

Craigmillar Learning for Community Participation and Action report: Chapter 1b – a full introduction

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A 'research group' of local people - to locate key issues and concerns.

Please note: the views of individual people, groups and organisations used within this report, and those of the lead researcher in expressing his interpretations and views in this report, cannot be assumed to be those of the Craigmillar Capacity Building Project.

Likewise, it should not be assumed that by contributing to the research any of the people or organisations who have done so, *necessarily agree* with the lead researcher's interpretations, views and conclusions, or the proposed outcomes and actions within a learning programme.



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A full list of those who wished to be acknowledged is found in the separate Chapter 12: 'Background information (appendices)'.

Thanks also to the following for allowing the use of text from one of their publications:

Craigmillar Communiversity (see chapters 7 and 9)
The Estate of Bill Douglas (see chapter 7).

Chapter 1b: Full introduction to this report on community research into lifelong learning for people active in the community

Introduction:

This chapter introduces the report by:

- **Firstly** - giving an overview of the report and research including other chapters in the report (pages 4–6)
- **Secondly** - looking in more detail at ideas on learning with people active in the community (pages 7-16)
- **Thirdly** - looking in more detail at participatory research and how this research was actually done (pages 17-27).

This is so that you can have knowledge and ideas to draw upon as you read some of the other chapters. This knowledge can help you think about what sorts of skills, knowledge and learning are useful to people who are active within the community; and about what it means to take part in research.

The main aim of this report is to share what people have said with other people who want to learn more about the skills and knowledge needed to be active. In doing this, this report can:

- support people in learning more about community participation from others who are active within the community;
- support community groups in learning more and seeing opportunities;
- support people in understanding the process of community regeneration in Craigmillar and the context in which it is happening – social, economic and political.

In order to help share this information the report has been broken down into separate chapters of between 10 and 25 pages. Each chapter has a particular theme so that you can choose the one most relevant to what you want to learn more about.

Individual chapters can easily be downloaded from the internet at www.craigmillarcapacitybuilding.org within the empowering communities' pages, or are available from the Craigmillar Capacity Building Project at 63 Niddrie Mains Terrace, Edinburgh EH16 4NX; or 0131-661 0200 (phone); or 0131 661 5826 (fax).

Overview of this report and research: the other chapters

The other chapters in this report look at the following areas:

- Chapter 2: Understanding community and participation in Craigmillar.
- Chapter 3: Local campaigning.
- Chapter 4: Working with people.
- Chapter 5: Organising meetings and events
- Chapter 6a: Community Organisations - Working on a Management Committee or Board of a local organisation
- Chapter 6b: Community initiatives
- Chapter 7: Lifelong learning and community participation
- Chapter 8: Participating in decision-making and partnership-working
- Chapter 9: Community regeneration
- Chapter 10: Local decision-making and the wider world
- Chapter 11: Conclusions for a learning programme
- Chapter 12: Background information (appendices)

Each chapter gives information and views from local active people, who are active as volunteers, community activists, members of organisations and people who are 'helping out. There is information on:

- what they do, how they do it, and what is working well for them;
- dilemmas and difficulties that they are working towards resolving.

This information is broken up into themes or sections within each chapter. At the end of each section there are comments from the researcher on what this means for a learning programme for people who are active in the community.

Chapter 1a is particularly useful to read. If you read it first, it will help you understand what the research aims to achieve and will deepen your understanding of other chapters. There is, however, no need to read all the chapters in the report to understand the one that interests you – each chapter can stand by itself.

Overview of the report and research: why a learning programme for community participation and regeneration in Craigmillar?

For at least forty years, but doubtless ever since there has been public housing in the areas of Craigmillar, Niddrie, Newcraighall, Bingham and Magdalene, there have been active people in the community, here, who have sought to:

- support and care for each other
- campaign and fight for the community's rights and for its future
- learn from each other and find other people and training that are useful to the community.

Such community action is described in detail by Helen Crummy in her book, 'Let the people sing!'¹ and demonstrates the depth of knowledge, skill and commitment that the people of Craigmillar, and the Craigmillar Festival Society, developed over decades – during the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s. This goes on into this goes into this new century. So there is extensive existing knowledge held within this community about community participation and how to do it – a pool of community knowledge and skill.

There is also a continuing urgency and relevance to this knowledge, skill and learning, for, 'Greater Craigmillar' as a community, remains one of the poorest in Scotland². Learning and sharing the skills and knowledge of community participation becomes crucial when you recognise the very real and demanding struggles that people face in their lives, day to day.

'Regeneration' is the general word used to cover ongoing plans and action to develop and improve housing, jobs and business, community facilities and community life, transport, education and learning, and health and well-being. One vital element of 'regeneration' is the ability or capacity of the community to direct and shape this process – that is to build the future that makes sense to it.

