence on the management committee and an 'archive team' of volunteers has enabled them to preserve and digitise some of their records. While the archives are a rich source, they contain many omissions and fragments. Association views are heavily represented in what remains,

¹¹⁵ Powley, *Getting on With It*

but youth work reports and management committee minutes do allow the opportunity to access the views of youth workers and committee members.

In addition to primary sources held at the LRO, LMA and in modern-day incarnations of clubs, secondary literatures have been used to put clubs and associations within their context and triangulate material found in archives. In particular this thesis uses sociology produced during the period. Empirical sociology, for example, May's study of school children in Liverpool, Muchnick's study of urban renewal in Liverpool and Parker's view of delinquency on the estate where the Bronte Centre case study was sited allow this thesis to take the snapshots provided by youth clubs and put them in a wider milieu.¹¹⁶ Even work about localities outside the case study areas has value in indicating the prominent social themes and issues which may have also shaped experiences in youth clubs at this time: for example, Rex and Moore's study of race in Birmingham provides a useful point of analysis when considering race and immigration in Lewisham and Liverpool.¹¹⁷ In so doing, this thesis uses sociological works as historical sources, situating them alongside the social contexts that produced them and using them to look at the responses from youth work to a range of issues. Such studies are not comprehensive examinations of any given topic and they are not without fault, but they are useful sources in conjunction with those being produced by youth work.

Photographs of clubs, from club archives and of young people from Liverpool and London from between 1958 and 1985 have been used. They present the fashions and cultures of youth in clubs and serve to enable an analysis of the way that the spaces of youth clubs were used. In this regard, John Goto's photographs taken within a predominantly black youth club in Lewisham in 1977 have been particularly useful.¹¹⁸ Contemporary photographs of former youth club buildings taken during research trips have their use in aiding understanding of how spaces have been used by young people and the place of a club in its local setting. In addition there are surviving British Pathé Newsreels. With the Duke of Edinburgh as their Patron, the LFBC, clubs, members and their notable

¹¹⁶ J.B. Mays, *Education and The Urban Child*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1968; Muchnick, *Urban Renewal*; Parker, *The View From The Boys*

¹¹⁷ John Rex and Robert Moore, *Race, Community and Conflict – a study of Sparkbrook*, London, OUP, 1967

¹¹⁸ John Goto, 'Lovers Rock', http://www.johngoto.org.uk/Lovers_Rock/index.htm, accessed 30th October 2014

milestones have been preserved in films of visits made by the Duke of Edinburgh in the 1950s and 1960s. These are vivid examples and serve greatly to illuminate the public image the LFBC wished to convey, and spent considerable effort promoting. They are one of the few sources which allow direct access to the voice and image of young people in youth clubs at this time, and for this purpose they are particularly useful, even though they have been edited to focus on their Royal Patron. Alford House in Kennington was the subject of the several films such as *We are the Lambeth Boys* (1959), and these films have been useful in providing a vivid snapshot of the young members, the activities of the club and the wider lives of the young members at the time.

However, the films, like the archives and photographs, have been mediated. The decision to preserve them, or author the documents in certain ways has served a purpose other than research. In so doing the voice of youth is often lost, and so are many of the nuances, informal discussions and unwritten feelings about clubs and members which must have inevitably taken place. In seeking to recover as full a picture as possible of youth work and youth club life in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 the complementary method of oral history interviewing has also been chosen.

c. Oral histories

Oral history has three particular advantages which have recommended it to this research. Firstly, '[I]ts ability to work closely with specifics of place continues to be one of the most valuable strengths of oral history' as outlined by Trower (in a project bringing together much local and community history) says much about how the stories people tell about their youth, professional lives and cultures are rooted in place.¹¹⁹ As a thesis in which the specificity of the spaces in and around youth clubs is crucial, oral history allows individuals to tell their stories in a way which relates directly to their experiences of using youth clubs. This was made explicit in one example where the interviewee pointed in the direction of the specific places that shaped his narrative; the youth club, the shopping centre and the train station or another interview which followed a tour of

¹¹⁹ Shelley Trower ed., *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 2

the club given by the interviewee.¹²⁰

Secondly, although the subjectivity of the oral history interview can be argued to be problematic in historical research, in obtaining different perspectives of youth work between 1958 and 1985 in South London and Liverpool subjectivity is important for discerning the meanings interviewees attached to their stories.¹²¹ For example, the unique perspective of detached youth work offered a positioned critique of established youth work. Youth cultures too were very subjective and while some interviewees' accounts of their youth club days could be corroborated by evidence in the archives, the significance of those experiences could only come from the interviewees themselves.

Thirdly, a very practical reason made oral history an obvious method to use for this research: archives are always incomplete records of the phenomena they are supposed to record. The archives of voluntary organisations have particular problems. Beyond the mandatory filing for the Charity Commission there is no duty to keep these records and many have been lost. Those that remain are particularly prone to gaps and omissions: the London Union lost many records in 1942 after a bomb fell on their headquarters. There is also much that was never written down especially in the less formal clubs like Anne's which was in a church hall without as much as a sign-in sheet.¹²² Oral history has not only been useful to verify information from archives but it has also been vital for accessing the voices of those involved or attending youth clubs. In addition it revealed new leads to follow to find further sources and has explained the absence of some documents, such in the case of the Liverpool Associations' merger, where an interviewee was able to explain that discussions were relatively advanced before any formal documentation was drawn up.¹²³

¹²⁰ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014; interview with Steve, 9th September 2014; in this way interviews used material culture, physical space and versions of photo or object elicitation to anchor their stories to real places see Hugo Slim and Paul Thompson, with Olivia Bennett and Nigel Cross, 'Ways of Listening', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson eds., *The Oral History Reader*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 115-125; George Ewart Evans, 'Approaches to Interviewing', *Oral History*, Vol. 1, No. 4, The Interview in Social History: Part 1, 1972, pp. 56-7

¹²¹ Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different?', Perks and Thompson eds., *The Oral History Reader*, pp. 63-74

¹²² Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

¹²³ Interview with James, 24th September 2014

Like documentary research, oral history has its limits. It is inherently limited by the constraints of memory.¹²⁴ Much has been forgotten and much is potentially misremembered as it is recalled through a contemporary lens. However, adults' reflections on their younger selves are not without value, especially in trying to establish the role of youth clubs to young people. The highly subjective nature of individual interviews is mediated where it is possible to use documents to verify stories, but even where this is not possible, the personal views of former members and workers are significant, especially when examining the meanings young people ascribed to their cultures. While the interviews carried out for this thesis have been subjective, hard to verify and contained misremembrances, they have also provided vivid stories and emotions which while they have echoed many of the themes in the documents, have taken them further.

One area where oral history has aided this thesis is in offering evidence on the under-researched elements of voluntarism: informal volunteering. By taking an archival and interviewing methodology which does not presuppose a level of formal organisation, this thesis offers evidence of the informal volunteer: the couple opening the church hall once a week to local young people, the trainee teacher offering informal assistance on a club-organised trip to Spain and so on. By not taking a solely top-down look at formal institutions and interviewing people viewing voluntarism on their own terms, nuance can be seen which shows the spectrum covering intensely formalised and very informal notions of work with young people.

The interviewees have been a self-selecting group, though a number of recruitment methods were used to try and ensure as wide participation as possible. After receiving ethical approval a project blog was set up to host an invitation to participate, an information sheet and act as a point of contact for potential participants.¹²⁵ Links to the blog could then be used to offer access to information about the research. At this point a slot on BBC Radio Merseyside was arranged to appeal for potential participants and the host used an hour of the morning show for

¹²⁴ Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition; A study in Historical Methodology*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965; Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different?'; Trevor Lummis, 'Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence', Perks and Thompson eds., *The Oral History Reader*, pp. 273-283

¹²⁵ See www.clements29.wordpress.com/oralhistory, accessed 8th August 2015

people to talk about their memories of youth clubs.¹²⁶ Several participants came forward as a result of this. Twitter and Facebook were also used to disseminate links to information about the call for interviewees. By the 27th July 2015 the details had been shared online 147 times, achieving 416 views of the project. This helped to recruit over a dozen participants who used the blog to make initial contact. The modern-day incarnations of the voluntary youth organisation were also contacted and they sent details via their mailing lists and member clubs. In an attempt to reach former members and workers who may not have internet access, posters and leaflets were also sent out to nearly a dozen local archive centres and libraries in Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark and 18 community libraries in Liverpool and Merseyside. However, by far the most successful methods for recruiting participants was word of mouth. While recruitment methods mean that the majority of people recruited are from clubs connected with one of the associations, who have remained in the local area the variety of recruitment methods used have ensured that as wide a pool of potential interviewees have been reached within the practical limitations of the research. This has also meant that interviews focus on a handful of clubs and projects for which documents were not always available. However, in the couple of instances where both documents and interviewees were available a particularly deep and nuanced understanding was offered.

A larger pool of respondents would have been preferable, especially to offer a more rigorous account of some local cultures. In particular this research would have benefitted from speaking to more black and/or female former club members, as well as more of those working with them, but as a self-selecting group within the constraints of the research every effort was made to reach as many people as possible.

In considering the use of oral history for this research it has been necessary to consider ethical issues. Interviewees were offered full anonymity and several only agreed on this basis. Those still involved with youth work required anonymity especially when discussing their past youthful misdemeanours and when discussing organisations and communities with whom they need to maintain a working relationship. This has meant limiting some of the uses of the

¹²⁶ Sean Styles morning show, BBC Radio Merseyside, 22nd November 2013

interviews, where information may lead to identifying the interviewee, but has resulted in understanding valuable links between past youth club attendance and later youth work. Some respondents were happy to be identified, but doing so may have identified others who wished to remain anonymous. All have been given pseudonyms for consistency.¹²⁷ In cases where the interviewee has stated that they are happy to be identified, identifying information is only given where it allows a greater understanding of their place within youth work or their case study and where it will not compromise other interviewees' anonymity.

Interviews adopted a loose structure, covering broad topics, chronologies and themes and allowing the interviewee the maximum opportunity to speak freely. More structured follow-up questions were used to clarify details such as the years that participants were referring to, their age at the time, and to clarify impressions given by the interviewee. The approach to interviews has been to facilitate the emergence of the narrative and in addition, to explore with interviewees some of the developing themes from the documents and literature.

In the course of the research 23 individuals were contacted or made contact, in addition to the archives group of the Shrewsbury House Youth Club and the individuals who telephoned BBC Radio Merseyside on 22nd November 2013. After screening the potential interviewees for suitability (i.e. having been involved with a club in the relevant location at the time covered by this thesis) nineteen interviews were conducted with twelve individuals, some of whom were interviewed in more than one capacity, such as workers who formerly attended clubs and were interviewed about both. The twelve interviewees comprised nine men and three women, eight of whom were relevant to the South London case study area, three relevant to the Liverpool case study area and one interviewee who had worked in both locations in the 1970s and 1980s. Interviewees' included those who have been youth club members, volunteers, part- and full-time workers and leaders, people running Intermediate Treatment services, detached youth workers, people from local associations, an HMI of Youth Services, management committee members and trustees. The gender disparity reflected that perceived in youth work and club membership at this time, so is

¹²⁷ Please refer to appendix one

perhaps unsurprising. Furthermore the post-Albemarle aim to recruit leaders from the ranks of senior members appears to be reflected in the way that volunteer and professional involvement could be traced back to membership in a surprisingly large number of cases. Biographies of interviewees are given as far as anonymity allows in appendix one. While interviewees provide a good perspective of post-war developments in youth work, the boys' club approach is poorly represented in the sample of interviews.

This research uses sources generated by clubs and associations themselves and those produced by related organisations and puts them alongside sources that have captured youth club life and the testimony of those who have used and worked in youth clubs. By doing this, this research draws on a range of perspectives about youth clubs in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 to amass a wealth of evidence about the significance of these organisations and the associations in place to support them. Only by doing in-depth case study research using a wide variety of sources can this research prove the contribution that youth clubs and associations have made to young lives and local welfare economies in the post-war period. This restores the importance of these bodies in historiography which has hitherto neglected them.

Chapter Two – Structure and Operation of Youth Voluntary Associations and Clubs in Liverpool and London 1958-1985

This chapter outlines the operation of the local youth associations in Liverpool and London as well as the structures in place for the running of the youth clubs affiliated to them. It examines how associations and clubs were an integral part of the local mixed economy of welfare. The evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates the blurred boundaries between state and voluntary action in providing services to young people. It demonstrates that at the local level, the key national policies' influence on the functioning of the associations was secondary to local concerns and reduced as the period wore on. Central government mattered most when it came to funding, particularly with regard to building projects and paying salaries, but the youth voluntary associations were not financially dependent on the Ministry of Education (1944-64) or Department for Education and Science (DES, 1964-92) and the balance of power switched in the 1970s when more grant making began to be decided locally.¹²⁸ As will be argued, this indicates that for local youth voluntary associations, the local education authority and national bodies were more important than their relationships with central government policy-makers, reflecting the more powerful role that Local Education Authorities (LEAs) had in running education services at this time. This shows that the Youth Service had relatively low priority in the national provision of welfare services in terms of policy and funding, giving it a precarious yet important position in the overall welfare economy of post-war Britain.

In both London and Liverpool changes in local government were to be important to voluntary organisations in the 1980s. In London the Greater London Council (GLC) and Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) were set to be abolished by 1985 and the local youth voluntary associations had grave concerns about their own future, which may not have been unfounded

¹²⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, Letter dated 30th April 1971, from DES to youth services outlines how money will be concentrated in some areas by being diverted through the Urban Aid programme to areas of 'high social need'. Other grants will change from being decided by DES and matched locally to being decided by LEAs and matched by DES up to 1/3 of the project cost, or 50% in exceptional circumstances, MYA Development Committee Papers

given the Youth Service's decline after this point.¹²⁹ The GLC had been a significant funder of the voluntary sector, set strategic priorities in key service areas and promoted innovation in the voluntary sphere and the closure of the GLC was widely viewed as a political attack.¹³⁰ In Liverpool, the 1970s had seen a new local authority structure implemented.¹³¹ The elected officials in 1980s Liverpool served to take the Council further left and this brought them into open conflict with the Thatcher Government. A small group who were labelled as 'Militant' nearly drove services to a standstill and following failure to set a budget in 1983 many councillors were barred from office.¹³² These events not only had significant impacts on the LEAs who formed the main point of contact with the state for local youth voluntary associations, they also affected the funding climate in which the Youth Service operated.

When looking at the structure and operation of the associations, one of the themes examined is professionalisation, in line with literature on NGOs and service-providing voluntary organisations in the 1960s.¹³³ Evidence presented here shows that moves were made by the associations in London and Liverpool to reduce running costs and become more efficient - in short, to professionalise in a number of ways – but that this was not always done as part of an overarching professionalising agenda. In some cases - such as the MYA - it was more a matter of local needs and pressures combining with ever-present concerns over financial matters, but in others - like the London Union - professionalisation was clearly part of the agenda. Uncovering this variation nuances and contradicts aspects of Hilton et al.'s argument; while agreeing that organisations increasingly looked to use trained professional staff and efficient machinery, Liverpool and London youth voluntary associations show that they retained a lot of ad-hoc organisation and simply could not have survived without their voluntary and part-time leaders,

¹²⁹ On concerns over ILEA/GLC closure see particularly LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/02, London Union Annual Report 1984, pp. 2-4, and on the 1980s decline of Youth Voluntary Organisations see Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 28, p.291

¹³⁰ Wilson and Game, *Local Government*, pp. 73-4; Tony Travers, *The Politics of London: Governing an Ungovernable City*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; Jennifer Wolch, *The shadow state : government and voluntary sector in transition*, New York, Foundation Center, 1990

¹³¹ Created as a result of the Local Government Act 1972

¹³² Frost and North, *Militant Liverpool – A City on the edge*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2013; Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn, *Liverpool – A city that dared to fight*, London, Fortress, 1988

¹³³ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10, Virginia Berridge and Alex Mold, 'Professionalisation, new social movements and voluntary action in the 1960s and 1970s'

voluntary helpers and voluntary fundraising effort.

This section introduces the umbrella associations studied within the case study areas: the LFBC; London Union; LBA; Liverpool Union; and MYA. It examines their audience through looking at the conditions of affiliation and the numbers of affiliates between 1958 and 1985, and looks at some of the organisational changes they experienced during this time. There is an examination of internal issues; funding, finance, staffing, and management to look at how these organisations functioned and changed, linking to the level of engagement with national policy agendas, and also the professionalisation agenda. Furthermore this will begin to uncover the roles and relationships of the associations and clubs in local youth welfare provision which will be covered in the following chapter.

I. Organisational structure and affiliation

The local associations in London and Liverpool all operated on a similar model, whereby an honorary executive and committees ran the voluntary associations. They supported youth work in the local area by affiliating local youth clubs while themselves having recourse to the support of the national associations; the National Association of Boys' Clubs (NABC) and the National Association of Youth Clubs (NAYC).

An idea of who affiliated to and used youth voluntary associations in Liverpool and London between 1958 and 1985 is vital to understand these organisations. The terms 'affiliated clubs' and 'member clubs' or 'member' were often used interchangeably, but for clarity this thesis will use affiliation to refer to organisations and members to refer to young people themselves.

In 1958, one of the principal organisations concerned with youth in London was the LFBC, founded in 1887 to help and promote the work of the boys' clubs in the city.¹³⁴ They were located on the Blackfriars Road in the current borough of Southwark, and their primary aims were to

¹³⁴ Powley, *Getting on with it*, p. 7

promote spiritual (meaning Christian), moral and physical welfare of boys in London.¹³⁵ To affiliate to the LFBC, a page at the back of their Annual Report for 1970-71 advises that the following conditions must be met:

London Federation of Boys' Clubs:	
Conditions of Membership	Conditions of Associate Membership
<i>Organisations seeking to affiliate must:</i>	<i>Organisations seeking Associate Membership should:</i>
Have a Constitution	Meet the main aims of the LFBC
Have an adult committee of management	Admit girls as long as boys are provided for by a dedicated area and night per week
Have an adult leader	Join in all activities and receive all services of the LFBC
Have a regular meeting place	Attend the Annual General Meeting
Have at least fifteen boys between 13-19 years old in membership	Have no voting rights
Be at least three months old	N.B. Specialist and single activity clubs may be admitted at the discretion of the LFBC
Be open a minimum of two nights a week	
Be open to a visit from an LFBC visitor	
Share the principles and aims of the LFBC regarding the spiritual, moral and physical welfare of boys	

Table 2.1: London Federation of Boys' Club Affiliation Conditions 1971¹³⁶

Associate membership was available to single interest groups or new clubs working towards fulfilling the main criteria. It is important to note the scope for discretion used to ensure the values and spirit of the boys' club movement remained paramount. The LBA, founded in 1911, shared similar aims, these being 'the spiritual, mental, physical and moral education and welfare of boys' by: encouraging formation of boys' clubs and similar organisations; organising leagues, festivals and games etc.; providing playing fields and similar sports facilities; recruiting and training leaders and making grants.¹³⁷

In 1961, the Liverpool Union used the NAYC's affiliation conditions to help formulate their own. Amongst their Executive and Policy Committee minutes for 1961 were the NAYC Conditions

¹³⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1957-1958, pp. 2-3

¹³⁶ Information tabulated from LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1970-71, p. 30

¹³⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1960, inside cover

for affiliation alongside a draft affiliation leaflet of their own setting out the benefits of joining.¹³⁸ It stated that affiliates should accept and strive to implement the aims of the NAYC; that 66% of the membership should be aged 14-21; the organisation must be non-party political; meet at least weekly in the normal club year; charge a subscription fee, keep a record of membership and correct accounts; have been open for more than three months and reapply annually for affiliation.¹³⁹ They also had specific criteria on the management of the clubs stating an adult committee must exist with finance and policy responsibility, appoint or approve the leader and if the club was mixed then the management committee must also be mixed. A members or joint adult and members committee was specified, with representatives elected by the members which 'shall be responsible with the leader for the day-to-day running of the club.'¹⁴⁰ Similarly to the boys' associations, associate affiliates could be single interest groups, or be provisional for one year to give clubs time to comply with the above.¹⁴¹

From the above, it can be seen that the spirit of the conditions was the same for boys' and mixed clubs: they should be stable, open frequently, well run, under adult leadership and should aim to implement a set of aims around the welfare and education of young people. Affiliation was formalised by the payment of a fee. For the Liverpool Union, similar to the other associations, the fee came in two parts: a flat annual fee plus an additional amount payable dependent on the size of the membership. In 1961 these fees were:

¹³⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, Memo from the NAYC dated November 1961 and Annotated Draft of Affiliation Leaflet (undated), the General Minute Book for 1958-1964

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs Affiliation Fees 1961-1966		
<i>Type of fee</i>	<i>Amount payable 1961 (per annum)</i>	<i>Amount payable 1966 (per annum)</i>
Flat fee for clubs with 0-40 members	£1	£2. 10. s
Flat fee for clubs with 40-60 members	30 s p.a	n/a
Fee per 20 additional members	10 s per 20 members up to a maximum of £4	£1.5 s per 20 members up to maximum of £8.15.-
Fee for junior club/section of club open one night per week	12 s	£1.5. s

Table 2.2: Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs Affiliation Fees, 1961-1966 ¹⁴²

The MYA, formed in 1969 kept the affiliation conditions in line with the national bodies as clubs continued to additionally affiliate to the NABC, NAYC or both. But the aim of the MYA as a ‘co-ordinating body’ was set out as encouraging club formation under the overarching object:

To help and educate boys and girls and young men and young women, especially those between the ages of 14 and 20 years, through their leisure time activities so to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.¹⁴³

Affiliation was voluntary, organisations had to satisfy local and national conditions of affiliation, and a fee was payable. For these reasons by no means every youth organisation in either London or Liverpool would have been affiliated to the local or national youth club associations. Furthermore there were clubs who did not see themselves as part of the boys’, girls’ or mixed club tradition(s) and distanced themselves from the associations. Additionally, associations accepted affiliates other than clubs despite the use of the collective term ‘youth clubs’. As the above conditions note, it was possible for an organisation other than a boys’, girls’ or mixed youth club to affiliate and specific mention was made of single interest groups. Between 1958 and 1985 overall conditions varied little except for some alteration in the age range covered.¹⁴⁴ How they were applied, however, was a matter for the committee accepting new applications to interpret at any given time. In this respect the London Union especially stand out as having had a broad affiliate base of many different types

¹⁴² LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5 , Memo from the NAYC dated November 1961 and Annotated Draft of Affiliation Leaflet (undated) in the General Minute Book for 1958-1964; LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/7, Liverpool Union Circular Letter. Fees were broadly similar across the associations examined here and were occasionally reviewed and revised upwards

¹⁴³ LRO, M367/MYA/M/1/9, Draft Constitution of the MYA (c. December 1967), p. 1,

¹⁴⁴ Discussed further in chapter five

of organisation. It appears the London Union interpreted the conditions more widely than their fellow organisations. Included in their affiliations were a group of Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied (PHAB) Groups, uniformed organisations like Scout and Guide groups, Boys and Girls Brigade Groups and single interest groups such as for sports and hobbies.¹⁴⁵

In the above conditions for affiliation it is not specified that a club had to be a voluntary club, and in Liverpool at least, some local authority clubs chose to affiliate as well. While in Liverpool the Liverpool Union did not actively court wider membership the same way the London Union did, they too had a variety of affiliated organisations throughout 1958-85. The clubs affiliated to the Liverpool Union in August 1958 included a tenants and ratepayers' association and a square dance club among the traditional and largely church-based youth clubs.¹⁴⁶ By 1969 affiliated groups included a settlement, residents' associations, a district welfare association, community centres, the local police cadets club and two pathfinder groups.¹⁴⁷ By September 1983 further diversification meant affiliates included seven companies of the Boys' Brigade, a school, Liverpool Football Club, a YMCA, dance club, technical college, a drop-in centre, an adventure playground, and clubs from Jewish, Methodist and Anglican backgrounds.¹⁴⁸ Similar trends in broadening affiliation were seen in the London Union, suggesting that mixed work was able to build a broader base for membership than boys' work, which tended to be more traditional in its membership. These diverse affiliate groups also suggest that associations in London and Liverpool, especially those for mixed clubs, were acting as a wider linkage in local youth welfare provision, bringing together youth clubs, uniformed organisations as well as other bodies with expertise in youth welfare without drawing a distinction between state and voluntary provision.

Having established who could join the associations, a simple look at the rising and falling affiliation levels stresses that the voluntary youth services in London and Liverpool between 1958

¹⁴⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, London Union Annual Reports 1958-1985

¹⁴⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/39, Liverpool Union of Girls' and Mixed Clubs Annual Report 1957-58, inside cover,; interestingly interviewee John in South London recalls doing a summer 'playscheme' (though including those in the Youth Service age bracket) while working for a tenants association, suggesting some chose to undertake youth work, interviewed 27th August 2014

¹⁴⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/49, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1969

¹⁴⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1983

and 1985 enjoyed periods of success and growth. This continued until the mid-1980s when a more general decline in youth voluntary organisations is noted by Hilton et al.¹⁴⁹

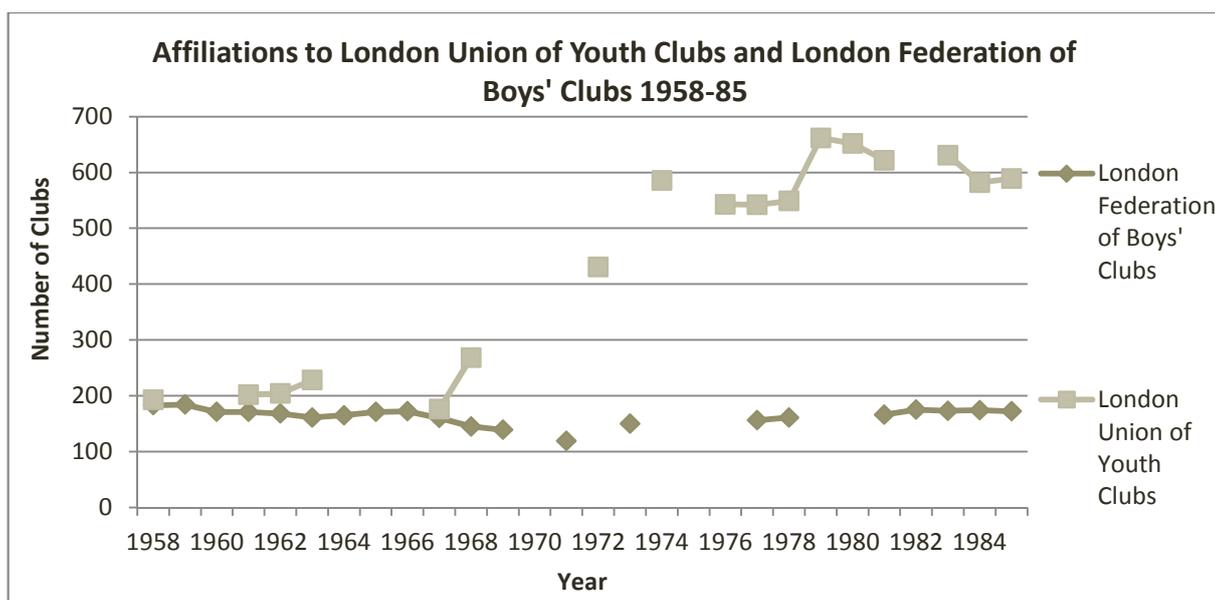


Figure 2.1: Affiliations to the London Federation of Boys' Clubs and London Union of Youth Clubs 1958-1985¹⁵⁰

While the figures are incomplete it is possible to see that between 1958 and 1985 the number of boys' clubs affiliated to the LFBC remained consistent at between one hundred and two hundred clubs. In comparison the London Union experienced a big increase in affiliation levels, especially between 1966 and 1974, maintaining a level of over 500 affiliate organisations per year after 1974. As described above, this was at least partially because they accepted a wider base of organisations.

¹⁴⁹ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 28, p. 291

¹⁵⁰ Figures compiled from information given in LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4-8, LFBC Annual Reports 1958-1985 and LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, London Union Annual Reports 1958-85

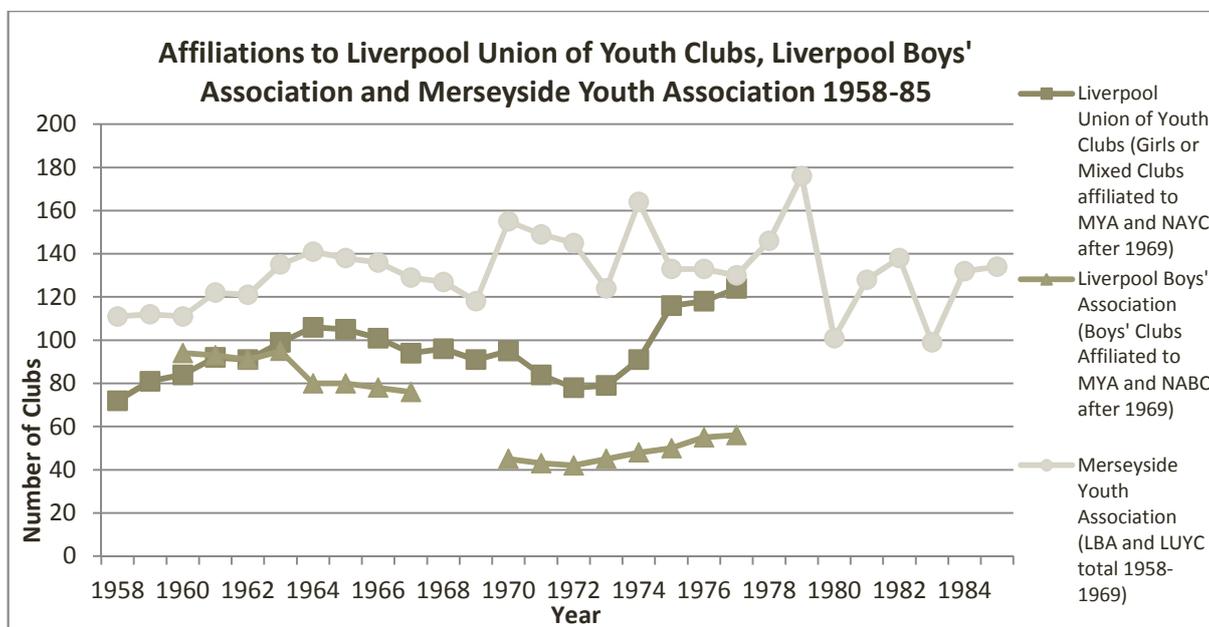


Figure 2.2: Affiliations to the Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs, Liverpool Boys' Association and Merseyside Youth Association 1958-1985¹⁵¹

In Liverpool figures for the numbers of member clubs are patchy and due to differences in the way they were collected over time it is only possible to draw the broadest of conclusions from them.

What the figures do show, however, is that Davies' contention that there was a 'golden age' in the 1960s, is not entirely supported at the local level in Liverpool, nor indeed in London.¹⁵² In both cases the number of affiliated clubs remained more or less stable throughout this time, until 1979 in the case of Liverpool and beyond this point in London.¹⁵³ While not all clubs within an area would necessarily have been affiliated to local associations, affiliation levels at this time do not point to an overall decline in the Youth Service after post-Albemarle optimism.

While age groupings were tweaked to reflect changing perceptions of when young people grew up, national government policy, as outlined below, had no significant influence on affiliation levels until at least the 1980s and public expenditure cuts affecting the wider welfare economy. In London, the withdrawal of the grants to youth groups as ILEA and the GLC closed was also relevant as it centralised some funding decisions and removed others from the left-wing GLC to less radical

¹⁵¹ Figures compiled from information given in LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Reports 1958-1969; LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/39-49, Liverpool Union Annual Reports 1958-1969 and LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/1-14, MYA Annual Reports 1969-83

¹⁵² Davies, *A History* p. 57

¹⁵³ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 28, p. 291

borough councils.¹⁵⁴ The policies of national associations, the NABC and NAYC, did however, setting the template for affiliation conditions in at least one case.

In both Liverpool and London, there were significant organisational changes for youth voluntary associations in the 1960s which reflected their attempts to meet emerging perceptions of what young people wanted and needed from their clubs, and to reflect this in organisations' identities. As preference for mixed clubs developed after the Second World War (as argued by Collins) the girls' and mixed associations nationally, and in London and Liverpool, sought to show that they catered for this emerging need.¹⁵⁵ This meant they formally changed their names in the early 1960s to include the increasingly popular term 'youth club'. In both cases the move was adopted without much fanfare and reflected the National Union of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs becoming the National Union of Youth Clubs.¹⁵⁶ The Liverpool Union of Girls' and Mixed Clubs changed their name in 1962, a year after the London Union, their previous name having reflected their role as 'other' to their local boys' association rather than their own coherent identity.¹⁵⁷ Both became 'Unions of Youth Clubs'. As well as bringing them into line with their national association, the change also clarified who they were as well as who they were for.¹⁵⁸ They saw themselves as the main association for youth voluntary organisations in their respective geographical areas. The LBA initially objected to this change as they felt the move excluded boys' clubs while appearing to be a catch-all name.¹⁵⁹ The boys' club associations kept their separate identity, demonstrating their perception that there was something unique about a boys' club and the movement to which they belonged that could not be found elsewhere.¹⁶⁰

In Liverpool there had long been pressure from the local authority and Liverpool Council of

¹⁵⁴ Muhammet Kosecik and Naim Kapucu, 'Conservative Reform of Metropolitan Counties: Abolition of the GLC and MCCs in Retrospect', *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2003, pp. 71-94

¹⁵⁵ Collins, *Modern Love*

¹⁵⁶ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/01, in the 1960-61 Annual Report the London Union refer to themselves simply as 'formerly LUMC&GC (London Union of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs), it then is not mentioned until p. 7

¹⁵⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/4, Liverpool Union of Girls' and Mixed Clubs and Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs Annual Reports 1960-62 and LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/01, London Union Annual Report 1960-61, p. 7,

¹⁵⁸ LRO, M367 MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union General Council Minutes, 11 May 1961

¹⁵⁹ LRO, M367 MYA/G/1/1/5, LBA and Liverpool Union Correspondence, 1959, LRO, M367 MYA/M/1/3 and Liverpool Union Executive Committee Minutes, 8 June 1961

¹⁶⁰ See for example LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1958-59, p. 3, and LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1981-82, p. 3; Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society*, p. 13

Social Service (LCSS) for the LBA and Liverpool Union to form a single organisation, with the idea dating back at least to 1944. Serious talks on the matter did not begin until 1964, and formal planning began in 1967, though an LCSS employee from the period described how the LCSS negotiated the 'engagement' long before the 'wedding planning' got underway.¹⁶¹ The merger aimed to bring together staff in shared headquarters, achieve efficiency and 'administrative rationalisation' while promising that member clubs would see improvements in services provided to them, importantly, without being asked to change their activities or identities.¹⁶² Another obvious gain which they refer to bore directly on their relationship with the state: as a single organisation, they would no longer be in competition with each other for grants. A merger would offer them a greater strategic opportunity to offer a strong voluntary-led development plan. From the point of view of the state, dealing with a single organisation was preferable. The Ministry of Education approved the merger, as evidenced by their correspondence with the LBA before it took place.¹⁶³

However, one organisation objecting strongly to the merger was the NABC who threatened to expel the LBA if the merger went through.¹⁶⁴ They felt that the merger threatened the national movement and was only happening because of local authority pressure, and while keen, there is no evidence of pressure in the archives. This sense of a movement under pressure is especially interesting given Springhall's refusal to include boys' and youth clubs in his definition of youth movements.¹⁶⁵ An interviewee recalls that a merger had long been the preference of the LCSS, and though the LEA was in favour, the LCSS and the Liverpool Youth Organisations Council (LYOC) were by far more influential, in this, and many other matters.¹⁶⁶ The NABC saw the LBA as picking local ties over the roots of what they described as the boys' movement, and wanted stronger inter-NABC ties rather than local links. In some ways they were correct. The LBA were deliberately

¹⁶¹ LRO, M367 MYA/M/1/5, early merger documents dated 1964; LRO, M367 MYA/G/3/48, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1967-68; interview with James, 24th September 2014

¹⁶² LRO, M367 MYA/M/1/9, Draft Constitution and Letter from LBA President, 8th August 1968; LRO, M367 MYA/G/3/48, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1967-8

¹⁶³ LRO, M367/MYA/M/1/9, Letter to the General Secretary of the LBA from the DES, 24th September 1968

¹⁶⁴ LRO, M367 MYA/M/1/9, Correspondence between the NABC and LBA, August 1968

¹⁶⁵ Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*, p. 13

¹⁶⁶ Interview with James, 24th September 2014

strengthening local ties, but they still saw boys work as unique. However, they wished to undertake this work from within a robust local partnership.¹⁶⁷ At this point for the LBA and Liverpool Union, it was local circumstances and the advantages of efficiency, including in their relations with the state, which took priority in 1969. The merger went ahead with the strong support of all local clubs.¹⁶⁸ It is a particularly good example of how the local welfare mix, pressures and circumstances shaped the boundaries of local youth provision.

The merger can also be seen in light of wider debates about professionalisation and 'modernisation' within voluntary organisations and state-provided welfare. At the local level the merger was designed to make the MYA a more efficient organisation: making better use of resources, joint training, staffing and shared offices. While the terminology may not have been about competition, in terms of securing resources from the LEA, it can be assumed that a leaner, larger local association would be better placed to work with the LEA and to develop a strong relationship with the Director of Education. However, that the MYA saw this as necessary in the late 1960s again comes back to their perception of their place within the mixed economy of welfare in Liverpool. They had been indirectly influenced by the LEA, and saw a successful merger in terms of how it would help their relationship with the LEA and LCSS.¹⁶⁹ This indicates that the youth voluntary organisations in Liverpool saw that they needed to strengthen their position as the weaker organisations in the mixed economy of welfare. While they were still the largest provider of youth clubs and related services in Liverpool, this provision came from within a relationship where the priorities of the LEA were paramount and the youth voluntary organisations had to promote and carry out their work within them.¹⁷⁰

There was no merger in London until 1997. For the duration of the period 1958-1985 the two London associations worked in relatively separate spheres and rationalisation and efficiency

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ LRO, M367 MYA/G/3/48, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1967-68

¹⁶⁹ Interview with James, 24th September 2014 and LRO, M367/MYA/M/1/9, Letter from the Chairman of LBA to the NABC, 8th August 1968

¹⁷⁰ Fairburn-Milson, pp. 142-43 notes that in 1957-58 the LEA employed 2 youth work staff whereas the local voluntary organisations employed 30. In 1967-68 the LEA employed 16 staff while the local voluntary organisations employed 37. This fits with local figures as in discussion on the above report published locally, LRO, M367 MYA/M/7/2, 'Last but not least - essentially for a creative Community Youth Service in Liverpool', September 1973, p. 5, which states that 34 out of 44 full-time clubs are managed by voluntary agencies

were internal. That they did not merge is partially because financial circumstances did not make it a priority; both organisations appear to have been satisfied with their ability to win grants and cope with financial hardship (and London had a larger potential pool of fee-paying members than Liverpool). Perhaps more important was a sense of separate identities, which an interviewee described broadly; the LFBC was for clubs, competitive sports and the traditions of the boys' club movement while the London Union focussed on special projects and services.¹⁷¹ In Liverpool the associations both felt they could undertake different types of youth work, even if they did take on a single identity. These differences in identity and focus, emerging particularly in the 1960s after the Albemarle Report are one of the defining features of the post-war Youth Service and recur throughout the remainder of this thesis.

II. Local reaction to national policy

In 1960 the Albemarle Report on the Youth Service was published.¹⁷² It came out of serious concern from the Ministry of Education for the future of the Youth Service after years of neglect and lack of investment, coupled with anticipated challenges around providing a fit-for-purpose service for increasing numbers of young people. It was an important watershed in the relationship between the voluntary youth services and the state. It promised a new lease of life for youth associations where training, staffing and resourcing would increase.

Prior to its publication, the Albemarle committee conceded there had been a period of decline in the provision of youth services.¹⁷³ This has been acknowledged by Davies.¹⁷⁴ While recognising the strengths of and ongoing need for a Youth Service, the Albemarle Report pointed to weaknesses which stemmed 'from the prolonged financial stringency and consequent lack of drive'¹⁷⁵ such as low political priority, an inconsistent and underdeveloped grant-making machinery leading to 'haphazard' local development, a tired method of youth work, 'dingy drab premises', lack

¹⁷¹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹⁷² Albemarle

¹⁷³ Albemarle, p. 1

¹⁷⁴ Davies, *A History*, p. 29-30

¹⁷⁵ Albemarle, p. 10

of equipment, insufficient leadership, poor support and training for leadership, little co-ordination between local authorities and voluntary bodies, and a failure to reach many young people.¹⁷⁶ That the Youth Service had been allowed to wither in this way suggests it was not a priority of post-war welfare. Such a long list of shortcomings produced a two-phase development plan for the Youth Service: an emergency five year development phase, followed by another plan including heavy investment in leadership training and recruitment, developing new youth work and a building programme where LEAs would lead but voluntary organisation building would also be encouraged, again showing the prominent role of local government in education.¹⁷⁷

The Albemarle Report signalled improved relationships between the state and voluntary youth bodies at local level, more investment and an overall reinvigoration of the Youth Service with voluntary bodies set to retain a vital role. It set a positive tone for youth work in the 1960s and gave a clear policy direction: to develop youth clubs and youth leadership, especially in new housing areas.¹⁷⁸ The Albemarle Report promised much to a troubled Youth Service.

In Liverpool and London recommendations were largely anticipated and already being planned for before publication. This is something Davies argues was happening country-wide and was part of the strategy of negotiation and compromise used by Lady Albemarle in drawing up the final report.¹⁷⁹ This would explain why the local voluntary associations in London and Liverpool had plans ready to be implemented and had conducted reviews of their own between 1958 and 1960. Crucially the Albemarle Report had credibility as it brought together people with relevant expertise, i.e. Richard Hoggart and Pearl Jephcott (linking to professionalisation) and also consulted a wide variety of voluntary associations likely to be impacted by the recommendations of the Report.¹⁸⁰

Funding was available from the Government for the Youth Service to revitalise in 1960 and

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 108

¹⁷⁸ See for example LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/38, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 7, and LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, LBA, 'Boys' Club Development Memorandum, p. 1, undated, c. 1958-1960

¹⁷⁹ Davies, *A History*, p. 38

¹⁸⁰ Albemarle, p. iii (committee members), Appendix 1 (groups who submitted written evidence); Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10

this gave momentum to the youth voluntary associations in London and Liverpool in the immediate post-Albemarle period. The immediate reaction to the publication of the Report was optimistic, perhaps over-optimistic given the long lists of possible development projects that were drawn up in London and Liverpool in advance of grants being made available.¹⁸¹ It was widely seen as something that would long be remembered in the history of the Youth Service, a sentiment that Davies has echoed, given the attention he pays Albemarle and credibility he invests in it.¹⁸² The Liverpool Union stated, 'due to the publication of the Albemarle Report, the year under review will be remembered as the most significant one in the history of the Youth Service.'¹⁸³ They had formed a small policy group before publication to look at their own policy and assess the 'most pressing needs of the areas where youth club provision was sadly lacking.'¹⁸⁴ However, they felt that the Albemarle Report left much room for interpretation and so focused only on what they wanted to achieve during the initial five year development phase rather than the second part. This was echoed by a local authority representative on their Executive Committee who said 'that it would be helpful to the LEA if the Union expressed what it would like the Authority to do, as there were so many riders in the report.'¹⁸⁵ Using policy as a framework for planning service development in this way can be seen as part of the 'technocratic planning' element of the professionalisation agenda.¹⁸⁶

The LBA also had a policy group and plan underway as Albemarle reported but they were more cautious in welcoming the recommendations than their sister association. In the statement included with their 1960 Annual Report they tell their supporters that:

Whilst welcoming the promise of increased support from National and Local Government sources, it is imperative that business executives and the man-in-the-street should see clearly the part the State intends to play will still fall far short, from a financial point of view, of our total requirements.¹⁸⁷

The LFBC was also conducting a review at this time. The conclusions of their internal review were

¹⁸¹ For an indication see LRO, M367 MYA/B/4/6, LBA Development Plans 1958-1965

¹⁸² Albemarle is referenced in four out of eight chapter titles of Davies, *A History* pp. 7-122

¹⁸³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/40, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1959-1960, p. 1

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union Executive Committee Minutes, 11th February 1960

¹⁸⁶ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10

¹⁸⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/2, LBA Annual Report 1960, p. 2

broadly similar to those of the national report.¹⁸⁸ Their '20 Clubs Fund' showed pre-emptive planning for an association waiting for approval to expand. Again they focused on areas of pressing need, activities and leadership.¹⁸⁹

The London Union made little direct mention of the Albemarle Report but the influence of the report can be perceived. In their 1960 Annual Report, they describe being 'caught both ways' as the common perception is that government will now pay for all youth services and therefore 'no more voluntary effort is needed' while local government expect services to be paid for by trusts and Whitehall.¹⁹⁰ This inspired their drive to professionalise in 1960. They aimed to 'be more professional than we have ever been' with their definition of professionalisation being 'the ability to come up from behind and win'.¹⁹¹ Unlike the other associations they did not have a particularly detailed response to the Albemarle Report, but like the others, its influence was there, in an emphasis on training, especially looking at graduates, a seven-year development appeal and examination of the work they were doing.¹⁹²

The local response to the Albemarle Report varied from those associations which were hugely optimistic with ambitious plans to develop and expand, those who recognised that it could not possibly solve all their problems but who had plans ready to match whatever assistance did materialise and those who saw the report as something with potential to confuse state and voluntary relations. In all cases some of the optimism and tone of the Albemarle Report was carried through.¹⁹³ This was not the case in 1970 when Whitehall produced its next report on the Youth Service.¹⁹⁴

In the interim neither the Youth Service staffing situation nor the problems of youth had

¹⁸⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1957-58, p.4, LFBC Annual Report 1958-59, pp. 6-8

¹⁸⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual report 1959-60, p. 4

¹⁹⁰ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/12, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, p. 12

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/12, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, pp. 10-12; professionalisation was also a theme in developing social work at this time, see Burnham, *The Social Worker*; Anne Oakley, *Father and Daughter*, Bristol, Policy Press, 2014

¹⁹³ It is worth noting that as a non-statutory service it was not necessary for legislation to follow policy recommendations. The Ministry of Education was free to implement the recommendations without recourse to Parliament.

¹⁹⁴ DES, *Youth and Community Work in the 70s* (Fairburn-Milson), London, HMSO, 1969.

been forgotten. The Bessey Report in 1962 scrutinised staffing and training.¹⁹⁵ The Hunt Report considered young immigrants in the Youth Service and Children in Trouble (followed by the Children and Young Persons Act 1969) aimed to protect vulnerable children and young people, while also revisiting the treatment of young offenders.¹⁹⁶ Youth and Community Work in the 70s (Fairburn-Milson Report), like the Albemarle Report was presented as a systematic review of the Youth Service and as the compass point for its direction over the coming years.¹⁹⁷ It looked at creating a Youth Service which was more integrated with both community development work and schools, providing more joined-up and effective local welfare services. It came out of two committees active at the time - Fairburn and Milson - looking separately at community development services and schools respectively. The report was brought together in the authoring of the final document rather than as a planned single endeavour which meant it lacked coherence in places.¹⁹⁸ Again it drew attention to the shortcomings of the Youth Service and argued that local youth voluntary organisations were too remote and removed from the communities in which they were placed.¹⁹⁹ The Report wanted to see youth provision more embedded within wider adult and child community services and infrastructure, sharing buildings such as community centres, staff, and making youth workers into youth and community workers with a role in community development.²⁰⁰ Regarding schools, the Report wanted to see greater use of school buildings, or youth wings built within community schools and more joint youth work appointments.²⁰¹

The Fairburn-Milson Report was roundly criticised by voluntary youth associations in London and Liverpool. While some had a general appreciation for the way they aimed to change

¹⁹⁵ *The Training of Part-Time Youth Leaders and Assistants* (Bessey Report), London, HMSO, 1962

¹⁹⁶ DES, *Immigrants and the Youth Service* (Hunt Report), London, HMSO, 1967, Home Office, *Children in Trouble*, London, HMSO, 1968

¹⁹⁷ Fairburn-Milson

¹⁹⁸ As the report was an amalgamation of a report on the Youth Service and Schools and another on the Youth Service and Community Development Services, it lacked the coherence of the earlier Albemarle Report, something noticed at the time by the Development Committee of the MYA who noted that 'it has to an extent suffered from the attempt to assimilate the earlier work' LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, Memorandum to the Executive Committee, Youth and Community Work in the 70s File

¹⁹⁹ Fairburn-Milson, pp. 1-15

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-94

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97; this can be linked to the idea of 'Village Colleges' on which see Andrew Saint, *Towards a social architecture: The role of school building in post-war England*, Yale, Yale University Press, 1987; Harry Rée, *Educator Extraordinary – The Life and Achievement of Henry Morris 1889-1961*, London, Longman, 1973

the approach to youth work, for many the report had major flaws which made its acceptance unfeasible. It was seen as a piece of policy made by people too removed from youth work to appreciate the situation most youth voluntary associations and local youth clubs faced. It was given a very short consultation period and the NABC said that 'less than lip service [was] being paid to the idea of joint consultation'.²⁰²

The main criticisms stemmed from what voluntary bodies regarded as a misconception on which they felt the entire report rested. The NABC, LFBC, MYA, LYOC and a Christian youth worker all argued that the Report assumed that youth clubs were staffed predominantly by full-time, professional leaders, to the detriment of appreciating how the majority - voluntary or part-time led clubs - would be affected by this assumption.²⁰³ While this might be the case in statutory youth clubs, in the opinion of many, it misrepresented the way most local clubs operated. This hindered the understanding of how an integrated youth and community service might work and made many of the report's recommendations unrealistic. In the most extreme reaction, the LFBC dismissed the whole report on the basis of this misconception:

We do not wish to comment on this report other than to say it does not, in our view give proper recognition to the indispensable role of the voluntary worker in Youth Service without whom the present level of activity could not be maintained, and nothing it says affects our judgement that the work of Boys' Clubs in London is as vital today as in the past.²⁰⁴

The NABC summarised the main criticisms best in a memorandum sent to their local associations, which highlighted that criticism of the club method failed to realise that existing provision did not take place within a vacuum and clubs were already working with the community.²⁰⁵ The changed age group was welcomed and there was agreement in widening the ages considered for grant aid but the NABC did not agree that the service should stop at sixteen, instead at this point members should have real responsibility for their own clubs and that many young people already did so. The

²⁰² LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, 'Are we irrelevant? NABC response to Youth and Community Work in the 70s' in MYA File 'Youth and Community Work in the 70s'

²⁰³ Ibid., LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, 'The Problems Presented to Voluntary Leaders in Implementing the Report' memorandum by Michael Jebson, Christian Youth Worker, November 1969, MYA Development Committee Memorandum to the Executive Committee on Youth and Community Work in the 70s, and 'Liverpool Youth Organisations Committee evidence to SCNYVO and DES,' all in MYA File 'Youth and Community Work in the 70s'; LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1969-70, pp. 6-7,

²⁰⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1969-70, pp. 6-7

²⁰⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, 'Memorandum: Youth and Community Work in the 70s...The NABC view'

report overlooked the importance of volunteers and for this reason the NABC felt it likely the report would be rejected by grassroots clubs. For them, full-time leader training needed practical experience, not equating with teacher training to achieve parity of esteem for youth leaders. However, the NABC did agree that the Youth Service suffered from a poor image and that it needed to address working with immigrants better.²⁰⁶

The newly formed MYA kept detailed records of their deliberations on Fairburn-Milson. Their Executive Committee considered reports from the NABC, NAYC, MYA Development Committee and LYOC, collecting a wealth of material extensively critiquing it. Their overall impression reflected the NABC view summarised above but they did use their discussions to start looking positively at ways to improve their own work.²⁰⁷ The MYA was preoccupied with the recent merger, and this had a much greater influence on the direction they took in the 1970s.

