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ACTION RESEARCH IN A COLLECTIVE ORGANISATION
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- Developing an Education Programme
in a Pressure Group -

HELEN JELLICOE

SUBMITTED FOR DEGREE OF PhD

Interdisciplinary Higher Degree Scheme
UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

June, 1983.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

ACTION RESEARCH IN A COLLECTIVE ORGANISATION

=====

- Developing an Education Programme in a Pressure Group -

SUMMARY

The aim of this project was to develop the education work of an environmental pressure group. The research devised and implemented a project to produce multi-media teaching packs on the urban environment. Whilst this involved understanding environmental education it was necessary to research beyond this to include the various structural and dynamic constraints on change in the field. This presented a number of methodological difficulties; from the resolution of which a model of the research process involved in this project has been developed.

It is argued that research oriented towards practical change requires the insights of an experienced practitioner to be combined with the rigours of controlled systematic enquiry. Together these function as a model-building process encompassing intuition, induction and deduction. Model testing is carried out through repeated intervention in the field; thus an interplay between researcher and client ensues such that the project develops in a mutually acceptable direction. In practice, this development will be both unpredictable and erratic. Although the conclusions reached here are based on a single case study they address general methodological issues likely to be encountered in different field settings concerned with different practical problems.

HELEN JELLICOE

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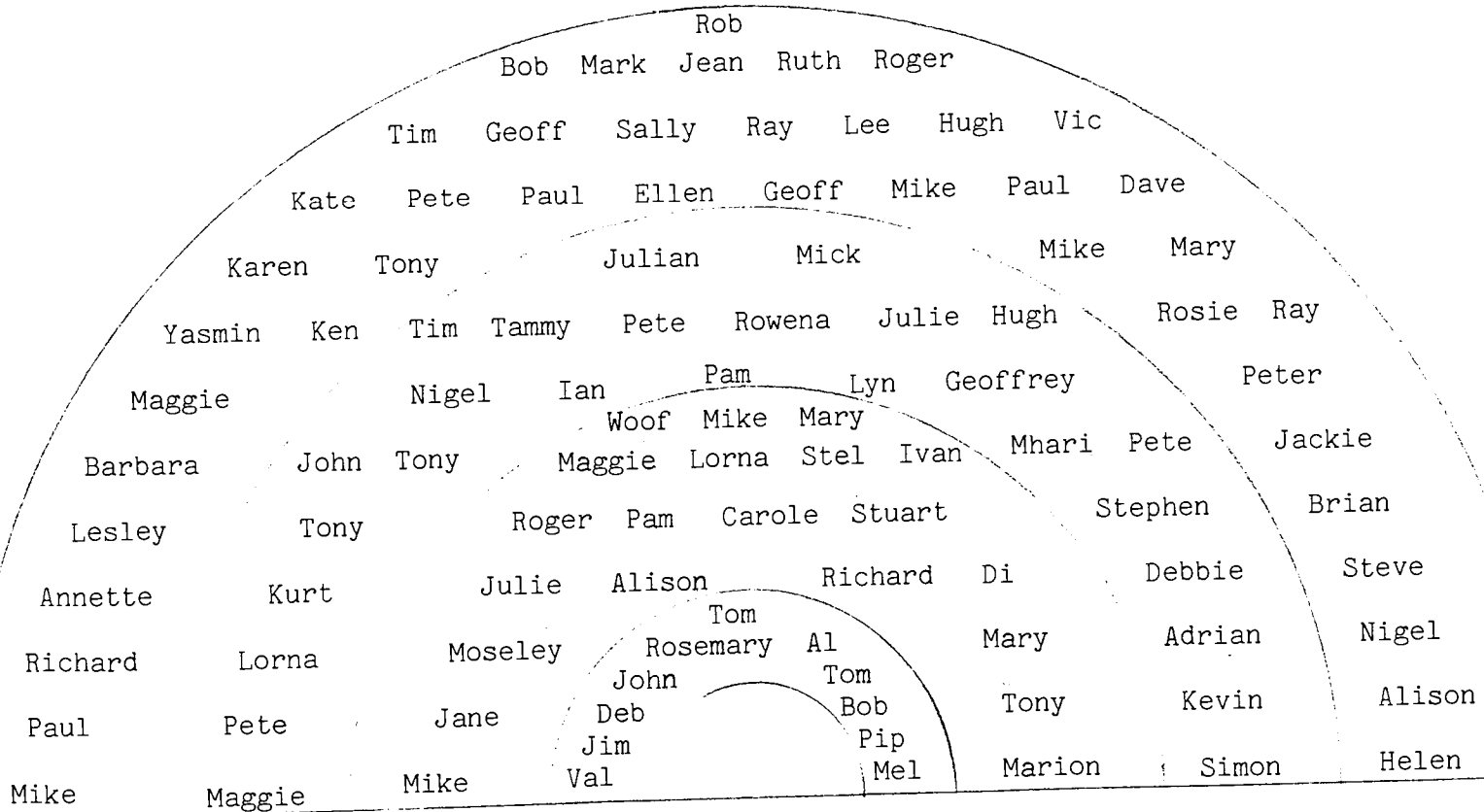
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S T E V E C O O K

A L L

M Y L O V E A N D G R A T I T U D E

T O



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Kate Pete Paul Ellen Geoff Mike Paul Dave
Karen Tony Julian Mick Mike Mary
Yasmin Ken Tim Tammy Pete Rowena Julie Hugh Rosie Ray
Maggie Nigel Ian Pam Lyn Geoffrey Peter
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Richard Lorna Moseley Tom Rosemary Al Mary Adrian Nigel
Paul Pete Jane John Tom Bob Tony Kevin Alison
Mike Maggie Mike Val Jim Pip Mel Marion Simon Helen

CONTENTS
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LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	(i)
LIST OF APPENDICES	(iii)
CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW =====	
Summary	2
(i) The Interdisciplinary Higher Degree Scheme	4
(ii) Research Project Brief and Overview	4
(iii) The Sponsor: History and Overview	6
CHAPTER 2 RESEARCH METHODS =====	
Summary	32
(i) Demands of the Research Brief	33
(ii) Research Methods Used: Introduction	38
(a) Applied Research	41
(b) Experience	51
(c) Summary	60
(iii) Report Style	62
CHAPTER 3 CASE HISTORY: DEVELOPING AN EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN FRIENDS OF THE EARTH =====	
Summary	66
(i) Early Research	70
(ii) Education Paper 1	76
(iii) Greensite Project	81
(iv) Communication Workshop	87
(v) Allies	92
(vi) Crisis in the Organisation	99
(vii) Campaign Planning	109
(viii) Re-appraisal	120
(ix) Education Projects	127
(x) BEEP Video Project	139

CHAPTER 4 DISCUSSION: THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

=====

Summary	144
(i) Introduction	145
(ii) Action Research vs. Pure and Applied Research	147
(iii) The Role of Experience	150
(iv) The Role of Applied Research	157
(v) A Model of the Action Research Process	164
(vi) Methodological Reflections on the Action Research Process	187
(vii) Summary	192
APPENDICES	A1
REFERENCES	R1

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

=====

FIGURES

1.1	The Structure of Friends of the Earth 1980.	9
1.2	Communication Channels in Friends of the Earth	13
1.3	The Structure of Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited 1979.	20
2.1	A Model of Applied Research	43
2.2	A Model of Experience	53
3.1	A Community-Based Nature Conservation Project	83
3.2	A Process of Communication	90
3.3	Campaign Planning	111
4.1	A Model of the Action Research Process	167
4.2	The Amalgamation of Applied Research and Experience into Action Research	171
4.3	The Relationship to the Field in Independent, Combined and Compliant Approaches to Change	173
4.4	The Locus of Control and Different Stages in the Research	183
A.1.1	Choosing a Strategy	A13
A.1.2	Campaign Options	A22
A.1.3	A Talk on Energy	A27
A.1.4	The FoE Knowledge Tree	A29
A.1.5	Stages in Changing Attitudes to the Environment	A31
A.1.6	The Food Resource System	A40
A.1.7	The Relationship Between Food and Other Resources	A41

A.1.8	The Use of Energy	A42
A.1.9	Land in Birmingham	A44

TABLES

2.1	Data Base of the Project	35
2.2	Constraints in Action Research and their Methodological Implications	39
2.3	The Research Methods Applied in the Present Project - Differentiated in Terms of the Form and Function	47
3.1	The Main Phases in the Development of the Research Project	69
A.1.1	Development of FoE Birmingham up to 1979 With Particular Reference to Education	A1
A.2.1	Education in FoE Nationally from 1977 to 1980	A75
A.3.1	Environmental Pressure Groups Today	A106
A.3.2	Planning the Energy Conservation Campaign	A110
A.3.3	Objectives, Targets and Tactics	A111
A.3.4	The Nature of Objectives	A112
A.3.5	The Development of Objectives - Example	A113
A.3.6	Fulfilling Objectives - Example 1	A114
A.3.7	Fulfilling Objectives - Example 2	A115

LIST OF APPENDICES

=====

APPENDIX 1 EDUCATION IN FoE BIRMINGHAM

=====

- (i) Development of FoE Birmingham up to 1979 with particular reference to Education A1
- (ii) Education Paper 1 A5
- (iii) Education Paper 2 A16
- (iv) Education on Behalf of FoE Birmingham:
 - (a) Overview and Description of Education Duties A25
 - (b) The Nature of Environmental Education in FoE Birmingham A37
 - (c) The Function of Education in FoE Birmingham A43
- (v) Application to the Department of Environment for the "Birmingham Environmental Education Project" A46
- (vi) BEEP Video Project A66

APPENDIX 2 EDUCATION IN FoE IN THE UK

=====

- (i) Development of National Education Initiatives in FoE A75
- (ii) Programme and Report of the 4th Education Workshop: "Communication Workshop" A79

APPENDIX 3 THE ENVIRONMENT MOVEMENT

=====

- (i) Origins of the Alternative Eco-Culture A96
- (ii) Contemporary Urban-Based Eco-Culture
 - (a) Philosophy A98
 - (b) Individual Behaviour A99
 - (c) Institutional Mechanisms A99
- (iii) Environmental Pressure Groups
 - (a) Development of the Ecology Movement A105
 - (b) Environmental Pressure Groups Today A105
 - (c) Campaigning A105
 - (d) Planning the Energy Conservation Campaign A107

CHAPTER 1

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BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Summary

- (i) The Interdisciplinary Higher Degree Scheme
- (ii) Research Project Brief and Overview
- (iii) The Sponsor: History and Overview
 - (a) Friends of the Earth in Britain
 - (b) Local Groups
 - (c) Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited
 - (d) Development of Education in FoE,
Nationally
 - (e) Development of Education in FoE
Birmingham

SUMMARY

Chapter 1 gives the academic and practical context in which this research was carried out. Section (i) describes the purpose of the "Interdisciplinary Higher Degree Scheme" under whose auspices the research was conducted. Section (ii) states the project brief and outlines the practical work completed and the theoretical outcome of the project. Section (iii) sets the scene for the research by describing relevant historical and contextual details of the field situation including an overview of the events leading up to the present project. The sponsor for the project was an environmental pressure group - Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited. Parts (a) and (b) of this section describe the wider organisation (Friends of the Earth) to which the sponsor belonged; Part (c) summarizes the salient and somewhat unusual characteristics of Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited and its development up to the start of this project in October, 1979. Parts (d) and (e) summarize the background to the education work - the former

outlines education at the national level and the latter the development of education in Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) itself.