A programme of learning for local people can build on the existing knowledge and experience held within the community, and contribute to the community's future.

¹ For a copy of Helen Crummy's book, first published in 1992, 'Let the people sing! A story of Craigmillar' contact the Craigmillar Communiiversity. Contact details are on the internet at: www.communiversity.org.uk

² The Scottish Executive have produced the Scottish Indices of Deprivation 2003 which compare different areas of Scotland by 'factors' such as income, employment, health, education and access to services. By combining these different factors to produce a 'multiple index of deprivation' the most deprived areas of Scotland can be pinpointed. The (electoral) ward of Craigmillar is presently rated the 4th most deprived ward in Scotland. The Craigmillar Social Inclusion Partnership is made up of this ward and parts of Bingham. See the internet, www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/social/siod-00.asp, for more information.

In order to support the sharing of this 'pool of community knowledge', the Craigmillar Capacity Building Project has secured European Social Fund (ESF)³ funding for two phases of work within this project:

- firstly, research into the skills and knowledge that local active people need to have to develop their community action further – that is what is this pool of knowledge like;
- and secondly, creating and trying out a programme of learning with local people that would also be available on the web (internet) – this would include a short survey that would check which areas of community knowledge are presently most in demand.

This report looks at what has been learnt from local people during the first 'research' phase of work.

By placing both this research report and the learning programme developed from it on the web, so that it is easily accessible, it is expected that other communities across Scotland and further afield will be able to learn from Craigmillar's experience – and share their experiences and knowledge with this area too.

³ Money from the European Community which supports economic and social development. Look on the internet at www.objective3.org/Web/Site/home/obj3_home.asp, to find out more.

Overview of this report and research: seeing this research as a process of learning leading into action, and not as an evaluation that tries to make 'objective' judgements on what is happening.

This research is an opportunity for learning from local people who are active in Craigmillar about the sorts of work in the community that they do and the sorts of skills, knowledge and learning that they find useful. The process is one of learning rather than one of evaluation.

Evaluations tend to focus on making judgements about what is working well and what isn't it. Processes that emphasise learning tend to focus on 'setting-up' potential discussions between people and groups by highlighting what they can gain from talking to each other, in particular by suggesting:

- useful connections to make
- local knowledge and skills held by local people and groups
- areas of concern, difference and conflict that could be worked with.

Research that focuses on learning gives people a starting point for discussions, perhaps with people they wouldn't usually have the chance to talk with. So this is very much a starting-point for 'shared learning' ... which local people and local organisations can use to work out what they want to do next.

It aims not to get caught up in making comparisons and judgement between people and organisations in the community. Instead, it aims to demonstrate the opportunities and difficulties that a learning programme for local active people needs to grapple with if it is to work meaningfully with them in the work they do within their communities.

It is clearly influenced then, like much thinking on learning for communities, by the work of Paulo Friere⁴, which emphasises the importance of:

- dialogue – talking with people within communities, informal learning from them, respecting their knowledge and experience;
- informed action (praxis) – moving learning from this dialogue on to action within the community that builds the strength of people and their community.

⁴ For more information on the thinking of Paulo Friere and his writings go on the internet to: www.infed.org/thinkers/et-freir.htm

Learning: what is lifelong learning?

ESF funding is focused on improving lifelong learning in Scotland and across the European Community. The Scottish Executive's present strategy for lifelong learning⁵ states that:

"Lifelong learning policy in Scotland is about personal fulfilment and enterprise; employability and adaptability; active citizenship and social inclusion.

This strategy document is principally concerned with post-compulsory education, training and learning. Lifelong learning encompasses the whole range of learning: formal and informal learning, workplace learning, and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that people acquire in day-to-day experiences."

This gives a very broad, inclusive picture of what lifelong learning is about and includes the following areas of people's lives:

- Work, enterprise and employment (economic life)
- Interest and enjoyment (social life)
- Community participation and active citizenship (civic life)

The strategy also gives 5 person-centred goals, one of which stresses that this strategy:

*"will help create a Scotland where ... people have the chance to learn, irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances"*⁶

There is then a clear recognition by the Executive that not everyone has the same access to learning and life opportunities.

It also recognises community-based learning as vital to the development of lifelong learning:

*"Community learning and development is the third strand of our work on raising participation in learning. Informal and community-based learning plays a crucial role in supporting people to engage in or to return to learning and can often be a first step back into more formal further or higher education for people who have come disengaged from learning."*⁷

The Scottish Executive takes, then, a very positive view of lifelong learning within the community, seeing it as an opportunity for bringing people back into

⁵ See page 8 of the Scottish Executive's (2003) Life Through LEARNING Through life: The Lifelong Learning Strategy for Scotland. See the report on the internet at www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/lifelong/lism.pdf

⁶ See page 7 of the Scottish Executive report on lifelong learning – as note 5 above.

