JRF

REPORT

HOW CAN UNIVERSITIES SUPPORT DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES?

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This report shows what universities are doing to reach out to disadvantaged communities and develop effective relationships; it is intended to encourage and inspire them to do more, and to do it better.

Universities can provide a wide range of opportunities and facilities, resources and expertise. They have a lot to offer disadvantaged communities, and a university's engagement with communities can enrich teaching, learning and research.

The report focuses on:
- the efforts universities are making to recruit students from disadvantaged groups;
- the provision of outreach education in the community;
- opportunities for students to learn in the community – and contribute to the community – through placements and projects;
- collaborative research with communities;
- student and staff volunteering;
- the roles and responsibilities of universities as community leaders and employers; and
- the importance of institutional commitment and the factors promoting successful engagement with disadvantaged communities.

INSPIRING SOCIAL CHANGE

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents examples of universities successfully supporting disadvantaged communities. It is based on findings from an extensive survey of universities across the UK, and case studies of individual projects and initiatives. It is hoped that the report will encourage and inspire universities to do more, and do it better

Introduction

Universities can do a lot to support disadvantaged communities. They can provide educational, cultural, social and recreational opportunities and facilities. Their students and staff can make an important contribution to the local community, through volunteering, for example. Universities are well resourced, have a substantial economic presence and provide many local jobs. A university is an important community asset.

Universities are being encouraged to support disadvantaged communities, and there are many examples of successful initiatives and good practice, but much more could be done.

Policies and relationships

Most universities consider community engagement to be important. Some have drawn up engagement strategies which, in many cases, make explicit reference to supporting disadvantaged communities.

Universities have many connections with local organisations. Nearly all universities are formally represented on some of the local bodies concerned with community development and regeneration, and many are involved with community groups in areas near their campuses.

Close connections have been developed with local schools and education partnerships in order to promote wider participation in Higher Education. For many universities, their main connections with disadvantaged communities are associated with their widening participation activities.

Widening participation

Universities have sought to increase the numbers and proportions of students from various under-represented groups. The government requires them to draw up strategies and undertake initiatives to encourage applications from disadvantaged communities and individuals.

The expansion of the Higher Education sector has resulted in many more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds going to university. However, there has been little change in the intakes to the 'most selective' universities, where students from fee-paying schools are still highly over-represented.

Provision in the community

Many universities offer educational programmes in community settings, often working closely with disadvantaged groups. Some universities have developed substantial outreach programmes – for example, through the Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute in South Wales. Nearly three-quarters of universities undertake arts and culture outreach activities with disadvantaged communities, working with a wide range of groups, including people with mental health difficulties, prisoners, hospital patients and disadvantaged young people. Sports outreach is also important in some universities, including coaching in local schools and opening up access to university sports facilities.

Students learning in community settings

Teaching and learning can be enriched through student placements in the community – and local organisations can benefit from the work of students. Many placements are linked to vocational courses, such as community and social work courses, teaching qualifications and medicine. But there are other examples, including some innovative degree courses in arts and humanities, which include work in community settings.

In Northern Ireland, Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster have established a very successful 'Science Shop'. This provides a brokerage service, linking students requiring project placements with community organisations seeking help with their activities and projects.

Research with disadvantaged communities

There are interesting examples of research developed through collaborations between university academics and local communities. The University of Brighton has good examples of such research with community groups, facilitated and supported through the University's Community University Partnership Programme.

Other examples include community-based research on debt, rural development, health, homelessness and environmental issues. These collaborations demonstrate the importance of the process – using approaches and methods that encourage reciprocity and respect.

Student and staff volunteering

Student volunteering has a long history, is well developed and well organised. Nearly three-quarters of universities have a university-wide student volunteering scheme. Volunteering includes work in schools linked to widening participation programmes and a very wide range of other volunteering opportunities, often supporting disadvantaged communities and groups. Increasingly, student volunteering is being formally recognised and accredited, and is regarded as a way of improving students' employability.

Volunteering schemes for university staff are much less developed — though they are fairly widespread in large private sector companies. Almost a third of universities have a staff volunteering scheme, enabling staff to take time out to undertake voluntary work without affecting their pay. Durham University's scheme is a good example: staff can have up to five days a year doing voluntary work, and well over 10 per cent of the university's workforce is actively involved in the scheme.

Doing more to support disadvantaged communities

Universities can do more. They can use their position to stimulate and promote debate — and ensure that the concerns of disadvantaged communities are heard and taken into account. They can also play a leading role in local regeneration — as Liverpool Hope University has done by developing an inner city campus and acting as a community development agency.

Universities can also do more as employers. They can be pro-active in recruiting local unemployed people. In addition, they can promote good employment practices, such as ensuring that all their employees are paid the Living Wage.

Institutional commitment and successful engagement

A major factor in developing successful community engagement is institutional commitment. Funding for these activities is important, as is leadership and the development of policies encouraging and enabling community involvement.

Universities need to have a good understanding of community needs and perceptions. Co-ordination, focus and strategic oversight help to ensure effective implementation — but bureaucratic structures must not get in the way of initiative or undermine enthusiasm.

Conclusions

Many universities are supporting disadvantaged communities through their involvement with local organisations, student volunteering and widening participation programmes, and also through their teaching and research activities. However, practice is very uneven and there is a great deal of scope for further development. Universities need to be: committed to this agenda; organised to deliver it; and prepared to take risks and respond to opportunities. The government and funding councils need also to show their commitment; provide funding for sustainable initiatives; and help universities to learn from each other. It is hoped that this report will promote that learning

and stimulate the question: 'if *they* can do that, why can't *we*?' The report concludes by noting that further work is needed to examine in detail how communities benefit from relationships with universities; how these initiatives and interventions can best be evaluated; and how universities can do more to ensure that their economic benefits and impacts reach disadvantaged communities.

1 INTRODUCTION

Universities have a lot to offer disadvantaged communities. They provide a wide range of educational, cultural, social and recreational opportunities and facilities. They have substantial resources and can offer access to knowledge and expertise. Their students and staff can be an important source of volunteers, helping local groups and organisations. They also have a substantial economic presence and impact: universities are big businesses and big employers.

Moreover, universities seem well-placed to support disadvantaged communities. Many of them have such communities close to their campuses, on their doorstep – and often draw some of their staff and students from these areas. Universities are also generally well aware of their social context and recognise the importance of maintaining good relationships with local communities; and some universities are deeply rooted in their localities and are keen to respond to local need. However, although there are many good examples of universities engaging with, and supporting, disadvantaged communities, a great deal of the potential has not been translated into effective relationships, action and impact.

This report is intended to encourage universities to do more, and to do it better. In difficult economic times, with public spending cuts and rising unemployment, disadvantaged communities are evidently under great pressure. They need, and deserve, all the help they can get – and universities could be an important source of support. Not only do they have a great deal to offer, but also these resource-rich institutions are spread across the UK. All our cities, and now many towns, have a university; indeed, many have more than one. A university should be regarded as one of the local community's most important assets. And it is a two-way, reciprocal relationship: universities have much to gain from effective relationships with the community. Moreover, universities are necessarily part of the community. Ultimately, they cannot be isolated or separate from it; and their staff and students live in local communities, including in disadvantaged communities.

It can be argued, of course, that supporting disadvantaged communities is not really the business of universities. While staff and students may get involved in the community that is their decision, it is not a matter for the institution. In fact, some universities appear to focus almost exclusively on their 'core' activities – aiming for excellence in teaching and research – and may seem to have little interest in anything else. They prioritise their international academic connections, while any local relationships tend to be principally with business and with large public institutions. Some academics and university managers feel that universities should not get involved in social problems and certainly not in 'social engineering'. Exhortations to support disadvantaged communities can be unwelcome therefore, a distraction from the university's core business.

Such views are not too hard to find, but are much less common than they used to be. Over the past few years, universities have been under pressure from government to improve access to Higher Education and widen participation. Therefore academics and university managers have become very aware of the composition of their student intake – an awareness now reinforced by arguments about the impact of tuition fees. The widening participation agenda has led universities to be much more involved with local schools and to undertake a variety of initiatives to encourage applications for undergraduate places from disadvantaged groups and communities. In addition, there have been considerable efforts to get universities to be more open and further develop their engagement with the community. The 'Beacons for Public Engagement' programme (www.publicengagement.ac.uk), funded by the UK Higher Education Funding Councils, Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust, has strongly promoted and supported these engagement activities. Research funders are also pressing universities to make their research more useful and relevant, through requirements in their *Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research*.[1] The four UK Higher Education funding bodies have adopted a similar approach, by including an assessment of 'impact' in the universities' Research Excellence Framework – an exercise that has significant resource implications for universities, rewarding those that can show evidence that their research has been of benefit to the wider economy and society.

These developments have undoubtedly encouraged universities to become more involved in supporting disadvantaged communities, and there are clear signs of a change in attitude and culture in many institutions. Some universities, by virtue of their historical development and context, have long been committed to this kind of community involvement; many of their students are, in any case, from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds. For other universities this agenda is less familiar and more difficult, and is less of a priority. They have struggled to widen participation, particularly when it comes to recruiting students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, and they may have quite weak connections with local communities – which, for the most part, expect little from them.

But why should universities support disadvantaged communities? There is certainly a good moral and ethical case, linked with some of the core values in UK Higher Education and embracing concepts of social justice. That is particularly evident in relation to widening participation, which is concerned with extending educational opportunity to people regardless of their background, but also holds with regard to the other opportunities and resources that universities can provide. After all, most universities are registered charities and (up to now) their activities have largely been funded by taxpayers. There is the wider economic case, too, which may be couched in terms of securing economic benefits, fully utilising the society's resources and avoiding the costs arising from social exclusion and inequality. It is also

increasingly recognised that involvement and engagement, perhaps especially with disadvantaged communities, can enhance teaching, learning and research, and add substantially to the student experience, ultimately improving employability as well as understanding.

In addition, these relationships and activities can foster community development, cohesion and well-being, not least in residential areas affected by 'studentification', where the student population has come to predominate.[2] In such areas, the university can seem more of a local liability than an asset. Universities need to be mindful of their negative impact; it helps if they are seen to be sensitive to that and keen to engage, contribute and positively support.[3] Community involvement can also help to deliver important institutional objectives – notably in relation to the university's corporate social responsibilities – and help to justify public investment in the university by demonstrating its 'social value'.[4]

There now appears to be a good deal of interest within universities in this agenda and some willingness, even enthusiasm, to take it forward. But in many universities there is limited experience of working closely and collaboratively with disadvantaged communities. There are undoubtedly some significant and successful connections – notably through widening participation initiatives, student volunteering, and some public engagement activity, and also through individual connections between academics and community groups. What often seems to be missing, however, is a confident, committed and coherent institutional response based on an assessment of options and possibilities, and drawing on experience of effective practice. Consequently, our aim is to set out what can be done and give examples of good practice, in the hope that this will not only inform but also challenge and inspire the universities to do more, and to do it better. This is a practical report aimed at stimulating activity and achieving practical results.

Approach and methods

This research study has been undertaken by Professor Fred Robinson and Ian Zass-Ogilvie of St Chad's College, Durham University, and Professor Ray Hudson, Durham University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Partnerships and Engagement. Technical support was provided by colleagues at the Policy Research Group, St Chad's College.

All of us have been involved in developing Durham University's engagement and outreach work – so we know how difficult it can be.[5] We are well aware of the competing priorities in universities and the difficulties involved in establishing effective, trusting relationships between the university and disadvantaged communities. Our experience of this – and awareness of the lack of an accessible corpus of good practice – led to this research study.

In 2010 the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) developed a programme called New Insights, which is about making 'concrete suggestions' for ways in which 'disadvantaged communities can be helped to thrive'. JRF wanted to identify new approaches to meeting the needs of communities in a harsh and challenging economic climate. In particular, it was looking for research that would have the 'clear potential to influence policy and/or practice'. JRF's concerns and interests matched ours and, as a result, it supported this study as part of its New Insights programme.

Our approach has been to focus particularly on 'disadvantaged communities' in the UK – in line with the concerns of both JRF and ourselves. We wanted to retain a degree of openness to the inquiry, so we have not sought to formally define this term. Essentially, by 'disadvantaged communities' we want

to encompass communities of place, identity and interest, embracing many different kinds of disadvantage. Similarly, we have also taken a fairly open-ended approach to the activities and concerns of universities, to include a variety of types and styles of involvement with communities. Necessarily, our survey work imposed structure and set limits but, as far as possible, we have pursued an exploratory approach, gathering together what universities recognise as their support to disadvantaged communities.

The research comprised two main components: a questionnaire survey, and then a series of visits and interviews centred on case study examples. The questionnaire survey was used to obtain a national overview of activity, to find out what universities are doing. It was also helpful in giving us a sense of where the energy and enthusiasm is, and was used to identify the best places to go for our subsequent case studies.