(i) The Interdisciplinary Higher Degree Scheme

This research project was carried out under the Interdisciplinary Higher Degree Scheme (IHD) at the University of Aston in Birmingham. In the IHD Scheme a post graduate student undertakes a research project proposed by an outside sponsor. The aim of the research is to produce a useful outcome for the sponsor and lead to a higher degree for the student. The sponsor in this case was Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited and the project was to develop their education work.

(ii) Research Project Brief and Overview

The brief for the project was as follows:

"To expand our already considerable commitment to education. This will include setting up and developing various courses, producing relevant

material, expanding our teaching aids, library and research papers. Also to co-ordinate our educational activities, working closely with all other workers at FoE and any other relevant people or organisations."

The research involved in fulfilling this brief spans a two and a half year period from October, 1979 to February, 1982. In practical terms the culmination of the research was the implementation of a project to produce a series of educational video tapes. It is of significance however that the definition and implementation of the specific education project developed here took two and a half years. This protracted development process is the focus of concern from a theoretical point of view since it afforded insights into both the field situation and the research methods used. To be more specific a number of cultural and organisational characteristics in the field greatly influenced the progress and direction of the research and in so doing exposed some of the limitations of the research methods currently available. These insights led me to formulate a model of the action research process.

The present chapter provides the background

to the project and introduces the more peculiar and highly significant characteristics of the field situation. Chapter 2 describes the research methods needed to execute the project and shows that a number of different methods and approaches were adopted at different times during the research period. Chapter 3 is the case history describing how the brief was actually fulfilled. Chapter 4 reflects on the research process underlying the practical development of the project and proposes a working model of the action research process.

(iii) The Sponsor: History and Overview

The section which follows condenses a wide range of information compiled during the research period, for various reasons and by different methods. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 describe in details the aims, methods and outcome of the research, the purpose of this chapter is to convey the general characteristics of the field situation. Additional contextual information is contained within the appendices which are referred to as appropriate in the text. It is

important to set the scene for the project in this way because the relatively unusual nature of the field turned out to be instrumental in shaping both the practical and theoretical content of this research project.

(a) Friends of the Earth in Britain

Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited is part of a nationwide environmental pressure group: "Friends of the Earth" (FoE). This group consists of a national office in London (FoE (UK) Limited) and about 250 other "local" groups all over Britain. This national movement in turn is part of an international movement and it emerged in Britain in 1970 following the example of the USA. (see Appendix 3(i)). FoE international allows FoE (UK), who in turn allows the local groups, to use the name "Friends of the Earth" on the condition that the groups' activities do not break the law. (FoE 1980). (67c)

Although there is a legal connection between the FoE movement in Britain and in other countries, there is no legal relationship between the UK national office and the local FoE groups. This informal

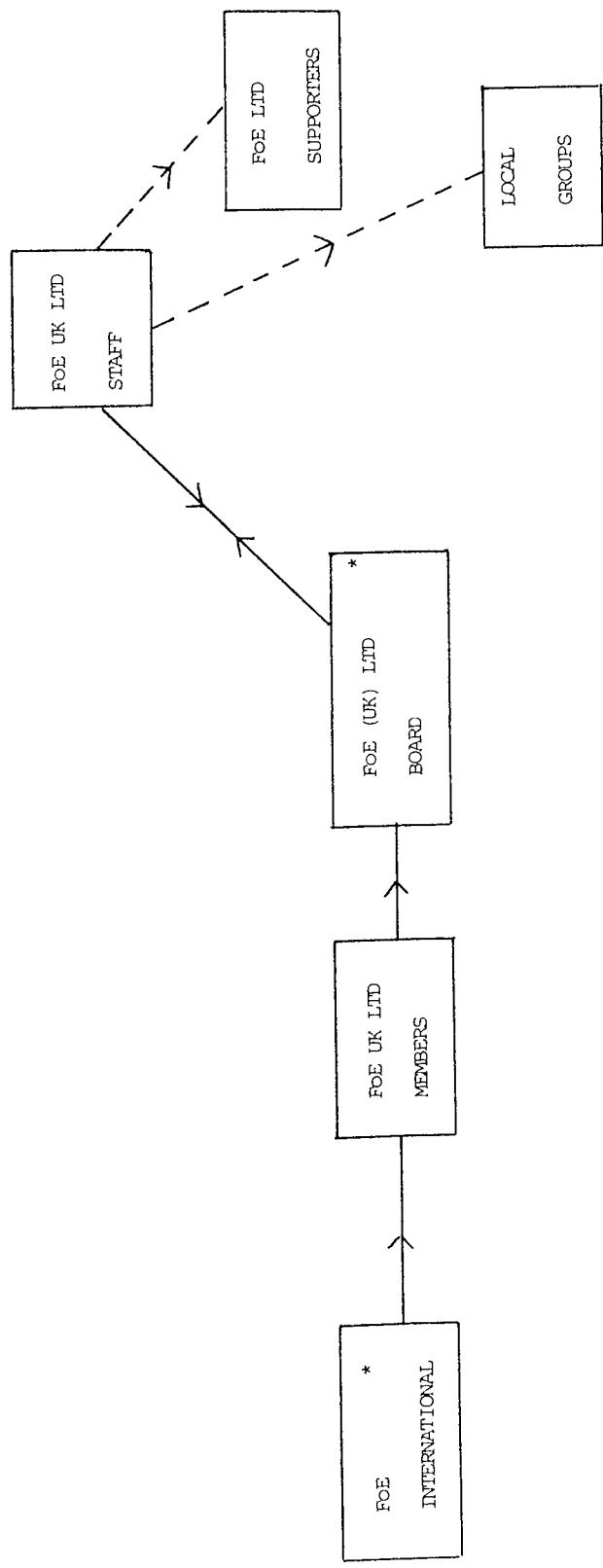
relationship gives the FoE movement in Britain a structure which is different to most other nationwide pressure groups. Each FoE group in Britain is legally and financially autonomous - thus each group has its own membership, its own budget and determines its own priorities and activities.

Despite this decentralised structure, Friends of the Earth functions as a cohesive group. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly each group (and member) is committed to the same basic philosophy and objectives:

"to generate among all people a sense of personal responsibility for the environment in which we live..., to make the many important environmental issues which now receive scant attention the subject of informed public debate..., and to campaign against specific projects which damage the environment or squander our resources, and fight for their correction with every legal means at our disposal" (FoE 1971-1970) (67a)

FoE is one of many environmental pressure groups in existence today (see App. 3(iii) a & b) and

Fig. 1.1 Structure of Friends of the Earth, FoE, 1980



KEY:

- * LICENCE TO USE NAME FoE
- LEGAL RELATIONSHIP
- -> INFORMAL RELATIONSHIP

is part of what has been described as the "strong and informed environmental movement"(141). Although groups like FoE emerged out of a growing general awareness of the environment it also identifies closely with the alternative eco-culture which emerged as a coherent subculture during the 1960's. (156) The philosophical and practical characteristics of this culture are described more fully in Appendix 3 (i) & (ii). Suffice to say at this point that this culture had a profound effect on the execution of the project.

Practical cohesion within FoE also stems from its function as a pressure group. A number of specific campaigns provide a common focus of activity for the national and local groups. The respective roles which the national office and local groups take in campaigns can be complementary in that pressure applied at the national, executive, legislative and public level by FoE (UK) can be reinforced by corresponding action at the community level (see App. 3 (iii) (c)). Moreover, mechanisms have been developed which facilitate combined action in the campaigns:

- (i) "Campaigners" are employed by FoE (UK) to run each of the main national campaigns.

Each campaigner holds regular workshops to discuss campaign strategy with representatives from the local groups. At these meetings the national campaign strategy is sanctioned and the role to be played by local groups is discussed.

- (ii) A national "Co-Ordinator's Conference" is held annually where local group co-ordinators meet each other, with the staff and board of FoE (UK) to discuss the overall direction of national activities, other issues of national relevance and various domestic topics. Prior to this conference, FoE (UK) holds an annual strategy meeting to determine national priorities for each campaign and for the movement as a whole. The decisions taken by the staff and board are presented to the co-ordinator's conference for general approval and the main nationally co-ordinated activities for the following year are discussed.

