

Efford Building Communities Initiative Masterplan

Employment & Skills Audit & Learning Action Plan
Report prepared by
CSC Regeneration & Research Consultants

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Issued for comments

Please note:
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1. INTRODUCTION

This audit and learning action plan has been completed by CSC Regeneration & Research Consultants working as part of a consortium of consultants commissioned to develop a Master Plan for Efford as part of the Building Communities Initiative funded by the South West Regional Development Agency (SWeRDA).

A comprehensive audit was undertaken, considering the main issues relating to skills development in particular respect to employment as perceived by three key groups: Efford residents; local service providers; and local employers. The results of the audit have informed the development of two action plans intended to guide service delivery to support local people develop the necessary skills needed to enter work, and progress once in employment.

The remaining part of this section includes:

- i. Background
- ii. Structure of the report

1.1 BACKGROUND

The overall objective of the Master Plan is to provide Plymouth City Council (PCC), SWeRDA and the Heart of Efford Community Partnership (HECP) a report encompassing all areas of the Framework for Action (of which this report constitutes a component part). The 'Framework for Action' is an agreement between Plymouth City Council and SWeRDA which drives forward the Building Communities Initiative. The core thrust of the Framework for Action aims to identify the types of provision needed in Efford, which can be developed and addressed through the BCI Master Planning process.

The scope of CSC's work focuses on socio-economic consultancy support, in particular this includes:

- Community focussed capacity building support
- Undertaking skills audits and evaluating current employment support and opportunities for training
- Investigating how an entrepreneurial spirit can be fostered in Efford to stimulate enterprise working
- Identifying opportunities for social enterprise solutions for the community

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is structured around eight main sections and has been written to facilitate easy access and understanding for both technical and non-technical readers:

Section 1: Introduces the report and sets the context for its production as part of overall Efford Master Plan through the Building Communities Initiative.

Section 2: Details a profile of the Efford area drawing on secondary data research focussing on key economic and social variables which impact aspects of employment and skills and affect local people,

- Section 3: Considers current economic activity in Efford making comparisons with trends for Plymouth and England and Wales as a whole.
- Section 4: Reports on the key findings relating to the local people survey drawing in particular on the perceptions and expectation of local people with respect to training and employment.
- Section 5: Reports on the key findings relating to the service provider survey including a discussion of perceived barriers to employment and opportunities for local outreach and support agencies.
- Section 6. Reports on key findings relating to the local employers survey and considers the skills requirements of employers and issues pertaining to the recruitment of new staff.
- Section 7. Draws together key messages from the consultation into two action plans intended to guide support services to help secure people into employment and assist with their in-work progression once they are working.
- Section 8. Appendices to the report.

2. PROFILE OF EFFORD

Efford is a post war 'garden suburb' type estate approximately three miles from the centre of Plymouth. The estate, and in particular the main shopping precinct at Torridge Way, has over recent years become run-down in places, with houses in the nearby area in a poor state of repair.

This section describes the context of Efford that directly or indirectly influence the scope of development of a social enterprise within the area. The topics covered include:

- i. Area location
- ii. Population
- iii. Neighbourhood indices of deprivation

Each of these is considered in more detail below.

2.1 AREA LOCATION

The Plymouth 'Neighbourhood Map' (see figure 1 below) was developed by a number of partners from Plymouth 2020 – the Local Strategic Partnership for Plymouth – and identifies 43 natural neighbourhoods within the city boundary. This map, rather than drawing upon existing ward boundaries, defines areas with which people can identify, and within which they can expect to find basic services such as food shopping, doctors, dentists, post office and primary schools. Efford is identified as neighbourhood 16, and is found towards the centre of the city.

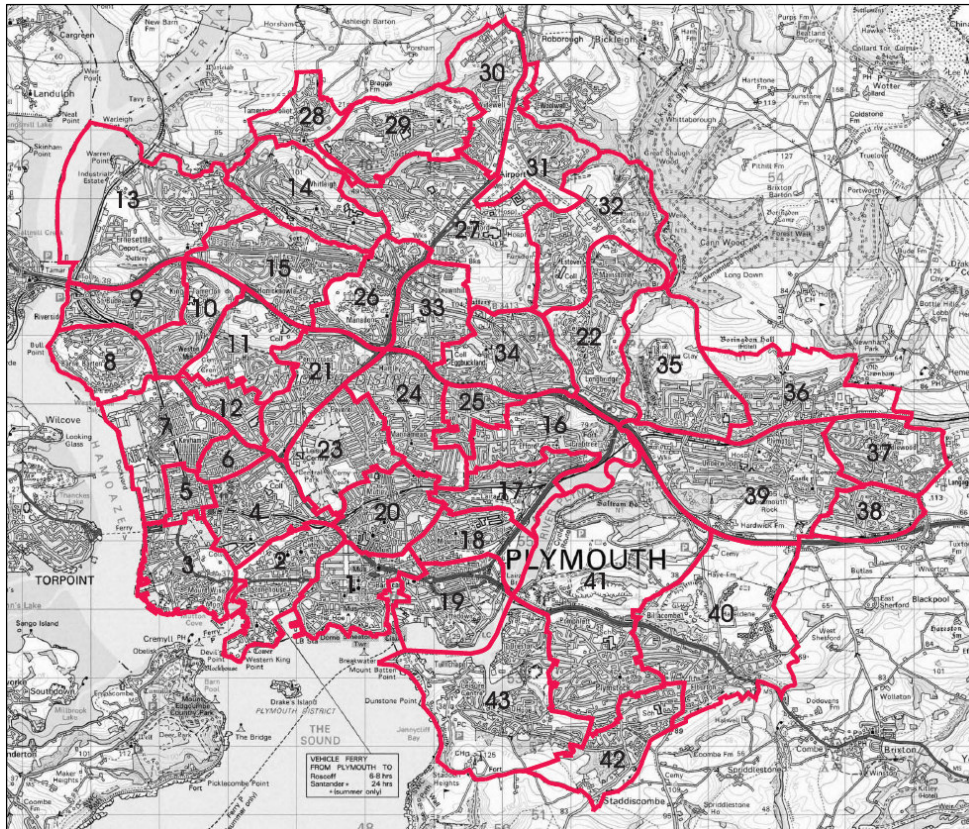


Fig.1: Plymouth 2020 Partnership Neighbourhood Map

In terms of topography the Efford Neighbourhood is, in relation to the rest of the city, on higher land and much of its streets are steeply sloping. Efford is relatively green with some large open spaces (well illustrated by figure 2 below), and commands good views over the surrounding areas.



Fig.2 Aerial view of Efford Neighbourhood



PHOTOS:
(clockwise from
top-left)

1. Torridge Way
and flats

2. View over
the lower lying
city

3. Torridge Way
shops (inc. Co-op)

4. Typical family
housing stock on
steeply sloping
road

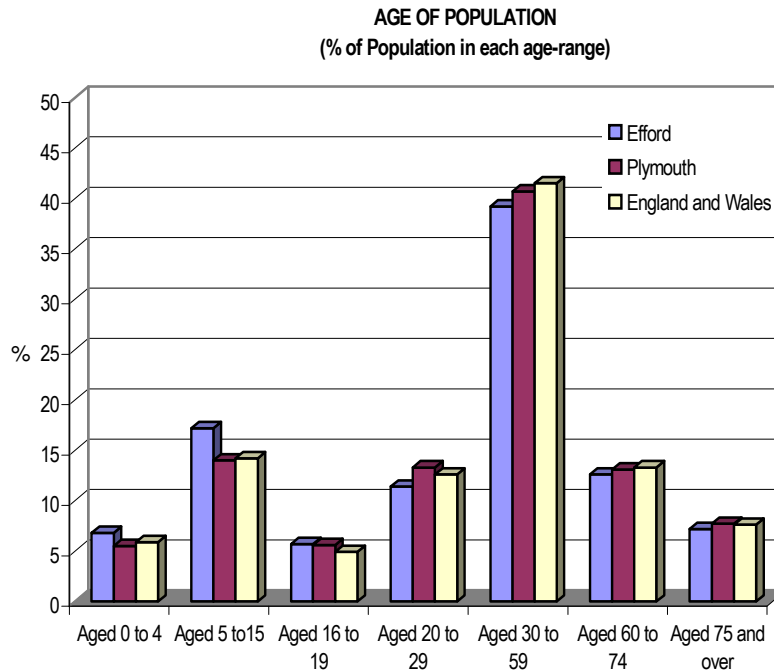
It is important to note that whilst the Efford Neighbourhood as defined by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) varies slightly from the original Efford Ward boundary and the National Statistics Output Area, statistics in the main are drawn from the Efford Ward area. This has been done in order to access the widest range of local and comparable data sets. This enables a comprehensive picture of the local area to be built up and accurate comparisons with the city as a whole can be made.

2.2 POPULATION

The resident population of Efford Neighbourhood, as measured from the 2001 Census was 6,171, of which 47.3% were male and 52.7% were female. At this time the resident population of Plymouth was 240,720 of which 48.8 % were male and 51.2% were female.

2.2.1 AGE PROFILE

The chart below shows the age profile for Efford, Plymouth, and England and Wales according to the proportion of the total population of each area in each age band.

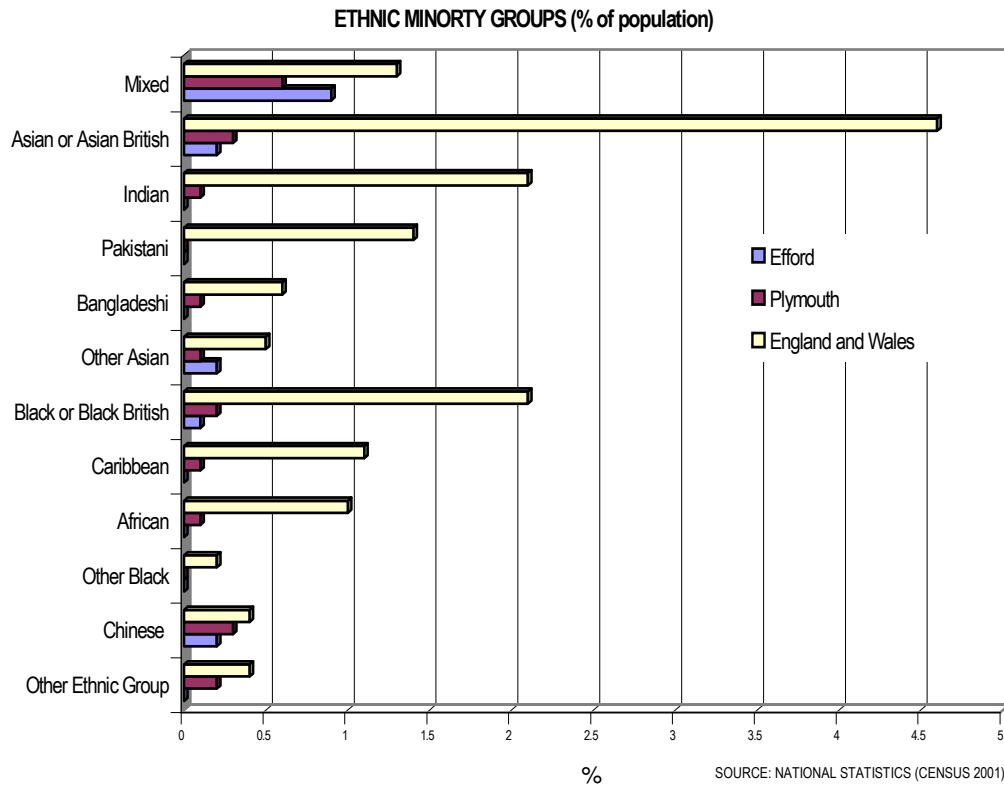


SOURCE: NATIONAL STATISTICS (CENSUS 2001)

Efford has a significantly higher proportion of residents aged 5 to 15 years than either Plymouth or England & Wales averages. Conversely there are a lower proportion of people in the older age groups resident in Efford, when compared to both Plymouth and England and Wales as a whole.

2.2.2 ETHNICITY

Efford, like the rest of Plymouth as a whole, is not a particularly ethnically diverse area. Details of ethnic minority populations in Efford are given in the graph below.



In terms of ethnicity, of the total population resident in Efford 98.6% consider themselves to be White. This compares to 98.4% Plymouth wide, and 90.9% in England and Wales.

2.3 NEIGHBOURHOOD INDICES OF DEPRIVATION

Indices of deprivation provide a useful means of comparing areas against specific defined criteria. We have considered two major data sets, using data from both the Plymouth 2020 Partnership, and National Statistics, to account for local variances in deprivation measurements.

2.3.1 PLYMOUTH 2020 INDICES OF DEPRIVATION

The Plymouth 2020 Partnership developed a Neighbourhood Index of Deprivation for Plymouth to establish which neighbourhoods within the city area was the poorest performing in relation to Neighbourhood Renewal Floor Targets. This index identifies the rank position for each of the 43 neighbourhoods within Plymouth where 1 is the poorest performing neighbourhood and 43 is the best performing neighbourhood. The overall position of a neighbourhood is derived from the average scores of deprivation measured against each of the following five theme areas:

- i. Education
- ii. Crime
- iii. Housing
- iv. Health
- v. Worklessness

The matrix below gives us the 10 neighbourhoods ranked most deprived using the most recent data sets, compiled in 2006.

Table D: Neighbourhood Renewal Index of Deprivation 2006

Area name	Crime Score	Rank	Education Score	Rank	Housing Score	Rank	Workless Score	Rank	Health Score	Rank	Total All Theme Score	Rank	Position of Lowest whole or part Scoring IMD 2004 SOA within neighbourhood	Does the SOA fall 100% within the neighbourhood	2005 Rank
Devonport	38.67	4	90.07	1	61.15	20	100.00	1	72.46	2	72.47	1	3%Whole		2
City Centre	100.00	1	64.25	9	54.98	23	-	-	61.81	6	70.26	2	3%Part		3
North Prospect	37.23	6	81.47	3	79.61	9	62.18	5	69.51	3	66.00	3	3%Whole		4
Barne Barton	41.99	3	71.48	6	85.71	6	58.24	7	67.87	4	65.06	4	3%Whole		5
Stonehouse	56.78	2	74.17	4	23.30	36	94.92	2	73.98	1	64.63	5	3%Whole		1
Ernesettle	20.59	16	84.93	2	75.31	13	60.15	6	59.15	9	60.03	6	20%Whole		10
Efford	21.80	14	73.77	5	89.80	3	48.69	9	62.26	5	59.26	7	10%Whole		6
Whittleigh	21.83	13	67.54	8	81.28	7	55.37	8	52.55	15	55.71	8	10%Whole		16

The matrix shows that Efford is ranked as the 7th most deprived neighbourhood overall, it is the most deprived of all Plymouth neighbourhoods in terms of housing, and within the top ten most deprived wards for education and health.