⁷ See page 40 of the Scottish Executive report on lifelong learning – as note 5 above.

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education, which in turn brings benefits for employment, community development and personal development.

Learning: what is community learning and development?

Another angle on learning, called Community Learning and Development (CLD), is also considered a priority by national policymakers. The Scottish Executive's Guidance for Community Learning and Development, which is aimed at Community Planning Partnerships, develops the link between community learning and lifelong learning.

*"Community learning and development describes a way of working with and supporting communities. We see community learning and development as central to 'social capital' – a way of working with communities to increase the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems and grasp opportunities."*⁸

Thus community learning and development is a particular approach to building the strength of communities, and the Scottish Executive guidance sees CLD as being crucial in a wide range of areas of policy:

*"Its aim is to embed the principles of community learning and development more firmly within key Scottish Executive priorities such as the improvement of public services, community regeneration, social inclusion, lifelong learning, the forthcoming national youth work strategy and active citizenship."*⁹

The Executive also want to make sure that community learning and development is valued, and given the same value as other forms of learning:

*"Community learning and development is a key feature of our approach to lifelong learning. We believe it should be accorded the same status as the work of schools, colleges, universities and work-based learning providers."*¹⁰

The Scottish Executive's policy statements give value to both 'lifelong learning within communities' and 'community learning and development' in creating change for both individual and communities. They see 'learning' as one of the key forces that can drive forward social and economic regeneration within communities – in developing a learning and enterprise culture.

The broadness of these themes and the 'common-sense' feel to them can lead you into thinking that there are no disputes about the value of different types of lifelong learning and community learning and development. In fact there is considerable dispute as to whether lifelong learning, community learning and development, and so community regeneration can really make a difference to the lives of people living in deprived communities.

⁸ See page 1 of Scottish Executive (2004) Working and learning together to build stronger communities: Scottish Executive Guidance for Community Learning and Development. The report is on the internet at:

www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/lccs_008211.pdf

⁹ See page 1 of Scottish Executive guidance – as note 8 above.

¹⁰ See page iii of Scottish Executive guidance – as note 8 above.

Learning: a sceptical view of lifelong learning for communities.

Others can be more sceptical as to whether such a 'consensus' about the value of lifelong learning, community learning and community regeneration can be so easily agreed. Jane Thompson¹¹ asks questions about whether lifelong learning and public participation are such easy answers to regeneration and poverty.

Firstly, she sees the idea of 'lifelong learning' as an easy way of disguising conflicts between different people and views:

*'One reason why lifelong learning seems to be used with widespread approval is precisely because it glosses over other ways of thinking and speaking about education. Now competing interests and different agendas can shelter together under the same umbrella, providing an illusion of consensus.'*¹²

Secondly, she sees 'community' as another easy word that hides the truth about poverty:

'Community nowadays is another name for paradise lost, but one to which we hope to return. That is why we eagerly seek out the roads – community development and community renewal, for example – that might take us there.'

*More cynically, community is also a term that gets used to fabricate a more positive and attractive image than the one widely associated with sink estates, deprived neighbourhoods and ghettos, on those occasions when a feel-good factor is required.'*¹³

Her approach is to see lifelong learning as an opportunity to get people thinking about what is possible. Whilst it is often very difficult to engage in learning activities in the most deprived neighbourhoods, it is important to persist because it can 'anticipate a more egalitarian society'¹⁴. Lifelong learning does not have the power by itself to change economic structures and policy but it can at least get people thinking about a vision of a fairer, more just and equal society. Her conclusion is that:

*'The challenge facing lifelong learning practitioners therefore is to establish a committed dialogue with the residents of deprived neighbourhoods, in order to develop the kinds of educational resourcing that makes sense to them, and which can make a difference to their lives.'*¹⁵

¹¹ See Jane Thompson's (2001) report, 'Rerooting lifelong learning: resourcing neighbourhood renewal.' Details from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education on the Internet at: <http://www.niace.org.uk/>.

¹² See page 8 of Jane Thompson's report – see note above.

¹³ See page 36 of Jane Thompson's report – see note above.

¹⁴ See page 37 of Jane Thompson's report – see note above.

¹⁵ See page 38 of Jane Thompson's report – see note above.

She points to the value of people and groups in deprived communities contributing to learning through their own stories and visions ... *“they contribute immediacy and authentic knowledge derived from the experience of living in such contexts”*¹⁶ ... and they can help to highlight the difference between visionary statements about lifelong learning and the day-to-day reality of what’s actually happening in people’s lives.