We decided to survey all types of Higher Education institution – not only those known as universities, but also university colleges and specialist colleges, such as those concerned with music, art, agriculture, medicine and so on. (For the sake of brevity we generally use the term 'university' to refer to all these institutions in this report.) Initially we were in touch with all of them to establish the most appropriate contact person – that is, someone who said that our questionnaire ought to be sent to them. The questionnaire was then sent to 165 institutions (this included all members of the Universities UK organisation, plus selected 'other' institutions on the 2010/11 UCAS list). The survey exercise was concluded in July 2011. By then, 141 completed questionnaires had been returned by the 165 institutions, producing a response rate of 85 per cent. This remarkably high response rate was, we think, achieved by persistence and some active encouragement, as well as our use of a reasonably simple questionnaire. It also reflects the enthusiasm of many universities to engage with this agenda. There is no evident bias in the profile of responses and so we can be confident that it provides a reasonably reliable, though not very detailed, picture of activity across the UK's universities.

Our analysis of the questionnaire revealed considerable variation in reported activity and highlighted many interesting examples of policy and practice. Possible case studies were identified using various criteria. We wanted to find out more about interesting examples of activity, where universities seemed to be working to engage with disadvantaged communities and, for the most part, were making a success of it. We also wanted to include different kinds of institutions, operating in different contexts. Furthermore, we feel it is important to include different parts of the UK, not least because funding and governance arrangements differ.

Visits were made to nearly 30 universities – rather more than had originally been anticipated. At each of them we gathered information about approaches and initiatives, usually focusing on a few projects and activities. Many of the examples we looked at are mentioned in this report. Our descriptions of projects have been verified with those whom we visited. Inevitably, we have not been able to go into much detail about individual examples and we have largely relied on what people in universities told us; we have not been able to look in detail at how communities themselves feel about these activities – that would require a further study. Where possible and relevant, we refer to websites where further information may be obtained, so readers can find out more about how things have been done and what is being achieved. We want this report to serve as a manual of practical ideas that people will want to know more about, will want to learn from – and will want to replicate.

Structure of the report

The report starts with a brief overview, looking at the structure and character of relationships between universities and communities. This covers the policies and strategies of universities, and their connections with particular organisations, interests and disadvantaged communities.

The rest of the report explores practice. We start with a short review of efforts to widen participation in Higher Education and open up opportunities for disadvantaged communities. We then look at how universities are offering educational programmes in the community and look at their outreach work in arts, culture and sport. That is followed by a discussion of the opportunities available to students to learn in community settings – and, in turn, make their contribution to the community. Next, we consider how academics can undertake collaborative research with communities, responding to their needs. There is a section on the community work undertaken by staff and student volunteers, and we then discuss additional options – some of the other ways that universities can support disadvantaged communities.

The report concludes with an assessment of the findings, and highlights successful approaches and initiatives – and also barriers and disincentives. Inevitably, we end with a challenge to the universities to be more creative and effective, and to engage more fully and deeply with communities in need of support.

2 OVERVIEW: POLICIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Community (or public) 'engagement' can be interpreted in various ways, and can involve a diverse range of activities and relationships. However defined, most universities say that it is important.
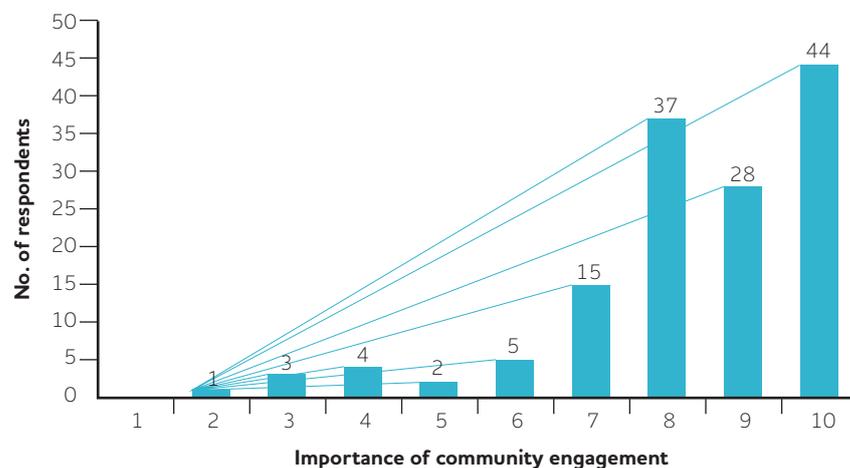
University policies for community engagement

In our questionnaire survey, we asked respondents to assess how important community engagement is to their university. They were asked to make that assessment on a ten point scale, from little or no importance (1) through to very important (10). Most rated community engagement at the top end of the scale (see Figure 1). There was not a great deal of difference in terms of types of institution, although university colleges and specialist colleges tended to give lower ratings.

Figure 1: Importance of community engagement

Many universities – but less than half of them – have underlined their commitment to engagement by developing formal strategies. Our survey found that 41.4 per cent of universities had 'a written and agreed strategy for community engagement', and a further 32.1 per cent were considering developing one. A quarter (26.4 per cent) of universities said they had no strategy and no plans for developing one (see Table 1).

These strategy documents vary considerably in terms of depth and coverage. Good examples include the University of the West of England's 'Community and Public Engagement Strategy 2010–2012' (www1.uwe. ac.uk/aboutus/visionandmission/strategy/strategydocuments.aspx); this is a well-articulated model, with specific goals and an action plan. Manchester Metropolitan University's Public Engagement Strategy (www.mmu.ac.uk/policy/policy.php?id=56) is also a good example – well-presented, clear, concise and straightforward. By contrast, some of the other strategies are rather disappointing, in some cases too wide-ranging, and lacking clarity and focus; some seem over-concerned about the university's image and ambitions.

These documents certainly demonstrate that community engagement can involve all kinds of communities and cover a very wide range of activity, from partnerships with the business community through to very local projects – and much else besides. Our particular focus is supporting disadvantaged communities, which may constitute only a small part of university–community engagement. According to the respondents to our survey, 80 per cent of these strategies do make reference to supporting disadvantaged communities – but often it is only a scant reference. Hence, the University of Brighton's Social Engagement Strategy (2009; www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/materials-and-resources.html) stands out for its explicit commitment to working with disadvantaged communities, and it is thoughtful about aims and intentions relating to different forms of engagement. In particular, Brighton's Strategy (p.3) states:

'Whilst recognising that social engagement is a broad spectrum we will seek to prioritise the use of resources to facilitate work that addresses disadvantage, sustainable development, citizenship and social justice.'

Relationships

Strategy documents can be useful as an expression of institutional commitment and can provide a framework for activity. But what really matters are relationships and actions, and the results that flow from them.

Table 1: Community engagement strategies

Qn: 'Does your university have a (written and agreed) strategy for community engagement?' (N = 140)	No. of respondents	%
Written and agreed strategy	58	41.4
Under consideration/being developed	45	32.1
No strategy	37	26.4

Qn: (If yes) 'Does that strategy make explicit reference to supporting disadvantaged communities?' (N = 55)	No. of respondents	%
Yes – explicit reference	44	80.0
No – no reference	11	20.0

Most universities have formal links with organisations concerned with the well-being of communities in their area, and some of those are of strategic importance to the university.

Clearly, many relationships between universities and communities are principally based on the interest and initiative of individuals[6] – and this report cites many examples of such connections. However, we initially wanted to get a sense of institutional relationships – the more or less 'official' connections between a university and community interests.

Most universities have formal links with organisations concerned with the well-being of communities in their area, and some of those are of strategic importance to the university. Nearly all (90 per cent) of the respondents to our survey said that their university is 'formally represented on local partnerships or organisations primarily concerned with community development and regeneration'. We asked them to give up to three specific examples of such connections; most of them were able to provide three examples (and some noted that there were far more than that).

Many universities have representatives on the boards of *regeneration and economic development organisations*, particularly Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and the new Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England. Outside England, universities are represented on other, similar organisations, such as, in Scotland, the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future partnership and the Convention of the Highlands and Islands; in Wales, Communities First Partnerships; and in Northern Ireland organisations such as the South Belfast Partnership Board. Although some universities are members of regional-level bodies, most of these connections are with organisations concerned with the university's town or city, and sometimes wider sub-region. These links are often complementary to the important relationships that a university may have with the local authority and may well be of strategic importance – hence, a senior manager, perhaps a Pro-Vice-Chancellor or even the Vice-Chancellor sits as a board member on the most significant of these organisations.

Universities are also involved with more locally based groups and, for some, relationships with *community and residents groups* near the university are clearly important. Several respondents made reference to membership of residents' associations, community councils and local forums, including campus/community liaison forums. Our survey also elicited other examples, such as a university representative on the management committee of a local Community Centre and university membership of a group organising a local community festival.

A great many of the relationships that universities have with disadvantaged communities stem from their activities aimed at widening participation in Higher Education. Universities are heavily involved in partnerships promoting Higher Education to schools in disadvantaged areas and to groups of people who are under-represented in the universities. They have been key members of local 'Aimhigher' partnerships (and, now, successor arrangements) in England; Reaching Wider partnerships in Wales; initiatives such as the Scottish Higher Education Schools programme and LEAPS (Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools) in Scotland; and the Step Up programme in Northern Ireland. Related to that, many universities are involved in the governance and development of local schools, including sponsorship of Academy Schools; and some are members of partnerships and networks developing lifelong learning and community learning. Many universities also work closely with Further Education Colleges.

A considerable number of other connections were noted in our survey. These included universities' membership of business-related organisations (e.g. the local Chamber of Commerce, Business in the Community and similar bodies such as the East London Business Alliance); local economic development initiatives (e.g. Science City partnerships); arts organisations (e.g. Greater Manchester Arts and Health Network, South West Dance);

sports and leisure groups (e.g. Lancashire Sport, Sustrans Wales) and third sector organisations, including sector infrastructure bodies (e.g. Community Development Cymru, Voluntary Action Stoke-on-Trent, Plymouth Guild and Community Action Southwark). Universities also have links of various kinds with a large number of local statutory and third sector service providers that support disadvantaged communities; some of those links are associated with student volunteering programmes or widening participation initiatives.

To get a sense of the range of connections reported by some universities, it is worth giving examples of particular institutions and some of the connections that they reported:

- **University of Bristol**: The university is represented on: the Bristol Partnership (LSP); West of England Local Enterprise project; partner in Merchant's Academy – 'in a disadvantaged part of the city'; partner in 'Regional Educational Legacy in Arts and Youth Sport or RELAYS', an initiative that aims to maximise the Olympics legacy; and West of England Sports Trust.
- **Cardiff University**: Member of Cardiff Community Learning Network; involvement with Sustrans Wales; partnership with Ruthin Town Council, focusing on sustainable development.
- **University of East London**: Involved with Thames Gateway London Partnership for sub-regional regeneration; Stratford Renaissance Partnership for local regeneration, including the Olympics legacy; and East London Business Alliance, which supports community development, employment and corporate social responsibility initiatives.
- **University of Sheffield**: Member of Sheffield First Partnership (LSP); representation on two ward-level Community Assemblies; membership of Broomhill Forum – in a neighbourhood where many students live.
- **Queen's University Belfast**: Member of South Belfast Partnership Board, a statutory regeneration body, and South Belfast Roundtable on Racism; represented on Belfast Healthy Cities initiative; academic staff are on Donegall Pass Community Development Company (a community adjacent to the university).
- **University College Falmouth**: member of Town and Gown Committee – a partnership with the local town councils; represented on Falmouth and Penryn Regeneration Committee; and on Falmouth Town Forum.

Following our question about university representation on community development and regeneration organisations, we asked respondents if their university had 'close connections with any particular disadvantaged groups'. On the questionnaire, we said that the kinds of disadvantaged groups we had in mind might be: 'particular localities (e.g. a neighbourhood); local communities of interest or identity (e.g. refugees and asylum seekers); or local schools'. Some overlap with the preceding question was expected, but the question was intended to get at the more specific (and often more local) connections, with greater focus on disadvantaged communities.

Most universities (92 per cent) said that they do have close connections with particular disadvantaged groups. Some of the strongest and closest links are with local schools, primary and secondary, in disadvantaged communities. These connections are principally associated with activities to promote and extend participation in Higher Education, and are no doubt fostered and reinforced by the fact that universities have staff who work specifically on widening participation and who need to develop such relationships. In addition to this, universities also have links to local schools through teacher training and student volunteering programmes.

Respondents to the survey also made reference to connections with groups experiencing particular disadvantages, such as disabled people, including physically disabled people, those with learning difficulties and people with mental health issues. Some noted, for example, their sports and cultural outreach activities with these groups. Quite a number of universities singled out their engagement with 'looked after' children in the care system, again generally in connection with widening participation activity. This group seems to be particularly important to some universities and several specifically mentioned that they had been awarded the Frank Buttle Trust's Quality Mark in recognition of their support for young people in care and care leavers (and also young carers). Education and support work with refugees and asylum seekers was mentioned by a number of universities and some also pointed to their engagement with particular black communities and travellers. Some universities were able to give examples of outreach education in community settings delivered to a variety of disadvantaged groups, including unemployed people, young offenders and prisoners.