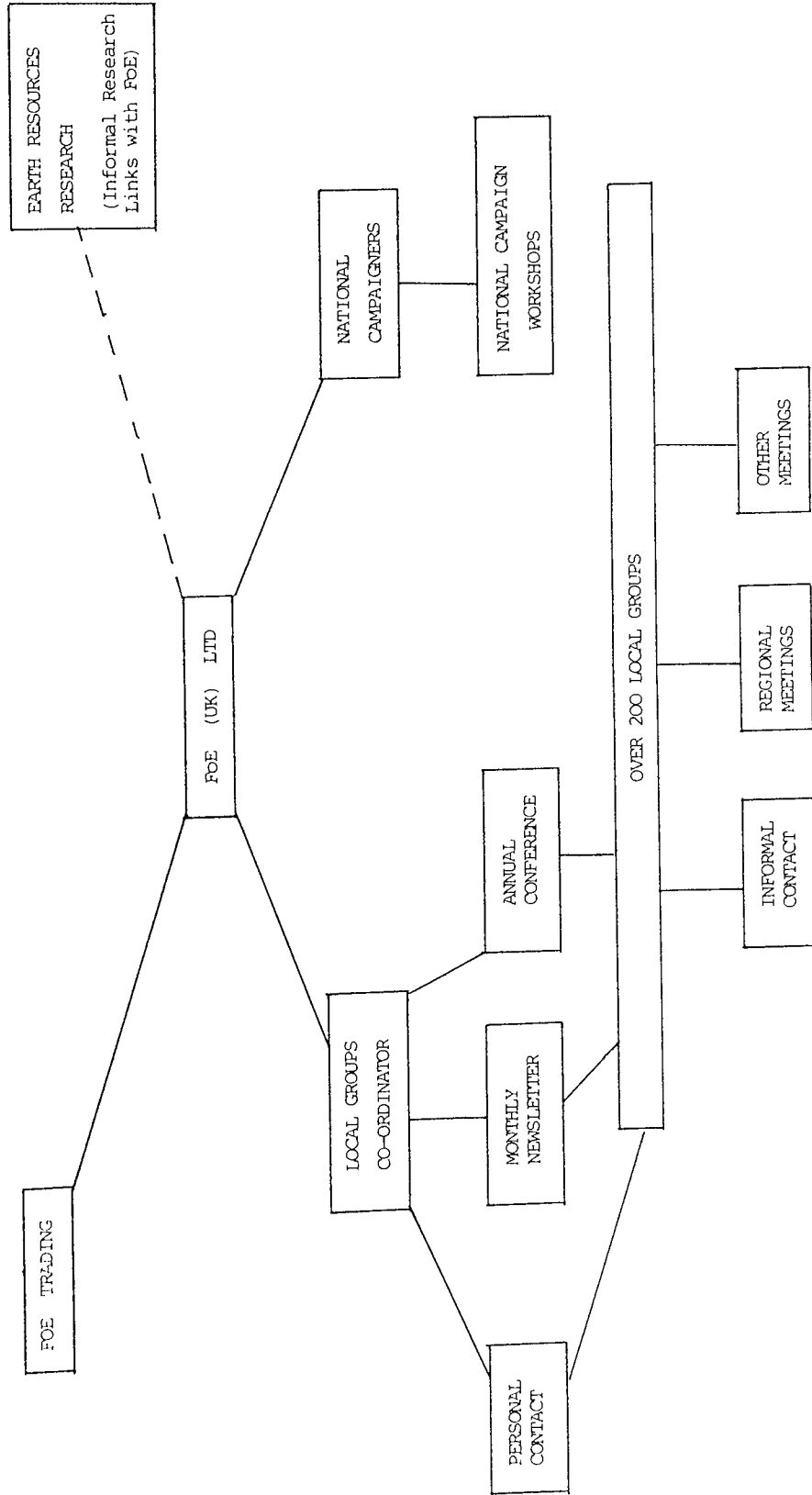
- (iii) A "Local Groups' Co-ordinator" is

employed by FoE (UK) to liaise with the provincial groups. Apart from organising the annual co-ordinator's conference this person publishes a monthly newsletter and generally "services" the local groups - launching new groups, helping lateral communication in the FoE network and so on.

These cohesive mechanisms provide the bases for communication in FoE and have been summarised in figure 1.2 overleaf.

Despite this structure, throughout the history of FoE there has been a degree of rivalry between the local groups and the national office. The local groups often complain that the staff at FoE (UK) pay insufficient attention to local group opinion on matters which are likely to affect everyone in the movement. The board and staff at FoE (UK) argue, that they are under no legal obligation to consult the local groups before making decisions and the staff argue that such a high degree of accountability would be unrealistic in their day to day work and decision making.

Fig. 1.2 Communication Channels in Friends of the Earth



Many hours have been spent at co-ordinators' conferences trying to alter the structure of the movement so that there is greater accountability and communication between all the groups. Suggestions for regional organisers, for a local groups' council, for more local co-ordinators have all been discussed to no avail so far. However, since 1980 representatives from the longer established groups have been invited to attend the FoE (UK) strategy meeting as observers. By early 1982 FoE (UK) decided to cease employing a local groups' co-ordinator but agreed that local groups should be allowed to vote for members in the FoE board. In short, the structure and dynamics of FoE at national level is subject to regular, sometimes far-reaching change.

(b) Local Groups

From 1970 to 1980 the number of local FoE groups rose from 4 to 250. Membership of each group varies; those in large cities tend to have the most; however figures have never been kept centrally, neither has there ever been any form of membership survey carried out until very recently.

Most groups are run by voluntary members on a part-time basis in the evenings and at weekends. As groups become established some manage to create a means of being able to employ one or more full-time, paid workers. This is usually done by running book shops, wholefood shops, home insulation projects and other government sponsored urban renewal or job creation programmes.

An individual local group can decide whether to concentrate on supporting the national campaigns at a local level; whether to run purely local campaigns or, as is the case with most groups, to do a mixture of both. A large proportion of their work involves attempting to influence public opinion. This can be done directly through demonstrations, petitions and other publicity devices or indirectly by example, running recycling schemes, insulation projects and so on. This is not to say that local groups operate exclusively at the public level, local campaigns may be directed primarily at the local executive body and the local groups engage in direct lobbying of M.P.'s, publish minority reports and so on. Nevertheless, their power in the overall national network lies in

their potential to incite a groundswell of public opinion on a given issue. (see App. 3 (iii) (c)).

(c) Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited

Friends of the Earth (Birmingham), (FoE B'ham) is one of the oldest local groups, it was set up in 1972 by a group of local voluntary members. It campaigned on both national and local environmental issues and from very early days it always emphasised putting environmentalist principles into practice. Indeed, it was the community recycling scheme and the sale of recycled paper products which prompted the group to look for premises and set up on a full-time basis. Thus in April, 1977 FoE B'ham opened a warehouse in the older part of Birmingham city centre. The base, affectionately known as "the warehouse", was opened as 'Birmingham Recycling Centre' and although a comprehensive community based recycling centre was envisaged, the intention at that time was to continue all the campaigning interests which they already had. A range of different activities were undertaken in addition to recycling and it was through this diversification that the organisation developed. The main stages in the development of FoE Birmingham from

its inception to the start of this project in October, 1979 are summarised in Appendix 1 (i).

The semi-derilect warehouse has been laboriously converted to accommodate offices, a kitchen, storage areas, a graphics studio, a shop and a meeting room. Such labels do rather aggrandise these rooms which on the whole were threadbare, filthy, untidy and cluttered with weird and wonderful second-hand home and office furniture.

Structure

In keeping with the pioneering ethos of the group, in 1978 FoE Birmingham was constituted as a "Society for the Benefit of the Community" under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. The organisation thus becoming "FoE (Birmingham) Limited". The constitution which it adopted was unique at that time and was felt to be as near as possible to charitable status for an ostensibly political organisation. (In other words, under this act FoE is able to function as a non-profit making body "for the benefit of the community". The membership or shareholders are the ultimate decision making body and

each member is limited to one share. The constitution requires a management committee to look after the day to day running of the organisation but in this FoE only shows nominal compliance.

Despite this legal structure, with expansion the organisation was run both on a day to day basis and at a broader policy level by the full-time employees rather than the membership as a whole. In effect therefore FoE Birmingham had a bifurcated structure. On the one hand there was a voluntary membership (about 400 shareholders in all) which supported and carried out the campaign activities typical of most local FoE groups. A weekly members meeting was held at which all strategic and tactical decision should have been made. However on the other hand by 1979 the organisation supported in excess of 15 full-time workers employed on a range of full-time projects. The workers held a weekly meeting amongst themselves and although the purpose of this was to discuss housekeeping matters, as the number of full-time members increased this became the main decision making body. Thus the involvement of members in the day to day and overall running of FoE had moved from the members to the workers. These various facets

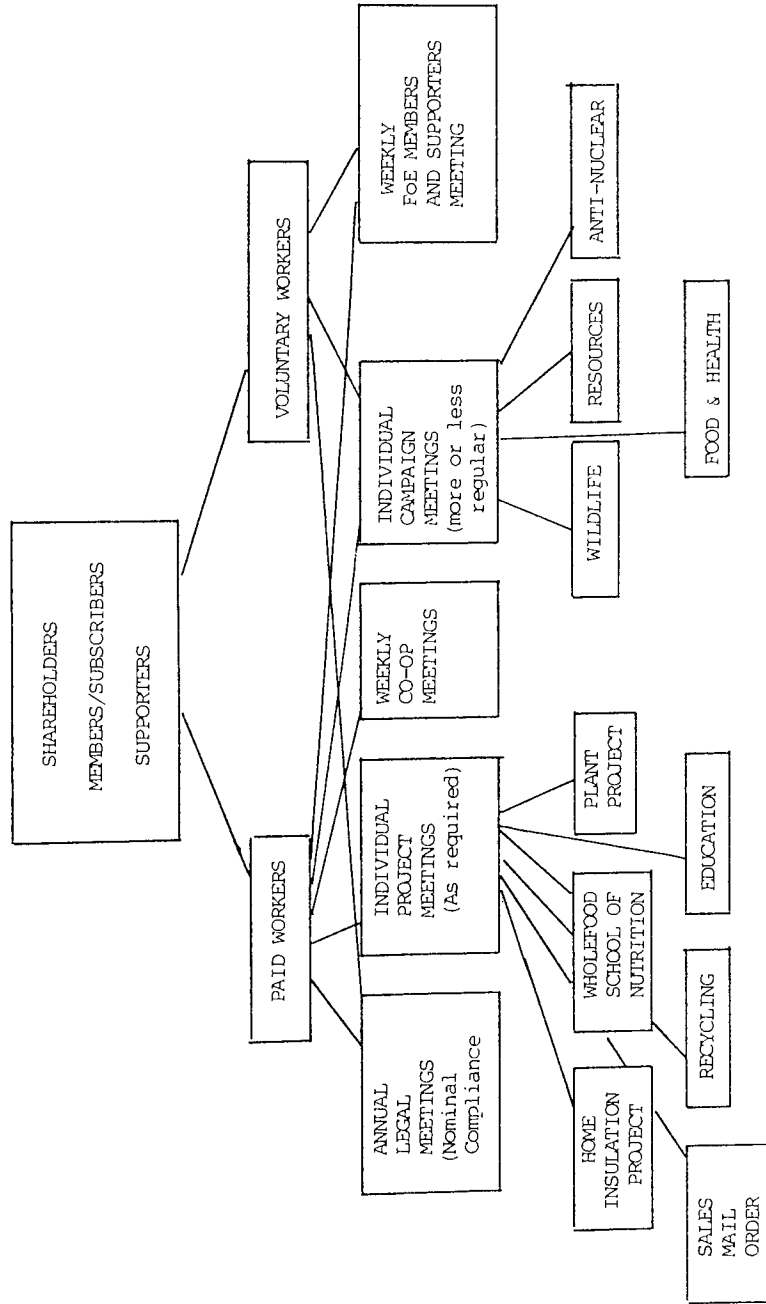
of FoE structure are illustrated in Fig. 1.3.