The lack of action taken on the report and large amount of criticism it received, as well as the rather curt response from the LFBC, suggests that, as voluntary associations, they simply could not accept a report that had paid their work so little attention during its production.²⁰⁸ The report and reaction to it shows that policy-makers did not understand how the Youth Service operated at local level. By failing to appreciate the significance of voluntary effort they were misrepresenting local youth welfare economies and reinforcing state-centred interpretations of welfare built around the professional worker.

In 1982 the Thompson Report on 'Participation and Experience' renewed previous criticism of the Youth Service.²⁰⁹ Like other reports on the Youth Service before it, the Thompson Report looked to encourage better training, more professional staffing and more robust management.²¹⁰ However, the main contribution of the Report was to argue more strongly than ever before for the

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, an entire file was kept of various responses, meetings, seminars and conferences: MYA File 'Youth and Community Work in the 70s',

²⁰⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/1/6/7, 'The Problems Presented to Voluntary Leaders in Implementing the Report' memorandum by Michael Jebson, Christian Youth Worker, November 1969, in which he notes that the committees had only visited full-time lead clubs during the compilation of the Report,

²⁰⁹ Thompson Report

²¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 74-101

need to involve young people in the organisations run for their benefit. While the Albemarle Report and the Fairburn-Milson Report had encouraged young people's involvement, via members' councils for example, the Thompson Report stressed the need for this participation in the running of the youth service as crucial to its continuing relevance and future success.²¹¹

The Thompson Report gathered less attention than its predecessors, and the London and Liverpool associations' reports at this time suggest that the economic situation weighed heavier on their minds than another vague edict on a Youth Service on the brink of decline. While the MYA mentioned it briefly in their annual report for 1982-83 much more space is given to the youth unemployment situation and the wider economic and social issues of Liverpool.²¹² It had a better reception in London. The LFBC spent a page in their annual report highlighting the report's relevance in the areas of multi-ethnic working, unemployment, young people and the police, (largely to justify their development plan outlined under the same headings).²¹³ The London Union gave it a page as well, again highlighting where work they had already done or were undertaking met with the aims of the Report.²¹⁴ In another example of policy seeming to lag behind practice, the London Union had already changed their constitution to give greater member participation.²¹⁵

While Albemarle prompted optimism, by 1970 voluntary youth services felt less inclined to accept government policy, and by 1982 it was even more marginal still. Official policy supports the idea that a professionalising agenda such as that seen in social work at the time, was also relevant to youth work, and this will continue to be explored in what follows.²¹⁶ However, what it also shows is that in understanding the structure and operation of youth voluntary associations in Liverpool and London between 1958 and 1985, looking at official policy can only assist to a limited degree. Official policy often did not understand the realities of youth work and local concerns were much

²¹¹ Ibid., pp. 49-72

²¹² LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1982-83. The Thompson Report was mentioned in the Chairman's Report for 1982-83, p.1, but received no particular comment other than to link it to the NABC and NAYC reorganising

²¹³ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1982-83, p. 2

²¹⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1983, p. 3

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 2

²¹⁶ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*; Burnham, *The Social Worker*; Garland, *The Culture of Control*

more prominent.

III. Financing youth voluntary associations and clubs

Youth Voluntary Associations in London and Liverpool were financed by a combination of state grants, grants from other voluntary organisations, fees, generated income, and fundraising activities. The accounts of the associations are not fully available, but reference to finance was often made within annual reports and committee papers allowing some idea of how the funding mixes worked and the general financial fortunes of the organisations between 1958 and 1985. Within individual clubs funding was again a complex mix of grants and fundraising including involvement from the local associations at times. Different clubs had very different financial demands and resources depending on factors such as whether a club owned and had to maintain its own building, and whether the leadership was paid, unpaid, full-time or part-time.

Grants from central and local government comprised a significant source of income for the London and Liverpool associations. In general there were three types of grant: salary, capital and small. They would be awarded according to criteria set by central and sometimes local government and lists drawn up by the local authority of priorities for youth work within their area. Grants were not designed to fully fund work. They came with the expectation that other grants from the state might be added to the total, but that clubs and associations themselves would also make a contribution of between 25% and 50%.²¹⁷ In Liverpool in 1974 the District Council agreed to pay 100% of leader salaries but this was a rare example of full state funding being awarded for voluntary youth work.²¹⁸ Interviewees occasionally referred to their clubs as 'grant aided' or '100% grant aided' and partially rejected the idea that their clubs could be seen as voluntary clubs.²¹⁹ It has not been possible to verify these statements by looking at club accounts, but they show that funding was viewed as the most important part of defining voluntary organisations for some youth workers. While these clubs would still have been managed by a voluntary committee (albeit one on

²¹⁷ See for example LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, the Liverpool Union Circular Letters, July 1961, detailing the Ministry of Education Grant scheme for small grants being capped at 50%

²¹⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/5, MYA Annual Report 1974, p. 3

²¹⁹ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

which the funders sat), that they depended so wholly on the state gave them an uncertain status. This shows clearly how blurred boundaries could be in terms of examining the mixed economy of welfare.

In 1960 the LBA had a five-year plan in 1960 with an estimated cost of £142,000 which they felt that even with promised assistance after the Albemarle Report would 'still fall far short, from a financial point of view, of our total requirements.'²²⁰ Their plan was stalled in 1962 when the Ministry suspended the development grants which were needed to transform the service and was resurrected later in that year, when Liverpool was allowed funding from Central Government to get eight clubs finished under a 'Crash Programme' designed to help areas with high unemployment.²²¹ Delays came from the state for salary grants too, whereby the local Director of Education had to give approval before an appointments process could begin, and in reality this approval often went hand-in-hand with agreeing to pay the relevant salary grant.²²² In 1969 the LBA remarked that it 'could indeed grow at a much faster pace if Government as well as local authorities were prepared to match their financial contribution to those provided by individuals and firms, including of course, the youngsters themselves.'²²³ In Liverpool, the boys' association waited on central government for capital grants for the promised investment, and while this materialised eventually, progress was slow and would have been slower still if not for the crash programme.

A similar situation is evident with the LFBC. In 1960 they listed major donations from several organisations towards six out of the twenty clubs on their development list, noting that that these were contingent on receiving money from the Ministry of Education.²²⁴ That this was not coming quickly enough, with development grants suspended, prompted them in 1962 to consider having to return money to donors for projects which were stalled due to central approval and

²²⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1960, p. 1

²²¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1962-63, p. 1-2

²²² See for example LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union Executive Committee Minutes, February 6th 1958, regarding their scheme for new housing estates noting that they must write to the Director of Education asking permission to advertise these posts

²²³ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1968-69, p. 5; this sentiment can be traced back to at least 1965 in the Annual Reports, LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1964-65, p. 3

²²⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1960, p. 1-3

funding not coming through.²²⁵ Their capital building programme of 20 clubs was, in the end, largely financed by state capital grants, even if they did have to wait for them. They reported the split as being 75% of capital costs paid by DES and ILEA, and 25% raised from sponsors.²²⁶ Therefore, the available evidence indicates that central grants for capital projects were adequate at facilitating new development in the 1960s in both Liverpool and London, though they may have been delivered at a slower than anticipated pace.

During the 1970s and 1980s, building projects were fewer, initiated by the 'credit squeeze' in 1967 according to the Liverpool Union.²²⁷ This reflected a more general perception of tougher financial circumstances and the loss of initial post-Albemarle Report momentum. With many new clubs having been completed in the 1960s, attention was focussed on specific new facilities such as sports, arts, and activities centres, but also smaller improvement projects. Applications for minor grants were designed for small schemes such as extensions, refurbishment, repairs and improving facilities at sports and camp grounds.²²⁸ In Liverpool, minor grants and larger projects were submitted to the local authority together on one list, with estimated costs. The local authority amalgamated these lists with those from other organisations and their own proposed projects. This priority list was sent to the Ministry who picked what would be grant aided by them, though it appears the local authority also had some room to allocate small amounts themselves.²²⁹ This twice-reprioritised list was a crucial mechanism for influencing local welfare mixes and in this regard it is interesting to note how in Liverpool, the voluntary associations sometimes perceived the local authority as unduly seeking to get a larger share of available resources. They felt it was unfair that the local authority were putting their own biggest project at the top of list when they reordered it, knowing that once finalised, the money would be allocated to projects down the list

²²⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1962, p. 4

²²⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/6, LFBC Annual Report 1967-68, p. 6

²²⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/47, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1966-67, p. 3

²²⁸ As described in LRO, M367/MYA/B/1/9, 'LBA Memo' to the Education Department, 7th February 1961

²²⁹ To see this system in operation see LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, LBA Development file for the 1960s, which has each iteration of the list; theirs, the Liverpool Education Committees and the one sent back from the Ministry of Education in which the LBA get one project approved for improvements to playing fields that was seventh out of nine priority schemes they wanted approved

until it ran out.²³⁰ Without understanding the full grant criteria it is unclear if this was the case.

In both Liverpool and London other grant-making voluntary or philanthropic organisations were used as sources of funding. Below is a table outlining some of the grants obtained by Liverpool and London Youth Voluntary Associations between 1958-1985.

Year	Grant From	Grant Given To	Amount	Grant Project
1959-60	Charles Clore Foundation, Dulverton Trust, Isaac Wolfson Trust	LFBC	variable	To start development of one boys' club each
1960-62	King George's Jubilee Trust	London Union	£2,000 a year for 2 years	To meet salary increases and employ a development organiser to focus on girls' work
1966-67	Sir William Butlin Trust	London Union	£12,500	Rammey Island Canoe and Sailing Centre
1966-67	City Parochial Foundation	London Union	£2,000 a year for 3 years	To develop an industrial training programme
1966-67	Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation	London Union	£5000 over 3 years	Drama and music experimental work
1973	The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation	LFBC	c. £250,000	New activities centre at Hindleap Warren Residential Centre
1982-83	John Moores Family Foundation	MYA	£4977	Continuation of DYW project

Table 2.3: Examples of grants from other charitable bodies to London and Liverpool Youth Voluntary Associations, 1958-1985²³¹

These grants were often for short-term or finite projects, experimental work or in areas the associations had successfully argued were in particular need of development. They often required the addition of funds from the associations themselves and were sometimes used to get matching capital grants from central government.

Importantly, all clubs affiliated to one of the associations examined here paid an affiliation fee dependent on the area, size of the club and whether it was junior or senior club. An example of the level at which affiliation fees were set has been discussed above. Similarly many of the youth clubs charged membership fees, and this was often a condition of affiliation as well. These were

²³⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, MYA Development Committee 'Memorandum' to the Executive Committee on Fairburn-Milson, 1970, notes 'It is generally felt that local authorities generally have a tendency to finance what is "theirs" to the imbalance of financial provision to the voluntary organisations'

²³¹ Data compiled from Annual Reports, LRO; M367 MYA/B/6/1-6/12, M367 MYA G/3/39-49, M367 MYA/M/4/1-14, and LMA; LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, LMA4283/A/2/4-8. This is by no means an exhaustive list but is presented to be indicative of the type of project, scale and type of organisation involved.

small amounts of between about a shilling and two shillings and sixpence, dependent on the age of the member and whether they were working or still in school.²³² This revenue combined with charges levied to enter leagues, attend courses, to use one of the residential centres or to hire out sports facilities, was an important stream of income which largely covered the costs of the activities and facilities, but which sometimes contributed to wider association funds. In Liverpool in 1963-64, the Liverpool Union noted £507 of income from charges and fees, a small contribution to overall income of over £14,000.²³³ These examples demonstrate that, though voluntary, the associations for youth clubs were not free, even if they generated relatively small amounts of income. Furthermore, money paid by members was important in framing their youth club participation as a consumer choice albeit within the limited financial resources available to members at the time.

There is a notable absence in the income streams of the youth voluntary associations. Literature on voluntary services, such as Mold and Berridge looking at drug voluntary organisations, has examined how reforms to welfare created a system whereby the state contracted services to the voluntary sector.²³⁴ This shifted funding away from core grants and created a more formal relationship whereby voluntary service providers had specific objectives for which contracts were signed and money was paid. This is not evident in youth associations by 1985, but did perhaps develop after this time. Certainly the more project focussed basis for state funding which emerged in the 1970s could be interpreted as a step in this direction, as could the MSC (Manpower Services Commission) funding of work with the unemployed, discussed in chapter four.

As well as external funding, fees and charges, there was a constant pressure to fundraise in all associations throughout the period 1958-1985. Fundraising took several different forms, including events and special appeals, some of which were targeted at businesses and wealthier individuals and others at the general public. Efforts to bring in money sought not only one-off donations, but also recurring subscriptions, covenants and legacies. However, specialised

²³² This example is given from discussions about a new club in LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union, Executive Committee Minutes, July 1962

²³³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1963-64, p. 14

²³⁴ Alex Mold and Virginia Berridge, *Voluntary Action and Illegal Drugs – Health and Society in Britain since the 1960s*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 126-7

fundraising staff were not widespread in associations at this time, setting them apart from the development of NGO fundraising.²³⁵

The London and Liverpool Unions, in conjunction with the NAYC, ran a postal book appeal which brought in a substantial amount of their income in the late 1950s.²³⁶ In 1958 their other fundraising efforts were to join in the National Appeal for Youth from which they received £1735, and to hold a 1920s ball, amongst other examples.²³⁷ In 1960 a midsummers night ball and cocktail party raised £1312 for the London Union.²³⁸ In this year they also launched a 'Lord Mayor's Appeal' for seven year donations, preferably in covenant form which raised £5607 by 1963.²³⁹ In 1961 they shared the proceeds from the premiere of the Terence Rattigan play *Joie de Vivre*, receiving £425.²⁴⁰ They were not the only organisation to benefit from a premiere, with the LBA receiving 'The Beatles' Help' in 1964 and the LFBC benefitting from the premiere of James Bond's *Never Say Never Again*.²⁴¹

The above shows the local nature of much fundraising activity, designed to draw donations from the area which would directly benefit. There was local variation and specificity to fundraising. In Liverpool the United Voluntary Organisations (UVO) scheme sought to collect on behalf of many causes in Liverpool. The UVO sought to coordinate local fundraising and distribution of charitable funds and was a key part of the city's history of charitable effort and voluntary welfare.²⁴² This local connection to UVO was partially behind a lack of engagement with at least one national appeal which clashed with their regular city-wide effort.²⁴³ Liverpool's donors came from the resident population who were encouraged to give a small weekly amount to local causes, as well as

²³⁵ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 88-95: the exception was the London Union which shared an appeals organiser with the NAYC, LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/10, London Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 2

²³⁶ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001, London Union Annual Reports 1958-1960. To give some idea of the proportion of all income this may have made up, in 1967 the income of the Union was under £15,000 in total. LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/003, Annual Report 1967, p. 4

²³⁷ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001, London Union Annual Report 1958

²³⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001, London Union Annual Report 1960

²³⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, p. 10; LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/03, London Union Annual Report 1962-63, p. 7

²⁴⁰ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002, London Union Annual Report 1960-61, p. 9

²⁴¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1964, p.14; LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1983, p. 1

²⁴² Margaret Simey, *Charitable Effort in Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1951

²⁴³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union General Council Minutes 14th May 1959

particular appeals made to business and industrial interests.²⁴⁴

The LFBC must be marked out because of its particular fundraising profile which relied less on local residents and businesses and focused on larger networks to utilise some particularly wealthy individuals and organisations. Although they participated in Club Week and other staple fundraising events such as dances, they received a vast amount of money from an assemblage of select individuals and groups, showing the financial benefit of their high profile patronage.²⁴⁵ The Variety Club of Great Britain part funded six clubs at once in the early 1960s, and the Charles Clore Foundation, the Isaac Wolfson Trust, the Dulverton Trust and the Grand Order of Water Rats all gave money equal to allowing at least one club to be started at the same time as this large Variety Club donation.²⁴⁶ They received over £200,000 for new clubs between 1958 and 1961 despite having no formal development appeal.²⁴⁷ Merchant Bankers Samuel Montagu and Co. alone gave £50,000 in 1961 when the Annual Report was bemoaning the great challenge of limited finances.²⁴⁸ By 1964 they had raised nearly a quarter of a million pounds overall.²⁴⁹ In 1975, when they had been running at a deficit for several years, they were able to wipe it out overnight by having a benefit dinner hosted by actor John Mills and attended by their Patron, the Duke of Edinburgh, where £51,000 was raised.²⁵⁰ In 1977-78 the Duke of Edinburgh launched a new appeal for £409,000 which they worked out was roughly £20 for every boy in membership.²⁵¹ Within a year they had £320,000, and by 1980 they had exceeded their target with a total of £417,737 despite their protest that the recession was having a hugely detrimental impact on association finances.²⁵²

The above has shown that the LFBC was particularly successful at fundraising from its own ranks and from its wealthy networks at various times when capital developments were taking

²⁴⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1963-1964, advert for UVO appeal headed 'a little a week is all we seek', p. 23

²⁴⁵ LMA, LMA/4282/A/2/4, the President of the LFBC was the Duke of Edinburgh and the Chairman at this time was Sir Basil Henriques, Clement Attlee was a Vice President, LFBC Annual Report 1960, inside cover

²⁴⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1960, p. 1

²⁴⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1961, p. 3

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4, the comment about lack of finance is on the same page

²⁴⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1964, p. 5

²⁵⁰ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1975, p. 1

²⁵¹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1977-78, pp. 1-2

²⁵² LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1978-79, p. 3, LFBC Annual Report 1979-80, p. 5

place. However, in youth voluntary association finances this is only one side of the coin.

Expenditure on salaries, buildings, special projects and running costs consumed all money raised, and often more. In understanding the operation of the youth voluntary associations and their constant fundraising efforts, looking broadly at expenditure patterns is useful.

The largest items of expenditure in each of the voluntary youth associations have similarities. The largest single item in many cases was the amount paid out in salaries. This has a bearing on the professionalisation agenda, as while staffing and expertise levels went up, so did staff costs, having a significant influence on the running costs of the association as a whole. This is why grant aid for salaries was so important to the associations, as without salary costs being offset by grants at a significant level they struggled to meet their own running costs. For example, a total expenditure of £14,328 for the London Union in 1966 consisted of £4,200 salary grant from ILEA.²⁵³ In 1967, £4,647 was provided from the same grant, towards a total expenditure of £14,484.²⁵⁴ The annual report for 1984, while not including full accounts, notes that they received in total £121,470 in grants, of which £55,582 came from the ILEA against a total staffing cost of £131,044.²⁵⁵ To indicate staffing as a proportion of the total expenditure, in 1985 they spent £206,042, which, with broadly similar staff levels meant that over sixty percent of all expenditure was paid out in staff costs.²⁵⁶

While much of the above has referred to association finances, it has reflected club finances to a large degree. As umbrella and intermediary bodies, associations were a central channel for some clubs' finances. Many, such as the Bronte Centre in Liverpool, used the same methods as associations to finance their work, and they were subject to the same economic fluctuations. However, their smaller size often made them more vulnerable than associations who held property and investments. For example, the Florence Institute in Liverpool closed in September 1985 and the building was mothballed due to financial pressures.²⁵⁷ Other clubs, such as church clubs were

²⁵³ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/003, London Union Annual Report 1966-67, p. 2

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/02, London Union Annual Report 1984, pp. 12-14

²⁵⁶ Based on detail given in LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/02, London Union Annual Report 1985, p. 12

²⁵⁷ LRO, M369/FLO/3/6, Minutes of the meeting of the Florence Institute (Inc.) Board of Management, September 1985

entirely separate from this machinery, for example, Anne's club in Forest Hill, which because it used a hall owned by the church and ran no activities, required minimal funding covered by the church.²⁵⁸ The LBA acknowledged that the 'vast majority of the small ones [*clubs*] receive no grant at all from public funds'.²⁵⁹

The overall financial fortunes of the association in London and Liverpool as disclosed by their annual reports show that the associations financial fortunes differed, not only throughout the period, but also across case study organisations. As the above discussion of the Albemarle Report outlines, in the early 1960s the Youth Service underwent a period of growth. This resulted in the associations in London and Liverpool developing new clubs and experimental projects. The LFBC Annual Reports show that in the early 1960s finances were promising and they had completed 20 new clubs by the early 1970s.²⁶⁰ Similarly, the London Union ran a surplus three years in a row from 1960-63.²⁶¹ In Liverpool the situation was similar though there are signs that Liverpool was already beginning to experience the economic problems with which it would come to be associated in the 1970s and 1980s. The LBA fared well in the early 1960s, though the slow drip-feeding of Ministry grants prevented them from growing at a faster place.²⁶² They also had at least one wealthy patron in the John Moores Family who promised £154,000 over seven years in 1965.²⁶³ However, this good fortune was tempered by the suspension of Ministry development grants in 1962 and the need to push money through the 'Crash Programme' for eight new clubs in the following year.²⁶⁴ The Liverpool Union's records confirm the idea of a relatively prosperous 1960s. They raised £82,789 out of an £100,000 appeal for seven-year covenants and although they had to queue for them, described the statutory grants as 'generous'.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁸ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

²⁵⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, 'Memorandum on the Youth Service related to the bulge', 27th November 1959, p. 3

²⁶⁰ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1960-61, p. 3, LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1967-68, p. 6

²⁶¹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/01-03, London Union Annual Reports 1960-63

²⁶² LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1961-62, p.2

²⁶³ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1964-65, p. 5

²⁶⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1962-63, p. 3

²⁶⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/46, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1965-66, p. 2 (LFBC fundraising over the same time was over double this amount)

By the late 1960s London and Liverpool were diverging. In Liverpool by 1967 they felt a 'credit squeeze' which 'has probably deferred the date when we can make a start on our major grant-aid projects' and around this time, more advanced merger talks began.²⁶⁶ The merger can be seen as a money saving exercise, at least in part.²⁶⁷ By 1974 they had lost money on investments and concerns were growing about inflation and continuing increases in unemployment.²⁶⁸ The effect of inflation was, however, 'biting'.²⁶⁹

The London associations were also struggling, though with gaps in the Annual Reports of the London Union, it is the LFBC which provide the best evidence of this. In 1974 they emphasised the need to increase their income, and adopted 'stringent measures' to control spending, with inflation costing them dearly too.²⁷⁰ In 1975 their anticipated deficit was set to be over £18,000 and so a fundraising effort was mounted, described as 'extraordinary' in reducing the deficit to £5 in the end.²⁷¹

When cuts in public expenditure loomed, the LFBC decided that 'an optimistic view of likely assistance strikes us as the best course.'²⁷² They had some reason to be optimistic. As their 1978 Annual Report stated, they had received £1,095,000 in central and local government grants in the last nine years.²⁷³ Nevertheless, another bold fundraising appeal was launched by the Duke of Edinburgh and they had raised £417,737 by 1980.²⁷⁴ It was their ability to draw on such patronage that had a huge impact on the ability of the LFBC to withstand wider economic turmoil and in the 1980s this would again be tested.

In 1980, the LFBC hoped that their state funders would see past 'short-sighted economies' to the value of their work and warned that 'further cuts in the Youth Service would inevitably escalate its erosion and ultimately curtail its effectiveness' and that 'a few clubs were seriously

²⁶⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/47, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1966-67, p. 3

²⁶⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/48, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1967-68, p. 2

²⁶⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/5, MYA Annual Report 1973-74, p. 3

²⁶⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/7, MYA Annual Report 1975-76, p. 1

²⁷⁰ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1973-74, p. 5 and Annual Report 1974-75, p. 1

²⁷¹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1974-75, pp. 1-5

²⁷² LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1976-77, p. 5

²⁷³ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1977-78, p. 2

²⁷⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1979-80, p. 5

considering closure.²⁷⁵ However, the scale of issues at individual club level was evident when the LFBC needed a 'Lifeline Fund' from a wealthy sponsor to keep some clubs operating in the early 1980s.²⁷⁶ While this uncertainty over public funding continued the LFBC again set about a huge fundraising effort, bringing in over half a million pounds in 1983-84, building or upgrading seven clubs and spending £156,000 on their own facilities.²⁷⁷ A £2 Million Centenary Appeal followed in 1985, to raise this amount for their one hundredth birthday in 1987.²⁷⁸ The LFBC could consistently rely on significant donations from wealthy patrons and this is an important factor in their ability stay afloat despite being smaller than the other associations in London and Liverpool.

The 1983 annual report for the London Union describes their financial situation as 'dangerous' stating that the plan was to seek more statutory funding.²⁷⁹ With the closure of the GLC and ILEA on its way, this plan was in jeopardy.²⁸⁰ Interviewees from clubs also mentioned the closure of ILEA and the GLC as seismic changes in their experience of youth work in London.²⁸¹

In contrast to the London associations, however, expenditure cuts were not something that the MYA successfully weathered. In 1979 they thought they might not have enough money to function at all in four years, as much of their money was tied up in property.²⁸² The MYA, like the London Union appeared to look more towards statutory funding for the solution to these problems. The MYA emphasised that for every £1 they were given by the local authority (who now managed all grants), they raised £2.30.²⁸³ They felt that local fundraising was very nearly at the maximum the area could stand given wider economic conditions in Liverpool.²⁸⁴ They also felt that there was very little more they could do to streamline.²⁸⁵ What fresh state funding arrived in 1982 came from central government with Michael Heseltine and his 'initiative for sport' in the wake of the Toxteth

²⁷⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1980-81, p. 4

²⁷⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1982-83, p. 6 notes the main contributor to the 'Lifeline Fund' was Mr Joseph Levy'

²⁷⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1983-84, p. 1, pp. 9-10

²⁷⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1985-86

²⁷⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1982-83, p. 11

²⁸⁰ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/02, London Union Annual Report 1983-84, p. 2

²⁸¹ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

²⁸² LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1983, p. 5

²⁸³ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/12, MYA Annual Report 1980-81, p. 1

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

Riots and spending it was tightly controlled.²⁸⁶

By the 1980s all the associations examined here had felt the effects of recession and the welfare reforms brought in by Thatcher. This precipitated the decline in youth voluntary organisations noticed by Hilton et al.²⁸⁷ However the LFBC seemed best able to cope and the MYA least so. This shows that state funding and the economic situation had a huge impact on the non-statutory Youth Service. Not only did it have to deal with fluctuations in interest rates, inflation and the changes to the local economy such as unemployment, but the availability of grants also changed, leading to a double impact. This was felt most keenly in Liverpool due to the severity of the local economic decline.

The Youth Service proportion of the Education budget was small; the LBA said '[O]ut of an Education Budget of £12,986,000 less than one third of one percent is spent on the Youth Service proper'.²⁸⁸ Yet there was a general feeling that the 'Youth Service deserves a larger share of the "education cake"'.²⁸⁹ When placed in a wider context it is clear that the Youth Service as a whole experienced continued instability in the period 1958-1985 despite the promise of the Albemarle Report, suffering particularly in the 1980s. Financial uncertainty meant continually changing proportions of state funding and pressure to fundraise, or cut costs. This put the Youth Service, and youth clubs, on the very boundary of state and voluntary welfare as they expanded, contracted, developed and changed direction to accommodate the resources available to them.

I. Association staffing

When examining the extent of professionalisation between 1958 and 1985, the staffing and training of these organisations can offer evidence to both support and contradict the idea. Hilton et al. point to NGOs' greater use of media, consultants and career NGO workers, middle class

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 3

²⁸⁷ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs*, p. 28 and p. 291

²⁸⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, 'Memorandum on the Youth Service related to the bulge', 27th November 1959, p. 3. While funding increased in the 1960s after Albemarle, it is unclear if this was as a proportion of the Education budget as a whole or in line with a larger increase in the Education Budget overall.

²⁸⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 4

graduate professions and technocratic planning.²⁹⁰ In social work professionalisation looked at greater specialisation of work, hierarchical and bureaucratic structures, and the skills and knowledge acquired during training, echoing heavily the professional hierarchies, specialised expert knowledge, technology and bureaucracy outlined by Perkin.²⁹¹ Examining the Liverpool and London youth voluntary associations in these contexts demonstrates some common understandings, but there is also a sense that the result of professionalisation was better services and greater efficiency, though there was little critical appreciation of what this meant and how it would be measured.

This section looks at the central staffing levels of associations who were often referred to as the headquarters staff. By 1958, all the youth voluntary associations in London and Liverpool examined here had paid staff. In general these were divided into clerical staff and those running different parts of the organisations' services to member clubs. In 1958, the London Union had twelve members of staff, one of whom was shared with the NAYC, working on fundraising.²⁹² The full list included: Organising Secretary; Girls' Development Organiser; Development Officer; Recruitment Officer; Finance Secretary; Part-time Field Officer; three clerical staff; two Camp Wardens; and the shared Appeals Secretary, showing some signs of the specialised roles used to define professional status.²⁹³ These twelve staff serviced 193 clubs. Ten years later the London Union had 15 staff, by 1972 this was 18 staff and from the mid-1970s onwards there were at least 20 staff before cuts in the early 1980s.²⁹⁴ While their figures are patchy they do show a general rise in paid staffing, even if the MSC sponsored staff working on youth unemployment are excluded and even when it is noted that some paid for posts remained unfilled.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁰ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10

²⁹¹ Burnham, *The Social Worker*; Perkin, *The Third Revolution*, pp. xi-xv

²⁹² LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/10, London Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 2

²⁹³ Ibid., p. 2; Burnham, *The Social Worker*; Perkin, *The Third Revolution*, pp. xi-xv

²⁹⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, London Union Annual Reports 1958-1985

²⁹⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/10, London Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 2

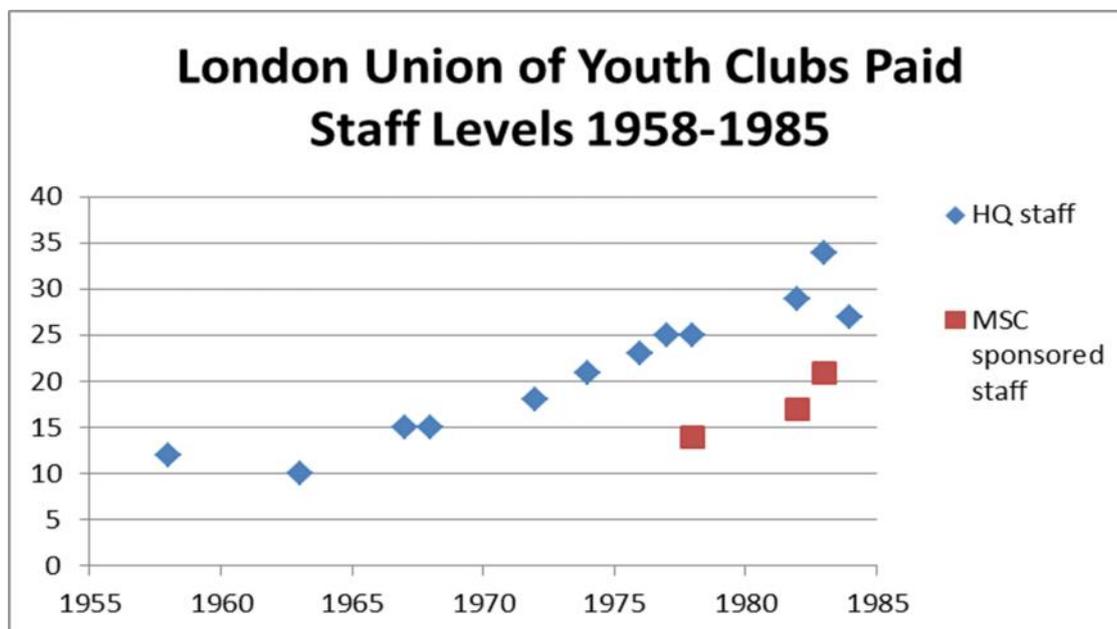


Figure 2.3: London Union of Youth Clubs Paid Staff Levels 1958-1985 ²⁹⁶

However, more than this, attempts to further professionalise are evident in an important internal policy move made in 1983 which introduced a bureaucratic system of performance monitoring for all staff whereby they would have annual objectives and targets, individual evaluation of all Union activities, more recording of work, staff appraisals and the stated intention 'to make better use of our paid staff.'²⁹⁷

The figures for the LFBC compare well to the above, at least for the 1970s when they are available. In 1978 and 1981, they had 27 and 24 staff respectively.²⁹⁸ This compares well to London Unions' staff levels but it should be noted that the London Union were looking after a far greater number of clubs than the LFBC at this time. This indicates greater efficiency and streamlining were achieved by the London Union.

In Liverpool it seems likely the trend towards a larger paid staff was matched based on the available figures and the detail given in minutes. In 1960 the Liverpool Union had 15 paid staff, but by 1983 they, and the LBA, merged as the MYA had 43 paid staff.²⁹⁹ Increasing numbers of staff indicate larger machinery dedicated to providing services and support to clubs. However, they do

²⁹⁶ Compiled from information given in LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, London Union Annual Reports 1958-1985

²⁹⁷ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1983, p. 12

²⁹⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Reports 1978-1981

²⁹⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, General Minute Book, Liverpool Union 'Albemarle' Memorandum, 25th March 1960, section 1.d; LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1983

not show clearly that professionalisation was taking place.

Looking at some of the particular appointments and staff reorganisations in London and Liverpool's youth voluntary associations at this time makes it clearer that they were trying to make their operations more professional. While numbers fluctuated, what staff were doing is also important – as indicated by the specialised roles in the London Union above. By 1985 the London Union the staff they added to their portfolio included a Director of Youth Work (later Principal Field Officer), Area Field Officers and part-time Assistant Field Officers (9 initially, but 20 posts by 1985).³⁰⁰ Field officers were arranged into teams covering four areas: North West, North East, South West and South East in the same way social work was using area teams.³⁰¹ This arrangement allowed the field officers to work with local clubs on services such as helping with activity programmes, as well as providing advice and access to London-wide or more specialist services.

However, perhaps the most significant appointment was a Chief Executive, part-time in 1971, and his successor full-time from September 1982.³⁰² After the initial appointment in 1971 a wider reorganisation was conducted to form a small executive group 'to improve integration and co-ordination of the association's work'.³⁰³ Again, after the full-time Chief Executive appointment was decided in 1982 another reorganisation gave a small group policy-making control and the executive the role of implementing the council's policies.³⁰⁴ Both these appointments and moves reflected a desire to be more efficient and professional.

The LFBC also changed their staffing structure over this period, also adopting a 'club services' approach like the London Union with field officers. However, the LFBC, with much lower affiliation figures than the London Union, did not feel the need to subdivide their club services by area.³⁰⁵

In Liverpool they too changed from having general secretaries do much of the day-to-day

³⁰⁰ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, London Union Annual Reports 1958-1985

³⁰¹ Gilbert Smith and Janet Ames, 'Area Teams in Social Work Practice: A Programme for Research', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1976, pp. 43-69

³⁰² LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/01, London Union Annual Report 1971, p. 7; LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1982-83, p. 1

³⁰³ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/01, London Union Annual Report 1971, p. 18

³⁰⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/A/02/002, London Union Executive Committee Minute Book, May 1981

³⁰⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1974, p. 3

management of the associations, to having a Chief Executive, but this move was made when the last of the General Secretaries retired. Instead of looking to restructure and reorganise earlier, they waited for a natural point at which to do so, when they too adopted a three-stranded approach to include: club services, field work, and recreation and activities.³⁰⁶ They similarly used a system of having field staff overseen by a senior field worker.³⁰⁷

In Liverpool and London the mixed youth associations looked to adopt more professional styles of leadership and management, headed by Chief Executives and with work separated into specialised streams which could each be managed separately. These moves were designed to make the associations more efficient and this was partly in terms of shaping professional definitions of their work but it was also about the pressures created by their fluid funding models. Local youth voluntary associations in London and Liverpool did seek to professionalise, but that this was not necessarily how they would always have seen their actions and by no means was it universal and smooth. In particular the continuing tension between such efforts and reliance on voluntary help must be considered.

Conclusion

When looking at name changes, mergers, member numbers, staffing, and internal reorganisations, differences of approach and results are clear. In Liverpool, the LBA and Liverpool Union merged to create a stronger local organisation, which, because of the LEA's role in providing grant funding, placed relations with the state at local level and Liverpool-wide consistency high on their list of priorities. In London, the LFBC remained relatively small, catering particularly for boys' needs and happy to continue to do so as a specialised organisation with wealthy links. In contrast the London Union looked towards attracting and servicing greater numbers of organisations and their approach showed the greatest deliberate attempt to professionalise.

All of the local associations in London and Liverpool did become more 'professional'

³⁰⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/10, MYA Annual Report 1978-1979, p. 1 notes the appointment of the Chief Executive; LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/12, MYA Annual Report 1980-81, pp. 3-6 details the reorganisation

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

between 1958 and 1985. There were higher levels of paid staff, doing more specialised jobs using more efficient management structures as the 1970s and 1980s unfolded. However, professionalisation was by no means simple and universal. Attitudes towards professionalisation also varied between the case study organisations, with the London Union the earliest adopters of a stated policy, saying in 1960 that they would be 'more professional than we have been.'³⁰⁸ The LFBC had mixed feelings about professionalisation. On the one hand they comment in 1973 that the 'Youth Service, like many other branches of Social and Educational work is suffering from a surfeit of experts, consultants and observers and a dearth of men and women who will get on with the job.'³⁰⁹ However, they also lament 'sloppiness in simple administrative and managerial skills which befront and frustrate voluntary management.'³¹⁰ They also had the highest proportion of paid professional full-time leadership of the associations examined here and thought that the 'professional approach is to be welcomed and encouraged'.³¹¹

An important driver behind the attempts of all youth voluntary associations' efforts to professionalise was financial. While training and understanding of youth were important, professionalisation took on greatest importance at times of financial difficulty, seeing most progress in times when they report financial hardship, uncertainty and wider economic issues. In the 1980s especially the London and Liverpool Associations looked to streamline management while reporting public expenditure cuts and fearing for the very future of voluntary youth services.

This chapter has also traced the national policy agenda to which associations reacted. What is missing in all associations is a decision to put national policy agendas particularly high on the priorities list, except in the case of the Albemarle Report which had particular credibility born out of its well-selected committee members, wealth of evidence collected from appropriate voluntary bodies and timeliness. It is not fair to say that central government interventions were ignored, but they were sometimes placed on a back-burner while local responses and issues were shaken out, as

³⁰⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/12, London Union Annual Report 1960, p. 12

³⁰⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1973, p. 1

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3

³¹¹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1971, p. 5

was the case in Liverpool following Fairburn-Milson and the creation of MYA which followed shortly after. Examining youth voluntary associations at the local level demonstrates a more complex engagement with national policy makers and national organisations, showing that mixes of local issues, national pressures, and organisational identity produced divergent paths for such associations. This shows that to fully understand the mixed economy of welfare, it must be understood that this mix varied not only over time, but also between different localities.

Chapter Three – The Roles of Youth Clubs and Associations

What were youth clubs for? In the period 1958-1985 the roles and functions of clubs and associations in Liverpool and London were contested. At stake were the futures of young people, framed against a backdrop of a changing society, within which they were viewed as problematic. Historiography has focussed on how youth groups have sought to influence the adults their young members became. Springhall looked at a range of movements and how they promoted imperial values between 1883 and 1940.¹ Tebbutt has considered inter-war boys' clubs.² Mills has examined how Scouting sought to make young citizens in the post-war period.³ Bradley has focussed on efforts to offer leisure to the young delinquent.⁴ Spence has looked at informal education for girls from the perspective of a former girls' worker.⁵ Yet, in the post-war period the role of the youth club has escaped full consideration and doing so reveals elements of many of the studies mentioned above blended and adapted to the individual youth club.

This chapter focuses on the roles of youth voluntary associations and youth clubs and their relationships with each other and the state. It does so by examining how youth associations, and youth clubs were conceptualised at the time, relating this to theories about social control, welfare, education and citizenship. Firstly it examines whether associations in London and Liverpool functioned to lead member clubs and how they served and responded to the needs of local clubs: how did they see their role, and what evidence is there of clubs supporting this vision? Subsequently, this chapter analyses the ideals of youth clubs and what various stakeholders saw the roles of clubs to be.

As seen earlier, the Youth Service sat under the Ministry of Education/DES throughout this

¹ Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society*

² Tebbutt, *Being Boys*

³ Mills, 'An instruction in good citizenship'

⁴ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation'

⁵ Jean Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education in Youth Work with Girls and Young Women, 1975-85', Kraftl and Mills eds., *Informal Education*

period, on face value seeing itself as an addition to formal schooling, and therefore with an educative function. However, were clubs more than informal sites of learning and what kind of education was provided in clubs? Is it the case that via social education, emphasis on citizenship and the embodied values voluntary clubs were agents of social control? Bradley has recently analysed youth work through the frame of Bailey's 'rational recreation' seeing sites of youth work as spaces to contain potentially delinquent youth by providing subsidised leisure facilities.⁶ Was this the case in London and Liverpool 1958-1985? Or were the educative ambitions of clubs more democratic, acting as spaces for the transmission of social and cultural capital? Were clubs in fact spaces for accessing and delivering welfare services? The mixing of welfare and social control elements has been examined in Jackson and Bartie's analysis of Scottish juvenile policing, but the integration of different approaches to young people is relevant here too.⁷ In what follows the variety within youth clubs begins to emerge and the tensions between different ideologies of youth work become evident. This chapter argues that there is significant evidence that youth clubs were fulfilling all the above roles and more as adults contested the spaces of youth work in post-war Britain. Young people also contested these places, seeing them variously as safe, spaces of social control or for crossing the threshold into adulthood, for learning and opportunity, and sites to be possessed by young people. Ultimately this chapter demonstrates that youth clubs were hard to define and that this worked to their advantage, allowing them to adapt to meet the needs of local youth. In this way, they stood apart from youth organisations with more formalised identities and this allowed them a uniquely adaptable position in young lives.

I. Youth voluntary associations: leadership and service

Local youth voluntary associations had a unique intermediary position in the structure of local youth services. They were a link between national bodies, the local state, other local voluntary bodies and individual clubs. These different stakeholders as well as the local context and

⁶ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation'

⁷ Angela Bartie and Louise A. Jackson, 'Youth Crime and Preventive Policing in Post-War Scotland (c.1945-1971)', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2011, pp. 79-102; Jackson with Bartie, *Policing Youth*; Garland, *The Culture of Control*

development of youth work saw associations negotiating a range of roles and relationships. In some cases, associations' functions in providing services to clubs and young people were emphasised. However, in other examples they sought to frame themselves as local leaders and setters of standards. As affiliation to them was by no means compulsory; it is likely that some clubs rejected associations' attempts to structure youth work, and this too says something about possible rejection of the ideals of youth work they embodied.

Examining the aims and objectives of the associations puts them firmly in a servicing role as this quote from MYA shows:

To help and educate boys and girls and young men and women, especially those between the ages of 14 and 20 years, through their leisure time activities, so as to develop their spiritual, mental and physical capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.⁸

Their services were many and varied, including organising the sports leagues, trips, appeals and every-day running of the association. Examining some particular services provided and roles fulfilled assists an understanding of associations as primarily servicing organisations. For example, communication and the pooling of expertise was a significant part of what youth voluntary associations did to enable youth work in London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. This resonates with the analysis of Hilton et al. on the role of communication and media in the professionalisation of many high profile NGOs since 1945.⁹ The LFBC, London Union, Liverpool Union, LBA and MYA were conduits for information from a variety of sources and for a number of audiences; national policy documents from central government, local government and the national representative bodies. Further inputs came from youth work publications aimed at promoting the latest expertise on working with young people.¹⁰ The associations collated this information, added to it and disseminated it to their member clubs. This was done via a range of publications, from annual reports to monthly circular letters.¹¹ Publications also aimed to promote use of the associations' facilities, good club-association relationships and the associations' values.

⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1982-83, p. 1

⁹ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 146-187

¹⁰ For example the magazine *Youth in Society* and the publications by the Youth Service Information Centre

¹¹ See for example LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters

However, further than that, associations were active communicators. Associations used their local networks and prominent local role to make vital connections, act as a focal point for youth work and try to influence the direction of development of youth work in their respective cities. Not only did they disseminate local and national expertise on youth work, but via leaders committees, members committees and the seats of association staff on myriad linked committees, the associations were able to find out what youth workers and clubs thought about young people, youth issues, local needs and policy.

How associations might best communicate was also considered. The LFBC, for example, in 1963-64 had a 'Public Relations' section in the Annual Report and in 1985 produced a 'corporate identity manual' to keep club and association publications to a consistent style.¹² This was intended to influence how they communicated about young people to the public, but also to control their public image. Hilton et al. have analysed how NGOs at this time made use of logos, branding and the media in order to maximise their campaigning visibility and the LFBC were adopting a similar approach.¹³ The Liverpool associations, however, paid much less attention to their image though they might occasionally mention press coverage they had received.

Local policy development was also important, reflecting historiography on the increasing attempts of NGOs to influence policy.¹⁴ The youth voluntary associations in London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 participated in lobbying and campaigning. However, it would be wrong to overstate the level of policy and campaigning work undertaken, and also misleading to consider it in the same vein as the national policy campaigning. For this, the local associations had their national counterparts, the NAYC, NABC and bodies such as SCNYVO.¹⁵ One example of this is the NABC's response to the Fairburn-Milson Report discussed in chapter two.¹⁶

The policy and lobbying work undertaken by local associations in London and Liverpool mirrored their sphere of influence and likely sources of financial support. It focused on local needs,

¹² LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1963-64, p. 3; LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1985-86, p. 4

¹³ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 95-99

¹⁴ Hilton et al. eds., *NGOs since 1945*

¹⁵ Green, *In the Service of Youth*

¹⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M6/1/7, 'MYA – Youth and Community Work in the seventies' folder

projects and grants. The associations' effort to convince local authorities of the necessity of their development efforts was one central element to this lobbying work. In particular, in both London and Liverpool, associations wanted local authorities to make provision for youth clubs on the planned new housing estates.¹⁷ They emphasised how youth clubs in poor quality housing areas earmarked for redevelopment were not always scheduled to move with their populations.¹⁸

Yet there was another important message that youth associations had to impart to their local areas and local authorities. In addition to promoting themselves, their clubs and their work, they also sought to counteract negative images of young people that they felt were common. Annual reports frequently promoted young people, giving the message that the majority of them were ordinary, well-adjusted young people. One quote from the Liverpool Union from 1964 illustrates this, saying '[T]eenage Delinquency produces paragraphs, even columns in the national press, but the reporting of healthy, sporting youth activities rarely receives the attention it deserves'.¹⁹ This shows that with regard to Cohen's understanding of the importance of the media in demonising youth, youth associations had a role offering a critique to media portrayals of youth.²⁰

There is some evidence that youth voluntary associations in South London and Liverpool provided leadership and endeavoured to set standards for clubs to uphold. One clear example of this was the conditions for affiliation given in chapter two. There were also occasions in the 1960s when both the London and Liverpool associations for boys' clubs attempted to weed out clubs that were considered sub-standard.²¹ Here, evidence that associations sought to monitor clubs and promote certain standards does exist, and it is the Liverpool associations whose examples are best preserved, though the London associations mention using similar methods even if the documents

¹⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, The LBA sent out a 'Development Memorandum' close to Albemarle saying that 'the "areas of need" are moving out and are now found in the new housing areas where large groups of City boys, uprooted from close community environment, urgently require a social unit of their own. A quick glance at the projected housing estates and slum clearance sites will give a clear picture of the urgency for a studied plan of Development schemes'

¹⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, LBA, 'Boys' Club Development Memorandum, p. 1, undated, c. 1958-1960; LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/47, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1966-67, p. 2

¹⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1963-64, p. 5

²⁰ Cohen, *Folk Devils*

²¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, 'LBA Minutes of A special meeting to consider action to be taken regarding doubtful affiliated organisations', 26th April 1961; LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 32

themselves have not survived.²² The two main mechanisms for monitoring standards and compliance with affiliation regulations were the annual return (a document filled in yearly by each club and returned with their affiliation fee) and the club visit. Annual returns recorded information like the nature of club leadership (full or part-time), opening hours, number of helpers, details of the management committee, and provided space to fill in the activities programme, average attendance and any membership conditions (pertinent to church-based or single activity groups).²³ This information could also indicate struggling clubs, where attendance was low, there were too few helpers, or where the activity programme and opening hours were out-of-step with the expectations of the association.

The club visit was a way of monitoring affiliated clubs, though this was often done with a view to offering help rather than censuring them. In 1965-66 the LBA kept documents of a series of visits to some clubs earmarked for special attention to check standards, removed some that were defunct from affiliation and helped where they could (such as when they gave a grant to a club fearing closure because it had no toilet).²⁴ The LFBC too had a clear-out of failing clubs, accounting for a slight drop in overall affiliation levels in 1962.²⁵ Such processes are evidence of bureaucratic administration and monitoring as outlined by Perkin.²⁶

To further demonstrate this point, in 1966 the LBA compiled data from a survey designed to measure the number of Association activities in which affiliated clubs were participating.²⁷ It measured club involvement in a set of core activities and events including attendance at Leaders' Council and Members' Council, camp, teams entered in sports leagues and arts activities, use of training courses, and attendance at the AGM. A table was produced, scoring 62 Clubs in terms of participation in 30 activities and using this data to classify clubs into four quartiles.

²² LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, for example LFBC refers to 'Statistical Return' in the Annual Report 1958-59, p. 12, but examples are unavailable

²³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/6/10 holds examples from the Liverpool Union 1959-1962

²⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/4, undated handwritten list 'Defunct Clubs' with Club Visit Reports, 1959

²⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 32

²⁶ Perkin, *The Third Revolution*, pp. xi-xv

²⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/5, 'LBA Activities Participation and Attendance Record 1965/66'

Group:	Level of Participation	Number of clubs in category
One	75% or over	2
Two	50% - 75%	4
Three	25% - 50%	26
Four	0% - 25%	30
Total		62

Table 3.1 Liverpool Boys' Association Sample of Club Participation in Association Activities (out of thirty categories), 1965-66²⁸

The top club, Old Swan Boys' Club, participated in 24 out of 30 activities, and the bottom club was St John's Youth Club who had no marks on their scoresheet but returned it nonetheless.²⁹ Clubs that did not return the survey might show a similar lack of commitment. This survey demonstrates that Clubs had differing levels of engagement with associations they affiliated to and that most clubs took part in less than half of the organised activities.³⁰ Some clubs were much closer to their association than others, but few clubs showed a high level of participation. While none of the other associations have records of similar surveys, interviewees supported the idea that engagement and relationships between clubs and associations varied widely even within local areas. Steve had regular links with both the LFBC and London Union, but Dennis deliberately kept them at arms-length.³¹

Yet this survey undertaken by the LBA has something else to offer to aid our understanding of club and associations. This survey was sent to the management committee of every affiliated club. The responses received back are very revealing. Edge Hill Boys' Club responded:

What we sometimes forget is that the LBA is there to run Boys' Clubs, not to run the LBA and there is a vast difference...I must admit that when I saw that Edge Hill had been put into the 25/50 percent participation bracket, I was a little disappointed but when I read what they are doing, my disappointment is less, particularly as I know that they are taking an interest in other pursuits which are not shown on your long list.³²

The Club at Victoria Settlement thought that as a mixed club it was unsurprising that they were 'a little less entirely orientated towards LBA ideas than are many Clubs which are purely for boys'.³³

²⁸ Compiled from LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/5, document 'LBA Activities Participation and Attendance Record 1965/66'

²⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/5, 'LBA Activities Participation and Attendance Record 1965/66', p. 5

³⁰ Ibid. pp. 1-5

³¹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

³² LRO, M367 MYA/B/9/5, letter from the Management Committee of Edge Hill Boys' Club to the LBA, 19th July, 1966

³³ LRO, M367 MYA/B/9/5, letter from Victoria Settlement Youth Club to the LBA, 22nd July 1966

However, one leader felt furious. The letter being sent to his management committee made him feel like he was being undermined and he made it clear that he felt the LBA had overstepped their role:

When I later learnt it [*the survey*] had been sent to my Management Committee two months previously I was extremely angry. I believe the Liverpool Boys' Association to be a servicing agency to which clubs desiring to may, by payment of a fee, choose to use whichever facilities are thought suitable to their situation. I am quite aware that you wish to encourage more clubs to take part in many more of your activities but, as you no doubt realise, you are very dependent on the goodwill and support of the Youth Leader working in the club...I deplore the action you have taken as a form or moral blackmail which could well do harm to the relationship between the Leader and the Management Committee and exceeds your position as a servicing organisation.³⁴

Another leader spoke in similar - though less vociferous terms - that the participation statistics did not reflect what it meant to be a 'thriving club', saying:

We at Bankhall may never have a case full of trophies or a crammed activity programme, but we do have a very happy leader management relationship - also a happy, homily [*homely*] club where members are encouraged to be alive to many more things of everyday life than competitions and so forth.³⁵

These responses, and others, begin to reveal a tension in the relationship whereby the role of the association was being questioned. Was it a servant or master? The survey shows crucially, that the relationships between clubs and associations varied widely. It was not simply a top-down hierarchy – there was significant scope for clubs to exercise autonomy while still taking advantage of associations facilities. Attempts by the LBA to tighten their grip on their youth leaders and encourage them to adopt the things that they thought marked out the model club can be viewed as an attempt to raise and level standards to shape professional practice and were not always welcomed.

However, there were other areas of work where those involved were happy for associations to provide leadership in youth work: development of new clubs and innovation. Experimental work is one area in particular where the relationship between the local authority, DES and the voluntary youth associations worked well. In frequent grant-giving to experimental work, often also supported by large charitable foundations, the state sanctioned those youth voluntary

³⁴ LRO, M367 MYA/B/9/5, letter from Club Leader to the LBA, 15th September 1966

³⁵ LRO, M367 MYA/B/9/5, letter from Bankhall Youth Club Leader to LBA, 19th September 1966

associations who were eager to do so to push the boundaries of youth work. The LBA, Liverpool Union and MYA in particular, and in comparison to their London counterparts, were able to lead on experimental work.

Traditionally, club-based youth work revolved around structured activities, organised by an adult leader, adult helpers or instructors. It was still a popular component of youth work throughout the period 1958-1985. However, discussions had begun in the late 1950s about how to appeal to the kind of young person that would not join a traditional club. In response to the Albemarle Report, the LBA and Liverpool Union sought to undertake an experiment whereby they developed a coffee bar in a building, but left decorating and developing the rest of the building up to the future club members.³⁶ The proposed club was to be shared and a central Liverpool location using three empty shops was found.³⁷ This experiment, the Bronte Street Youth Centre, proved to have filled such a need in the City, that when the lease expired and the site was redeveloped, a new neighbourhood centre including a youth wing was built on the site with increased assistance from the local authority.³⁸

The NAYC funded a three-year experiment in youth work outside the club setting across several locations which was eventually published by Mary Morse in 1965.³⁹ This prompted a detached youth work project in Liverpool which formally commenced in 1967. In 1969 the MYA formally took over the project, which ran until the early 1980s.⁴⁰ While personnel changed frequently in the early period, it eventually settled down to a male and female who worked closely together for an extended period in a specific community centred on the Breck Road in Anfield. The work required them to locate groups of young people wherever they were found, places like pubs, streets, car parks and cafés. Once they had contacted young people they were to work with them to provide opportunities and activities and also just to listen to what young people had to say. They eventually acquired a minibus with a tea urn in the back which served as a roving youth facility and

³⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Liverpool Union 'Suggestions' 19th January 1962

³⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter from Field Officer to General Secretary of the Liverpool Union, 4th October 1961

³⁸ See for example LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/4, Bronte Centre, 1967 folder

³⁹ Morse, *The Unattached*

⁴⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/1, LYOC minutes from 26th April 1965 and 'Unattached Youth' 31st May 1965 explain the background and rationale for the project

a small office to assist their work.⁴¹ While leader salaries were eventually funded and an education department representative was on the management committee, the workers were left to conduct their work as they saw best, assisted by a local academic and later a professional advisory committee.⁴²

The detached youth work project demonstrated that the local authority and central government were happy to let associations experiment and innovate. In 1972, the ability of local government to provide funding to voluntary organisations for such purposes was formalised in the Local Government Act.⁴³ In Liverpool, an important element of this was the link to a local academic gathering evidence on this work and contributing to the specialised knowledge on new youth work techniques needed to professionalise.⁴⁴ While experimentation is an acknowledged role of voluntary organisations in service provision, it should not be taken for granted that any and all experimentation would have avoided state censure.⁴⁵ In this case, it shows that despite difficulties there were often good relations with the local authority, and sometimes good, if remote, relations with the DES.

Development and policy is an area where state-voluntary tensions are most evident and show some of the contests about the role and meaning of youth work being fought out. From the point of view of associations, the local authority and sometimes Whitehall stunted their plans for development by slow responses or refusing grants. However, the state bodies were responsible for weighing up and allocating resources across a number of organisations and priorities, including their own and so such tensions were inevitable. Direction for development was officially provided via policy such as the Albemarle Report and Fairburn-Milson.⁴⁶ The LBA, Liverpool Union and LFBC had all anticipated the findings of Albemarle, and had development plans well underway before

⁴¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/6, Report on 18 months of the Project with Unattached Young People April 1967-October 1968

⁴² LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/3, DYW Professional Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

⁴³ Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 made a wide provision to enable local authorities to fund voluntary organisations not covered by any other legislation for the benefit of part or all of the local area; http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/pdfs/ukpga_19720070_en.pdf, accessed 31st August 2015

⁴⁴ Ince, *Contact*; Perkin, *The Third Revolution*: pp. xi-xv

⁴⁵ Jeremy Kendall, *The Voluntary Sector: Comparative Perspectives in the UK*, London, Routledge, 2003, p. 175

⁴⁶ Albemarle; Fairburn-Milson

publication.⁴⁷ Relationships between the state and the Liverpool youth associations were often strained around issues of development priorities, as each had competing priorities and perceptions of local need. Central government was often removed from these local issues and indeed some of the wider issues facing the youth service. Overall it was a constant, ongoing and piecemeal negotiation of the mixed economy of welfare at local level which was further complicated by the DES, whose policy and funding often seemed at odds with the rest of the Youth Service.

While associations did monitor standards and try to improve struggling clubs, there was no overarching sense that they saw their role as paternalistic. Instead it was more one of helping clubs and providing encouragement. Member clubs sometimes perceived associations as servicing organisations and indeed a large part of what they did was help clubs and organise inter-club activities. Yet clubs had little view of the work done with LEAs, local youth councils, DES and national bodies which offered complementary roles to associations and an alternative view of relationships with them. In particular what was missing from the club perspectives given on the 1966 LBA survey above was a sense of how associations could be a focal point for expertise on youth work and local issues, coordinating the local mixed economy of youth welfare. When put in the context of arguments from Hilton et al. about the role of developing expert knowledge in processes of professionalisation, local associations can be viewed as crucial in this, as they brought together a range of people with relevant roles and experience.⁴⁸ However, it is fair to say that to clubs, as well as to other partners, the roles of and relationships with associations were not straightforward, universally accepted, or, indeed, static.

II. Networks of education and welfare: clubs, associations and the state

In both South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 dozens, if not hundreds, of

⁴⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, 'Five Year Development Scheme', LBA, May 1958; , LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC note in the 1958-59 Annual Report that they are preparing their development plan having 'already anticipated' the need for the 20 Clubs fund, p. 13; LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/1, General Council Minute Book, November 1959, details extensive plans and a colour-coded map

⁴⁸ Hilton et al, *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10

organisations were involved in the mixed economy of youth welfare. For example, in 1964 the Liverpool Union offers thanks to over thirty organisations and businesses that they have worked with in the past year.⁴⁹ Instead of viewing this network from the state perspective, taking a bottom-up view provides a more detailed and textured view of provision and the welfare mix. When looked at in this way, though the role of the state is still significant, however it becomes clear quite how fundamental to the functioning of the local welfare mix voluntary organisations were. James who worked in the LCSS, and later at Liverpool University, felt that in Liverpool bodies such as the LCSS and LYOC were the central co-ordinating and decision making bodies, and that the LBA and Liverpool Union were both particularly influential within this web.⁵⁰ Their networks and relationships offered co-ordination and expertise to a range of stakeholders in youth welfare and they provided many services themselves. This said, networks were not completely co-ordinated and much ad-hoc planning remained.

The most important relationship from the point of view of the city-wide voluntary youth associations was the one they had with the state at local level. In reality most interactions were between the association and the LEA or in the case of London, ILEA, and the local Director of Education, though a range of other departments might be contacted on occasion (such as the planning or surveying department when a new club was being built). The LEA as a grant-making or matching body had a lot of influence over what development could take place and held a seat on a vast array of committees ranging from the large city-wide youth committees to individual club management committees. They also gave permission to appoint paid staff within voluntary organisations and sat in on interviews for leaders of voluntary run clubs. Therefore, beyond simply the funding relationship outlined in chapter two, the functioning of the relationship between voluntary associations and LEAs was very important to the youth voluntary associations and generally it can be seen to have been a good one.

Local Authority projects were perceived to be the main beneficiaries of the grant system, prior to 1971, but the LEA retained the advantage when they gained the power to decide which

⁴⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1963-64

⁵⁰ Interview with James, 24th September 2014

projects were to be funded, albeit at a lower grant rate and with money taken out of the main pot to fund Urban Aid.⁵¹ The main area of tension within this otherwise good relationship was around grant-making processes. Frustrations came from the Liverpool Union several times in the late 1950s and early 1960s as they note that they are waiting on to receive formal grant letters.⁵² The result of this was often delays of several months to projects.⁵³ However, it is clear that communication was open and that the associations felt that they could at least ask for what they wanted, even if these requests were ultimately subsumed into what the LEA thought was a good idea.⁵⁴

In London, the relationship between associations and local government was more complex than in Liverpool for most of this period. From 1965 to 1986, London had a two-tiered local government system comprising of London Boroughs beneath the GLC. In Inner London, education was the responsibility of ILEA and outer boroughs had their own LEAs, offering a level of coordination of the Youth Service. This meant that the LFBC and London Union had to negotiate more complex relationships: with each Clubs' Borough (on issues such as planning), with the LEA or ILEA, with the Ministry on grants and the GLC on London-wide policy. The London Unions' use of area teams in the 1970s and onwards was part of their strategy for managing these complex relationships and achieving better service coordination.⁵⁵

The relationship between LEAs and associations was mostly positive and this can be seen especially in the 1980s when local government in London and Liverpool were under strain; in London with the looming closure of the GLC and ILEA, and in Liverpool with the near financial

⁵¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, letter from DES to Youth Voluntary Associations, 30th April 1971

⁵² Examples from LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, General Minute book include meetings on the 10th April 1958 and 8th May 1958, on 10th November 1960 they note that a premises they wanted to buy was sold to a commercial firm while waiting on the LEA, on 6th July 1961 the Liverpool Union notes awaiting LEA approval for experimental scheme and once given by 31st August 1961, the Director of Education says they cannot appoint until they meet with LEA Youth Officers, they were also 'awaiting a letter' 8th March 1962

⁵³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, General Minute Book, for the Liverpool Union, a delay of 9 months in one experimental scheme in 1961-62 resulted from waiting for requisite permissions to come through

⁵⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, LBA Development file, 1962 shows the LBA getting one project approved out of nine submitted with a large local authority project coming first

⁵⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/10, London Union Annual Report 1981-82, p. 6; LMA, LMA/4232/A/05/001/01, Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes, March 1982, notes that staff 'feel far happier with this arrangement'

collapse of the local authority and barring of the 'militant' councillors.⁵⁶ The MYA showed remarkable solidarity with Liverpool's local authority, offering the sanguine remark '[W]e too understand their own difficulties' in response to anticipated grant levels.⁵⁷ This indicates that behind the tension over process and priorities lay understanding and an attitude of genuine goodwill.

When looking at the roles of youth clubs and youth voluntary associations in the local mixed economy of youth welfare, it is important to place them in the context of their wider networks, not only in terms of other local youth voluntary organisations, but also local welfare and community organisations with whom they worked to provide local non-statutory services. Full network mapping of these webs in Liverpool and London is virtually impossible, given the gaps in the archival papers preserved, the sheer numbers of projects with varying stakeholders, and the way that personnel sometimes represented more than one organisation simultaneously on myriad committees. In order to provide an idea of the extent of these local networks, over 200 people from at least 41 organisations linked to the LYOC attended a day conference on youth and community work in 1970, including local representatives on national bodies such as the NABC.⁵⁸ From the associations' perspective, the most important relationships were with local government, their member clubs, other associations and other youth welfare groups or movements, such as the Scouts. Extending from this were a variety of local welfare and youth welfare organisations, community organisations and importantly, churches. Networks were incomplete, pragmatic and dependent on key personnel who knew each other and had good local knowledge of the mixed economy of welfare. For example, the Great George's Youth Welfare Council, in Liverpool, is only mentioned in Liverpool archival documents when they want to offer financial and practical assistance to a youth scheme in their area which they see as lacking in provision.⁵⁹

One particular partner in providing services to young people that was shared with the

⁵⁶ Wilson and Game, *Local Government*; Travers, *The Politics of London*; Wolch, *The shadow state*; Frost and North, *Militant Liverpool*; Taafe and Mulhearn, *Liverpool*

⁵⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/8, MYA Annual Report 1976-77, p. 1

⁵⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, Report from Day Conference on Youth and Community Work in the 70s (8th November 1969) to the LYOC, January 1970

⁵⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/1, mentioned as authors of 'Unattached Youth' document, 31st May 1965, at the beginning of the folder on the establishment of the DYW project

Scouts was churches and religious bodies. Mills has written about how the Scouting Movement in the twentieth century has accommodated a variety of cultural and religious groups, including Muslims.⁶⁰ Youth clubs have also had appeal across religious divides and associations welcomed affiliates from Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Jewish youth in London and Liverpool as well having local religious leaders on committees.⁶¹ There is much further research to be done on the links between religion and youth work, but here it is important to emphasise that many local clubs would have had religious links and exploring these has the potential to nuance our understanding of secularisation in twentieth-century Britain.⁶² Some simply rented the church hall. Several interviewees were linked with church clubs.⁶³ In 1960, 73 out of 110 clubs were meeting in Church premises.⁶⁴

This shows that even without considering the national picture, local youth and welfare networks were large and complex but that youth voluntary associations were central to them. That the MYA had links with all those that attended shows the level of involvement they had with youth welfare provision in Liverpool in the 1960s and 1970s. Here, it is clear the local state and voluntary sector formed particularly prominent bonds. This differs from how scholarship on movements such as the Scouts has portrayed relationships with the local state, which appear much more remote.⁶⁵

III. Youth clubs

The above sections have illuminated some of the structures in place around youth clubs, playing various roles. However, the role of the youth club, within local communities, social and welfare structures and the lives of the young people was complex. The term 'youth club' was fluid enough

⁶⁰ Mills, 'Muslim Scouting'

⁶¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/7/3, for example the affiliations for Liverpool Union included Scout and Boys' Brigade groups, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Jewish groups, hobby groups and pre-service organisations, list compiled for local government re-organisation; the Liverpool Union had official representatives of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches alongside Rabbi S. Woolf representing the 'Jewish Community' LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/45, Liverpool Union Annual Report for 1964-65, p. 11

⁶² See for example Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000*, London, Routledge, 2001; Hugh McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*, Oxford, OUP, 2007

⁶³ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014; interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

⁶⁴ LRO, M367 MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union 'Albemarle Memorandum, 25th March 1960, part b,

⁶⁵ Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*; Block and Proctor eds., *Scouting Frontiers*

to encompass many different types of organisation seeking to provide space for young people.

Indeed the NABC felt particularly that work with boys was threatened by wider applications of the term youth club:

Recently, any institution which provides facilities for the meeting and relaxation of the young, under whatever auspices and applying whatever method, is called a "Youth Club"; it is tacitly and often explicitly assumed [*they*] are all of the same kind. Confusion and misunderstanding has resulted.⁶⁶

Interviewee Tony agreed, drawing a distinction between those who spend time with young people and youth workers:

I always say professional youth worker now. Because anyone who does any work with young people is seen as a youth worker, whether it is one night a week or two nights a week doing a bit of activity. I've got nothing against that. I emphasise that they are add-ons. It's not youth work, professional youth work.⁶⁷

While for the NABC and Tony this fluidity was seen as a weakness, it also enabled youth clubs to fulfil a variety of roles in local communities and provided scope for youth workers to interpret their role as will be discussed in chapter six. This section looks at four of the principal ways the roles of youth clubs and associations were interpreted at the time. Firstly, the educative function of youth clubs is examined, suggesting that clubs have remained important sites for informal and semi-formal education, where the exchange of social and cultural capital has been viewed as an important part of what the Youth Service has to offer young people. Secondly, in line with earlier youth movements they were articulated as spaces for creating citizens in a way which was gendered, classed and based on a traditional model of leadership and discipline. Thirdly, clubs existed as targeted welfare services and acted as gateways to other services, in a role which saw youth in modern urban society framed as in need of particular help to access full social citizenship. Fourthly, again, envisioning youth provision as a specialist service to contain potentially problematic youth, clubs in the 1960s, as Bradley has argued, became sites for 'rational recreation'.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, NABC *Memorandum on Development*, undated, c. 1960, p. 1

⁶⁷ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

⁶⁸ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'

a. Education

The Youth Service was widely understood as a vehicle for providing education. Though not a statutory service, the Ministry of Education and later DES were responsible for policy and funding to youth organisations. Bradford has argued that 'youth work has become largely synonymous with informal education'.⁶⁹ He is right that much of the educative value of youth clubs was thought to be found in non-formal learning (framed as outside the school classroom). There was a specific emphasis on the social education which was gained in youth organisations, to the extent that the London Union felt in response to the Thompson Report that more work needed to be done explaining and publicising the 'special youth service role of social education'.⁷⁰ This does not mean that more formal learning was not on offer via clubs and associations. Many clubs hired instructors for specific activities.⁷¹ Associations also described having discussions on publicising warnings and advice on topics such as drug abuse, smoking, venereal disease and alcohol.⁷² There were also examples of the local marriage guidance councils giving talks, and of some club members requesting sex education from their youth club.⁷³

Arranging sports, competitions, crafts, hobbies, music, drama and events was a major element of the work of associations and something which many clubs took advantage of.⁷⁴ Clubs too often arranged their own activities on a smaller scale. Local associations were involved in a significant amount of local provision, both in terms of organising and also in terms of providing facilities and infrastructure. This represented a large contribution to the mixed economy of youth welfare in these cities, whereby often state services were dwarfed by this provision or indeed reliant upon it to provide some of their own services. For example, in Liverpool, the MYA were

⁶⁹ Simon Bradford, 'Managing the Spaces of Freedom: Mid-twentieth-Century Youth Work', in Mills and Kraftl eds., *Informal Education*, p.193

⁷⁰ Ibid. see also Ince, *Contact*; John Wilson, Norman Williams and Barry Sugarman, *Introduction to Moral Education*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1967; Mays, *Education and The Urban Child*; LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union of Youth Club Annual Report 1982, p. 3

⁷¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1-17, Bronte Youth Club papers, detailing such requests

⁷² LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/22, Liverpool Union Circular Letter February 1969; LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, 1959,

⁷³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/16, Liverpool Union Circular Letter June 1963, p. 2

⁷⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, 'What Does the MYA Have to Offer?', draft of promotional leaflet, c. 1970

responsible for 100 acres of playing fields including 45 football pitches.⁷⁵ The MYA noted that of the 65 hours a week that the fields were open in 1977-78, the local authority used 35 of them, catering for half a million young Liverpudlians that year.⁷⁶ That this proportion is so large, at over 50%, shows that while the state may have led in formal educational provision for youth, opportunities for sport and recreation, including that paid for by the state, relied on Liverpool's voluntary youth associations.

Without co-ordinating associations able to arrange and subsidise activities otherwise too expensive for many young people, many members may not have had the opportunity to experience them. A good example of this is the LFBC 'Fed Afloat' programme which sponsored and subsidised canoeing on the Thames for young men.⁷⁷ Not only did they arrange instruction and equipment, but they organised workshops to teach boys how to build canoes, allowed boys to train as lifeguards to support canoeing and held canoeing events and camps.⁷⁸

Holiday and residential centres were another way that associations had a role enabling access to opportunities that may have been beyond the reach of many young people but which also had an educational element. In line with the Scouts, Guides and Outward Bound, youth voluntary associations saw the benefits of getting young people from London and Liverpool to take responsibility for themselves in an outdoor environment.⁷⁹ These included the health benefits of fresh air, linking to a longer tradition of charities thinking urban children needed to get into the countryside.⁸⁰ The Barnston Dale Camp on the Wirral near Liverpool, run by the Liverpool Union provides a useful example. The Camp alone provided opportunities for outdoor activity for thousands of young people every year, providing holidays for 2060 young people in 1962-63, 2118

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/9, MYA Annual Report 1977-78, p. 6

⁷⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1960-61, p. 9

⁷⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 11

⁷⁹ Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth''; Richard G Kyle, 'Inside-Out: Connecting Indoor and Outdoor Spaces of Informal Education through the Extraordinary Geographies of The Boys' Brigade Camp', Mills and Kraftl eds., *Informal Education*, pp. 21-35; Sarah Mills, 'A Powerful Educational Instrument': The Woodcraft Folk and Indoor/Outdoor 'Nature', 1925-1975', Mills and Kraftl eds, *Informal Education*, pp. 65-80

⁸⁰ Nigel Scotland, *Squires in the Slums – Settlements and Missions in Late Victorian London*, London, IB Tauris, 2007, p. 48

the following year and 2144 the year after that.⁸¹ The MYA also made use of a residential facility in Llangollen in Wales and the LFBC had Hindleap Warren in East Sussex for a similar purpose.⁸²

While the documents show that voluntary associations had a role enabling access and co-ordinating provision for more specialised activities, interviewees too reflected on the opportunities of club membership. They recognised that membership allowed them to do things they may never otherwise have had the chance to do, like trips to Calais, Somerset and the Lake District.⁸³ Some youth workers, including Katherine, felt that the educational role of youth work was sometimes as simple as getting young people out of the environments where they spent all their time, offering them new experiences to challenge those to which they were exposed on a daily basis.⁸⁴ Katherine particularly saw youth work as educational, having chosen this type of informal education over her training for teaching.⁸⁵

With aspirations of bringing recreation, sports, hobbies and more to young people issues of class and social and cultural capital are raised. As will be explored further in chapters four and five, many of the young people targeted by the voluntary youth clubs were working class and many were perceived by youth workers and social agencies to live in deficient urban environments. Thus working class youth were thought to need these informal educational and social opportunities most. Two former attendees interviewed placed their membership of clubs in the context of preparation for going away to college or university, showing that clubs could be seen to have a role in social betterment.⁸⁶ This is interesting in the context of the Scouts who were thought to appeal to more middle class youth.⁸⁷

One further form of education is deserving of mention in this context: political education. While associations and clubs took pains to steer clear of party politics there is evidence that clubs could enable a process of politicisation of young people. Dennis in particular saw this as part of the

⁸¹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/42-44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1962-63, p. 7, 1963-64, p.4, and 1964-65, p.7

⁸² LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/45, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1964-65, inside cover; LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC had a site called Hindleap Warren with a large house on which they subsequently developed a multi-activity outdoor centre in the mid-1970s, Annual Report 1974-75, p. 2

⁸³ Interview with Wendy, 29th July 2014; interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

⁸⁴ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Interview with Wendy, 29th July 2014; interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

⁸⁷ Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*, p. 16

role of clubs he has worked in, and of many of the black clubs in Lewisham in the 1970s where political education had a radical edge.⁸⁸ This liberal concept of the kinds of citizenship young people should have contrasts with understandings of citizenship which had long been associated with youth voluntary organisations.

b. Creating citizens: citizenship and control?

The stated aims and objectives of youth voluntary organisations in London and Liverpool give some indication of what they thought their main role was. In keeping with a longer running current in historiography on youth movements, the boys' club associations sought to emphasise their role in shaping character, making men fit for society and community by infusing Christian morality and manliness through the use of leisure time.⁸⁹ In this regard they can be examined in the context of the Scouts in terms of citizen-making, and Outward Bound in terms of expressing muscular Christianity.⁹⁰ Alongside ideas of physical and moral (and Christian spiritual) health, was an idea of young people as citizens and as contributors to their local community. It is important to note that while new youth work in the post-war period expanded the remit of youth clubs, this traditional strand of youth work remained, especially in boys' clubs.

Sir Basil Henriques had a wider connection to youth through his work in juvenile courts and settlements in London. He was also President of the LFBC in the late 1950s. He opened the 1959 Annual Report with some remarks about the need to support boys during adolescence:

The years between early puberty and manhood are still the most critical in the formation of a boy's character... the aim of the club has always been to develop the personality of each individual member and to make him feel that he has a contribution to make to the welfare of the community.⁹¹

These opening remarks situate the role of the club to help form boys' characters and place in the community. Yet the LFBC went further than this, and indeed further than some of their more secular sibling organisations in placing this within an explicitly Christian concept of citizenship:

Religion should still be the basis upon which the whole spirit of the Club depends, even as it

⁸⁸ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁸⁹ Powley, *Getting on with it*, p. 6

⁹⁰ Mills, 'An instruction in good citizenship'; Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth''

⁹¹ LMA, LMA/4232/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1958-59, p. 3

was when the Club movement was first started. The greatest need of our country today is to have citizens with a high moral code who are trying to live to the glory of God by serving their fellow men.⁹²

More so than their sibling organisations in London and Liverpool, the LFBC continued to articulate their role in shaping young men and creating citizens. Manhood, though ill-defined, is something the LFBC particularly focussed on, saying in 1958 that ‘a good Club is really a community of boys who are “on the road to manhood”’.⁹³ Statements about creating men and citizens are also evident in the mid-1960s, and into the 1970s. The opening quote to the 1964 Annual Report from footballer Sir Stanley Matthews was, ‘I want to develop a boy’s natural assets and strengthen his weaknesses and also teach him to be a good citizen.’⁹⁴

Again in 1974 the Federation continued to discuss how the boys’ clubs they supported had a continuing role contributing to the lives of boys:

Boys’ Clubs are concerned with standards of leadership and activity which are taught by example and the sharing of relationships between adults and boys aspiring to manhood. The importance of **accepting responsibility** is taught through their participation in self-government; their **obligations to society - and to those less fortunate** - are imparted through social service in the community; and awareness of the importance of **personal physical and mental fitness** comes through their participation in demanding and exciting activities (*emphasis in original*).⁹⁵

This quote more than any other, articulates the kind of citizenship the Federation wanted to create and gives three examples of how they believed their work, and the work of clubs, supported this. The LBA’s approach was broadly similar to that of the LFBC, at least until 1969 when they merged with the Liverpool Union. However, in their aims and objects they describe the ‘spiritual, mental, physical, and moral education, development and welfare of boys’ using welfare or well-being as an idea much earlier than the LFBC.⁹⁶ The religious and specifically masculine element was there too, seeing their role in ‘furthering the work which is of vital importance, leading to a Better, Fitter, More-Tolerant and God-Loving Manhood.’⁹⁷ This reflects sentiments expressed at the founding of

⁹² Ibid., p. 4

⁹³ LMA, LMA/4282/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1957-58, p. 11

⁹⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/6, LFBC Annual Report 1963-64, p. 1

⁹⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1973-74, p. 1

⁹⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1960, inside cover

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 2

the boys' club movement in the 1880s.⁹⁸

As boys' club associations, there is a particular sense of manhood, masculinity and citizenship which the organisations want to promote: one which includes physical fitness - in line with earlier movements such as the Scouts - but also an understanding of responsibility and obligations to those less fortunate.⁹⁹ It is important to note here that in the 1960s this interpretation of the role of clubs was strongly aligned with the boys' club movement in particular with one interviewee going as far as directly using the term 'muscular Christianity' when describing the work of the LFBC in the post-war period.¹⁰⁰

Youth movements and organisations which have explicitly sought to create better physical or moral specimens have a history dating back at least to the nineteenth century with such movements as the Band of Hope as well as, more notably, the Scouts, in the context of creating citizens of Empire.¹⁰¹ Mills and Olsen suggest not only did youth movements aspire to make citizens, but also to 'make men'.¹⁰² This is also evident in the post-war views of the boys' club associations, where rhetoric emphasising manhood and masculinity can be found as described above.

This contrasts with the lack of a corresponding aim for sister organisations to 'make women' or emphasise femininity. This suggests that clubs and associations perceived youth issues pertaining to citizenship as distinctly gendered in the post-war period, with women often marginalised in youth clubs, as chapter four continues to explore. Though the girls' and mixed clubs associations did provide stereotypically female activities such as dressmaking, cookery and hair-styling, the way they talk about themselves is less about making a specifically female or genderless citizenship.¹⁰³ Generally, mixed associations were much more likely to take perspective based on tolerance of young people and promotion of their general welfare.

There was, however, concern about whether youth work was an agent of social control, and at

⁹⁸ Powley, *Getting on with it*, p. 6

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹⁰¹ Springhall, *Youth Empire and Society*, p. 18; Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell'

¹⁰² Mills, 'Scouting for Girls?'; Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*; Proctor, "'On My Honour'"

¹⁰³ See for example LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/38-49, Liverpool Union Annual Reports 1958-1968

least one former worker interviewed expressed having had reservations about this during his career.¹⁰⁴ Michael saw it slightly differently, saying that while state money for youth clubs came through because of the perception that clubs helped control delinquents, youth workers were happy to take the money even though that was not how most youth workers he knew saw clubs or their own role.¹⁰⁵

c. Welfare and social citizenship

Promoting an alternative vision of citizenship came to be considered one of the possible roles of youth work and youth voluntary associations in the post-war period, aided by the changes in youth work described in chapter six. Social citizenship, in the manner of T.H. Marshall was brought onto the agenda by wider considerations of young people's welfare, identifications of groups for specialist intervention and a concern about the modern urban environment. Youth clubs and associations were taking an interest in welfare and were concerned with the conditions that young people faced. The LFBC felt that 'in the present social context, adolescents deeply need the guidance and understanding of adults as much as ever if not more than they ever did.'¹⁰⁶ They further argued that they were concerned with 'influences' and in providing 'lessons for life in our crowded modern society'.¹⁰⁷ These statements showing that modern, and particularly urban life were a risk to young people's welfare continue, with statements such as '[E]very day that goes by makes us more aware of the difficulties that arise from our modern environment when most of us live in the crowded conditions of urban life'¹⁰⁸ and '[T]he Federation is very much concerned with the general welfare and well-being of young people whose lives are determined to a great extent by the conditions and opportunities which exist in our inner cities.'¹⁰⁹

The MYA in 1983 stressed continuity in their aims in terms of the maturity and capabilities

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

¹⁰⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1959-60, p. 5

¹⁰⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 3; LMA, LMA/4283/ A/2/7, Annual Report 1968-69, p. 1

¹⁰⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1969-70, p1

¹⁰⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1981-82, p. 3

of young people, but they brought this together with stated emphasis on productive use of leisure and general welfare. The MYA's stated aim which opens the Annual Report is:

To help and educate boys and girls and young men and women, especially those between the ages of 14 and 20 years, through their leisure time activities, so as to develop their spiritual, mental and physical capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.¹¹⁰

There was an idea within boys' clubs and associations that something in contemporary society caused a need for them to provide leisure and targeted services to young people, especially in urban settings. This is a notion also found in the sister organisations looking after mixed and girls work.¹¹¹ The specific dangers to the young person of post-war society such as unemployment and poor housing and the welfare responses to them are discussed in chapter four. The dangers of modern urban society were also noted in 1887 at the founding of the LFBC but this sense that clubs should help to improve the living conditions of youth suggests a wider welfare role.¹¹²

d. Leisure provision and permissive youth work

As well as viewing sports, activities and trips as educative it is also possible to view them as an attempt to provide something for young people to do with their leisure time alongside commercial opportunities. Indeed when asked about the role of the youth club several interviewees who had attended saw it as simply 'somewhere to go', echoing Bradley's work on the importance of safe spaces for youth leisure in London.¹¹³ These respondents conceptualised the youth club as safe space and somewhere that their parents were happy for them to spend time.¹¹⁴ Dennis and Lee reflect how this was also true of some of the black youth clubs in Lewisham at a time when young men from ethnic minority backgrounds were regularly subjected to police searches on the streets of the borough.¹¹⁵ In this case it was not just a parentally-sanctioned safe space for the use of leisure but it offered some protection from conflict with the state, though perhaps not always, as

¹¹⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1982-83, p. 1

¹¹¹ In LMA, LMA/4283/D/01/004, London Union Annual Report 1971-72 the President referred to the 'endless damaging possibilities inevitably provided by our complex modern society,' p. 5

¹¹² Terry Powley, *Getting on with it*, pp. 6-43

¹¹³ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014; interview with Keith, 28th July 2014; Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'

¹¹⁴ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014; interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

¹¹⁵ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

Gilroy references youth club police raids.¹¹⁶

However, as the above quote stating the aims of MYA indicates, there was a perception that club leisure facilities were sometimes seen as a means to an end and that constructive use of leisure had wider objectives.¹¹⁷ This attitude towards their work with young people went back to 1959 at least with them stating in their Annual Report that

[T]he need to improve and extend the leisure time facilities for the young people of our City is a very pressing one and although some progress has been made in the last twelve months, much more must be achieved if the increasing population of teenagers is to be given those opportunities which are considered desirable.¹¹⁸

There was a sense that there were appropriate ways for young people to use their leisure time, (which it can only be presumed were the activities offered by the Union) and these can to a certain extent be contrasted with fears that some elements of mass culture and leisure were having a detrimental effect on young people at the time.¹¹⁹ This fits with the idea that the young were in need of 'rational recreation', as used by Bradley (drawing on Bailey).¹²⁰ The 1960s and 1970s saw the potential of youth work to contain troublesome youth discussed and work undertaken which focussed on those whose behaviour was of concern. The focal point of concern came to be 'the unattached' as framed by the Albemarle Report and the 1965 book by Mary Morse.¹²¹ Bradley argues that in response to more informal commercial spaces and against the rigidity of traditional club rules, places like the Hoxton Café Project offered a space where 'many had the opportunity to 'do nothing' while casually building social skills and confidence outside of the parental home or school'.¹²² This thesis, particularly chapters four and five, shows that a dichotomy between formal clubs and informal projects needs nuance; clubs fitted on a spectrum of formality and clubs lacking structure and formality, such as that attended by Anne, were found alongside projects designed to

¹¹⁶ Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black*, p. 116; Solomos, *Black Youth*

¹¹⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/14, MYA Annual Report 1982-83, p. 1

¹¹⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/39, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1958-58, p. 1

¹¹⁹ For example Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* fears the deleterious environment of the Milk Bar as analysed by Joe Moran, 'Milk Bars, Starbucks and the Uses of Literacy'

¹²⁰ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'

¹²¹ Albemarle, pp. 105-107; Morse, *The Unattached*; Merfyn Lloyd Turner, *Ships Without Sails: An Account of the Barge Boys' Club*, London, University of London, 1953;

¹²² Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence', p. 82

attract the 'unattached'.¹²³

However, concern about the leisure pursuits of youth did result in experimental work which took a different approach to young people which conformed to the supposedly permissive social mores of the time.¹²⁴ The Bronte Youth Centre in central Liverpool, opened in the early 1960s, can be considered in this vein, because it was deliberately sited near a juvenile delinquency blackspot in the city according to a list drawn up by the youth officers.¹²⁵ It began as a coffee bar and aimed to draw in delinquent youth.¹²⁶ It was set up in three empty shops in a central area of the city with little alternative youth provision. In the early days of planning the venture and when recruiting the leader, the documents record the aim to have a more informal type of club.¹²⁷ The committee, under the chairmanship of John Moores Junior (of the Littlewoods family), but with the General Secretary of LBA often directing the project, decided that their 'unorthodox' approach would be propelled by two actions.¹²⁸ Firstly, in refurbishing the empty shops, they only commissioned basic structural and cosmetic work and the completion of a coffee bar. In their view, the club would be valued more by members if they were left to decide on how the rest of the inside was to be decorated and the space used.¹²⁹ Secondly, the club was set to open with no formal programme and activities were to be planned based on interests indicated by the potential members.¹³⁰ The Bronte Centre can be seen as part of a wider trend for interest in and experimental work with unattached youth in line with the ideals of the café project Bradley describes.¹³¹ However, it linked explicitly with juvenile delinquency in a deprived community rather than fears about comparable commercial leisure. More structure was added after the club opened,

¹²³ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014; Morse, *The Unattached*

¹²⁴ Collins ed., *The Permissive Society*; Tim Newburn, *Permission and Regulation: Morals in Postwar Britain*, London, Routledge, 1992

¹²⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter from Jim McGeachin to the Ministry of Education, 2nd January 1962, p. 1

¹²⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Memorandum 'Bronte Street Development' attached to minutes of joint policy group meeting between LBA and LUYC, 15th February 1962

¹²⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, minutes of the 'Meeting of the Policy Groups' from the LBA and the Liverpool Union, 15th February 1962, states the leader is to have 'freedom to see what develops' without a 'set pattern'

¹²⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter to the Liverpool University Guild of Undergraduates asking for a donation, 5th March 1962

¹²⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, minutes of the 'Meeting of the Policy Groups' from the LBA and the Liverpool Union, 15th February 1962

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'; Morse, *The Unattached*

but not all of the informality was lost.¹³²

Detached youth work began in Liverpool after the Bronte Centre had been open for about three years and was inspired by the progressive and pioneering methods for youth work laid out by Morse.¹³³ In 1966 the project began, looking to contact young people wherever they might be found. The hallmarks of the project were a lack of structure and an informal way of communicating with young people that was focused not on discipline and role modelling but genuine interest in young people, because of young people's 'reluctance to abide by the formalities of club membership' and 'response to a sympathetic adult who is prepared to talk to them'.¹³⁴ This is evident throughout the workers' field reports, where antisocial and criminal behaviour is discussed and discouraged, but trust is not broken by reporting it to the police. In fact, workers often went to court with the young people they knew and arranged family visits for those who were given custodial sentences.¹³⁵ Informality is also evident in the different directions the project took, including the purchase of a minibus and tea urn to be used as a mobile base where young people were found such as waste ground and car parks.¹³⁶

Assisting young people with the use of their leisure was an important function of youth clubs and doing so in an informal way became more popular in the 1960s and 1970s, with emphasis shifting to the kinds of provision that young people were prepared to accept. While in some cases this was seen to have an element of controlling potentially delinquent young people, such as in the Bronte Centre in Liverpool, this was not always the case and a strand of informal and permissive youth work looked more to provide on young people's terms. While commercial provision was a potential influence here, so was the new style of training youth workers were receiving (as

¹³² LRO, M367/MYA?B/10/4/1, Warden's Report 4th May 1964 included a proposed programme for approval with many more structured activities than previously, pp. 1-3

¹³³ Morse, *The Unattached*; LRO, M367 MYA/M/6/1/1, memo 'The Unattached' to the LYOC dated 31st May 1965, in which the Great George Youth Welfare Association (central Liverpool) directly recommended the appointment of 'street workers such as those used in the research project recorded in the book "The Unattached"'

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/2, September 1979 Workers Report notes 'three days spent at Birkenhead Crown Court. Two young men I know were accused of GBH...they were both given a three year jail sentence. What a waste'

¹³⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/1, 'A Report on 18 months of the Project with Unattached Young People April 1967 – October 1968'

analysed in chapter six). This training went hand-in-hand with academic research being undertaken about working with the unattached which developed expert knowledge and saw detached work emerge as a specialism, once again showing elements of professionalisation at work which were being mirrored elsewhere in social and welfare services.¹³⁷

Conclusion

The work of the Liverpool and London youth voluntary associations and their clubs shows that they had a multifaceted role in local mixed economies of welfare that cannot be neatly fitted into existing categories. Examining the role of voluntary associations and clubs in this mixed economy, its nature becomes clearer: it was messy, lacked full co-ordination and was incomplete, with changing and growing demands always outpacing the resources available to meet them. However, in local mixed economies of youth welfare the association was a vital element in providing leadership and co-ordination.

The roles of clubs and associations varied greatly even at the very local level with many aims and approaches coexisting. This variety hints at one of the defining characteristics of post-war clubs and associations: their ability to adapt, change and cope with ever shifting ground. The boundaries of local welfare mixes were blurred by money, personnel and local needs, something which required this adaptability in associations, and which meant that welfare provision appeared fluid. A couple of key quotes from annual reports puts this succinctly stating that ‘for the voluntary organisation to “stay put” means almost certain death’ and that ‘whatever we in the borough cannot do, they [*London Union*] can usually manage’.¹³⁸ For clubs, adaptability in the mixed economy of welfare meant constant effort to fundraise and keep pace with myriad social, cultural and political changes around them and in the lives of young members.

The roles of the youth, boys’ or girls’ club in the mixed economy of welfare were ones often in part shared by other youth voluntary organisations such as the Scouts, Guides, Boys’ Brigade and

¹³⁷ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10; Perkin, *The Third Revolution*; pp. xii-xv; Burnham, *The Social Worker*

¹³⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/11, London Union Annual Report 1958-59, p. 8; LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/02, London Union Annual Report 1973-74, p.6

Girls' Brigade. However, clubs had a particular place in this mix, with a focus on working class youth and in the urban setting, ameliorating the effects of the urban environment and the potential for problematic youth behaviour. They used significant voluntary effort in aiding youth to use their leisure time more effectively. This was not a function mirrored by arms of the state on any comparable scale: leisure alternatives for youth were commercial in nature. Therefore at individual club level, the private element of the mixed economy of welfare became ever more important.

In trying to deconstruct what various people thought youth clubs were for, contest and compromise emerges. Concepts like education, welfare and citizenship could be applied very differently, and blended to reflect local needs. Official standpoints, such as expressed in the Albemarle Report, did infer that while the Youth Service was there for all there were some young people that needed it more than others and this raised the question of the extent to which the Youth Service could be seen as an agent of social control. This idea was reinforced when specific funding for the social problems caused by inner city deprivation was given to youth clubs under Urban Aid.¹³⁹

The broad categorisations offered above of the role of youth clubs: education, social control, citizen-making, welfare and leisure were often mixed and contested in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. Continuity and change are both evident. Citizen-making traditions associated with other youth movements continued, supported by the traditionalists within boys' clubs. However, innovative youth work offered newer strands which could be incorporated into youth provision in the 1960s and 1970s. This is seen most prominently in Liverpool. As chapter six considers, this change was fed, in part, by new training and the emergence of radical and progressive youth work. For example, the Bronte Centre gained support for its attempt to tackle youth crime, but it also functioned as a welfare service (later gaining a full-time welfare worker). Examples like this nuance analysis of official discourse about youth clubs and youth work and show the wide variety of informal, semi-formal, formal, secular, religious, state and

¹³⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, DES Letter dated 30th April 1971; Hansard documents the discussion of the shift from 50% to 75% capital funding for Urban Aid Projects, House of Commons Debate, 2nd December 1968, Hansard, vol. 774 cc1107-66 and the discussion of urban areas chosen linked to immigration, House of Commons Debate, 12th December 1968, vol. 775 cc557-8

voluntary groups that could come under the term 'youth club'.

Chapter Four – Anything more than a ‘sticking plaster’? - Youth Clubs, Young People and Society

In considering the relationship between young people and youth clubs it is important to recognise that youth clubs did not exist in a vacuum and nor did the young people that used them. The previous chapter outlined how the modern urban setting was often viewed as a dangerous place in which to grow up. Chapter two looked at clubs and associations within the framework of the ‘mixed economy’ of local youth welfare, but focusing solely on the institutional histories of youth clubs and associations provides too narrow a view of their role. It is necessary to ask what the roles of these organisations were in local areas, in wider society and in the mix of social and cultural activities with which young people were engaged, as issues such as housing, poverty, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, and experiences of class, race and gender were mediated by youth clubs.

This chapter looks at how clubs and associations attempted to help young people, especially via project work and experimental work, building on the examination of their roles in chapter three by looking at specific interventions in response to social issues. In examining some of these issues there will be a further analysis of archival documents, but an increasing use of the oral history interviews conducted with former club attendees and youth workers in South London and Liverpool. Here it must be remembered that the specific case studies in this thesis are not being used to stake any claim to universality - local variation is fundamental to understanding youth clubs - but the evidence presented does invite an examination of how the more everyday might be better interwoven into existing youth histories. This chapter provides evidence that clubs and associations were making active interventions in the lives of young people and that this saw them providing and acting as a gatekeeper to wider welfare services both formally and informally. However, the effectiveness of these interventions is unclear. By doing this, clubs and associations inhabited a wider role than that which is associated with other youth groups, as explored in the preceding chapter. Furthermore, this work shows that these bodies had an important function in local mixed economies of welfare. Looking at how these voluntary organisations adapted to local needs enhances understanding of voluntary action history by looking below national level and adds

nuance to appreciation of the roles of such organisations on the boundaries of state and voluntary welfare.

I. Who used youth clubs?

At the national level it has been hard to assess how many young people were using youth clubs between 1958 and 1985. The Albemarle Report noted how at the time of writing 'provision of some sort has been made for the needs of one in three young people between 15 and 21.'¹ Ten years later, the Fairburn-Milson Report claimed that 29% were 'attracted by the Youth Service' on a regular basis, showing a slight fall.² Davies' history of the Youth Service supports this to a certain extent, based on his secondary analysis of selected surveys undertaken in the 1960s. His analysis of Office of Population Censuses and Surveys figures for the DES in 1969 shows that levels of Youth Service uptake had remained fairly consistent since the 1940s, adding that up to 68% of 14-20 year olds had used it at some point, underscoring the transitory nature of young people's engagement with the Youth Service.³ However, in the above uniformed organisations were included and finding out who specifically went to youth clubs is harder still. Willmott found that c.40% of East London boys were members of some organisation with large mixed open clubs most popular with about 1 in 5 boys going and Scouts and Boys Brigade less popular, attracting only 1 in 20 boys.⁴ In Smith's study of Bury he states 32% of his sample of young people between the ages of 14 and 18 were current youth organisation members but that 57% had been members for three months or more since they were 14.⁵ Of these he says that 49% attended church groups, 13% other youth clubs, 18% Scouts and Guides, 20% other uniformed organisations and 1 in 3 had multiple memberships.⁶ The Bury study notes that girls were much more likely to join church groups while Willmott only looked at boys.

¹ Albemarle, p. 9 (though similarly including a wider range of organisations than analysed in this thesis)

² Fairburn-Milson, p. 16

³ Davies, *A History*, p.90

⁴ Peter Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, p. 122

⁵ Cyril Smith, *Young People at Leisure – a study of Bury*, Manchester, University of Manchester, 1966, p. 26

⁶ *Ibid.*

However, given the varying definitions of Youth Service, engagement, and varying age groups being included it is very difficult to get an overall sense of the proportion of young people using youth clubs in the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, because of the varying sizes of affiliated organisations, affiliation levels can only give a very limited impression of the stability or growth of voluntary Youth Service units at this time. Hilton et al. suggest youth organisations experienced growth in the 1960s and 1970s, followed by decline from the early 1980s onwards.⁷ This would seem to fit with the narrative emerging from the archival evidence. However, one in three remains the best approximation of membership levels of all youth organisations available, and also matches the only direct reference to the proportion of young people attending organisations at the local level in Liverpool.⁸ From comparing Willmott and Smith's surveys above, this one in three sometimes included more church and uniformed organisations (Bury) or mixed clubs (East London) and there are few clues in the archival material as to the proportions in Liverpool and South London. What is clearer from the surveys, and Davies evidence is that while one in three may have been in membership, a much larger proportion passed through clubs in some manner during their adolescence.⁹

Overall membership numbers were sometimes provided by the local associations, but not on a regular or comparable basis, again meaning it is very hard to discern anything but the broadest trends from the available figures. Data was collected via the annual return which affiliated clubs filled in. It is not clear if this took an average or a snapshot of membership or attendance and there was no standard form used nationally for comparison. Furthermore informal and unaffiliated clubs will not have submitted figures to any central body. Additionally attendances at clubs varied seasonally, for example falling in the summer when the weather permitted more outdoor activities. Therefore, the overall accuracy of the figures which do exist must be questioned. Based on what is available in annual reports, it seems possible that figures were often only reported when they were favourable meaning that there is no sense from the archival evidence available of a rise or fall in

⁷ Hilton et al., *Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain*, p. 28

⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/48, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1967-68, p. 2

⁹ Smith, *Young People at Leisure*, p. 26; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys*, pp. 123-125; Davies, *A History*, p. 90

membership. The best guess remains one in three, but even this is likely to mask significant local variation.

Figures on the gender of those in youth work must be used with caution. Affiliation levels are unreliable here as they do not reflect the gender split of the members of the affiliated clubs. Membership statistics were only provided sporadically by the London and Liverpool Associations in their annual reports, and they did not always note the gender split. Where it is possible to see membership by gender, statistics show that it was rare for girls to be in the majority within youth clubs. In 1960, the London Union recorded 6,725 male and 5,828 female members.¹⁰ The nearest comparison from the LFBC was 1962 (after they dispensed with clubs in Middlesex), noting 15,625 boys in membership.¹¹ In 1964, the LBA recorded having around 10,000 members while the Liverpool Union noted having around 8,500 members overall.¹² The figures for the Union of Youth Clubs in Liverpool in 1967-69 show that while more girls than boys were members of the mixed associations, once the LBA members are added to the figure after the merger, there were nearly twice as many boys in clubs:

Organisation	Members	Year		
		1967	1968	1969
Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs	Boys	6,201	6,621	
	Girls	6,675	7,000	
	Total	12,876	13,621	
Merseyside Youth Association	Boys			11,743
	Girls			6,637
	Total			18,380

Table 4:1: Membership figures of Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs and Merseyside Youth Association 1967-69¹³

The only other complete series of statistics, produced by the London Union between 1976 and 1985, also shows more boys in membership than girls, even before the membership of the LFBC is considered.