Several universities specifically said that a significant part of their engagement was with disadvantaged communities and neighbourhoods on their doorstep. Some have chosen to focus their activities, such as work with schools, involvement with community groups and student volunteering in areas close to the campus. Concentrating attention and effort like this may be the easiest and most obvious way of engaging with the community – and could be helpful to the university in securing good relationships with its neighbours.

This brief overview of university relationships gives an indication of the range and nature of the connections between universities and local organisations and communities. But it is important to appreciate that the picture is actually very uneven, and that some universities are far more involved and connected than others – with varying degrees of impact. In a sense, it highlights possibilities, suggesting what universities might do, and how they may position themselves. The rest of the report looks at such possibilities in more detail, and shows what these relationships and interactions can achieve.

3 WIDENING PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The provision of education is, of course, the central role of universities, and the effective availability of that provision to people from disadvantaged communities must be one of our key concerns. Here we review the efforts of the universities to widen participation in Higher Education, and consider how successful those efforts have been.

Over the past decade or so, much emphasis has been given to widening participation in Higher Education, focusing particularly on the participation of younger people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Considerable efforts have been made to increase the numbers and proportions of students from various under-represented groups, including those with low incomes, people living in neighbourhoods with low participation in Higher Education, people with disabilities, people who have been in care and some black communities. There is substantial political support for this. The previous Labour Government was committed to widening participation both by expanding student places and encouraging greater uptake by individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. That government's concern was expressed in terms of tackling social exclusion and extending opportunities. The present Coalition Government wants to ensure that students from all backgrounds can have 'fair access' to university; this is seen as particularly important in relation to improving social mobility and helping to create a fairer society.

The language differs but it could be said that the aim has changed little since the Robbins Report in the 1960s: essentially to make Higher Education available to everyone who can benefit from it. The rationale for this can be expressed in various ways, but it is commonly framed in terms of how education benefits the whole economy and the wider society, as well as the individual. Widening participation helps to ensure that talent — irrespective of an individual's background — is nurtured and developed, and contributes to the economy.

Of all the areas of university policy and practice considered in this report, widening participation is certainly the best developed.

Of all the areas of university policy and practice considered in this report, widening participation is certainly the best developed. It has been the subject of reports, evaluation and research; it is supported by funding; there are established processes to develop and monitor it; and universities have staff responsible for delivering it. Widening participation is now largely embedded in university policies and practices.

Universities in England have to produce two complementary plans: a Widening Participation Strategic Assessment (a three-year plan, required by HEFCE, the Higher Education Funding Council for England) and an access agreement (required from all institutions charging more than the basic fee, and submitted to OFFA, the Office for Fair Access). These are supplemented by the submission of an annual monitoring return. The access agreements for each university are available at www.offa.org.uk/access-agreements. Although there are different arrangements for tuition fees elsewhere in the UK, the other national university funding bodies operate similar policies for widening participation, and universities throughout the UK undertake similar initiatives.

To a large extent, the widening participation agenda has been focused on young people (up to age 30) studying for their first degree. There are many reasons why young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are under-represented in higher education, including lower attainment in relatively poorly performing schools, lower or different aspirations, inadequate information, advice and guidance, and so on – as well as evident financial pressures. In various ways, universities have sought to address these issues and other kinds of barriers through their widening participation programmes. Initiatives to encourage individuals to go to university include the provision of financial support (which accounts for a large majority of the expenditure on widening participation) and also outreach activities aimed at improving access. Initiatives include:

- provision of means-tested bursaries and scholarships
- summer schools
- residential courses on campus for potential future university students
- master classes for school/college students
- targeted support to able students from disadvantaged backgrounds and support geared to promoting access to particular professions
- visits by university widening participation staff and also student 'ambassadors' to schools and colleges
- university students providing mentoring (including e-mentoring) in schools and colleges; also helping with revision sessions, after-school clubs, etc.
- school and college visits to universities, open days and taster days
- information, advice and guidance sessions and services for potential students, their parents, carers and teachers, alongside advertising campaigns
- the provision of non-traditional routes into Higher Education – foundation and access courses for those without traditional qualifications for entry, mature applicants and people from, for example, 'Low Participation Neighbourhoods'

Universities have also developed a range of interventions – set out in their access agreements – to support these students during their time at university, in order to ensure their retention and success. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those attracted through widening participation programmes, are more likely to withdraw early without completing their degree. Interventions to improve student retention include:

- extended induction, which may continue through the first year at university
- tracking and monitoring to identify those most at risk of withdrawal – linking to targeted support services
- personal support through university tutors, student peer mentors and 'buddying' schemes; staff helping students to navigate academic and support systems; and counselling, health and disability services
- financial support, including emergency and hardship funds and assistance with budgeting
- employment support, including Job Shop services for students to help them earn and gain employability skills; students from disadvantaged backgrounds can be helped to access internships and on-campus job opportunities
- study skills support – some universities offer drop in services for students struggling with maths, for example
- universities can also establish ways of keeping in contact with students who withdraw or fail to return – and keep open routes enabling them to re-engage and resume their studies

Through local partnerships such as the former Aimhigher scheme in England and Reaching Wider Partnerships in Wales, many universities have established long-term relationships with local schools and colleges. Some have become involved as sponsors of academy schools and a considerable amount of student volunteering takes place in schools – through mentoring schemes, for example.

These activities, mostly developed over the past ten years or so, have forged new and productive links between universities and disadvantaged communities. Universities have not only been concerned with encouraging applications from these communities, but have also recognised the need to operate fair selection systems (taking into account an applicant's potential, with reference to their school's context, for example) and, subsequently, to provide support for disadvantaged students while they are at university.

Expansion of the higher education sector, together with these kinds of initiatives, has resulted in many more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds going to university. Furthermore, they now constitute an increasing proportion of students.

> *… for the first time ever in a period of expansion, growth in students from those in less advantaged families has both proportionately and absolutely exceeded that from better off families. Moreover, this growth has not been at the expense of young people from families where, in many cases, higher education is seen as a normal expectation.*[7]
> – Sir Martin Harris, Director of OFFA, 2010

So the drive to widen participation has been successful – but only up to a point. The picture is improving, but there is still a big gap. The government's 2011 White Paper, *Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System*, concedes that:

> *Despite this progress, there remain very significant differences in the chances of participating in higher education depending on where you live. Currently fewer than one in five young people from the most disadvantaged areas enter higher education compared to more than one in two for the most advantaged areas.*[8]
> – *Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System*, White Paper, 2011

Furthermore, while there has been improvement across the sector as a whole, there has been no improvement in the 'most selective' or 'research intensive' universities. Indeed, the recent White Paper notes that 'the relative chance of people from low-income backgrounds studying at the most selective third of universities has worsened'. In September 2011, OFFA reported that almost one in four universities in England had failed to reach their widening participation targets. Students from fee-paying schools continue to be highly over-represented in the most selective universities; and a recent report from the Sutton Trust points out that pupils from independent schools are over 22 times more likely to enter a highly selective university than state school pupils who have been entitled to free school meals (an indicator of low income).

There is enormous variation across the sector. In 2010, the Sutton Trust noted that, at one end of the spectrum, less than 1 per cent of students entering Oxford, Cambridge and Bristol universities had been entitled to free school meals. At the other end of the spectrum, Middlesex, East London and London South Bank universities all had over 23 per cent of their students previously entitled to free school meals – and fewer than 3 per cent from independent schools.[9]

Evidently much more needs to be done – most especially by the more selective institutions – to open up universities to students from disadvantaged communities. The way forward, according to the Harris report, is more 'co-ordinated, sustained outreach' – in other words, universities need deeper, long-term relationships in the community, particularly with schools. The ending of government funding for outreach in English universities could make this more difficult – universities have to fund these activities from the extra fee income they will receive.

In England, the major challenge for the future is the huge increase in student tuition fees from 2012. The impact of that is hard to predict, perhaps especially for disadvantaged students who can qualify for fee remission, grants, bursaries and so on (largely paid for from universities' tuition fee income). For these groups, much may depend on them receiving good information and advice about their likely financial situation, rather than simply being deterred by a supposition that they will incur enormous debts.

Widening participation: some examples of practice

Twelve 'research intensive' universities are delivering a scheme called the Realising Opportunities Programme (www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk). This is a structured programme comprising summer schools, academic tutoring, online study skills classes and also e-mentoring by current university students, aimed at encouraging the 'most able, least likely' young people at partner schools to apply to these universities. Those completing the programme may benefit from alternative grade offers or additional recognition when they apply. In the Times Higher Education Awards 2011 the programme was named 'Widening Participation Initiative of the Year'.

Swansea University provides a comprehensive package of support for young people in care and those leaving care who want to go on to Higher Education (www.swan.ac.uk/undergraduate/student-services/care-leavers). This includes: assistance with UCAS applications and credits towards UCAS tariff score; financial assistance to attend open days and interviews; £1,000 annual grant to assist with rent over the summer vacation; provision for all-year accommodation; advice on money management; mentoring before and throughout the whole period of study.

University of Edinburgh has several initiatives aimed at encouraging local young people to go to university, including a collaborative football-based project called Educated Pass (www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-recruitment/widening-participation/projects/educated-pass). This works with local boys' football teams in Edinburgh and the Lothians and is intended to unlock their educational potential through personal development and coaching in a football context, getting across the value of educational success. The boys visit the campus – and may come to regard university students who play football as role models.

University of East London runs a programme called New Beginnings 2 (www.uel.ac.uk/cass/shortcourses/nb2/) for those who do not have the formal qualifications to enter a degree programme. It is pitched at those for whom a more traditional access programme at a local college would be too slow or too basic; it can also offer academic credits that can be used towards a degree programme.

University of Southampton works with Unity 101, a local radio station targeting local black communities, to develop student-led programmes about university (www.southampton.ac.uk/diversity/race_and_ethnicity/index.page). University representatives also attend local community festivals and events to promote Higher Education, e.g. the Southampton Mela. The University also specifically offers mentoring support to Somali young people in inner city Southampton (www.southampton.ac.uk/edusupport/mentor/support.html).

University of Westminster has a Student Associate Scheme, involving specially trained ambassador students undertaking 15 placement days in schools in disadvantaged areas, promoting learning in small groups (www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/student-news/student-news/2011/exciting-opportunity-for-work-experience-in-a-secondary-school2). The accreditation of this as a 15-credit undergraduate module is under consideration.

University of Manchester's Manchester Access Programme targets 300 local sixth formers each year from disadvantaged backgrounds (www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/map/). They participate in a range of activities to develop the skills to be successful university students, including completion of an assignment under the guidance of an academic tutor, and attendance at a three-day University Life Conference. Completion of the programme gives 40 UCAS points towards entry to a degree course at the University.

Aberystwyth University runs a free, week-long residential 'Summer University' aimed at school and college students in Years 12 and 13 (www.aber.ac.uk/en/widening-participation/schools/summer-uni). This is intended to give them an opportunity to experience university life and prepare them for Higher Education. It includes Key Skills and optional modules from a wide range of subjects.

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance offers extensive and low cost opportunities to children and young people, including workshops, performance opportunities, work experience, taster days and career days (www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/education-community/for-schools-community-groups/dance-taster-days.aspx).

4 PROVISION IN THE COMMUNITY

This chapter looks at how universities are working in the community to extend access to opportunities and resources. We present examples of universities offering education on an outreach basis, mostly in community venues. We show how some universities are opening up access to arts and culture, both in community settings and in the university's own facilities. Finally, examples of sports outreach are discussed, showing how universities can work closely and collaboratively with disadvantaged local communities.

Educational provision

Most universities offer educational programmes and activities in community 'outreach' settings. Some of this is employer-based education and skills development, and some of it is provided in community venues. Our concern here is particularly with education delivered to disadvantaged communities, largely in community settings, rather than on the campus.

There is a long history of university outreach. The University Settlement movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided educational facilities and community centres that were run by universities and mainly located in inner city areas. They also provided opportunities for students to volunteer, and learn, in the community. The Settlements largely faded away, but many universities developed extra-mural education, and some of that has survived in university departments of continuing education or lifelong learning. On the whole, that provision has attracted mainly middle class participants and much of it has now gone, partly because of changes in university funding, and also because universities have re-focused on their core activities, while Further Education Colleges have become the principal providers of lifelong learning.[10]

Table 2: Education in the community (n = 134)

Qn: 'Does the university offer education on an outreach basis to local disadvantaged groups?

	No. of respondents	%
Yes	92	68.7
No	42	31.3

Nevertheless, many universities are still providing some useful, interesting and innovative educational activities in the community. In our questionnaire survey, over two-thirds (68.7 per cent) of universities said that they offer education on an outreach basis to local disadvantaged groups.

A large proportion of this community-based education is part of the widening participation work of universities. Many universities are now undertaking educational work in local schools to improve attainment, raise aspirations and encourage young people to go into Higher Education. Academic staff and students are involved in educational work in science, music and various arts, including some activity on campus at summer schools, for example.