2.3.2 INDICES OF DEPRIVATION FOR WARDS

The Indices of Deprivation (ID2000) for Wards are based on data within six domains, each of which is constructed using a range of individual indicators. These are briefly explained below:

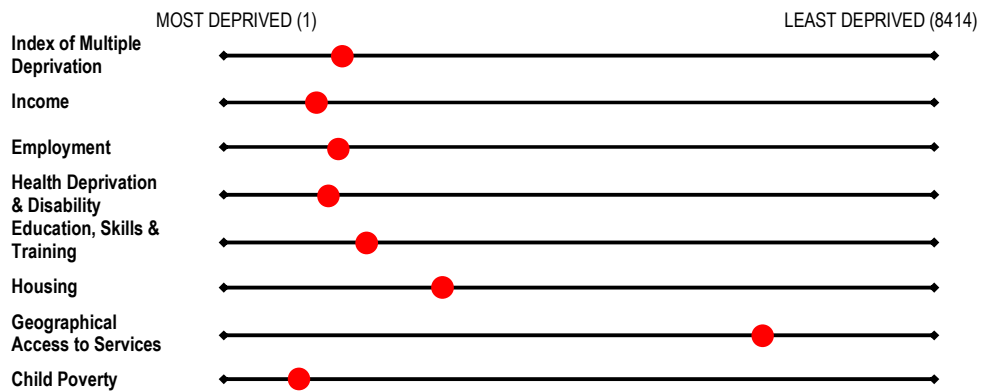
- i. Income – measuring people who are on a low income drawing mainly from benefits data
- ii. Employment – measuring employment deprivation as those who want to work but are unable to do so through unemployment, sickness or disability (i.e. involuntary exclusion from the world of work).
- iii. Health Deprivation & Disability – measuring those people whose quality of life is impaired by either poor health or disability.
- iv. Education, Skills & Training – measuring deprivation across a range of indicators including lack of qualifications, being outside of fulltime education and failed applications for higher education.
- v. Housing – measuring those living in unsatisfactory accommodation, and homeless
- vi. Geographical Access to Services – measuring the ability to access essential services such as medical care and education.
- vii. Child poverty – a supplementary indicator (not a component part of the indicator of multiple deprivation) which is measured using data including the numbers of children under 16 in benefit reliant families.

Each indicator is measured independently before being weighted and combined to form the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The matrix below shows the rank of Efford in relation to the 8414 Wards in England and Wales where 1 is the most deprived ward, and 8414 the least deprived. The matrix also displays this rank position as a percentage of the total number of Wards in England and Wales, thus we can find that in terms of the IMD, Efford Ward is one of the 20% most deprived of wards in England and Wales. The same statistic is true for Efford in terms of income, employment, health deprivation and disability, and child poverty.

INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION DATA FOR EFFORD		
INDICATOR	RANK	RANK POSITION AS % OF TOTAL WARDS
Index of Multiple Deprivation	1374	16.3%
Income	1027	12.2%
Employment	1368	16.3%
Health Deprivation and Disability	1233	14.7%
Education, Skills and Training	1698	20.2%
Housing	2621	31.2%
Geographical Access to Services	6380	75.8%
Child Poverty	1004	11.9%

SOURCE: NATIONAL STATISTICS, INDICES OF DEPRIVATION (2000)

The diagram below provides a graphical interpretation of the above statistics, showing the position of Efford Ward (represented by the red dot) in relation to other Wards in England and Wales where the most deprived Ward is at the left hand end of the scale and the least deprived Ward on the right-hand side.



SOURCE: NATIONAL STATISTICS, INDICES OF DEPRIVATION (2000)

The indices of multiple deprivation for Efford provide an important insight into the developmental priorities of the area and the associated support needs of its residents. For any learning action plan to be effective at engaging and supporting local people it has to acknowledge the sensibilities of residents whilst describing a skills development agenda which reflects the context set by the relatively low socio-economic indicator rankings in Efford and actively addresses training needs through a systematic and targeted approach.

3. WORK AND LEARNING

As a central ward in Plymouth, Efford displays a range of interesting characteristics relating to employment and skills development, being influenced by citywide trends whilst also displaying nuances which are particular to the Efford neighbourhood area.

This section describes the context against which the employment and skills audit was set, by considering a number of statistical measures which capture activity in Efford and compares trends to Plymouth and England and Wales averages.

This section includes the following sub-sections:

- i. Economic activity
- ii. Unemployment and training
- iii. Male and female employment trends
- iv. Lone parents in employment

These are described further below.

3.1 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Economic activity has been considered across four focus areas including:

- i. Breakdown of employment type
- ii. Employment by sector
- iii. Types of occupation
- iv. Travelling to work

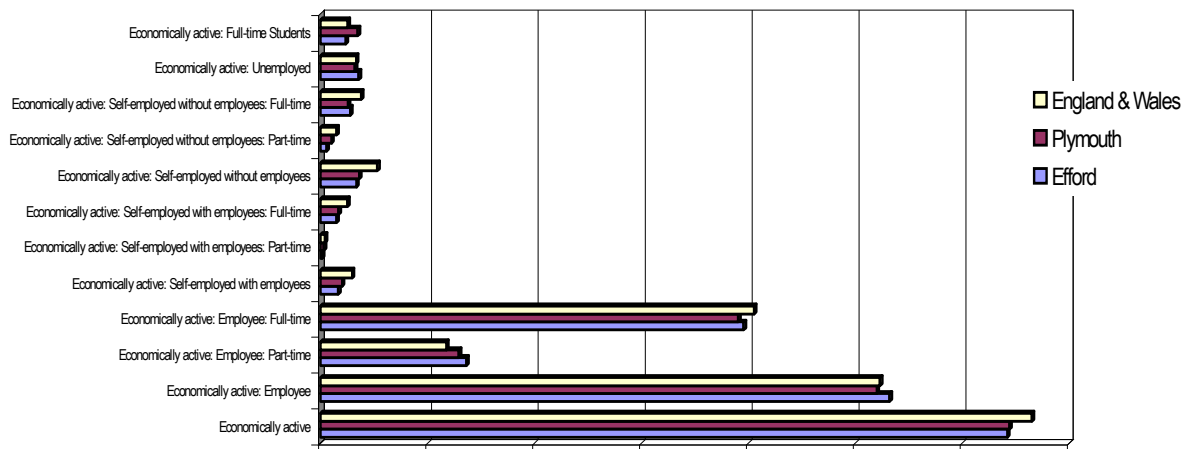
Each is described in more detail below.

3.1.1 BREAKDOWN OF EMPLOYMENT TYPE

Efford is an area where the percentage of the local economically active population is below both Plymouth and England & Wales averages. Efford, like Plymouth overall, has a relatively low level of self-employment among local people, which is a feature of the local employment landscape that is drawn on further in the report *Fostering an Entrepreneurial Spirit*.

The graph below shows how economic activity is broken down across employment and self-employment for Efford, with comparison to Plymouth and England & Wales averages.

BREAKDOWN OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE (% of population aged 16 - 74)

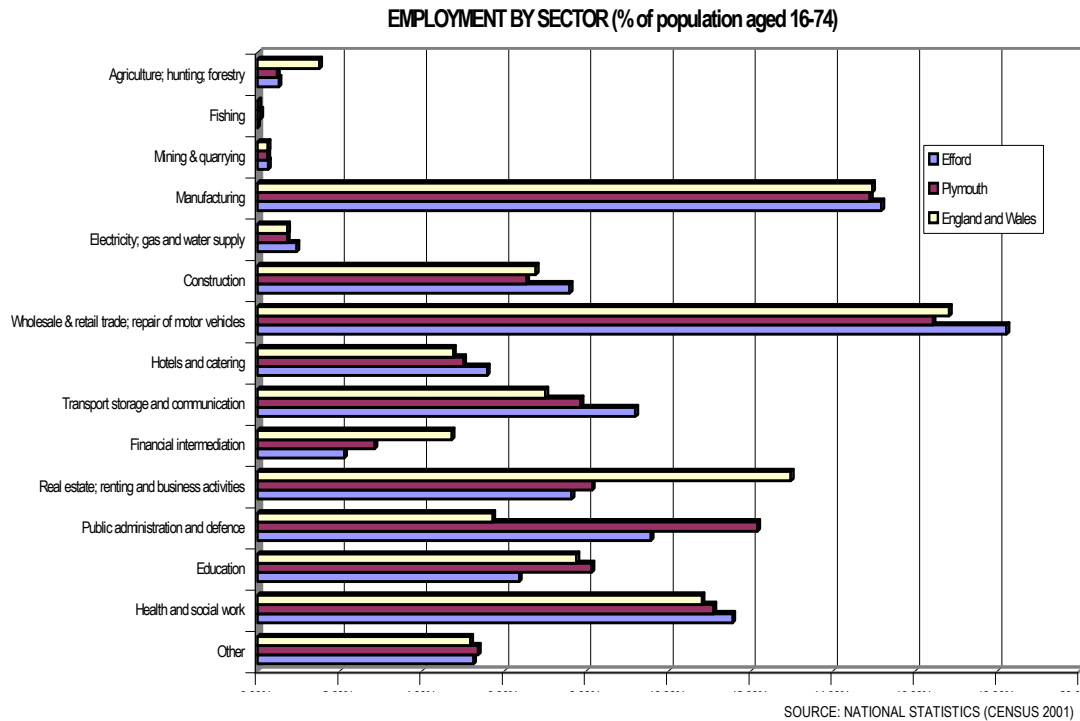


Whilst the vast majority of economically active people secure employment as an employee with a firm, the level of these employees in part-time work is higher among Efford residents than comparable averages for Plymouth and England & Wales. Similarly the proportion of these employees engaged in full-time work is lower for residents from Efford than the national average, although slightly higher than the average for Plymouth.

With a considerable majority of the local population in Efford aged between 30 to 59 it is expected that a greater proportion of individuals seek the flexibility of part-time work to accommodate other commitments including child raising. However, the types of employment local people can access can also be influenced by localised factors specific to Efford, including restriction in the connectivity to the labour market, limited relevant skills, and lower ambitions and expectations. Many of these are considered in more detail later in the report.

3.1.2 EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

The graph below shows the levels of employment across a number of sectors as recorded for workers residing in Efford, Plymouth and England & Wales overall.



When compared to both Plymouth and England and Wales averages, Efford has a higher proportion of residents employed in sectors including: health and social work; transport, storage and communication; and wholesale & retail trade, repair of motor vehicles. The proportion of working residents in Efford operating within the construction sector exceeds both Plymouth and England and Wales averages, and with the absence of any single large construction projects in the city, this would suggest that there are a number of construction sector related suppliers and other operatives working within the building trade in addition to anticipated skilled craftsmen and site labourers.

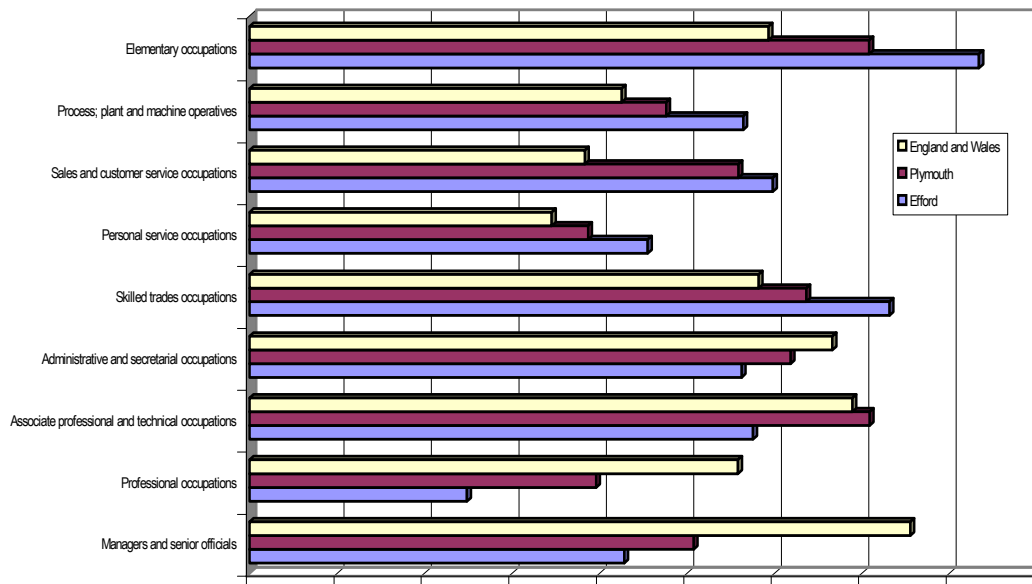
It is interesting to note that the public administration and defence sector accounts for significant levels of employment for Efford and Plymouth city overall, resulting in part from the strong presence of the MOD, HM Services and numerous contractors associated with defence that operate in and around Plymouth.

Data relating to the proportion of economically active people working in other types of sectors, as recorded in the 'Real estate; renting and business activities' sector, shows that the average in Efford is almost half that of England and Wales. There is also a similarly low level of the working population of Plymouth working in business, providing an early indication that levels of enterprise within the city are below those levels set in a national context.

3.1.3 TYPES OF OCCUPATION

The graph below shows employment according to sector as a percentage of total population.

EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION TYPE (% of population aged 16-74)



SOURCE: NATIONAL STATISTICS (CENSUS 2001)

There is considerable variance in the types of occupation fulfilled by residents of Efford compared to local and national trends. Significant occupation types for Efford residents include elementary work, process and machine operatives and skilled trade occupations. There is also a large proportion of the working population in sales and customer service work and this follows a city-wide trend across Plymouth where significant employment is generated by this sector.