¹⁰ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/12, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, p. 4

¹¹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, appendix

¹² LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6, 12, LBA Annual Report 1964, p. 4; LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report, p. 3

¹³ Compiled from LRO, M367/MYA G/3/47-49, Liverpool Union Annual Reports 1967-1969; M367/MYA/M/4/1, MYA Annual Report 1969

London Union of Youth Clubs Membership										
	Year									
	1976	1977	1978	1979*	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Boys	65,750	58,739	57,104	69,403	68,195	61,762	62,353	66,986	56,167	59,356
Girls	45,533	43,869	41,723	47,014	48,884	42,806	42,929	42,821	38,178	39,976
Total	111,283	102,608	98,827	116,417	117,079	104,568	105,282	109,807	94,534	99,332

Table 4.2: London Union of Youth Clubs Membership 1976-1985 * indicates a change in data collection to include affiliated clubs in Essex resulting in overall increase in membership.¹⁴

Collins traces the development towards more mixing in the inter-war and early post-war period.¹⁵ While the number of girls' clubs dwindled in favour of mixed clubs, the traditionalists in the boys' club movement kept to their principle that boys clubs were different and necessary, even if they did allow some mixed dances.¹⁶ By 1960, the London Union had only 20 girls' clubs affiliated, with 13 of those offering some mixed activities.¹⁷ In Liverpool, the number of girls in girls-only clubs dwindled away to 400 by 1963.¹⁸ Young people increasingly chose mixed clubs. The preference for mixed youth organisations can also be seen in Mills' work demonstrating the demand for girl Scouts.¹⁹

Concern about gender balances within individual clubs arose sometimes, but this was usually managed by putting certain membership categories on a waiting list. For example, Alford House in Lambeth in 1960 put senior boys on a waiting list when it was felt they might dominate the club.²⁰ The feeling that there were fewer female members in clubs was not universal and several interviewees such as Wendy and Steve in South London thought their clubs were well-balanced.²¹ Anne in Lewisham, on the other hand, said she did not have 'any particular recollection so I am guessing it was probably predominantly girls.'²² Other interviewees, such as John, noted his group had a core group of about five girls but a larger number of boys.²³ He notes that though the girls

¹⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002-005, London Union Annual Reports 1976-1985

¹⁵ Collins, *Modern Love*

¹⁶ The comment in LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC 1963 Annual Report is illustrative: they indicate that as long as boys' 'activities were safeguarded' and 'proper arrangements and conditions made, there were occasions when girls should be welcomed into Boys' Clubs', p. 6

¹⁷ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/12, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, p. 14

¹⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1963-64, p.3

¹⁹ Mills, 'Scouting for Girls?'

²⁰ Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of Alford House Youth Club, January 1960

²¹ Wendy interview, 29th July 2014; Steve interview, 9th September 2014

²² Anne Interview, 14th August 2014

²³ John interview, 27th August 2014

were fewer in number and a little younger, they were regular attenders and influential within the wider group.²⁴ However, Dennis recalls that of all the clubs he has worked in 'it would be hard to call them anything other than male-dominated'.²⁵ This reflected the idea that girls lost interest in clubs more quickly because they were more likely to be married by the end of their teens than their male counterparts, but it does not fully explain where the girls may have been.²⁶ The focus on boys is further emphasised when examining the social problems clubs dealt with, of which juvenile delinquency was no exception.

II. Juvenile delinquency in and around youth clubs

It is unfortunate that re-appraisal and renewal of effort in the youth service is too often made in response to problems of vandalism and delinquency. The youth service should no longer be content to see itself patching up holes, salvaging something of the wreckage created by social conditions, or providing "something to do" for young people who have become a nuisance. It should be developing in accordance with social change, contributing to an ongoing process of qualitatively improving life in the communities of which young people are a part, and providing the necessary resources for young people to live creatively and enjoyably as their right [emphasis in original].²⁷

This quotation captures several of the core issues shaping the relationship between youth work and juvenile delinquency in both South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985: the tension between a supposedly universal youth service and the patchy nature of provision; the idea that instead of being universal the youth service was a selective and reactive service responding to youth social problems; an assumption that delinquency was linked to wider social upheaval; the notion that providing young people "something to do" would deter much delinquency; and the idea that youth work needed to keep pace with social change and the needs of local communities.

It is possible to see consensus, conflict and change in attitudes to juvenile delinquency in the papers of youth clubs and associations, as well as in the opinions of the youth workers gathered during oral history interviews. In some ways this reflected wider divisions in approaches to youth work, but in other cases it appears to reflect the local lived experience of poverty and youth crime.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

²⁶ Albemarle, p. 42, Fairburn-Milson, p. 16

²⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/7/2, 'Last but not Least' (a report on the proposed reform of the Youth Service in Liverpool), September 1973, p. 17

Before considering the youth club response to delinquency, some national context is required. National policy on the youth service had referred directly to juvenile delinquency in 1960, drawing on the Ingleby Report which had addressed the issue in a more focused manner.²⁸ The Albemarle Report also referred directly to an increase in the numbers of juveniles convicted of crimes as one of the factors in the timing and content of their review of the Youth Service.²⁹ This observed that it was only a minority of young people who committed crimes, roughly 2%, but that this minority had grown. While crime statistics can be unreliable, and subject to variations in enforcement activity, the overall trend of increasing juvenile crime is endorsed by looking at British social trends in the longer term.

Year	Number of Juveniles Found Guilty of Indictable Offences
1950	41,910
1960	56,114
1970	71,860
1980	89,192

Table 4.3: Summary Court figures: Juveniles Guilty of Indictable Offences, 1950-1980³⁰

The Fairburn-Milson Report had much less to say about juvenile crime but reflected the view that the Youth Service's image was heavily linked to its role in preventing delinquency.³¹ Juvenile delinquency was already being considered separately by the government at this time producing the *Children in Trouble* white paper and the Children and Young Persons Act 1969.³² These documents revisited the treatment of juvenile offenders and the system set up to deal with them earlier in the twentieth century. *Children in Trouble* outlined proposals for changes to juvenile courts, reassessing appropriate measures by age group, closing approved schools and giving the local authority more responsibility for the care and supervision of offenders. In the White Paper, but not the Act, was the idea of 'Intermediate forms of Treatment' for young offenders (known as 'Intermediate Treatment'). The aims of that specific section bear some remarkable similarities to the objectives of the Voluntary Youth Association and Clubs:

²⁸ *Report of the Committee on Children and Young Persons (The Ingleby Report)*, London, HMSO, 1960

²⁹ Albemarle, pp. 14-15

³⁰ Adapted from Halsey, *British Social Trends*, p. 620

³¹ Fairburn-Milson, p. 3

³² *Children in Trouble*

The aim of the changes described in this Part is to increase the effectiveness of the measures available to deal with juvenile delinquency. Effectiveness means helping children whose behaviour is unacceptable to grow up, to develop personal relationships and to accept their responsibilities to their fellows, so that they become mature members of society.³³

Intermediate Treatment allowed for the use of facilities not usually available to those who had been before the courts with the aim 'to bring the young person into contact with a new environment and secure his participation in some constructive activity.'³⁴ This opened the way for youth workers to become more formally involved in juvenile delinquency which they did in South London via Intermediate Treatment playschemes and in Liverpool via DYW.³⁵

Intermediate Treatment by voluntary organisations can be seen as an extension of the penal welfarist approach to juvenile delinquency as outlined by Garland.³⁶ While Garland focuses on state welfare structures and their use in supporting young people via a range of state interventions, the extension of penal welfarism to voluntary agencies requires more consideration. Bradley's critique of Garland's failure to adopt a rigorous historical approach is valid, as Intermediate Treatment was implemented in the 1970s, when Garland argues that conservative, punishment-based approaches to youth crime were introduced.³⁷

The local associations in London and Liverpool had some sympathy with the national policy view. They agreed that good clubs could have a role in preventing delinquency, but they argued that this was not the sole purpose of clubs, emphasising that clubs were for everyone who wished to use them (and those who did not!). For instance, the Liverpool Union, when planning a new club on an inter-war housing estate outside the city centre, stated:

Speke is an estate with a definite social problem amongst certain of its teenage population and in consequence it became our definite aim to attract a cross-section, including the disinterested and delinquent type of youngster and to endeavour to put across our ideas on social behaviour, respect for property and people etc.³⁸

The LFBC had their President and well-known Juvenile Court Magistrate, Sir Basil Henriques,

³³ Ibid., p. 8

³⁴ Ibid., p. 10

³⁵ Interview with John, 27th August 2014; LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4-1/6, MYA Progress Report on 'Contact' DYW Team, April 1972-March 1975, p. 5

³⁶ Garland, *The Culture of Control*

³⁷ Bradley, 'Becoming delinquent'

³⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/4, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1960, p. 4

comment on the issue:

During the past year there has been a startling increase in the number of young persons between the ages of 14 and 20 who have been found guilty of crimes, and in the gravity of the offences they have committed. Because very few of these offenders are very active members of any youth organisation, Clubs may rightly claim that they are preventing delinquency. But it also shows that they are failing to hold or attract the boy who needs them most.³⁹

While maintaining that every young person could benefit from being a club member, local associations such as these were keen to use the presumed preventative potential of clubs when it suited them, for example, when arguing for the location and funding of new clubs. In 1962 the General Secretary of the LBA wrote to the Ministry of Education to get a grant for an experimental youth club in the Bronte Street area of Liverpool describing it as 'a very poor neighbourhood, near to the City Centre, which has a very high rate of juvenile delinquency.'⁴⁰ In a fundraising letter he went as far as to describe it as the 'highest rated juvenile delinquency area of the City'.⁴¹ That this area was seen as a hotspot of delinquency was further established several years later when Parker undertook a major study of delinquency published as *The View from the Boys*.⁴²

This emphasis on an area's social problems to attract funding applied in a wider sense too: in looking at the LBA's post-Albemarle development plans, the development committee compared their proposals to the 'Juvenile Delinquency-Area Priorities' they had received, noting:

As a matter of interest the attached details show the black spots relating to juvenile delinquency in the City of Liverpool. Note, almost all the areas mentioned have been covered by the Association in its Club Development Programme.⁴³

A similar approach was evident in London: 'Boys' Clubs do not exist primarily to keep young people out of trouble, although they serve this purpose for a substantial number of youngsters.'⁴⁴ This tension, between being a universal service on one hand, and attracting funding to target particular youth problems on the other, is a crucial element in understanding the fluid nature of youth clubs.

While the ideal was to get every young person into a club, practical and financial limitations often

³⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1958-59, p. 3

⁴⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter from LBA General Secretary to the Ministry of Education, 2nd January 1962, p. 1

⁴¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter from LBA General Secretary to the Liverpool University Guild, 5th March 1962

⁴² Parker, *The View From The Boys*

⁴³ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, Minutes of the Meeting of the LBA Development Committee 12th June 1961, p. 1

⁴⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1975-76, p. 1

pressured associations into taking a more targeted role and having a more realistic expectation of what they could achieve, how, where and with whom.

The portrayal of young people and juvenile delinquency in the press was another area where there was some agreement across local associations. Both Pearson and Cohen explored how media coverage of hooligans, mods and rockers stoked negative perceptions of young people and associations too felt that young people were getting a bad press.⁴⁵ In 1960 the London Union commented that 'there is also the constant publicity often of a sensational type, focussed on young people,' when describing challenges in their work.⁴⁶ Viscount Amory on behalf of the LFBC agreed, stating in 1969:

There are many people today who, because of the extravagancies and misbehaviour of a minority of young people, are feeling somewhat disenchanted with "youth". Unfortunately the decent behaviour of the majority is not news.⁴⁷

In 1975 the LFBC again commented on unfair media coverage adding:

The work we do rarely attracts the headlines. Pop Festivals, Juvenile Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour, etc., all receive massive publicity and some may think a disproportionate amount of time, energy and scarce resources.⁴⁸

This said, levels of delinquency varied widely in and around the youth clubs in South London and Liverpool as did understandings of delinquency and attempts to tackle it. Some interviewees who attended clubs never encountered crime but several youth workers and former attendees saw theft, vandalism, and the odd fight, as part and parcel of young people growing up and working out what they could get away with.⁴⁹ At the other extreme is an example in Lambeth of an attendee who ended up in detention centres more than once after thefts, drug abuse and violence.⁵⁰ The Bronte Centre and the Breck in Liverpool (the patch covered by DYW) had reputations for crime, ranging from petty theft to gang fights.

⁴⁵ Pearson, *Hooligan*; Cohen, *Folk Devils*

⁴⁶ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, p. 11

⁴⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1968-69, p. 1

⁴⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1974-75, p. 1

⁴⁹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

⁵⁰ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

a. The influence of youth clubs on criminality

If youth workers thought their work had an impact on delinquency levels, how was this achieved? In some ways, the perception of voluntary youth services in Liverpool and South London suggested they thought they were tackling the causes of juvenile crime. However, while the interplay of social and familial factors in criminal behaviour were beginning to be explored, there was still significant faith in some parts of the Youth Service on the positive benefits of recreation.⁵¹ Put simply, a common perception existed that giving young people opportunities (which they may not have been able to otherwise afford) to engage in recreational activities was the method of preventing delinquency, even where it was acknowledged as a mere distraction from wider social issues. This fits with earlier ideas of rational recreation, a concept recently extended in Bradley's examination of café projects for young people in London 1939-1965.⁵² The London Union went as far to describe their work in exactly these terms, in 1971-72 defining their aim as 'To direct young people into sensible and fruitful occupations and to distract them from the endless damaging possibilities inevitably provided by our complex modern society.'⁵³ This link between the dangers of modern society and the potential to corrupt youth was in no way new, having been used by boys', girls' and youth clubs from the beginning as well as by many others involved in the moral instruction of young people across a range of periods and organisations.⁵⁴

As the rest of this chapter goes on to explore it was often the particular and local mix of social conditions that most affected work with young people, rather than any specific overarching issue. While there are exceptions to this, such as the scale of unemployment in Merseyside in the 1970s and 1980s, the complex interrelation of a range of factors often made them inseparable in the minds of those working with young people.

Youth workers also offered alternative views of juvenile delinquency. Two workers interviewed saw some minor delinquency as young peoples' attempt to explore and construct

⁵¹ See for example Bradley, 'Becoming Delinquent'

⁵² Bradley, 'Rational Recreation'

⁵³ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/01, London Union Annual Report 1971-72, p. 5

⁵⁴ See for example Powley, *Getting on with it*, p. 6, and Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*

social boundaries and thought that damage to club property, vandalism, and petty theft were signs of a young person trying to figure out what would be tolerated.⁵⁵ While they both spoke of the value of building personal relationships, neither seemed to think juvenile delinquency in South London in the 1970s and early 1980s was a particularly big problem for their club or group.⁵⁶

The Bronte Youth Centre in Liverpool offers an example of working with young people who had a reputation for causing trouble. As is outlined above, the area where the experimental centre was situated was thought to be the worst spot for juvenile delinquency in the city. Tackling the delinquency and wider social issues in the area was a reason for making provision in the area, and prompted the LBA and Liverpool Union to work together on making the venture a success. In a joint meeting to discuss the proposal a discussion paper suggested:

In view of various factors relating to the neighbourhood, the normal concept of youth club work is not expected to be applicable and no set pattern may emerge...this experimental Youth House, therefore, with its proposed unorthodox approach to young people, is a special venture which we might add has been received by the civic authorities and in particular the magistrates and police with approbation.⁵⁷

In his study of the area a decade later, Parker characterised the area and residents as poor, working-class, largely Catholic, some with an Irish immigrant background, a close-knit community in the blocks of walk-up flats.⁵⁸ A Bronte Centre progress report in December 1968 strongly reinforces this perception.⁵⁹ Looking at what survives of the area, the round shape opening onto a central courtyard serves to emphasise this inward-looking view.

⁵⁵ Interview with John, 27th August 2014: interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁵⁶ *ibid*

⁵⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, 'Bronte Street Development' attached to minutes of joint policy group meeting between LBA and LUYC, 15th February 1962

⁵⁸ Parker, *The View From The Boys*

⁵⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/5, Bronte Centre Progress Report, December 1968



Images B and C: Pictures of St. Andrews Gardens (the Bullring). The new club is directly alongside this set of enclosed buildings (now student flats)⁶⁰

Part of the aim of the early Bronte Centre was to give young people a real sense of ownership and belonging to the club by allowing them to shape the physical space of the club.⁶¹ In doing so, the LBA and Liverpool Union hoped that young people would value the premises more, because it was they who had shaped it. It is unclear how successful this was, as vandalism and theft still happened within the club occasionally, and crime in the area continued to attract attention (such as Parker's). However, the attempt to give young people something they could mould and value was an interesting approach to a specific local problem. It was noted that after one year 'a tribute must be paid to the youth of this area that the inside decorative conditions are so wonderfully preserved' indicating that the management committee at least thought the approach had been the right one.⁶²

Bronte Youth Centre also shows an innovative attempt to handle delinquency within the club. While clubs were thought to reduce delinquency in an area, they also had to consider the conduct of members on club premises. In one Lambeth club, the leader described the routine of kicking someone out of the club for the night, or for a week, or from the football team.⁶³ It appears this was a common approach to discipline, though in Liverpool this was seen as problematic. For example, in another experiment in Speke, the leader remarked it is 'odd that people suppose we go

⁶⁰ Images B and C; St. Andrews Gardens, Liverpool, photographs by the author, 23rd September 2014

⁶¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, 'Bronte Street Development' attached to minutes of joint policy group meeting between LBA and LUYC, 15th February 1962

⁶² LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, LBA Honorary Properties Officer to Management Committee of Bronte Youth Centre, 25th March 1964,

⁶³ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

to so much trouble to attract the toughs only to let someone else throw them out again!’⁶⁴ The Bronte Youth Centre agreed and developed an internal disciplinary system to deal with theft and vandalism by the members.

As the Bronte experiment developed, a range of other grassroots organisations grew up around the youth club: a parents’ committee, a women’s committee, a housing committee, a neighbourhood council and a youth council. In the end this supported the development of a whole new youth and community centre, but in the meantime these committees were involved in youth club discipline. In 1966, it is noted that members were involved in recovering a guitar that had been stolen after it was left in a car during a live music show at the centre. It is commented by the warden that leaving the guitar on show was naive but also noted that:

[g]radually new values are being adopted, this one being that those who damage the Centre or do anything to upset it are in fact against the majority of members. Confidence is gradually being established and as stated, discipline methods are being evolved. The Police Liaison Officer stated that this is an important break thro’ [sic] in an area such as ours where everything is ‘closed shop’.⁶⁵

The involvement of members in establishing and enforcing discipline continued. A document dated 3rd June 1968 records the proceedings of a ‘Disciplinary Committee’, noting it had representation from all the local committees, including Junior and Senior, Boys’ and Girls’ Youth Club Committees. The centre had been broken into by four boys between 9 and 12 years of age, with damage and losses estimated at £25-30. They are recorded as having wanted money and sweets. Family members of the boys were present and all were given a chance to speak. The committee decided to fine the boys, adding increments to their subs until the amount had been paid off, minus the value of any goods returned. If this did not happen the boys would be banned from attending the popular club camp in the summer. No police involvement is mentioned, and the recording of similar incidents shows that not calling the police was normal in these circumstances.⁶⁶

Another incident report in 1968 recalls junior members seeing senior members steal LPs.

The warden explains how at first the juniors did not want to come forward and be labelled ‘a

⁶⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/41, Liverpool Union Annual Report, 1960-61, p. 5

⁶⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/3, Bronte Centre Warden’s Report, March 1966

⁶⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/5, document titled ‘Disciplinary Committee’ notes representatives of all committees attended and gives an account of the meeting, dated 3rd June 1968

snitch,' but when asked to think about the group who now would not have records to play, and assured that they would not have to talk to the police, did speak up. Again it was decided within the club committees that fines on the subs to cover losses or return of goods was the required action by the guilty parties.⁶⁷ Further incidents occurred in 1969, one where four boys broke in was put before the neighbourhood council who threatened to report further damage to the police, indicating this was not their first infraction.⁶⁸ Later that year the senior members' canteen was closed after thefts of stock. Members decided it could not reopen until the value of the stolen goods had been repaid.⁶⁹ A more serious incident occurred in 1970 during which a boy was hospitalised after a fight, but this too was resolved by the Neighbourhood Council after the Senior Member Council was seen as having too many new and younger members to handle this serious an incident effectively.⁷⁰ A pertinent addition to this picture is the Neighbourhood Council's report of June 1970 - 'The Neighbourhood and the Police' - which notes several incidents since the opening of the new Police Station where young members, picked up for car theft, have been treated badly, including two ending up in Liverpool Royal Infirmary.⁷¹ In Bronte, it seems the moral authority lay with the Neighbourhood Council which grew out of the original youth club, and that this became a necessary mediator in the relationship between young people and the police. That club members were involved in discipline as well shows that the Bronte Centre made good on their intention to give young people a real say in the shaping of the youth club. In this example the club was acting as much more than rational recreation for members, it was actively seeking to shape their social attitudes.

This use of members and community discipline committees demonstrates some important insights into juvenile delinquency in an area of Liverpool with a bad reputation. Firstly, it shows a community unwilling to trust the police after perceived injustices in prior dealings with official law enforcement. The detached workers also noted this, especially after an occasion where they were

⁶⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/5, paper by Warden 'When is a snitch not a snitch? – Changing Attitudes', July 1968

⁶⁸ LRO, M367/MYA//B/10/4/6, Warden's Report April 1969

⁶⁹ LRO, M367/MYA//B/10/4/6, Warden's Report July 1969

⁷⁰ LRO, M367/MYA//B/10/4/7, Assistant Youth Leader's Report February 1970

⁷¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/7, 'The Neighbourhood and the Police,' Bronte Centre Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, 16th June 1970

themselves subject to being moved on by the police.⁷² It shows that locally it was felt that internal disciplinary mechanisms in clubs were fair compared to the police. There is some evidence of similar mistrust in South London, relating to the police searches of young black men.⁷³

Secondly, it shows the altered moral code in use in the area and the idea that some crime was actually explicable in a context of relative poverty. It seems that there were some acceptable targets for theft and vandalism, and those who should be left alone. The club and its property are agreed to be off-limits in the same way Parker describes local residents' property as an unacceptable target for theft.⁷⁴ A nice car from outside the area with a guitar on the seat was seen as a fair target as were the cars targeted by the 'Catseye Kings' that Parker observed.⁷⁵ However, it was harder to understand why people would want to damage a community asset or take from those in a similar situation. Michael also noticed this in Liverpool when he recalls young people being sent out 'with a shopping list but no money' as it was the only way to obtain enough food and the priest acknowledging that feeding families comes first.⁷⁶ He described another incident when an electrical goods van was left in the area making a delivery and was emptied by a 'conveyor belt' of adults and young people alike – he refused to call the police when asked.⁷⁷

Outsiders, and this included the police, were not to be trusted, which is why the Bronte Centre and some youth workers seemed to have had some authority over discipline after these incidents; they had 'insider' status in the community. The Bronte Centre was criticised for seeming to endorse this criminal behaviour, but the warden saw it very much as part of a longer term plan of establishing boundaries and responsibilities and then gradually moving them outwards into wider society, though he did accept that a certain level of delinquent behaviour had become almost normal on the estate.⁷⁸ There is some evidence of this in Lambeth too where an interviewee recalled abandoning an attempt to steal a car once he realised that it belonged to the new youth

⁷² LRO, M367, MYA/M/6/1/6, 'Progress Report' on 'Contact' DYW Team, April 1972-March 1975

⁷³ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁷⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Warden's Report for March 1966

⁷⁵ *ibid*, Parker, *The View From The Boys*

⁷⁶ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

⁷⁷ *ibid*.

⁷⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/7, Warden's Report, June 1970, citing an article in the Daily Post using interviews with locals 'indulgence of crime is regarded as 'normal' in the neighbourhood'

worker.⁷⁹ However, the records suggest the Bronte Centre had a particular preoccupation with such issues.⁸⁰ The attention the area received later from Parker a few years later reinforces this perception of a specific ‘moral geography’, though he appears dismissive of the role of the youth centre in his study.

There was some consensus between youth workers on young people who committed crimes in both locations: some young people committed crimes, often they received a disproportionately bad press, and it was almost exclusively young men who were involved. Delinquency was also often put in the context of other social issues; poverty, unemployment and housing in particular, as part of a whirlwind of disruption that young people had to handle and the problems of ‘young people who have been brought up in a deleterious environment.’⁸¹ Disturbed family conditions were also seen as part of the making of the young delinquent.⁸² While youth workers in interviews and in archival sources thought they could offer direct assistance on delinquency, there is little sense, other than the anecdotal, of what this meant.

III. Poverty, housing and unemployment: working-class youth clubs in South London and Liverpool 1958-1985

As the above section on juvenile delinquency indicates, the perceived role of youth clubs in tackling delinquency, the siting of clubs in poorer or new social housing areas, and the use of local social issues to justify club development strongly indicates the assumption that clubs were for working class youngsters. However, the term ‘youth club’ has encompassed a range of organisations, something which became particularly apparent when people who had considered themselves members of youth clubs put themselves forward to be interviewed. In two cases in South London

⁷⁹ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B10/4/2, ‘Proposed Youth and Community Project for Bronte Street’, 1965. After early success in the empty shops, the management committee at Bronte decided to develop plans for a full youth and community centre. They argued that a full community service was needed because of the local conditions and because, by the time most people reached 14 and could join the full youth club, it was too late to have any real effect on them

⁸² This view dates back to the 1890s and the Child Study Movement, Hendrick, *Child welfare*, pp. 33-5

people from the wealthier fringes of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham came forward, telling quite different stories to the vast majority of oral histories. Wendy, living on the borders of Lewisham and Greenwich, went to a church club named 'Boggles' in the early 1960s, when she was a teenager. It held a weekly debate under the leadership of the curate, and she describes the club in aspirational terms:

I suppose, it was different to a lot of youth clubs around at that time in that it was aimed at those of us who wanted to college or university, though it didn't bar you if you didn't want to go. It was quite a mixed group but the boys came from the local grammar school and it was about just generally getting a group of people together and getting them to learn to articulate I think.⁸³

She added 'I suppose it prepared us for going to college,' especially in the context of how social mixing and holidays prepared her for teacher training college away from home.⁸⁴ Wendy also helped at the Sunday School and described these activities as good for her CV, while also describing how her mother was viewed as a snob for wanting her to be educated when the prevailing local opinion was 'why educate a girl?'⁸⁵ For Wendy at least, her aspirational, rather more middle-class youth club was thought of as a means of achieving social mobility.⁸⁶

Another attendee from the Forest Hill area of Lewisham also gave the impression of attending a club that catered for more affluent teens (though in the 1970s). The central activity for her group was listening to records, but Anne recalls these were provided by members from their own collections, indicating that they had the disposable income to buy records.⁸⁷ Again she puts the social education aspect of the club in terms of university:

I suppose on a smaller scale and more local scale it was just a microcosm of what 18 year olds do when they first go away to university. It's just that first kind of, being on your own, being in a group outside of family, school.⁸⁸

In Anne's memory, this club, run by a Catholic Church drew from at least three local single sex and grammar schools, but was focused on the church-going congregation of a more affluent area of

⁸³ Wendy interview, 29th July 2014

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Anne Interview, 14th August 2014. Compare this to the anecdote earlier about the Bronte Centre where the Centre bought the records and had to cancel the activity when they were stolen.

⁸⁸ Anne Interview, 14th August 2014

Lewisham.⁸⁹ Furthermore, Anne, like Wendy, also stressed the lack of formality and structure within the clubs. This contrasts with clubs like the Bronte Centre where the deliberately informal approach to the activities programme in its early years was deemed experimental. The young people in Anne and Wendy's clubs were trusted to organise themselves and they did so in a way which was not thought part of the club experience in other parts of South London and Liverpool. These clubs felt the young people had enough social capital to organise their own affairs.

These two examples from interviews stand out as describing a different kind of club member in terms of class to those in other interviews and archival documents. Interestingly both were church youth groups which interviewees recall drew their membership from the children of the local congregation, indicating that the club reflected the social background of the area to a certain extent. This perception is reinforced by looking at other examples of more working class clubs.

However, the Youth Service was, on paper, a universal service and tried to accommodate a range of young people from a variety of backgrounds. When the LBA and Liverpool Union merged in 1969, the NABC asked whether there was 'any real need to stress poorer classes?' in a document on their aims.⁹⁰ There is no mention of poorer classes in the merger documents, meaning all the local associations studied here, and their member clubs, were theoretically open to members regardless of their background. In practice the streams of funding and development priorities in the 1960s and 1970s meant that in both South London and Liverpool there was focus on provision for working class teenagers, though associations would have provided a range of support services to any member club which asked for them. From 1971 the focus on urban working class youth was embedded as part of the official funding policy from the DES, which diverted money via Urban Aid to specific urban areas and experimental projects.⁹¹ Accordingly, where associations could not expect unlimited funding, they focussed on the areas of greatest need. In the 1960s and early

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/1/9, NABC letter to LBA, 29th June 1967

⁹¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, DES Letter, 30th April 1971; Hansard documents the discussion of the shift from 50% to 75% capital funding for Urban Aid Projects, House of Commons Debate, 2nd December 1968, Hansard, vol. 774, cc.1107-66

1970s this often meant a focus on poorer areas, new housing estates and areas with particular problems, further embedding a practical focus on working class youth. In the 1970s and 1980s, as will be discussed later in the chapter, this shifted away from building development to project development on specific issues such as gender and race, but within the existing framework of youth clubs in urban, working class areas.

The difference between the open membership policy of local youth club associations and the practical focus on poorer working class areas again demonstrates a tension within the Youth Service. It enabled the wide variety of organisations studied here to come under the Youth Service umbrella and gave associations the flexibility to adapt to emerging social contexts. However, it also meant a struggle for identity and in articulating clearly the needs of the voluntary services which were many and sometimes contradictory. This is something that at least the MYA recognised in 1973, where their development policy document reflected that, '[I]n our anxiety to offer some compensation for poor social conditions we have perhaps fallen into the trap of creating youth service "ghettoes", and forgetting that the positive aims of youth work are relevant to all young people'.⁹² However, when considering the scale of some of these 'poor social conditions' in the 1970s, such as housing and unemployment, discussed below, it seems hard to see this focus on social conditions as anything other than entirely appropriate, though it does reflect an understanding of young people heavily influenced by perceptions of class.

a. Housing and 'the patch': youth club catchment areas

The development policy of the associations in London and Liverpool has shown that the opening of youth clubs was closely related to the housing situation in the area. However, the link between housing and clubs goes further. The type and tenure of local housing had a large say in determining the 'patch' that many clubs drew their membership from.⁹³ In many cases in South London and Liverpool it is hard to tell the area that membership was drawn from for existing clubs, but new

⁹² LRO, M367/MYA/M/7/2, 'Last but not least' (Development Policy Document), September 1973

⁹³ The most common usage of the term was in Liverpool. See for example LRO, M367/MYA/M/4-1/6, 'How the patch is changing, September 1975,' part of Progress Report June 1975-76

clubs sometimes specified. In the case of a 1958 experiment in Speke (an inter-war housing estate just outside Liverpool), the boundaries of the estate served to define the area of membership, though this was later divided into two clubs on different ends of the estate.⁹⁴ In the case of the Bronte Youth Centre the staff and management committee went as far as to name the streets that served as the boundaries to the club membership area. These boundaries were Brownlow Hill, London Road, Lime Street and the University of Liverpool.⁹⁵ The area within these boundaries was described in 1964 as a 'densely populated area where extensive building of multi-storey tenements has taken place.'⁹⁶ The area was seen as a 'closed shop' to authorities, something the centre itself had to overcome in its early years to draw a good membership.⁹⁷ It's success in doing so justified entirely new premises in the early 1970s. In other areas of Liverpool, gang-related activity was occasionally linked to groups having confrontations over possession of one of the few youth facilities in an area. Speke and Garston are mentioned by the Liverpool Associations in this regard.⁹⁸ The MYA seems to have grasped this territorial nature of club membership when advocating for a development policy of small local clubs coupled with large activity centres which could be booked by visiting clubs when they needed additional facilities.⁹⁹

Similarly, in South London the local nature of youth club membership can best be illustrated by reference to interviews with former youth workers from two well-known council estates in Lewisham: the Silwood and Pepys Estates. Youth workers from both of these estates described the territorial nature of memberships in their respective clubs.¹⁰⁰ This was not something done overtly. Young people from outside the estates but close to the clubs would have been welcome as far as the youth workers were concerned, but local boundaries reinforced who went to

⁹⁴ To trace this development see LRO, M367 MYA/G/7/7, Speke File, Leaders Reports; G. Mercer, 'Speke As A New Town', *Town Planning Review*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1953

⁹⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter from LBA General Secretary to the Town Clerk, 8th December 1961, p. 1

⁹⁶ Letter from LBA Honorary Properties Officer to the Bronte Youth Club Management Committee, 25th March 1964, LRO, M367/MYA/M/B/10/4/1

⁹⁷ LRO, M367, MYA/B/10/4/1-17, the folders on the Bronte Youth Club provide a clear trajectory of increasing use by the local neighbourhood and plans for the new centre along these lines; on problematic housing estates see Lynsey Hanley, *Estates – An Intimate History*, London, Granta, 2007 and Lisa McKenzie, *Getting By – Estates, Class and Culture in Austerity Britain*, Bristol, Policy Press, 2015

⁹⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/7/2, 'Last but not least' (Development Policy Document), September 1973, p. 13

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14

¹⁰⁰ John Interview, 27th August 2014; interview with Lee, 14th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

which club. The young people themselves and the local residents, not the youth club, defined who attended which club. A significant factor here was the way local council and housing association housing was allocated. Lee describes one club he volunteered at as entirely white because of how the surrounding housing was allocated – at a time when racial discrimination in public housing was permitted.¹⁰¹ The mixed housing tenure of the estate where his later project was sited resulted in a much more mixed youth club, and one with few racial issues inside the club premises, though plenty in the wider community.¹⁰²

Housing, its supply, and the type and tenure of dwellings had a big impact on local youth clubs in both South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. It set boundaries, officially and unofficially, and set expectations of the type of young person likely to be found in an area and therefore the potential pool of club members. In considering how clubs interacted with local working class communities, how housing stock shaped the social make-up and physical space was important, for example, the ‘closed shop’ of the bullring, the high rise estates in Lewisham. Aspirational, or more middle class clubs also drew from distinct areas; Anne got the bus to a neighbouring (more affluent) borough for school, but her youth club drew from the congregation of the Roman Catholic church near her house whose members lived in the semi-detached houses on the streets near her own.¹⁰³

The fact that most youth clubs drew from a very small and tightly-defined local area, coupled with the patchy nature of provision might go some way to explaining the levels of take-up of youth clubs between 1958 and 1985. New youth club development policy in the 1960s and early 1970s in Liverpool and London allowed some clubs to open in new housing areas, and be rebuilt in slum clearance projects but provision of clubs remained inconsistent.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014, see also discussion of this in Birmingham: Rex and Moore, *Race, Community and Conflict*

¹⁰² Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

¹⁰³ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

¹⁰⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, LBA ‘Boys’ Club Development Memorandum, c. 1959, p. 1; LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual report 1959-60, p. 4

b. Problems of housing within the youth club

The post-Albemarle club development schemes had priorities for new club developments in both London and Liverpool, as described in chapter three. In both cases, the local associations articulated a need for facilities on new housing estates. In their opinion, this was because new estates had made no provision for social or community infrastructure, concentrating solely on housing.¹⁰⁵ To remedy this, associations wanted to prioritise club building on new estates, if they were given the land and grants to do so. In Liverpool the new housing estates and redevelopment areas were often juxtaposed in documents, revealing the significant changes that the city underwent in the post-war period, with one third of the forty seven square miles of the city earmarked for 'urban renewal' in the 1960s.¹⁰⁶ As early as 1958 the Liverpool Union were making plans for development, mentioning the inter-war estate at Speke as an urgent priority, but aware of the need in other new housing areas.¹⁰⁷ The LBA agreed in a 'Boys' Club Development

Memorandum' that:

The necessity of further expansion to meet the needs of the ever increasing number of boys is obvious and the reasons for the increase are 'too well known to reiterate, but perhaps not so well known is that the "areas of need" are moving out and are now found in the new housing areas where large groups of City boys, uprooted from the close community environment, urgently require a social unit of their own.'¹⁰⁸

In 1966-67 this issue arises again in Liverpool with the Liverpool Union, but with the added context of what is being knocked-down as well as built:

The Changing Face of Liverpool...Something is being done to meet this challenge but much more is needed to provide occupation for boys and girls in their spare time in the "devastated" areas and in the new housing areas on the outskirts of the City.¹⁰⁹

They go on to comment that the families are enjoying new homes but that the areas lack the amenities of the 'old established districts' arguing for rebuilding in every sense and specifically that

¹⁰⁵ Muchnick, *Urban Renewal*; there had been housing shortages in big cities for several decades preceding this, made worse by the Blitz on which see Richard Rodger, *Housing in Urban Britain 1780-1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press for The Economic History Society, 1989; Patrick Dunleavy, *The Politics of Mass Housing in Britain 1945-1975: A Study of Corporate Power and Professional Influence in the Welfare State*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1981

¹⁰⁶ Muchnick, *Urban Renewal*, p. 51

¹⁰⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/38, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 7

¹⁰⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, LBA, 'Boys' Club Development Memorandum, c. 1959, p. 1

¹⁰⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/47, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1966-67, p. 2

'Youth Club members and their leaders obviously have an important part to play in this process.'¹¹⁰

They describe decanting the population from the youth club perspective:

Due to the redevelopment which is taking place of the outworn areas of the city, hitherto thickly populated districts now have large open spaces. Naturally clubs have closed as their members have been moved to new homes which are often situated outside the city boundaries.¹¹¹

The procedure they describe meant that the population of young people in Liverpool fell during the late 1960s and early 1970s despite an overall 'bulge' in the population. The MYA Development Committee discussed this at length noting that while the population in the north-west region of England was estimated to have risen by between half and three quarters of a million people between 1968 and 1981, the population of Liverpool had been falling for five years as people moved to 'overspill' new estates.¹¹²

The LFBC also noted the need to provide facilities for young people on new housing estates as early as 1957-58 and prepared a five-year plan in advance of the Albemarle Report on their priorities.¹¹³ Their focus was on outer London, and their plan eventually morphed into the '20 Clubs' plan; with ten clubs earmarked for outer boroughs north of the river, and ten clubs south of the river including Streatham, Loughborough Junction, Battersea Park, Bellingham and Camberwell within the boundaries of Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark.¹¹⁴ Over a decade later, as the '20 Clubs' scheme was completed, they recognised that there was still 'much work to be done on the new housing estates.'¹¹⁵

The associations recognised that better housing came at a cost, especially where no provision for community space had been made, as the LBA Development Memorandum above indicates. This view persisted throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In 1967 the leader of the DYW project linked new housing and a lack of social cohesion saying that the areas had 'a floating unstable population which was probably increasing as more and more new blocks of flats were

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p. 4

¹¹¹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/49, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1968-69, p. 5

¹¹² LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, MYA Development Committee, 'Report and Recommendations of the Development Committee upon Policy for the 1970s', p. 4

¹¹³ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1957-58, p. 10, p. 13

¹¹⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1960-61, p. 18

¹¹⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1970-71, p. 8

built.¹¹⁶ MYA, formed out of the merger of the LBA and Liverpool Union, still had this view in 1970, saying 'It is no good having empty buildings in Liverpool 8 [*Central District*], and there is nothing provided on new estates. People are moving out and no community centres are going with them.'¹¹⁷ In 1975 one of the detached youth workers noted the 'unsettling effect' of movement into new housing complexes and the lack of community spirit.¹¹⁸ One pertinent remark was that after the need for experimental and development work on the inter-war estate at Speke where no youth facilities had been provided, the 'lessons' had not been 'learned in Netherley,' a modern corporation housing estate to the east of Liverpool.¹¹⁹

MYA and some of its workers shared the conclusions reached by Young and Willmott that new estates resulted in decanted populations that disrupted the long-standing connections in local communities.¹²⁰ While dense, poor quality housing nearer to city centres was inadequate, the social disruption to young peoples' lives caused by breaking up and moving these communities was also undesirable. Parker, the Bronte Centre, and the DYW project all document that there was reluctance to leave older areas of the city with poor quality housing as people valued the local ties over the improved amenities.¹²¹

In South London and Liverpool in the 1960s and 1970s the problems of housing went beyond the movement of the population to new estates with few amenities. The condition of existing housing was also a significant concern and this informed the slum clearance programmes seen in both cities.¹²² The Bronte Centre archives show that the community activism which grew up around the Centre can be seen partly as a response to this, though it also reflects a wider emphasis

¹¹⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/3, Minutes of the meeting of the Professional Advisory Committee to the DYW Project 1st February 1967, p. 1, p. 5

¹¹⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, MYA, 'Report of special Policy Meeting on Youth and Community Work in the 1970s'

¹¹⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/4-1/6, DYW Progress Report June 1975-76, p. 1

¹¹⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/7/2, 'Last but not least', September 1973, p. 13; though an issue evident in London and Liverpool, it was applicable nationwide, John Short, *Housing in Britain: The Post-war Experience*, London, Methuen, 1982

¹²⁰ Young and Willmott, *Family and Kinship*; Hanley, *Estates*

¹²¹ Parker, *The View from the Boys*, pp. 21-44; see for example LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/7, Bronte Warden's Report June 1970; LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/3, Minutes of the Meeting of the DYW Professional Advisory Committee 1st February 1967, p. 5

¹²² Ben Campkin, *Remaking London – Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2013

on community development at this time.¹²³ The Neighbourhood Council and Women's Council were formed as a result of a Rent Strike in 1967 where the Bronte Centre collected and kept the rent money until the outstanding issues were resolved.¹²⁴ Reports of the general welfare worker attached to the Centre also give monthly details of particularly difficult cases.¹²⁵ Housing conditions were often linked to the poverty of the residents, caused in part by unemployment. It is these two issues which this chapter now goes on to consider.

c. Youth clubs and poverty

Housing conditions in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 were linked strongly to the conditions of the working class, and therefore the issues of poverty, inequality and social deprivation. Chapters two and three considered the role of the voluntary youth associations and youth clubs within local mixed economies of welfare in London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985, but how the clubs and associations viewed welfare, as well as how they experienced local deprivation is also pertinent to considering their role in local welfare provision.

It is clear that while acknowledging the benefits of new state welfare provision, the local associations and clubs saw continuing poverty and inequality as a crucial challenge in their work. Long before Townsend and his colleagues were hailed for their 'rediscovery of poverty' voluntary youth services in London and Liverpool bore witness to the problems of poverty in their localities.¹²⁶ There were subtle differences in how this was described and also differences in how this was experienced; associations were quicker to apply the balm of the welfare state as having solved some of their earlier problems compared to clubs and youth workers who dealt with individual cases at the local level, trying to solve individual practical problems; like young people who cannot afford to participate, as well as meeting local needs such as daytime occupation for the unemployed.

¹²³ Kendall, *The Voluntary Sector*, p. 176

¹²⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/4, Bronte Youth Centre Warden's Report September 1967, p. 2

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Abel-Smith and Townsend, *The Poor and The Poorest*; Townsend, *Poverty in the United Kingdom*; Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street'

The LFBC reflected on the challenges posed by post-war welfare provision when they commented in their 1961-62 Annual Report that before the Second World War 'poverty and lack of opportunity provided such obvious hardships that they acted as a spur for outside agencies to offer help' adding that the 'social setting has very much changed,' but that their aims remain the same.¹²⁷ This idea, harking back to a perceived time of greater need, and appealing to the long history of the boys' club movement stays with them throughout the 1960s. In 1969 they again outline that 'there is an idea in some people's minds that whatever good work Boys' Clubs may have done in the past they are no longer needed today', and arguing strongly against this notion.¹²⁸ For the LFBC, the Welfare State had not changed their aims, but had changed the public climate in which they worked. The London Union saw state welfare differently, as an opportunity. In 1959, though they assumed that the state would do much that they had previously been doing, they articulated that the role of the voluntary organisation was clearly to drive forward innovation:

In the past the voluntary organisations have always shown the lead in Youth Work. Now many of our previous functions have been taken over by statutory bodies, and we rejoice in this, because it leaves us the time and opportunity to use our initiative in experimenting with new forms...There have been changes over the last twenty years which tend to make anachronisms of our old ideas.¹²⁹

This fits well with their later focus on experimental and project work.

While the LFBC saw youth welfare in pre- and post-war binary terms, they argued that 'conditions of work, education and housing for many, but not all, have been revolutionised.'¹³⁰ Again, this sense that London and Liverpool were both experiencing multiple, complex and unsettling changes affecting young people is a common idea. However, an older idea, that poverty blighted the lives of young people, also persisted, despite grand appeals to the benefits of new state welfare.

It is in looking at examples from individual youth clubs that the impact of continuing poverty is most clear. Sister Philomena, the general welfare worker attached to the Bronte Youth Centre, submitted a monthly report of the deprivations and difficulties of the people she

¹²⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 3

¹²⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1968-69, p. 1

¹²⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/11, London Union Annual Report 1958-59, p. 8

¹³⁰ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1970-71, p. 5

encountered. This often included young people; for example, she notes that of 155 young people who went on the club camp, 67 of them needed subsidising from the Children's Country Holiday Fund and another £100 to subsidise camp was provided by the Catholic Children's Protection Society.¹³¹ Sister Philomena's reports, read alongside the Warden's Reports for Bronte give a picture of numerous family tragedies. However, they also begin to show that local experiences of poverty varied. The 'bullring' had a large Roman Catholic population and so large families struggling to cope can be seen alongside rising unemployment.

Local clubs and associations sought to stress the comparative severity of their conditions and level of local need, sometimes in an effort to secure the funding that increasingly gave priority to such needs. However, their concern for the conditions that young people were growing up in was genuine, if sometimes contained within a problematic discourse about myriad social problems causing the problems of youth. Unemployment, as one of the causes of poverty received particular attention. Moderating the effects of unemployment, and its contribution to local poverty was one area where the local clubs and associations did show a multifaceted response.

d. Youth clubs and unemployment

Youth unemployment drew significant concern from youth associations and clubs in South London and Liverpool. National unemployment statistics reflect these changes over time; with employment easier to obtain in the 1960s and early 1970s and unemployment rising from 1975 and dramatically so during the 1980s.