As well as work in schools, there is also a wide range of activity concerned with providing learning opportunities in other settings within disadvantaged communities – often reaching people with very limited educational experience. Some of this provision is in the form of accredited courses and some of it is not formally accredited; there are one-off events and also courses that last several weeks or months. Some of this provision is intended to lead participants towards degree courses, while in other cases it is more about the acquisition of new skills or, more broadly, supporting personal development. Various community venues are used, and flexibility and accessibility are seen as being important, with activities taking place at venues and times to suit participants, in some cases with crèche provision. Good student support is usually a key element, including help with study skills and support for those with language difficulties, disabilities and financial constraints.

Work with disadvantaged groups and communities: interesting and innovative examples

Staffordshire University provides training for people involved in local community groups (e.g. in community research skills and communication skills; www.staffs.ac.uk/courses_and_study/courses/community-learning-tcm4213658.jsp).

University of East London runs a course specifically for carers (called Look after Me); also arts workshops for people with mental health difficulties; and job search workshops for unemployed people. The University has two 'Learning Shops' in disadvantaged communities (Thurrock and Barking), which can help people access educational opportunities while also offering a wide range of information, advice and guidance services (www.uel.ac.uk/partnerships/iag/Grays.htm). The University's long-term aim is to foster a culture that values education and learning.

Aberystwyth University has Family Learning provision in disadvantaged Community First areas, e.g. Family Spanish. Also undergraduate and

postgraduate students ('Physics Buskers') have been presenting outreach Physics in a variety of community venues (www.aber.ac.uk/en/imaps/news-archive/title-86724-en.html).

University of Leeds offers an interdisciplinary Islamic Studies programme in the community (www.llc.leeds.ac.uk/community/arabic-and-islamic-studies).

Central School of Speech and Drama runs Outbox, an LGBT theatre group (sponsored by the National Lottery; www.cssd.ac.uk/news/big-lottery-fund-awards-ps60000).

University of Central Lancashire developed a Foundation Degree course in Volunteering and Community Action for women of Pakistani heritage in Burnley (www.uclan.ac.uk/information/campuses/burnley/prince_charles_backs_centre_for_volunteering.php). This was delivered in a local school; for strict social and cultural reasons the participants could not travel to the UCLAN campus at Preston.

The Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute (UHOVI; www.uhovi.ac.uk/index.aspx) in South Wales provides a particularly good example of focused outreach to disadvantaged geographical areas. This initiative is based on a strategic partnership between the University of Wales, Newport and the University of Glamorgan, working with four Further Education colleges. UHOVI is expected to play a major part in the economic regeneration of these former coal mining areas of South Wales, improving employment prospects particularly for people who are often very disadvantaged in the labour market. It now has about 1,000 learners and is expected to grow to over 4,500 by 2014–15. UHOVI offers a wide range of opportunities, including 'bite sized' courses and Foundation degrees, with linked pathways and progression routes. It operates on a local outreach basis, delivering courses at local colleges, community venues, and workplaces and also at two newly built centres at Ebbw Vale and Merthyr Tydfil. UHOVI is supported by the Welsh Assembly Government, the European Social Fund and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.[11]

Universities have always had public lectures and some have developed that traditional approach to public engagement in new ways. For example, Cambridge University's Public Engagement Team runs Festival of Ideas, an impressive programme of public events over a period of 12 days, and London South Bank University holds public events during Adult Learners' Week and Family Learning Month (www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/communications/publicengagement). In several universities, the Beacons for Public Engagement initiative has supported a considerable amount of educational activity in the community – for example, Science Fairs, where members of the public can hear about developments in science. The Beacons initiative has also supported the Bright Club, sessions where academics talk to the public about their work, presented in the form of a comedy routine (www.publicengagement.ac.uk/how/case-studies/bright-club-public-engagement-variety-night).

While most of the Beacons' work has not been targeted specifically on disadvantaged groups, some projects have been focused in that way. One example is Swansea University's Teen Talkback Theatre, a drama project with Barnardo's service users, which aimed to encourage young people to think about their future in positive terms (www.engagingwales.org/projects/our-place-in-the-future-14-19-year-olds/teen-talkback-theatre). Another example, also supported by the Beacon for Wales, was the $1,000 Genome

project, which looked at the implications of low-cost gene sequencing (www.engagingwales.org/projects/our-place-in-the-future-14-19-year-olds/the-1000-genome). Academics explored the issues with young people, including through a series of workshops at Parc Prison, Bridgend.

Arts and culture

In addition to educational provision, many universities are involved in various forms of cultural outreach: nearly three-quarters (73.1 per cent) of respondents to our survey said that their university was 'involved in arts and culture outreach for disadvantaged communities'.

A good deal of this takes place in local schools. Activities include music, drama and film, and one or two universities noted that they have had artists in residence in local schools.

Some universities do art-based work with people who are often marginalised, such as refugees and asylum seekers, young people in care, disabled people and travellers. The University of Wales Institute Cardiff, for instance, has a painting project called 'Woman: Creation', which works with women who have come to Wales from all over the world, many of whom have come as refugees and asylum seekers (www3.uwic.ac.uk/English/News/Pages/Refugee-and-Asylum-Seeker-women-present-art-exhibition.aspx). Most have never painted before. Similarly, in Oxford, the Oxford Brookes Poetry Centre has been working with local charity Asylum Welcome on a project enabling asylum seekers to produce new poetry (www.asylum-welcome.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=93&Itemid=111). Residencies can be helpful in developing work with some groups: for example in north Wales, Glyndwr and Leeds Metropolitan universities have been engaged in a collaborative project, Visualising the Invisible, involving an artist in residence in an adult psychiatric unit doing workshops with patients and staff.

There is also a particular strand of arts and culture activity with community groups that is centred on local history and heritage. For example, the University of York, in partnership with York Museums Trust, the Art Gallery and the Yorkshire Film Archive, ran a creative writing project, which sought to 'reconnect disadvantaged groups from around the city with their heritage and culture through creative writing' (www.york.ac.uk/inst/cce/learningforpleasure/AdultEveningandDayClasses.htm). At Sheffield University, the School of English hosts Storying Sheffield (www.storyingsheffield.com), a remarkable project that brings together second-year undergraduate students and local people from disadvantaged communities, mostly mental health service users and people with disabilities. They work and study together to produce, record and collect stories and other representations of Sheffield life. The project is based on campus — to encourage people from the community to come into the University.

> Some universities do art-based work with people who are often marginalised, such as refugees and asylum seekers, young people in care, disabled people and travellers.

Table 3: Arts and culture outreach (n = 134)

Qn: 'Is your university involved in any arts and culture outreach for disadvantaged communities?'	No. of respondents	%
Yes	98	73.1
No	23	17.2
Under consideration/being developed	13	9.7

Theatre, music and other performing arts offer the potential for productive collaborations. The University of Winchester's Playing for Time Theatre Company has performing arts students working with inmates at Winchester Prison, leading to the staging of productions (www.winchester.ac.uk/academicdepartments/performingarts/peopleprofiles/pages/anniemckeanmambe.aspx). The Royal Northern College of Music organises Youth Perform, a musical theatre group that provides performance opportunities for young people from families that have not experienced Higher Education (www.rncm.ac.uk/news-hiddenmenu-174/article/174/819-talented-youngsters-of-rncm-youth-perform-to-present-little-shop-of-horrors.html). In London, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama ran Blah, Blah, Blah sessions, creative music workshops with looked-after young people in Tower Hamlets (www.findyourtalent.org/pathfinders/tower-hamlets/projects/guildhall-connect-creative-music-project-%E2%80%93-blah-blah-blah). Bangor University has a professional ensemble in residence (Ensemble Cymru; http://new.thebiggive.org.uk/charity/view/7031/aims) that performs regularly and arranges workshops and school visits in disadvantaged areas throughout North Wales.

Collaborations can be beneficial to all those involved. Through a social enterprise called Converge (http://convergeyork.co.uk), York St John University and the NHS have developed a partnership to provide theatre, dance and other arts courses to people in the community who have experienced mental health problems. The University's students are involved in teaching the courses, thereby gaining valuable work experience.

A number of universities undertake a considerable amount of outreach work based on their museums, galleries and arts centres. For instance, the University of Manchester's Whitworth Art Gallery and Manchester Museum run a programme called Arts for Health that includes therapeutic outreach activity delivered by student volunteers in six hospitals near the University (www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/learning/youngpeople/artsandhealth). The Whitworth Gallery has also developed a cultural programme to welcome refugees and asylum seekers to Manchester. The programme includes mentoring and befriending, as well as interactive arts-based work in the Gallery. Some universities have well-established partnerships with local arts centres and other arts organisations, and several have a substantial involvement in local festivals and events.

The Courtauld Institute of Art has a very active Public Programmes Department which works with disadvantaged communities across London (www.courtauld.ac.uk/publicprogrammes). Academics and student ambassadors deliver outreach sessions in state schools in deprived parts of the city and young people are invited and supported to undertake projects in the Courtauld Gallery. The Gallery also hosts an independent project called 'SMart' (socially marginalised art; http://smartnetwork.org.uk) that works with people who are homeless or otherwise at risk of social exclusion.

Lancaster University has a year-round programme of arts-based community engagement activity, working with disadvantaged communities on artworks, dance, film and music (www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/lica/live_at_lica). In London, Goldsmith's invites local families to come and take part in drawing, painting and story-writing activities, overseen by PGCE students. This is part of the annual Big Draw event run by the National Campaign for Drawing, and has attracted about 700 participants (www.gold.ac.uk/bigdraw).

Cambridge University's Fitzwilliam Museum has been providing learning opportunities for prisoners via virtual access to the Egyptian collection (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/ant/egypt/outreach/prisons/index.html).

At the University of Southampton, the John Hansard Gallery delivers its Arts Award scheme in partnership with organisations such as the Wessex

A number of universities undertake a considerable amount of outreach work based on their museums, galleries and arts centres.

Youth Offending Team. The scheme helps socially excluded young people to gain literacy and numeracy skills, and develop their creativity and confidence.

At Queen Mary, University of London, People's Palace Projects has initiated the delivery of arts based interventions that develop resilience in young people in inner city schools (www.peoplespalace.org.uk). Much of the current work is being undertaken in partnership with AfroReggae musicians from *favela* communities in Brazil. In addition, a school-based drumming project called Drumming for Change has been established at St Paul's Way School in Hackney, a Foundation Trust School with a board of trustees led by the University.

Sports outreach

Sport is an important part of university life, and many universities have impressive sports facilities – which may be made available to groups and individuals in the community. In our questionnaire survey, 60 per cent of universities said that they made at least some of their sports facilities available to disadvantaged groups. Such groups may include local sports teams, schools, or groups of people with particular needs. Access to facilities depends partly on potential availability – the nature, quality and location of these facilities and the amount of spare capacity. It also depends on the university's practical commitment to opening up facilities. Some universities, for instance, say that their sports facilities are open to local people, but do little to publicise that and seem to have given little thought to access issues such as introducing concessionary rates for unemployed people.

In some universities sport is used as a focus for outreach activity, often associated with the university's efforts to widen participation in Higher Education. In our survey, 57 per cent said they were involved in sports outreach for disadvantaged groups (Table 4). That frequently entails sports coaching, undertaken by both students and sports centre staff, typically in local schools in disadvantaged areas, but also with other local groups. Sports coaching can give students valuable experience – again, enhancing their employability – and coaching in schools can fit well with widening participation activity. In some universities, student teams regularly compete with local teams, and there are also interesting examples where sport has forged links between students and people with particular needs and issues. The University of Sheffield, for example, held a one-day tournament in 2010 called Football for Friendship, which brought together students and young asylum seekers (www.shef.ac.uk/communityrelations/sports.html).

Some universities have developed strong and productive sports partnerships with local schools and sports organisations. For example, the University of East London has close links with Newham All Stars Sports Academy (www.nassa2012.org.uk), which has resulted in a joint project to

Some universities, for instance, say that their sports facilities are open to local people, but do little to publicise that and seem to have given little thought to access issues such as introducing concessionary rates for unemployed people.

Table 4: Sports outreach (n = 135)

Qn: 'Is your university involved in any sports outreach for disadvantaged communities?'

	No. of respondents	%
Yes	77	57.0
No	47	34.8
Under consideration/being developed	11	8.1

develop a new sports hall and also the University's close involvement in the delivery of the Academy's 'Carry a Basketball, not a Blade' campaign (www.englandbasketball.co.uk/news/default.aspx?newsid=2505). In Hull, the University's Sports and Fitness Centre, working in partnership with Hull FC, is providing facilities to host Kickz, a football project for hard-to-reach 12–18 year olds (www2.hull.ac.uk/student/sports_centre/news/kickz_in_the_community.aspx).