Personnel, Income and Activities

Since the move to permanent premises, FoE B'ham has maintained a steady growth in personnel, income and activities. When this research project started in 1979 the organisation had expanded sufficiently to employ about 15 full-time workers. It is not realistic to be categoric about how many people were actually employed since FoE Birmingham's personnel had traditionally consisted of an unpredictable combination of full-time workers, not-so-full-time workers and volunteers.

In 1979 the main activities in which they were involved were the collection and sale of waste paper, cardboard, sales of recycled paper products, FoE publications and campaign paraphernalia such as badges and T-Shirts; a government funded insulation project, two privately funded educational publications; wholefood catering and the usual range of campaign activities. The consequences of having two facets to the organisation - full-time and

Fig. 1.3 The Structure of FoE (Birmingham) Limited 1979



voluntary - were that each worker at FoE was expected to fulfill an enormous range of duties. These included the practical work of the specific practical projects, a general responsibility for the well being of the warehouse which meant innumerable extra-duties such as cooking, cleaning, warehouse maintenance, office and sales rota, meetings and working parties. And finally each worker was expected to be an active member of FoE, the pressure group. This could include conferences and working parties, campaigning, public events, dealing with enquiries and callers, encouraging enthusiasts and volunteers, research and reading.

As with personnel, income at FoE had also always been unpredictable. A fluctuating proportion had been generated by FoE's own trading activities and some income had come from membership fees, donations, loans and private grants. But the employing power of the organisation really started to increase through funding from various government urban improvement schemes and job creation programmes. In 1977 FoE's overall turnover was £650 and by 1979/80 this had risen to £79,200.

Dynamics

Belonging to the alternative eco-culture had implications for both the general atmosphere or lifestyle at the warehouse and for its functioning. These cultural characteristics are described in more detail in Appendix 3 (i) & (ii) but are mentioned here briefly since they had a significant effect on the development of the research.

On the practical level the alternative culture affected behaviour at the individual and group level. Individual behaviour was influenced in a number of ways, the most obvious expressions being moderate consumption of material goods, riding bicycles, eating a natural and vegetarian diet, wearing second-hand clothes, being non-sexist and non-racist, being casual or "laidback", reading the "Guardian" - the list is endless. The point being that such behaviours were more or less compulsory at FoE and indeed were clearly encouraged in one of FoE's own publications (66d). The average age of the workers was 24 and three quarters had received higher education or some form of vocational training which now played only a minimal role in their work (see App.

3 (ii) (b)).

At a group level FoE Birmingham had always attempted to live up to certain ideals - wage sharing, job and skill sharing and non-specialisation, minimal personal ownership of property and territory, shared responsibility and equality of status within the group and last, but by no means least, collective or consensus decision making (see App. 3 (ii) (c)). The ramifications of these ideals are demonstrated more specifically in the case history in Chapter 3. A general point to be made at this stage is that given this philosophical base the dynamics of the organisation were particularly informal, there was no clear hierarchy or authority structure in the organisation and it had developed more or less "liketopsy". That is to say there was a tradition of spontaneity and arbitrariness in most of FoE's decisions and activities, an approach captured succinctly by one of the founder members of the organisation:

"Most of FoE's achievements over the last couple of years have not been so much the result of clearly stated objectives pursued in a rational and

co-operative manner, but have tended to be more or less dependent on personalities, personal needs and abilities, group interaction and often plain exigency. Decisions to pursue one line rather than another have been fairly arbitrary". (159)

Whilst such an approach did not augur well for the research project this atmosphere of experimentation and determination to stand up for what they believed would improve the quality of life, made FoE an intriguing and inspiring organisation. Indeed because of its relative size, longevity, ability to generate "environmentally-useful" employment and its courage to put principles into practice FoE B'ham enjoyed a generally high status within the FoE movement. It was seen as an example to other local groups of what is possible with a little imagination, determination and hard work. Over the years the sustained activity of FoE B'ham contributed substantially to the growth of the FoE movement in Britain.

(d) Development of Education in FoE Nationally

Since 1978 there had been a few spasmodic

attempts to organise education activities at a national level in FoE. These national initiatives had started with a couple of discussion papers which in turn led to three national workshops in 12 months. Of the three workshops only the first led to any sort of national initiative - an "Education File" was set up for those involved in education around the country to share ideas and experience. The file slipped into oblivion after the first batch of contributions. Further details of these national activities along with an evaluation of them are given in Appendix 2(i). In short, education had never been a well co-ordinated national activity; it had been a local activity so that the amount and quality of education as a whole depended on the people active in the movement at any given time. In 1980, FoE Bristol and FoE Birmingham had both developed their education function to the point of employing full-time education workers and running specific education projects. However, most of the other local groups adopted a more piecemeal approach to education in that they gave talks, disseminated information, organised public functions of a more or less campaigning nature and in a few cases published teaching material on a purely voluntary basis. Seeing itself primarily as a

campaigning organisation and because of limited resources, FoE (UK) had never employed a national education co-ordinator and maintained that they never would. In 1980 they employed an information officer to improve the dissemination of information about FoE campaigns.

(e) Development of Education in FoE Birmingham

In contrast to the national situation, education had been an important concern of the people in FoE B'ham since the move to the warehouse. Its broad definition embraced most of the activities which went on, including talks, courses, public meetings, the recycling scheme and wholefood warehouse, lectures and demonstrations, radio programmes, exhibitions and publications. All but the last of these had been local in effect and a number of useful local education and community contacts had been nurtured. Relations were good with the education establishment, the local press and other bodies in the community.

Specific education activities had started in earnest at the end of 1977 when FoE Birmingham was awarded 12 months funding to set up the "Environmental

Information Project" (EIP). The EIP succeeded in producing three publications (67 a,b,c) apparently well received in the movement and outside. In addition a number of other education services were developed such as information sheets on numerous environmental issues, talks were given to about 30 local community groups and half a dozen schools. The EIP had helped in the Central Birmingham Workers' Association and contributed to courses run by local Adult Education Institutes and Extra-Mural Departments.

As the EIP funding came to an end the key workers on the project devised and implemented four specific plans for the future development of education. They established an education charity ("Birmingham Environmental Education Project") and secured funding for three new workers - one to produce a teaching pack on whales, one a teaching manual on urban wildlife and one as a general education worker. (App. 1 (i))

Thus the situation at the start of this research in October, 1979 was an emerging reputation in educational publishing, a number of useful education and community contacts, an educational

charity, and three new posts in education - two quite specific, and a third (my post) a general development post.

Evaluation

A detailed summary of all the education activities up to the end of 1979 is given in Appendix 1 (i). However in order to set the scene more fully a number of general observations on education in FoE need to be made:

Firstly it is interesting to note the importance of education in the development of the organisation as a whole. There was a blurring in the distinction between the general duties of the organisation and the education duties. To most of the employees during this early period, "education" was the essence of all FoE B'ham's activities - be they literary, public demonstrations or practical example.

Secondly the ethics of shared responsibility and non-specialisation were powerful during this early growth period. This meant that the workers were as concerned with the physical and spiritual development

of the organisation as with any education work and conversely, that almost every worker in FoE took part in the education work. This had two consequences, firstly the education work had to compete for time with practical projects, maintenance work, innumerable meetings and immediate campaigning. Secondly the quality of the education product was secondary to the means whereby it was produced - much more importance was placed on opportunities for personal skills learning and for co-operative group venture.

Thirdly up until 1979 there had been three major publications to work towards and a definite time limit for the work. But in October, 1979 although two people had been employed to work on quite specific projects (urban wildlife manual and whale pack) there were no other short or medium-term education targets for the group as a whole. Thus my research project started with a free choice.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, I had been employed to co-ordinate education work yet unlike the preceding two years there was not an education team as such. I alone had been employed to continue the general education work of the

organisation.

Nevertheless, the EIP group had left a good legacy in education in so far as their practical achievements had gained respect for FoE B'ham and they had identified and established three new posts for the future. Their dynamic and pragmatic approach to the environment and the unusually broad scope of their education work combined to make education in FoE B'ham an exciting prospect.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODS

Summary

- (i) Demands of the Research Brief
- (ii) Research Methods
 - (a) Applied Research
 - (b) Experience
 - (c) Summary
- (iii) Report Style

SUMMARY

Chapter 2 describes the research methods that were used in order to fulfill the project brief and gives the justification for their use. Section (i) outlines the demands which action research of this sort puts on method. In particular it considers the methodological consequences of the need to effect practical change in a mutually acceptable direction through direct involvement in the field. Such demands were accommodated by two quite distinct research approaches which have been classified as applied research and experience. Sections (ii) (a) and (b) describe the main characteristics of each approach in terms of its methodological origin, mode of enquiry and main methods of data collection. Each description ends with a rationale for their use in the project and outlines their particular limitations. The combination of these two approaches into a coherent action research process is not considered here but is the subject of Chapter 4. This chapter ends with an overview of the remainder of the research report.