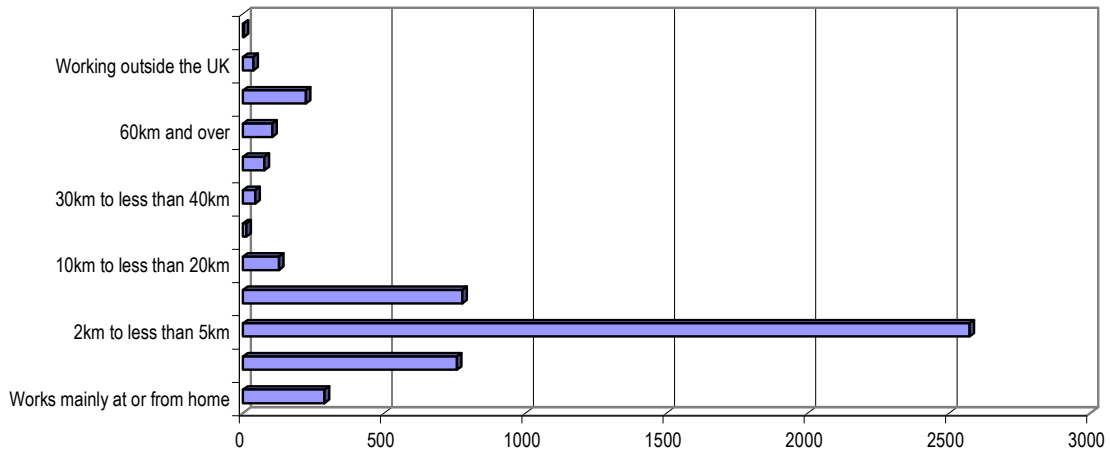
The proportion of economically active residents from Efford with management and senior official and other professional occupations is significantly less than the average for England and Wales and below the levels for Plymouth as a whole.

Despite a significant presence of skilled trade occupations fulfilled by Efford residents, the majority of the local workforce in this neighbourhood are employed in elementary and basic level process work and customer service and sales occupations. The low skills levels of most of the workforce in Efford also translates to the types of sectors local residents have secured employment such as retail and wholesale.

3.1.4 TRAVELLING TO WORK

Efford is a well positioned ward with respect to its proximity to Plymouth City centre and surrounding industrial and business sites. The graph below shows the ranges of distances travelled by different number of the working population in Efford.

AVERAGE DISTANCES TRAVELLED TO WORK BY EFFORD RESIDENTS



The vast majority of people from Efford travel between 2km to less than 5km to work. This journey distance would incorporate the main areas of the city centre, particularly the retail centre, which is part of the largest sector of employment for local people.

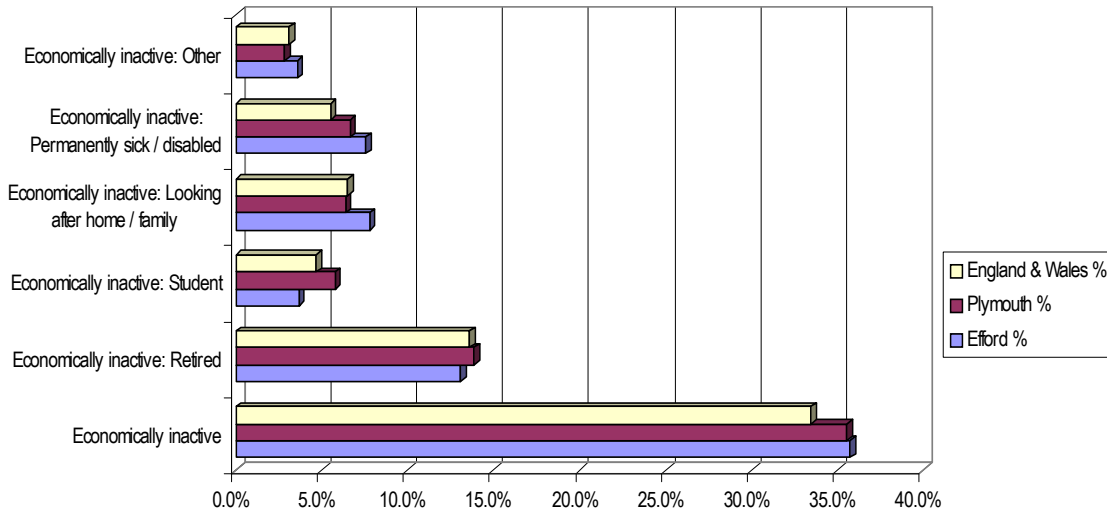
Away from the centre of town there are a range of industrial and business sites such as the Derriford business park, which host a number of large manufacturing and business-2-business services. Typically these centres are typically between 5km to less than 10km from Efford, and collectively these business and industrial parks support a significant volume of work around the city periphery.

The graph also shows that there are a significant number of people living in Efford who work within a 2km distance or are based at home. This short journey distance could be linked with the relatively high levels of part-time employment filled by local people in Efford, who would be specifically look for work which is close to their home and easy to get to, such as the Sainsbury's Superstore at March Mills.

3.2 UNEMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Economic inactivity accounts for those individuals of the working population who are not receiving a formal wage through engagement in the labour market. The breakdown of economic inactivity is shown in the graph below.

BREAKDOWN OF ECONOMIC INACTIVITY (% of population aged 16 - 74)



Of the total working population in Efford 35.8% are described as being economically inactive which is comparable with the Plymouth average of 35.6%, but above the 33.5% average for England & Wales. Inactivity associated with permanent sickness/disability and looking after home/family is proportionally higher among Efford residents than the Plymouth and national averages. This is a characteristic often symptomatic of an area which suffers acute deprivation at a micro-level, typically restricted to certain neighbourhoods, estates or roads, where the nature of economic inactivity often reflects wider fragility in the social fabric such as relatively high instances of sickness and disproportionately high numbers of single parent families with non-working adults.

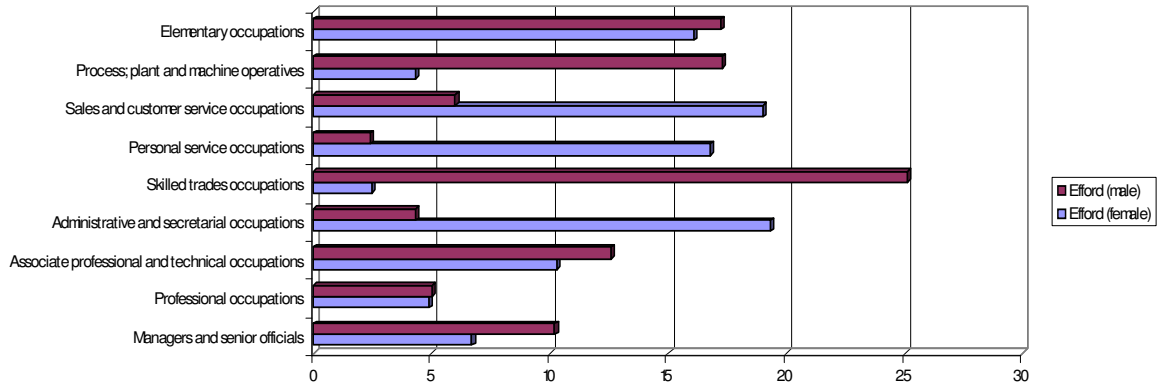
It is interesting to note that Plymouth has a considerably higher level of students contributing to the recorded economic inactivity compared with the average for England & Wales, 5.8% compared with 4.7% respectively. Conversely the average for Efford is only 3.7%, which provides an early indication of relatively lower levels of engagement in education and training among Efford residents than is seen at a regional or national level, and is explored further in this report.

3.3 MALE AND FEMALE OCCUPATION TRENDS

The graph below shows the proportions of male and female employees from Efford working in key occupations.



OCCUPATIONS MALE/FEMALE BREAKDOWN



There is a clear dominance of female employees in administrative and secretarial, personal services and sales and customer services occupations. Whilst male employees dominate occupations including plant and machine operatives and skilled trade work.

These acute divisions between the distribution of male and female employees from Efford in key occupation types across the labour market demonstrates a more traditional apportionment of work among the sexes, where women undertake office based and customer facing roles and men continue to perform hands-on skilled and mechanical based work. This in part can be linked to Plymouth's overall continuing transition and adaptation to a changing working environment, where large employers, particularly manufacturing and heavier industry companies, have been replaced with service sector employers whose skills needs can be met through an equal balance of male and female employees who share comparable expertise and experience.

4. LOCAL PEOPLE SURVEY

The Local People survey was an integral part of the consultation process which was facilitated through the consultation hub installed at Highfields School on Torridge Way in Efford. The focus on employment and skills development was incorporated into an overarching residents survey which considered a number of important issues pertinent to the people living in Efford. The relevant questions included are shown as Appendix 1 of this report. A full description of our methodology is included in Appendix 2.

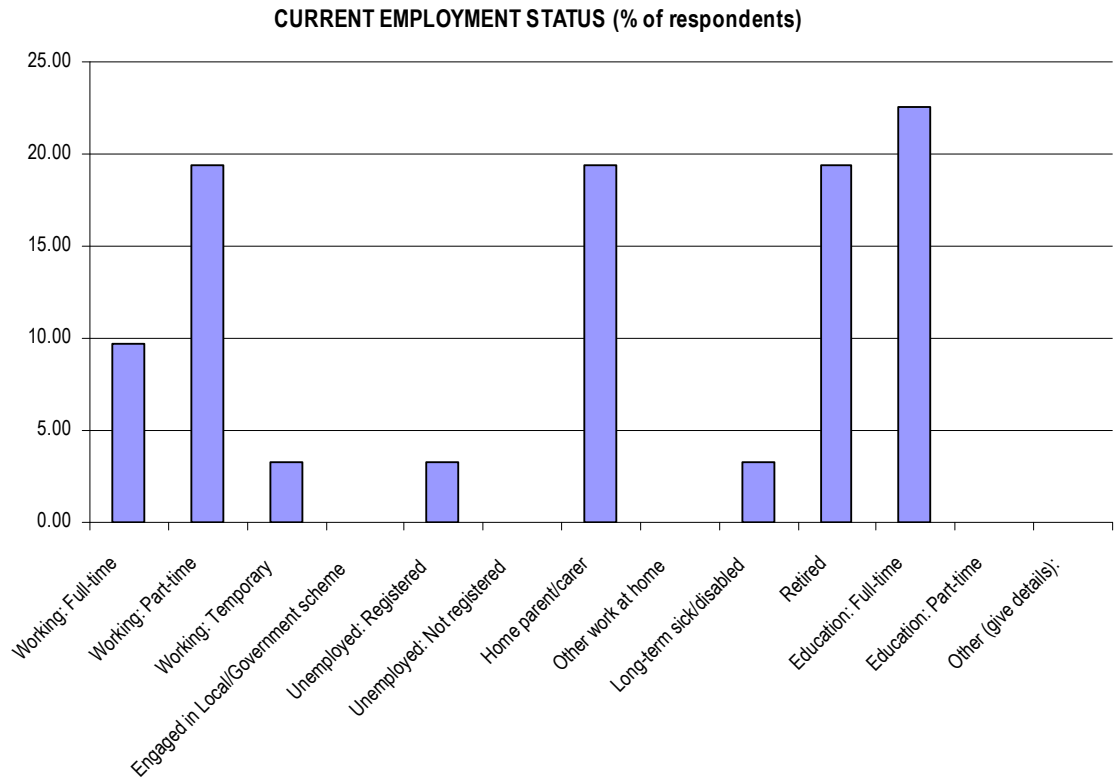
This section includes the following sub-sections:

- i. Current employment status
- ii. Qualifications
- iii. Finding work
- iv. Training activity
- v. Perceptions and expectations

Each is discussed in further detail below.

4.1 CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Local residents were asked to indicate what their current status of employment was, the results of which are shown on the graph below.

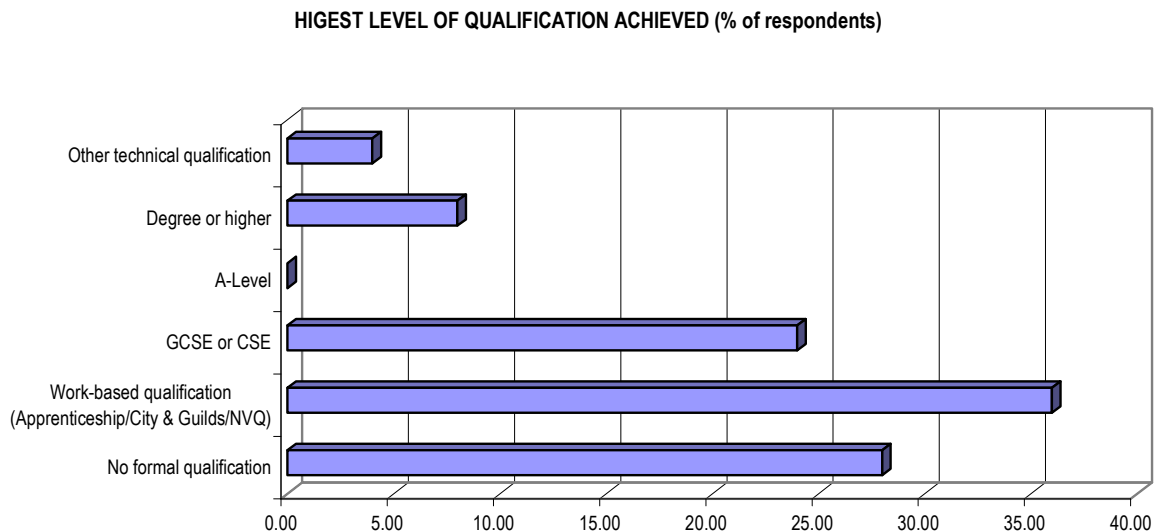


The most popular type of recorded economic activity was part time employment, with double the number of responses returned from part-time workers than those in full-time work. The popularity for part time work among Efford residents is consistent with national statistics for the area.

However, it is important to note that the participation in this phase of the master planning consultation included a particularly high number of local people who were not currently in full-time employment, including those who had retired, were in full-time education or remained at home as a parent or carer, and this is obviously reflected in the results for these classifications of employment activity. For example over 22% of respondents indicated that they were currently in full-time education, with some people fitting paid employment around their studies on an ad-hoc basis but national statistics data shows that the amount of students in the Efford area is below Plymouth and England & Wales averages.

4.2 QUALIFICATIONS

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of qualification that they hold. The graph below shows the types of qualifications held by Efford residents.



The results show that the most popular type of qualification held by 35% of local people partaking in the consultation was work based, including NVQs, Apprenticeships, City & Guilds and similar.