It is this difference between, on the one hand, the rich vision that policymakers paint of what learning can achieve for communities, and on the other hand, people’s actual experiences of living and learning in deprived communities that deeply concern and anger her. She highlights, for instance, the terrible struggles of many women in deprived communities who are bringing up their families, trying to make a living, wanting space for their ‘own’ lives, and yet are still concerned for their wider community.

Lifelong learning, community learning and community regeneration must genuinely link-up with people’s hopes and needs if they are to mean anything within deprived communities. People are looking for activities and resources that they can use to make a real difference. And it is in their stories that the real learning can be found.

¹⁶ See page 23 of Jane Thompson’s report – see note 11 above.

Learning: a community as 'half full or half empty'?

John Kretzmann and John McKnight¹⁷ take a third approach to lifelong learning, community learning and community regeneration, through what they call 'Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)'. They describe two paths for community regeneration:

- the first, and most popular, concentrates on a community's problems
- the second, begins with a community's strengths (ABCD).

According to Kretzmann and McKnight, the first approach, with its emphasis on 'need', leads to money going to services rather than the people who live there, and perpetuating 'need' in the search for more funding to sustain further services.

The second, Asset Based Community Development, seeks to develop a community's ability to lead and to set the agenda, with its emphasis on finding 'strengths' and what communities can already do. It aims to develop these strengths through working with the community to recognise its strengths and develop its assets.

Kretzmann and McKnight are clear that communities do need additional resources - they cannot be independent of the rest of the world. But they say that communities are already achieving remarkable things and need to be developing their own agenda for change.

Their work is in response to America's experience of urban decay as a consequence of economic changes where industrial jobs disappeared, leaving working class urban communities without job opportunities, save for low paid service jobs.

This all feels very familiar territory. Craigmillar, too, has experienced economic decline with the surrounding factories closing in the area during the 60s, 70s and 80s, leaving working class families without opportunities for making a decent living. And Craigmillar, too, has a long-standing tradition of community activism, of developing its community assets, and achieving remarkable things.

Kretzmann and McKnight take a broad view of 'community assets' they include:

- the knowledge and skills of local people and the relationships between them
- the resources and assets of community associations and organisations including their members, staff and buildings.

¹⁷ See John P. Kretzmann and John McKnight (1993) 'Building Communities from the Inside Out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's asset'. Go on the internet to: www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html

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Kretzmann and McKnight point to a view of community that sees strengths rather than deficits; and their question, '*is the cup half full or half empty?*' is a spur to taking this perspective.

Craigmillar has often been painted in negative colours, particularly in the press, but also in the research statistics – what if we started by recognising that 'the cup is more than half full'?

Learning: valuing the diversity of people and knowledge within a community

Sometimes the word 'community' itself can give a sense of an area or neighbourhood that is both full of people who are the same, who think the same and who have one set of common experiences. People in communities often hold a lot in common but there are also many differences; communities are full of both common and diverse experiences

In their guide to mapping community assets, John Kretzmann and John McKnight¹⁸ point to understanding both individual and organisational capacity.

To them this means finding out more about what all sorts of people can do and give - people such as:

- young people
- older people
- people with disabilities
- people on low incomes.

And finding out about what all sorts of local associations can do and give, such as:

- neighbourhood and community action groups
- religious and faith groups
- cultural organisations.

And finding out what all sorts of local institutions can do and give:

- libraries
- schools
- community colleges
- police
- hospitals.

And finding out what a community's economic assets are:

- social enterprises such as credit unions
- resources such as abandoned spaces, recyclable materials

Their aim is to *mobilise* the entire community – with all its diversity and assets.

¹⁸ See John P. Kretzmann and John McKnight (1993) *Building Communities from the Inside Out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago: ACTA Publications

Learning: researcher's comment on lifelong learning, community learning and community regeneration

This brief look at learning, and in particular lifelong learning, within communities has covered a lot of ground and leaves a lot of questions open for more consideration during the report.

Where there is potential for *some* common ground between the three different views on learning in deprived communities, is in the sense that people within communities have experiences to tell and knowledge to share. The Scottish Executive seems to recognise the value of learning within communities. Jane Thompson is calling for 'committed dialogue', a deep, ongoing and action-orientated discussion with people in communities. John McKnight and John Kretzman see that communities already have much to offer and need to focus on developing their strength further.

So what might such a 'committed dialogue' be like? Drawing on these 3 views it would seem likely that it would involve:

- the full diversity of the community and its organisations, networks and assets – and overcoming divisions within the community;
- services, funders, politicians, and policy-makers who are prepared to listen and learn, and to join with the community on the community's terms;
- raising questions, dilemmas and conflicts that have to be worked with over a period of time;
- taking a longer-term perspective and 'anticipating' a fairer, more equal society – seeing the need for political change as well as asset-building;
- recognising, valuing and building on the strengths of people and community organisations already have – so that communities have genuine power in this dialogue;
- taking on the 'whole picture' (holistic) of social, economic, political and cultural issues;
- doing things and learning from actions through people's stories and experiences.