(i) Demands of the Research Brief

The purpose of this research project was to bring about change in the education work of Friends of the Earth through direct involvement in that work and in co-operation with others in the organisation. The label given to research aimed at bringing about change in the social world seems to vary - "Operational Research", "Applied Social Research" and "Action Research" all tackle problems of this sort. However the last of these labels is most appropriate here since it stresses the need to effect practical change in a mutually acceptable direction through close involvement in the field:

"Action Research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of the people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework. Action research is a type of applied social research differing from other varieties in the immediacy of the researcher's involvement in the action

process."(154)

Such demands impose a number of constraints on the choice of research method, these are outlined in turn below.

(a) Practical Change

The need to effect practical change in the field has a number of implications for method.

(i) Firstly the researcher needs to acquire highly detailed understanding of the entire field situation. This means the research must generate a unique data-base which accommodates information on the subject or product of change; the material constraints on change; and the non-material constraints on change. Table 2.1 summarises the range of information within these three categories that was collected in the present project.

Such a broad range of information from a variety of sources necessitates the use of many different methods of data collection. That is to say, the methods able to access factual incontrovertible

Table 2.1

Data Base of the Project

PRODUCT OF CHANGE	MATERIAL CONSTRAINTS ON CHANGE	NON MATERIAL CONSTRAINTS ON CHANGE
<p>Environmental topics and problems</p> <p>Environmental education - content, provision, networks</p> <p>Education in FoE - Developments, content (environmentalism), provision, networks</p> <p>Teaching and Communication</p> <p>Community networks</p> <p>Ecology Movement and pressure politics</p>	<p>Human and financial resources in FoE</p> <p>Market Research</p> <p>Sponsorship</p> <p>Other priorities and activities in the organisation</p>	<p>Structure and dynamics at FoE - co-operative organisation, the alternative culture, interpersonal relationships</p> <p>Opinions of sponsor - ideas, priorities, felt needs, expectations</p>

information are inappropriate for accessing negotiable information such as the ideas, knowledge and opinions of others in the field. In the former it is possible to collect information in pre-determined categories whereas such an approach would be inadequate if the aim were to encourage the informants to define the categories for themselves.

(ii) The second methodological implication of trying to implement change is the need for intervention in the field as well as data collection. In order to bring about change in the field it is not sufficient to simply access and record information, this has to be used as a basis for making appropriate decisions and/or recommendations for change. The researcher therefore has to choose a means of intervening in the field in order to bring about change. Intervention, like data collection calls for a variety of intervention methods - depending on research priorities and/or the situation in the field at any given time.

(iii) Finally, given the priority of this sort of research to effect practical change if a method or approach appears to be jeopardising this end then it

has to be abandoned in favour of one more likely to achieve it. That is to say, method cannot be used for method's sake but must be assessed pragmatically in the field - this leads to inevitable degradation of experimental or scientific control over the research.

(b) Involvement

(i) "Involvement" in the field means that the researcher must adopt the role of participant observer. The first of the two main implications of this is that the researcher is immediately adopting at least two roles in the field concurrently - that of colleague/participant and that of researcher/observer. These roles necessitate two different, often antagonistic, relationships between the researcher and the field. The second implication is that the researcher automatically contaminates the field of study. Rather than ignoring this as a necessary evil, the onus on the researcher is to make good use of such contamination by integrating this into the research process itself.

(ii) Another consequence of direct involvement in the field is that the researcher has access to an

enormous amount of relevant detail about the field. Again it is advantageous to the researcher to use constructively such information, however coincidental.

(c) Mutual Acceptability

In order to ensure that the research develops in a direction which is acceptable to both the researcher and the client/sponsor, an approach which permits interaction between the two is essential. Interaction can take place at different levels in the field from the practical to the political; moreover interaction by its nature is cumulative - each new interaction being influenced by the outcome of previous interaction and limiting subsequent ones. Thus the researcher needs to ensure that interaction is progressive rather than regressive.

The constraints operating in this type of research are summarised in Table 2.2 along with the ensuing methodological implications.

(ii) Research Methods in Present Project

Table 2.2 Constraints in Action Research and Their
Methodological Implications

CONSTRAINT	METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATION
Direct Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participant - Observation Mandatory - Automatic Contamination of Field - Different/Antagonistic role - relationships between researcher and field - Access to useful coincidental detail
Practical Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Origination of Unique data base - Highly detailed data base on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - product of change - material constraints - non-material constraints - Different data requires different methods - Pragmatism over control and methodological purity - Intervention in addition to data collection
Mutual Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interaction between researcher and field - Different levels and types of interaction - Cumulative process

The constraints outlined above were accommodated by the adoption of two research approaches which broadly I have called "Applied Research" and "Experience". Each contributed in its own way to each of the various constraints. However, whilst both were working towards the same ends the two can be distinguished in terms of their methods of enquiry or data collection, the nature of the information generated and their key functions in the overall research process.

The combination and co-ordination of these two research approaches to produce a coherent and practicable outcome has given rise to considerable thought on my part and is analysed in full in Chapter 4. Essentially the information and/or responses generated from each was integrated, often unconsciously, into an overall model of the project on which research and development decisions were based. For present purposes, to set the scene for the case study reported in Chapter 3 the two categories of research activity will be described separately in order to show what they involved in practice and how they met the demands of the research described above.

(a) Applied Research

The purpose of applied research is to use current scientific/expert opinion to understand the real world and make decisions based on the understanding. In an attempt to fulfill the rigours of scientific enquiry - which demand controlled observation and repeatability - the applied researcher adopts the role of dispassionate observer. Initially the researcher has the simple ambition of understanding the field. The researcher uses the literature available in order to build up a pertinent model or hypothesis and thence some form of experimental design in order to test this out. Because the field is part of the real world there is a lot of background activity ("noise"/confounding variables) taking place that may or may not be relevant to the researcher's model. The researcher is unable to observe rigorously in this environment and therefore "reconstructs" the field in terms of the model/hypothesis that is being tested. This reconstruction takes the form of a controlled approximation of the field which enables the data arising out of the experiment/application to be recorded rigorously. The response is recorded in

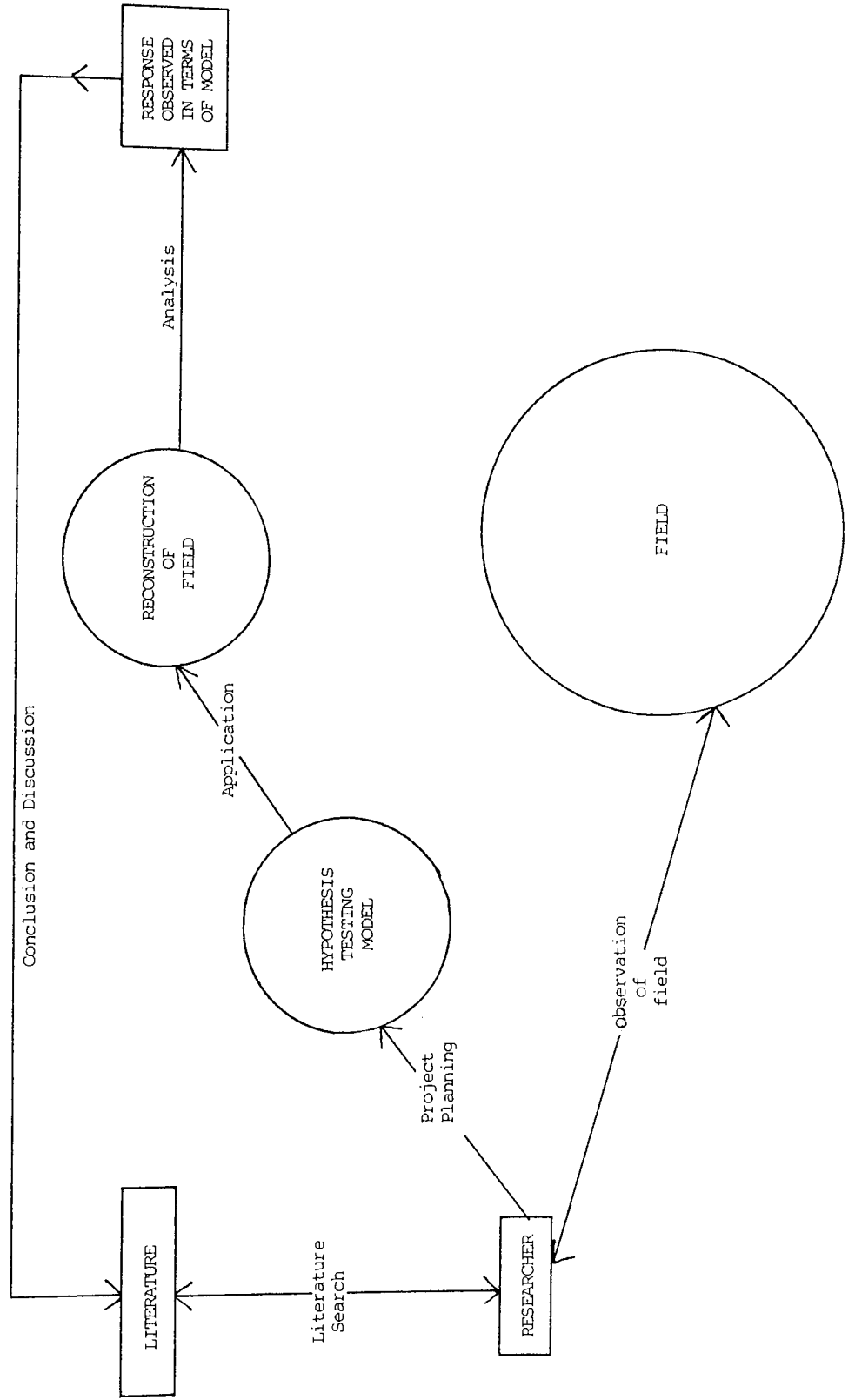
detail, analysed and then passed into the body of literature. This process is illustrated in figure 2.1.