¹³¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/4, Warden's Report, July 1967, p. 3

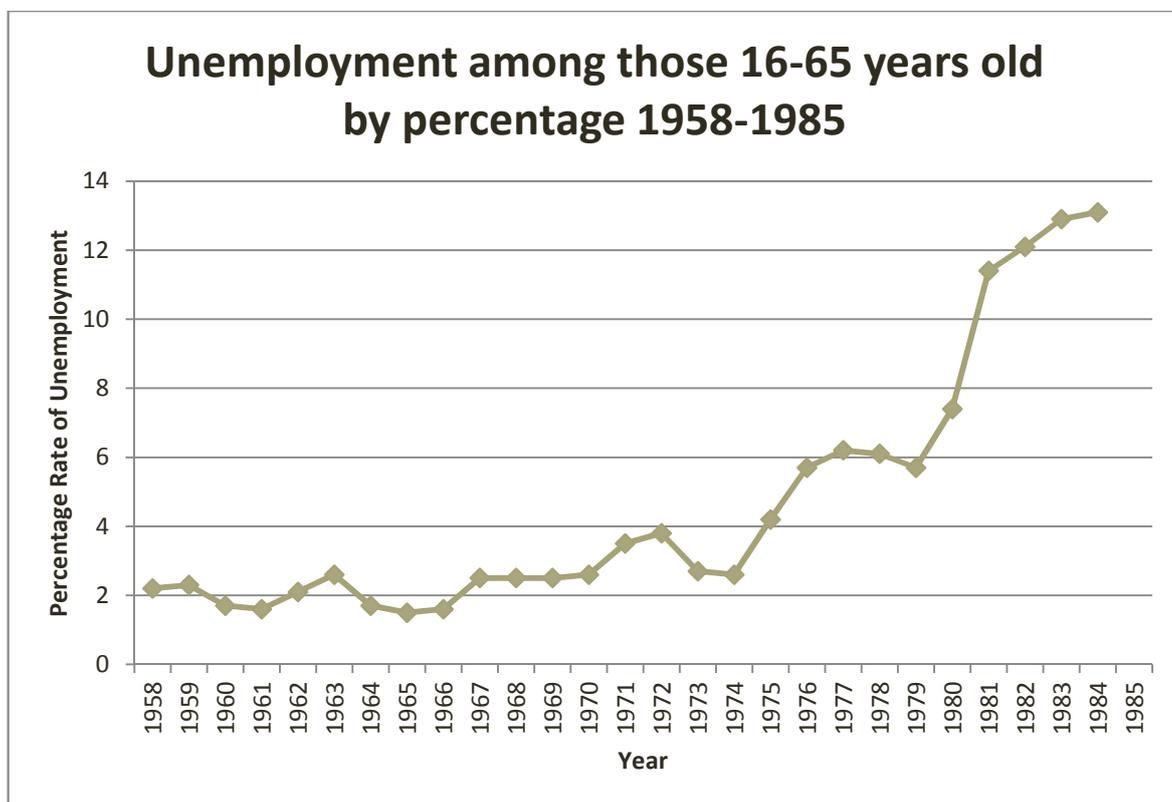


Figure: 4.1: Unemployment among those 16-65 years old by percentage 1958-1985 ¹³²

However, national statistics conceal the significant variation in local unemployment. Employment in Liverpool fell by a third between 1971 and 1985 after the concentration and then decline of the manufacturing industry there, leaving the public sector as the major economic force and employer in the city.¹³³ This resulted in not only long-term and intergenerational unemployment but also meant that the rolling back of the state in Liverpool had the Director of the Liverpool Centre for Urban Studies commenting that ‘decline has turned into collapse’ in 1985.¹³⁴ There is a sense from interviewees that in Liverpool, unemployment and youth unemployment problems were worse, viewed against a backdrop of decline in Liverpool’s traditional industries. One youth worker who moved from South London to Liverpool during this time directly compares the poverty and unemployment he encountered, saying, ‘I was shocked by the poverty [*in Liverpool*] even though where I had come from was a poor area. I was really really shocked by just how poor that part of

¹³² Halsey, *British Social Trends*, p. 174

¹³³ Parkinson, *Liverpool on the Brink*, pp. 13-16

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7; Jo Blanden and Steve Gibbons on the impact on adolescents in the 1970s of being brought up in poverty on their chances of living in poverty in later life, *The Persistence of Poverty Across Generations*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Bristol, Policy Press, 2006

Liverpool was'.¹³⁵ For Michael, in Liverpool, unemployment was more of a problem, and it might affect more than one generation of the same family that he knew from the youth club.¹³⁶ The two detached youth workers independently recalled the incident when Michael Heseltine, Minister for Merseyside after the riots in 1981, met young people in the back of their minibus and was told by a local youth, 'no one asks you what you want to be when you grow up now. There's no jobs'.¹³⁷ Lewisham too had its own experience of unemployment with 'endemic black unemployment' and youth unemployment being noticed by youth workers in the 1970s.¹³⁸

As the statistics above indicate, unemployment was also a problem that posed an entirely different scale of challenge to youth workers at different points between 1958 and 1985. In the 1960s it was not uncommon to read about concern for young unemployed boys. While they were relatively few in number, they represented a failure to transition into adult life. However, in the 1980s large projects, and in one case new organisation, had been set up by the local youth associations to tackle the problem as unemployment levels soared well above those seen in the preceding decades.¹³⁹

In 1960 the LBA were running three-week part-residential courses for unemployed boys, aiding with emigration to work on farms in Canada and running a groundsman's apprentice scheme working on their playing fields for boys leaving school who did not find work.¹⁴⁰ In 1963 the Liverpool Union announced in their monthly circular letter that the Everton Red Triangle Club was to be opened two afternoons a week on an experimental basis, specifically for the young unemployed of that area.¹⁴¹ The Executive Committee provide more detail in their discussions behind this experiment. They consulted a paper compiled for a special meeting with the Director of

¹³⁵ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014. In her interview Katherine used different words but the message was the same, 'years ago people asked you what you wanted to be when you grow up. Nobody asks you that now', interview 24th September 2014

¹³⁸ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

¹³⁹ *Voluntary Organisations and the Manpower Services Commission Special Programmes*, London, Manpower Services Commission, 1982; LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/02, London Union Annual Report 1985, p. 11

¹⁴⁰ LRO, M367/MAY/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1960, p. 1

¹⁴¹ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/16, Liverpool Union Circular Letter June 1963

Education, Youth Employment Team staff, youth advisers, the LBA, Liverpool Union and representatives from four clubs in high unemployment areas. They discussed some statistics on the 2,490 unemployed people between 15 and 17 in the area; 1,472 boys, 1,018 girls, 947 of whom were 15 years old and 1,543 of whom were 16 or 17. Of these, 460 teenagers went back to school, and 1,450 stayed in school and therefore did not contribute to these figures.¹⁴² It is this group of 2,490 young people that were the target group of the joint employment centre and youth club held in club premises in Everton in 1963, but it is not clear what happened to the project after this date and if it indeed did help any of them find work. In 1964, the 'Crash' programme which accelerated stalled club development programmes was justified in terms of it being an attempt to alleviate unemployment on Merseyside, though it is not clear if the intention of this was providing work for adults carrying out the building work, providing facilities for unemployed young people or both.¹⁴³

At club level there were also attempts to help young members find work. This was often on an informal and individual basis using workers' and helpers' knowledge of where local vacancies might be. Evidence for this comes from anecdotes in Leader's reports about a boy or girl who had been helped.¹⁴⁴ This was not a formal part of club work or youth leadership, but it reflects the prevailing attitude within some clubs that they ought to offer practical assistance to young people where they could, similar to Sister Philomena paying towards camp in the case of the Bronte Youth Centre above.¹⁴⁵ One particularly vivid memory from Michael in South London demonstrates that leaders were keen to help their members find work:

I remember getting really angry...I was in the job centre looking at what was available and I took a card off the board and this was shelf stacking in the Tesco's at Elephant and Castle, 'Good A-Levels Required'. I went storming down there and demanding to see the manager and said, 'Excuse me, how many A-Levels did you get?' 'I didn't get any' 'Why are you demanding [*them*]?...Thing is, these are the sorts of jobs that my young people normally would aspire to and you are cutting them out'.¹⁴⁶

Again this links to the idea of social capital within the youth club as leaders used their skills, experience and networks to help members find work. Helping young people who were not at work

¹⁴² LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, Liverpool Union Executive Committee Minutes, 7th February 1963

¹⁴³ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1960, p. 1

¹⁴⁴ See for example LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/3, Warden's Report October 1966, p. 3

¹⁴⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/4, Warden's Report, July 1967, p. 3

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

to use their leisure time was also part of this. Similar to the arguments made by Bradley, some efforts to rationalise recreation were aimed at those who needed it during the day, hence daytime club opening schemes were introduced in some cases.¹⁴⁷ However, in an attempt to meet young people where they were, the detached youth workers were also using their minibus as a mobile refreshments van aimed at finding local unemployed school leavers.¹⁴⁸

Concern in the 1960s and 1970s was also raised about the type of work that young people were doing. This is illustrated particularly well in *We are the Lambeth Boys*, which contains a section exploring the work lives of the young members. In it viewers were presented with the types of jobs young people were doing; for example the post clerk or young woman working on the food assembly line. The perception was that the tedium and repetitive nature of jobs, even if reasonably paid, required a stimulating environment outside work (such as the youth club provided) and that furthermore this work, when combined with readily available jobs gave young people cause to change jobs frequently or spend time out of work rather than do boring jobs with few prospects. The Warden at Bronte noted the 'unbearable monotony' of the jobs at the local Vauxhall plant.¹⁴⁹ This is little mentioned in the archives of the London and Liverpool Associations. However, they did offer concern for those in, or about to enter work, as well as those out of work. One example of this is the 'Adjustment to Industry and Commerce' Courses run by the LBA which included information of what to expect in a workplace, standards of behaviour and the role of trade unions. They note that 400 young people used these courses in 1966 alone though they were later phased out because of the unemployment level on Merseyside; other interventions were more important and demand for courses fell as people's expectations of being able to find work similarly fell.¹⁵⁰

This shows that youth clubs and associations had a more general concern with the work lives of their young members. However, particular concern remained about those not working.

Associations especially were quick to comment on trends in unemployment, using it as a reason to

¹⁴⁷ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation in the age of affluence'

¹⁴⁸ LRO, M367/MYAM/6/4-1/6, DYW Report June 1975-76, p. 1

¹⁴⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/4, Warden's Report 11th April 1967 links this and a scarcity of jobs to a local spate of delinquency

¹⁵⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/2, LBA Annual Report 1965-66, p.20

show their relevance and gain support, but much more so because of their commitment to their young members.¹⁵¹ In the mid-1970s, when the unemployment figures show increasing unemployment rates nationally, these trends have already been noticed with regard to local young people. The MYA noticed that unemployment has risen ‘tremendously’ in 1971-72.¹⁵² It was discussed frequently from 1974 onwards, with their partnerships with the MSC becoming a feature from 1978.¹⁵³ The London Union noticed that unemployment had been increasing for the last couple of years in 1977, in line with national trends.¹⁵⁴ They pointed this out as part of their announcement that they had submitted their own schemes to the MSC for job creation work, but their overall level of concern was muted compared to the voices on Merseyside.¹⁵⁵ The LFBC came somewhere between the MYA and London Union, mentioning concern and their plans for job creation schemes in 1976.¹⁵⁶ A question and point of comparison emerges here about how, in Merseyside, unemployment seemed to be spiralling by 1971, but it took several years for MSC schemes to get off the ground. In London, discussion of unemployment was much more focussed on the schemes themselves rather than the wider problem. It appears as though Liverpool experienced a lag between local unemployment trends and government support coming forth.

As well as variations in the timing of rising unemployment in London and Liverpool, there is also a sense that those in Liverpool perceived their situation as particularly acute, and particularly hopeless, something which Parkinson noted in 1985.¹⁵⁷ In the tempered language of the annual reports of associations this is evident, with them saying that there is ‘little hope for the future of young people’.¹⁵⁸ They add later that ‘[U]nemployment is a dark cloud which hangs relentlessly over Merseyside. There can hardly be a family that has not been affected by now’.¹⁵⁹ The public statements of the London associations never quite reached this level of pessimism, but if what the

¹⁵¹ For example LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/09, London Union Annual Report 1980-81, p. 1 states that aiding unemployment is a specific reason to support the Union

¹⁵² LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/4, MYA Annual Report 1971-72, p. 7

¹⁵³ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/10, MYA Annual Report 1978-79, p. 1

¹⁵⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/06, London Union Annual report 1977-78, p. 11

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1976-77, p. 4, notes that schemes are underway

¹⁵⁷ Parkinson, *Liverpool on the Brink*, pp. 13-16

¹⁵⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/12, MYA Annual Report 1980-81, p. 2

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7

MYA was saying in public struck a dejected tone, then their private discussions reveal a deeper despair. In 1977, the cartoon on the front of their DYW Conference Report parodies the anti-litter Keep Britain Tidy Campaign. It depicts a bin with the caption 'Please Place your School Leavers Here':

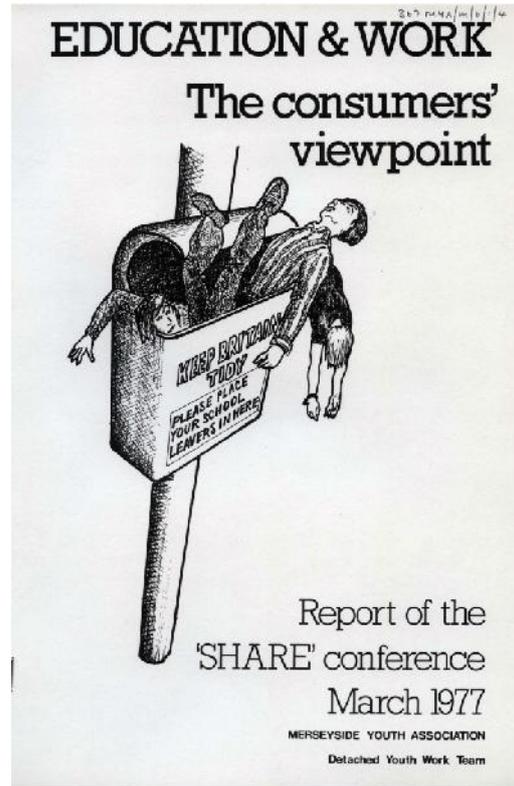


Image D: Cover of Detached Youth Work Conference Report on Education and Work, 1977 ¹⁶⁰

The report continues with comments such as:

One of the major lessons we have to get across to the public at large is that to be out of work is not a failing of the individual person...Unemployment on Merseyside has been, is, and will be a permanent situation – real jobs are needed, but as this seems improbable we must ensure that schemes which at the moment are regarded as second-best to work are seen as equal to work... 'Work' can no longer be regarded as a god to whom we all do homage... We hear our young people preach a message of despair – if all your early years are geared towards getting a job and you cannot find a job then you regard yourself as a failure. ¹⁶¹

They note that deep pessimism from young people is understandable when faced with the reality of work on Merseyside. While unemployment in South London from the mid-1970s was a serious issue, it was treated as a solvable one, with much space given to the MSC schemes the association

¹⁶⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4 , 'Education and Work: The Consumers Viewpoint', *Report of the SHARE Conference March 1977*, Front Cover

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 11

ran. In Liverpool, unemployment was portrayed as an enduring state of affairs with little hope for significant improvement until the problems with the city's economic structure had been addressed. However, the MSC schemes applied in both situations were essentially very similar.

From about 1976 onwards the youth associations in South London and Liverpool made a concerted effort to help young people with a specific problem through their response to high unemployment. In both cases, the efforts were government-backed, with money being made available via the MSC. There were two main types of scheme; job-based and training-based, broadly speaking. London and Liverpool used both types of scheme, though associations ran them differently.

The London Union ran a Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) in 1978-79, a training-based scheme to train sixty Youth and Community Work Assistants.¹⁶² They also ran a Special Temporary Employment Programme (STEP) looking to have 40 STEP workers in the first year.¹⁶³ By 1980 STEP had become CEP (Community Enterprise Programme) with fewer government restrictions on eligibility and an increase in the number of workers they aimed to recruit.¹⁶⁴ In 1983 they brought 60 trainees through as Assistant Youth and Community Workers, but complained about lack of employment for them after the scheme finished.¹⁶⁵ In the same year they brought 73 people through the CEP scheme, 18 of whom are unaccounted for whereas 64% of the rest found work or further education.¹⁶⁶ They note the following details about their scheme members, (though not their ages) suggesting that unemployment had facets of gender and race and was a particular problem among black men:

¹⁶² LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/07, London Union Annual Report 1978-79, p. 4

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/09, London Union Annual Report 1980, pp. 19-20

¹⁶⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1983, p. 2

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10

London Union of Youth Clubs CEP Scheme 1983				
Gender	Men		Women	
Ethnicity	Black	White	Black	White
Number	26	15	15	17

Table 4.4: London Union of Youth Clubs CEP members, 1983¹⁶⁷

The two schemes ran in a similar vein, with increasing numbers involved up to 1985. In that year there were 217 placements with the CEP (now just CP) and 122 on job based training.¹⁶⁸ At this point the London Union set up London Employment Training as a separate organisation to manage its MSC schemes as a wholly controlled subsidiary of the Union to manage their exposure to financial and legal risks on the schemes.¹⁶⁹

The LFBC also ran a training-based scheme providing jobs and skills in repairing and decorating property via the Job Creation Programme.¹⁷⁰ This is the only work they mention, but this fits with the way the LFBC focussed on club work, where the London Union took the lead in project-based work. The MYA also ran the YOP and STEP schemes but they did not provide a great level of detail about the numbers and successes of the scheme.¹⁷¹ Given their otherwise vocal opinions on youth unemployment, this suggests they did not find it particularly successful or that perhaps it was run at arm's length. They do explain that four new detached youth workers were temporary MSC Job Creation Programme workers.¹⁷²

When it came to youth unemployment the youth associations in South London and Liverpool were involved in supporting young people from a variety of angles; offering informal help to find work and advice on the issue, drawing public attention to the problem of youth unemployment, schemes to ease young people into the workplace and micro-local projects to help young people use daytime leisure. From the mid-1970s this was subsumed within much larger machinery sponsored by the state via the MSC. Unemployment, out of all the issues young people,

¹⁶⁷ While making broad assumptions about ethnicity, this detail is useful for seeing that all categories are similar except for black men who formed nearly 1/3 of the cohort, LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005, London Union Annual Report 1983, p. 10

¹⁶⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/02, London Union Annual Report 1985, p. 11

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1976-77, p. 4 and 1977-78, p. 4

¹⁷¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/10, MYA Annual Report 1978-79, p. 1

¹⁷² LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/4-1/6, DYW Report June 1975-76, p. 1

their clubs, and associations were dealing with, shows the greatest variation across case study locations and across the time period studied.

The response to unemployment is a great example of how state and voluntary boundaries were shaped in response to local circumstances and shows clear differences between case study areas: the London Union took the lead due to their greater focus on projects, in Liverpool schemes failed to make much headway for local young people against the scale of problem they faced. This is also a good example of how local associations could be at the vanguard of developments in welfare and how they were quick to respond to whatever pots of state money might be available to them. It shows again how national blanket approaches to the needs of youth needed nuance and interpretation to operate at the local level, given the responsiveness and flexibility of local voluntary youth organisations. Lastly it shows that voluntary organisations could use their status to respond quickly to cover emerging gaps in welfare provision and helps us understand the mechanisms used to do this.

IV. Gender and race in youth clubs in South London and Liverpool

There were conflicting attitudes to race and gender in youth clubs in Liverpool and South London between 1958 and 1985. In a way that is again emblematic of the clash of youth work cultures in Liverpool and South London during this period, traditionalists and more progressive youth workers sought to frame and solve these issues in different ways. The issues of gender and race were also often hidden, rarely directly referenced in sources, and not always perceived as important. The lack of reference is interesting in the context of the 1960s, a time when permissiveness was supposedly liberalising attitudes towards a range of issues.¹⁷³ However, in the later 1970s and early 1980s the way minorities were treated in youth clubs and wider society did take on more prominence, with organisations like London Union using their expertise in project work to lead the way. Reference to gender, immigration and race became more frequent and youth clubs took on more responsibility not just for ensuring harmonious relations within the club, but addressing racist and sexist

¹⁷³ On this theme, see for example Collins, *The Permissive Society*

attitudes. While there were certainly individual youth workers who had long been challenging such attitudes, it took some time for more co-ordinated responses to emerge.

a. Girls in youth clubs

The previous chapters have established how the separate development of boys' clubs on the one hand and mixed and girls' clubs on the other entrenched a perception that boys needed clubs in a much more specific way than girls did. There was something thought to be unique about the needs of boys which could only be addressed in a single-sex environment, where character and citizenship could be inculcated in an environment of all-male companionship. This is something traced back to the roots of the boys' club movement by Powley, and picked up by Collins when he discusses the inter-war period.¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, even in the post-war period, attitudes to unemployment, class, poverty and delinquency in clubs started from the presumption that these problems were to a certain extent boys' problems. While girls were included in unemployment schemes, for example, thought was very rarely given to how the experiences of girls might differ from those of boys. However, a certain focus on the boys in clubs is forgivable given, as indicated above, that often there were more boys in clubs than girls.

While clubs did not always have greater numbers of boys, overall the Youth Service was catering for more boys than girls. How did this link with what was going on in clubs? Were fewer girls going because clubs normatively provided for boys? Were programmes simply reflecting the members that attended? Literature on inter-war girls' reading habits from Penny Tinkler suggests that girls had less leisure time that needed filling due to expectations that daughters would be helping out with domestic duties.¹⁷⁵ Social surveys also reflect that many girls were expected to be at home, possibly doing domestic duties, and that their outside leisure was more controlled than their brothers.¹⁷⁶ Girls were more likely to be at home than in a club. Similarly, one of the possible

¹⁷⁴ Powley, *Getting on With It*, p.8; Collins, *Modern Love*, pp. 59-89

¹⁷⁵ Penny Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood – Popular Magazines for Girls Growing up in England 1920-1950*, London, Taylor and Francis, 1995, pp. 11-39

¹⁷⁶ Pearl Jephcott, *Time of One's Own – Leisure and Young People*, London, Oliver and Boyd, 1967, p. 58; Smith, *Young People at Leisure*, p. 15

answers has been provided by McRobbie and Garber in their work on teenage girls' bedroom culture.¹⁷⁷ They argue that girls' social lives were more likely to be found in the private space of the bedroom. While Anne also described sitting in her room listening to records and chatting to friends at home in her bedroom as part of her wider lifestyle as a teenager, the full range of possibilities for girls' relative absence in youth clubs needs further exploration.¹⁷⁸

Activities for girls in the 1960s sought to reinforce their future role as housewives as well as their role in consumer culture. Dressmaking, sewing, cookery, budget planning and demonstrations of new household equipment awaited girls in South London and Liverpool.¹⁷⁹ The Liverpool Union tried a household budgeting competition in 1959, while noting that dressmaking and homemaking were among the activities that interested girls.¹⁸⁰ Dressmaking ran as an annual competition until at least 1965, though it was expanded to include outfits put together but not made by the girls, reflecting more readily available off-the-peg fashion.¹⁸¹ One such competition asked girls to put together an outfit for a spring wedding and put photographs of the winning girl, in her outfit, in the annual report.¹⁸² These activities and competitions reinforced the girls' future roles as housekeepers, but also increasingly trained the future housewife to utilise her role as a consumer to help fulfil this role.¹⁸³ In 1967 the London Union, in conjunction with *Honey* magazine ran a ten-week personal grooming course with sponsors including Miss Selfridge doing a fashion display.¹⁸⁴ This mix of domesticity and consumption was particular to the 1960s and reflected emerging consumer currents in wider society, and a continuing expectation that the eventual destination of

¹⁷⁷ Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber, 'Girls and Subcultures', Hall and Jefferson, eds., *Resistance through Rituals*

¹⁷⁸ Anne interview, 14th August 2014

¹⁷⁹ See LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/39-49, Liverpool Union Annual Reports 1959-1969, LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001-005, London Union Annual Reports 1958-1985

¹⁸⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/39, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1958-59, p. 5

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/03, London Union Annual report 1962-63, p. 14, which notes Elizabeth Arden and Lever Brothers working with the Union

¹⁸⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/003, London Union Annual Report 1966-67, p. 12

teenage girls in the 1960s was home and family, even if opportunities for work and leisure increased in the meantime.¹⁸⁵

Within the individual club the expectation that girls were in training for marriage could also be found, though so could spaces where girls expressed autonomy. In London, the Union of Youth Clubs remarked that it was fairly normal for girls in mixed clubs to be doing chores.¹⁸⁶ While female former attendees that were interviewed did not speak of having to do chores, they were not directly asked, and one did speak of gender divided roles at dances, where boys would act as bouncers and girls would organise the drinks.¹⁸⁷ When members were consulted about furnishings and decoration in clubs, it was the girls who were expected to take the lead, something seen in both Alford House in South London and the Bronte Centre in Liverpool.¹⁸⁸ The London Union observed that girls have higher standards and want well-decorated and furnished clubs to reflect girls' shift from instructional activities to more social ones.¹⁸⁹ In Bronte they rearranged the furniture in the canteen to make it more 'cosy'.¹⁹⁰ In Alford House in the early 1960s the management committee kept an eye on the new cushions and curtains being made by the girls for the girls' room in the club.¹⁹¹

However, girls' use of space in youth clubs could be simultaneously entrenching gender norms and challenging them.¹⁹² Many clubs were 'male dominated' or aimed at boys but a few clubs provided girls-only spaces. Girls' rooms could be found in some larger clubs, such as Shrewsbury House near Everton and Alford House in Lambeth. In Alford House the Girls' Room was for the use of older girls and was not normally used for activities or instruction. Its most frequent use was a space where girls could talk away from male members. However, it did come with the

¹⁸⁵ Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 21-22

¹⁸⁶ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/02, London Union Annual Report 1961-62, pp. 20-23

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Wendy, 29th July, 2014

¹⁸⁸ Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of Alford House Youth Club, February 1960; LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Bronte Centre Warden's Report, 31st March 1963, p. 3

¹⁸⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/12, London Union Annual Report 1959-60, p. 15

¹⁹⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Bronte Centre Warden's Report, 31st March 1963, p. 3

¹⁹¹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of Alford House Youth Club, February 1960

¹⁹² Dennis says it would be hard to describe the clubs he knew as 'anything other than male dominated', interview 19th September 2014; Jean Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education'

expectation that the girls would make curtains and cushions for the room to suit the perception that girls needed more comfortable surroundings than boys to get them into clubs.¹⁹³ By the late 1960s this room had been repurposed. Shrewsbury House did not get a girls' room until the rebuild in 1974, when it became a mixed club, but it still had one in 2014, painted pink.

Girls' rooms raise some questions about the role of girls within youth clubs. For clubs that had them they were seen as necessary, due to the tendency of boys to dominate club proceedings. However, by moving girls away from the centre of the club and its activities, they did not promote the interests and needs of girls as equal to those of the boys inhabiting the main space. While they did offer girls privacy and space for expression, they simultaneously made girls the 'other' in the club, reinforcing the idea that the typical youth club member was male. The absence of girls' rooms in other clubs could have been because of lack of space, because challenging the boys' use of the space was not seen as necessary or because a club had achieved a good balance in catering for the needs of all members. However, the way that groups chose to use the space reflects that the latter was not always achieved. In Alford House, a former member and volunteer remarks that often girls gathered to talk in the corridors, choosing to separate themselves from boys, watch what was going on and use marginal spaces.¹⁹⁴

This is not the only example of confusion about the position of girls in youth clubs. One example can be found in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme run by the Liverpool Union in 1959. The boys scheme included 'rescue', 'public service', 'expedition', 'pursuits' and 'fitness', while girls had 'design for living', 'adventure', 'interests' and 'giving service'.¹⁹⁵ It is intriguing to see 'public service' for boys put next to 'giving service' for girls, though without more detail on what the girls and boys actually did for their service it is hard to ascertain what this difference meant in practice. The idea of giving service is one Penny Tinkler picks up in girls' periodicals in the inter-war period, and it is possible that female service was more personal and domestic in contrast to that of

¹⁹³ Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of Alford House Youth Club, February 1960

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014; Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of Alford House Youth Club, February 1960

¹⁹⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/39, Liverpool Union Annual report 1958-59, p. 4

the boys, for whom wider citizenship training was emphasised.¹⁹⁶ Overall it was thought that the new girls' programme was 'specially suited to the adolescent girls [sic] and should encourage her to do exciting and worthwhile things with her leisure.'¹⁹⁷

At the city-wide level, challenges to gender stereotypes in youth clubs were few and far between in the 1960s. The most obvious challenge came from the London Union in 1962. In their report 'Girls 1962' the youth worker organising girls' activities implores the reader of the Annual Report to stop making girls in mixed clubs do chores to reinforce their future roles as housewives, saying that although a girl will eventually be a housewife, she will also be an 'educator and setter of standards' and that 'the girl is as much tomorrow's citizen as the boy'.¹⁹⁸ They continue with the observation that 'Girls['] sphere of interest has widened enormously over the past few years' to include rifle-shooting, pot-holing, canoeing, pottery, drama, art, archery, and committee work, all shared with boys, but allowing for girls to still 'develop as a woman' in the Union into the roles of budgetter, buyer, dressmaker, cook, interior decorator, nurse, hostess, voter and partner.¹⁹⁹ Even proto-feminism in youth clubs in the early 1960s had limitations. While gender-based expectations were normal and often unchallenged, it is clear that many thousands of girls in Liverpool and London were using youth clubs on a regular basis for a range of activities and social interactions. It seems, however, social norms, rather than youth club rules were shaping the way that girls experienced these spaces. The same could be said of the boys and often it was up to individual youth workers to try and challenge young people's received messages about gender, and in at least the case of Katherine this could be linked to feminism and a group of feminist youth workers she was involved with in the 1970s.²⁰⁰ In the 1970s, efforts to do this became more co-ordinated. This can be contrasted with uniformed organisations such as the Scouts and Guides which offered camping and adventure, though the Guides also offered more domestic activities as outlined by

¹⁹⁶ Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood*

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/02, London Union Annual Report 1961-62, p. 16

¹⁹⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/02, London Union Annual Report 1961-62, p. 22

²⁰⁰ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014; feminism was influencing youth and social work at this time as noted by Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education'; Annie Hudson, 'Feminism and Social Work: Resistance or Dialogue?', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 15, No. 6, 1985, pp. 635-655

Mills.²⁰¹ While girls could camp and undertake a range of adventure activities in theory, it seems that in practice, prior to the 1970s gender norms had a significant influence on activities in clubs.²⁰²

But by 1970, the position of girls within mixed youth clubs began to be considered more carefully. There was some concern nationally and in London and Liverpool about the position and numbers of girls in clubs and a feeling that they were not being sufficiently well provided for. In 1970, the Fairburn-Milson Report remarked on a sharp drop-off in female membership, especially after 16 years of age, saying that fewer girls were attracted to clubs and that those who were, lost their interest more quickly than the boys.²⁰³ In Liverpool, they did not see quite such a steep decline, but the report did make them consider whether they were doing enough to attract and retain girls. In their 'Last but not Least' policy on development for the 1970s the MYA acknowledged that '[I]ndeed youth clubs and groups have generally tended to perpetuate the "housewife" myth, and have offered girls hairdressing and cooking lessons in a desperate attempt to break down their apparent lack of interest.'²⁰⁴ The detached youth workers similarly observed a lack of facilities for girls while acknowledging that their work was often associated with boys because they were seen as the problem group.²⁰⁵

'Girl's work' as it was termed, began to be seen in youth clubs from 1971 onwards when the MYA put it on the priority list for a £10,000 grant it had received from the John Moores Family Trust.²⁰⁶ The description of how this money was to be used set out that a female leader was to be employed to ascertain the type of activities required by girls and to work, especially with full-time male leaders, to provide such activities. Furthermore, the worker would report directly into the management committees of the clubs concerned.²⁰⁷ This suggests that problems catering for girls in youth clubs were thought to be found largely in clubs with full-time male leaders. This work was

²⁰¹ Mills, 'Scouting for Girls?'

²⁰² Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education'

²⁰³ Fairburn-Milson, p. 16

²⁰⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, 'Last but not least', p. 12

²⁰⁵ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014, LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4, Progress report August 1977-July 1978, p. 2

²⁰⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, Minutes of the meeting of the MYA Development Committee, 7th December 1971, p.1

²⁰⁷ *ibid*

continued and extended in 1973 when the MYA was awarded money by the Eleanor Rathbone Trust to appoint two advisers on girls' work.²⁰⁸ It was different to the work carried out in the early 1960s by the London Union in that it came with a desire to improve not just the standards of activities for girls in youth clubs, but also give girls equal status and attention in their youth clubs. Hence, for the first time since mixing became standard, girls' work considered when girls might need their own homosocial activities and spaces free from assumptions about who girls were or what they wanted to do. Girls' work looked to provide a louder voice for girls' interests on an equal footing to boys and not relegate girls' activities to broom cupboards.

The London Union also took on board the criticisms of Fairburn-Milson when it came to the provision for girls in clubs. Here, their strategic focus on projects over the LFBC focus on buildings becomes clear. The London Union started a girls' work project one year later than the MYA, initially reporting in their 1975 Annual Report.²⁰⁹ While they may have started later, their project went further than the one in Liverpool. One year into the project they held an event open to all youth workers in London and produced a booklet outlining more about what girls' work was.²¹⁰ By 1977-78 they were running specific training on doing this work.²¹¹ By 1978-79 they were running out of money for the project but had extended their events to include weekend conferences and 'assertion training'.²¹² By 1980 the work had become formalised with a sub-project on girls within club social events. At this point they also mention updating the 'London Union Girls' Pack' of resources and ideas for undertaking specific work with girls which was available free to all affiliated organisations.²¹³

The London Union's work with girls continued until at least 1985. However, in 1982-83 it took on a slightly different tone, acknowledging that girls' work was also about tackling sexist attitudes within the youth club. An anti-sexist strand was added, involving consultation with youth

²⁰⁸ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/5, MYA Annual Report 1973-74, p. 4

²⁰⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/03, London Union Annual Report 1974-75, p. 9

²¹⁰ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/04, London Union Annual Report 1975-76, p. 21

²¹¹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/06, London Union Annual Report 1977-78, p. 16

²¹² LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/07, London Union Annual Report 1978-79, p. 10

²¹³ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004/09, London Union Annual Report 1980-81, p. 8

workers in clubs about how to change the attitudes of boys in clubs towards women, in line with Spence's account of the influence of feminism on youth work.²¹⁴ At this time girls' work diverged into three clear strands; one where some girls-only activities (such as DJ training, weekends away and dance workshops) were undertaken to try to boost girls' confidence, a second strand using field officers to raise awareness of girls' work, and a third strand of anti-sexist work attempting to tackle the attitude of boys in clubs to female members.²¹⁵ This last strand of work is something interviewee Steve remembers delivering to the groups of boys at the club he managed in the 1980s in Lambeth. He recalls leading discussions with small groups of boys about what sexist attitudes were and how they were manifested in behaviour in the club, as well as talking more positively about how women should be treated and given opportunities. He recalls that this work was a particular highlight of his career as he saw boys responding and thinking about how they behaved towards women, but that the work was limited by the numbers it was delivered to and the wider social attitudes that it was coming up against.²¹⁶

This London activity was overseen by a subcommittee on girls' work and in later years came under the purview of a specific 'Girls' Work Unit' which concentrated on work in Greenwich, Southwark, Lewisham, Kensington and Chelsea, Camden and Westminster.²¹⁷ While in the 1960s there were two workers looking at girls' work nationally (one of whom was London-based it appears), in the 1970s MYA responded to the challenge of the Fairburn-Milson Report with two 'girls advisers' appointed on a temporary basis. The London Union, however, wholeheartedly took on the project of trying to improve attitudes to work with girls, with some, if limited, success.

Thus, in both London and Liverpool a more co-ordinated attempt was made in the 1970s and 1980s to make youth clubs more welcoming to girls. London took this work further than Liverpool but both looked to stem the flow of female members leaving clubs after age 16 by considering how clubs could better reflect girls' interests and further their ambitions. This had

²¹⁴ Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education'

²¹⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1983, p. 1

²¹⁶ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

²¹⁷ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/01, London Union Annual Report 1983, p. 1 ; LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/03, London Union Annual Report 1985, p. 6

some limited successes. But only in the 1980s did clubs and associations really begin to consider in detail how entrenched gender expectations were shaping young peoples' lives and club experiences, alongside a wider equal opportunities agenda which came to prominence at this time.

b. Immigration and Race

After the Second World War immigrants from a number of Commonwealth countries and former colonies arrived in the UK. Britain was not new as a destination for economic migrants, with Irish people having settled in Liverpool in the nineteenth century and an earlier group of black immigrants associated with the docks in the early twentieth century, for example.²¹⁸ However, the new wave of immigration and settlement in the UK came to be one of the most notable social trends of post-war Britain with the Government's Race Relations Board estimating in 1969 that there were between one and one and a quarter million 'coloured people' in Great Britain, of which about one in five had been born in the UK.²¹⁹ The distribution of immigration was also important to note, with immigrants settling predominantly in seven urban areas (68%), and London receiving by far the largest number.²²⁰ London was home to 43.2% of West Indian, Indian and Pakistani immigrants according to a 1966 census sample, with the corresponding figure for Merseyside being 0.8%.²²¹ This accounted for 3.2% and 0.3% of the populations of these areas respectively.²²² In both cases it was noted that relatively few older people would be among the immigrants. Men, followed later by their wives and children, made up the bulk of those newly arrived in the UK.²²³ From this it can be seen that London and Liverpool experienced immigration quite differently, with Liverpool taking relatively few new arrivals in the 1950s and 1960s compared to London.²²⁴

²¹⁸ Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*

²¹⁹ Report of the Race Relations Board for 1968-69, London, HMSO, 1969, p. 55

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² Report of the Race Relations Board for 1967-68, London, HMSO, 1968, p. 42

²²³ Report of the Race Relations Board for 1968-69, p. 56

²²⁴ When considering how little mention of race there was in the youth club and association documents in Liverpool, these differences should be borne in mind.

The 1967-68 Report of the Race Relations Board offered a breakdown of numbers of immigrants by London Borough and the details for Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark are reproduced below alongside the London total.

Estimated Immigrant Population in London by Borough, 1966		Immigrants' Country of Origin			Those born in West Indies, India & Pakistan as % of total population
Borough	Total Population	West Indies	India	Pakistan	
Lambeth	320,780	16,620	3,470	460	6.7
Lewisham	278,450	9,580	1,750	220	4.3
Southwark	295,500	8,400	680	170	3.1
London total	7,670,911	147,520	80,300	15,990	3.2

Table 4.5: Estimated Immigrant population of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, with London-wide average 1966 ²²⁵

The above table demonstrates that in the boroughs examined in this thesis, immigration from the West Indies was the largest trend, with smaller numbers of immigrants from Indian and Pakistan. Lambeth had the third highest number of immigrants overall (after Brent and Hackney). Lewisham also had a high proportion of immigrants compared to many other boroughs and Southwark was 0.1 percent under the London average of 3.2 percent. The corresponding figures from Merseyside are below:

Estimated Immigrant Population in Merseyside, 1966		Immigrants' Country of Origin			Those born in West Indies, India and Pakistan as % of total population
	Total Population	West Indies	India	Pakistan	
	1,337,530	1,710	2,280	410	0.3

Table 4.6: Estimated Immigrant population of Merseyside, 1966 ²²⁶

Levels of immigration from the West Indies, India and Pakistan attracted attention from politicians and racially-linked violence and disorder were seen on the streets of several UK cities, including both Liverpool and London between 1958 and 1985.²²⁷ Political rhetoric focussed on stemming

²²⁵ Report of the Race Relations Board for 1967-68, p.42

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Clashes between Teddy Boys and West Indians in Notting Hill in 1958 were characterised by race: Solomos, *Black Youth*, p. 54; 1981 saw riots in Toxteth and Brixton. The Brixton Riots prompted *The Scarman*

immigration and in this regard the National Front (founded 1967) and Conservative politician Enoch Powell were particularly prominent, with the latter giving a famous speech in 1968 on this theme.²²⁸

Immigration and race drew relatively little attention from the youth associations in London and Liverpool until the later 1970s. Like some aspects of gender as an issue, it was not often directly referenced or seen as a problem. In some ways silences over race and immigration say more about youth club and association attitudes than the sources which directly mention them. Racial diversity had begun to appear in youth clubs in London by the early 1960s, as photographs in the LFBC annual reports demonstrate, but this did not come with any awareness of how black youth might experience hitherto white youth clubs, or indeed growing up in Britain as first or second generation immigrants.²²⁹ Ethnic diversity in youth clubs in this period initially meant black young people. While Pakistani youth get a couple of mentions in Liverpool, it was black youth who received the most attention, largely fitting immigration patterns in the areas under consideration.

In national Youth Service policy documents, race is largely treated as a separate issue, reflecting an overall failure to engage with race in many associations and clubs. Race was given very little space in the Albemarle Report. Race was mentioned in terms of violence and culture: 'new and strange faces' were noticed but it was assumed that youth shared a 'common culture' through jazz and football.²³⁰ The Albemarle Report said '[R]acial outbursts present a new problem and seem paradoxical in this age when young people of all races and nationalities seem less different.'²³¹ In 1967 a standalone report by the Youth Service Development Council, the Hunt Report, tackled the

Report: The Brixton Disorders 10-12 April 1981, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1986; Diane Frost and Richard Phillips eds., *Liverpool '81: Remembering the Riots*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2011

²²⁸ Christopher Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism and the City: The Urban Support of the National Front*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2007; Enoch Powell, *Speech to the Conservative Association Meeting*, 20th April 1968, full text available at, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html>, accessed 1st September 2015

²²⁹ See for example LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4-8, LFBC Annual Reports 1958-1985 which often included photographs

²³⁰ Albemarle, pp. 19-20

²³¹ *Ibid.*

issue of immigrants in the youth service.²³² One of its central debates was about whether provision for youth from immigrant families should have separate or integrated youth club provision. While it felt that integrated provision was the ideal for which the Youth Service should aim, it also argued that in the short term separate provision might be required as integration could not be forced, rather it could be facilitated by inter-club activities.²³³ A follow-up study by the Youth Service Information Centre in 1972 received a poor response and showed that the Hunt Report had failed to have any significant impact on local Youth Service provision, something The Fairburn-Milson Report also noted.²³⁴

Youth voluntary associations in London and Liverpool also struggled to get to grips with immigration and race in their local clubs in the 1960s and early 1970s. There was little understanding of race and immigration as issues for the Youth Service and little discussion of what it meant to have immigrant and Black British youth in youth clubs. This was perhaps down to an assumption that people settling in England would adopt local cultures, including youth cultures and the almost exclusively white leadership of the majority of clubs. There was a sense that all young people were becoming more alike in culture, as the quote from the Albemarle Report reveals, though this perhaps reflects more on cultural discourses than racial ones. In the papers of Liverpool and South London youth clubs and associations for the 1960s the issue of race and immigration was almost never mentioned. While it is not clear if discussions were taking place informally, there was a distinct lack of any national or local attempt to publicly coordinate work with ethnic minority youth.

The lack of discussion of race does not indicate that young immigrants and second-generation ethnic minority youth were absent from youth clubs. Pictures from the Annual Reports of the London Associations make it clear that there was some racial diversity, but there is no way of knowing if there was an element of tokenism in including pictures of black youth in annual reports.

²³² Hunt Report

²³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11

²³⁴ *Youth Service Provision for Young Immigrants*, Leicester, Youth Service Information Centre, 1972; Fairburn-Milson, p. 14

Perhaps the almost exclusively white leadership of clubs and associations did not perceive how race and immigration could require specific interventions from youth leaders.

Again, local variation is important here. The figures above establish that the numbers of immigrants and second generation Black British youth in clubs would have varied significantly. However, local attitudes and events as well as local demographic patterns affected race in youth clubs. In Liverpool, with much lower levels of Commonwealth immigration there were fewer black youths to be accommodated in clubs. As interviewees recall, clubs and youth in Liverpool were very territorial, with most clubs drawing from a very local area spanning a few streets. This added complexity to the issue of race, as while Liverpool had a 'black quarter' it is hard to ascertain quite how race and locality intersected. While James recalls being on the management committee of Stanley House, a 'black youth club' and Michael recalls the nominally Catholic Club he ran being white, this reflected the local neighbourhoods the clubs drew from.²³⁵ Michael remembers an incident in the early 1980s where he invited a basketball team of black youths from another club to play at the club he ran, and rival white youths chased them out of the club and threw projectiles as they were driven away in a minibus.²³⁶ He attributes this equally to racism and local young people defending their ground, but concedes that hearing racist language was, for example, commonplace. The detached youth workers similarly recall that they spent time tackling racist attitudes, challenging young people when they used racist language or crude stereotypes.²³⁷ They suggest Liverpool teenagers sometimes had racist attitudes because they heard their parents articulating them at home.²³⁸

Liverpool's more recent history around race and municipal provision is illustrated through some of the issues surrounding the Militant Council in the early 1980s. In oral histories of the Militant Council, which came unstuck in part over its race relations work, members recall that the Left in Liverpool insisted that solutions to racial inequality in Liverpool were not separate from

²³⁵ Interview with James, 24th September 2014; interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

²³⁶ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

²³⁷ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014; interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

²³⁸ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

industrial relations, and that therefore, no special consideration of race was necessary.²³⁹

Liverpool's youth clubs also exhibited an ambivalent relationship with the city's black youth, with some workers challenging ingrained attitudes, but a wide ignorance remaining, borne out of a separation between black and white communities.

In South London, immigration levels were higher. There were geographic clusters of immigrants within specific areas of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark and again, youth club memberships relied on the demographic make-up of the areas from which they drew membership. A couple of interviewees in South London mentioned that there was no racial diversity in their clubs.²⁴⁰ John, who worked in two different schemes in Lewisham in the 1970s, said one was exclusively white and the other more mixed, though both were on estates a short distance from each other.²⁴¹ Lee who also worked in Lewisham noticed that some clubs had greater numbers of black members, and there was a club, Moonshot, which drew 80% of its members from the local West Indian community.²⁴² AJ thought it surprising that her club, which met in a local Catholic Church was monocultured, given what she terms the local 'Caribbean' population in the pub she went to after club nights.²⁴³ Dennis also from Lewisham, drew distinctions between clubs which drew their membership from different estates, one white and one mixed, the Pepys and Milton Court Estates respectively.²⁴⁴ Steve in Lambeth observed that his group of friends in the club he attended was predominantly black but that overall the club membership was representative of the racial mix of the area.²⁴⁵

In South London, Lewisham provided the best evidence of the interrelation of race and youth clubs and Lewisham has a particular history concerning race politics with the New Cross Fire (where suspected arson at a house party killed 13 people) and Battle of Lewisham remaining

²³⁹ Frost and North, *Militant Liverpool*, p. 136-137

²⁴⁰ Interview with Wendy, 29th July 2014; interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

²⁴¹ Interview with John, 27th August 2014; see for example study of Birmingham: J. Jeffrey William Henderson, Valerie Ann Karn, *Race, Class, and State Housing: Inequality and the Allocation of Public Housing in Britain*, London, Gower, 1987

²⁴² Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

²⁴³ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

²⁴⁴ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

²⁴⁵ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

prominent in local memory.²⁴⁶ In 1977 the Battle of Lewisham exposed racial divisions and stoked unrest when a National Front March was stopped from going down New Cross Road by a counter march from the local community, including local black activists and residents, who had used side streets to evade attempts by the police from keeping the two groups separate. In the case of Lewisham in the 1970s and 1980s where interviewees spoke at length about topics including race, class, politics and youth it is possible to see how youth clubs became important sites in the wider networks of race politics and activism which the borough witnessed at the time. Lee and Dennis from Lewisham both talked at length about racism in Lewisham in the 1970s and 1980s. Lee, from Croydon, went to Goldsmiths College where he began volunteering at Moonshot, a youth club he described as ‘almost exclusively black’.²⁴⁷ He was then asked to work at the Riverside Youth Club on the Pepys Estate, which was ‘notorious’ and had a ‘big problem with racism’. Lee says that there were black and white clubs in Lewisham, and he was involved in both as well as the local Sound System culture which Lez Henry has written about as a site of racial resistance for young people in South London at the time.²⁴⁸ While he was predominantly based in Moonshot, he says that in fact he was involved in a range of clubs which were all interconnected, recalling the black clubs had a larger age range, including young people from 9 to 30 years of age and linked with a wider network of community and cultural organisations. Lee vividly recalls how hanging out with young black people in Lewisham taught him about the everyday racism in parts of the borough:

They would say “watch what happens” and if it was a young black guy and a white woman coming past, it didn’t matter what age they were, or if there was a white guy there...[pause] the handbag thing. I saw it, like 30 times. You watch as we go towards them that woman will put her handbag tighter under her arm, and she’ll close up, and walk fast. It happened all the time.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ New Cross Fire: national news coverage via the BBC, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/january/18/newsid_2530000/2530333.stm, accessed 14th August 2015; Battle of Lewisham/National front March, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/13/newsid_2534000/2534035.stm, accessed 1st September 2015, and Lindsay Mackie, ‘The real losers in Saturday’s battle of Lewisham’, *The Guardian*, Monday 15th August 1977, <http://www.theguardian.com/century/1970-1979/Story/0,,106928,00.html?redirection=century>, accessed 1st September 2015

²⁴⁷ BCA, Pagnell/1-5, this later became the Pagnell Street Youth and Community Centre

²⁴⁸ William ‘Lez’ Henry, ‘Reggae, Rasta and the Role of the Deejay in the Black British Experience,’ *Contemporary British History*, Volume 26, Issue 3, pp. 355-373

²⁴⁹ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

Everyday racism had other elements; 'so many people being stopped and searched all the time...it was ugly'.²⁵⁰ However, there was also racism that was witnessed and experienced on top of the common experiences of stop and search. Lee remembers, 'there was one case of a dog being dropped into an area, a fighting dog, where children were playing'.²⁵¹ He continues:

There was really heavy-duty racism and division. For example "the ghetto" as it was referred to, Milton Court Estate, was a very mixed place, a very diverse place but Pepys Estate which was less than a mile away was certainly not.²⁵²

He puts this down at least in part to 'racism in the housing allocation structure. There was racism on the streets. There was the police'.²⁵³ For Lee, racism in the youth club needed to put in the context of several events in the memory of the local community in Lewisham, all of which were labelled as having a racial element.

For Lee as well as many other local residents, the New Cross Fire was also a huge presence in local ideas of race and racism.²⁵⁴ It was feared that the fire was a deliberate and racially-motivated attack on the young black partygoers, though the exact cause of the fire has never been discovered. Residents felt that the police and fire brigade were lax in their investigations and that this too had a racist motivation. It stoked tension in the area at a time when the National Front was particularly active in Lewisham. The New Cross Fire was, and still is 'an open wound' in the area according to Lee.²⁵⁵ Riots in 1981 also followed a 'period of intense policing and tremendous anger' where there was 'tremendous harassment and surveillance going on' regarding the local black population.²⁵⁶

While Lee saw this, and went on youth work courses around anti-racism (which he thought were not very useful due to a limited appreciation of the issue), he ultimately became exasperated with youth work and its ability to help in an intense local situation. He felt that 'the world of youth

²⁵⁰ Ibid. Don Letts autobiography details his experiences of stop and search, with photographs, *Culture Clash – Dread Meets Punk Rockers*, London, SAF, 2007, pp. 77-79

²⁵¹ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid; Henderson and Karn, *Race, Class, and State Housing*

²⁵⁴ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

workers as a collective' had not 'really developed the kind of intellectual and interpretive tools that were required to deal with this incredibly difficult, damaged situation' at a time when the youth clubs 'were being run on minimal resources'.²⁵⁷ His frustration sent him back to academic research 'to try and make sense of it' where race and racism has formed part of his career since, something he claims was shaped not just by his experience of youth work, but by the people and places in Lewisham at this time (mid 1970s to early 1980s).²⁵⁸

Dennis who was born in Deptford and lived in Lewisham all his life (apart from when he was doing youth work training at the national centre in Leicester) was also volunteering and working in Lewisham at this time and his testimony resonates strongly with that from Lee.²⁵⁹ They worked in the same borough and both depict a divided borough with a range of problems of which racism and racial tension was one of the most significant. Dennis' experience of youth work in South London in the 1970s and 1980s was predominantly on well-known housing estates; the Aylesbury Estate in Elephant and Castle (Southwark) and the Evelyn, Pepys, Silwood and Milton Court Estates in Lewisham that Lee was also familiar with. For Dennis racism was something he was very aware of as soon as he noticed the change in the population to include more black families in about 1976.²⁶⁰ He noted that parts of Lewisham changed from being predominantly white working class to being predominantly black working class (Deptford, Lewisham), while other areas stayed more monocultured and closed off (Pepys, Silwood, Old Kent Road).²⁶¹ He says 'how could you not be aware?' but links racism, especially on the part of the police, towards young black people with the larger issue of how the state tried to manage young people as a whole in Lewisham:

I knew we were a boisterous bunch of puppies...21 of your mates get nicked for nothing...You would have to be really silly not to see that there was something wrong with how the state tried to manage us. There wasn't anything in my mind that can tell me that riding police horses into a crowd down Coldharbour Lane is a reasonable thing to do.²⁶²

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

For Dennis, the police were heavy-handed all round, but young black people at the individual level were targeted and for him, this was the racial element. Again Dennis points to events in Lewisham such as the Lewisham 21 (the number of young black people arrested in a series of raids over a spate of mugging) and National Front march in 1977 and says events like these meant that they 'came to our senses' over race and started looking at ways to tackle the racism in the local area.²⁶³ Relationships with the police and stop and search came under scrutiny with local activists seeking to challenge the use of 'sus' laws in Lewisham.²⁶⁴ However, for Dennis the larger issue was 'endemic black unemployment' and youth unemployment (which had gender as well as racial dimensions in South London) for which youth clubs could do little, especially with the closure of the (Murdoch) News Corp. plant in Deptford which 'devastated' the local economy.²⁶⁵

What is interesting in both the cases of Dennis and Lee is how their youth work linked into other community action and forms of activism, of which anti-racism formed a key part. Furthermore, these political networks which themselves linked to unions, the miners and other left-wing activism also linked the people around several local youth cultures. Radical and new left activism had embedded itself in social and community work, and could be seen at work in community activism, like the example of the Bronte Centre in Liverpool.²⁶⁶ For Dennis, youth clubs were definitely a site of resistance, though not only for black youth.²⁶⁷ He notes that in Lewisham the black youth clubs kept their distance from the LFBC and London Union, seeking black activist and local community links instead, a view echoed by Lee which suggests that this was where understanding and a sense of safety could be found.²⁶⁸ The approaches and cultures of the LFBC and London Union simply could not understand or accommodate the local issues faced by Black

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ For a discussion of the use of 'sus' and stop and search see Solomos, *Black Youth*

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ The *British Journal of Social Work* accommodated the radical view in its 1970s and 1980s discourse: Michael Clarke, 'The Limits of Radical Social Work', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1976, pp. 501-506; Robin Means, 'Which was for 'Radical Social Work'?', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1979, pp. 15-28; David Webb, 'Themes and Continuities in Radical and Traditional Social Work', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1981, pp. 143-158; LRO, M367 MYA/B/10/4/1-17, Bronte Youth And Community Centre papers

²⁶⁷ Ibid

²⁶⁸ Interview with Dennis, 19th September; interview with Lee, 14th September

youth in Lewisham and this indicates a wider failure of associations to grasp the complexities of race and youth at this time.

Race in youth clubs came to be tackled more directly in the 1980s, over 13 years after the Hunt Report. At this time, just as girls' and anti-sexist work emerged, so did a strand of anti-racist work and a greater appreciation of how youth associations could promote a wider equalities agenda in clubs. The London Union, for example, ran anti-racist awareness courses and sought to promote black role models via a poster campaign.²⁶⁹ However, in a similar way to the girls and anti-sexist work these projects could be seen as distinctly limited in tackling wider social attitudes.