SUNEE (Sports Universities North East England) is one of the best-known and well-developed examples of university sports outreach. It is a collaborative arrangement involving the North East's five universities and aims to support the region's economic and social development, with an emphasis on tackling disadvantage. Since its formation in 1997, SUNEE has helped the five universities (Durham, Northumbria, Newcastle, Sunderland and Teesside) to develop their sports outreach programmes and learn from each other (http://services.sunderland.ac.uk/universitysport/ourpartners/sunee). The initiative has also attracted substantial funding from HEFCE, the Football Foundation, the Northern Rock Foundation and others. These universities have established a wide range of programmes, involving a variety of sports-based activities engaging homeless people, vulnerable adults' groups, young offenders, rehabilitating drug users (Street League and Second Chance sessions), and looked-after young people (www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk/toolkit/uploads/files/sports_universities_north_east_england_teesside_cs.pdf). Student volunteer coaches are centrally involved in the successful delivery of projects; and they acquire valuable skills, experience and qualifications. Although external funding has continued to be important, sustainability has been achieved for much of the work and some posts have now been mainstreamed by the participating universities developing their own programmes.

5 STUDENTS LEARNING IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS: PLACEMENTS AND PROJECTS

Educational experiences can be enriched through creative interaction between the university and the wider community. In particular, student placements and projects in community settings can provide valuable learning opportunities – and can also help to support community organisations.

In our survey, we found that only 44.9 per cent of universities require at least some of their students to undertake work with communities, including disadvantaged communities, as part of their degree course. Typically, this involves the placement of a student in a local statutory or voluntary sector organisation, where they can undertake vocational practice – learning, alongside professional practitioners, how to do the job.

The benefits can be considerable. Students can have real-life experience, which will enrich and deepen their learning, and also potentially make them more employable. They can become more aware of different, perhaps

Table 5: Community placements for students (n = 136)

Qn: 'Does the University *require* some students to undertake work with disadvantaged communities as part of their degree course?'		
	No. of respondents	%
Yes	61	44.9
No	75	55.1

unfamiliar, needs and situations; and that can help them in their subsequent lives and careers. In addition, while on placement, students can give a great deal in terms of their time and expertise, and many voluntary and community groups have benefited from the input of students supporting their routine activities or undertaking specific project work.

Our survey found that most of the courses that require students to undertake such a placement are within a fairly narrow range. Predominantly, these are courses which are evidently vocational. The main ones are:

- **community and social work** – particularly social work, youth work, probation and VCS-related qualifications;
- **education** – teaching qualifications, involving placement in schools;
- **medicine** – clinical placements for medical students, nursing, midwifery and various specialties. Also practice placements for counselling and therapy qualifications.

As well as students going out into community settings, university–community relationships can be developed by members of the community coming in. On vocational courses such as social work and medicine, it is now considered good practice to invite service users to help shape courses and also talk to students about their experiences.

Some social science courses include community-based research and some business courses offer opportunities for students to do consultancy projects to help local voluntary sector organisations. Several specialist Higher Education institutions provide placements in activities such as community-based drama, music and dance. Planning and architecture courses also often involve community-based project work; one pertinent example is the work that was undertaken by the Contested Cities – Urban Universities project at Queen's University, Belfast (www.qub.ac.uk/ep/research/cu2/practice.html).

Community-based research can be an integral part of a course. An interesting example is the BeWEHL project (Bettering Wellbeing, Education, Health and Lifestyle) at the University of Wales, Newport (www.newport. ac.uk/ccll/communitylearning/CommunityLearningInitiatives/bewehl/Pages/ default.aspx). This course recruits people, mainly women, from disadvantaged communities and they work together in small groups to research issues in their community. The curriculum is built around the idea of conducting a research project which is accredited and often leads to participants progressing to degree courses.

Across many arts and humanities subjects there is relatively little community-based work available to students as part of their degree, but we have encountered a number of courses that are centred on community practice:

- Bristol University's part-time BA degree in English Literature and Community Engagement (www.bristol.ac.uk/english/part-time), which has mostly mature students from very diverse backgrounds. A key aspect of the course is the requirement that students set up a community project, such as a reading group, in local libraries and other community settings, mainly in disadvantaged areas. The exact nature of these projects is not fixed, but evolves according to the interests and needs of both the student and the participants.
- Manchester University's Drama Department set up a Theatre in Prisons and Probation Research and Development Centre in 1992, which subsequently developed into TiPP (www.tipp.org.uk), a separate charity supported by the Arts Council. In association with TiPP, the Drama Department offers

students the opportunity to undertake placements and run projects in prisons and other criminal justice settings.

- The Royal Academy of Music runs Music in the Community modules involving the placement of groups of students in local state schools (www.ram.ac.uk/open-academy). These provide opportunities for children to write and perform their own music, and for the Academy's students to develop as musicians. These placements are popular with students, many of whom will do community outreach work in their subsequent careers.

Most university Law Schools (about two-thirds of them) provide opportunities for students to undertake community practice on a pro-bono basis, usually supervised by staff and local solicitors, and predominantly serving people from disadvantaged communities.[12] One example is the work of the Pro Bono Centre at BPP University College of Professional Studies, a private sector university law school (www.bpp.com/about-bpp/-/aboutBPP/pro-bono). Students can take part in a variety of projects, generally on a voluntary basis, such as helping at Law Centre clinics and advice centres, language translation in legal settings, and work with tribunals, human rights and appeals. Cuts in legal aid provision make this work particularly important at the present time. BPP also runs the Streetlaw project, which promotes understanding of the law, working with socially excluded young people, among others.

While many placements involve students learning how to do a job, some students do research or undertake specific practical projects in the community, either through a placement or a less formal arrangement. That might lead to the production of an individual dissertation or other outcomes, such as a group project. Such community collaborations are usually arranged on an individual basis, through connections between an academic or student and a local organisation, but there are examples of more formal arrangements, which can serve to develop and broaden opportunities for students, and also yield greater community benefit.

The Science Shop, a long-established joint initiative of Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster, is a good example of effective collaboration between universities and the local community. Local voluntary and community organisations are invited to submit proposals for projects that they would like students to help them with. Science Shop staff work with the organisations to ensure these projects are feasible and will then promote these opportunities, on an optional basis, to students. The Science Shop acts as a brokerage and deals with practical matters, such as relationships, ethical issues and monitoring. Some opportunities are individual dissertation projects, with a strong research aspect; others are group projects and are more practice-based. They range from students working with organisations wanting a survey of their service users, to advice on legal issues or help with marketing or evaluation. They can also include team projects, such as Hospitality Management students helping with a conference, or Interactive Media Arts students undertaking the development of promotional materials. All projects are supervised by academic staff and count towards the student's degree, and they can be substantial: typically 300 hours work for a dissertation project. The Science Shop engages in over 100 projects a year, involving several hundred students from across a range of disciplines in the two universities (see www.scienceshop.org and www.qub.ac.uk/scisho). The Science Shop receives funding from the Northern Ireland Higher Education Innovation Fund and is part of the International Science Shops Network. Elsewhere in the UK, Liverpool University's School of Law and Social Justice has a similar but smaller brokerage scheme, run by Interchange, a charitable organisation supported by the University (www.liv.ac.uk/ssp/interchange). Cambridge University has also

The Science Shop, a long-established joint initiative of Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster, is a good example of effective collaboration between universities and the local community.

started a scheme of this kind, called Community Knowledge Exchange (www.cam.ac.uk/ccke).

There is a great deal of scope for the further development of opportunities for students to learn in the community. In the UK, formally accredited learning in the community is under-developed, particularly when compared with the USA, where 'service learning' is a widespread feature of university education.[13] Here, most students, apart from those on certain vocational courses, will not have the opportunity to undertake community-based work as part of their studies. Although many students do gain community experience through volunteering activities, that certainly should not preclude more structured learning in community settings as part of a first (or higher) degree course. Not only can students gain a lot from this form of educational experience, but their engagement represents a substantial resource that can be harnessed to support disadvantaged communities – which is perhaps particularly important and useful in a time of austerity and cuts. Furthermore, this kind of learning activity builds bridges between universities and their local communities.

In the current economic climate, and with the tripling of tuition fees (in England), universities are increasingly emphasising the importance of enhancing the 'employability' of their students. One aspect of that is a greater awareness of the value of community-based learning and experience. In the future, more students may well want to have this as part of their university education, an integral aspect of the student experience; that will bring new opportunities both for students and for disadvantaged communities.

6 RESEARCH *WITH* DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Research done *with* communities rather than *on* communities can develop active and effective collaborations between universities and disadvantaged communities.

Academic research on topics such as poverty and inequality, on the health experiences of different social groups, or on the effectiveness and impacts of public policy can help to support disadvantaged communities. Such work can provide credible evidence and may be particularly valuable in policy-making and in campaigning for change.

There are different styles of research, serving different purposes. Some research may support disadvantaged communities indirectly, while not being the primary purpose of the work. Here, however, we are particularly interested in research that is developed through a more direct relationship with disadvantaged communities, and which is designed and developed through a process of supportive engagement, collaboration and reciprocity.

In our questionnaire survey, 70 per cent of respondents said that their university undertakes such research and cited examples, several of which we followed up as case studies. The majority of examples given could broadly be categorised as social policy, and many of those projects were concerned with health and well-being, focusing on issues such as lifestyle choices and sustainability. Some researchers are working closely with specific disadvantaged groups to find out about the difficulties they face and the needs that they have. These groups included people on low incomes, homeless people, disabled people, travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and people with substance misuse problems.

Some of these examples are more collaborative than others, and some more focused on disadvantaged communities than others. While there is certainly developing practice, this kind of work does not appear to be as wide-ranging, or as well-developed, as it probably ought to be. Nonetheless, it is certainly possible to identify some good examples and interesting approaches.

Some academics go so far as to say that they do work with communities *despite* their university, and encounter 'benign indifference', not institutional support.

In many cases, collaborative research *with* communities has developed as a result of the interest, connections and commitment of individual academics and their colleagues. It has generally not derived from an institutional response to community needs. In fact, some academics go so far as to say that they do work with communities *despite* their university, and encounter 'benign indifference', not institutional support. The approach taken by the University of Brighton, based on a strong and enduring institutional commitment to supporting communities – and backed up by continuous funding from the University's central resources – is therefore a relatively unusual, as well as an instructive, example. Brighton established the Community University Partnership Programme (Cupp) in 2003 to facilitate and sustain supportive relationships with the community (www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp). A key feature of the approach is the Cupp Helpdesk, which provides a way in to the university for local community, voluntary and statutory organisations interested in research, or wanting to access university resources. Cupp staff clarify how the University might help and, in relation to research collaborations, researchers are able to provide initial advice and assistance. Many research projects have developed in this way, with academic researchers working closely with community groups on projects that matter to them; currently, about 15 such projects a year are undertaken, principally with local groups under Cupp's 'On Our Doorsteps' programme (www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/whatwedo/community-knowledge-exchange/on-our-doorsteps.html). In addition, there are many other activities, including student projects in the community and also forums and seminars that bring together researchers, students, community practitioners, residents and service users.[14]

Commitment to research that promotes change is a key aspect of many effective community-university research collaborations. At Durham University, the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action has been established, with funding support from Beacons for Public Engagement, to produce 'tangible benefits' and foster social justice (www.publicengagement.ac.uk/how/case-studies/collaborating-social-justice). The Centre's use of participatory action research is especially evident in the development and implementation of a project on debt on Teesside, being undertaken in partnership with a local organisation, Thrive (Thornaby on Tees), and Church Action on Poverty, with funding from the Northern Rock Foundation (www.dur.ac.uk/beacon/socialjustice/researchprojects/thrive/). This work developed gradually, beginning with an initial request from Thrive for help with local research, which led on to deepening relationships between the university and the community and several mutually beneficial collaborations. The Northern Rock Foundation project centres on developing a sustainable programme of household mentoring on money management, linked to community-based campaigns aimed at tackling the causes of debt in poor households. There is a strong element of campaigning, notably against the practices of loan companies – a vitally important community issue.

Another, rather different example demonstrating commitment to change is the work of the Scottish Agricultural College, especially its work on care farming and on community land ownership. Care farming involves farmers providing therapeutic opportunities for disadvantaged individuals, including long-term unemployed people, homeless people and young people excluded from schools (www.sac.ac.uk/ruralpolicycentre/publs/supporttoagriculture/factsheets/carefarmingfactsheet/). Care farming receives no direct statutory funding – it relies on the goodwill of farmers, and their ability to become 'service providers'. The College is very supportive of this work, and helps by undertaking some consultancy and by providing assistance with the running of the Care Farming Scotland organisation. This is seen as part of the College's

corporate social responsibility activity. Recent research on community land ownership, with local communities across Scotland, also represents the College's commitment to remote and sometimes disadvantaged communities in rural areas, where basic infrastructure, services and affordable housing can be in short supply (www.sac.ac.uk/news/currentnews/11n80comm landownership).