In the other chapters of this report, the researcher returns to this idea of lifelong learning as 'committed dialogue' to see what light it can cast on local people's experiences and the development of a learning programme for community participation and action.

The research: the planning

The research aims to use a *participatory and learning approach*; that is doing research that involves people from the community in giving more than brief answers, but research which aims to discuss with people and learn from the fuller and richer picture of their experiences.

The research also aimed to be a piece of *market research* that looked at both 'need' and 'demand' for lifelong learning within the community. To help understand 'need' the researcher planned to talk with approximately 80 people¹⁹ about what they did in the community and what sorts of knowledge, skill, support and learning they needed to do this.

By working with people and listening to the variety of their work in the community, it was expected that what people 'need' in order to be effective, active people – as volunteers, activists, members or project users of organisations, and people who are 'helping out' – would become clear. It is important not to rush people, but to listen and build a full picture of what they are doing and how they understand their work – to build a picture of the pool of community knowledge. It was expected that such discussions would also generate sufficient information about 'demand' for a particular type of learning programme to become clear.

An initial research plan and a 'scoping report'²⁰ have been written. One type of research, 'action research', helped form the plan. This asks a researcher to give emphasis to people's experiences by using a range of approaches; for example story-telling, discussions in groups, and interviews which allow people space to talk about the issues that matter to them.

Action research also highlights the difficulties of researching within a particular organisation or community. Trying to examine every event in detail to get to the 'truth' may not help 'things' improve or change. Better to try and focus on what is current and on what actions may help bring about constructive change²¹.

The crucial focus of action research is to turn what is being learnt into some form of action that can make some kind of difference or that can at least lead to more learning. The final focus of this research, then, is to learn from people's experiences and crucially to see how this can be turned into a learning programme for local people – so that the learning can be shared widely across the community.

¹⁹ It was agreed with the ESF that we would meet with 80 local people using interviews and focus groups.

²⁰ This used some discussions with local people and staff to suggest some of the key issues for community participation. It is not included in the chapter on 'background information' due to length but is available on request from the Craigmillar Capacity Building project.

²¹ See Rosalie Holian (1999) Doing research in my own organisation: ethical dilemmas, hopes and triumphs. For a copy go on the internet to: www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-rholian99.html

The research: aiming to meet with a wide range of local, active people.

In this research it has been *assumed* that recognising the diversity of the community is crucial to understanding the full range of knowledge and skills that people active in the community have and need.

The research therefore committed itself to meeting with a diverse a range of people as possible and that this would include people:

- from different neighbourhoods
- taking up different roles in the community e.g. volunteer, activist, member or project user of local organisations, 'helping out'
- having different responsibilities – working with people, leadership, teaching, community representative, organiser.

This diversity would also include the different contexts in which people are active:

- community political and organisational structures
- local campaigning groups
- schools and related activities
- work with children and young people outside of schools
- housing and neighbourhood groups/projects
- adult and community learning groups/projects
- arts-based community activity
- health and social care groups/projects
- sports, leisure and outdoor development groups/projects
- mutually supportive groups eg. mother and toddler clubs, self-advocacy groups
- management committees/Boards of voluntary organisations
- community businesses and enterprises.

And it would include a full a range as possible of the different identities that people can have, for instance²²:

- Economic circumstances – particularly people on low incomes
- Race and ethnicity – black people and white people
- Age – young, middle aged and older
- Gender – female and male
- Sexual orientation – including gay people and transgender people
- Disability – that is people with disabilities
- Faith – people for whom faith and/or religion is important
- Health – people where their health impacts on their identity, for example mental health or long-term health problems
- Culture and language – including working class communities and people who use BSL.²³

²² Race and Ethnicity, Age, Gender, Sexual orientation, Disability and Faith are likely to become part of the focus for the proposed UK Commission for Equality and Human Rights

The research: who did the researcher actually meet with?

During this first and main phase of the research the researcher held:

- 25 individual meetings with 23 local people
- 18 meetings with 14 different groups from 2 – 13 people in size and involving 56 different local people ... another 7 people were present but didn't take an active part
- shorter, informal, unrecorded discussions with another 4 local active people.

This gives an overall total of 79 people - 75 people through meetings and another 4 informally. See Chapter 12 for a full list of groups and individuals who wished to be acknowledged see Chapter 12.

One of the groups was '*the research group*' - a mix of local active people from different parts of the community. This involved 7 different, locally active people, some of whom were also staff, over 3 meetings. Some attended once, some twice. They provided an initial focus and advice for the research.