Youth clubs became an important site where race politics were played out. Gilroy describes how the Metro Youth Club in North London was raided and local youth arrested, offering clubs a cultural significance in race politics in line with that of Carnivals and Sound System events.²⁷⁰ Gilroy's analysis draws out how racism in the 1970s took on a new form, whereby the criminality of black youth and moral panics about 'mugging' all became entwined in symbolising British and urban decline.²⁷¹ In Lewisham, youth clubs became a battleground between agencies seeking to control black youth and an activism which sought to offer agency and opportunity to those same youths within a wider community and cultural framework of resistance.

For black teenagers, youth clubs were not only the liminal space for making the transition to adulthood that they could be for other young people. Clubs were described as safe spaces for black youth in Lewisham, despite police activity, because they were seen as safe relative to the streets of the Borough.²⁷² National and city-wide associations did not have the understanding or tools to grasp the complexity of race politics or the everyday experiences of black youth. In South London, youth clubs formed their own networks to do this. The failure to comprehend race in

²⁶⁹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005/03, London Union Annual Report 1984-85, pp. 9-10

²⁷⁰ Gilroy, *There ain't no Black*, p. 116

²⁷¹ Gilroy, *There ain't no Black*; Stuart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 1978

²⁷² Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

youth clubs reflected failures in wider society and shows the limitations of youth clubs' and associations' ability to mitigate social problems despite their best efforts.

V. Sex, drugs and alcohol

Sex, drugs and alcohol, though often linked to the permissive society of the 1960s by historians and contemporary commentators were not central concerns of youth work at this time.²⁷³ They were present, but not prominent, and there is little evidence of widespread concern in the archives of clubs and associations in London and Liverpool at this time, despite the preoccupations of the so-called 'permissive society'.²⁷⁴ While these relative silences may have reflected differences in the target age and class for the Youth Service and those who had concerning behaviours, again, clubs and associations may have failed to acknowledge problems or they could simply have not been significant when compared to the other issues described above.

Where youth workers' reports mention sex, it was normally connected to either sex education or sexual promiscuity. The circular letters of the Liverpool Union mention being asked to provide information on potential speakers to clubs on sex education and they recommended two marriage guidance organisations, one of which was Catholic.²⁷⁵ When Michael ran a club in Liverpool overseen by a Catholic Priest he recalls the Priest asking him to include contraception in his advice to young people because they 'needed to know'.²⁷⁶ Dennis in Lewisham says not much was done to help women in particular access resources or around sexual health, showing that it was not just Liverpool where such services were scant.²⁷⁷ While Cook describes a sexual revolution in contraceptive technologies, there is little evidence of its use in either South London or Liverpool in the archives of youth organisations at this time.²⁷⁸ It was likely that much of the sex education

²⁷³ Collins ed., *The Permissive Society*; Newburn, *Permission and Regulation*; National Deviancy Conference, *Permissiveness and Control: The Fate of the Sixties Legislation*, London, Macmillan, 1980

²⁷⁴ Collins, *The Permissive Society*

²⁷⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/1-6, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, June 1963, p. 280

²⁷⁶ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

²⁷⁷ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

²⁷⁸ Hera Cook, 'The English Sexual Revolution: Technology and Social Change', *History Workshop Journal*, No. 59, Spring, 2005, pp. 109-128

and advice in clubs was of the informal type and thus may have depended on the personality, strengths and possibly gender of the youth worker and young person in question.²⁷⁹ Tony recalls a young man whose girlfriend was pregnant asking him if he should marry her. He said he could not tell him what to do instead he listened to him and asked questions to help him decide.²⁸⁰ Concern about young people's sexual behaviour was thus not prominent. In two examples in 1960s and 1970s Liverpool, different workers noticed sexual promiscuity. However, their concern was not a moral one, in one case it was practical (the risk of venereal disease) and in another the worker felt sad that such behaviour showed a lack of love and respect in the lives of the people who conducted their encounters in an alleyway.²⁸¹

Drug-taking was mentioned more but in particular local contexts, and none of the examples in South London and Liverpool match the activities in the Kaleidoscope Youth Centre which Eric Blakeborough writes about in *No Quick Fix*.²⁸² There was also little hint at the idea that taking soft drugs led to amplification into a hard drug habit.²⁸³ Michael recalls the spot on the disused second floor of the club building where members would sneak off to smoke 'joints'.²⁸⁴ More striking are the testimonies of Lee, Dennis and Keith in South London who recall how heroin affected the area in the 1970s and 1980s, after the initial rise in numbers and change in demographics of heroin addicts outlined by Mold.²⁸⁵ While none point to any heroin use in the club, suggesting addicts were isolated from clubs, Lee described how on the Pepys Estate, in Deptford (north Lewisham)

²⁷⁹ Adrian Bingham argues that newspapers were a significant source of sexual knowledge at this time due to their salacious content, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press 1918-1978*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009

²⁸⁰ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

²⁸¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/3, Bronte Youth Centre Warden's Report, October 1966, p. 3; LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/2, DYW Report, May 1974; This resonates with the emphasis on love in relationships charted by Claire Langhamer in *The English in Love: The Intimate Story of an Emotional Revolution*, Oxford, OUP, 2013

²⁸² Eric Blakeborough, *No Quick Fix: A Church's Mission to the London Drugs Scene*, Basingstoke, Marshall and Pickering, 1986; Kenneth Leech also wrote the development of the London scene in the late 1960s and referencing DYW attempts to work in the scene, *Keep the Faith Baby – a close up of London's drop outs*, London, SPCK, 1973, p. 11, pp. 54-55. Leech was also one of those arguing for an explosion of youth culture in *Youthquake*.

²⁸³ See for example Jock Young, *The Drugtakers – The Social Meaning of Drug Use*, 1971

²⁸⁴ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

²⁸⁵ Alex Mold, 'The 'British System' of Heroin Addiction Treatment and the Opening of Drug Dependence Units, 1965-1970', *Social History of Medicine*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2004, pp. 501-517

'cheap heroin...was decimating some of these young people's lives'.²⁸⁶ Keith, described a scene he was part of as:

[i]nto drinking and that, drugs. Some of my mates were puffing then [*smoking cannabis*]. Some of my mates even started taking heroin then, at 16-17. They are still on it today, the ones that ain't dead. I remember that time, we had a big heroin thing round here, round Brixton and that, right over to Deptford, that sort of period when heroin came.²⁸⁷

Dennis felt this drug scene was linked to changes in policy, describing it sarcastically as 'a stunningly successful social intervention...[*drugs were*] more prevalent, cheaper', while Davis argues that ending GP prescription and addict maintenance drove heroin users to ever more dangerous attempts to simulate previous highs.²⁸⁸ While these concerns were not widespread, they did have a local character and were significant in pockets of youth cultures that did experience them, like Keith who commented:

My mates that were on heroin; some that have died, ones we call them the 'walking wounded' now. It's just, they are still on it, or are on methadone. I still see them, still nicking out of Marks'.²⁸⁹

In the same way concern about alcohol was a relatively marginal concern, though there was an acceptance that those under-18 had access to alcohol and underage pub drinking culture is evident in both South London and Liverpool.²⁹⁰ Anne and Keith were pub-goers and the detached youth workers in Liverpool gained a reputation for spending time in pubs with young people.²⁹¹ Concerns about isolated heavy drinkers were present, but a moral panic about underage drinking was not. Indeed it was acceptable within reason and could be viewed as one of the transitions to adulthood that marked adolescence.²⁹² The pertinent point here being that in the 1960s and 1970s, as 'permissiveness' was argued to be influencing behaviours, there is evidence that tolerance towards these issues was established with youth workers as part of their non-judgemental approach but

²⁸⁶ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

²⁸⁷ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

²⁸⁸ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; John Davis, 'The London Drug Scene and the Making of Drug Policy', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2006, pp. 26-49

²⁸⁹ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

²⁹⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/2, DYW Report, May 1974, for example

²⁹¹ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014; interview with Keith, 28th July 2014; LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/6, letter from Donald Crawford to the MYA Honorary Officers about the next phase of the DYW project, 17th July 1969,

²⁹² One such case is described in LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/2, DYW Report for July 1979, p. 2

that furthermore it reflected low levels of concern tempered by the view that sex, drugs and alcohol were not widespread teen problems.²⁹³

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the relationship between young people, youth clubs and voluntary associations, and several social issues including class, gender, and race. It has shown how different problems had local variants, were grounded in local communities and were accorded different priorities, with poverty, unemployment and crime looming much larger in the minds of youth association officials than sex or drugs. Clubs and associations knew their efforts were likely to be constrained by the wider social, political and economic climate and were limited in scope and scale.²⁹⁴ In this way clubs and associations acted both as a mitigating and mediating current, offering more than rational recreation, and using their range and fluidity to try and respond to changing social, economic and political circumstances.

The evidence presented above has shown clearly that class, gender and race shaped young peoples' experience of youth clubs in South London between 1958 and 1985, though not necessarily in uniform or predictable ways. Class continued to shape experiences and expectations of young people and interpretations of the needs of working class, urban and particularly male teenagers directed much innovative and project based work at this time. This shows some continuity from earlier periods, but it is important that these assumptions were challenged in some ways by work emerging in the 1970s on gender and racial inequalities in clubs. Dealing with the problems of race and gender were notable failures in much youth work in the post-war period, though progressive and radical work was much more likely to be successful, even if it was often isolated from wider youth association structures.

²⁹³ Collins, ed., *The Permissive Society*

²⁹⁴ This is evident in Albemarle, p. 2, and in local association Annual Reports e.g. LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1975-76, p. 1

One thing that can be seen in the evidence presented above is that youth clubs and associations were speaking for and working with young people on a range of social issues at a time when most young people did not have the vote and public attention focused on young people as a problem population rather than on their potential contributions. In doing this, youth workers mediated their voices. This role of clubs and associations as advocates for youth is an interesting contrast alongside the formal campaigning of NGOs.²⁹⁵ The pressure here, between top-down policy and bottom-up assessments of need, has been a constant tension in the work of local associations. The continued lack of priority given to the Youth Service shows that despite the hopes of the Albemarle Report for many working class young people in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 the social interventions of clubs and associations were often 'little more than a hastily applied medicament' or perhaps as one interviewee put it 'a sticking plaster on the uncaring nature of the state'.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁵ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*; Hilton et al., *NGOs since 1945*

²⁹⁶ Albemarle, p. 2; interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

Chapter Five – ‘Everybody Scouser’ - Youth Clubs and Youth Cultures

I vividly recall an occasion a few years ago when I had been expatiating – perhaps a little smugly – in the language of grown-ups upon the proper use of leisure by the adolescent, a youth saying to me that the problem of his leisure was that someone else was always trying to use it for him.¹

This chapter explores the place of the local Youth Club in the leisure and cultural lives of young people in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. It locates this not only within concepts of ‘rational recreation’ and consumption, but also within literature on youth cultures and subcultures, offering a more nuanced view of the everyday lifestyles of youth club members and young people in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. ‘Cultures’ is used in the plural to articulate the fluidity and variation found within clubs at this time, while acknowledging that clubs only formed part of local youth cultures for the approximately one third of young people that used them.² Whether cultures, lifestyles, or tribes (or something else) is the appropriate terminology here is arguable. However, as this chapter is situated in conversation with work such as Fowler’s, the work of the CCCS, and those who have followed using cultures is most suitable. This is despite the fact that identities also come into play when considering the range of activities and expressive forms young people were using in and around Youth Clubs in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985.³

Sociological literature on youth culture and sub-cultures is a product of this time, during which the influential CCCS at Birmingham University provided the shape of a new field of study.⁴ Subsequent literature has sought to extend and critique the work of the CCCS. Instead of taking the

¹ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/10 , London Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 8, ‘A businessman takes a new look at Youth Clubs’

² Davies, *A History*

³ Fowler, *Youth Culture*; N.B. In this chapter statutory and voluntary clubs are considered alongside each other. Interviewees who attended clubs rarely knew if they were state or voluntary run.

⁴ On the history, significance and development of the CCCS see recent 50th celebrations by the University of Birmingham, CCCS at 50, <http://cccs50.co.uk/> and The Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Project, <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/historycultures/departments/history/research/projects/cccs/index.aspx>, both accessed 29th April 2015; Hebdige, *Subculture*; Hall and Jefferson eds., *Resistance through Rituals*; Cohen, *Sub-Cultural Conflict*

subculture and working backwards to uncover class and motivation, it has sought to recover the everyday, offering a post-modern explanation of youth cultures such as that offered by Muggleton in his re-examination of punk.⁵ In addition to the literature focussing on the visible styles of youth, complementary work by Cohen has also looked to explain the role of the media in perceptions and levels of deviance by examining 'moral panic' around mods and rockers.⁶ Pearson has made a significant contribution to this area of study too by showing that fears of deviant youth are not new and have been periodically remade, something Davies has also examined with regard to Manchester.⁷ It has been important to understanding these phenomena in the post-war period to appreciate that they were not new. Reinterpreting the literature has thus offered depth and increased scope to understanding how young people have expressed their cultural preferences in post-war Britain.

The place of youth clubs in wider youth culture has not been considered at length. Studies of youth voluntary organisations are normally placed in the context of attempts to control urban and potentially deviant youth or create citizens.⁸ There are several reasons why examining youth cultures from the perspective of youth clubs offers a new perspective. Firstly, literature rightly looks at how youth consumption has shaped youth cultures, but without seeing the youth club as a consumer choice that young people were making. While heavily subsidised and offering what Bradley terms 'rational recreation', youth clubs still provided opportunities to consume, and to express cultural preferences.⁹ By paying membership fees - 'subs' - and payments for activities and trips, spending by young people in state and voluntary clubs formed part of the cultural preferences and means of expression of their members. Secondly, a focus on elements of commercial youth culture has marginalised the role of youth clubs in some young people's lives, especially those whose spending was constrained and thus did not fit Abrams' model of the

⁵ Muggleton, *Inside Subculture*

⁶ Cohen, *Folk Devils*

⁷ Pearson, *Hooligan*; Davies, *Gangs of Manchester*

⁸ For example Mills, "An instruction in good citizenship"; Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*

⁹ Bradley, 'Rational recreation in the age of affluence'

Teenage Consumer.¹⁰ Between one quarter and one third of young people were thought to be using youth clubs in the 1960s (a far larger number than those experiencing 'Swinging London') but more attention has been given to those using dance halls, cinemas and coffee bars.¹¹ The history of the youth club member needs to be added to existing histories of youth in order to nuance our understanding of the category 'youth' and to restore the everyday experiences of young people alongside the focus on spectacular and delinquent youth. This chapter seeks to rectify the previous under-emphasis on everyday youth cultures in youth clubs and put youth club culture alongside commercial culture. By beginning with the local, grounded and everyday sites where youth culture was shaped and experienced, a more nuanced view can emerge, which shows the mix of international, national, local and micro-local influences on the ways young people used their time and money. By so doing this chapter argues that youth clubs were, for some young people in the post-war period, a focus of micro-local youth cultures while drawing on a range of other influences. They were also very fluid, with the transitory nature of youth club membership allowing for a relatively fast turnover and adaptation of styles, activities and expressions.

I. Changing age ranges

Previous chapters have demonstrated that while youth clubs have been fluid enough to appeal to a variety of young people, at city level, the target group for membership of most clubs was working class young people. Furthermore, in part due to the assumptions that boys' clubs were founded upon, the presumption that the young people who needed a youth club most were male has also been examined. The post-war period witnessed many changes in the lives of young people and constant reconsideration of who they were from a range of perspectives. State education and welfare has taken a greater role in their lives and they have grown up in a supposed age of affluence and consumerism. Legislation has looked at the age that young people should leave

¹⁰ Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*

¹¹ Davies, *A History*; Fowler, *Youth Culture*; Geoff Mungham and Geoff and Pearson eds., *Working Class Youth Culture*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain since 1945*; Louise Jackson gives a vivid example of the scene in Manchester in 'The 'Coffee Club Menace': Policing Youth, Leisure and Sexuality in post-war Manchester, *Cultural and Social History*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2008, pp. 289–308

education, when they can vote, when they can have sex, when they can marry.¹² This and informal changes to the youth trajectory shows that the world was changing for young people and so were the boundaries that defined their 'youth' status. Youth clubs and associations, though not compelled to do so via a statutory underpinning, also periodically reconsidered the age group they thought they should serve. They have tried to assess how many young people were using their clubs and the suitability of clubs for certain age ranges and specific age groups. This section seeks to examine who the young people in youth clubs in South London and Liverpool were between 1958 and 1985, continuing from previous analysis of membership levels and gender disparities in the chapters above. Furthermore it looks at how this changed over the period in question. What age group did clubs and associations serve? How did the young people in those age groups differ?

Changing perceptions of the ages of the people in youth clubs were observed and give the impression that the target youth club age group was getting younger, at least partly because the age when organisations could intervene before young people were too mature for their assistance was also getting younger. However, while the youth club lower age boundary fell, the upper boundary for the work of the youth service remained quite fluid during this period.

In the early 1960s members could join the main section of a youth or boys' club at age 14, which fitted with the aim to provide opportunities for those who had left full-time education. The separation between under and over 14s was fairly strictly enforced in many cases because it was felt 'certain that the presence of children drives the older boys out of the club.'¹³ Indeed, the LFBC made a decision to focus on over 14s and while junior sections of clubs could affiliate, they were often given scant attention. For example, they had merely one paragraph a year in the annual reports for the years 1961 to 1964.¹⁴ At the upper end, the ages 18-21 were used in various circumstances. The Albemarle Report referred to one in three people aged between 15-21 years

¹² The School Leaving age was raised twice in the post-war period via The Education Act 1944 to 15 and subsequently, in 1972 to 16 years of age with The Children Act 1972. The age of majority was reduced to 18 following the Latey Committee in 1968, papers held at The National Archive, HO 328/115

¹³ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1958-59, p. 4

¹⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Reports 1960-64

old using the service.¹⁵ The Members' Council of the Liverpool Union required members to be between 15 and 21.¹⁶ The LBA followed the National Association's lead in looking to focus up to 18 years of age, but the Bronte Centre in Liverpool, with its concern for local young unemployed people aimed to cater for those up to 20 years old (though it would accept membership until 21).¹⁷ In a city where youth unemployment was a problem the Bronte Centre included those who could not complete the transition to the adult world of work but who were free from the influence of school. The variation in ages covered at the top end reflected the understanding that youth club membership was transitory, a phase in the lives of young people, and that people matured in different ways and at different times. Keeping the members council representatives until the age of 21 reflected the desire to recruit future leadership from the membership (as discussed in chapter six). In the 1960s the voluntary youth organisations normally referred to those under-21 as under its remit, although the focus of youth work increasingly became the 14-18 age group. This acknowledged that the 18-21 range represented the ages that people usually dropped off the Youth Service radar and allowed flexibility for this.

By the later 1960s boundaries came to be reconsidered. Following the Newsom Report, the school leaving age was raised to 16 and shortly afterwards the voting age was lowered to 18. By the time the Fairburn-Milson Report came to be published there was a re-evaluation of the age range the Youth Service should serve. In 1966-67 the LFBC had stopped talking about the under-fourteens and instead referred to the under-thirteens.¹⁸ In 1972-73 they changed their membership conditions to stipulate that a qualifying club must have a minimum of 15 boys aged 13-19 paying subs.¹⁹ This reflected a sense that while the young people they catered for were getting younger, they were also increasingly failing to hold the older young person in membership.

¹⁵ Albemarle, p.9

¹⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/4, Liverpool Union Draft Constitution (1960s), p.1

¹⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, 'NABC – Memorandum on Development (n.d., c. 1960 as part of post-Albemarle development policy); LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, 'Bronte Street Development' memorandum

¹⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/6, LFBC Annual Report 1966-67, p. 9

¹⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual report 1972-73, p. 13

Similarly in 1970 the MYA Development Committee said that '[I]t is highly likely that the 14s of yesteryear are the 13s of today,' agreeing that younger people than previously thought formed part of the main youth club age group.²⁰ This may have reflected earlier puberty as remarked upon by the Albemarle Report or a decision to offer Youth Service interventions earlier in the lives of young members.²¹ They added that the grant-linked age range was 14-21, but that their priority was the 14-17 age range with a pilot scheme focussing on employment for 17-21 year olds.²² From this it can be seen that despite recognising a shift in the local young people they thought they could attract and provide for, the grant system did not allow them to shift their focus to what they saw as the appropriate Youth Service age group at that time.

Within this reconsideration of age ranges in the late 1960s was a sense that there were differences contained inside the 14-21 age group, particularly in the ages at which boys and girls matured. Fairburn-Milson and subsequent discussions about it in the MYA, LYOC and NABC noted a 'change in emphasis' at 16 whereby youth club members should be given more say in the running of the club.²³ It was also at around 16 that a drop off in the numbers of girls attending clubs was noticed:²⁴

It is possible that, because youth itself is divided into levels, many young people are unwilling to join clubs where their own interests cannot be adequately indulged. There is the problem of general separation for the boys of 16 plus, whose interests are quite different from those of the younger boys, and in this connection it is felt that boy 16 = girl 14.²⁵

It was remarked that girls were losing interest and moving on from clubs earlier than boys and that they developed independence within the club at an earlier age. The change of emphasis at 14 for girls and 16 for boys was viewed in Liverpool as natural and was not questioned. The remedy

²⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2, Report and Recommendations of the Development Committee upon Policy for the 1970s,' MYA Development Committee (n.d., c.1970)

²¹ Albemarle, p. 14

²² Ibid.

²³ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, 'NABC View' memorandum, (n.d., c.1970), LYOC evidence to the SCNYVO on Fairburn-Milson, Conference, 8th November 1970, p. 5 and 'Youth and Community Work in the 70s – Memorandum to the Executive Committee from the Development Committee,' MYA Development Committee, (n.d, c.1970)

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, 'Youth and Community Work in the 70s – Memorandum to the Executive Committee from the Development Committee,' MYA Development Committee, (n.d., c.1970)

though, was argued to be giving young people more responsibility within clubs to keep them engaged as members, and perhaps as junior leaders.²⁶ Discussion about the age of young people continued into the 1970s however, with further suggestions that local youth clubs and youth projects catered for ever younger young people. In 1976 the DYW team in Liverpool were doing an Intermediate Treatment Programme with 12-14 year olds.²⁷ In 1981 the London Union gave 11-21 as the age range they covered though they, in general, covered a wider range of member organisations.²⁸

This concern with ages reflected wider discussion of the roles and responsibilities of young people in society at the time, with school leaving and voting ages changing. This broke the traditional link whereby the Youth Service had sought to cater for those who had left full-time education. By the 1970s, this was just who they were having increasing trouble retaining. Overall there was a feeling that the kind of interventions that the Youth Service could offer young people needed to be offered earlier. In Liverpool, it was felt by some that 14 was too late to tackle criminal behaviour and indeed in Liverpool the LYOC felt that it peaked then.²⁹ However, it was as likely that the voluntary youth services were adapting to those who would join clubs and pay membership fees as much as they were seeking to step in earlier in the lives of young people. In the 1960s and early 1970s, junior clubs were a holding pool for club membership proper. However, as age ranges shifted and older teens moved on, juniors were able to attract more attention.

Individual youth clubs also considered balancing their membership by age and keeping older and younger members apart, though often from a pragmatic viewpoint. In Alford House in Lambeth they banned over-16s from joining for a while after 'gang invasions' of older boys which were driving out other members. They briefly closed, reopening by registering new members in

²⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7 , 'NABC View' memorandum, (undated, c.1970), and LYOC evidence to SCNVYO on Youth and Community Work in the 70s Conference, 8th November 1970, p. 5

²⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4-1/6, DYW Report June 1975-76

²⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/A/02/002, London Union Executive Committee Minute for May 1981, p.1

²⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/2 , 'Under 14s' memo by LYOC to SCNVYO and DES, 1970, p. 1; Parker, *The View From The Boys*, pp. 45-61

under 16 and under 14 categories to solve the problem of domineering older boys.³⁰ They also used a senior room at one point to give older members a place to socialise away from the younger members who were thought to be a deterrent to the older age group remaining in membership.³¹ In the early years of the Bronte Centre, the warden returned subs to under 14s who had been allowed to join while he was on sick leave, keeping the club for older members who it was felt needed the facility the most.³² They developed colour-coded membership cards for under 16s, under 18s, full members, boys' club nights members and coffee bar members as a way of making sure the membership balanced in the way they wanted it to.³³ Anfield Boys Club also noted keeping under 14s on a list because too many were applying for membership.³⁴

The 'bulge' in numbers of young people and the ending of national service as considered by the Albemarle Report also fed into currents reframing youth.³⁵ The Youth Service was not immune or isolated from these discussions. They too sought to re-evaluate the age range for which they could best provide leisure and social education. In continuity with earlier framing of the 'youth problem', young boys were the target of service providers. However, in the late 1960s and 1970s the efficacy of doing this at 14 was reconsidered and efforts made to keep 11-13 year olds in more than a holding pattern. It is possible that these changes were influenced by changes in commercial provision. By reframing the age limits in youth clubs and continually considering how to divide youth into groups youth clubs and associations understood that young people were not a homogenous group. This is something also shown in the way clubs accommodated youth subcultures and the wider cultural interests of young people.

II. Local youth club cultures

A mix of international, national, local and club specific factors influenced the youth cultures that

³⁰ Minutes of the Management Committee Meetings November 1959-January 1960, Alford House Archives

³¹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

³² LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Wardens Report to the Management Committee, 28th February 1964, p. 1

³³ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, letter from General Secretary of LBA to the Honorary Secretary of Bronte Youth Club, April 16th 1963

³⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/1, Anfield Boys'/Youth Club Leaders' Report 12th March 1973, p.1

³⁵ Albemarle, p. 16

came to be found in youth clubs in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. Evidence from the archives of the Liverpool and London Youth and Boys' Clubs association, as well as the interviews with former attendees and youth workers, reveal youth clubs as environments shaped by a range of factors.

Young people's consumption has been important to understanding youth cultures and a shift towards seeing young people as consumers of mass culture can be seen through the sponsorship of association events and competitions by household brands. In 1963, the London Union noted that 220 girls went to a beauty demonstration by Elizabeth Arden and that Lever Brothers provided a 'girls' interest talk' on the 'care of modern fabrics'.³⁶ The 'Miss 1963' event was attended by 60 girls from the Union and had international fashion model Jean Dawnay as the star attraction.³⁷ For boys, Persil sponsored the 'Clean Team' football trophy rewarding good sportsmanship in 1973 and 1974.³⁸ This way of linking leisure and social education with young people's citizenship and consumption is particular to the 1960s and reflects currents in wider society, captured in perceptions, such as those from Mark Abrams about the role of the *Teenage Consumer*, cited in the Albemarle Report.³⁹ While sponsorship may not have been entirely new, to see it as an example of links between commercial, voluntary and public organisations shows how entwined they could be in the lives of post-war youth. Furthermore while Abrams sought to show that young people were increasingly affluent with money to spend on clothes, music, cosmetics and leisure activities such as the cinema it can also be seen that sponsorship also looked at young people as future adults who would be running their own households or as having the potential to influence parents.

Increasing mass consumption, such as that which Abrams was discussing, was noted with concern by Hoggart, who not only sat on the Albemarle Committee but who also was the first director of the CCCS. In his 1957 publication *The Uses of Literacy*, he lamented the potential agglomerating effects of mass culture and dangers of the influence of American culture on the

³⁶ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/002/03, London Union Annual Report 1962-62, p. 14

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1973-74, p. 6

³⁹ Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*; Albemarle, pp. 23-24

UK.⁴⁰ Hoggart's influence can be seen in the Albemarle Report in statements such as: 'It does seem true, however, that society does not know how to ask the best of the young, that as a whole it is not much more concerned with them than to ask them to earn and consume.'⁴¹ The report further argued that young people were 'less different' than previous generations and 'share common interests such as jazz and football and often a common culture.'⁴² Hoggart's vision of youth culture was one of uniformity, of nostalgic evocation of working class childhood threatened by influences from abroad and mass consumption. For Hoggart, mass consumption and international influences were making youth culture worse, showing uniformity among youth, something this thesis shows was not the case in South London and Liverpool in the post-war period. Indeed, it is clear that there were international influences on British youth in the post-war period but not that they had deleterious effects on British youth culture. To the contrary, Adrian Horn suggests American influences, particularly via music, resulted in a variety of interwoven local cultures rather than a mass takeover.⁴³ That is an interpretation with which this thesis has some sympathy given the example of the development of the Merseybeat sound in Liverpool, discussed below.⁴⁴

In 1960 it was perceived by commentators such as Abrams that young people were more affluent and that consumerism was becoming a major force in their lives, influenced by America. The Albemarle Report considered this 'widely held assumption' 'well founded' arguing that their 'real discretionary spending seems to be roughly twice what it was before the war.'⁴⁵ This assumption led to the predictable question on the part of an underfunded Youth Service: how can we attract more of this money?⁴⁶ However, it is by no means clear that this was the case in South London and Liverpool at the time. As the previous chapter showed, poverty remained a huge issue for Liverpool throughout this period and London too saw its share of poverty and unemployment.⁴⁷ Even before *The Poor and the Poorest* reignited the debate about poverty in the UK after the

⁴⁰ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*

⁴¹ Albemarle, p. 17

⁴² Albemarle, p. 20

⁴³ Horn, *Juke Box Britain*

⁴⁴ See for example Woolley, *The Golden Years of Merseybeat*

⁴⁵ Albemarle, pp. 23-24

⁴⁶ Albemarle, p. 24

⁴⁷ Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street'

supposed panacea of State Welfare, it is probable that a significant proportion of the people in youth clubs would have struggled with the £3 a week discretionary spending Abrams and Albemarle thought they had.⁴⁸ The LFBC also believed that '[T]he modern boy commands purchasing power' in 1970.⁴⁹ This contrasts directly with the opinion of detached youth workers in Liverpool at the time who said of their young people that 'they are unlikely to have money or initiative to pursue alternative leisure activity' showing that perhaps Liverpool and London had differing visions of the average adolescent boy.⁵⁰ In contrast to the claim of £3 a week discretionary spending in 1960, in 1972 workers at a conference in Liverpool put this figure at more like 50 pence to cover 'ciggies and chips'.⁵¹ Affluence was not universal or linear and many young people did not have large amounts to spend on leisure activities. Todd and Young have used oral histories to uncover how some parents subsidised their children to allow them extended adolescent leisure, but this appears not to have been the case throughout Liverpool and London in the 1960s and 1970s, and certainly not during the recession of the 1980s.⁵² While many young people may have been better-off, in urban areas like Liverpool and South London the Youth Service continued to provide opportunities for leisure to young people who were not affluent by the measure of the day. Coffee bars, clubs and special projects also offered subsidised leisure activities to young people, such as the Hoxton Café project examined by Bradley.⁵³ Likewise, Fowler's examination of youth cultures in modern Britain correctly describes that the Palais de Danse in Streatham rather than the glitzy Soho nightclub was likely to be the site of everyday youth culture.⁵⁴ Youth clubs should be seen as part of this picture of the everyday too. This section asks what local youth club cultures looked like and how they related to wider youth cultures. As a place where a number of activities and groups of young people could come together, youth clubs offer an interesting prism on youth culture. What Fowler reveals with his colourful comparison is that place and space, especially at the local level, had a significant role in shaping the lives of the young people growing up in Britain.

⁴⁸ Abel-Smith and Townsend, *The Poor and The Poorest*; Albemarle, p. 23

⁴⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1970-71, p. 1

⁵⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4, DYW Report October 1966-September 1969, paragraph 3,

⁵¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4, Report of SHARE Conference March 1972, prologue,

⁵² Todd and Young, "Baby-Boomers' to 'Beanstalkers'"

⁵³ Bradley, 'Rational Recreation'

⁵⁴ Fowler, *Youth Culture*

Looking at the variation in youth club cultures at this time, underlines this point but develops it to include provision being made by the voluntary and state elements of the mixed economy of youth welfare.

Interviews and archival documents paint pictures in fragments of what these cultures were like and how young people engaged with them to different extents. Former youth club attendees' descriptions of a typical night in their club are revealing in this regard. For Anne the fact that the room was a small hall joined onto the church ruled out sports and planned activities.⁵⁵ In her informal club, which she attended once a week, members brought records which were played while the adult helpers sat in the kitchen annex. Small groups would sit listening to music and chatting before her friendship group moved on to the pub. This fitted in with a version of McRobbie and Garber's description of bedroom culture whereby Anne would also listen to records and talk with a smaller group of girlfriends in her bedroom.⁵⁶ She would also spend Saturday afternoons hanging around the local shopping centre.⁵⁷ For Anne, the youth club was one of several important sites in her local area which included her bedroom, the shopping centre and the pub. Her lifestyle did fit within consumption patterns expected by Abrams, possibly because of the more affluent area of Lewisham that she lived in and her moderately middle class upbringing.

Steve attended a large activity and sports-orientated club in South London several times a week.⁵⁸ It was the centre of his out-of-school life. For him, a typical night involved spending time doing one or two sports practices or activities and hanging out in the coffee bar chatting to other members in between. While there were regular dancing, arts, crafts and drama activities, he spent most of his time in a largely male environment doing sport, with regular trips to away fixtures, competitions and holidays. He was a very active participant and regular attender who stayed on in adult sports leagues that used the club. His lifestyle was based on activities and sports within a local area with a range of facilities and opportunities both within his locality and nationally facilitated by his membership of the youth club. Outside of the youth club, sport continued to be a theme.

⁵⁵ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

⁵⁶ Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber, 'Girls and Subcultures'

⁵⁷ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

⁵⁸ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

Steve's main hobby outside the club was to go and watch his local championship side play football matches.⁵⁹ In Steve's account, this spectating was set apart from the associations it had with hooliganism elsewhere in South London, such as Keith's account below.

Keith described a club where young people played ping pong in one large room or football on the enclosed tarmac outside the club.⁶⁰ His club was also a place for music, films, photography and a certain amount of drinking and petty criminality. Keith's club was culturally-mixed: home to young people who adopted skinhead and punk styles as well as young black people. He remembers, '[W]e were sort of a bit punky then still. Sort of the end of the punk era in London. And we didn't like rockers and greasers and there was a load of them in Calais [*club trip*] and we bumped into them so it all kicked off.'⁶¹ Differently to Steve above, Keith never played sport competitively or spent much time around other clubs. He and his friends remained very local, using the club as a base, except when travelling to watch away fixtures of the football club they supported. His club was located in a large house and he described a familial feel or care home element to the culture, with young people running around largely unsupervised by the 'hippies' that ran it.⁶² Both Keith and another interviewee used the term hippy in the 'Jonny Rotten sense' to mean anyone a bit older or who still had long hair, with Lee laughing as he recalled his hippy youth leader calling people 'man' and 'dude' in the late 1970s.⁶³

Keith's other main points of reference were the football team (who he travelled to watch, with violence and drinking not uncommon) and Brixton town centre, where some mild hooliganism and theft formed part of a normal match-day Saturday:

Drinking, fights [*laughs*]. We used to go Brixton Tesco's which used to be in the market then.... They used to leave their, stack their booze up inside the door, coz they didn't have room. So you'd sort of hang about and quickly run in and grab a tray of 24 and off, bang, run through the market with it. We used to do that all the time. I don't know how they never stopped it. So you'd have 24 cans of lager straight away. That was the thing. You

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.; interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

drink them. But coz you used to go with like West Ham and teams like that, you felt safe...you'd only need fifty of you. ..I went to Newcastle once, and that was in the early 80s and there must of have been about a hundred of us. There was all these West Ham, the ICF they used to be called. This bloke, said 'come outside, they're here' and we walked outside and I'll always remember, I'd just seen these Geordies, about 400 of them at the top of this hill, like Zulu or something. They were coming down the hill and I thought 'we're gonna die here.' And these West Ham, they just started walking towards them and as we got nearer, this lot slowed down, and eventually stopped and turned back and run up the hill. We chased them up the hill and I thought that was unbelievable, that was fantastic. That's what it was about. If you follow a London firm, you had that sort of reputation and you'd go to these towns and that and the whole town would want to come out and fight you but invariably end up running away. And you used to think 'yeah' [laughs].⁶⁴



Image E: Youth Club building attended by Keith in Lambeth (now a day nursery), image used under Creative Commons license, copyright Stephen Richards.

The above descriptions give some indication of how the physical space inside the club shaped the atmosphere of each club. The small church hall for listening to music and chatting, the large multipurpose centre promoting sport and activities and the converted house offering a few activities, but more than that, a base for wider local adventures. The clubs mentioned as examples above were also all within a short distance of each other, showing how, even relatively locally, diverse types of clubs offered very different experiences to local young people. Furthermore, all three show an engagement with elements of commercial culture whether it be the shopping centre, pub or paying to go to football matches. The neighbourhood location also contributed, as has been described in an earlier chapter; housing tenure, demographic profiles and immigration patterns all affected the culture within clubs. The immediate locality was crucial here, with many

⁶⁴ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

clubs drawing membership from within a few streets of the club. This was clear in Liverpool in the case of the Bronte Centre with its feeling of being a 'closed shop' and the bullring building physically dominating the space, reflecting the way the Catholic community that lived there engaged with outside agencies.⁶⁵

Leadership was also a factor in shaping local club cultures. Steve went to a club with a full-time warden and several staff to supervise the many activities going on at the same time, providing the structure that made the club a central part of his lifestyle.⁶⁶ Keith had fewer activities and loose supervision within the smaller rooms of a converted house.⁶⁷ Anne's club was very part-time, only open once a week and shaped by the relative youth of the couple that ran the club and the fact that they were usually in the kitchen, offering the young members a feeling of 'not being terribly supervised'.⁶⁸ The emphasis on informality that emerged in the 1960s (after calls to reach the unattached) translated to club leadership styles too. This linked to new training provided to a new generation of youth workers after 1960 which focused on understanding young people and building relationships with them on either an individual or group basis (which will be discussed fully in the next chapter).⁶⁹ Some clubs preferred more traditional styles of leadership, and that they stayed open suggests that young people were willing to accept a range of leadership styles in order to use club facilities.

Young people also shaped how club cultures operated via their willingness to accept rules, participate in activities, or in the opposite case, by leaving the club altogether. Dennis, commenting on the need for informality in his club in Lewisham, says 'we weren't the most structurable group of young people, is the politest I can be about it.'⁷⁰ Anne states that her group would not have accepted more formality and that she left after about 18 months when the pub expanded to fill the

⁶⁵ See images B and C in chapter four

⁶⁶ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁶⁷ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

⁶⁸ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

⁶⁹ Albemarle, p. 75

⁷⁰ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

former role of the youth club in her social life.⁷¹ The LFBC, while thinking that in modern society boys needed the all-male boys club environment, also argued that this was what boys themselves wanted too.⁷² They used this argument to resist pressure to have more mixed activities. The Bronte Centre considered carefully how they might attract and retain members with their informal approach.⁷³ In this way it can be seen that in order to keep a membership and remain open, clubs had to offer young people opportunities which they wanted and this was shaped by local cultural preferences and factors. Anne said she would not have wanted structure and could have probably pursued other leisure activities locally had she chosen.⁷⁴ Keith said there was no interest in participating in inter-club leagues. He wanted to play football only with his friends and other club members.⁷⁵ While the idea of youth participation in the formal sense of helping run clubs became popular throughout the later 1970s and 1980s, it is clear that membership was in some ways negotiated throughout the 1960s. Clubs had to consider what restrictions and rules the young people in their area would accept to access the facilities and opportunities they had available. Therefore the local youth cultures in clubs had to be negotiated with leaders and local youth to varying degrees; depending on demand, alternative provision and the reach of newer ideas into older traditions of youth work.

Looking at the dynamics inside clubs via oral history and archival research has been revealing. It has shown that each club was unique and that clubs came in all shapes and sizes. Each club drew on its geography, leadership, demographics, alongside national and international influences on youth to create micro-local youth cultures which shifted as older members left, and younger ones exposed to different currents came in. That informal clubs could come together or clubs could fizzle out (for reasons other than lack of money) shows how fragile these cultures were. Youth clubs did offer young people a sense of belonging, something acknowledged nationally as

⁷¹ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

⁷² LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1968-69, p. 1

⁷³ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, Minutes of the Meeting of the LBA and Liverpool Union Policy Groups, 15th February 1962

⁷⁴ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

⁷⁵ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

being vital to their success.⁷⁶ But this was done in a subtler way than by putting members in uniform. In clubs which had links to subcultures such as mods, rockers and punks, young people could be said to have chosen their own uniform. Factors such as locality, leadership, demographics and the built environment shaped young people's lifestyles, sense of belonging and identities in the same way they shaped youth club cultures. Below, a further analysis is offered of what some of these looked like, and how they interacted with youth cultural and subcultural influences outside the club. By looking at cultures in the wider sense, and alongside literatures of control and resistance, it is possible to reveal another way in which the fluid identity of the youth club manifested itself; not only did it leave clubs on the blurred boundary between the state and voluntary action, it also meant that clubs offered young people spaces for resistance, control, identity and conformity.

III. Club and wider subcultures

Literature on what came to be termed subcultures came to define subcultural youth by visual signals, music and consumption, without a detailed consideration of the everyday sites of young peoples' lives. While offering local case studies, such as Cohen's on the East End of London, focus has still been largely on commercial provision.⁷⁷ While young people may not have been universally affluent consumers, youth clubs did offer them chances to spend and consume, on activities, refreshments, trips etc. Looking at the range of influences inside and outside of the youth clubs reveals the youth club as an everyday site of youth culture. Evidence presented here will also show that the everyday lifestyles of youth were not incompatible with the 'subcultural' as clubs offered spaces to express cultural preferences, especially as they sought methods by which to attract and retain members.

⁷⁶ As discussed in Liverpool Union response to a consultation by the NAYC, LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, noted in Executive Committee Minutes 12th February 1959 and General Council Minutes 10th September 1959

⁷⁷ Cohen, *Sub-cultural Conflict*

There is evidence from both South London and Liverpool that visible youth subcultures such as those studied by the CCCS were embedded in youth clubs. While this evidence is most easily gleaned from talking to the people in clubs, some of it can be seen in the archival records too. Interviews with Keith and Steve both in South London, reveal that there were rival mod and rocker youth clubs in the Southwark and Lambeth in the early 1960s. Steve describes that the club he attended at one point became a mod club and was invaded by rival rockers.⁷⁸ Without naming specific groups, the minutes of Alford House Youth Club in Kennington 1960 reveal that it temporarily closed in early 1960 due to invasions by gangs.⁷⁹ They were thought to be dominating the membership and intimidating the younger age group. They revised membership to cater for a younger age group to solve the problem.

However, it is only in this case that the subcultural elements were thought to be a particular problem within the club and that a specific attempt was made to discourage attendance. In general, the view of youth workers and the youth service, as articulated throughout the 1960s, was that all young people, including the unattached and those at risk of delinquency were to be encouraged into clubs. Most felt attracting tough members was part of the purpose of the youth service and indeed the assumptions behind the development of work with the unattached support this view. However, other literature rings more true when put in the context of youth work. Michael, who worked in both South London and Liverpool, describes the perception that young people who were part of subcultures caused trouble which he experienced when working with a group of young people on a canal boat on the Thames in the late 1970s. The aim of the trip was to move the boat to winter moorings and a group of young unemployed people were chosen to assist. 'We had a punk, two skinheads and the girlfriend of one of skinheads.'⁸⁰ After stopping in Henley on Thames they went into a local pub. He described how a large Hells' Angel came up and was handed a free drink, before approaching them with a flick-knife and saying 'I hate skinheads.' They drank up, left, and drifted the boat out to a nearby island for protection. Michael is firmly

⁷⁸ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁷⁹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of Alford House, January 1960; *We are the Lambeth Boys*, 1959

⁸⁰ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

convinced the intimidation was deliberate, organised by the landlord and based on the appearance of these particular young people.⁸¹ This fits with the way ‘hooligans’ have been perceived by Pearson and the ‘moral panics’ Cohen has described young people being subjects of in the 1960s.⁸² Youth workers, though, rarely saw young people this way and indeed were often the ones to champion young people in the face of hostility towards their perceived traits and wrongdoings.

Keith remembers being a young punk in his club in the 1970s, before moving to adopt more of a skinhead or football hooligan style in line with his increasing attendance at football matches on a Saturday.⁸³ ‘We were all into our music then. Especially the punk thing had started just before that. A few of us were punks. We used to go to concerts and that. Yeah, so that was a big thing then.’⁸⁴ He liked that the club played all the most up to date punk records and had a photography class taught by someone who worked for style magazine, *the Face*.⁸⁵ Keith did not see his style as an act of resistance, as Hebdige argued, but more as an act of conformism, of being part of the crowd of friends in the youth club.⁸⁶ However, he can be seen to have been resisting authority in a number of ways, such as his involvement in crime, drugs and views of most adults as ‘bad’.⁸⁷

Lewisham also witnessed specific youth cultures in the 1970s and 1980s and ones which were associated with resistance to British authorities and the State. In Deptford, in the north of the borough, punk was a noticeable influence, remarked on by two young people in Lewisham at the time. John said he saw the change from hippy to punk styles in Southwark and Lewisham:

In particular the Old Kent Road which bordered both. But I was more conscious as I was growing up in my mid-teens of the punk era and the number of people that had had long hair or been kinda old hippies as it were, suddenly cropping their hair and becoming punks and you knew about four or five who I used to play football with that suddenly changed their appearance drastically.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Pearson, *Hooligan*, Cohen, *Folk Devils*

⁸³ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.; Hebdige, *Subculture*

⁸⁷ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

⁸⁸ Interview with John, 27th August 2014

Dennis refers to punk in Deptford, Sound Systems and rastafari in Lewisham and a student culture of radical politics around Goldsmiths College.⁸⁹ Lee describes 'very localised...hubs' which included skinhead and sound system elements around the clubs in New Cross and Lewisham that he knew.⁹⁰

Of particular interest is the sound system culture which formed a core part of the experience of many black British youth in Lewisham. This has been described by participant and later academic Dr William 'Lez' Henry in terms of resistance at a time when racism and tension with the police were issues for Lewisham's black youth to navigate.⁹¹ Dennis explained that for him, the film *Babylon* (1980) which explored the sound system culture and race in Lewisham at the time offered an insight into the youth culture he experienced (albeit as a white adult). He did see this in terms of resistance and Lee too saw a youth culture shaped by racism and the disadvantages of the young black population in Lewisham such as youth unemployment.⁹² Within the context of race politics in Lewisham, the role of youth clubs in hosting the sound system culture is significant. As Gilroy and Solomos have both pointed out, black youth were constructed as a social problem around whom policy solutions needed to be developed, such as Youth Training Schemes to tackle unemployment, and policing strategies to tackle mugging.⁹³ In this context the youth club became a site of struggle and a place where attempts to control black youth were made. Police were recorded as having waited outside youth club dances or raiding them to find suspects.⁹⁴ Furthermore, this was taking place within a community which had experienced dramatic events and violence which became racialised, such as the New Cross Fire, the Battle of Lewisham and nearby rioting in Brixton in 1981. In Lewisham in the 1970s and 1980s black youth experienced a particular mix of cultures, events, oppression and disadvantage within which the youth club was embedded, and, alongside wider community organisation, from which resistance was mounted.

⁸⁹ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁹⁰ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

⁹¹ Henry, *Reggae, Rasta and the Role of the Deejay*

⁹² Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁹³ Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black*; Solomos, *Black Youth*

⁹⁴ Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black*, p. 116

Lee was part of this sound system network, which used local black youth clubs and Community Facilities as part of its mobile base.⁹⁵ Lee described how this was integrated into a network of organisations forming a cultural network, whereby black youth clubs were separate from other local Youth Service provision. He saw this as partly due to more intergenerational cohesion in the black community. A fascinated young sociologist, he borrowed equipment from Goldsmiths to film the sound systems which at the time he thought were ‘so big and so unknown’.⁹⁶ Dennis describes how black youth clubs became ‘safe spaces’ for black youth culture, including sound system, lovers’ rock and later rap, and hip-hop.⁹⁷ He too saw the local connections between black community organisations as paramount, superseding relationships outside the borough and with state agencies. Anti-racist organisations, such as that which confronted National Front marchers in 1977, came from this network and offered resistance and solidarity of the type which Dennis came to think of as central to youth work.⁹⁸



Image F: Photograph from John Goto’s *Lover’s Rock* (named after a reggae subculture). Photograph taken in Lewisham Youth Centre, 1977⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ John Goto, *Lover’s Rock*

In Liverpool, one of the most striking features of the youth club culture was its relation to the local music scene. As with South London this had variants, but the 'Merseybeat' scene encompassed a range of bands and styles which marked out Liverpool as a key proponent of youth culture in the 1960s. As is well known this scene produced some artists who went on to achieve national and international fame, such as the Beatles, who donated proceeds from their northern film premiere of *A Hard Day's Night* to the local youth associations.¹⁰⁰ However, the merseybeat sound also produced dozens of local bands playing and practicing in local commercial venues and in the city's youth clubs. Gerry and the Pacemakers were formed inside the Florence Institute, a boys' (later mixed) club in the City.¹⁰¹ Youth clubs had well-known dance, band and skiffle nights which were well attended. Eric Woolley, former participant and unofficial historian of merseybeat, details how skiffle and beat music from America were given their own Merseyside makeover reflecting the budgets, skills and instruments of the local musicians.¹⁰² St David's Club dance night was so popular that it threatened to be taken over by people coming just for the music, causing the committee to offer a monthly open dance to keep the remaining weekly dances for members only.¹⁰³ Club leaders liaised with local commercial venues to book bands and the LBA, though perhaps not in favour of the type of music being played in affiliated clubs, appreciated the talent on show and felt it reflected their efforts, evident in their comment:

There is nothing harmful either in the high reputation which Liverpool teenagers have earned for the City in the fields of pop singers and beat groups. Many of them such as "Gerry and the Pacemakers" and "The Chants" were formed inside boys' clubs and whether the sounds which they produce appeal or not, many of the boys are deriving a great deal of satisfaction in having been helped to discover in themselves an aptitude for rhythm and entertainment.¹⁰⁴

In Liverpool the subcultural element is there too, and a striking element of a couple of the youth work projects studied in Liverpool is the inclusion of delinquent cultures alongside mainstream youth culture. While 'rational recreation' has been used to describe how voluntary and state youth

¹⁰⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1964-65, p. 14

¹⁰¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1962-63, p. 8

¹⁰² Woolley, *The Golden Years of Merseybeat*

¹⁰³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/1, 'News from the Clubs' in Minutes of the Meeting of the Liverpool Union Members Committee, April 1966

¹⁰⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, in the same report they claim Frankie Vaughan as a 'Boys' Club Crusader' and 'Liverpool's Own', LBA Annual Report 1962-1963, p. 8

facilities were provided to young people to keep them out of trouble, evidence from youth clubs shows that certain criminal elements were not only accepted but expected.¹⁰⁵ For example, Howard Parker's 'Catseye Kings' were the target group of the Bronte Youth Centre.¹⁰⁶ Steve described some petty criminality as expected, as part of the way young people in South London explored their boundaries.¹⁰⁷ Keith's club was a rallying point, at a time in his life when his group were all 'pretty into crime.'¹⁰⁸ With a Youth Service increasingly targeted at young people seen as delinquent or potentially delinquent, but with the mission of being a universal service, it should therefore be unsurprising that clubs included delinquent cultures, visible youth 'subcultures', conformist church-going youth and a range of people who would not appear in any category.