Over 28% of respondents indicated that they had no formal qualifications at all. This was particularly high among older residents, who were currently unemployed and drawing benefit or were retired. Less than a quarter (24%) of respondents indicated they had GCSE and older CSE qualifications which are basic Level 2 standard qualifications, widely considered by employers to be a base level entry point for work.

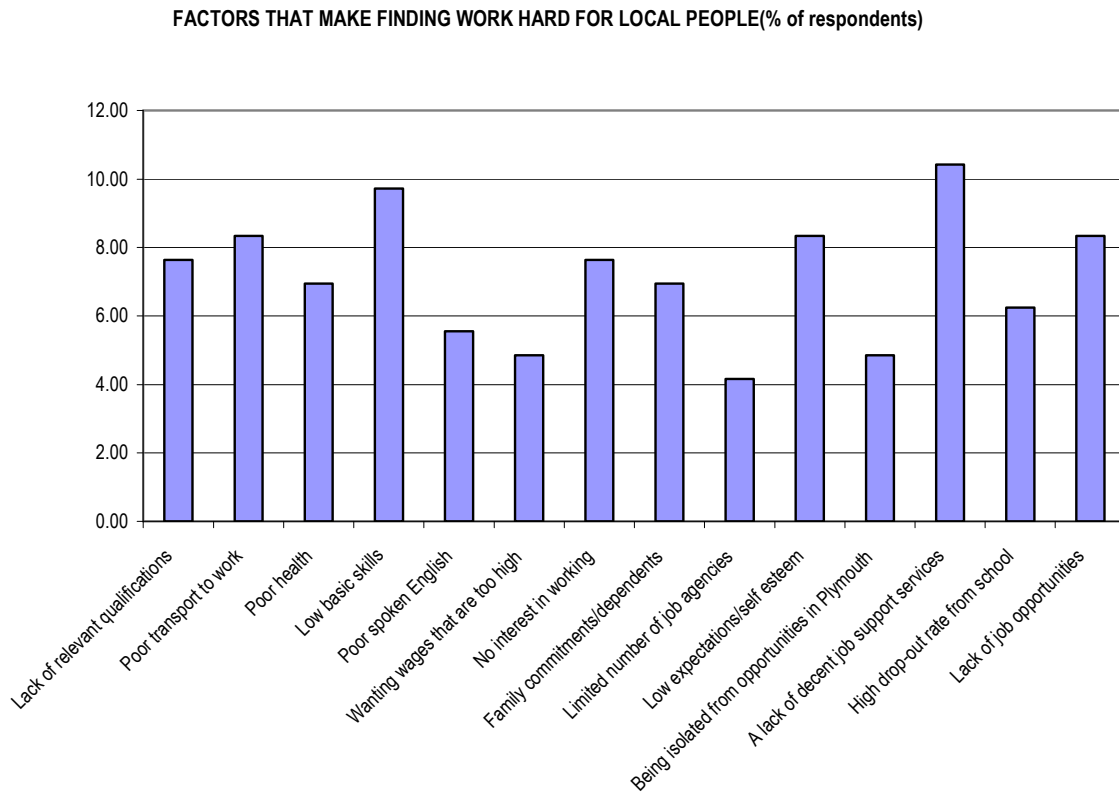
The relatively low skills base reported by local people is reinforced by the noticeably small number of people who hold higher level qualifications such as degrees or other technical qualifications, which collectively were only held by 12% of those surveyed.

Whilst the breakdown of occupation types shows that there is a good proportion of work in Plymouth that can be described as low skilled, there is also a growing trend to attract new service sector employers to the city who require definite skill sets and particular aptitudes for their business. Those residents in the Efford neighbourhood who do not hold qualifications up to the required level 2 standard,

are in danger of further exclusion from the labour market as new employers recruit staff that can meet their skills requirements.

4.3 FINDING WORK

Participants were asked to highlight what factors they believed makes finding work hard for local people. The results are shown on the graph below.



The responses returned shows that all suggested factors are considered in part to contribute to making finding work difficult. Over 10% of respondents believe that a lack of decent job support services is a significant factor adversely affecting their ability to job search effectively and since only around 4% of respondents considered a limited number of job agencies as an adverse factor affecting job search, this could mean that local people are concerned more with the type of service being right for them, rather than an taking issue with accessibility to these services.

Another significant factor highlighted by respondents to the survey was the low level of basic skills among local people looking for work, including poor literacy and numeracy skills which can be linked to an inability to access available employment opportunities. This continues the theme of exclusion suffered by local people who do not possess the necessary skills required by employers, as discussed in section 4.2.

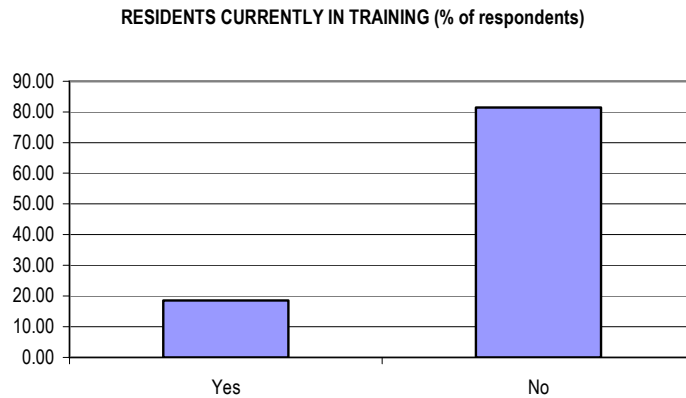
Other factors that were highlighted include poor transport links from Efford to places of work, including the city centre, a lack of job opportunities and a perception of low expectations/self esteem. Parallels can be drawn between this latter point and the perception of over 7% of respondents that some local people have no interest in working. Indices of deprivation rank Efford as the 6th most deprived ward in Plymouth, however statistical ranking of an area has to be complemented by an understanding of the

personal factors affecting individuals, in order to appreciate how local people's approach to employment and skills development is influenced. Acknowledging the limited aspirations some people in Efford impose on their job search, will be an important consideration for local service providers who wish to engage and support job seekers and focus on their needs effectively.

A number of respondents indicated that they thought poor spoken English made finding work hard for local people. The majority of the local population in Efford are native English speakers, suggesting spoken English is more of a work specific issue rather than an issue relating to local people's actual command of the language as a limiting factor. Such work specific issues could include the verbal communication requirements demanded by customer service roles, and the specific skills sought by call centres which often require operators to communicate in a clear and efficient way following a set methodology on how to conduct a call or address an enquiry.

4.4 TRAINING ACTIVITY

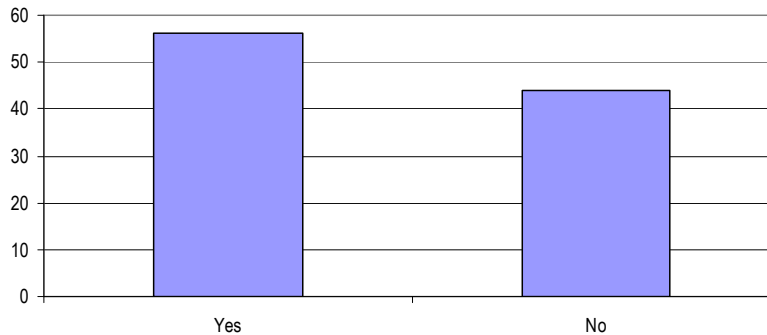
To gain an insight into the current levels of training that local residents in Efford were undertaking, participants were asked to indicate whether they were engaged in training activity.



The graph above shows that over 80% of respondents were not engaged in training activity or support at the time of being surveyed. Those individuals that were training reported a diverse range of training activity including committee and regeneration work, studying for a community degree and leisure based courses.

Participants were then asked to consider if they would undertake training to improve their job prospects and results are displayed in the graph below.

RESIDENTS WHO WOULD CONSIDER TRAINING TO IMPROVE JOB PROSPECTS (% of respondents)



Among those partaking in the consultation there is not an overwhelming level of support for engaging in training to improve personal employment prospects. Even factoring for those survey participants who were retired or otherwise economically inactive for the foreseeable future and therefore would not find employment training relevant, there was still a distinctly low level of people expressing an interest in training.

This may in part be the result of local people perceiving that there is a lack of decent job support services available, which, coupled with low expectations/self esteem could lead to a correspondingly lower level of interest in training and support as a means to help secure employment.

Those participants that indicated that they would engage in training support listed their preferred types of provision to include: retail training; youth work; community network support; and children centre work. The specific nature of the support detailed suggests that respondents have pre-determined what their particular skills development needs are in line with the type of job they wish to pursue. This underlines the importance for support agencies to understand and manage the expectations of people to ensure that each individual's development is tailored to suit their particular aspirations whilst remaining rooted in the reality of demand from the local labour market.

4.5 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

To capture participants' perceptions and expectations, the questionnaire survey was structured to include the following focus areas:

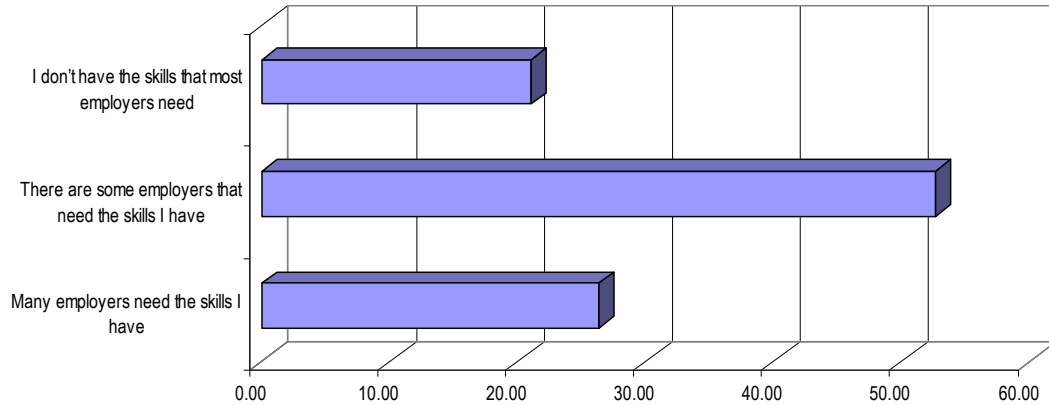
- i. Perceived employer skill requirements
- ii. Perceived employment opportunities
- iii. Employment expectations

Each is described in more detail below.

4.5.1 PERCEIVED EMPLOYER SKILL REQUIREMENTS

Participants were asked to select one of three possible descriptions that most accurately described how they perceived employers' need for the skills they have. The results are shown below.

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYER NEED FOR THEIR SKILLS
(% of respondents)



In excess of 50% of local people completing the survey thought that there were some employers who needed the skills they had. A further 26% of respondents indicated that they believed many employers need the skills that they have, with a number of respondents also indicating that they were qualified with a particular technical skill, suggesting that this is a factor which helped facilitate an above average demand from employers for their knowledge and abilities.

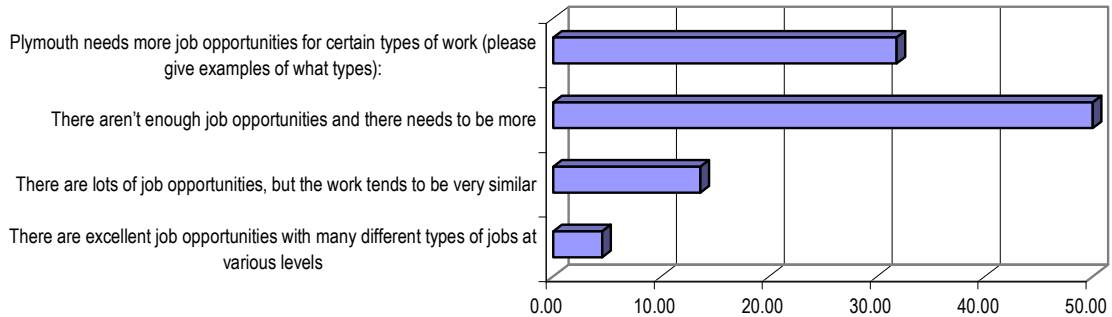
The results also show that over a fifth of participants (21%) considered themselves not to have the types of skills that most employers need. This was particularly prevalent among respondents who did not have any formal qualifications, and also among those that were involved in full-time education and hence might lack any real work experience.

The sizable amount of local people who suggest that they lack the necessary skills needed by most employers, indicates the need for creative and sustainable skills development support which addresses skill shortages through innovative provision that is fresh in its approach and noticeably set apart from previous interventions, to avoid local people's misconceptions about existing training.

4.5.2 PERCEIVED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The graph below shows the results returned from participants who were asked indicate how they perceived the employment opportunities in Plymouth.

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN PLYMOUTH (% of respondents)



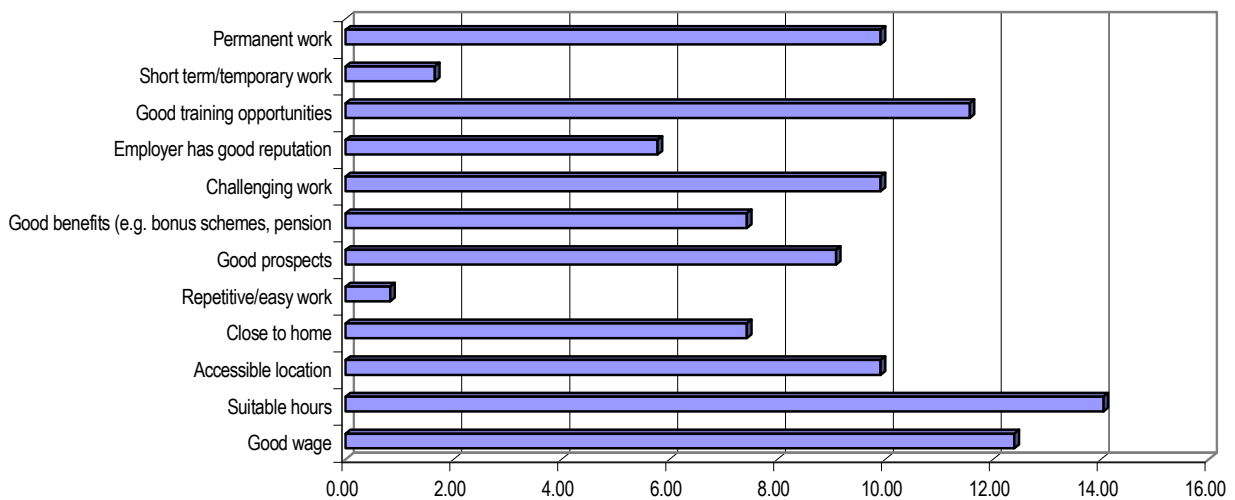
In total over 80% of participants thought that there were not enough job opportunities in Plymouth of whom 50% indicated that there generally needs to be more and a further 32% thought that more opportunities of certain types were needed including community research related posts, parent support advisors and greater opportunities in retail.