There are a number of pertinent features about this process that need to be understood. Firstly the researcher is an observer having his/her primary commitment to the disciplines of his/her enquiry rather than to the field; he/she usually has little contact with the field (and then usually in the role of expert/outsider); moreover too much field contact during the research produces unacceptable levels of contamination.

Secondly, the researcher, for the purposes of hypothesis testing will only admit literature that is academically rigorous. Other literature may be absorbed by the researcher and may indirectly increase his/her skills in defining hypotheses and reconstructing the field but if it lacks the academic disciplines it can only have minimal relevance in the formal design of the research.

Thirdly figure 2.1 shows the reconstruction of the field as distinct from the field. Even though

Fig. 2.1 A Model of Applied Research



the hypothesis testing may be done in situ, the researcher's field becomes static except in those restricted areas that he/she is testing. In effect this removes the researcher's field from the real field since the former is failing to exhibit the myriad (minor) responses that are caused by his/her intervention. These 'other' responses are acknowledged by the researcher in an anecdotal way but cannot be admitted in the basic matter of the hypothesis testing. This generates a distorted picture of the field and as such can be validly considered as distinct from the field.

Finally, the researcher is required to record the experiment in all its detail from literature review through hypothesis testing and experimental design to the response of the field and then to the analysis of the results. Because of the nature of academic discipline this is a skilled and painstaking job and takes a lot of time; more often than not it is concerned with relative minutiae and by itself may not lead to profound new insights into the field. However, it is important in so far as it builds up further academically rigorous data relevant to the field and this becomes available to further

researchers who are able to take its factors into consideration when designing further research.

So far applied research has been discussed as a process of hypothesis testing; the applied research model can be extended to see how it could effect change. From what has been said above the applied researcher is necessarily a detached critical observer who builds up a picture of the field through a series of formal hypotheses, each tested out. In the same way the researcher can formulate change models which are then tested under controlled conditions in the field. The change models so generated are likely to be at best approximations and at worst inappropriate to the field because they are based on the researcher's necessarily static, piecemeal understanding of the field. Moreover the field is usually powerless to influence the processes of change implied because it is largely excluded from the model.

Having said all this, applied research was carried out throughout this project. It took many forms and fulfilled various functions at different times during the research period. Broadly it can be divided into methods aimed at data collection and

methods aimed at intervention or change within the field/organisation. Both these categories can be further divided into methods which were prescriptive or directive and those which were descriptive or non-directive. The former follow in the positivist tradition and impose a predetermined structure or interpretation on the phenomenon/problem being studied. In contrast the latter seek to generate an interpretation only after having made observations.

Within each of the four categories of research a range of methods were used. These are summarised in Table 2.3.

The circumstances under which any specific method was used are described in the context of the case history in Chapter 3. For example, directive data collection accessed a range of non-controversial, 'factual' information which I felt relevant to the progress of the project such as existing education materials on the market; environmental education provisions in schools; the organisation's turnover, and so on. Non-directive data collection on the other hand enabled me to access information which was negotiable such as the aims of the organisation, the

Table 2.3 The Research Methods Applied in the Present Project - differentiated in terms of their form and function

	FORM	
	DIRECTIVE	NON-DIRECTIVE
FUNCTION	Surveys Content Analysis Interaction Analysis Questionnaires (closed)	Diaries/Field Notes Questionnaires (open) Interviews Repertory Grid
	Group Discussions (structured) Questionnaires (closed)	Group Discussion (open) Delphi Technique Repertory & Socio-Grids Interviews Questionnaires (open)
	DATA COLLECTION	INTERVENTION

opinions, knowledge and priorities of relevant people in the field and so on. As for formalised intervention methods, the directive ones such as questionnaires not only provided a means of focussing the group onto particular issues, recommendations or ideas for change but also provided formalised feedback in that they recorded the response of the field to a predetermined model of change. In short they attempted to influence the field in a predetermined direction and at the same time tested the appropriateness of that direction. Non-directive intervention fulfilled a similar function but imposed fewer constraints on the direction of change. It is important to note therefore that data collection and intervention methods overlapped - for example, a predetermined group discussion, structured or unstructured, could provide information on group opinions, etc but at the same time intervene in the system in so far as it might serve to focus the group's attention on issues or at a less ambitious level serve to raise awareness of certain issues or ideas.

Benefits of Applied Research

The information generated by formal research activities of this sort is discrete, well articulated and publically verifiable; there are a number of reasons why this was important in the present project:

(i) It enabled the development of explicit/public ideas and models of the project which were used as a basis for discussion with the client. This enabled the client to participate directly in the development of the project thus providing a certain degree of control over the validity of the research.

(ii) It facilitated a degree of independence from the field because this form of research puts the researcher in the role of dispassionate observer and it is automatically critical of the field because it assesses the field in terms of a generalised model.

(iii) The articulation of formal models permits knowledge and understanding to be accumulated in a systematic fashion.

Limitations of Applied Research

(i) The need for controlled observation limits

the range and type of information that can be collected. As such, the findings accommodate only part of the field and reflect the situation in that part at a particular point in time. Such findings need to be incorporated into a much wider spatial and temporal context yet the applied research procedure above does not permit this.

(ii) Because this form of research applies generalised models to the particular field situation it provides information only to the parts of the field chosen as relevant by the model. Imposing a structure on the field in this way increases the risk of misunderstanding the field since this is limited ultimately by the model's definition of what is relevant.

(iii) The control over applied research rests exclusively or primarily with the researcher thus tends to exclude the uninhibited participation of the field in the research process.

On its own therefore applied research was too restrictive to adequately fulfill the project brief. Because of the need for control it provided

insufficient insight and was too cumbersome to cope with a dynamic social situation. Nevertheless it was a desirable part of the overall research process, and as will be shown in Chapter 4, it complemented the Experience Research described in the next section.

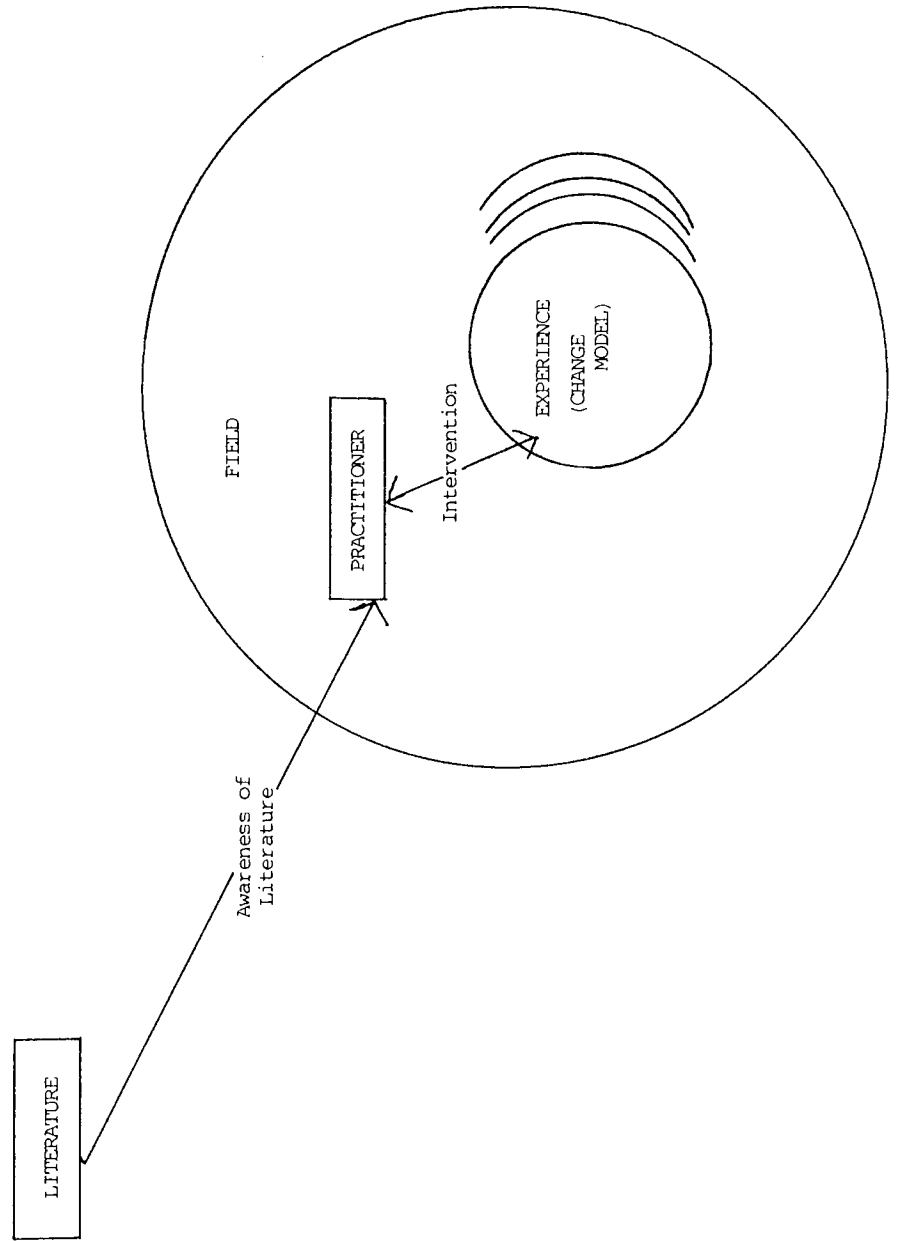
(b) Experience

In contrast the means used by a change agent who is not subject to any academic constraints are quite different. In reality such people will be practitioners in the field, they are a part of the field and their primary responsibility is to the field. The practitioner undertakes to complete a task in the field thus needs to develop insight into the field - in effect to develop a model of the field. The nature of this model and the way in which it is developed is quite distinctive. Whilst the practitioner uses literature he/she has no responsibilities to feed back into it therefore this becomes a one-way process. Furthermore whereas he/she may indeed refer to academically rigorous literature he/she will also use much other relevant literature (anecdotal, etc.) to gain insight. The model so gained is therefore personal, often private and poorly articulated, there

is no need to justify it since its validity is tested in terms of success or failure in the field; experience models may indeed be valid but usually only in the sense that they have stood the test of time. That is to say the process of model testing is done informally and in a non-controlled fashion essentially as follows: from his/her understanding of the literature and experience gained to date the practitioner formulates a means for completing the task. This can be called a change model, on the basis of which he/she takes action in the field. Such actions generate responses which are fed back to the practitioner. The responses may be directly related to the task or they may be co-incidental (eg. a response to the personality of the practitioner). However the responses are rapid and allow the practitioner, who has no responsibilities other than effective completion of the task, to modify his/her change model to bring about change more effectively. This process is illustrated in Figure 2.2 which shows the practitioner and the model are part of the field and the essentially dynamic relationship between them.