While the above has shown the range of youth cultures in and around youth clubs in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985, change and fluidity between them was also important. As sociologists noted at the time, cultural changes being reported in London were not universal, for example as noted by Tom Harrison in his re-examination of Bolton.¹⁰⁹ This presumes that youth culture began in London and spread out across the country, giving London a cultural status above that of the rest of the UK. This was not the case as the early merseybeat sound demonstrated, in part because Liverpool bands who visited America brought many albums back to Liverpool with them.¹¹⁰ But young people at the time did perceive change. Keith was one of those who believed that youth cultures were sown in London and spread countrywide, describing changes in fashion:

There was punks and soulheads. It was a great mix. Basically if you didn't wear flares really. That's another thing! We started wearing straight trousers around end of 76/77 so when you went up north and they had great big Wigan Casino Flares on them we used to really take the piss out of them. They was dressing like that, you know, almost into the eighties...The Scousers - they used to think they were smart and we used to just laugh at them. They used to be a record called 'Everybody Salsa.' It was a dance tune. And they used to all have wedge haircuts and everyone in Liverpool had a wedge haircut so we used sing them to them: 'Everybody Scouser [to tune of Everybody Salsa]' we used to change the words. But they thought that they were smart and all that, and that they were always into

¹⁰⁵ Bradley, 'Rational recreation'

¹⁰⁶ Parker, *The View from The Boys*

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

¹⁰⁹ Tom Harrison, *Britain Revisited*, London, Gollancz, 1961

¹¹⁰ Millard, *Beatlemania*, p. 3; Cohen, *Rock Culture*, p. 12

thieving. They thought they were the best thieves and that they were the best dressed. We just couldn't believe that you could be so deluded. But anyway...I suppose Liverpool and us, they were closest to Londoners, if you do your research.¹¹¹

Not everyone saw youth culture as a competition but other interviewees noted change. John was aware of a shift from hippies to punks.¹¹² Dennis remembers coming back from youth work training to see that sound system culture was now being mixed with rap, dance and in particular the *Off the Wall* album by Michael Jackson.¹¹³ Within the time frames of young people's lives, culture moved quickly and a club which had been sound system based in 1977 in Lewisham, was rap, dance and Michael Jackson by 1979.

Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated how youth clubs were entwined in the lifestyles and cultures of their young members. Not only did clubs help create micro local youth cultures, but visible and delinquent subcultures were included in some youth clubs. Once again the less-defined identity of youth clubs allowed them to suit a variety of young lifestyles, identities and cultural expressions. Clubs could be spaces for conformity and control, but they could also be sites of resistance. These elements could be seen between and within clubs in the same area, and could change dynamically due to the constantly changing and ultimately transient membership of clubs. While clubs have traditionally been seen as liminal spaces for child to adult transitions, they could also be culturally liminal: spaces where cultures formed, changed and diffused. This role has more frequently been ascribed to commercial spaces, but the youth club shows itself as truly on the blurred boundary of the welfare economy when state-run and voluntary youth services can be shown to have also been so interlinked with commercial and cultural elements as well. Dennis' attitude to youth work encapsulates this. For him, rather than youth clubs being about the 'proper use of leisure' as per the opening quotation of this chapter, the purpose of youth work was to 'help young people figure

¹¹¹ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

¹¹² Interview with John, 27th August 2014

¹¹³ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

out what they think about the world and what they want to do about it' and this included politically and culturally.¹¹⁴

Furthermore, looking at the range of experiences and cultures found in clubs also helps to critique youth as a homogenous category. Examining changing age ranges proved that local and intangible factors shaped how youth associations and individual clubs defined youth, showing that this changed between 1958 and 1985. The Youth Service was catering for younger people and seeing that they had different needs shaped by cultural and leisure preferences as well as class, gender and race. Looking at youth cultures via youth clubs, however, has also shown how regional and local factors, such as identifying with the merseybeat, are shown to also have complicated young identities and the category 'youth' in the post-war period.

The physical space of the club has been revealed to have been very important to local club cultures, as has the local area. This was perceived as particularly important when it came to the lack of provision on new estates on the outskirts of cities, as analysed in chapter four. In this way the history of youth clubs and youth cultures is inseparable from their geography. Leadership too had a significant opportunity to shape, encourage or deter the cultural elements in clubs and as such youth workers and leaders have been key figures in the history of post-war youth clubs. Examining the roles of adults within clubs is illuminating of the political and social currents which fed in to these youth cultures and is the topic to which this thesis now turns.

¹¹⁴ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/001/10 , London Union Annual Report 1957-58, p. 8, 'A businessman takes a new look at Youth Clubs'; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

Chapter Six – ‘Why don’t you stop pissing about here and help us run the place?’ - Youth Workers and Volunteers

Youth workers were arguably the central figures in youth clubs. The Executive Committee of MYA remarked in 1970, ‘[I]t is the leader whom the club depends on.’¹ The personality and capabilities of youth workers and leaders were crucial factors in the cultures that formed in youth clubs and the stability of the clubs themselves. The acknowledged centrality of the leader was evidenced in problems that clubs and associations had in recruiting good leaders, complaints they made about bad ones, and attempts throughout the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s to recruit and train the right number of suitable people into youth leadership roles.

Given the significance of youth workers in the lives of youth clubs and their members, unpicking their role is an important part of analysing local youth work in South London and Liverpool. But what was a youth worker and how did this change between 1958 and 1985? Examining the recruitment and training of staff and volunteers demonstrates how attempts were being made to shape youth work into a profession. Perkin has looked at the trend for professionalization in the twentieth century, whilst Hilton et al. have looked at how a politically infused NGO career was created in the 1960s.² Hilton et al. in particular look at ‘technocratic planning’, expert forms of knowledge, an ethos of professionalism and graduate professionals like doctors, lawyers and scientists as key to defining the ‘professional’ in the ‘NGO career’.³ However, literature on changes to careers like social work is also relevant here in looking not only at increasing training and specialisation, but also the links to radical politics and new social movements.⁴ This chapter shows that voluntary organisations have sought greater planning for youth services and to use expert knowledge in working with young people in the post-war period, and adds to this by including consideration of training outside of graduate professions, the use of

¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, Report on Special Policy Meeting on *Youth and Community Work in the 70s*, MYA Executive Committee, p. 1

² Perkin, *The Third Revolution*; Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 54-79

³ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10

⁴ Burnham, *The Social Worker*

volunteers and by looking at service-providing organisations. The evidence below shows that while professionalisation was an ideal held by associations and many clubs, it was neither universally defined nor found. One important contribution the evidence from youth clubs can make is to understanding attempts to train volunteers, widening appreciation of who in voluntary organisations professionalisation processes have applied to in the past, complementing the idea of the 'professional volunteer' in drug voluntary organisations looked at by Mold and Berridge.⁵

This chapter also shows how a progressive or permissive strand of youth work developed in the 1960s. This came up against older youth work traditions, notably grounded in the boys' club movement. Many of these workers had received new styles of training after the Albemarle Report, which intended to make them into professionals. By looking at the roles that youth workers took on, and the way they managed their clubs (or streets) it can be seen that the tide turned towards the professional permissive youth worker during the later 1960s and 1970s, though not to the extent that there was no place for older working methods. This relates to wider changes in social work and welfare which similarly brought together expert knowledge and techniques in the management of social problems.⁶

This chapter will examine routes into youth work and the training on offer to youth workers in London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. It will examine attitudes to training and youth work and analyse what youth work was and the roles youth workers filled. Considering youth workers' reports and oral history interviews will allow for an analysis of the variety within youth work, the issues faced by youth workers and their opinions of their jobs. Additionally, the roles of volunteers and part-time workers will be explored.⁷ This is important because even as the Youth Service looked to increase levels of paid leadership, volunteers and part-time leaders continued to undertake a significant proportion of work with young people. As with many other areas of this thesis, an analysis of the routes into, training, and types of youth work shows that there was great

⁵ Mold and Berridge, *Voluntary Action and Illegal Drugs*, p. 102

⁶ Burnham, *The Social Worker*

⁷ Full-time positions did not always specify working hours but would cover a club opening most nights of the week, with daytime work including building management, administration etc. Part-time paid work varied from being paid per session in a larger club or being paid to open a smaller club once or twice weekly

variation within and across London and Liverpool. There were many different types of youth clubs and many approaches to leadership and management. The inclusion of detached youth workers again provides an analytical counterpoint which reveals how youth work functioned at large, in the community and away from the buildings upon which traditional youth work had been so reliant, and also shows the research and innovation driving the development of the profession in the 1960s.

I. Paid and voluntary leadership

The London Union noted in 1959 that they had a large turnover of leaders and emphasised the support they offered to their leaders through discussion groups, study groups and more formal training courses.⁸ At this time the LFBC also sought more 'new blood' and leaders, appointing a full-time training officer to help them achieve this.⁹ A year later they referred to 'manpower' as one of the three great shortages curtailing their work.¹⁰ Both London and Liverpool associations agreed with the Albemarle Report's call for more leaders, volunteers and training, each believing they needed a share of the 600 posts which the report called to be created as a minimum.¹¹

Full statistics on leadership and volunteer numbers in London and Liverpool associations in 1958 are not available. The LFBC recorded that in 1958 they had 72 full-time paid leaders, 37 part-time paid leaders, 103 voluntary leaders and 1062 other voluntary helpers in their affiliated clubs.¹² This supports the assertion made in several annual reports by all of the associations that voluntary and part-time leadership constituted the majority in their affiliated clubs. Indeed it was a perception evident in the Albemarle Report.¹³ From other figures available from the 1960s for London and Liverpool, this can be seen to be true. In 1960, the Liverpool Union had eight full-time

⁸ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/11, London Union Annual Report 1959, pp. 5-10

⁹ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1959-60, p. 5

¹⁰ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1960-61, p. 4

¹¹ Albemarle, p. 110

¹² LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1958, statistical appendix

¹³ Albemarle, chapter 6

paid leaders and the LBA had 12, despite having hundreds of affiliated clubs.¹⁴ The LFBC did record this information relatively consistently at this time, and their figures are given below.

London Federation of Boy's Clubs Leader and Helper numbers 1958-1967	1958	1959	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967
<i>Full-time paid Leaders</i>	72	71	61	62	76	83	76	74
<i>Part-time paid Leaders</i>	37	31	22	28	29	27	30	30
<i>Voluntary Leaders</i>	103	104	63	68	64	60	66	56
<i>Voluntary Helpers</i>	1,062	1,202	1,091	988	897	1,118	1,123	983
<i>Number of Affiliated Clubs</i>	183	184	168	165	171	172	160	145

Table 6.1: Leader and Helper numbers in the LFBC 1958-1967¹⁵

These figures, while qualified, do show that those running clubs were mainly part-time paid leadership and volunteers. They also show that in the years following the Albemarle Report there was no significant rise in the numbers of people involved in running clubs, nor a marked rise in the level of full-time paid leadership. It is not clear if this was the case outside the LFBC, but continuing reports of lack of manpower from the other associations suggests so.

Figures for Liverpool and the London Union are not available for the 1960s, but according to their accounts of staffing at the time, the pattern of predominantly part-time and voluntary leadership and help remains. Figures from the 1970s and 1980s are again incomplete but help to continue to explore this theme. The MYA figures show that in 1970 they had 48 full-time paid leaders, 41 part-time paid leaders and 66 voluntary helpers.¹⁶ This is likely to vastly underestimate the level of voluntary help, but again shows that out of 155 clubs, only a minority had a full-time paid leader, and qualified leadership was by no means universal. In 1973, they had 51 full-time paid leaders, 37 part-time paid leaders, and 59 voluntary leader/helpers and in 1977 they had 59 full-time paid leaders, 27 part-time paid leaders and 98 voluntary leaders.¹⁷ This meant that the MYA did find more full-time paid leadership throughout the 1970s. Their levels of full-time paid leadership did not compare favourably with the LFBC who had 105 full-time trained leaders and

¹⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/G/1/1/5, General Minute Book, 'Albemarle' Memorandum, 25th March 1960

¹⁵ Figures compiled from statistical appendices given in LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4-8, LFBC Annual Reports 1958-1967 where available. Statistics based on figures submitted by annual return and so data may be missing from clubs where a form was not returned

¹⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/1, MYA Annual Report 1969-70, p. 6

¹⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/4, MYA Annual Report 1972-73, p. 5; LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/8, MYA Annual Report 1976-77, p. 2

704 part-time paid workers by 1978 despite being much smaller.¹⁸

The London Union kept a relatively good record of their club leaders in the 1980s. As was outlined in chapter two they had a much greater number of affiliations at this time than any of the other local voluntary youth associations, and so it is unsurprising that they also had more leaders and volunteers. However, in common with the existing data from the other associations, they too relied on part-time and voluntary helpers to staff their member clubs.

London Union of Youth Clubs Leader and Helper Numbers	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
<i>Full-time paid Leaders</i>	254	395	442	457	426	376	379	351	246	458
<i>Part-time paid Leaders</i>	2,332	2,606	2,636	3,165	3,139	2,915	3,073	3,356	2,729	2,775
<i>Voluntary Helpers</i>	3,221	2,977	3,092	3,434	2,903	3,071	3,114	2,789	2,601	2,467
<i>Number of Affiliated Clubs</i>	622	587	587	689	701	658	680	675	621	628

Table 6.2: London Union of Youth Clubs Leader and Helper Numbers 1976-1985¹⁹

While the data on staffing is incomplete, the evidence provided by associations in annual reports and committee minutes, make it clear that between 1958 and 1985 full-time paid and trained leadership at youth clubs was in the minority. The voluntary youth associations and their clubs in London and Liverpool were reliant on part-time leadership which could be trained or untrained. However, they also relied on thousands of volunteers. While efforts to professionalise by increasing levels of full-time qualified leadership may have resulted in more of these leaders reaching clubs in Liverpool and London this was by no means the majority and overall youth leadership was an amateur pursuit. Though part-time leaders were numerous, not all of these will have been qualified, though many of these and many volunteers will have received training which will be discussed later in this chapter.

II. Entering youth work in South London and Liverpool 1958-1985

South London and Liverpool used nationally recognised routes to recruit youth workers between 1958 and 1985, summarised by the Albemarle Report as ‘teachers, social workers and mature persons with a natural gift for leadership’ which extended to include former members with a talent

¹⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1977-78, p. 1

¹⁹ Figures compiled from LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/003-005, London Union Annual Reports 1977-1985

for youth work.²⁰ Liverpool had the additional benefit of one of the major national training centres on their doorstep run by the LBA prior to 1958. Interviewees spoke of several of the most significant routes into the job as having applied to them.

Michael, who worked in both Lambeth and Liverpool in the 1970s and 1980s came into youth work after training as a teacher.²¹ He trained in Exeter but found youth work more appealing than teaching and decided to become a youth worker. Although he taught in schools while training, as soon as he qualified Michael went straight into youth work, remarking that he found it easier to work with young people in the youth club setting. While training he would be teaching pupils during the day, and then volunteering at their youth club in the evening, providing the basis for his comparison, saying they were 'like different people' when he spent time with them outside school.²² He worked in variety of voluntary and state run clubs in London and Liverpool until he retired.

Similarly, Katherine, one of the detached youth workers in Liverpool, came into youth work after completing teacher training, saying that she had no idea that such a thing as youth work existed before she did so.²³ The girls' grammar school she went to offered three routes for their students: teaching, nursing and university.²⁴ After spending sometime as a student doing street theatre in Northern Ireland with children in the summer, Katherine went to work in a Village College in Cambridgeshire. Village Colleges expected teachers to contribute to the community in a wider sense and it was here that Katherine first worked in a youth club.²⁵ She says she enjoyed the informality of the relationships with young people there, adding;

²⁰ Albemarle, p. 110

²¹ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

²² Ibid.

²³ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

²⁴ Carol Dyhouse in *Students – A Gendered History*, London, Routledge, 2006 also points towards acknowledged paths for female university students; Spence, 'Feminism and Informal Education' in Mills and Kraftl eds., *Informal Education*

²⁵ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014; on Village Colleges: Réé, *Educator Extraordinary*; Saint, *Towards a social architecture*

I was always interested in those young people who never quite fitted in or were always in scrapes or getting sent home because their hair was too long or getting sent home because their hair was too short.²⁶

After deciding she wanted to move north, nearer to her home, Katherine saw the detached youth work job advertised and applied for it, even though she 'didn't even know what detached youth work was.'²⁷

Both of these respondents preferred the more informal setting of youth work in comparison to the more formal discipline of classroom teaching and found more meaning in the kinds of interactions they had with young people as youth workers. The Albemarle Report in 1960 had looked to teachers as part of the solution to the large shortage of youth workers in 1960s and there was a recruitment stream via teacher training and 'transfer courses' for those already teaching.²⁸ Youth work modules in teacher training had been designed with community schools in mind, where youth work would be an add-on to the main role of teaching (much as Katherine experienced in Cambridgeshire).²⁹ However, teaching did not provide the majority of youth workers and there remained professional antagonisms between the teachers and youth workers throughout this period which indicated some differences of opinion on informal education and the purpose of youth work at the time as discussed in chapter three.

Other professions linked to youth work sometimes provided workers or volunteers, such as John who was a volunteer and part-time paid worker in Lewisham while he completed a degree in social work. John saw doing youth work in the summer as a good way to practice the communication skills he would need as a social worker.³⁰ Peter, while studying for a social administration degree at LSE, lived at Toynbee Hall University Settlement and was expected to volunteer for one of the activities they ran.³¹ Bradley has outlined how work with children and young people, such as in youth clubs, was a common part of the work of young graduates who lived

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Albemarle, pp. 71-72

²⁹ Tony Jeffs, *Young People and the Youth Service*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979

³⁰ Interview with John, 27th August 2014

³¹ Interview with Peter, 18th September 2014; Bradley, *Poverty, Philanthropy and the State*; Oakley, *Father and Daughter*

at Toynbee Hall.³² Peter chose the youth club within Toynbee Hall and spent his career in youth work as well as training and inspecting youth workers and acting as a trustee for several youth organisations. The teachers' transfer scheme could also apply to these potential youth workers, getting them into service within three months.³³

The one-year emergency training scheme put in place after the Albemarle Report looked to provide a steady stream of new recruits who had come from industry, commerce or other sectors unrelated to youth work but with 'natural leadership' skills which would be useful to the role.³⁴ It is unclear how successful this idea was. Several interviewees who went on to have long careers in youth work came from other areas, showing that while the scheme failed to solve the shortage of youth workers it was possible to recruit people from other careers. For example, Steve worked in communications, Dennis worked as a van driver, and Tony worked as a screen printer.³⁵ All ran youth centres in London and Liverpool after a career change and formal training and were from local working class backgrounds.

A link between those who attended youth clubs and those who went on to become youth workers in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985 is clear. Many leaders were former members. With the exception of John, who was in the Scouts, all interviewees who volunteered or worked at a youth club, had also been a member of a youth club. A couple, including Steve who lived on the Lambeth/Southwark border, continued on at the same club where they had previously been members, while most stayed within the same locality.³⁶ Several interviewees recall being asked by youth workers if they would be willing to volunteer for a night or two and describe how this was extended and formalised, with full-time training following on from part-time paid work. For some this relied on a personal contact. Tony in Liverpool described how his mentor, a Church

³² Bradley, 'Juvenile Delinquency'

³³ Albemarle, pp. 71-72

³⁴ Albemarle, p. 70

³⁵ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

³⁶ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014. Dennis remained in Lewisham and Southwark for his career, interview 19th September 2014

youth worker called Sid, asked him to come and help out and he 'gave it a whirl'.³⁷ Sid got him involved in helping out and then encouraged him to become more involved in youth work, mentoring him throughout his career.³⁸

Steve had been a very active member of his youth club in South London, playing in sports leagues and competitions, getting his name on the honours board and attending many trips with his large multi-activity club.³⁹ He continued to play football with an adult team at the club after he started work and was asked if he would be willing to help out. He was later invited to apply for a role as an assistant youth worker after the previous post-holder had not worked out. Even though he was young and untrained, he was a known quantity and in his opinion, someone they thought they could shape into the kind of youth worker they needed.⁴⁰ It is also likely that he had established rapport with many of the young members already.

It is not clear whether Dennis was asked to or not, but he ended up as a volunteer at his local Church-based youth club in Lewisham in 1976.⁴¹ Like Steve, his volunteering and part-time work overlapped with paid work elsewhere. He went on very quickly to do paid work on the nearby Aylesbury Estate in Southwark near Elephant and Castle. For Dennis it was important to stay in his local area and he believes that having the local accent helped give him credibility with young people.⁴² He describes asking young people to get involved himself when he began running clubs, recalling how he asked young people, 'why don't you stop pissing about here and help us run the place?'⁴³ In many of these journeys into youth work key individuals in the local community or the locality itself were important in shaping the choices individuals made to begin their journeys into youth work.

³⁷ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

Clubs and associations also documented their attempts to get senior members involved in club life and evidently saw them as a significant potential recruitment pool. Sometimes this was presented as a matter of youth participation in club life and at other times it more directly reflected the staffing issues which organisations were having in London and Liverpool at the time. In 1964, the Liverpool Union reported that 'few clubs had an adequate supply of leaders and helpers'.⁴⁴ They add that '[L]eaders are anxious for senior club members to maintain their interest in club life by progressing to leadership.'⁴⁵ In 1969 they noted that the Fairburn-Milson Report had stressed 'the need to seek and nourish leadership potential amongst the club membership'.⁴⁶ They drew on the feedback from their Members' Council that it was 'apparent that quite a number of senior members were undertaking some form of responsibility for children's [junior] groups...with adult help'.⁴⁷ The LFBC agreed, saying in 1962 that they needed to make provision for leaders to come from the 'ranks' of members.⁴⁸ Recruiting leaders from among the membership can be traced back to the early days of the club movement, but it remains interesting as a method by which local working-class youth were swelling the ranks of professional social and welfare workers.

a. Training

Whether recruited from the ranks or from outside of welfare services, in the 1960s the professional training of youth workers came under particular scrutiny. The Albemarle Report spent a great deal of time examining the long standing issue of staffing and training fed by earlier reports such as the McNair Report.⁴⁹ It voiced concern about youth workers' levels of preparedness for their role in the Youth Service and emerging welfare professions, saying '[T]hey seem to themselves to be in danger of becoming cut off from the march of social and educational advance. And there is a considerable volume of evidence that full-time posts fail to attract good applicants'.⁵⁰ This was reflected in the

⁴⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1963-64, p. 3

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 5

⁴⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/49, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1968-69, p. 4

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 8

⁴⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62

⁴⁹ The McNair Report

⁵⁰ Albemarle, p. 12

statement of the LYOC in response to plans in 1970 for a graduate entry scheme for youth work that '[W]hen a large urban area such as Liverpool finds it impossible to fill 16 full-time posts with qualified leaders it is unrealistic to talk of graduate entry to the Service, desirable as this is [*emphasis in original*],' reflecting a national problem recruiting leaders.⁵¹ This is especially significant given the role of graduates and middle class professionals in the NGO sector as outlined by Hilton et al.⁵²

While acknowledging that voluntary and part-time leaders would probably always make up the bulk of youth leaders, policy-makers thought that an extra six hundred full-time leaders would need to be in post by 1966 to meet rising demand from 'the bulge'.⁵³ The solution to finding six hundred workers was a one-year emergency full-time training scheme to run immediately and the expansion of existing schemes to take more new students. However, this came with the slightly odd assumption that having taken at least a year to train, most full-time workers would only spend a few years doing this kind of work.⁵⁴ This underlines the unclear status of youth work as a career and questions whether it can be seen as a profession alongside Hilton et al.'s idea of the 'NGO career'.⁵⁵

In the appendices to the Albemarle Report there was a suggestion that training should include; 'adolescent psychology, problems of personal relationships, the transition from school to work, the youth employment service, adolescent physiology and health and sex education' and could have specialisms such as 'behaviour of groups and principles of group work'.⁵⁶ In so doing they took training for youth work beyond the functional aspects of running clubs and attempted to develop a theoretical, academic and methodological underpinning equipping youth workers to respond to the changing circumstances of youth and to better understand the lives of their young charges, reflecting the training social workers were also receiving.⁵⁷ This formed part of the

⁵¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/7, 'LYOC Evidence to SCNYVO and DES,' p. 7

⁵² Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 7-8

⁵³ Albemarle, p. 70

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, p. 54-79

⁵⁶ Albemarle, p. 75

⁵⁷ This training had similarities to developments in the training of social workers and probation officers, Brian Sheldon, 'Theory and Practice in Social Work: A Re-examination of a Tenuous Relationship', *British Journal of*

understanding of what professionalism was in youth work - the expert knowledge identified by Hilton et al but it also contributed to a less formal, permissive youth worker emerging from these courses.⁵⁸ In time, the need to be trained gained more impetus with trained workers earning more than their counterparts. Furthermore, in trying to claim expert status for more and more youth workers, the Youth Service was being ambitious in its idea of what youth work was and could achieve alongside other professional social and welfare workers at a time, when as discussed in chapter three, the role of youth clubs was contested and variable.

Other routes to recognised youth worker status could be gained via the recruitment channel of teaching, where optional youth work modules could be taken, indicating that some youth work was seen as an add-on to school. Michael who took this route was very critical of the type of training offered. He described it as 'skimpy' and 'rudimental' saying 'it really wasn't good preparation' and that consequently he found his first full-time post a shock particularly in terms of managing staff, volunteers and the building.⁵⁹ Michael thought the training was an add-on for those who expected to go into community schools and he worked with a local group of youth workers in Southwark to fill the gaps in his own knowledge via peer-to-peer training. Katherine who also came from teacher training, did not go straight into youth work and found the gaps in training less of an issue.⁶⁰

Workers who took this new style of training responded to it in different ways. For Steve, Dennis and Tony entering full-time training for full-time youth work marked an important watershed in their career trajectories and Dennis and Tony in particular talked about feeling at the time that it was important to them to become formally trained.⁶¹ Dennis and Tony both went on the full-time course in Leicester, but Dennis unusually took the two-year option over the one-year

Social Work, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1978, pp. 1-22; Rosaline S. Barbour, 'Social Work Education: Tackling The Theory-Practice Dilemma', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1984, pp. 557-578; Robert J Harris, 'The Probation Officer as Social Worker', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1977, pp. 433-442

⁵⁸ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 3-10

⁵⁹ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

⁶⁰ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

⁶¹ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014; interview with Steve, 9th September 2014; interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

course Tony took.⁶² Steve trained in London at Avery Hill, then a teacher training college, while he was in-service on a day release programme.⁶³

Each was asked about how they found the formal training for youth work and all agreed it helped them to do their job in some respects. Steve described spending a great deal of time reflecting on his interactions with young people and enjoying written assignments which provided him with structure to learn the job formally.⁶⁴ Dennis was keen to enter full-time training, opting to do a longer course than was normally needed to qualify, saying he thought it was 'important to do theory, to study, to take it seriously'.⁶⁵ He perceived an 'anti-intellectualism in the caring professions' and wanted to study to do his job better. He found the training at Leicester beneficial, saying it helped him do his job but he thought the theoretical underpinning of this training for youth work was a 'contradictory mish-mash' in comparison to his MA in Anthropology at Goldsmiths.⁶⁶ Overall, Dennis demonstrated an ambivalent attitude to the idea of being a professionally-trained youth worker; on one hand he thought critical thinking about his role was very important but he distanced himself from many professional groups and debates preferring to use radical politics and trade union activity to reinforce his sense of what good youth work was.⁶⁷ This competing view of youth work can be seen in chapter three in some of the ways youth work has been conceived as well as in chapter four in terms of the way youth work has sought to tackle youth social issues and was often found in a younger generation of youth workers.⁶⁸

Tony who worked in clubs and as a detached worker in Liverpool spoke about his time in Leicester at length. He says the course gave him a 'rounded, political interest in young people' and he credits it for 'bringing me out as an individual – big time'.⁶⁹ He felt that training gave him what he needed in order for him to do the job. He remembers the stages in the process of reflecting on

⁶² Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

⁶³ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid. Tony could also be seen as part of this generation of youth workers and indeed he expressed some similar views, interview 23rd September 2014.

⁶⁹ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

his youth work recorded in columns in his log book; fact (incident/occurrence), plan of action, action taken, and reflection and in his interview he gives examples of early incidents where he used that formula in his interactions with young people.⁷⁰ He concludes that '[T]hey [*trainers*] gave me confidence and ideas, insight, analysis'.⁷¹ This training and reflective practice gave him a professional framework within which he could challenge and develop his skills as a youth worker.

However training for full-time youth work was not the only form of training in and around youth clubs in London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985. Club and associations had run their own training events designed not only to advance the in-service training of full-time workers, but principally with the idea of providing training to volunteers and part-time workers who were not eligible for nationally recognised schemes. For example, the archive of Liverpool Union monthly circulars allow the opportunity to see the kinds of training they were providing to helpers and part-time workers. In February 1960 they list a five-week short course costing 5/-, that included sessions on running a club, techniques and methods, activities, religion and the club meeting, and club leadership.⁷² In April of that year they ran a short course for Management Committee members outlining 'Duties and Responsibilities, Finance, and Liaison'.⁷³ In March 1961 they advertised a Youth Service Training Centre refresher course 'The Club Programme – New Angles' which covered 'Traditional Patterns, comparative values, and new features for club programmes' over three afternoons.⁷⁴ This refresher course in particular highlights how efforts were being made to drive part-time and voluntary youth work towards emerging approaches such as those promoted by the Albemarle Report.⁷⁵

Courses were aimed at helpers too, and were not free, although management committees may have subsidised the costs of volunteers' attendance. For 2/6d., voluntary helpers could attend an introductory course over four evenings covering 'The Youth Club Movement, the Youth Club

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, February 1960

⁷³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, April 1960

⁷⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, March 1961

⁷⁵ Albemarle, p. 75

Method, Finding Your Feet and a Visit to a Club'.⁷⁶ Annual reports from the youth associations frequently record the numbers attending and passing primary leadership courses, which ran internally in preparation for taking on more responsibility within member clubs.

The efforts made by youth associations to offer training to part-time workers and volunteers shows another facet to wider attempts to professionalise youth work. While Hilton et al. have focussed on increasing numbers of paid staff and specialist working, for example in media, campaigning, and lobbying, that NGOs focussed on during 1960s, they have little to say about the role of the volunteer in professional NGO machinery.⁷⁷ What the evidence held in the Liverpool Union archives demonstrates and the annual reports of the associations further suggests is that attempts to train volunteers to a standard short of professional, but more than that of amateur do-gooder, date back at least until 1961.⁷⁸ Attempts to underpin the work of part-time and voluntary workers in youth clubs, as well as recruit and train more qualified youth workers show that it was not only high-profile NGOs who sought to professionalise in the 1960s. The inclusion of volunteers in attempts to professionalise is significant because it adds to how we have understood professionalization to date as largely something for the full-time worker and also because so much of the labour in clubs was voluntary and part-time, as described above. Training volunteers suggests that organisations aiming to be professional tried to maximise the effectiveness of all resources, including volunteers and gave consideration to the experience and motivations of those choosing to give up their time in youth clubs.

III. What did a youth worker do?

As indicated by the emphasis put on training and recruiting professional youth workers, there was a national understanding in the 1960s that professional youth work was a distinct job containing

⁷⁶ This is noted as a repeat of a popular course, LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, March 1961

⁷⁷ For Hilton et al., this is partly a question of terminology, *The Politics of Expertise*, p. 12

⁷⁸ For Steve such courses served to test the water before he decided to enter formal training, interview 9th September 2014

specific roles and responsibilities as welfare and social work also took on more specialised and distinct roles. The NABC offered the following remarks:

Recently, any institution which provides facilities for the meeting and relaxation of the young, under whatever auspices and applying whatever method, is called a "Youth Club"; it is tacitly and often explicitly assumed [they] are all of the same kind. Confusion and misunderstanding has resulted...A Boys' Club is a special and distinctive kind of club for boys (normally between 14-18 years of age); its method is based on the characteristics of adolescent boys; its aim is the training of character. It is designed to develop in its members the virile qualities for which the nation looks.⁷⁹

Interviewee Tony echoed this definition of the space of youth work in his understanding of the people doing youth work:

I always say professional youth worker now. Because anyone who does any work with young people is seen as a youth worker, whether it is one night a week or two nights a week doing a bit of activity. I've got nothing against that. I emphasise that they are add-ons. It's not youth work, professional youth work.⁸⁰

In terms of attitudes to training there was a sense that youth workers were professionals whose job required specialist knowledge and skills to work with young people. This was nuanced with attempts to move youth and community work closer together in the 1970s.⁸¹ Here, though, the consensus ended: the methods professional youth workers employed and the roles they played in young people's lives and organisation machinery were all subject to debate and local variation. In this debate about the roles of an ideal youth worker the divides between traditional youth work, associated with boys' clubs and permissive youth work, associated with mixed and especially experimental work can be seen most prominently. This reflected deep-seated differences concerning the essence of youth work and whether it was an instrument of social control or a tool for social education and citizenship which sometimes included politics and resistance (as discussed in chapter three).

The administrative and managerial tasks of youth workers were less controversial, though they too contribute to how historians have understood professional bureaucracies.⁸² Many agreed they were challenging aspects to the job and some thought they took up too much time. Tony

⁷⁹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, NABC *Memorandum on Development*, undated, c. 1960, p. 1

⁸⁰ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

⁸¹ Fairburn-Milson

⁸² Perkin, *The Third Revolution*, pp. xi-xv

switched from club-based work to detached work because it freed him to spend more time with young people.⁸³ Michael described being unprepared for the amount of time involved in staff and building management which had barely been mentioned in his training.⁸⁴ Steve echoes frustrations evident in archival records about the hugely time-consuming work of fundraising and writing grant applications which detracted from time spent with young people.⁸⁵ In the view of former youth workers interviewed, time spent with young people and interactions with them were the centre of youth work. The majority of youth workers interviewed had come through the newer training streams and they reflected this in their interviews, taking progressive, permissive and radical standpoints which place young people and their well-being far above notions of discipline and making traditional citizens. Newer training schemes also promoted a reflective practice, sometimes caught in youth workers reports which allows a chance to examine what youth workers felt their role was.

In September 1979 Tony's detached youth work report listed the individual cases he was working on at the time, ranging from young people in trouble with the law after a fight at the Grafton Dance Rooms in town, a young woman kicked out by her mother, her boyfriend ('one of societies lame ducks'), and two boys drinking heavily because of problems in the home one of whom 'will at times practically ignore you and at other times pour out his soul to you'.⁸⁶ After listing the various cases Tony reflects:

How do I see my role in all this? A lot depends on my reading of each situation really. Sometimes it's one of counsellor, sometimes advisor, and other times maybe a sympathetic listener. The latter is probably more important than generally thought, in helping to ease the frustration and stress that builds up...Help in practical ways is offered where appropriate of course.⁸⁷

What this quote captures is the sense that youth work in the 1960s did not have a fixed role, but changed to meet the circumstances of each interaction or group. Club-based workers, such as Michael already described, used this reflective practice to allow them to be flexible enough to meet

⁸³ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

⁸⁴ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

⁸⁵ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁸⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/2, DYW Report, September 1979, pp. 1-2

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

the demands of their job. Steve describes reflecting deeply after delivering anti-racist and anti-sexist content and handling racism in the club. He asked himself 'why did I handle it like that?' and described how white workers like him had 'to start asking themselves some questions' about how racism occurred in their clubs.⁸⁸ He concludes that doing this work 'was a bit of a personal journey.'⁸⁹ At the end of his interview he stated that he believed different approaches to youth work were valid saying 'some people respond to the sergeant-major-ish type person. I think that's good' but that his approach was about building 'trust with young people', being 'non-judgemental' and having a 'sense of being *with* young people'.⁹⁰ His comment about the sergeant major character evokes the stereotype of the boys' club leader and the approach that Steve described earlier in his interview, epitomised by the LFBC. While not his method, interestingly his opinion emphasises the value of what gets a response out of young people rather than supporting any single ideological standpoint on the fundamentals of youth work.

Michael, while also adopting a permissive approach later in his career when he worked in Liverpool, remembers how tough his first appointment in Waterloo, London was. The club had been through a number of leaders in quick succession, there was 'barely a stick of furniture' and the staff was 'deskilled and demotivated'.⁹¹ In this difficult environment Michael added more discipline and structure in a deliberate change of approach to show the young people (and staff) that he would not be lightly sent on his way like previous leaders. Discipline and structure provided stability in a club which he felt needed it because of frequent staff changes and slowly Michael describes how 'the young people came round'.⁹²

The disciplinary role of the youth worker was referred to in several interviews, with some talking about particular environments where breaking up fights and disciplining young members was necessary. John, Lee and Steve all referred to this, showing that while the disciplinarian approach in boys' clubs was losing favour, the need to keep young people in line remained to some

⁸⁸ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

⁹² Ibid.

degree.⁹³ In order to recover the sense of what this role entailed within a boys' club it is necessary to look back at what the boys' club associations advocated as the qualities of good leadership. One thing the boys' club associations focussed on is 'calibre' and standards of leadership. In 1958 the LFBC were positioning themselves as offering young people 'the chance to share their leisure with men of high calibre.'⁹⁴ A year later they repeated the term in an effort to recruit more leaders, this time including women in their call for staff saying they needed 'men and women of the right calibre who will not only be able to initiate new activities but who can win the confidence and friendship of the more unstable boy.'⁹⁵ They continued to refer to 'mature leadership'⁹⁶ but by 1970 had nuanced their position somewhat discussing the 'modern environment':

[I]n such circumstances two qualities above all seem to be needed (in young people) – a sense of individual responsibility and consideration for others. Neither of these can be imparted under compulsion...They can only be learnt through personal influence and example.⁹⁷

In 1971 they stated 'the professional approach is to be welcomed and encouraged' and that youth workers are 'trained and are properly recognised as important social workers.'⁹⁸ They added that the best way to teach responsibility is to give 'positive and fearless adult guidance'.⁹⁹ The LBA agreed with much of this, and by 1962 were using very similar language to their brother organisation in London saying that the 'task of recruiting sufficient people of the right calibre and temperament is becoming more difficult'.¹⁰⁰ In visits to clubs in the 1960s the LBA recorded positively 'firm friendly' relations between the leader and members in one club, and in correspondence with another club the chair of a management committee noted approvingly to the General Secretary that 'Mr. Robinson (leader), like myself is a keen disciplinarian. He is an ideal

⁹³ Interview with John, 27th August 2014, interview with Lee, 14th September 2014; interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

⁹⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1957-58, p. 8

⁹⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1958-59, p. 4

⁹⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 3

⁹⁷ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1969-70, p. 1

⁹⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1970-71, p. 5

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1

¹⁰⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/B/6/1-6/12, LBA Annual Report 1961-62, p. 3

leader, strict yet kind and together we strive, not only to win honours, but to turn out good healthy citizens.¹⁰¹

In 1960 this view was already being challenged by work being carried out in Liverpool. The female leader of an experimental project in Speke, just outside Liverpool commented that it was futile to go to the effort of attracting the tough type of young person only to have someone strong-arm them out of the club when they misbehaved, further explaining her approach:

I have met many women leaders working in difficult areas who have had just this sort of experience [*bad behaviour*] and they have found that the way to ensure a not too rough passage is by exhibiting a real interest in and affection for the members, being ready to stand and chatter about the most trivial point and yet at the same time insisting on definite standards of behaviour, higher than those normally displayed and yet within the members' reach.¹⁰²

An alternative model of the youth worker was being offered, one which depended on the qualities and skills of the person in the role. It also saw the potential for youth workers to be role models but emphasised being non-judgemental and earning the trust of young people. The leader in Speke was convinced that young people 'need the love and understanding of a trained youth leader.'¹⁰³ It is this model of the youth worker that Tony associated himself with when he asked himself 'where do I see my role in all of this?'¹⁰⁴ Within it were encompassed activities such as listening, advising, counselling and practical assistance, in some ways embedding a social casework role within the wider role of running a youth club.

This type of work fitted a society that was reshaping the law around many areas of citizens' personal and sexual lives.¹⁰⁵ Permissive youth work was similarly tolerant and non-judgemental. When put in the contexts of the environments they were working in and the particular challenges of being young people in these places, it is perhaps unsurprising that progressive and radical youth work found its home in spaces with acute social problems. In the archives of the mixed youth associations in London and Liverpool this approach can be seen emerging and gaining momentum

¹⁰¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, Report of a Club Visit to Belle Vale Boys' Club, 20th May 1960, letter to General Secretary of LBA from the Chair of Richmond Boys' Club Management Committee, 29th September 1966

¹⁰² LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/41, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1960-61, p. 5

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹⁰⁵ Collins ed., *The Permissive Society*

throughout the 1960s and 1970s, with the leader from Speke just one early example. As mentioned earlier, courses were promoting 'new features'.¹⁰⁶ While the LFBC and LBA were focussed on the calibre of leaders, the London Union were asking '[D]o you in your club want to be organised? Or would you rather drink your coffee or your beer and talk with your friends?' after observing that '[A]s the pattern of behaviour amongst young people changes so rapidly, so also must the way in which they use their leisure time. In education, in industry, in family relationships there have been changes over the last twenty years which seem to make anachronisms of our old ideas.'¹⁰⁷

If organisation and structure were becoming less central features of the role of youth workers, what elements of the role were expanding in this new climate? One answer is a new emphasis on building personal relationships with young people as the means by which effective interventions could be made, a clear contrast to the sergeant-major-ish character Steve describes who hails from an older boys' club tradition. A former youth club attendee from Lambeth who had been in trouble with the police several times described youth workers as 'good adults' in contrast to the adults often around him in 1970s Brixton.¹⁰⁸ Another worker said that the one-to-one work engaging with young people was the element of his job that he most enjoyed.¹⁰⁹ The detached youth workers in Liverpool's Breck Road area between the late 1960s and early 1980s agreed: with one worker saying the 'key word: relationships, listening, the key skill'.¹¹⁰ This comes through in the archives held by the MYA detailing individual casework including, for example; home visits, prison or remand centre visits and individual work within Intermediate Treatment groups.¹¹¹

Within these personal relationships fostered with young people it was sometimes the idea of offering them a role model or example that was emphasised. It was also often just offering a critical view, challenging young people's assumptions and presenting them with values, opinions and viewpoints outside their own experience within a non-judgmental environment.¹¹² For

¹⁰⁶ LRO, M367/MYA/G/4/15, Liverpool Union Circular Letters, March 1961

¹⁰⁷ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/10/11, London Union Clubs Annual Report 1958-1959, p. 8

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Keith, 28th July 2014

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹¹⁰ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹¹¹ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1-6: these folders contain extensive reports from the detached youth workers

¹¹² For example in interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

example, a volunteer worker on an Intermediate Treatment course in Lewisham explains how he saw his relationship with young people:

I think they needed to know that it was a safe space and that we were prepared to listen to them. That was absolutely essential I think...We used to take people aside and talk to them but we usually knew who they would listen to most, or there had been a reasonably trusting relationship formed and you could use that in the context of the group.¹¹³

Two interviewees who had attended church-based clubs (Church of England and Roman Catholic) also pointed out that the adults in their club were not teaching religious values, but offering a non-judgmental space within which young people could talk to adults who acted in a loose and informal supervisory capacity.¹¹⁴ This shift in approach is similar to that Freeman describes in *Outward Bound*, whereby they changed emphasis from the individual and collective benefits of character training to the more tailored aim of 'personal growth'.¹¹⁵

One of the benefits of building good relationships with young people was the ability of youth workers to focus on informal influencing and advice-giving in case work. Here, being embedded in wider youth and welfare networks was vital to youth clubs and associations. For example, Steve in South London remembers his practice in relation to sexism in the 1970s 'challenged them [*members*] without jumping on them'.¹¹⁶ He still regards 'empathy' as an important quality of youth workers.¹¹⁷ John, who worked with young people seen as 'at risk' on an Intermediate Treatment scheme in Lewisham recalls that he felt part of his role was to give advice on the kinds of conflicts young people were experiencing in their lives.¹¹⁸ Michael believed that conversations with young people had a purpose to help them think and that the youth worker was 'never just floating', that they were planning interactions, and to further conversations with young people in a way which was structured on the part of the youth worker, but informal to the young person.¹¹⁹ Tony reflected this when he talked about using relatively quiet activities like darts or

¹¹³ Interview with John, 27th August 2014

¹¹⁴ Interview with Wendy, 29th July 2014; interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

¹¹⁵ Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth'

¹¹⁶ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Interview with John, 27th August 2014

¹¹⁹ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

snooker as 'as means to an end...they'll talk about anything'.¹²⁰ Later in his career, as a detached worker, Tony used a minibus where he and the young people spent 'a lot of time just talking' later returning to this idea that the role was 'talking – main activity, listening – best activity, asking questions, analysing'.¹²¹ Katherine also 'did an awful lot of listening' saying that youth work centred on 'dialogue and discussion...small talk is important...use every opportunity to widen their experience, make them think'.¹²²

The advice youth workers were giving young people sometimes concerned other social agencies that might be able to help them. Thus, their role encompassed an element of being an enabler or gatekeeper to other voluntary and statutory welfare services. This is illustrated most vividly by the DYW project in Liverpool which had multiple agencies represented on the management committee of the project, which came to function in some regards like a case-conference. The local councillor, education guidance team, social services, probation services and police were all involved in the committee.¹²³ John in Lewisham also recalled taking time to encourage young people to access other services, though without the support team already assembled as was the case in Liverpool.¹²⁴ Such committees with representatives from several state and voluntary bodies show the mixed economy of welfare in action; welfare was a partnership between state and voluntary bodies and these committees depended on having the relevant mix of expertise drawn from a range of sources, furthermore, representing a variety of developing professions and professional functions.¹²⁵

The independence of the youth workers from some of these services was an important part in building trust and relationships with young people in the first place. Katherine in particular

¹²⁰ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹²³ Ibid.; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014; LRO, folders M367/MYA/M/6/1/1-4

¹²⁴ Interview with John, 27th August 2014

¹²⁵ Perkin, *The Third Revolution*; the mix of professionals involved in penal welfarism is also important here, see Garland, *The Culture of Control* and Jackson with Bartie, *Policing Youth*

discussed how she could achieve things that social workers could not.¹²⁶ She tells the story of visiting a father of seven whose wife had left him. She described him letting her into the house when he would not let the social worker in. He was scared that if he did so, the children would be taken away from him. Katherine was able to arrange to take two of the children away for a few days.¹²⁷ A similar understanding of youth workers is evident in the criminality they witnessed but did not report (as described in chapter five). In this sense the role of youth workers was to guide young people as they negotiated society and welfare services, acting as a buffer between the young individual and the state, using their expertise in understanding and communicating with young people to help them participate and have opportunities which were more than the chance to try a new sport or activity. Youth workers functioned to boost the social citizenship of young people via the acquisition of specialist skills and social capital.

Aside from interactions which enabled young people to access advice, practical assistance and a sympathetic ear in individual and small group environments, youth workers functioned in a broadly educative role, as discussed in chapter three. The idea of challenging young people's attitudes and broadening their horizons recurs in the testimony of interviewees. Broadening horizons again meant more than teaching young people a new sport, it could mean introducing them to people from other cultures, or simply getting them out into new spaces. For example, in cities where young people spent much of their time within a few streets of their home, as described by Katherine in the Anfield area of Liverpool, a trip a few miles away to the beach at Formby was a new experience for some young people.¹²⁸

Informal education in this sense was not just about learning which took place outside a classroom. It included social education; presenting young people with views which challenged their assumptions (such as inherited views on race and sex). Katherine as a trained teacher saw her role in terms of educating young people informally. For her and Michael, from teaching backgrounds, youth work was a better environment for teaching young people than school. Katherine, who felt

¹²⁶ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

drawn to society's misfits, in particular saw the potential to educate the teenagers she knew in Liverpool outside the formalities and structures of school as important, and something she knew she was good at.¹²⁹

If Tony, Michael and Katherine could be seen as permissive youth workers then examining some of their views on social and informal education of young people alongside those of Dennis and Lee shows that this permissive or progressive view ventured into the radical on occasions. The associations in South London and Liverpool struggled with the idea of providing young people with a political education, wishing to remain non-partisan and believing that the youth wings of the political parties and trade unions should and did fulfil this purpose. Yet when youth workers talked about the political education of the young they did so with 'a small 'p' – a very small 'p''.¹³⁰ They wanted the politicisation of the young to mean they engaged and participated in the social and political processes which were having such an impact on their lives and futures.

Dennis was a trade unionist and activist who spent a year mobilising around the Miners' Strike. He recalled, 'I was very very strongly involved in the union locally. I was very strongly involved in organising the voluntary sector. I was very strongly involved in anti-cuts stuff.'¹³¹ He believed that 'keeping powder dry' was neither helpful nor successful and describes his view of social education as 'liberal, libertarian'.¹³² Working in an area with 'endemic youth unemployment,' black unemployment and huge racial division Dennis was incredibly critical of other approaches to youth work.¹³³ Of the London umbrella associations he says that 'their style' was not 'the most popular theoretical and professional response[s]' to the problems in Lewisham and that he and his colleagues 'were interested in building up solidarity'.¹³⁴ Of the traditional boys' club approach focussing on discipline he was even more dismissive saying 'I know of no educational or developmental approach that is predicated on getting the best out of people by making them feel

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

shit...solidarity and collectivity were the only way you would get anything'.¹³⁵ Instead he framed youth work in terms of resistance and saw his role as to 'help young people to work out what they think about the world and what they want to do about it'.¹³⁶ His role therefore was essentially one of facilitator, challenger and occasional agitator.