Of the 18% of people who believe that there are a number of job opportunities in Plymouth, 14% indicated that most of the work opportunities are very similar in nature, which was contrasted by a further 4% of respondents who indicated that job opportunities in Plymouth were excellent with many different types of jobs available at various levels.

4.5.3 EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

The graph below shows the aspects of a job local people regard as being most important.

RESIDENTS' MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN A JOB (% of respondents)



Interestingly the responses received show collectively that a good wage isn't regarded as important as suitable hours as selected by 14% of participants. Whilst a good wage was the job aspect most selected as important after suitable hours, a number of respondents also drew upon aspects relating to the nature and stability of the work, with 11% expressing a need for good training opportunities and several local people selecting options including employment that is accessible, permanent and challenging with good prospects.

The results suggest that people in Efford have a hierarchy of needs pertaining to new employment, where the job security and the proximity of work relative to the individual's residence are more important than associated in-work benefits such as bonuses and pension schemes. This is reinforced when considering that less than 2% of respondents indicated that they regard short term and temporary work as important and less than 1% expressed a desire for repetitive or easy work.

5. SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY

To ensure maximum engagement of local service providers, CSC undertook a comprehensive programme of interviews with practitioners complemented by a focus group session, attended by key employment and training providers and other community support agencies whose services cover the Efford area. A full description of the methodology is included as Appendix 2 to this report.

To coordinate our approach to engaging key service providers in the consultation, we developed three focus areas to draw on the expertise of delivery agents and local practitioners into three consultation themes including:

- i. Local people's skills
- ii. Barriers to employment
- iii. Opportunities for training and outreach agencies

Each is covered in further detail below.

5.1 LOCAL PEOPLE'S SKILLS

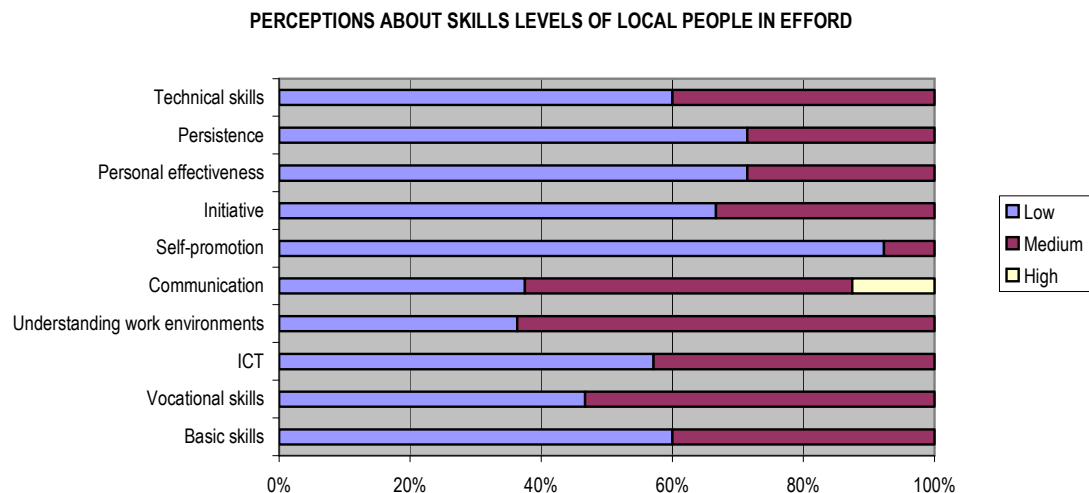
Understanding the levels and types of skills local people have and respective shortages is crucial to informing the development of tailored provision which addresses some of the key developmental and employment support needs of residents in Efford. The skills of local people were considered across three areas including:

- i. Perceptions about current skill levels
- ii. Types of skill shortages
- iii. Reasons associated with skills shortages

Each area is discussed in more detail below.

5.1.1 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CURRENT SKILL LEVELS

As part of the focus group session, service providers were invited to score a range of particular skills, as they perceived the level to be among people living in Efford. The results are shown in the graph below.



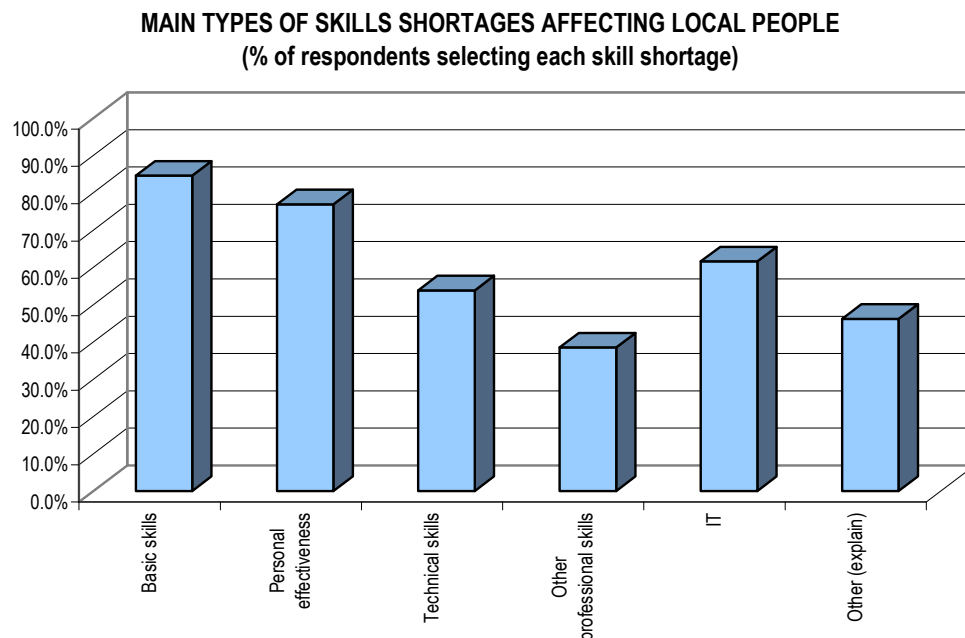
Communications skills are the only skill types which some (15%) of the employment service practitioners believe is at a high level among Efford residents. Many participants regarded local people's skills to be low, with self promotion attracting scored as low by over 92% of practitioners.

Skills types that most practitioners thought were at a medium level included Understanding Work Environments and Vocational skills, scored at a medium level by 64% and 53% of participants respectively. This suggests that practitioners believe that local residents in Efford have the necessary skills to be able to operate effectively in a work environment but, with 60% of practitioners indicating they perceive local people to have low technical skills, the nature of such work could predominantly be non-technical or elementary, which would align to national statistics data on local occupations.

The types of skills often associated with efficient job searching, including persistence and personal effectiveness were each considered being at a low level by 71% of practitioners. This provides an insight into "softer" factors that shape an individual's approach to training for and seeking employment, and could be related in part to local people's perceptions that drew on low expectations/self esteem as a factor that hinders people looking for work.

5.1.2 TYPES OF SKILL SHORTAGES

As part of the interviews completed with providers, participants were asked to say what types of skills shortage they believed affected local people. The results are shown in the graph below.



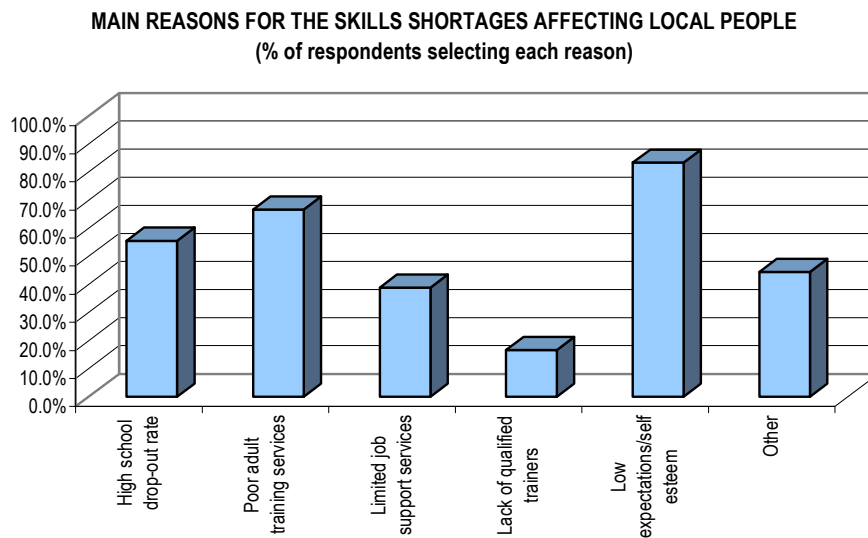
The most selected type of skill shortage was a lack of basic skills, highlighted by over 80% of interviewees as a particular problem affecting people looking for work. A lack of basic skills was also indicated by a number of participants in the local people survey as a factor which makes finding work hard.

As with the results from the focus group session, the practitioners interviewed considered there to be an acute shortage of personal effectiveness skills among local people, and another 58% and 50% of interviewees felt that IT and Technical skill respectively were also notable skill shortages in Efford.

Other skill shortages suggested by practitioners included low attainment levels at higher education, a lack of trade skills and low management and leadership potential among local people. Generally all practitioners agreed that to some degree the level of confidence of residents in Efford needs to be raised, and this in itself is widely seen as an important first step in developing people's skills and aptitudes.

5.1.3 REASONS ASSOCIATED WITH SKILLS SHORTAGES

As part of the practitioner interviews, once participants had nominated the skills shortages they believed to be most prevalent among local people in Efford, they were asked to discuss what associated reasons for these shortages there are, the results of which are shown in the graph below.



Over 80% of interviewees considered low expectations/self esteem as a notable reason that contributes to skill shortages, with some practitioners explaining that local residents often don't engage in provision because they are unable to see how the benefits align to their own expectations from employment. A lack of expectations and esteem were also drawn upon by residents responding to the local people survey, as a factor which makes seeking employment hard for people in Efford.

Interestingly practitioners participating in the provider interviews referred to poor adult training services as another reason influencing levels of skills shortages in Efford. This is another perception also conveyed similarly by participants of the local people survey indicating a lack of decent job support services as the most significant factor in adversely affecting an individual searching for work.

Other reasons suggested by those interviewed included an apparent lack of training opportunities such as apprenticeships and job placements and a perceived disillusionment among local people about the merit of training and building skills that meet employers' needs. One practitioner also drew attention to the fact that Efford has the fourth worst educational attainment in Plymouth and there is often an associated stigma attached to training which propagates the myth that educational support structures are primarily for children and ineffective in relation to improving the personal job prospects of individuals.

5.2 BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

The consultation considered barriers to employment across three main areas including:

- Types of barriers affecting local people
- Associated causes
- Potential solutions

The results secured for each area are described in more detail below.

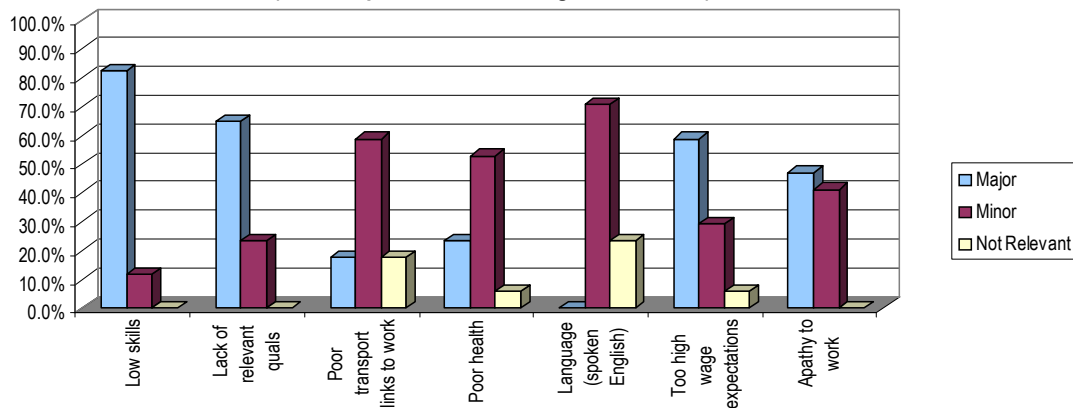
5.2.1 TYPES OF BARRIERS AFFECTING LOCAL PEOPLE

As part of the focus group session and the interviews conducted with local service practitioners, participants were asked to indicate what were the main barriers to employment affecting the people of Efford.

The results returned through the practitioner interviews are shown in the graph below.

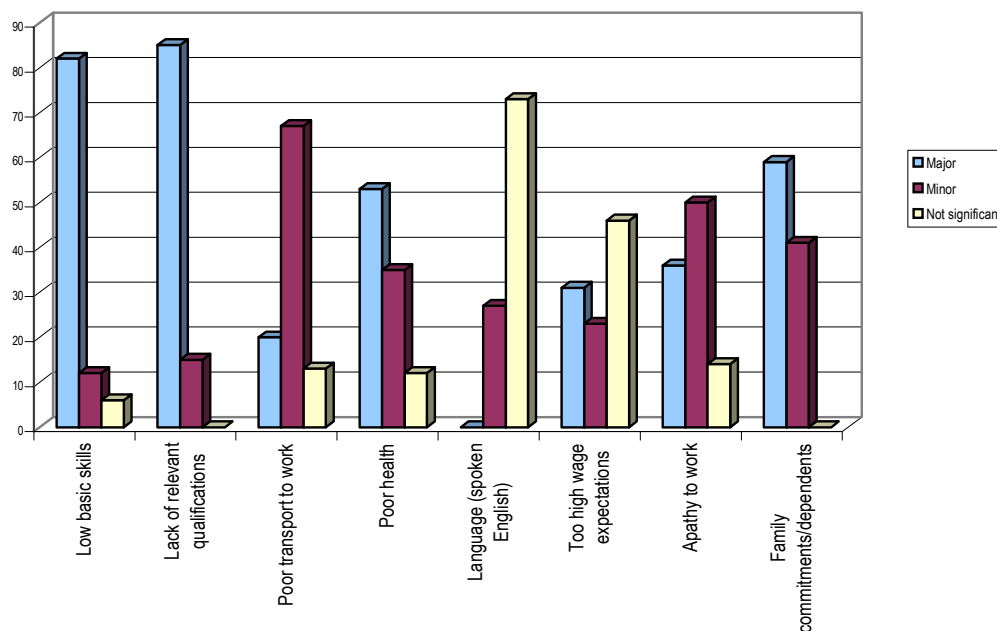
MAIN BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AFFECTING LOCAL PEOPLE - PRACTITIONER INTERVIEWS

(% of respondents selecting each barrier)



This can be compared against the results returned as part of the focus group session as shown in the second graph below.