Experience builds up from day to day involvement in the field of study; thus the "methods"

Fig. 2.2 A Model of Experience



of experience depend upon the nature of the "field". Knowledge or experience about a job comes from doing that job; knowledge about an organisation comes from being part of that organisation and about a skill by executing that skill. Experience can be acquired in a more or less active fashion. Much useful detail is gained from practical involvement in a job or role but in addition simply being there acts as an important source of information and intervention - watching and listening, conversations, jokes, arguments, joint ventures, parties, the pub and just hanging around. This is a much more passive approach.

Experience research of this sort broadly falls within the ethnographic tradition of sociology/anthropology (134) (173). The method used in this tradition is participant-observation in which the researcher sets out to observe people in situ:

"....finding them where they are, staying with them in some role which, while acceptable to them, will allow both intimate observation of certain parts of their behaviour, and reporting in ways useful to social science but not harmful to those observed." (89a)

Participant observation encompasses a broad range of data-gathering techniques, including:

"....direct observation, interviewing of (well informed) people, listening to their conversations, securing life-history accounts using letters and diaries, consulting public records, arranging for group discussions, and making counts of an item if this appears worthwhile". (17)

Clearly, participant-observation is more than just getting involved in the field, however, the important similarity between this method and the experience research described is that in both the researcher attempts to become "one of the natives". He/she temporarily "surrenders" (194) to the field, suspending objectivity by allowing him/herself to identify with the field or culture being studied. (83) (174)

In this project "getting involved" was not difficult. The sponsoring organisation was a co-operative which meant that in order to function

effectively I would have to be a contributing member of the group. Co-ops do not tolerate observers or passengers and indeed once in the field there were a number of roles that I was automatically expected to fulfill. In particular those of Education Worker, Co-op Member and FoE Member: As education worker I gained invaluable insight in the practice of education in FoE and of environmental education in general. Moreover simply by setting up filing systems, nurturing contacts, answering enquiries and so on I acquired a broad range of relevant information. As a contributing member of the Co-op I gained essential insight into the dynamics of the organisation, I experienced directly the joys and sorrows of working through a co-operative structure; in addition I discovered the priorities of the organisation, learned the other work and generally gained the knowledge and understanding of an ordinary FoE Worker. As a FoE Member I was involved in the campaigning activities which provided me with information on the subject matter of the environment and on the process of campaigning. In short these three roles alone afforded sensitivity towards the field not only in terms of knowledge or cognitions but in terms of feeling/emotion and behaviour.

Quite apart from the expectations of the field and the project brief there were additional reasons why this sort of close involvement was desirable. In the first place I was to pioneer a unique job so there was little existing experience or expertise to draw upon. No-one else in the organisation was employed to work specifically on education so trying out different aspects of the education work would constitute an essential source of information. Secondly in order to implement change in this unconventional organisation it would be important to gain a realistic understanding of its dynamics. By becoming a working member of both the Co-op and the FoE movement it would give me access to cultural and institutional insight which I felt would be inaccessible through more formal research means.

Benefits of Experience

The information generated from experience is diffuse, private and subjective. It is characteristically non-discrete, poorly articulated and comprises a mixture of thoughts, feelings and impressions. However there are a number of reasons

why this sort of information was important in the present project:

(i) Experience provides heightened sensitivity or empathy towards the field. Direct involvement in the field of study means that the researcher becomes a part of the subject matter itself, becoming cognitively and emotionally involved, personally identifying with the activity, role, organisation or whatever happens to be the field of study. Insights gained in this way are valuable in trying to understand a specific situation in terms of the criteria laid down by that situation.

(ii) Consultative research of this type normally has to be completed within relatively short time limits yet often involves making decisions which would ideally be based on extensive experience in the field. Direct involvement or experience seemed an effective and speedy means of acquiring sufficient insight on which to base such decisions.

(iii) Because experience is not subject to the rigours of independent justification the model or understanding generated can adapt quickly to events or

changes in the field since these are automatically integrated once they have been observed. This is invaluable in a social setting which by definition continually alters.

Limitations of Experience

(i) There is no guarantee that the practitioner generates more effective models than the applied researcher. For example he/she may be unaware of certain areas of knowledge and through ignoring these may hold a highly inappropriate change model. Moreover he/she may often have achieved a status within the field and place heavy reliance on others' compliant response to this status to push through changes that could have been achieved far more effectively by other techniques. Thus although the presence of the practitioner within the field allows the potential for far greater sensitivity than can possibly be achieved by the applied researcher, his/her relative lack of responsibilities in terms of independent reporting and his/her status within the field can mean that he/she can operate at a low level of effectiveness without suffering constructive criticism.

(ii) The knowledge acquired through experience because it is diffuse and subjective and builds up imperceptively over time is difficult to report, difficult to support with clear facts and difficult to justify objectively.

(c) Summary

In summary therefore despite its many advantages, experience like applied research, is inadequate on its own. Its lack of control and accountability mitigate against optimum fulfillment of the project brief. The Action Research task is to counteract the weakness of applied research (lack of sensitivity to the field and a slow, cumbersome process) with the strengths of experience (sensitivity and ability to respond quickly). And conversely, to counteract the weaknesses of experience (no independent control) with the strengths of applied research (critical appraisal of findings with requirement to report publically).

It must be stressed that the foregoing description of the research methods used in this project is itself something of a post-hoc justification. Unfortunately such retrospective

description and classification endows the research process with a coherence and control which was neither apparent nor desirable at the time. Moreover, it tends to suggest that social research for real-world ends is, or should be, a clearly defined, pre-planned, researcher-controlled activity. On the contrary, this research was a social process, a conversation or process of negotiation between myself and the field/client. As such the research process suffered all the unpredictability that such an interaction can entail.

It is accurate to say at this stage that through the combination of applied research and experience I was able to complete the project to the satisfaction of both my sponsor and myself. However the integration of these two basic approaches was done intuitively rather than in accordance with any pre-defined formula or model. As such the integration of these two approaches into the overall action research process is not the subject of this chapter. It was only in the light of the case history that this became apparent. Therefore this topic will be discussed fully in Chapter 4 following the presentation of the results of the research in Chapter

3.

(iii) Report Style

The progress of this research is recorded in Chapter 3. In order to capture the complexity and breadth of the research effort the findings have been written in descriptive style. Moreover the research is reported as it happened, in case history fashion in order to convey the developmental nature of the research process.

The decision to record what literally happened during the research period, rather than re-organise the findings into a more conventional report structure, was taken because, from a methodological point of view, what actually happened was too fascinating to re-style or ignore.

This research project is unique in so far as it is unlikely that an education development programme of this sort will be embarked upon elsewhere. However, the conclusions in Chapter 4 are concerned with the characteristics of interdisciplinary, real-world action-oriented research and as such are

intended to be of general or wider relevance.

CHAPTER 3

CASE HISTORY: DEVELOPING AN EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN FRIENDS OF THE EARTH (BIRMINGHAM)

Summary

- (i) Early Research
- (ii) Education Paper 1
- (iii) Greensite Project
- (iv) Communication Workshop
- (v) Allies
- (vi) Crisis in the Organisation
- (vii) Campaign Planning
- (viii) Re-Appraisal

(ix) Education Projects

(x) BEEP Video Project

SUMMARY

This chapter documents the development of the research project. The report shows repeated attempts on my part to define and develop the education work at FoE. It shows how well-informed ideas and plans for education were frequently thwarted by circumstances in the field and perhaps most significantly it tracks the course which the research followed in order to accommodate these practical problems.

Many of the obstacles facing this research were directly related to the fact that the sponsoring organisation was run as a collective and indeed the interest of this report lies in the challenge of trying to bring about change through collective means. In particular it shows the inappropriateness of many of the established social and management science techniques to unconventional and highly informal structures of this sort.

As the case history shows the culmination of the research was the implementation of an education

project to produce a series of video tapes on community-based environmental education. However the fact that it took two and a half years research to identify and implement a specific education programme supports my claim that the achievement of this research was not the end product itself but the fact that such agreement was reached at all within this particular organisation. The emphasis of this case history therefore lies in the research effort which went into encouraging the organisation to participate in the education work since without their co-operation no education work could have been successfully implemented.