Some of the people who came along to the meetings were both active locally in the community in unpaid capacities and were also working as staff within local community organisations or local community services.

The researcher met with the following range of people:

- 53% of those met with were women and 47% men
- 31% of people met with had a disability
- 4% of people met with were people from 'Black and Minority Ethnic' groups (BME).

And by ages:

- 20% were 'younger people' (10 – 25)
- 66% were 'middle-aged' people (25 – 64)
- 14% were older people (60+)

See over the page for a discussion on who you might have expected the researcher to meet with if you met randomly (that is by chance) with people who are active in the community, or people who live in the area.

²³ British Sign Language – for more information on Deaf people look on the Internet at: www.signcommunity.org.uk or at: www.learntosign.org.uk

The research: who might 'you' have expected the researcher to meet with?

This section looks at who the researcher might have met with if taken a random sample – that is if they drawn names out of the hat; either for people who are active in the community, or for the whole local population. They can help highlight how diverse a group of people the research was able to meet with.

By gender: The Scottish Households Survey 2003/4²⁴ found that across a broad range of volunteering activities in Scotland as a whole, 25% of women and 22% of men had been involved in volunteering in the last 12 months – slightly more women and men. The numbers of local active men and women met with by the researcher fits roughly with this pattern – being slightly more women than men. However in the researcher's opinion, it feels as if more women are active in the community here than men in unpaid capacities²⁵. This is an area worth exploring further - it leaves many questions open: are men and women likely to be active in different ways? Are men more likely to take leadership roles and so be more noticeable, and likely to be met by a researcher?

By age: Volunteer Development Scotland²⁶ found that people between the ages of 35 – 54 were most likely to take part in volunteering. The Scottish Household Survey 2003/4 found that people over 75 were significantly less likely to be volunteers and people between 16-34 also less likely than people between 35-74 to be volunteers – there was little difference between people of ages 35-44, 45-59 and 60-74. It is not possible to tell from these whether the researcher met with 'reasonable' numbers from each of the 3 age groups he used. You might expect there to be a weighting towards people in the 'middle-aged' group – but maybe not as much as the numbers of people that the researcher actually met with (66%). This points to the researcher, at least, attempting to grapple with diversity of different age groups and their involvement in community participation. But again, this is an area worth exploring further.

Disability: Figures from 2001 Census show that for the electoral ward of Craigmillar – this doesn't include Bingham and Magdalene – 28.5% of the population had a 'limiting long-term illness'²⁷. By this the census means

²⁴ For details of this part of the Scottish Household Survey go on the internet to: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/08/03155211/52466#71

²⁵ During the short survey done by the researcher for instance into demand for local training, he met with 55% women, 32% men (13% did not give information on gender).

²⁶ For details of Volunteer Development Scotland summary go on the internet to: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/08/03155211/52466#71

²⁷ For source of information go onto the Internet at: www.scot.gov.uk/scrol/analyser/analyser?topicId=2&tableId=&tableName=Limiting+long-term+illness&selectedTopicId=&aggregated=false&subject=&tableNumber=&selectedLevelId=&post code=&areaText=&RADIOLAYER=&actionName=view -

people who consider themselves to have a long-term illness, health problem and disability; and so this is likely to include people who consider themselves to have a chronic physical illness, a physical disability, a learning difficulty and/or people with mental ill-health.

31% of the people the researcher met with had a disability; again this would be people within this same broad group who considered themselves to have in this case a 'disability'. So this would seem to be roughly in line with the numbers you would expect a researcher to meet with through a random sample of the local population ... although this could be different for people who are active locally.

There are no figures for Craigmillar, but nationally the number of people with disabilities and/or long-term illness who volunteer is given as 17-18% compared to an average of 26% for all adults. The number of people with disabilities and/or long-term illness who 'do not feel involved' in their community is between 38-41%, in comparison to an average of 30% for all adults.²⁸ So nationally there is a very strong trend for disabled people to be and feel significantly less involved in community life.

This would suggest that either the researcher met with significantly more disabled people who are active in the community than you would expect by a random sample of local active people, or that in Craigmillar 'things' are somehow different for disabled people, and that they are actually much more likely to be active and involved in this community than in other communities²⁹. The experience of doing the research and a later short survey suggest the latter, that disabled people are likely to be more active in this community than others in Scotland. It could be that the Craigmillar experience has something crucial for other communities to learn about.

Nationally, the Scottish Households Survey finds that approximately 19% of adults in Scotland consider themselves to have a disability and/or long-term illness.³⁰ Significantly lower than 28.5% of people, including children, in Craigmillar. Again this suggests that Craigmillar is a very different community from an 'average' community in Scotland. It highlights the link between poverty and people with disabilities- people with disabilities are much more likely to face poverty. Other communities struggling with poverty may also be likely to have both higher numbers of people with disabilities and higher numbers of people with disabilities who are active in the community.