MAIN BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AFFECTING LOCAL PEOPLE - FOCUS GROUP SESSION (% of respondents selecting each barrier)



The results show that there is a clear trend among all practitioners' responses that identifies the two perceived major barriers to employment as low skills and lack of relevant qualifications.

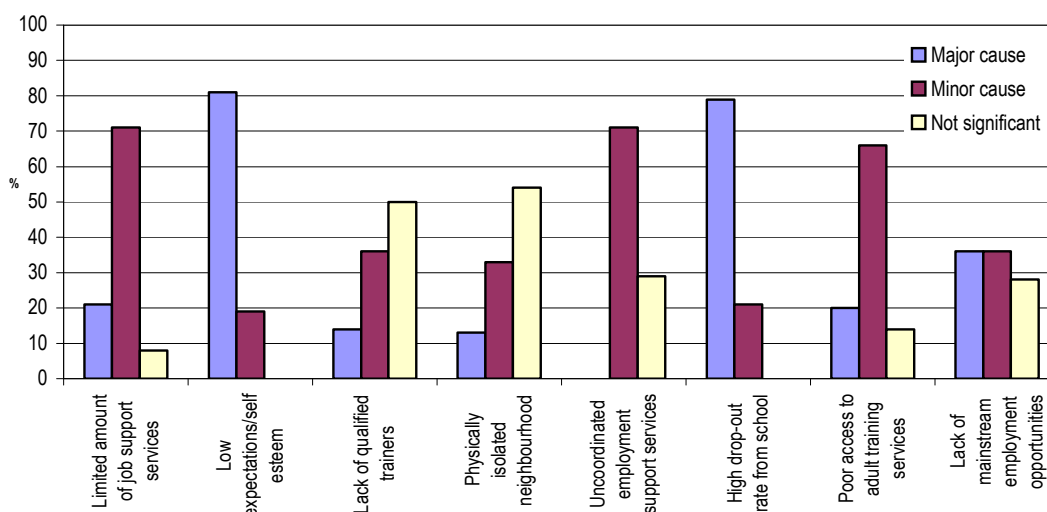
The results from the focus group drew on poor health as a major barrier more than was expressed through the interviews conducted with service providers. A further barrier was incorporated into the focus group session – Family commitment/dependants – which 58% of practitioners highlighted as a major barrier to employment.

However, over 70% of those practitioners that were interviewed considered spoken English to be a minor barrier, but the same level of participants at the focus group session indicated that this barrier was not relevant. Taking account of both results, spoken English cannot be regarded as a significant barrier to employment, but nevertheless support services should recognise effective oral communication as a necessary pre-requisite for a large number of customer facing and call centre based roles.

5.2.2 ASSOCIATED CAUSES

As part of the focus group session, participants were invited to consider what causes they perceive to result in the barriers to employment which affect local people in Efford and to indicate whether these causes are major, minor or not significant. The graph below shows the results taken from the session.

PERCEIVED CAUSES OF BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT
(% respondents selecting each cause)



The results incorporate some transcendental factors which are deemed by practitioners to influence skills shortages as well as barriers to employment. The most significant of these is low expectations/self esteem among local people, scored as a major cause associated with barriers to employment and a factor which practitioners have also indicated is a cause for skills shortages among residents. A further cross cutting theme – high drop-out rate from school – is factor deemed by practitioners to be acting as both a barrier to employment and also adversely limiting the skills developed by individuals in Efford.

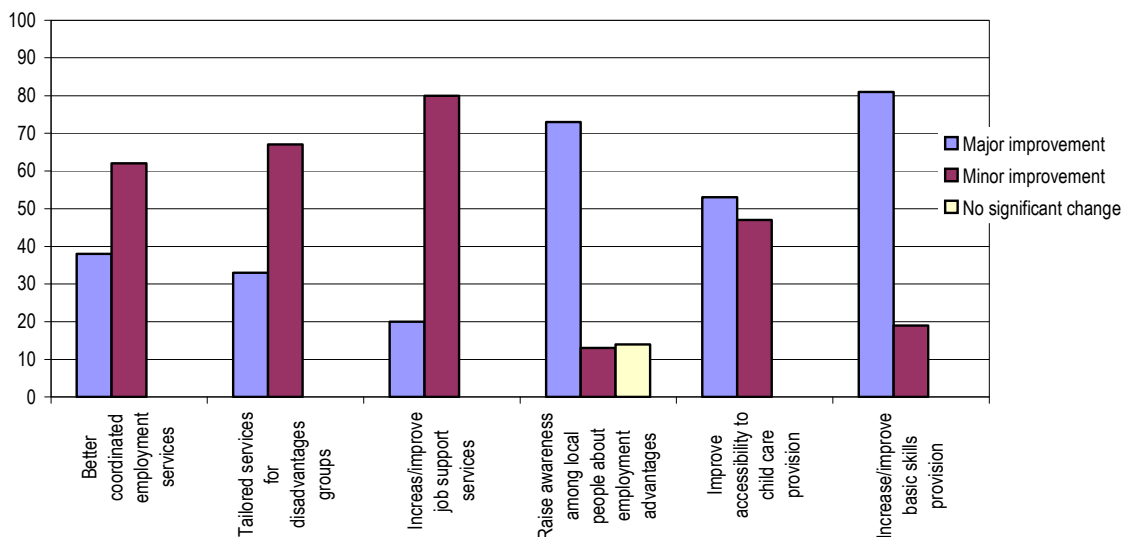
The results show that the majority of participants (28%) believed that physical isolation was not a significant barrier to employment that can impact upon people from Efford. This contrasts with the results of the local people survey, where a number of respondents indicated that they consider Efford to be isolated from opportunities in Plymouth and jobseekers can be hampered by poor transport to work. For support solutions to be truly focussed on need, they must be developed from a thorough appreciation of the perceptions from those that both live and work in and around Efford.

There were no practitioners who believed that uncoordinated support acted as a major barrier to employment, although over 70% did indicate that they thought this acted as a minor barrier. Co-ordinating support services effectively will become an important consideration to ensure that the training offer presented to job seekers is managed effectively and offers an holistic approach to addressing skills development needs in Efford.

5.2.3 POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

After indicating what causes are attributable to the perceived barriers to employment affecting people in Efford, practitioners at the focus group session were also asked to consider what potential solutions would be most effective in addressing these causes. The results are shown in the graph below.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT
 (% respondents selecting each solution)



Over 80% of participants indicated that they consider increase/improve basic skills provision as a solution that could bring a major improvement in overcoming barriers to employment. This builds on one of the key themes established through the consultation which has identified basic skills as one of the main determining factors influencing the success of local people from Efford in the labour market, something that needs to be fostered through dedicated provision to address deficiencies in basic skills support and ensure there is good access to quality training services.

A second solution to address employment barriers, nominated by participants as a potential major improvement, focussed on raising the awareness of local people about the advantages of employment. Such a solution could be delivered through a qualitative based approach to support provision, which adheres to some practitioners' views that there is a need to address the doubts some local people have regarding the benefits of employment.

Over 50% of participants indicated that they consider major improvements to addressing barriers to employment can be garnered by improving the accessibility to childcare provision for local people. This can be linked in part to the earlier described perceptions of a majority of practitioners which identified Family commitments/dependents as a major barrier to employment, often seen as a restrictive influence that reduces the ability of some local people to either find employment, or stay in employment.

Almost 80% of participants regarded an increase or improvement to job support services as a solution which would bring only minor improvements to addressing barriers to employment. This suggests that practitioners generally feel that the quality of the support services offered to local people is adequate, but scope could exist to examine the focus and methods of delivery, including a co-ordinated approach to training and enabling tailored provision for disadvantaged groups, highlighted by a number of participants as potential solutions that could bring major improvements to tackling barriers to employment.

5.3 OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINING AND OUTREACH AGENCIES

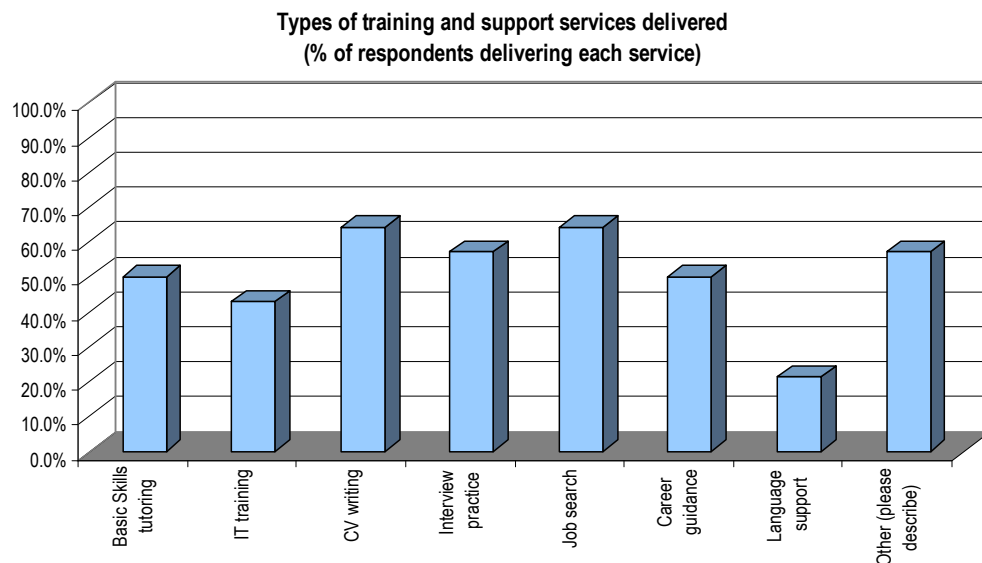
Practitioners were consulted about the opportunities for training and outreach agencies were considered across five main areas which included:

- i. Current training and support services delivered
- ii. Training and development priorities
- iii. Existing opportunities
- iv. Priority employment and training needs
- v. Developments in the labour market

Each area is discussed in more detail below.

5.3.1 CURRENT TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES DELIVERED

As part of the interviews held with practitioners, interviewees were asked to indicate what main types of employment and skills training support they offer to beneficiaries. The results are shown in the graph below.



Over half of all practitioners interviewed indicated that their agency provides basic employment support services including CV writing, interview practice and job search activity.

Fewer than 50% of interviewees described their services as including career guidance or basic skills tutoring. The apparently lower level of basic skills provision led by providers suggests that provisionally there could be some scope to explore the possibility of increasing the range of basic skills focussed support that is available to people in Efford. Increases in provision should acknowledge that general increases or improvement to job support services has been identified as a minor improvement solution to tackling employment barriers by the majority of practitioners and therefore new provision would need to address a specific need.

Language support services were offered by less than 20% of provider agencies interviewed, and this type of provision typically focuses on developing spoken and written English skills in the form of the

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course, primarily intended to support a relatively small minority of non-English speaking migrant workers in Plymouth.

The other types of services reported by interviewees as part of their support offer to beneficiaries included: work placements and taster; training beyond entry level; personal development; care work training; and other life skills training and drug awareness activity.

Interviewees were also asked whether their agency undertook any form of in-work support for beneficiaries who secure employment. Only a small number of organisations were delivering in-work support services for beneficiaries they have assisted into employment, suggesting there may be scope to expand the types of provision offered to develop the skills of individuals who are in employment, to help them progress further in their career.

5.3.2 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

During the focus group sessions, participants were asked to comment upon the priorities they think need to be addressed to improve the employment and training opportunities for local people. A matrix of the full results is included in Appendix 3 of this report and an analysis of the comments returned is described below.

Participants drew further upon the theme of accessibility to opportunity including suggestions to have job support staff in Efford acting as a satellite service from the nearest Jobcentre Plus office, and increasing the amount of adult education that takes place within Efford itself. The model of a satellite support service operating from central hub could also include in-work provision, perhaps focussing on those individuals who have particular support needs that cannot be adequately addressed through standard support structures.

A number of practitioners described specific priorities such as childcare facilities for job seekers; establishing an IT drop-in centre; and ensuring that there are appropriate facilities and venues to host training activity.

Some practitioners commented upon the need to address people's attitudes and expectations, such as building esteem and confidence so they will apply for jobs they are qualified to do. There were also several comments made that allude to aligning provision with need based on an understanding of the types of jobs available in Plymouth and the associated skills required by employers. This can be incorporated into a broader theme that concentrates on the quality of the support offer made to local people, so that services are pitched at the correct level to meet the needs of the individual and be relevant to the requirements of the labour market.

Ensuring local people are equipped with skills relevant to employers' needs could be facilitated through a sector specific training approach. Working closely with employers, training providers can engage and support jobseekers in Efford to develop the necessary skills and aptitudes required by employers from key sectors in Plymouth. As key partners employers would guarantee an interview for beneficiaries completing the course, which would incentivise people to complete their training as they work towards a positive outcome. This type of approach has the added benefit of linking training directly to a potential positive job outcome for each beneficiary, which can help engage local people who struggle to see the benefits of training in relation to securing or progressing in employment.

5.3.3 EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES

The second comments theme introduced to participants at the focus group session concentrated on the opportunities that exist for local training and outreach agencies in the Efford area. Again a full matrix of results is included in Appendix 3, and a discussion analysis is detailed below.

One of the key themes taken from the comments made by practitioners is the promotion of new services/facilities including establishing services around a designated area centre, and improving skills training for people with young families whilst supporting their childcare needs. Some practitioners commented that the fact that there is no perceived centre, or “heart” to the Efford area handicaps to some extent the approach to build and develop a range of services that are located in an accessible central place.