At Bristol University, the Centre for Exercise, Nutrition and Health Sciences (www.bristol.ac.uk/enhs/) is involved with a wide variety of projects with community partners, working with people across the lifespan and including a focus on disadvantaged communities (www.bristol.ac.uk/enhs/research/ currentprojects). The aim of the group is to combine research with action to improve health, and collaboration is central to the group's approach. One example of their approach is a project in Sandwell in the West Midlands, where researchers have worked with local people on 'shop tours', looking at food choices, especially in relation to the nutritional information provided on food packaging. Such projects are very much rooted in the community: in schools, community centres, leisure centres, shops and, often, in people's homes. Similarly, researchers at the Healthy Living unit at Northumbria University (http://healthylivinguk.org/) are working with communities to set up and also evaluate children's breakfast clubs and other healthy eating programmes.

The choice of research methods is important in developing work with communities, rather than on communities. Peer research can offer a good way of ensuring that research is immersed in the community – and can bring out much more information and insight than traditional methods. For example, researchers from Cardiff University (www.cardiff.ac.uk/cplan/contactsandpeople/ stafflist/m-r/mackie-p-research-housinghomelessness.html), in partnership with Shelter Cymru, have looked at homelessness provision in Torfaen, South Wales and, as part of that research, they employed a peer researcher – a young person who had been homeless himself. He was able to gather the experiences of vulnerable and homeless young people and help ensure the relevance of the research to the needs of that community.[15] That study has helped to change the way housing and support services are delivered to young people in the area.

One way of working with communities is to recruit members of the public to undertake empirical work and, in turn, help shape the research agenda. An example of that is the PARC Project, an impact study of Connswater Community Greenway, a major environmental scheme in east Belfast (www. communitygreenway.co.uk/current/index.php?option=com_content&task=vie w&id=5&Itemid=5). One element of that study involves training 22 community volunteers to act as surveyors who record the use of open spaces. These volunteers play an important part in a research process that is concerned with community improvement and development, and their training and contributions to the project are duly recognised through accreditation. In addition, members of the East Belfast Community Development and Health Network and the East Belfast Partnership sit on the Management Executive and Project Management groups of the study and this helps the research team work out more clearly the implications of the findings for the local community, gives real momentum to the dissemination of findings and helps the team to ask new research questions.

Another example is the OPAL (Open Air Laboratories) project, led by Imperial College London (www3.imperial.ac.uk/OPAL). This large-scale initiative has enabled scientists to work with the public on environmental research projects; it combines high-quality academic research with public engagement, and is focused on disadvantaged urban communities throughout England.

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OPAL works through a network of ten universities and other partners, and has been funded by the Big Lottery for a period of five years, from 2007 to 2012. One of OPAL's main aims is to raise environmental awareness and help local people to develop the skills to examine issues that matter to them (www.opalexplorenature.org).

7 STUDENT AND STAFF VOLUNTEERING

Voluntary work undertaken by students represents an important community resource and can have a considerable impact. While student volunteering is well established, often well organised and has a long history, staff volunteering in universities is relatively new and underdeveloped.

Student volunteering

A number of organisations that support disadvantaged communities provide volunteering opportunities especially for students, and some rely heavily on student volunteers. Even though student volunteering is usually confined to term time, student volunteers are popular with organisations.

A comprehensive study by the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) found that student volunteers were particularly valued for their youth, enthusiasm, creativity and dynamism — and they can also add an extra element of diversity to an organisation's pool of volunteers.[16] The study also found that, for their part, student volunteers are primarily drawn to volunteering because they are keen to make a difference, but they get a lot out of it in other ways too, developing skills and adding to their experience, self confidence and employment prospects.

Our questionnaire survey found that nearly three-quarters (73.4 per cent) of universities had a university-wide student volunteering scheme (e.g. Student Community Action) that operates as a brokerage, linking students to volunteering opportunities. A further 10.1 per cent were considering setting one up (Table 6). Student volunteering schemes are clearly very common in the older (pre-1992) universities: 89 per cent of these universities had one. However, they are also widespread in the new universities: 79 per cent of the post-1992 universities had such a scheme. They are much less common in the other Higher Education institutions, such as the university colleges and specialist institutions: only 32 per cent of these had a formal student volunteering scheme.

Many schemes have quite a long history, but have seen substantial growth in recent years.[17] Over the last ten years or so their development has been

Table 6: Student volunteering schemes (n = 139)

Qn: 'Is there a university-wide student volunteering scheme (e.g. Student Community Action)?'

	No. of respondents	%
Yes	102	73.4
No	23	16.5
Under consideration/being developed	14	10.1

encouraged by funding from the HEFCE (through the Higher Education Active Community Fund and the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund) and, most recently, through support from vInspired, the National Young Volunteers Service. Student volunteering has also been boosted by the development of new models of provision such as Student Hubs (http://studenthubs.org) – networks for voluntary action that have now been established at six universities.

In many universities, formal student volunteering is arranged by various student bodies, notably students' unions and related student volunteering societies. As well as university-wide schemes, there are also individual student societies that have elements of volunteering activity. Historically, volunteering in universities was largely developed by students, and student-led provision is still the most common, but some universities are now directly involved in developing and organising it (e.g. through their Careers Services). One interesting example of a university-sponsored approach is the Centre for Volunteering and Community Leadership at the University of Central Lancashire, which runs several externally funded projects supporting volunteering by both students and local young people (www.uclan.ac.uk/schools/education_social_sciences/the_centre_for_volunteering/index.php). The Centre also delivers courses to encourage and develop active citizenship.

In addition, some students will participate in voluntary work that they have arranged for themselves; indeed, the IVR study found that about half the volunteering that students do is *not* supported by university schemes. As well as these kinds of volunteering, there are also other activities which might be included in a broad definition – such as unpaid internships and even some unpaid, but academically accredited, work that is part of the requirements for an optional course module. Students also do a considerable amount of charity fundraising; a key part of that in some universities is 'Rag' (Raising and Giving) week, a fundraising tradition that goes back many years. One example is Sheffield Rag (www.sheffieldrag.com), which raised £202,000 for good causes in 2010–11, with priority given to supporting community organisations in South Yorkshire – where most of the money was raised.

Student volunteering activity evidently takes many forms and is undertaken in a wide range of contexts. A substantial amount of it is linked with widening participation programmes and includes, for example, students going into local schools as ambassadors or mentors.[18] Some student volunteering is involved with sport; an example of that is students volunteering to coach local school teams. Other volunteering is much the same as that offered at local volunteer centres, often requiring enthusiasm and commitment rather than particular knowledge or skills.

Community Action (www.rhul.ac.uk/CommunityAction) at Royal Holloway College is a fairly typical example of a successful university-wide volunteering scheme. It offers many one-off volunteering opportunities, such as environmental clean-ups, which are easy to get involved in and do not require a CRB check. There are also long-term projects, in schools, care homes,

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youth clubs, museums and other community settings. The range is wide: from volunteering with the National Trust to English language tutoring at a centre for recently arrived unaccompanied young asylum seekers. About 1,500 of the College's 9,000 students are registered as volunteers. This scheme is run by the College, but hosted by the students' union, and relies heavily upon online administration and brokerage.

Student volunteering is increasingly being considered in terms of its potential to enhance employability. While that may, or may not, be an important motivation for individual students volunteering,[19] it is an important reason for ensuring that it is formally recorded and recognised. Our survey found that, among those with a volunteering scheme, just over two-thirds (67.3 per cent) of universities provide some kind of formal recognition of participation in volunteering (Table 7). Such recognition includes academic credits, Higher Education Achievement Records and volunteering awards developed by universities themselves (e.g. the Vice Chancellor's Civic Awards scheme at Oxford University and the Imperial College CV2012 Award). At Royal Holloway, as at several other institutions, existing awards specifically recognising volunteering are being supplemented by a more broadly based award (the 'Royal Holloway Passport') for extra-curricular activity, including volunteering. Similar examples include: the Plymouth Award; the Nottingham Advantage Award; the Manchester Leadership Award; the Sheffield Graduate Award; and the York Award. All these award schemes emphasise employability: such an award, demonstrating breadth of experience, may make a graduate more attractive to employers.

Staff volunteering

While student volunteering is well established, often well organised, and has a long history, staff volunteering in universities is relatively new and underdeveloped. Employer-Supported Volunteering schemes are fairly widespread in the private sector, especially in larger companies with Corporate Social Responsibility programmes, but such schemes are still relatively unusual in universities.[20]

Nevertheless, almost a third of the universities responding to our survey said that they have a staff volunteering scheme, which we defined as a 'scheme that enables staff to have time out to undertake volunteering activity in the community without affecting their pay' (Table 8). Nearly all these schemes are open to all types of university staff: academics, support and administrative staff, and service staff such as estates, catering and cleaning. Most universities that had such schemes said that they had arrangements to help staff find suitable volunteering opportunities (in some cases, via the arrangements for student volunteering). However, most offered little time away from work – commonly, only a day a year. Some of these schemes also seem very limited, focusing very much on education-related activity, such as mentoring in schools.

Student volunteering is increasingly being considered in terms of its potential to enhance employability.

Table 7: Universities with student volunteering schemes: formal recognition of participation in volunteering (n = 107)

	No. of respondents	%
No formal recognition	35	32.7
Academic credits	27	25.2
Higher Education Achievement Awards	21	19.6
Other forms of recognition	49	45.8

Note: many universities offer more than one kind of formal recognition.

Table 8: Staff volunteering schemes (n = 133)

Qn: 'Is there a staff volunteering scheme?'		
	No. of respondents	%
Yes	43	33.3
No	90	67.7

Of course, many members of staff will be active as volunteers in any case, and may not want time off or any kind of recognition from their employer. University staff members have always been involved as school governors, magistrates and as stalwarts of local organisations – a university can certainly provide a good pool of people willing and able to help to run community organisations. A staff volunteering scheme, however, can help to unlock more of that potential, by brokering connections, providing staff with the time to volunteer, and by signalling that the university values and recognises this work. From the university's point of view, it shows that the university wants to support the community – and it is also good for staff morale and development.

Durham University's staff volunteering scheme (www.dur.ac.uk/volunteer) is one of the most developed schemes and is now well established. It started in 2008, initially supported by funding from One North East, the Regional Development Agency. It is now funded by the University, and by the end of 2011 had over 430 active staff volunteers (out of a workforce of 3,400) and 175 Community Partners, organisations that provide volunteering opportunities. Volunteers can have up to five days a year paid time away from their normal work to take part in their existing voluntary work, or to volunteer in placements organised through the scheme. The University's Staff Volunteering and Outreach office also organises about 25 Team Challenge events a year with a wide range of voluntary and community sector organisations. Durham has recently been awarded Volunteering England's 'Investing in Volunteers for Employers' accreditation and is now starting to help other organisations in North East England to develop similar schemes.

From the university's point of view, it shows that the university wants to support the community – and it is also good for staff morale and development.

8 DOING MORE TO SUPPORT DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Universities can play an important and distinctive role in terms of community leadership and through their involvement in stimulating debate and facilitating regeneration. It is also important to highlight the role of universities as big businesses and big employers – and consider how that can be used to support disadvantaged communities.

Universities are widely recognised as important institutions in their localities – 'anchor institutions' with long-term local connections and interests.[21] Many have established good relationships with local authorities and other agencies and are represented on the boards of local partnership bodies (as discussed in Chapter 2). Some are involved in development schemes and regeneration programmes. However, universities could play a more distinctive role than they often do, by capitalising on their particular attributes and specific strengths. They are certainly able to provide access to knowledge and expertise; but in addition to that, they are very well-placed to offer a space for debate, providing an opportunity for different voices to be heard. Universities can act as facilitative leaders – brokers able to foster discussion by bringing people together on neutral ground. Some universities are already doing some of this, developing forums for lively debate, for example in the style of the University of Liverpool's 'Policy Provocations' (www.liv.ac.uk/events/policy-provocations/mayor.php) or as round-table discussions. But that could be taken much further, and many more universities could provide opportunities for policy-related discussions focused on the challenges facing their localities – ensuring that the concerns of disadvantaged communities are heard and taken into account. That would seem to be particularly valuable in the current economic and political climate.

Some universities have become heavily involved in local regeneration programmes by establishing new campuses in areas undergoing revitalisation. Their new developments have helped to stimulate additional economic activity in these areas. Liverpool Hope University (www.hope.ac.uk/) is one example, having developed a second 'creative' campus in Everton, which has encouraged other new investment in that inner city area. But Liverpool Hope has done more than that. Consistent with its roots in the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, the University is strongly committed to social action in Liverpool. Building on experience of developing the Everton campus, the University set up 'Urban Hope' (www.hope.ac.uk/urban-hope/urban-hope.html), a subsidiary company and a trading arm, which has been directly involved in managing the development of several capital projects in some of the poorest parts of the city. Acting as a community development agency, Urban Hope has served as an accountable body and facilitator for these projects, which accommodate various community services, such as employment support, training and childcare. In this way, and working closely with community organisations and activists, Liverpool Hope has demonstrated commitment to the area – and taken managed risks. This might not be a relevant role for a university in many places, but it does demonstrate the kind of imaginative leadership, or partnership, that a university may offer.[22]

Over the past few years, several studies have been done assessing the economic impacts of universities,[23] but these studies have said little about the impacts specifically on disadvantaged communities in terms of job opportunities or the procurement of goods and services. In responses to our survey, local employment was mentioned by only two universities and procurement was not mentioned at all. Our subsequent visits to universities seemed to suggest that very few of them have considered how their recruitment and procurement practices might be used to support disadvantaged communities.