Like Dennis, workers with approaches and views which pushed the permissive towards the radical were found in some of youth work's most challenging environments. For example, the detached youth workers in Liverpool approached their work believing that that young people should be politicised. They were chronically aware of the lack of opportunity that many of their young people faced but wanted them to understand the forces and structures which created those situations. Similarly to Dennis they were involved in the Youth and Community Workers Trade Union and Katherine was active in a feminist workers group. She 'spent a lot of time politicking I suppose' and 'was strong in the union at one stage'.¹³⁷ She also found a great deal of support from the left-leaning management committee of the project which was inclined to support progressive and experimental approaches, something her co-worker agreed was important to the credibility and success of the project.¹³⁸ Again Katherine put emphasis in youth work as being 'for them [*young people*] to participate in it, in a democratic society'.¹³⁹ Approaches to youth work like those taken by Katherine, Tony and Dennis showed the broad outlook on informal education some workers felt the youth service was best able to provide.¹⁴⁰

Finally, in terms of considering what youth workers did in South London and Liverpool between 1958 and 1985, their role representing young people needs to be examined. While Dennis and Katherine in particular worked with young people to try and get them to represent themselves, youth workers, as those working with young people on a daily basis, were often in a position to represent the views and needs of young people to other agencies and society at large. They

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹³⁸ Ibid.; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹³⁹ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹⁴⁰ A particularly relevant call for progressive youth work can be found in Bernard Davies, *Threatening Youth: Towards a National Youth Policy*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1986

mediated and reshaped young people's views for adult reception, but more than this they came to act as champions for young people at a time when they were receiving significant negative attention as outlined in chapter four and in work such as Cohen's.¹⁴¹ Workers, and to a certain extent the associations they sometimes worked for, were aware that much press and public attention was being focussed on a minority of delinquent or visible teenagers. They keenly appreciated how the press in particular fed a 'moral panic' about youth in the way described by Cohen.¹⁴² For example the Liverpool Union commented in 1964 that '[T]eenage delinquency produces paragraphs, even columns in the National Press, but the reporting of healthy, sporting youth activities rarely receives the attention it deserves'.¹⁴³ In 1962 the LFBC agreed that 'young people today are subject to harsh public criticism' which perhaps contributed to the emphasis on public relations they had, as discussed in chapter three.¹⁴⁴ In 1969, Viscount Amory, President of the LFBC went further saying, 'It is our job to convince those who have lost faith in youth to keep a fair perspective'.¹⁴⁵

Youth workers too felt the need to speak up for the teenagers they worked with and many felt young people had an undeservedly negative image. They sought to emphasise the positive relationships they built with young people and all the ways in which young people failed to live up to negative perceptions about them. One interviewee became quite emotional when saying 'I can't stand injustice and unfairness and so many were treated unfairly'.¹⁴⁶ Tony said 'all sorts of labels were put on them but young people are always going to be young people'.¹⁴⁷ Lee said he felt there was 'a culture of tremendous amnesia' when it came to moral panics about young people and that there was and is a 'profound social deafness' about young people.¹⁴⁸ Commenting on the way young black men in particular were singled out and treated in Lewisham in the 1970s, his

¹⁴¹ Cohen, *Folk Devils*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/44, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1963-64, p. 5

¹⁴⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/5, LFBC Annual Report 1961-62, p. 8

¹⁴⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1968-69, p. 1

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

conclusion is that '[I]t was ugly'.¹⁴⁹ In the face of negative perceptions of young people, youth workers were people who trusted and liked young people and saw this as an essential part of their job. 'I don't think you can teach empathy...They can't teach you to like young people' one South London youth worker remarked, adding that he felt that was 'the most important thing' about being a good youth worker.¹⁵⁰

Post-Albemarle training promised deeper understanding of young people and promoted flexible approaches to youth work alongside innovation. While traditional methods emphasising fitness, discipline, older understandings of citizenship and masculinity were still found in both South London and Liverpool, newer approaches became more popular, especially as the kinds of leadership young people were prepared to accept changed. In this way youth work became a question of figuring out who young people needed the youth worker to be at any given time and being responsive and flexible enough to fit that role, with a genuine interest in young people. The flexibility provided by a largely voluntary Youth Service framework aided this. Youth work was sometimes permissive, sometimes radical, and occasionally strict. At different times and in different places it promoted social control and social resistance simultaneously. While different workers disagreed as to what they thought youth work was for and how to achieve it, youth clubs and associations had room to accommodate many of these competing visions.

IV. The challenges of youth work

The above section outlined how the role of the youth worker was contested in the post-war period. Differences sometimes rested on what those involved felt the purpose of youth work was and tensions were exacerbated by the fluctuations in funding and the uncertainties of finance in clubs and associations which made it hard to plan ahead. There were other professional tensions with those outside youth work such as schools and the police which also fed into the challenges that some youth workers faced in their roles. Many of the tensions in youth work in South London and

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

Liverpool 1958-1985 have already been alluded to and these must be considered alongside the challenges provided by wider social and economic conditions, changes in the mixed economy of welfare and the local mix of these found within individual communities. Difficulties recruiting and training enough youth workers to meet demand were present from the 1960s until at least the mid-1970s.

One of the most important uncertainties of youth work concerned its professional status, which is important given recent focus on the careerists within voluntary organisations highlighted by Hilton et al.¹⁵¹ Certainly the McNair and Albemarle Reports (as well as the Bessey Report, 1962, on part-time and assistant leaders) had attempted to put youth work on a more professional footing and many organisations sought to be more professional but several factors ask us to consider the professional status of youth work overall.¹⁵² Firstly, the volume of voluntary manpower must be considered. Voluntary clubs and associations relied on voluntary helpers. Estimates in Liverpool thought that about 75% of the effort in clubs was voluntary effort and in the few statistics available on the matter volunteers outnumbered paid posts by some margin, as outlined earlier in this chapter. Many volunteers would not have worked as many hours as paid staff, but their cumulative contribution was vast. In 1958 the LFBC recorded over 2,000 volunteers.¹⁵³ In 1960 a sample of 206 out of 215 affiliated clubs included 1,202 voluntary helpers.¹⁵⁴ The Liverpool Union listed 560 voluntary helpers in 1969.¹⁵⁵ In 1978 the LFBC showed they had kept a steady number of volunteers at 1,995.¹⁵⁶ Yet many clubs did not have full-time paid leaders and so would have been reliant on part-time paid workers and volunteers. Some small-scale and informal clubs had no paid staff. Anne's club in South London, opened one evening a week by the Catholic couple that ran the marriage preparation course, was run on an entirely

¹⁵¹ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, pp. 54-79

¹⁵² The McNair Report; Albemarle; The Bessey Report

¹⁵³ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1957-58, p. 6

¹⁵⁴ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/4, LFBC Annual Report 1959-60, p. 12

¹⁵⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/G/3/49, Liverpool Union Annual Report 1968-69, p. 5

¹⁵⁶ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/7, LFBC Annual Report 1977-78, p. 1

voluntary basis, and clubs of this type which leave little or no archival evidence are likely to have been more prolific than available evidence demonstrates.¹⁵⁷

Secondly, youth work struggled to create a clear and lasting career path and there is some evidence to suggest that it was viewed by some as a job where individuals spent a few years before moving on to other work. This was the view given in the Albemarle Report which suggested that this meant people from industry and business could incorporate youth work into their careers.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, they felt teachers could spend part of their careers in youth work.¹⁵⁹ Once trained and in a full-time post there were relatively few rungs on the career ladder until Senior Field Work posts were introduced in the late 1970s and early 1980s.¹⁶⁰ Workers who ran their own clubs could move into local education authorities, training or the management of voluntary associations but even here, youth workers skills sets did not always match the demands of the role. An advanced qualification in youth work available in Manchester was mentioned by the two detached youth workers but there was a tension between those who saw the youth work career as being embedded in a club (or area) as a professional social worker and those who saw youth workers as part of a wider career spent elsewhere.¹⁶¹ Attempts to align youth and community work in the 1970s did not help in this regard; some workers were already acting as youth and community workers but it was unclear how this might work on larger scale and in the longer term.¹⁶²

The wider issue of financial uncertainty which was a constant element of the voluntary club structure also hindered long-term career planning for youth workers. Clubs could close for lack of finance relatively easily and youth workers' complaints about time spent fundraising reflect how

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

¹⁵⁸ Albemarle, p. 75

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/4/12, MYA Annual Report 1980-81, pp. 3-6; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹⁶¹ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014; interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹⁶² Fairburn-Milson; Keith Popple, 'Reconsidering the Emergence and Establishment of Community Development in the UK: The 1950s and 1960s', Tony Jeffs et al. eds., *Reappraisals: Essays in the history of youth and community work*, Dorset, Russell House Publishing, 2013, Albemarle, p. 75

precarious their jobs could be at times.¹⁶³ Here, voluntary clubs, which waited on annual grant allocations and relied on fundraising, were particularly uncertain.

Finally, the divisions over the role and purpose of youth work also affected the role of the professional youth worker. Those who saw clubs as places just for recreation, without any wider social role, saw leadership and organisation as the primary qualities for youth leaders. Training and professional status meant different things to leaders who did not adhere to the idea of the youth worker as a specialist social and educational worker. Thus the 1960s and early 1970s which saw the generation of wartime and immediately post-war leaders cross over with a new generation of leaders who were using social science, psychology, development studies and emerging social work techniques, was a time when professional youth work was particularly contested. This was reflected in an uncertainty in what it meant to have a career in youth work.

Staff in everyday contact with young people came up against a variety of challenging perspectives on their work from people in the wider field: schools, the police, association staff, local authority staff, management committees and other leaders. Again unpicking these differences shows that youth clubs were fluid and contested places in the post-war period given understandings of and approaches to dealing with young people have varied. As an older approach to youth work (linked to other youth movements in emphasising character, fitness, discipline and citizen-making) was embedded in the traditions of the youth club associations, this sometimes resulted in management of these associations conflicting with youth workers, despite having supposedly shared aims.¹⁶⁴

The LFBC can be seen pushing back against emerging youth work in 1974 when they said that in 'attempting to be all things to all men' there was 'a great temptation to undertake responsibility for areas of work for which one way may not be equipped'.¹⁶⁵ They added that:

¹⁶³ For just one example, interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹⁶⁴ See chapter four, and also work on the Scouts: Proctor, "*On My Honour*"; Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell'; Mills, "An instruction in good citizenship"; Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth'

¹⁶⁵ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1973-74, p. 1

Alongside these pressures are those from the enthusiastic experimentalists who are happy to put at risk or reject worthwhile work, often in over-publicised or ill-judged attempts to reach the many unattached young people. Youth Service, like many other areas of Social and Educational work is suffering from a surfeit of experts, consultants and observers and a dearth of men and women who will get on with the job.¹⁶⁶

Their criticism continues later in the report to reveal a feeling of general frustration and an understanding of good youth leadership as focussed on management, administration and having an appropriate activity programme. They comment that there is:

[n]o room for the evident sloppiness in simple administrative and managerial skills which befront and frustrate voluntary management. Nor the generally poor level of relationships, behaviour, programming and organisation ...in some situations.¹⁶⁷

This conflicted with their idea of 'the job' above which is grounded in their belief that traditional methods, as outlined earlier, were still valuable to the boy of 1974. By 1981, when resources for experimental work were becoming scarcer, they remark that 'there has been a gradual and marked reversal back to the essentials of good club-work, where challenging leadership, discipline, self-respect and a sense of responsibility are being upheld'.¹⁶⁸ This perhaps also reflected that in London clubs could choose to adhere to this approach, and while those that did so could affiliate to and receive the support of the LFBC, those that rejected it found their home in the London Union which supported permissive youth work. Steve certainly saw this divide in his running of a mixed club in Lambeth. He says the LFBC 'could not quite...were reluctant to grasp the changes going on in youth work'.¹⁶⁹ He says the 'old school people from the Fed...got stuck' and that;

[T]he Fed was still rooted in the boys' club movement, the Christian muscularity ways of doing things...finding it hard to shift it, and those that were, were not looked too kindly on...The [London] Union [of Youth Clubs] were grasping it and leading on it a bit more.¹⁷⁰

This division was also evident in Liverpool. Experimental work in Liverpool became one of the internal battlegrounds where traditional and permissive ideologies of youth work were contested, in particular the role of detached youth work. There were several attempts to shake the

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p.3

¹⁶⁸ LMA, LMA/4283/A/2/8, LFBC Annual Report 1980-81, p. 4

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Steve, 9th September 2014

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. Dennis agreed with this overall assessment (interview 19th September 2014) but was overall more dismissive of both associations as not good enough 'theoretical and professional responses' to the issues he faced in Lewisham. On Christian muscularity see Mark Freeman, 'Muscular Quakerism? The Society of Friends and Youth Organisations in Britain, c.1900-1950', *English Historical Review*, Vol. CXXV, No. 514, 2010, pp. 642-669

‘experimental’ terminology after the initial three-year phase of the project and to have detached work accepted as an embedded and complementary element of club-based work.¹⁷¹ This happened eventually, with the project extended and one of its early proponents, Tony, given an MBE for services to youth work in 2014, but the testimony of workers and some archival documents reveal that this was a hard fought victory. Katherine recalls ‘a few clashes about detached and club-based work’ after she was recruited to the project.¹⁷² ‘I was pretty frowned upon at one stage so you were always swimming upstream’, she said, adding that from her perspective the MYA was ‘less innovative in some respects’ than she had anticipated ‘and it was quite resistant to change whether that was the boys’ clubs becoming mixed or detached youth work’.¹⁷³ In particular she remembers that she ‘was not welcome in the youth club. Mr Davies didn’t want me there’.¹⁷⁴

Katherine felt that other workers did not understand detached work and thought she took young people to the pub and got them drunk, something an association official echoed when he wrote in a letter:

[O]n the one hand, the number of young people with whom contact is made and who benefit [*original emphasis*] is extremely small. Also the ‘detached workers’ are apt to be rather curious types who seem to spend much of their time pub-crawling.¹⁷⁵

In Katherine’s words:

There were a few older youth workers, male, who thought as detached youth workers we were taking them [*young people*] into the pubs, getting drunk with them...a real antithesis towards it...I had to fight, in that sense, for detached youth work...there was resistance to its development particularly from the male, older, I’d call them boys’ club even if they weren’t boys’ club, they had a sort of mentality...I think they thought I was a bad influence.¹⁷⁶

Her co-worker echoes this view commenting that ‘[T]raditionalists within the MYA, particularly from the boys’ club movement, there was some doubt...we got a feeling there was some

¹⁷¹ At the end of the initial project, its academic supervisor recommended this in Ince, *Contact*, p. 74, however, the DYW team felt the need to repeat this call eight years later, LRO, M367/MYA/6/1/2, ‘Policy Statement – August 1979’, p. 1

¹⁷² Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/6, letter from Donald Crawford to the MYA Honorary Officers, 17th July 1969; this sentiment was felt by the workers, LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/5, DYW Report, 27th November 1971

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

antagonistic views'.¹⁷⁷ Katherine felt that she constantly had to justify her work in a way that club-based workers did not and that she wrote 'more reports than any youth club worker,' a sentiment reflected in the fact that so many of her reports have survived in the archives in the absence of comparable amounts from the more numerous club-based workers.¹⁷⁸ Not only did Katherine and Tony feel that this negative perception came from traditional boys' club leaders, they also felt this tension sometimes applied to people within the MYA executive, though they both took pains to emphasise how supportive their own management committee was in the face of this criticism.¹⁷⁹ In the report of the detached youth work conference of March 1977, the detached workers wrote:

There was also some difference apparent in those who still worked in face to face situations with young people and those whose roles were of a more policy-making or administrative ilk. The planners and the doers need to educate each other much more about what they are about.¹⁸⁰

At their core, disagreements about different approaches to youth work rested on contested views of the overall purpose of youth work which, in turn, were based on varying assessments of who young people were and what they needed from an amorphous Youth Service. That the single term 'youth work' was flexible enough to encompass all these different meanings was simultaneously part of its success and one of its greatest difficulties. Using terms like 'professional' and 'trained' sought to show a co-ordinated and unifying element which in fact youth work at this time simply did not have.

V. Voluntary helpers and management committees

Voluntary helpers completed a range of tasks such as serving in the canteen, leading activities such as football training (which was also done by paid instructors), assisting leaders with activities, taking subs, general supervision and building maintenance. As well as regular volunteers there were also those who helped out occasionally with special events, camps, trips, festivals etc.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014. See also LRO, M367 MYA/M/6/1/1-6, DYW files

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014; interview with Katherine, 24th September 2014

¹⁸⁰ LRO, M367/MYA/M/6/1/4, Report of the DYW "SHARE" conference, March 1977, part 2

Voluntary help was focussed on practical tasks as a way to save money. As outlined above, much of the work undertaken in youth clubs was voluntary in nature.

Voluntary help and part-time paid help were treated similarly in clubs with full-time professional leadership. Some full-time leaders and association staff drew rather formal distinctions which showed what volunteers and part-time workers could do within a club. This articulated what they felt professional youth work was and emphasised the differences between what they did and the impact they had on young people, and the functional role of the volunteer or sessional worker. For example, Michael who trained as a teacher in Exeter, remarked that as a volunteer during his training he never had a conversation with the full-time youth worker at the centre he was in.¹⁸¹ He said volunteers and part-time paid workers were hard to tell apart, in this case indicating that the full-time youth worker had a different status within the club and was distant from the other adults in the club, showing that perhaps he saw himself in a managerial role.¹⁸² Some of this affected his own work where he stressed the planned interactions he had with young people over volunteers or part-time staff running activities. However, he pressed for his part-time staff and volunteers to undertake training and expected them to be reliable and to understand the job in a way that suggests he wanted them to be as professional as possible.¹⁸³ He organised this training and offered one-to-one supervision to facilitate this. Tony also made clear the distinction between the trained and untrained worker in his interview.¹⁸⁴

In the smaller one or two night per week clubs it was expected that voluntary help would be the major source of manpower. While these clubs were fully affiliated there is some indication that these clubs had a different status to full-time, professionally-led clubs. Often it was hoped that trained leadership could be found and the club developed into a full-time club, or if under the care of the church (who often had training of their own for workers), the club would be left to its own devices. There was some criticism of clubs with no trained worker present. When Michael arrived

¹⁸¹ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

at a new club in Liverpool ‘[T]here were half a dozen nineteen-year-olds running the centre when I got there, who had no training’ as they had been provided by a MSC scheme.¹⁸⁵ This was unacceptable to Michael who developed training for them after taking up his post.

The supply and training of volunteers was of concern to the associations in London and Liverpool. There were frequent complaints that volunteer levels were insufficient and evidence that training designed to give volunteers a basic understanding of youth clubs and youth work were well established by the 1960s as described earlier in this chapter. This is further evidence that volunteers were a valuable resource to youth clubs and associations who were willing to invest in their training. An emphasis on offering training to volunteers is important in showing further efforts towards professionalisation from clubs and associations throughout the post-war period.

There is another area where the evidence about volunteers contributes to our historical understanding of the volunteer. The records of youth clubs and associations offer a small glimpse into the under-researched area of informal volunteering. Interviews with former volunteers also show the informal nature of volunteering. There are several elements of informality evident in volunteering in youth clubs which, while they only provide a snapshot, are useful to help us understand that, which by its nature, usually leaves very little archival evidence. There was a lack of a formal recruitment process in many cases, volunteers did not always have clearly defined roles and the judgement of the youth leader and management committee often formed the only criteria for selection. While, as the above has outlined, training was available to volunteers, there were also few formalised expectations around take-up and it was often up to leaders, such as Michael outlines above, to develop volunteers.¹⁸⁶

Much of the voluntary help in youth clubs appeared informally-based. Firstly, in the archival and interview evidence there is no indication that either London or Liverpool used any formal recruitment processes as standard in order to manage their voluntary resources. There are a handful of occasions where volunteer recruitment drives are mentioned or clubs were asked to

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

submit their requirements for new volunteers but most recruitment was *ad hoc*, being based on individual requirements and assessments of suitability. Some clubs submitted their volunteer lists for approval to the management committee but this was not universal and much was down to the set-up of the individual club and the discretion of those in charge. Dennis, Lee and Tony all describe being recruited informally by being asked if they would help out.¹⁸⁷ Secondly, while volunteer training was encouraged, there was no formal vetting, training or official roles for volunteers in the club (outside of the management committee to be discussed below). Anyone could volunteer to do anything, dependent on the assessment of the leader and without records to be completed or requirements to be fulfilled. Furthermore volunteers could do a range of tasks as demand arose. Lee described having undertaken a range of tasks, including collecting subs on the door, acting as a bouncer, helping to set up sound systems and coaching basketball in a handful of clubs in Lewisham in the 1970s.¹⁸⁸ Seasonal and event-driven volunteering further underlines the informal approach to volunteering in youth clubs. Accounts of club camps and special events include mention of helpers and volunteers drafted in for the occasion. Wendy remembers helping out on a club trip to Spain for example.¹⁸⁹ Finally, interviewees' accounts show that volunteering was a mix of the formal and informal. Wendy described assisting on a trip to Spain organised by her then boyfriend and another adult from the club where she had responsibility purely on the basis of being a bit older than the club members attending and because her boyfriend was the leader.¹⁹⁰ In another capacity she volunteered more formally to help the Sunday School at her church.¹⁹¹ Anne thinks the adults in her club opened the church hall once a week for young people because they were active in the church. They were not youth leaders but volunteered to run other church community activities.¹⁹² In contrast to Dennis, Lee and Tony above who were informally asked to help, Michael's volunteering was quite formal and arranged based on his need to gain experience as part

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Dennis, 19th September 2014; interview with Lee, 14th September 2014; interview with Tony, 23rd September 2014

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Lee, 14th September 2014

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Wendy, 29th July 2014

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² Interview with Anne, 14th August 2014

of the youth work element of his teacher training.¹⁹³ John's was also more formal, as he was recruited via the local volunteer centre and sought a role where he could develop the professional interpersonal skills he would need for social work.¹⁹⁴

There was, though, a highly formalised form of volunteering within youth clubs and associations which was voluntary membership of youth club management committees. These bodies have generated many of the surviving records of individual youth clubs, such as meeting minutes, which give a good indication of the role and function of the committee as well as some indication of who made up these bodies. Furthermore the LBA attempted to codify the responsibilities of management committees following a survey of their clubs in 1966, offering the association's take on what the committee was for. Looking at a club in the early stages of formation, where the management committee were being assembled, offers a good insight into the way such committees were assembled. At the Bronte Youth Centre in Liverpool the office of chairman was taken by Mr John Moores Junior, whose family ran the Liverpool-based business Littlewoods.¹⁹⁵ Choosing someone with such a well-known name and successful business was no accident and in this case demonstrates a specific desire for the experimental project to be well-resourced and high-profile. Management committees often had several members from prominent local businesses and this was encouraged by association management because of their standing in the community but also their ability to fulfil one of the vital roles of the committee in ensuring adequate financial resources were available to voluntary clubs. In 1964 John Moores Junior was encouraged to refresh the Management Committee of the Bronte Youth Centre by writing to the General Managers and Managing Directors of local firms to ask for nominations from their executives, as well as writing to the Chambers of Commerce.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, the new club in Speke set

¹⁹³ Interview with Michael, 22nd September 2014

¹⁹⁴ Interview with John, 27th August 2014

¹⁹⁵ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, Bronte Centre Development Report (n.d., 1960s)

¹⁹⁶ LRO, M367//MYA/B/10/4/1, Minutes of the Meeting of the Bronte Youth Centre Management Committee, 5th October 1964, p. 1

up in the early 1960s had a management committee 'made up of some ten or twelve representatives from the larger firms on the Speke Estate'.¹⁹⁷

In addition to businessmen it was common for representatives from other bodies to be present on committees. James represented the LCSS which was the central voluntary sector co-ordinating body in Liverpool, on several club management committees.¹⁹⁸ The youth associations were also often represented by staff serving on club management committees. This was especially true of new clubs driven by the associations such as Bronte which had the General Secretaries of both the LBA and the Liverpool Union on the committee.¹⁹⁹ Overall this meant that management committees can be inferred to have been much more middle-class than many of the other volunteers in youth clubs, and indeed the members, as outlined in chapters four and five. It was here, as well as in some elements of youth club leadership that the middle-class professions crucial to the development of NGOs as outlined by Hilton et al. were found.²⁰⁰ This distinction is important when considering the functions of the committee and the ability of the members to draw on different types of capital to achieve their aims. One such form was local social capital whereby knowing other local businesses and personalities formed a crucial network of support for the club.

This pooling of several types of resources can be seen as important when the functions of management committees are examined. Following their 1966 survey of boys' clubs, the LBA held a special meeting for the chairmen and members of management committees to whom they had sent the survey results. They also invited the leaders who had felt criticised by the way the results had been shared without including them. They held discussion groups on the role of the leader and the role of the management committee.²⁰¹ The consensus was that the management committee were responsible for the following: overall policy and aims of the youth club; continuity; major

¹⁹⁷ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/1, Speke Club Development Report November 1962-March 1963, p. 1

¹⁹⁸ Interview with James, 24th September 2014

¹⁹⁹ See folder on setting up of the Bronte Centre, LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1

²⁰⁰ Hilton et al., *The Politics of Expertise*, p. 7-8; the memoir of voluntary service in Liverpool by key figure Margaret Simey is also useful in this regard: *The Disinherited Society: a personal view of social responsibility in Liverpool in the twentieth century*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1996

²⁰¹ LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/5, 'Special Meeting of Club Chairmen, Members of Management Committees and Leaders, 20th March 1966'

finance; provision of premises, equipment, furniture, heat, lighting and cleaning (with minor elements to be taken care of by the members' committee); public relations; to be an example to the members; and make contacts with the local community.²⁰²

The management committee was there to provide continuity and stability in terms of guiding successive leaders and members' committees and ensuring the club managed its money. In voluntary clubs the competence of the management committee was important, but rarely were committee members offered formal support with their roles. Only in the 1980s as the financial climate changed did the associations provide seminars for management committees and treasurers on managing club finances.²⁰³

In 1974, the London Union also decided to pay management committees some specific attention. They conducted research on issues in the relationship between leaders and management committees. This relationship was vital given management committees provided scrutiny of leaders' actions and supported them. Likewise leaders relied on their committee to provide resources for and approve their programme. It was also important that the leader and committee had a similar vision for the club and the role of the leader in that club. The Bronte Centre management committee feeling one warden was 'not the man for this type of Youth Club' is one example of this.²⁰⁴

In London, the research undertaken by the Union was sympathetic to the viewpoints of leaders and they provided a cartoon to illustrate one of the central points of tension in the relationship. The cartoon shows a leader in his office surrounded by management committee members who are pulling paperwork out of drawers and creating chaos. The caption reads:

²⁰² LRO, M367/MYA/B/9/5, Adapted from list provided in 'Special Meeting of Club Chairmen, Members of Management Committees and Leaders, 20th March 1966'

²⁰³ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/005, London Union Annual Report 1980

²⁰⁴ LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, 'Special Management Committee meeting to discuss leadership', 30th December 1964

[W]anting your Management Committee to spend more time in the club is like infidelity in marriage. In theory you've got nothing against it, but God help you when it happens to you in practice.²⁰⁵

The research highlighted shortcomings in some management committees such as a lack of interest in young people, that half had never visited the youth club except for committee meetings, and that many did not know their role. The London Union recommended a wider basis of selection to committees, that members became more involved in the club, a system for clearing out 'dead wood' in committees was introduced, and that new committee members receive more help and support.²⁰⁶ Other examples point to similar trends. For example, at one point the Bronte Centre committee were not meeting at the club at all.²⁰⁷ Constitutions of clubs provided regulation on voting, quorum and roles on committees, but there was no regulation around who served, for how long and what their interest in the youth club might be. The inference from the London Union was that some club committees were serving the interests of the committee member in doing some form of voluntary work, rather than functioning in the most effective way to further the aims and objectives of the club, or indeed the interests of the young members. The cartoon also hinted at a perception that management committees could be interfering with the work of the youth leader, suggesting support for the leaders' expert role in the club over the voluntary role of committee member.

Hence, management committees were made up of volunteers and paid representatives of linked organisations and had a central but sometimes hidden role in the running of voluntary clubs. The influence of the management committee on the way clubs operated and their culture was of particular significance in the voluntary youth club, where formal identity was not shaped by uniforms, badges, unified training and handbooks as it was in other voluntary youth movements like the Scouts. Their role supporting and directing paid youth workers made the relationship between the two an important factor in the success of clubs. Recruiting the right voluntary committee members could ensure financial stability and local status for the club. Some clubs were

²⁰⁵ LMA, LMA/4232/D/01/004, London Union Annual Report 1973-74, p. 12

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13

²⁰⁷ For example LRO, M367/MYA/B/10/4/1, shows the Bronte Youth Centre Management Committee met at '100 Old Hall Street' 30th December 1964

shaped by the way committees viewed youth work, for it was they who recruited the leader and approved the programme in the absence of a strongly formalised identity. Again it was the fluidity of what the term 'youth club' could encompass which allowed committees and leaders to have such scope to mould them to their own ideals and local needs.

Conclusion

Youth workers in South London and Liverpool had a vital role in shaping clubs at a time when their own professional identities were contested. In terms of a youth work career, while some interviewees did spend many years in youth work, there was an expectation that youth work might also fit into, and around, other careers. The fact that qualifications for youth work at this time did not achieve parity with degrees differs other ways of trying to understand professionalisation via training and qualifications.²⁰⁸ That said, training for youth work did seek to utilise emerging social science and psychology to create expertise about youth and match this with training in the technocratic or bureaucratic elements of running a youth club. Furthermore, in showing that attempts were made to increase the knowledge and skill-levels of volunteers, attempts to professionalise can be shown to have been wider than an analysis of NGOs presents and it cannot be forgotten that most youth clubs still relied on unpaid and relatively untrained staff. This further limits how fully we can view youth work and youth welfare as professional in post-war Liverpool and London.

The emphasis on training did not guarantee a fast or universal transformation for the Youth Service. In this respect, the Albemarle Report did not succeed in its aim to solve the problem of providing the skilled manpower youth clubs needed.²⁰⁹ However, new training did infuse a new generation of youth workers with permissive or progressive views on working with young people. Some of these workers had links to radical politics, trade unions, feminism and race politics and they came up against older understandings of youth work which prioritised shaping young people

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Albemarle, p. 110

into good citizens, emphasising character, discipline, Christianity and leadership. Conservative approaches were embedded in some club and association management structures but an appreciation of professional youth work as centred around young people themselves was gaining ground. Therefore it is important to see the people coming into youth work at this time within the context of the social changes and social movements which may have been influencing them.²¹⁰

Youth work in South London and Liverpool at this time was being pulled in several different directions from perspectives including conservative, social democratic and radical but the fluidity of the term 'youth club' or 'youth work' meant tension and tolerance simultaneously. However, as time went on, youth work became about being flexible enough to be whoever young people needed workers to be. While official funding streams and project work tried to focus on particular groups; urban, black or delinquent, progressive and social democratic perspectives held by the new generation of youth workers encouraged young people to define their own identities and needs. The contests concerning the identity and purpose of youth clubs continued.

²¹⁰ Bernard Davies, *Threatening Youth* offers a particularly good viewpoint on this.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

This thesis engages with a set of multidisciplinary debates about how young people have been defined, problematized, and shaped by youth welfare provision in two case study locations in post-war Britain. It has shown how local voluntary youth associations and clubs in South London and Liverpool were part of the mixed economy of welfare, on the very boundary of state, voluntary and private action. Sitting on this boundary resulted in institutional adaptability to local circumstances and emerging agendas but has also meant uncertainty in terms of the funding, status and the overarching purpose of the Youth Service.

This thesis has looked at some of the most important themes in voluntary youth work in post-war Britain. It has shown how youth work changed between 1958 and 1985 to be more permissive and informal, while at the same time placing ever greater emphasis on the professional youth worker. However, clubs and associations continued to be reliant on volunteers and amateur leaders, showing professionalisation to be an incomplete and an unrealisable aspiration for a non-statutory service by 1985. The 1960s and 1970s saw the emergence of a new generation of youth workers who did not subscribe to the traditional model of youth work for character building, education and citizenship advocated by the boys' club movement.¹ Instead these workers saw their role in terms of a wider educational remit, links to community and political activism, and an acceptance of the terms under which young people themselves were prepared to use the youth service. In some cases, this progressive youth work had a radical edge which was sharpened by local experiences of unemployment, race, gender, class and poverty, especially in the late 1970s and 1980s, and especially in Lewisham and Liverpool.

By the 1980s youth clubs and associations had engaged with the issues of gender and race within youth clubs. This is a strong contrast with the earlier period which saw inequalities largely unchallenged. The successes of youth work on race and gender problems were often found within

¹ Freeman, 'Muscular Quakerism'; Mills, "An instruction in good citizenship"; Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society*

the progressive or radical stream of youth work, but it is fair to say that ultimately, they were limited. Class too remained problematic at the Youth Service struggled to reconcile a universalist aim with the priorities imposed by limited funding.

Additionally, the relationship of youth voluntary associations and clubs with the state changed between 1958 and 1985. State support initially increased and voluntary youth clubs did well in the 1960s, but financial pressures remained consistent and by the 1980s changes to state support had begun to bite. This meant that increasingly, government support for youth work focussed on innovation and targeting certain types of young person such as the potential delinquent. As a result, during the 1970s and 1980s clubs and associations saw further challenges to their sense of what they could achieve and for whom.

As well as change between 1958 and 1985, this thesis has also charted the differences in youth clubs and voluntary provision in South London and Liverpool. Liverpool, with a long tradition of voluntary effort and mutual aid via the UVO, was more reliant on voluntarism to run the city's youth clubs.² Liverpool also needed a unified youth voluntary association for boys', girls' and mixed youth work to face the scale of the economic challenges posed by a city which was experiencing chronic industrial decline. By creating the MYA, youth voluntary organisations in Liverpool put local needs above the traditions of youth work. This places them at the vanguard of the changes in working with young people during this period. This can be seen in their innovative project work with detached workers and an experimental club in an area with high rates of juvenile delinquency. South London had two associations with different strengths: the LFBC represented the traditions of the boys' club movement and the London Union focussed on development and projects. However, it is important to note that neither of these approaches had much appeal to black youth clubs in Lewisham at this time. These different ways that associations were structured in the two case studies meant that in Liverpool, conflict about the role and meaning of youth work took place

² Simey, *Charitable Effort in Liverpool*

internally, while in London, this conflict encouraged further specialisation within the two associations.

The scale of issues that clubs and associations were dealing with also varied. In Liverpool, attempts to tackle unemployment appeared earlier and by the late 1970s were perceived as almost futile. In Lewisham, youth workers saw unemployment disproportionately affect young black men. However, in both cases very similar MSC schemes were the only solution for which funding was readily available. This is perhaps the starkest example of how national approaches to single issues failed to take account of local complexity. However, there were other examples of local association providing the flexibility to approach issues differently such the London Union which embraced girls' and anti-sexist work much more wholeheartedly than any of the other associations.

A full comparison of youth cultures over time in both South London and Liverpool has not been possible. However, comparing the experiences of interviewees has provided the basis to examine some of the factors shaping youth club and wider cultures. In Liverpool, merseybeat provided a source of pride for local youth reinforced by a strong sense of regional identity. However, London saw a dynamic set of youth cultures which drew on a wide variety of influences and identities and interpreted them in very local ways. Youth clubs have provided a crucial perspective on how youth cultures have been shaped and experienced outside of the traditional commercial spaces with which they have often been associated.

Youth clubs stand out from other youth organisations in the post-war period. Organisations like the Scouts had more coherent identities shaped by central leadership in the form of the Chief Scout, uniforms and other motifs which communicated their function and purpose. Youth clubs did not. They had the fluidity and freedom to shape their own identities and purposes in ways not always consistent with the central policy agenda or wider interpretations of the needs of teenagers. Clubs could be shaped to fit a range of identities based on class, race, gender and culture as well as to suit a range of local requirements. Clubs embodied resistance as much as they were sites of citizen-making. The break from tradition and fluid identity which characterised voluntary youth work at this time deserves to sit alongside literature about a range of other youth groups and

movements. Further research is needed, especially on rural provision and in new towns and suburban estates, to further understand the dynamics of interactions with other youth groups and the role of space and place in youth work at this time, but it is clear that the neglect of post-war youth clubs in literature to date has been undeserved.

This research has also contributed to literatures on welfare and voluntarism, showing the unique role of the youth association in local networks of provision for youth, especially in Liverpool. This helps us understand not only how the boundary between state and voluntary welfare has changed over time, but also how it has had local variants. Youth associations and clubs were at the heart of the mixed economy of welfare for youth because as well as sitting on the boundary of state and voluntary provision, these bodies also had to contend with the commercial alternatives available to young people at this time. Furthermore, this thesis contributes to our understanding of how service-providing organisations have sought to professionalise since the 1960s and the wider history of voluntary action, both of which still contains many gaps.

Finally, this research offers insight into how we have understood young people in the post-war period by looking at a site of everyday leisure for about one third of them. It is clear that young people used youth clubs as more than a social or leisure service. Clubs fitted in with wider youth lifestyles and cultures and were not incompatible with a range of visible subcultural youth groups. In considering the history of youth and youth cultures the intersection of the commercial, rebellious and everyday has been highlighted, with Liverpool and merseybeat more prominent in the 1960s, and South London offering more evidence for continuous development throughout the period under examination. Using the site of the youth club has offered a more rounded appreciation of ordinary post-war youth lifestyles and the immense variety contained within them. It has highlighted how class, gender and race shaped the experiences within youth clubs in a way which was often understood implicitly and also how the youth club challenges an understanding of youth as a homogenous group in the post-war period.

Not only has the evidence presented in this thesis enriched a hitherto poor historical understanding of post-war youth clubs and voluntary associations by looking at particular case

studies, it has also contributed to a set of multidisciplinary questions about how policy is made, at what level, and the agency and voice that has been allowed to young people by adult society. National policy proved limited in the case of the non-statutory Youth Service and the expert voice of youth workers on young people has struggled to be heard. Harder to hear still, have been the voices of young people themselves at a time when much more attention was given to the way they looked and their potential for deviancy. Restoring the everyday voices and lifestyles of young people in the past via youth clubs at a time of further welfare retrenchment not only preserves the history of youth clubs at a time when many clubs are witnessing the final chapter in their own histories, it also raises questions about how young people's voices are articulated and heard in the present day.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Oral History Interviewees

Pseudonym

Interview Date

Anne

14th August 2014

Anne attended an informal club at her local Roman Catholic Church Hall in Forest Hill, Lewisham in the mid-1970s. She describes the main activities as talking and listening to music. In her club there was little supervision. The young couple who ran the marriage preparation class at the church opened the club and sat in the kitchen annex area, available to, but removed from the young people in the club. She attended the club for around 18 months, during which time the club was used as a staging post for trips to the pub. She stopped spending time at the club as the pub became more acceptable to her parents though she continued to attend the church.

Dennis

19th September 2014

Dennis spoke to the author only with the guarantee of full anonymity because of his current position within youth work in London, where he is in charge of one of London's most prominent youth participation schemes. He has attended, worked in and managed several youth clubs and projects in South London since the 1970s. As a lifelong resident of London, he has decades of experience of youth work, as well as postgraduate qualifications in the social sciences. Dennis has also been an active trade unionist and political activist, including travelling to Liverpool and Spain to participate in workers demonstrations and helping in Leicester during the Miners' Strike.

James

24th September 2014

James worked for the LCSS in the 1960s, leaving Liverpool for a couple of years and then returning to work at the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Liverpool. He has experience of serving on management committees of youth clubs as well as servicing the LYOC which was the main co-ordinating body for youth work in Liverpool. He has extensive knowledge of key voluntary sector and youth work personnel and of the events leading up to the merger of Liverpool Boys' Association and Liverpool Union of Youth Clubs in 1969 as he worked for the LCSS staff member who brokered the merger. When he returned to Liverpool he went to work at the Extra Mural Department of University of Liverpool where he was involved in local social research and training for voluntary sector organisations.

John

27th August 2014

John is a social worker in Lewisham and former Boy Scout. After his undergraduate degree he began social work training, and during this time, he volunteered as and subsequently became a part-time paid youth worker. The first scheme John was involved in was an Intermediate Treatment course in Lewisham. This ran for several weeks over the summer in 1976. The following two summers, 1977-1978, John worked in a playscheme run by the Residents Association and catering to all the children and young people of one housing estate in Lewisham, initially as a volunteer and the following year as a paid worker. This involved working with a mix of ages, genders and ethnicities. John also then undertook work experience and work in children's homes in the borough. In his interview, John also reflects on his own youth growing up in Lewisham in the 1960s, including his involvement in live music and football cultures.

Katherine

24th September 2014

While training as a teacher Katherine spent her summers in Northern Ireland doing outdoor theatre with young people on the Shankhill Road. After training as a teacher she went to work in one of the Village Colleges set up by Henry Morris in Cambridgeshire where she assisted with the running of the youth club. In the early 1970s Katherine applied for and was appointed to the detached youth work project where she worked until 1984. In 1982 she wrote a book about the project called *Street Mates*. After leaving detached youth work Katherine worked in the education department of the local authority for ten years.

Keith**28th July 2014**

Keith attended a youth club in Lambeth in the 1970s. In his interview he describes at length his involvement with a youth club and a range of other activities in particular music and football. Keith has a history of criminal and drug-taking activity, having spent time in detention centres, which he described interwoven with his youth club activity. He also considered himself a member of different subcultural groups at different times including skinhead and punk. He now runs a youth sports programme in South London.

Lee**14th September 2014**

Lee attended clubs as a young person. He volunteered in several black youth clubs in Lewisham in the 1970s and 1980s while he was a student at Goldsmiths College studying sociology. He spoke extensively about the place of race in the lives of young people and in the locality at a time where racism was a particular problem for Lewisham from the perspective of a white volunteer worker. He has experience of volunteering across different clubs and within the wider Sound System culture. Lee went on to become an academic and has written extensively on race, culture and young people, something he says was in part inspired by some of these formative volunteering experiences.

Michael**22nd September 2014**

Michael is the sole interviewee to have extensive experience in both the South London and Liverpool areas from the late 1960s until the early 1980s. He trained as a teacher in Exeter but decided to go into youth work. He ran a local authority club in Waterloo in the mid-1970s and was involved in the local Trade Union and the Southwark Youth Workers Group. He moved to Liverpool to run a Catholic Club in a deprived area of the city in approximately 1982. He has worked as a trainer for youth workers and running youth sport in the city and retired when the youth service was moved under the youth justice remit in the city.

Peter**18th September 2014**

Peter volunteered at a local club and Toynbee Hall University Settlement in East London when he was studying at LSE. He also worked in youth clubs, in training youth leaders for a local authority in the south east of England. Later in his career he worked as HM Inspector of youth services. He was a member of the executive and later trustee of London Youth, the modern day version of the LFBC and London Union which merged in 1997. He has also been involved for many years in a large mixed club in South London developed by the LFBC in the early 1960s, where he remains a trustee.

Steve**9th September 2014**

Steve was interviewed in his capacity as a youth club attendee in the 1960s and early 1970s and as a youth leader in the 1970s and 1980s. Steve attended and runs a large mixed club in Lambeth, South London. He began attending as a young boy and was very involved in football and other sporting activities. As an older member he also began volunteering to help out with a younger group. By the later 1970s he was working part-time at the club as well as volunteering. He entered formal training for youth leadership soon afterwards, returning to his club afterwards where he has worked ever since.

Tony**23rd September 2014**

Tony was born in Liverpool shortly after the Second World War ended and as a child and teenager attended the Florence Institute for Boys in the South of the city. He worked as a screen printer before being asked to help out with a local church youth club. He liked the work and went on to train as a full-time youth worker at the National Training Centre in Leicester. He returned to the same youth club as their full-time leader before joining Katherine (above) as a detached youth worker in about 1974. He stayed in this role until the early 1980s when he became the Senior (and then Principal) Field Officer for the Merseyside Youth Association. He was one of the early founders of the Federation for Detached Youth Work and in 2014 was awarded an MBE for services to youth work in Liverpool.

Wendy**29th July 2014**

Wendy is a retired teacher who lives in Eltham, South London. Before teacher training she attended an informal club at her local church. It is described as centring on a weekly debate and regular dances. The club was loosely run by the curate. Later, with her husband, Wendy volunteered at another informal club, also a church club. In this role she arranged holidays for young people as a nominally older adult.

In addition to the above formal interviews I have been grateful for the host and listeners of the BBC Merseyside Morning Show, which hosted a phone in and brief interview with the author on the topic of local youth clubs on 22nd November 2013 which provided many interesting anecdotes to complement this research. Furthermore this thesis benefitted from informal discussion with the Chair of the Management Committee and Archives Group of the Shrewsbury House Club, and the present day staff of the MYA.

Appendix Two: Club 'Biographies'

Alford House Youth Club

Alford House Youth Club is a mixed club in the London Borough of Lambeth close to the border with the London Borough of Southwark. It is a large building with several parts including two large gymnasias, several large activity rooms, a snooker hall, canteen and sound proofed basement. It was originally established in a local mission in the late nineteenth century but by 1958 was a more secular club which benefitted from a longstanding link with Mill Hill School. In 1959 Karel Reisz made the film *We are the Lambeth Boys* about the lives of some of the young members of Alford House Club, which was followed up in two documentaries by BBC Manchester in 1985. In the early 1960s it was a place where Mod and Rocker rivalries were played out with the club forced to close briefly in 1962. In the 1970s the Club was grant maintained by Lambeth Council but has remained technically voluntary throughout its history.

Pagnell Street Youth and Community Centre/Moonshot

Moonshot was established as a club for black youth in Lewisham, with 80% of the membership coming from West Indian backgrounds in the 1970s. Pagnell Street Youth and Community Centre was a new building opened in 1981 to house the existing Moonshot Youth Club and additional community facilities such as a library, young mothers groups, and dominoes club in the wake of the New Cross Fire. Moonshot formed part of a network of local black youth and community facilities which mixed race politics, welfare and local Sound System culture. Moonshot's original founder, Sybil Phoenix, was the first black woman to be awarded an MBE in Britain for her youth and charity work in Lewisham.

Shrewsbury House Youth Club

Shrewsbury House began as a mission-based Boys' Club in Liverpool in 1903 before moving to its own premises in 1906 where it remained, avoiding the bombing during the Second World War until urban renewal saw the site cleared and a new facility developed near to Everton Park which opened in 1974. Shrewsbury House Boys' Club is linked to St Peter's Church and Hostel, both of which are on the site of the new club. The Club has also benefitted from the long-standing patronage of Shrewsbury House School, whose alumni include the 'Minister for Merseyside' Michael Heseltine. A yearly week-long camp from the club to the school, and reciprocal annual visit to Liverpool by some pupils has formed a long established part of the links between the two organisations. Since 1974 the club has been mixed, and the new building includes a gymnasium, music room, canteen, mezzanine with snooker tables, a junior room and a girls' room.

The Bronte Youth and Community Centre

The Bronte Youth and Community Centre was opened in 1963 in a deprived area of Liverpool which included the St Andrew's Garden's or 'Bullring' 1930s housing development. It was initially sited in three empty shops and the location was chosen because of the area's reputation as a juvenile delinquency blackspot, which later caught the attention of Howard Parker who wrote *The View from the Boys* about the young delinquents in the area. 'The Bronte' was an experimental centre of the type advocated by the Albemarle Report. The Management Committee, under the chairmanship of John Moores Junior (of the Littlewoods family) with the support of the two general secretaries of the LBA and Liverpool Union (later joined as the MYA) decided to experiment by only

developing the front of the premises into a coffee bar and allowing the members to both initiate the activity programme and the development and decoration of the rest of the building.

The club had difficult early years but was popular not only with local teenagers but local residents who felt the centre provided a much-needed community facility. When the area was redeveloped in the early 1970s, a new centre, including facilities for other community groups was purpose-built nearby. The Centre has included a full-time welfare worker (in this period a local nun), a neighbourhood association and a parents committee as well as catering for groups from infants to the elderly.

Anfield Boys' Club

The origins of Anfield House Youth Club are unclear as there are no surviving records. It is included in this research because papers pertaining to its redevelopment and decision to become a mixed youth club in the early 1960s have been preserved in the archives of the Merseyside Youth Association. The Anfield Boys'/Youth club was typical of the kind of redevelopment and change advocated by the Albemarle Report.

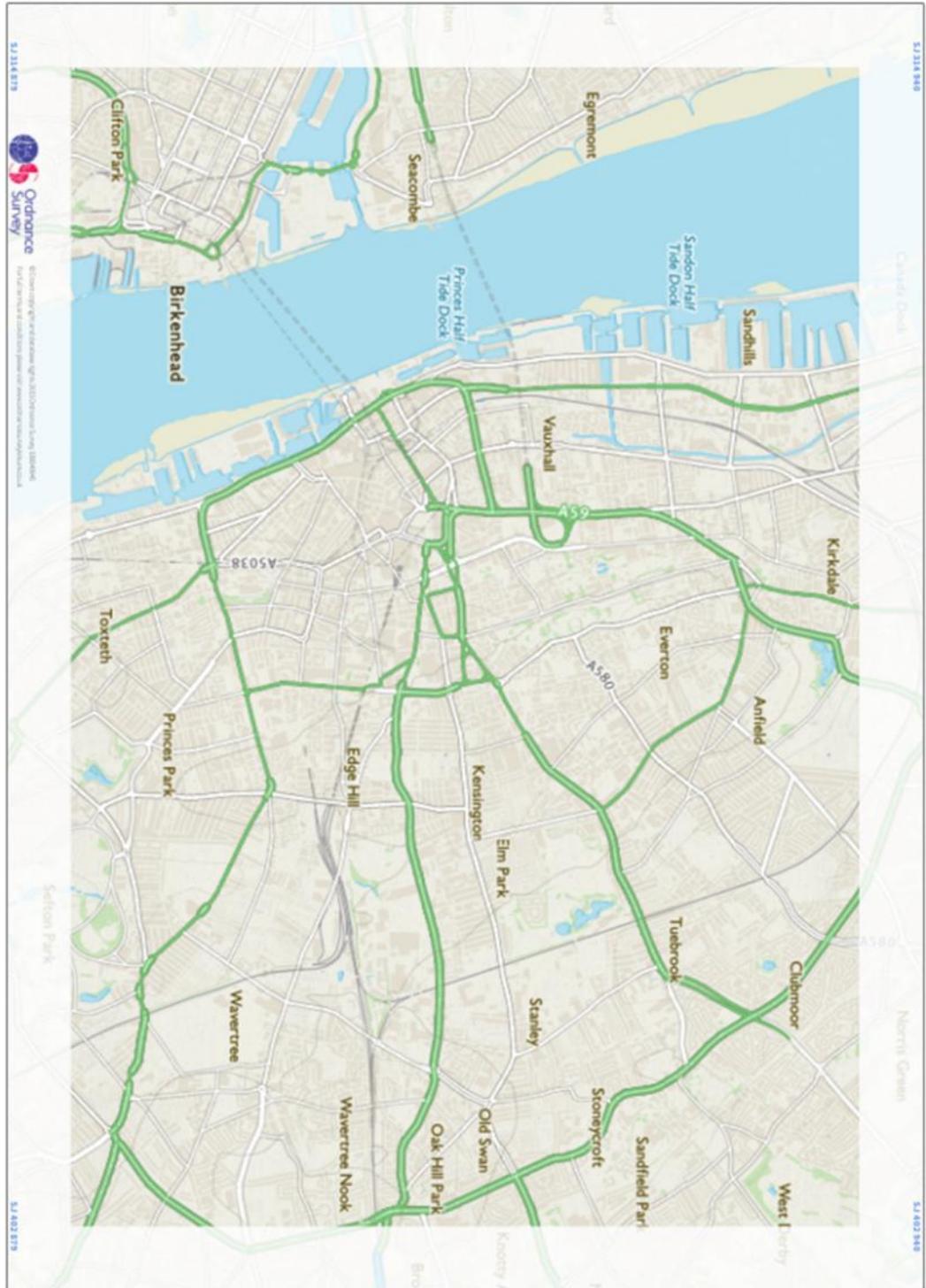
The Florence Institute

The Florence Institute for Boys was opened in 1889 by local magistrate, philanthropist and Mayor of Liverpool, Bernard Hall, who named after his late daughter Florence. It is a large red brick building which accommodated many sports, activities and interest groups. It was particularly notable as a place for young musicians in Liverpool to learn their instruments, practice and perform with their bands. The Institute claims Gerry Marsden and his band Gerry and the Pacemakers among its former members. Like many Boys' Clubs it became mixed in the post-war period. It closed in September 1985 due to financial problems following government cuts. It has since reopened after a significant community campaign and restoration of the virtually derelict building.

Appendix Three: Maps



Map One: London Borough Map (map courtesy of London Councils – for an interactive map of political control of each Borough over the last fifty years see <http://boroughs50.londoncouncils.gov.uk/almanac/>, accessed 4th August 2015)



<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/osmaps/>

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Map Two: Central Liverpool and surrounding districts, Ordnance Survey: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/osmaps/>, accessed 4th August 2015