A number of comments were made which relate to shaping and developing co-ordinated services for local people by utilising a multi-agency approach to empower local people by facilitating their engagement with a range of provision, that could be accessible through a single point of entry. Some examples of possible joined up-service provision given by practitioners included a One Stop Shop model and developing a multi-use hub for training and outreach work in the area.

Other responses that were noted drew on existing facilities that are currently deemed to be underused, such as the Efford Community Centre and local schools in the area, which could support the delivery of a number of training services for local people.

Also some practitioners commented that young people could be supported further than is currently happening at present, perhaps through developments to the existing Youth Centre and changes to the role of the youth workers, to break down perceived barriers and engage with young people on the streets.

5.3.4 PRIORITY EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS

The final comments theme introduced to participants at the focus group session considered what priority employment and training needs local people had. A full results matrix is included in Appendix 3 and an analysis of the comments returned is described below.

A number of overlaps with suggested possible solutions to overcome barriers to employment, again suggesting that there are some cross-cutting themes that both skills development and training support activities need to incorporate. These include priority areas such as changing attitudes, quality service provision and good accessibility to area based services, which are themes that have been linked to barriers to employment and possible solutions as well impacting on skills levels among local people.

Comments made by practitioners around changing attitudes included suggestions that the contentment of some parts of the local population with drawing benefits needs to be addressed, and other participants expressed priority training needs include raising local people’s personal aspirations and building their self-esteem.

A number of the comments that were made in relation to quality service provision involved practitioners suggesting specific types of services that are needed to address perceived training and support priorities for local people. This service included IT skills development; career advice; better basic skills training; and having a work focus in training activity.

Another priority need highlighted by some practitioners was the one to one support, in the form of “buddies” or “mentors” giving support and advice, which some practitioners thought was an approach that residents can find more accessible compared with traditional office based training and job search centres. Such an approach could be developed in conjunction with in-work satellite support services to provide more holistic support services for new employees.

5.3.5 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

During the interviews undertaken with practitioners, participants were invited to comment on what changes they anticipate in the local labour market over the next five years.

A number of interviewees drew attention to the planned developments of a new power station at the Langleigh Science Park and large new housing estates such as the planned Fairford estate as part of a wider strategy to increase the overall population of Plymouth to over 300,000 residents in the coming years. With such notable increases in construction activity, including the forthcoming multi-million pound Millbay redevelopment masterplan, some practitioners believe that there is a growing need for local service providers to position themselves to accommodate an anticipated increase in associated construction skills training activities. However, some practitioners also sounded a warning against developing reactionary strategies to fit recent trends in the market, highlighting the risk associated with construction based jobs becoming untenable once major regeneration projects and other medium term developments have been completed.

Other notable feedback included reference to Plymouth City Growth Strategy which includes a focus on the marine industry and high technology sectors. Whilst there have been some positive developments in encouraging new and successful employers that can service newly development centres, including the new medical school development, many local people are still reliant on a relatively narrow selection of large employers for work, with correspondingly very significant consequences if any of these employers decides to downsize or relocate.

6. EMPLOYER SURVEY

To capture the perspective of employers in the consultation, CSC completed a number of interviews with key personnel at selected firms across the five main sectors in Plymouth as identified in the Plymouth Economic Vision & Strategy¹, including manufacturing; retail; tourism; construction; and health and social care. Appendix 4 contains a copy of the questionnaire used with employers.

Both multinationals and SME businesses were engaged to establish a balanced perspective on a number of key issues relating to employment, skills development and training including:

- i. Recruitment
- ii. Staff skills
- iii. In-work support
- iv. Development and progression

Each is discussed in more detail below.

6.1 RECRUITMENT

The employer survey looked at the field of recruitment across two areas including:

- i. Level of ease or difficulty in recruiting new staff
- ii. Methods of recruitment

The results returned by employers for each area are detailed below.

6.1.1 LEVEL OF EASE OR DIFFICULTY IN RECRUITING NEW STAFF

All businesses interviewed from the retail, tourism and construction sectors reported that they generally found recruiting new personnel easy for most positions. Employers from the manufacturing and health and social care sectors all reported that whilst recruiting for lower skilled positions was relatively easy, jobs that required particular skills such as management roles, physiotherapists and accountants were much harder to fill.

Most employers from all of the five selected sectors reported that where they do experience any difficulty in relation to recruitment (aside from recruiting for higher skilled staff as mentioned), it is in relation primarily to getting staff for elementary work, which attracts low wages, including cooks, night receptionists and care assistants.

6.1.2 METHODS OF RECRUITMENT

The responses to the survey showed that businesses employ a range of different recruitment methodologies that are often tailored to suit the different levels of jobs that companies are recruiting for.

Those businesses from the Tourism, Construction and Health and Social Care sectors reported that they often use Jobcentre Plus as a first step to search for and recruit new staff, typically complemented with advertisements in the local newspaper. Notably the larger employers interviewed, indicated that they tend to employ recruitment agencies to locate new staff for low/mid skilled positions, and in some cases HR departments have a high volume of speculative enquiries to reference before considering advertising for a role.

¹ Plymouth Economic Vision & Strategy 'Thinkpiece' (EDAW)

When interviewees were asked to indicate which recruitment methods in their experience were the most successful, employers from the construction sector indicated that word of mouth often proved the most efficient way to recruit new staff, an approach which highlights the specific environment and networks associated with this industry which allow workers to change quickly from one job to the next. Others employers commented that the recruitment methods they currently have in place have proven to be the most successful, with one large retailer based close to Efford explaining that all lower skilled staff positions can be filled through in-store advertising only.

6.2 STAFF SKILLS

Interviewees were asked to comment on staff skills around two areas which included:

- i. Aptitudes
- ii. Skill shortages

The responses returned by interviewees for each area are described below.

6.2.1 APTITUDES

On being asked to describe the typical types of skills and aptitudes needed for their staff team, interviewees in the main part all suggested that staff have to be at an acceptable minimum level of competence in basic skills ability, with other skills requirements varying according to each sector as follows:

- Manufacturing; Wide variety of roles, but a general requirement for manual dexterity and competence to understand the operate machinery
- Retail; An ability to learn and adapt to flexible working environments
- Tourism; Customer service skills, good communication and team working skills
- Construction; Numeracy, literacy in addition to skilled-trade specific aptitudes
- Health & Social Care; Good communication skills and being people focussed

6.2.2 SKILL SHORTAGES

Interviewees were asked to detail what skills shortages affects their respective companies. A number of employers linked their skills shortages to roles they find difficult to recruit for, perceiving them to be one and the same. The specific skills shortages that were reported by employers align closely with those reported in the Plymouth Economic Vision & Strategy and the StAR Report² and for each sector included the following shortages:

- Manufacturing; Specialist skills including mechanical fitters and fabricating. Although one manufacturer did report having no skill shortages
- Retail. Bakers; cooks and drivers
- Tourism; Chefs and night reception staff
- Construction; The only shortage was reported in recruiting for people with suitable accountancy qualifications

² (StAR) - Sector Research Report Plymouth

- Health & Social Care; Domestic assistants, occupational therapists and suitably competent care assistants

6.3 IN-WORK SUPPORT

The employer survey considered in-work support across two areas which included:

- i. Staff training programmes
- ii. Further training support

The results for each area are described in more detail below.

6.3.1 STAFF TRAINING PROGRAMMES

As might be expected, larger employers were able to describe extensive training budgets associated with training and developing employees, whilst smaller companies referred more regularly to in-house based training plans.

Smaller employers tended to support staff with initiatives including personal development plans and company based training programmes that typically included training which is short and enables new employees to be inducted into a particular company specific procedure or approach etc.

Conversely larger employers often supported staff with training courses that were progressive, e.g. staff can progress from basic to intermediary to advanced levels in a given discipline, and in some cases training was facilitated through Government initiatives such as Apprenticeships, which often smaller companies cannot afford to support.

6.3.2 FURTHER TRAINING SUPPORT

Interviewees were asked if there was any further training support they considered could benefit their staff. Employers from the manufacturing sector responded that there wasn't any other training support that could benefit their staff beyond what skills development provision is already offered to their employees, particularly given the specialist nature of some of the roles.

A number of other employers from sectors including Tourism, Construction and Health & Social Care do have a proportion of staff engaged in NVQ training, typically at Level 2, which is normally, but not always, undertaken by younger employees.

6.4 DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION

This part of the survey was focussed on two areas which were:

- i. Sector specific employment barriers
- ii. Sector development over the medium term

The results pertaining to each area are described in more detail below.

6.4.1 SECTOR SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

Interviewees were asked to describe the barriers to employment that they are aware of in their sector which affect local people.

Some employers from the Tourism and Health & Social Care sector reported that they believe low basic skills for some people is a significant barrier to employment, and employers in the Construction and Retail sectors suggested that some local people have too high wage expectations for the type of work involved, and this has been linked as a probable causal factor that makes some posts difficult for employers to fill.

One large retail company suggested that travel could sometimes act as a barrier to some people, in terms of their ability to actually get to their place of work, although this wasn't regarded as a significant issue that overly impacted their staff. A large employer from the manufacturing sector reported that a major barrier to employment they experience regularly is local people who are not qualified to do the work that is available. This is a major factor which stimulates this and other employers to advertise work based in Plymouth at a national level, when local people cannot meet the necessary skills or experience requirements.

6.4.2 SECTOR DEVELOPMENT OVER THE MEDIUM TERM

The last part of the employer survey asked interviewees to describe how they see their sector developing in the medium term (3 - 5 years).

There were a selection of mixed responses as to the expected prosperity and direction of each sector, often reflecting the immediate market each employer operates in and the key economic drivers they see as relevant to them.

Some employers in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors indicated that they saw their markets to be changing, which may result in the need to streamline their business and reduce the number of staff they employ.

Other employers, particularly from Tourism and Health & Social Care saw their respective sectors as remaining relatively stable over the medium term, and in some instances interviewees suggested change would be driven by outside political influences a broader national agendas

The only confident description of likely future expansion in Plymouth came from retail based businesses, with a constant cycle of recruitment used as a main tool to manage and plan future company growth.

7. KEY MESSAGES AND ACTION PLAN

By engaging three key groups including local people, service providers and locally based employers in the consultation on employment and skills development, a number of clear themes have been identified which have a direct impact upon the employment prospects of local people in Efford and the opportunities that they can expect to be open to them.

Survey results show that both support service practitioners and local people believe that the confidence and esteem of residents needs to be raised and people need to be able to see and understand the advantages of working. A number of respondents to the consultation believe that a significant proportion of Efford residents are disillusioned about the training and skills development services available and do not recognise the benefits of developing new skills as a means to improving job prospects and increasing the range of work opportunities available to them.

Improving the levels of basic skills held by local people in Efford emerged from the consultation as a key priority. Low basic skills among residents is recognised by local people, service providers and employers as forming a significant barrier to employment and restricting people's participation in the labour market and any effective interventions introduced in Efford will need to include a strong focus on promoting and developing basic skills at a local level.

Skills development support will be most effective if it targets the specific needs of local people and equips beneficiaries with skills that are most relevant and sought after by locally based employers. Whilst there is a need to build the aspirations of local people and encourage and support residents to strive to achieve employment success, service providers will also need to manage job seekers' expectations and ensure that their understanding of work reflects the reality of the Plymouth labour market. This could be initiated through a sector specific approach to delivering training services in partnership with key local employers.

A current lack of in-work focussed provision necessitates quality post employment support services for local people starting a new job. Such interventions enable the typical teething problems a person encounters when moving from unemployment into work to be addressed quickly, and can be used as a vehicle to encourage beneficiaries to engage in further training and support to help progress their employment. In-work support could also be delivered through a satellite support service operating from central hub and perhaps focussing on those individuals who have particular support needs that cannot be adequately addressed through standard support structures and could operate in conjunction with work place mentors or job buddies as a complete service package.

Capturing the perceptions of local people and practitioners highlighted a common view that a lack of childcare support restricts the access local people have to training services. In addition a number of respondents to the consultation also described the need to engage and support local young people who are in danger of becoming disaffected from mainstream education services.

The framework for action identifies the need to develop an action plan to raise skills both to lead to employment and with employment met. Using the findings of the consultation to inform the development of an action plan, a number of overarching themes were identified which have been developed into specific actionable success criteria and included in the action plan.

A multi-agency delivery base will provide a holistic approach to training and skills development for local people, enabling beneficiaries to engage at a single point of entry and be referred to the most effective source of provision to meet their development needs and employment aspirations. A portfolio of joined-up support services could be provided by a selection of quality training providers operating from a hub which is positioned at a central and accessible location and recognised as a centre of excellence for skills development and employment support services in the Efford area.

7.1 ACTION PLAN

The action plan draws on the main themes and priorities for skills development identified through the consultation. The partner organisations listed are those agencies that have been identified as sharing a strategic interest in the objectives set against each action.