By contrast, The Works (www.theworksmanchester.co.uk) in Manchester shows just how such a connection can be made. Both the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University are partners in Corridor Manchester, an initiative to improve the city's Oxford Road corridor. Through that initiative, the two universities support The Works, a partnership between City South Manchester Housing Trust, The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Work Solutions. Services are delivered by Work Solutions and other partners. Along with several other employers, both universities notify job vacancies to The Works, and they have provided pre-application advice and support to potential job applicants. Many of the vacancies are entry-level jobs – such as cleaners, catering staff, caretakers and security staff – and are accessible to people who are disadvantaged in the labour market and live in this part of the city. Manchester Metropolitan University is particularly concerned with ensuring that local people will benefit from job opportunities arising at the University's new Birley Fields campus in nearby Hulme.

This was the only example of such an initiative that we found, but there may be others. A scheme of this kind could easily be emulated, and with minimal cost to the university.

Universities could also explore other interventions. For example, they could consider attaching additional conditions – 'social value' clauses – when awarding contracts. Some housing providers, for instance, specify that their building contractors need to provide a certain number of apprenticeships. Some organisations, in both the public and private sectors, are supporting local businesses by revising conditions for the procurement of goods and services. Interventions of this kind could be developed and designed to support disadvantaged communities. Given the size of universities, relatively modest

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Universities could also promote good employment practices, especially in relation to their lower-paid employees. Universities agreeing to pay the London or UK Living Wage (www.livingwage.org.uk/), for example, would deliver real benefits, enhance their reputations and could be very influential in encouraging other employers to do the same.

It is striking that universities – even those clearly committed to supporting disadvantaged communities – seem to have given little consideration to the opportunities stemming from their role as employers and purchasers. Universities could review and significantly revise their HR and procurement practices to target benefits, where feasible, on disadvantaged communities. The impacts could be very substantial, in some cases even transformative. Evidently, there could be some difficult issues here, not least concerning the possible tension between universities as commercially driven businesses and as charitable or public sector based organisations with a social mission beyond the market. This could test universities' commitment to this agenda and, more broadly, their willingness to embrace corporate social responsibility. At present, however, such approaches are undeveloped; there is clearly a need for these issues to be properly explored, understood and developed into practical interventions and options.

9 INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT AND SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT

If universities are to engage effectively with communities, especially with disadvantaged communities, they have to be strongly committed to that and have a good understanding of the context and potential difficulties. Above all, they need to establish effective implementation mechanisms. These are key ingredients for success.

In our questionnaire survey, respondents were asked to identify barriers to successful community engagement. Many of them mentioned funding: a lack of dedicated funding for this kind of activity, short-term funding and, simply, a general lack of funding. Some expressed concern about the end of designated funding for the Aimhigher scheme, and the ending of the Beacons for Public Engagement programme.[24]

Funding is vitally important and, without it, universities may well find it difficult to undertake activities outside their core business. That said, widening participation activities have to continue as part of Access Agreements, and student placements, research with communities and even volunteering are all closely connected with – or part of – the core business of universities. Community engagement and support does not necessarily require substantial financial resources. The main issue seems to be not so much about funding, more about willingness to engage with communities – and doing that seriously and effectively.

A major factor in developing successful engagement and securing support for disadvantaged communities is institutional commitment. Many of our survey respondents highlighted this, saying that engagement needs to be an integral part of a university's strategy: there needs to be a serious, long-term commitment to doing it and to doing it properly; and it has to be a priority, not

tokenism.[25] It should also be clear why the university is doing it: there should be a rationale supporting commitment. That rationale could be, for instance: 'being a good neighbour'; 'commitment to promoting social justice'; or 'partnerships of mutual benefit'. Furthermore – and this was stressed by many academics and university managers – commitment has to come from the highest levels in the university. It needs leadership from the top and, preferably, a strong 'champion' to take it forward. It also helps a great deal if it is backed up by dedicated funding from central university resources, rather than relying on ad hoc grants.

Furthermore, institutional commitment needs to be translated into policies and practices that help and encourage staff and students to get involved in the community. An important part of that is ensuring that they have the time to do this and, no less important, that their activities are recognised and actively supported by the university. At the same time, it is important to appreciate that this kind of engagement activity certainly does not appeal to everyone and, for relationships to work, they have to be entered into enthusiastically – and voluntarily.[26]

Universities also have to have a good understanding of the community context: what is needed and what is feasible. Alongside that, universities need to be well aware of community perceptions. This point was made strongly by several of our survey respondents, who noted that a major barrier to engagement was the community's sense that the university was 'not for them'. Overcoming such perceptions can require a good deal of effort, confidence-building on all sides, and careful nurturing of relationships. That will take time. Furthermore, while universities may seem open and accessible to those within them, the reality is that they often seem closed and mystifying, even intimidating, to those outside them. Universities need to establish a clear point of entry, a 'front door' for communities.

An important aspect of implementation is good co-ordination. It is striking that, although there are many overlaps between different engagement activities, they are often done separately and potential synergies are not recognised and not exploited. Community organisations may receive support from different parts of the university, all having little awareness of each other's involvement. Some co-ordination could certainly be beneficial and universities need to think about the most appropriate structures to encourage co-ordination.

In addition, effective implementation has to be based on a clearly expressed strategy, with lines of responsibility, and systems for monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation, in particular, seems to be underused in this work; it tends to be assumed that these initiatives are effective and, generally, a 'good thing'. Evaluation needs to be developed and used to help shape policy and practice. We are not proposing a heavy-handed, bureaucratic infrastructure. Indeed, it is important to avoid creating structures that can discourage initiative and destroy enthusiasm: it is important to nurture and support bottom-up initiative and encourage individual creativity. But some systems do need to be in place to ensure that progress is being made, and that problems are being identified and dealt with. There is a real danger that a cross-cutting strategic commitment is the responsibility of everyone – but, in reality, of no-one.

Successful implementation: some examples of practice

Co-ordination: The University of Leeds has drawn together several key engagement activities into one large department, with 40 staff, concerned with 'Access and Community Engagement' (www.leeds.ac.uk/ace/community/community.htm). Its responsibilities include: widening

participation, particularly work with schools; student volunteering; and community relations. Establishing this large unit has created resilience, a capacity to cope with change and to attract additional external funding.

The University of the West of England (www1.uwe.ac.uk/business/waystoworkwithus/communityengagement.aspx) has developed an 'atlas', with 'maps' showing how the University connects, in different ways, with community organisations; this is intended to help develop and strengthen relationships and open up new opportunities and collaborations.

Focus: Some universities have found it very helpful to focus their community engagement in specific places, often close to the campus. De Montfort University has set up the 'Square Mile' (www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/partnerships/square-mile/square-mile-project.aspx) project focusing the efforts of staff and students to help improve an area covering about 2,000 homes in Leicester. Brighton University's Community University Partnership Programme has established an initiative called On Our Doorsteps (www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/whatwedo/community-knowledge-exchange/on-our-doorsteps.html), which explicitly seeks to develop projects in areas close to the University.

A 'way in' to the university: The University of Brighton has a Help Desk, which provides a simple, user-friendly and well-known way in to the university for organisations that would like to make contact with academics and students to help them with projects.

Incentives and recognition: Efforts have been made to include public engagement in staff promotion processes at the University of East Anglia and Cardiff University.

Monitoring and measurement: The University of Bradford has developed REAP (Reciprocity, Externalities, Access, Partnership; www.bradford.ac.uk/ssis/ssis/icps/ParticipatoryResearchMethodologies/), a measurement tool to assess the University's community engagement activities. The University of Manchester has set a number of Key Performance Indicators (http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=11015) to monitor progress in relation to Social Responsibility. An attempt has also been made to apply Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility Index (and Environment Index) to the university sector; see Universities that Count (www.eauc.org.uk/universities_that_count_-_he_benchmarking_report).

10 CONCLUSIONS

Many universities seem keen to support disadvantaged communities. Widening participation policies have been particularly important in encouraging universities to develop connections with these communities, especially with schools in disadvantaged areas. There are other significant influences as well, including pressures on universities to engage with the public and ensure that their research has an impact. In addition, universities are now more aware than ever of the need to offer a student experience that connects with the real world, making their graduates more attractive to potential employers.

Nevertheless, while universities may recognise the importance of supporting disadvantaged communities or, more generally, engaging with the public, these activities are usually seen as being far less important than their mainstream activities of teaching and research. That is despite the fact that teaching and research can be substantially enriched by effective community engagement. Of course, there is great variation across the sector; some universities are deeply involved with their local communities, from which they may recruit a large proportion of their students. Many others, however, have relatively limited connections and are uncertain about how to establish these relationships and how far to develop them.

This report has focused on good examples – initiatives that are successful. The aim is to encourage and inspire. This may, however, give the impression that there is more going on than is actually the case. In fact, the reality is that practice is very uneven and universities have a long way to go. Universities are generally far behind the best practice in the private sector, where Corporate Social Responsibility policy and practice is, in some companies, very well developed. Even so, we do want to give credit where credit is due. It can be said that most universities do some things to support disadvantaged communities

– and often do them well. No university does all of it well or does all it can to support disadvantaged communities.

There are so many things that universities can do to support disadvantaged communities. Here we have concentrated on the more 'conventional' things universities can do – but they could be far more creative and radical. For now, though, delivering those conventional approaches well and effectively is what is needed – and what could make a big difference.

We have pointed to the ingredients for success: elements of policy and practice that help ensure that universities respond successfully to community needs. We would reiterate that much depends on institutional commitment. That can make all the difference. Strategies without commitment behind them are unlikely to be delivered. And universities that are not institutionally committed to this agenda may leave isolated individuals struggling to engage with it, with little or no institutional support.

This report is addressed to all universities, but may be of most relevance to those which are committed but are perhaps uncertain about how to go forward. We have cited many specific examples of activities which can offer support to disadvantaged communities and, moreover, which can be replicated. As we visited universities across the UK it was quite striking that few knew much about what other universities are doing. Particularly now, in a very competitive environment, universities are often inward-looking and have limited opportunities to learn from each other. We hope this report will promote some of that learning and, at the least, stimulate the question: 'if *they* can do that, why can't *we*?'

Having surveyed practice throughout the UK, we are able to draw together some general observations and conclusions on the current state of play:

- Universities are supporting disadvantaged communities in various ways, notably through membership of local bodies, through student volunteering and through their widening participation programmes. But some universities are much more interested, committed and involved than others.
- Universities have generally made considerable progress in attracting more students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the 'most selective' universities have been far less successful in widening participation.
- There are some very good examples of outreach education: some universities have found innovative ways of promoting and providing education in local community settings. There seems a good deal of scope to do more – and for universities to learn from each other what works best.
- Many university students are benefiting from opportunities to learn in the community, through practice placements and research-based projects. Communities can also benefit from the practical work that students can do in local organisations.
- We found some interesting examples of collaborative research *with* disadvantaged communities. Again, this work is often innovative and of benefit to both academics and communities – and, again, there is a great deal of scope to do more of it.
- Student volunteering is very widespread and successful. It is one of the most important – often considered *the* most important – link between the university and local disadvantaged communities. Staff volunteering schemes in universities are, by contrast, new and underdeveloped, but their potential seems to be considerable.
- This study also points to some of the other kinds of support that universities might offer. Universities can play a distinctive role in community leadership and in promoting and stimulating debate. In some circumstances, universities can promote regeneration. But we particularly want to

highlight the role of universities as employers and as purchasers of goods and services. Universities could play a big part in helping to improve job prospects in disadvantaged communities – that potential needs to be explored further.

The policy implications stemming from this study can be expressed broadly and quite simply.

- *For universities*, the implications are that there are real opportunities to support disadvantaged communities in many ways; and there are good examples of effective practice that can be emulated. Universities need to be committed to this agenda, be organised to deliver it, and be prepared to take risks and respond to opportunities.
- *For government and the funding councils*, the implications are that they need to encourage and support universities to play their part in supporting disadvantaged communities. That encouragement can take various forms, including an expressed government commitment to this agenda, funding support for sustainable university initiatives, and interventions to help universities learn from each other and encourage each other.

Of course, this is not an easy time to ask universities to do more. Funding is tight, and the understandable reaction to that is to focus narrowly on core business. Consequently, the future of some community engagement and support activity may be in doubt, both because of a lack of funding and also owing to insufficient institutional commitment. There are other pressures too: for example, students have less time for volunteering if they need to undertake more paid work. However, as we have pointed out, there are also factors promoting this agenda, such as: the emphasis on research impact; concerns about student 'employability'; and a variety of other pressures on universities encouraging them to respond to the needs of disadvantaged individuals and communities in an increasingly unequal society.