[results&clearAreas=&stateData1=&stateData2=&stateData3=&stateData4=&debug=&tempData1=&tempData2=&tempData3=&tempData4=&areaId=14S57&levelId=13](#)

²⁸ See chapter 3 of the Scottish Executive's Social Focus on Disability on the internet at: www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/sfod04-00.

²⁹ In the next phase of the project the researcher undertook a small survey of 44 people who are active in the community or wanting to be and 55% considered themselves to have a disability.

³⁰ See chapter 1 of the Scottish Executive's Social Focus on Disability on the internet at: www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/sfod04-00.

Finding out more the experiences of people with disabilities in Craigmillar and other communities where there are concentrations of poverty would be a valuable piece of research – one that supports learning in other more affluent areas.

Black and Minority Ethnic people:

Within Craigmillar at the 2001 census, 91.5% of people recorded themselves as White Scottish, 6.5% as White British/Irish/Other, and 2.3% as Black and Minority Ethnic. This is very similar to the national picture for Scotland at the same time with 88% White Scottish, 10% White British/Irish/Other, and 2% as Black and Minority Ethnic.³¹ On the ground there is a strong sense of ethnic diversity increasing within the area since then, with the arrival of more people from Eastern Europe, people who are refugees and asylum-seekers and people from Asian and African backgrounds who were born in Britain or already lived in Britain. Therefore, these figures from 2001 may not accurately reflect the situation now.

Whilst the figures could suggest that this piece of research is not out of line with the numbers Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people you might meet by chance in this area, it is nevertheless still disappointing, because of the emphasis the researcher put on reaching as diverse a group of people as possible.

The official statistics from the 2001 census do not directly mention Gypsy Travellers or other Travellers (likely to be included with White Scottish or Other White) as an ethnic minority group – so this cannot be commented upon.

National figures for numbers of people volunteering suggest about 23% of white people volunteer as do 24% of Indian and Pakistani people and 18% of people from other minority ethnic communities³². So BME people (except for people of Indian or Pakistani origin) are slightly less likely to volunteer at present as white people. This is likely to be in part because of the barriers through discrimination, but also through different understandings of what participation and volunteering are about.

Again this would be a valuable area for more work, so that a greater understanding of what learning for participation would be relevant to BME people can be developed, and then used to increase the diversity of community participation.

³¹ National figures for ethnicity in Scotland can be found on the web at: www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/social/aescr-02.asp . Figures for Craigmillar are available by request from the General Register Office for Scotland at customer@gro-scotland.gov.uk

³² These figures come from the Scottish Household's survey which can be found on the internet at: www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/society/bbbb-00.asp

The research: the present limits of the research (1)

The people and groups the researcher met with were contacted through existing networks of community groups, community organisations and community services. Although the researcher aimed to meet with a diverse range of groups and people, and did indeed meet with a wide range, there are, of course, limits to what could be achieved.

Some instances:

- the researcher did not knowingly meet with people who are from the Gypsy Traveller community, although there are a significant number of people from this Minority Ethnic group in the area;³³
- the researcher contacted several national organisations and used their mailings to see if there were LGBT³⁴ groups and people active in the area who would like to take part – but there was no response on this occasion;
- there was only some discussion with active Black and Minority Ethnic people (BME) – three people during the course of the main research phase.

The development phase of the learning programme offers opportunities to begin or extend contact with such groups of people - for instance initial contact has been made with a worker working with one group of Gypsy Travellers and a worker with the Pakistan Society.

This can be extended into making links with:

- faith groups – Churches (all denominations) and groups from other faiths and beliefs;
- other BME and LGBT contacts in the area, for instance community health projects tend to make links with LGBT people;
- people in poverty – again through community health and welfare groups.

Whether the training in the learning programme can be flexible enough to work with this range of groups and people will become clearer as the work

³³ Alli Donachie's report is called 'Family Learning with Gypsy Travellers in Edinburgh' and was commissioned by the City of Edinburgh's Community Education – Community Based Adult Learning (CBAL). A copy of the report is available from: Linda Gibson, Senior Community Education Worker at Towerbank Community Education Base, Towerbank Annexe, 13 Bath St, Portobello, EH15 1EZ or tel: 0131 657 2607 or email: Linda.gibson@educ.edin.gov.uk

³⁴ LGBT stands for Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender. It is short-hand for a wide range of people who face very significant discrimination: either because of their sexuality – they may be gay, lesbian or bisexual rather than straight; or because their gender is not the one society believed them to have at their birth – they have changed or are seeking to change their gender (transgender). Because of this discrimination and the impact this has on their human rights, LGBT people form one of the strands of work for the proposed equality and human rights commission.