EFFORD LEARNING ACTION PLAN				
REF.	INTENDED OUTCOME	PRIORITY	PARTNERS	SUCCESS CRITERIA
OVERARCHING THEMES				
1	Local people have access to a multi-agency suit of provision hosted in a provider hub that is centrally located in the Efford neighbourhood	High	Plymouth City Council Selected quality employment and training providers	Improved access to adult education for local people Creative and sustainable skills development support established in Efford Single point of entry to support services Residents are actively referred to the best sources of provision based on their individual need Employment training and skills development support is co-ordinated and joined-up
2	Young people at risk of dropping out from school receive appropriate support and guidance	High	Plymouth City Council Efford youth services Connexions	Young people in danger of dropping out of school successfully engaged in support services Tailored support is delivered to meet specific needs of disaffected young people in Efford Career mapping undertaken to guide progression onto work-based training and/or employment, including vocational training programmes and apprenticeships Identifying and addressing main issues leading to youth disaffection in Efford
3	Training provision is aligned with need	High	Plymouth City Council Key training and support providers	Skills development training is relevant to the types of skills needed by employers at the time Training support is responsive to the development needs of local people

RAISING SKILLS TO LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT				
4	Levels of basic skills among local people are significantly increased	High	Plymouth City Council SWeRDA Key training and support providers Devon and Cornwall Learning & Skills Council	Basic skills of local people are raised to exceed the requirements of employers Development of good basic skills is recognised as a priority target for wider learning strategies that impact upon and/or cover the Efford area Basic skills training leads into further provision and is part of a longer term personal development plan for training beneficiaries rather than being a standalone service
5	Confidence and self esteem of local people is raised	High	Key training and support providers	Local people have a new confidence to aspire to achieve and progress to senior positions in the local labour market Residents are motivated and driven to engage in skills development
6	Local people are enthusiastic and supportive of local skills development, training and employment	High	Plymouth City Council Key training and support providers Devon and Cornwall Learning & Skills Council	Local people recognise the benefits of training as a means to progress in their careers Residents' perceive training and skills development activity as a positive route to work
7	Improved access to childcare support	Medium	Plymouth City Council Jobcentre Plus	Residents are aware of all childcare support that is available to them in and around the Efford area People entering employment receive the necessary support to ensure that they receive any benefit entitlement towards childcare
8	Increased rates of employment facilitated through Sector specific training activity	Medium	Key training and support providers	Employers are active and committed partners in supporting unemployed local people into work Local people are motivated to develop new skills and complete a course that has a guaranteed job interview on completion Employers recruit motivated staff members who are trained to meet their specific skills requirements



RAISING SKILLS WITH EMPLOYMENT MET				
9	Increase in the amount and success of in-work support including satellite support services	Medium	Key training and support providers Employers	<p>Local people begin a programme of training activity to build and develop new skills and gain further qualifications</p> <p>In-work support agents operate a satellite support service focussing on beneficiaries with particular support needs and those who are in danger of disengaging from the labour market</p> <p>Host employers are supported so staff training can be fully accommodated</p> <p>Employers actively promote the benefits of supporting staff training activity as a positive contribution to their business</p>
10	Local people receive support through dedicated mentors or job buddies	Medium	Key training and support providers Employers	<p>Employers actively engaged in mentoring scheme as an effective means to support and guide new staff members recruited through local service providers</p> <p>Local people receive support to address any initial teething issues relating to their new employment and ensure a smooth transition into their new work environment</p> <p>Numbers of local people leaving employment are reduced</p>



APPENDICES



8.1 APPENDIX 1 LOCAL PEOPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What is your current employment status?
 - Working: Full-time
 - Working: Part-time
 - Working: Temporary
 - Engaged in Local/Government scheme
 - Unemployed: Registered
 - Unemployed: Not registered
 - At home
 - Long-term sick/disabled
 - Retired
 - Education: Full-time
 - Education: Part-time
 - Other (give details):

2. From the list below, tick the factors listed below which you think make finding work hard for people who live in Efford
 - Lack of relevant qualifications
 - Poor transport to work
 - Poor health
 - Low basic skills
 - Poor spoken English
 - Wanting wages that are too high
 - No interest in working
 - Family commitments/dependents
 - Limited number of job agencies
 - Low expectations/self esteem
 - Being isolated from opportunities in Plymouth
 - A lack of decent job support services
 - High drop-out rate from school
 - Lack of job opportunities

3. Please indicate the highest level of qualification you have from the list below
 - No formal qualification
 - Work-based qualification – e.g. Apprenticeship/City & Guilds/NVQ/GNVQ
 - GCSE or CSE
 - A-Level
 - Degree or higher
 - Other technical qualification

4. Are you currently in any type of training?
 - Yes
 - No

If yes, what:

5. Would you consider training to help improve your job prospects?
- Yes
 - No
6. What types of training would you interested in?
7. How easy do you think you could get a new job with your current skills? Tick the description below that best matches what you think
- Many employers need the skills I have, so I would find getting a new job is easy
 - There are some employers that need the skills I have, but it may take a short time before a job opportunity comes up.
 - I don't have the skills that most employers need, so I would find getting a new job difficult.
8. From the descriptions below, tick one option that best describes how you feel about the job opportunities in Plymouth.
- There are excellent job opportunities with many different types of jobs at various levels
 - There are lots of job opportunities, but the work tends to be very similar
 - There aren't enough job opportunities and there needs to be more
 - Plymouth needs more job opportunities for certain types of work (please give examples of what types):
9. What are the most important things you look for in a job?
- Good wage
 - Suitable hours
 - Accessible location
 - Close to home
 - Repetitive/easy work
 - Good prospects
 - Good benefits (e.g. bonus schemes, pension)
 - Challenging work
 - Employer has good reputation
 - Good training opportunities
 - Short term/temporary work
 - Permanent work

8.2 APPENDIX 2 METHODOLOGY

CSC undertook a comprehensive methodology of seven inter-linked stages including:

- i. Background research
- ii. Key player interviews and questionnaire surveys
- iii. Establishing the consultation themes
- iv. Development of consultation toolkit
- v. Employment & skills focus group session
- vi. Data analysis
- vii. Reporting

Each stage is explored in more detail below.

8.2.1 BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Using a range of existing data sources, base level audits and area reports, a detailed picture of the local area was created. Data sources referenced included:

- Office for National Statistics datasets
- Neighbourhood Renewal statistics
- Census 2001 data
- Household survey data
- Local Strategic Partnership data (Plymouth 2020)
- Plymouth Economic Vision and Strategy (Thinkpiece)

8.2.2 KEY PLAYER INTERVIEWS

CSC held a series of in-depth discussions with key players with a regional and/or local focus. This included representatives from the following categories:

- Employment support, training and outreach agencies
- Locally based employers
- Statutory agencies
- Other interested and stake-holding parties

As part of the key player interviews CSC developed and implemented a questionnaire survey to collect quantitative data from a range of key individuals and organisations which included representatives from the following:

- Employment support, training and outreach agencies
- Efford residents
- Statutory agencies
- Other relevant stake-holding parties

8.2.3 LOCAL PEOPLE SURVEY

The employment and skills development survey was incorporated into an overarching residents survey which considered a number of important issues pertinent to the people living in Efford. Facilitated through the consultation hub located at Highfield School in Torrridge Way in Efford, local residents were invited to complete a number of short questions about employment, training and skills development and how these topics are perceived among local people.

8.2.4 ESTABLISHING THE CONSULTATION THEME AREAS

To ensure the collection of appropriate data, the consultation process was shaped around three overarching theme areas. These included:

THEME AREAS FOR EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS CONSULTATION	
Theme 1.	Identifying and addressing barriers to employment
Theme 2.	Perceptions about skills levels of local people
Theme 3.	Identifying the employment needs of the community
Theme 4.	Opportunities for local training and outreach agencies
Theme 5	Priority issues affecting local service providers

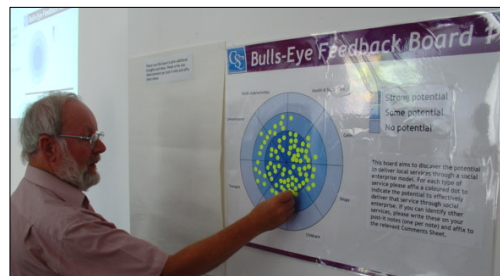
8.2.5 EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS FOCUS GROUP SESSION

CSC hosted a seminar event held at Plym View School in Efford on the 3rd July 2006. The event was attended by practitioners of employment, training and outreach agencies and other relevant service providers, together with a number of interested local residents. Delegates were encouraged to use a variety of consultation tools to feedback their thoughts and perceptions about a ranges of issues relating to employment and skills impacting local people in the Efford area.

8.2.6 CONSULTATION TOOLKIT

To encourage in-depth feedback from all participants at the Employment & Skills focus group session, CSC developed a comprehensive suite of tools that formed the basis of the interactive consultation. The tools were specifically designed to be easy to use, and provide both a visual representation of people's views as well as capturing detailed comments and opinions. The main tools employed in the consultation event were:

Bulls Eye Comments Boards capture participants' opinions and perceptions relating to specific employment issues. The Bulls Eye Board segmented with a range of options and participants are invited to record their perceptions about each by affixing a single dot in the area of the board that best describes their view. The boards have the added benefit of allowing for instant visual feedback during the consultation activity itself so participants are able to view and discuss early trends recorded by fellow delegates.



Bulls-Eye Boards facilitate an immediate visual assessment of delegates' feedback.



Comments Boards encourage feedback against particular consultancy themes.

Comments Boards record participants' comments and suggestions and feedback on issues relating to each of the theme areas and also allow the working groups to record their main discussion threads.

8.2.7 ANALYSIS

To analyse the data collected from the research and consultation activities and present the results in a meaningful and easy to understand way, we utilised a number of effective tools as appropriate, including:

- SNAP market research software (survey design, data collection, statistical manipulation and analysis)
- Excel (matrix and graphical representation)
- Top-level tables (for comparison of qualitative data and interview transcripts)

8.2.8 REPORTING

Comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from the research and consultation activity is drawn together into a report, which will be incorporated into the final master plan proposal.

8.3 APPENDIX 3 COMMENTS BOARDS RESULT MATRICES

COMMENTS BOARD 1	
WHAT PRIORITIES DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE ADDRESSED WHEN CONSIDERING IMPROVING THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE?	
THEME	COMMENTS
Strategy review	Economic Strategy needs to address skills needs – look to build/promote higher added value jobs and subsequent skills needs.
Addressing attitudes and expectations	Build esteem and confidence [of local people]. Many are qualified or able to [do the jobs available] but don't have the confidence to apply.
	Manage people's expectations to match reality of work.
	Tackle people's [negative] attitudes.
Aligning provision with need	Need to look at the employment market in Plymouth – where are the skills gaps and which of these skills gaps [can] be filled by Efford residents?
	Is [employment support] required? If yes, what training is already available.
	Identify what jobs are available in Plymouth.
Meeting identified needs	Creche/child care facilities to free up parents for employment/training.
	IT drop-in centre (including training) places where non-PC owners can access internet for job opportunities/applications.
	Direct lines to job centre etc. for [direct access to latest] job opportunities.
	Appropriate facilities/venues for training.
Co-ordinating provision	Set-up development trust (like Wolseley and Milfields).
	Employ a coordinator to link various providers and provide one point of call for local residents.
Reviewing good practice examples	A coordinated approach by all providers to education and training in Efford.
	Existing provision has been the wrong type – it doesn't address local needs.
	Look at what has already been done and what has worked and has not worked.
Improving access to opportunities	Look at other areas of the city to see how these areas have developed local opportunities.
	Job opportunities actually within Efford advertised fairly for all of Efford to apply for.
	Adult education provision currently takes place "off estate" in Lipson, Eggbuckland etc – not local.
	Nearest local employment agency is in Mutley Plain.
	Satellite Jobcentre or advisors for the people of Efford on employment opportunities.
	Improved transport links to get to and from the city.

COMMENTS BOARD 2	
WHAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL TRAINING AND OUTREACH AGENCIES DO YOU THINK EXIST IN THE LOCAL AREA?	
THEME	COMMENTS
Shaping the delivery of services	Info point/forum [to support]: employment; welfare; youth and basic skills services.
	A multi-agency approach.
	One stop shop/community multi-use hub for training and outreach work.
	A need [for a] focal point for local info dissemination.
Utilising existing facilities	Better use of schools as “doorway” to service provision.
	Efford Community Centre [should be] linked to Lipson Community College to provide ICT training.
	[Using] Lipson Community College
Promoting new services/facilities	Community room in Highfield School is underutilised. Could be used for training/courses.
	Possible start-up of a SureStart in Efford – skills provision for the family and young children.
	ICT training in local community point with access facility.
	Need for better sporting facilities – no heart to community.
	Need for a better planning department.
	Affordable childcare.
Engaging young people	Community café.
	[Establish a] Youth Centre 12-14yrs with Youth Leader.
	Detached youth workers working with young people on the streets.
Identifying gaps in provision	[There are] opportunities for work with young people.
	Carer support group? Is there one!
	Christian Fellowship? What is it doing for local people?
	Efford closes at 8pm – no shops, catering or facilities.

COMMENTS BOARD 3	
WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRIORITY EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE?	
THEME	COMMENTS
Improving health of local people	Better health.
	Improve health through health club/gym/sports facilities.
One-to-one support	Local “buddies” or “mentors” to give support and advice. People who have gone through the system have been there [and can offer advice].
	1:1 support and advice accessible for people.
Changing attitudes	Need to address the prevailing contentment with claiming benefit and not working. Any interventions re: employment need to link Efford into the wider employment opportunities that exist in the city as a whole.
	Have role models for local/young people to aspire to.
	Raise personal aspirations.
	Build self-esteem.
Good accessibility to area based services	Efford is isolated and highly deprived (80% social housing) – need to increase private housing to increase sense of ownership and motivate [people] to work.
	Access to more local jobs
	Local people find it hard to access local jobs e.g. building projects with outside contractors.
	Better transport links to the jobs.
Quality service provision	[There is] poor public transport to other areas of Plymouth outside of city centre.
	Having a work focus in training activity.
	IT skills; job hunting skills; application skills and interview skills.
	Career advice.
	Provide better numeracy.
Additional support	Community education (opportunities).
	Funding for training.
	Land allocation for employment.

8.4 APPENDIX 4 LOCAL EMPLOYERS SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. DETAILS ABOUT EMPLOYER

1. Name and job title
2. What is your current role?
3. How many employees are with your company?

2. RECRUITMENT

4. How easy or difficult do you find recruiting new staff?
 - i.) Easy
 - ii.) Some difficulty
 - iii.) Much difficulty

(If they experience difficulty)
5. What are the main types of difficulties you experience in staff recruitment?
6. How do you recruit new staff?
 - i.) Advertise in local press
 - ii.) Advertise at Job centre
 - iii.) Employ a local recruitment agency
 - iv.) Use temping agency staff
 - v.) Other
7. In your experience, what is the most effective method of recruitment?
(Factors influencing decision could include cost, time, internal company policy etc.)

3. STAFF SKILLS

8. What types of skills does your staff team need to have?
9. Are you affected by shortages of particular skills amongst new and/or existing staff?
(Could include: basic skills, time keeping, technical skills, trade-specific skills etc.)

(If skills shortages have been identified)
10. Can you think of any reasons why there would be these particular skill shortages in Plymouth?

4. TRAINING SUPPORT

11. Do you currently have a staff training programme?
12. Are there any types of training support you think your staff could benefit from?
(Could include: Basic skills training, NVQ qualifications, other work specific training/qualifications)

5. BARRIERS AND PROGRESS

13. What barriers to employment in your sector do you think affect local people?
(Could include: low skills; poor transport links; too high wage expectations; lack interest in sector)
14. How do you see the sector developing in the medium term?
(Anticipated changes within the next 5 years)

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