In this report we have not been able to cover everything and we have become increasingly aware of gaps that ought to be filled in order to help take forward this agenda. Further work is needed to:

- explore how disadvantaged communities are responding to the support they receive from universities. How beneficial is it, and in what ways? How have relationships been established and developed? What are their strengths and limitations?
- look at what efforts have been made to evaluate the work of universities in disadvantaged communities. What evaluative methods are most appropriate and how can evaluation be used to help shape practice?
- examine the possibilities for recruiting university employees from disadvantaged communities and ensure that more of the economic impact of universities reaches these communities. What practical interventions can be developed? What are the barriers to implementation – and how can they be overcome?

We hope that this report will stimulate wide-ranging debate. Ultimately, there is a debate to be had about what universities are for. A key part of that must be a discussion about connections and impact, and particularly about how a university can be a community asset and help to serve, support and nurture communities in need.

NOTES

1   The *Concordat* is available at www.rcuk.ac.uk/per/Pages/Concordat.aspx. The *Concordat* was followed by the publication of a *Manifesto for Public Engagement*, which universities have been invited to sign in order to register their commitment. By the end of 2011, 40 universities had signed up to it (www.publicengagement.ac.uk). See also RCUK (2010) *The Research Councils UK Public Engagement with Research Strategy*, available at www.rcuk.ac.uk/per/Pages/Concordat.aspx.

2   See P. Hubbard (2008) 'Regulating the social impacts of studentification: a Loughborough case study', *Environment and Planning A, 40*, pp. 323–41, and M. Munro and M. Livingston (2012) 'Student impacts on urban neighbourhoods: policy approaches, discourses and dilemmas', *Urban Studies* 49 (8), pp. 1679–94. Also Universities UK (2006) '*Studentification': a guide to opportunities, challenges and practice*, available at www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/Publication-232.aspx.

3   For a brief but wide-ranging review of the local impacts of universities, see D. Matthews (2011) 'What have they ever done for us?', *Times Higher Education*, 24 November, available at: www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=418236.

4   See U. Kelly and I. McNicoll (2011) *Through a glass darkly: measuring the social value of universities*, Bristol: National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, available at: www.publicengagement.ac.uk/how-we-help/our-publications/social-value.

5   Durham's experience is discussed in A. Russell, A. Cattermole, R. Hudson, S. Banks, A. Armstrong, F. Robinson, R. Pain, S. Gollan and G. Brown (2011) 'Sustaining community-university collaborations – the Durham University model', *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 4, pp. 218–31.

6   For findings from a survey of individual academics and their interactions with external organisations, see M. Abreu, V. Grinevich, A. Hughes and M. Kitson (2009) *Knowledge exchange between academics and the business, public and third sectors*, UK Innovation Research Centre, available at: www.ukirc.ac.uk/knowledgeexchange/reports/article/?objid=3221.

7   M. Harris (2010) *What more can be done to widen access to highly selective universities?*, p. 83, available at: www.offa.org.uk/publications/.

8   Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (2011) *Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System*, p. 55, available at: www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/he-white-paper-students-at-the-heart?cat=closedawaitingresponse.

9   Sutton Trust (2010) *Responding to the new landscape for university access*, available at: www.suttontrust.com/public/documents/access-proposals-report-final.pdf.

10   For a perspective on the role of Further Education Colleges, see NIACE (2011) *A Dynamic Nucleus: Colleges at the Heart of Local Communities, the Final Report of the Independent Commission on Colleges in their Communities*, Leicester: NIACE, available at: http://shop.niace.org.uk/media/catalog/product/d/y/dynamic_nucleus_-_summary_-final.pdf.

11   The Welsh Assembly Government has said that one of the two main aims of Higher Education in Wales is to deliver social justice (the other main aim is to support a buoyant economy). UHOVI is of major importance in responding to that policy aim. See Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Welsh Assembly Government (2009) *For our Future: the 21st Century Higher Education Strategy and Plan for Wales*, available at http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/forourfuture/;jsessionid=q2tXPhhG2LKv4ZGJHTp8yL7R1K3kB0N70JsQzj12JNxjqglpQxyB!-351825548?lang=en.

12   Information about pro-bono work at Law Schools is given at the LawWorks website (www.lawworks.org.uk), which also has a recent survey of this activity.

13   Service learning and its value in developing citizenship is discussed by J. Annette (2010) 'The challenge of developing civic engagement in Higher Education in England', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 58(4), pp. 451–63.

14   For details and commentary on Brighton University's work, see A Hart, E. Maddison and D. Wolff (eds) (2007) *Community-University Partnerships in Practice*, Leicester: NIACE. See also the work of the South East Coastal Communities programme (www.coastalcommunities.org.uk), involving a collaboration of nine universities, including Brighton.

15   The use of a peer researcher in the Torfaen study is discussed by P. K. Mackie (2012) 'Peer Research With Children And Young People: Reflecting On The Impact Of Adopting A Rights-Based Rationale', in J. Fleming and T. Boeck (eds) *Involving Children and Young People in Health and Social Care Research*, London: Routledge.

16   The IVR research is reported in G. Brewis, J. Russell and C. Holdsworth (2010) *Bursting the Bubble: Students, Volunteering and the Community*, Bristol: Institute for Volunteering Research and National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, available at: www.publicengagement. ac.uk/sites/default/files/NCCPE_Bursting%20the%20Bubble_FullReport.pdf. See also C. Holdsworth (2010) *Student Volunteers: A National Profile*, London: Volunteering England, available at: www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/184-Student-Volunteers-A-National-Profile. A comprehensive overview of student volunteering is presented in a research synthesis: *Student Volunteering: Background, Policy and Context*, Bristol: National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, 2009, available at: http://vinspired.com/uploads/admin_assets/datas/8/original/ Research_Synthesis_01_NCCPE_SVI_June_09.pdf.

17   The historical development of student volunteering is examined in G. Brewis (2010) 'From service to action? Students, volunteering and community action in mid twentieth century Britain', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 58(4), pp. 439–49. A short film on the history of student volunteering is available at http://vimeo.com/22704163.

18   An assessment of the value of student mentoring in schools is given in F. Shaheen (2011) *Degrees of Value: How Universities Benefit Society*, London: New Economics Foundation, available at: http://neweconomics.org/publications/degrees-of-value.

19   Students' motives for volunteering are explored in C. Holdsworth (2010) 'Why volunteer? Understanding motivations for student volunteering, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 58(4), pp. 421–37.

20   See H. Bussell and D. Forbes (2008) 'How UK Universities engage with their local communities: a study of employer-supported volunteering', *International Journal of Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 13, pp. 363–78.

21   For a discussion of the idea and scope of the civic university, see J. Goddard (2009) *Re-inventing the Civic University* (NESTA 'Provocation' 12), London: NESTA, available at: www.nesta.org.uk/ library/documents/Reinventing-Civic-Uni-v2.pdf. For an assessment of the links between universities and economic growth, including local economic development, see *The Wilson Review of Business – University Collaboration* (2012), available at: www.wilsonreview.co.uk/review. See also K. Schmuecker and W. Cook (2012) *Beyond Bricks and Mortar Boards: Universities and the Future of Regional Economic Development*, Newcastle upon Tyne: IPPR North; and University Alliance (2011) 'Growing the future: universities leading, changing and creating the regional economy', London: University Alliance, available at: www.unialliance.ac.uk/2011/09/growing-the-future-universities-leading-changing-and-creating-the-regional-economy.

22   The role of Liverpool Hope in providing support to disadvantaged communities is explored in detail in 'University-community engagement at Liverpool Hope University: building social capital in the inner city?' Working Paper 4, University Learning with Excluded Communities Project, KITE, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, January 2010, available at: www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/ grants/RES-171-25-0028/outputs/Read/8251b5e7-7a00-466b-ad70-f2804fe7edfd. Another example of university involvement in regeneration was the 'Urban Regeneration: Making a Difference' programme which ran from 2006–09 and was funded by HEFCE. Four northern universities worked on this (Manchester Metropolitan, Northumbria, Salford and Central Lancashire), undertaking 46 projects, on community cohesion, health and well-being, enterprise, and crime. The programme aimed to create effective university–community collaborations to tackle social and economic issues.

23   For example: U. Kelly, D. McLellan and I. McNicoll (2009) *The Impact of Universities on the UK Economy: Fourth Report* (www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/ EconomicImpact4Full.pdf) and *Making an Economic Impact: Higher Education and the English Regions* (www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/MakingAnEconomicImpact-Higher

EducationandtheEnglishRegions.pdf), London: Universities UK. Also see studies on *The Impact of Higher Education Institutions on Regional Economies* (Economic and Social Research Council/UK Funding Councils), available at: www.impact-hei.ac.uk.

24 The Beacons for Public Engagement Programme came to an end in December 2011. However, it is being followed by 'Catalysts' (www.publicengagement.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/public-engagement-research-catalysts-call), a smaller scale programme to embed public engagement with research, which runs from 2012 to 2015. The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement has continuation funding until at least the end of 2013.

25 The challenges involved in embedding cultural change in universities, particularly in relation to public engagement, are discussed in D. Burns and H. Squires (2011) *Embedding Public Engagement in Higher Education: Final Report of the National Action Research Programme*, Bristol: National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, available at: www.publicengagement. ac.uk/how-we-help/our-publications/framework-assessing-learning. NCCPE has also devised a useful self-assessment tool that universities can use to establish how far they have reached in embedding public engagement. This EDGE Tool (www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support/self-assess) can be used to map key dimensions of Purpose, Processes and People.

26 These characteristics of effective relationships are well explored in A. Hart and D. Wolff (2006) 'Developing local 'communities of practice' through local community-university partnerships', *Planning, Practice and Research*, 12 (1), pp. 121–38. See also: P. Benneworth (ed.) (2012, forthcoming) *University Engagement with Socially Excluded Communities*, Dordrecht: Springer.

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ENGLAND

Anglia Ruskin University	University of Exeter
Aston University, Birmingham	University College Falmouth
University of Bath	University of Gloucestershire
Bath Spa University	University of Greenwich
University of Bedfordshire	Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Birmingham City University	Harper Adams University College
The University of Birmingham	University of Hertfordshire
University College Birmingham	The University of Huddersfield
Bishop Grosseteste University College	The University of Hull
Bournemouth University	Imperial College London
Arts University College at Bournemouth	Keele University
University of Brighton	The University of Kent
University of Bristol	Kingston University
Univ. of West of England, Bristol	Lancaster University
Buckinghamshire New University	University of Leeds
University of Cambridge	Leeds College of Music
Canterbury Christ Church University	Leeds Trinity University College
University of Central Lancashire	Leeds Metropolitan University
University of Chichester	University of Lincoln
City University, London	The University of Liverpool
Coventry University	Liverpool Hope University
University for the Creative Arts	Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
University of Cumbria	Liverpool John Moores University
University of Derby	Birkbeck
Durham University	Central School Speech and Drama
University of East London	Courtauld Institute of Art
Edge Hill University	Institute of Education
The University of Essex	Goldsmiths

ENGLAND *(continued)*

King's College London	Royal Agricultural College
London Business School	Royal College of Art
London School of Economics and Political Science	Royal College of Music
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine	Royal Northern College of Music
Queen Mary	University of Salford
Royal Academy of Music	University of Sheffield
Royal Holloway	University of Southampton
Royal Veterinary College	Southampton Solent University
St George's	Staffordshire University
University College London	University Campus Suffolk
London South Bank University	University of Sunderland
Loughborough University	University of Sussex
University of Manchester	Teesside University
Manchester Metropolitan University	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Middlesex University	University of the Arts London
Newcastle University	University of Warwick
Newman University College, Birmingham	University of Westminster
University of Northampton	University of Wolverhampton
Northumbria University	University of Winchester
University of Nottingham	University of Worcester
Nottingham Trent University	Writtle College
Oxford University	University of York
Oxford Brookes University	York St John University
University of Plymouth	Open University
University College Plymouth	Richmond, American International University in London
University of Portsmouth	BPP University College of Professional Studies Limited
Ravensbourne	Norwich University College of the Arts
Rose Bruford College	

SCOTLAND

University of Aberdeen	Queen Margaret University
University of Abertay Dundee	Robert Gordon University
University of Edinburgh	Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama
Edinburgh Napier University	Scottish Agricultural College
Edinburgh College of Art	University of St Andrews
University of Glasgow	University of Stirling
Glasgow Caledonian University	University of Strathclyde
UHI Millennium Institute	University of the West of Scotland

WALES

Aberystwyth University	Glyndŵr University
Bangor University	University of Wales, Newport
Cardiff University	Swansea University
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC)	Swansea Metropolitan University
University of Glamorgan, Cardiff and Pontypridd	Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

NORTHERN IRELAND

Queen's University Belfast	Stranmillis University College
University of Ulster	St Mary's University College

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