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progresses – they may require training and learning more specific to their circumstances and concerns.

The research: the present limits of the research (2)

Another set of limits to the people and groups met through the research are through the amounts of time that organisations, groups and networks were able to give to support the researcher, depending on their own circumstances and priorities. The work of different groups is represented according to the amount of discussion possible. It was not of course possible to make contact with every organisation, project, group or committee active in the area - this was an inevitable, practical limitation. Again we can work during the development of the learning programme to increase the links made with different groups.

Another form of limit to the research has been the present 'community divide'³⁵ or loss of trust between those organisations and networks of people providing leadership to the Craigmillar Community Council, and those organisations and networks of people providing leadership to the Community Regeneration Forum. The Craigmillar Capacity Building Project (CBP) supports the Community Council and plays a key role within it. This has meant that people and groups connected with the Craigmillar Regeneration Forum have been cautious about joining in with the research – the researcher being a member of staff with the CBP.

However, several people who are active within the Forum and its groups did participate; so too the Craigmillar Neighbourhood Alliance which supports the Forum and gave valuable background information. Together they provided valuable information all of which has added considerably to the understanding of community participation and community learning in Craigmillar that has been developed within this report.

Whilst the report cannot raise every issue that would be relevant to a learning programme for community participation in this area, it is nevertheless extensive and raises a large number of themes that will be valuable for discussion, debate and learning during the piloting of the learning programme.

Note: Any group, project or organisation who have 'missed out' on this research phase should contact the Capacity Building Project as there are likely to be opportunities to share their experience and knowledge during the development phase of the learning programme.

³⁵ This 'community divide' has deepened over the last 12 months because of the different approaches and leadership offered by the Community Council and the Community Regeneration Forum. This includes: different approaches to dealing with cuts to Social Inclusion Partnership funding that followed from Scottish Executive decisions; differences in view on the Draft Urban Design Framework and regeneration in the area; and differences in approach to working with the City Council and the Craigmillar Joint Venture Company (Parc) on the Draft Urban Design Framework and regeneration of the area. See Chapter 2, Chapter 9, Chapter 10 and Chapter 11 for further discussion on the importance of understanding this community divide within a learning programme.

The research: background research that was actually done

The researcher also met with a range of staff from local and other organisations in order to develop strong background knowledge of local services and of issues relevant to learning for people in communities. The researcher had discussions with:

- 37 local staff from a range of agencies
- 8 staff working outside the area

Relevant information also came from attending national events and subscribing to a wide range of relevant mailings and e-mailings – including those covering regeneration, volunteering, social enterprise, the voluntary sector, the arts, equality and human rights.

The research: follow up work

There was a follow-up phase to the research where the researcher went out to talk with a range of people and groups with some early themes for further discussion. Some of these discussions were long, others short. This included discussion with 12 separate groups of sizes varying from 3 members to approximately 45; and discussions with several individuals and also with 3 groups of staff.

As part of these discussions with local people, the researcher asked them to complete a survey that would help understand the demand for particular pieces of training. 44 surveys have been completed – 27 ‘new’ people who hadn’t taken part in the first phase of the research.

The survey is being used to understand the demand for training and to support the Capacity Building Project and the other organisations and active people on the advisory group in developing and piloting a learning programme. This will be used to complete a second (shorter) report on the development and piloting phase of the project.³⁶

The research: consultation on draft report

Finally this report has been out to consultation with 19 people or organisations within the community, so that errors can be corrected and differences of opinion with the researcher discussed and recognised. The consultation report on the feedback given can be found in the chapter on ‘background information’.

³⁶ Full results from the survey work are available from the Capacity Building Project

The research: names, anonymity and acknowledgements

Local community groups and community organisation are mentioned in the report by name, where they are happy with this, so that you can contact them if you need to learn more from their experiences.

Individual people, who took part in the research, are not mentioned by name so that issues do not become focused on particular people within the community: instead readers are encouraged to stand back and consider issues from a range of perspectives.

Some people have asked that details are minimised so that it is very unlikely others would recognise them. Most, however, are happy to be recognised and so you might recognise some of them if you are active in the area.

A list of people and groups who were happy to be acknowledged for their involvement can be found in the background information (appendices) section.

The research: contacting people

Whatever the case if there is someone you feel your project or group could learn from or share knowledge and skills with please contact the Capacity Building Project and we should be able to arrange to make that connection.

The research: the nature of the quotes

The reported speech in this report is taken from notes made by the researcher and then checked with the participants, rather than from audio-tape or video-tape, and should not be considered 'a direct quote' but rather as edited for ease of reading. Their meaning to the participant has been sustained and where possible this has been checked through consultation with the participants.