The case history is divided into ten sections each representing a significant phase in the development of the education work. Each phase focusses around specific actions in the field - action usually, but not exclusively initiated by me. Each of the ten sections is divided into three parts - the first outlining the actions and events in the field; the second describing both mine and the sponsor's response to these; and the third summarising the research conclusions drawn from this at the time. This demonstrates the developmental nature of the research



and it shows the requirement of this research to develop both the theory and the practice of education in FoE. With no experts to refer to in the organisation an important part of the research lay in defining the nature and function of education in FoE and in communicating this to relevant people in the field. Overall the research is shown to have developed through a process of action and response; the ten main phases in this development are summarised in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1 Main Phases in the Development of the Research Project

Phase	Actions	Results	Conclusions
1. Early Research	Discussion History Practical Experience	Vague concept No participation Ranging Work approach Co-operative Venture	(a) Need to clarify concept and function of education (b) Need to facilitate planning of future work
2. Education Paper 1	Paper Circulated Strategy Meeting Planned	No response to paper No meeting	(a) Paper too formal and academic (b) Organisation too new (c) Focus on specific project
3. Greensite Project	Project Blueprint	Ideas ignored Project Group Split-up	(a) New co-op no communication channels (b) Co-op client - consensus of all (c) New co-op - no sanctions
4. Communication Workshop	National Education Workshop	Good response nationally Ignored by FoE B'ham Sense of Isolation Energies elsewhere Education irrelevant to function of FoE B'ham	(a) Education skills useful and necessary (b) Education alien to FoE - need to clarify concept (c) Need to clarify my role at FoE
5. Allies	Day-to-Day Practical Involvement Personal Research into Education	Improved personal knowledge and Skills Improved Education Services Co-op Involvement	(a) Product orientation unwise at present (b) Own reservations - enough? (c) Practical participation indicates mismatch between my desires and FoE's needs (d) Conflict of roles - change agent vs co-operator
6. Crisis in the Organisation	AGM 1980	Frustration, resentment and stalemate in FoE	(a) Changing character of FoE B'ham (b) Put own house in order (c) Need to facilitate discussion - but how?
7. Campaign Planning	Co-op Emergency Meeting	Co-op accepted ideas AGM (2) restructures FoE Energy Conservation Campaign Organisation finds own level	(a) Co-op - new order emerging (b) Co-operator role paying-off (c) Personal Commitment (d) Pragmatic control of methods (e) Conflict - does education = campaigning (f) Need to identify my role
8. Reappraisal	Passive, non-intervention in organisation - Active education - unilateral intervention	Co-op cohesion and collective action grows Sophisticated my ideas on education	(a) Benefits of passive research and dangers of normative approach (b) Nature of collective bureaucracy (c) Reaffirmed need for education indep of campaigning - the nature and function of education in FoE
9. Education Projects	DoE Application "Open Door" Programme Series of corporate planning meetings Fire	Failed DoE but succeeded in Co-op Co-op at most constructive 3 New projects developed and Greensite rejected	(a) Criteria of an Education project in FoE B'ham (b) Experience important eg innovation
10. BEEP Video Project	Set up and put into action I leave FoE	Accepted and accommodated by Co-op Other projects set up	(a) Achievement not the product (b) Benefits of interactive research (c) A story worth telling

Phase 1

EARLY RESEARCH

(i) Actions

My intention at the beginning was to build up sufficient appreciation of the role of education in FoE, to be able to stimulate a debate on education amongst the others at FoE. As a result of impressions from the project brief I envisaged this as the starting point of a progressive education project carried out in co-operation with the other workers. Expertise within the organisation would slowly build up through this controlled yet dynamic approach to education. There were no experts in education in FoE (including myself) but by taking an open, learning attitude towards the work I believed that the organisation could improve both the quantity and quality of its education work through development in a fashion which best suited FoE's needs and capabilities.

In order to initiate this process, for the first two months I explored the field from three different viewpoints.

(a) I held an open-ended discussion on education with the other workers, ex-workers who had been involved in education and any volunteers who were interested. The purpose of this was to find out what the people in FoE thought and felt about past education and what they wanted to see happening in the future.

(b) I undertook a historical survey and analysis (86) of FoE Birmingham in order to establish what had been achieved both generally and more specifically in education to date. This involved sorting out as many "records" as I could from the dirty and untidy warehouse and more fruitfully, talking at length to more experienced workers.

(c) The third, quite different research effort consisting of the direct experience of doing the education work itself. As education worker I was expected to continue doing the various education jobs that had evolved in the organisation, namely: preparing talks, courses, exhibitions, information sheets and teaching aids; responding to the media; liaison with outside bodies be they educational,

community or environmental organisations; maintaining the information system in FoE and taking on any apparently worthwhile "education" work. The reason for doing this practical work was to learn the broad and complex subject matter, to pick up some of the practical teaching and communication skills, to start developing an idea of the role FoE took, or could take, in environmental education, to maintain FoE's existing local reputation, to prove myself a useful member of the organisation and benefit from the insights this would no doubt provide and finally because I knew of nothing else to do in education at this stage.

(ii) Results

(a) The group discussion, like many subsequent discussions on education produced a seemingly endless and unco-ordinated list of practical suggestions. Although it was generally agreed that the quality of future publications should be better than previous ones each person had their own ideas as to what the education worker should be doing. It appeared that education was not particularly clearly defined concept within the organisation; moreover whilst previous

workers may have had clear ideas on education policy and practice the present workers made very few contributions to the discussions and apparently put the responsibility for future education work in my hands. In October, 1979, 80% of the workforce were newcomers who knew nothing of FoE B'ham's history nor of the tradition and practice of co-operative organisation. Most significantly they were unaware that education had been seen by their predecessors as a major part of FoE's activities. Most of the workers, although acknowledging their general responsibilities towards the running of the Co-op and the warehouse, had been employed to work primarily on one of the single practical projects. This lessened both their commitment and the time available to contribute to the other broader functions, such as education. In effect therefore I had been employed by an organisation which no longer existed and participation of the others in the education work could not be taken for granted.

(b) Historical research revealed that past education work had concentrated on the publication of three information booklets and some useful links had been made with statutory and voluntary

education/community bodies. More significantly all the education work had been organised collectively; this had been a salutary experience on which one of the key workers had commented:

"....the final written product suffered from trying to use too co-operative a method and by avoiding overt leadership. This is not to say dictatorship is the most efficient form of running a project, but when material is being prepared for publication then it will benefit by being produced under one overall editor. This helps ensure consistency of style and depth. The whole team should co-operate in decisions about overall approach and content." (153)

(c) Practical involvement in the day to day education work was particularly enlightening. In the first place it demonstrated that the work was challenging, varied and potentially vast. The subject matter was broad, complex and often controversial; it crossed numerous disciplinary, education, social and institutional boundaries (see App. 1 (iv) (a)). The

number of vehicles available for education was potentially large and the practice of education in FoE could spread in many directions.

Secondly the approach taken to the education work was largely reactive and ad hoc. It was not surprising to discover that this small, new radical organisation had a tradition of spontaneity in its approach to work. Its growth appears to have depended on its capacity to operate in a reactive manner, seizing opportunities to act, campaign, educate, whenever these arose. However, whilst this poorly organised and unplanned approach to education reflected to some extent the approach taken to activities as a whole it also seemed to reflect the vague definition of education within the organisation.

(iii) Conclusions from Early Research

A number of conclusions were drawn from this early research which suggested directions for the next stage:

- (a) I should clarify the concept and function of education within FoE. This should involve researching

relevant literature and experts in the field to ascertain the educational message, the purpose and objectives of education, the form it should take in FoE and so on.

(b) In view of the vague definition of education and the characteristically unplanned approach to the work I concluded that FoE was doing too much education work to an ineffectual standard. To avoid wasting meagre financial and human resources I needed to set up future education work on a more organised basis. To do this I had to devise a means whereby the organisation could discuss and plan education work and agree a rational and desirable course of action.

Phase 2 EDUCATION PAPER 1

(i) Actions

I reasoned that FoE could best achieve control over the education work by adopting a specific limited course of action. "Education Paper 1" was therefore my first attempt to introduce to FoE the idea of planning education.

Along with another of the workers I engineered a "corporate strategy" meeting. Two or three of us agreed that this essentially new organisation should sit down and work out some directions and priorities for the various projects currently running in the organisation. The group as a whole agreed that a strategy meeting should be held in January, 1980. This meeting was to be preceded by the circulation of discussion papers from each of the main projects - Home Insulation, Marketing, Urban Wildlife and Education. The papers were to outline ideas for development over the next 12 months and would be the stimulus for discussion at the meeting. As far as education was concerned I wanted to use this opportunity both to stimulate a continuing debate on education in FoE and to focus the practical education work in some mutually agreed direction.

I wrote and circulated a discussion paper on education (see App. 1 (ii)). It started by reviewing education to date both in FoE Birmingham and FoE, nationally. This was meant as a general introduction since I knew that most of the others had no way of knowing this history. Then I put the case for

planning the education work and set down guidelines for doing this. Based on current ideas in educational technology, (16) (109) (118) I stressed the importance of choosing a specific action or topic and determining a strategy. I went on to list some of the strategies and means of education at FoE's disposal and ended by asking the group which of a number of roles I, as education worker, should take in this. I pointed out that this was not intended as a definitive document but as a stimulus for discussion since ultimately development in education depended on a group decision. The paper was launched into the abyss of the warehouse along with one from the insulation project and one from the new urban ecologist.

(ii) Response/Results

Unfortunately, the strategy meeting never took place and copies of the discussion papers slipped into oblivion with neither individual nor group comment. To be more precise, they were engulfed by the piles of old newspapers, magazines, letters, orders, sleeping bags, jackets, coffee cups, placards, cushions, plant pots and so on which littered the dysfunctional communal desks.

Having said this, one volunteer came to tell me my paper was good and that he disapproved of the limitations of group discussions and interaction at the warehouse. My industrial supervisor considered the paper useful but agreed with a key contributor to the previous education project who registered a protest at the implication that work in the past had been disorganised and unplanned. From the others - silence.

(iii) Conclusion from Education Paper 1

I concluded that there were two main reasons for this failed venture - the first lay in my method, the second in the dynamics of the organisation.

(a) For my part, the paper was too "academic" or abstract for a group whose main priorities were practical and immediate. Moreover, as a means of encouraging participation it was unsubtle and inappropriate. Discussion documents, planning meetings and the whole idea of strategic and corporate planning were an anathema to FoE's alternative culture. They represented those social institutions which the group

condemned. The alternative culture emerged out of the rejection of just such prescribed modes of communication; it rejects the control which bureaucratic organisation exerts over inter-personal and group behaviour. It was hardly surprising therefore that the people at FoE failed to respond as expected (see App. 3 (i)).

(b) As for the organisation, it was too early to expect long, or even medium term thinking to have developed. The "organisation" consisted of about 15 people; this group had only been together for one or two months and new people were still being employed. The new workers were concerned primarily with learning their new jobs, building up cohesion and identity within their immediate working group and last but by no means least, having fun. For the majority of these people, at this time they had quite simply been employed to work on clearly defined practical projects - by an apparently thriving (albeit poor) organisation. As a consequence there had been little time for any corporate identity to develop, the future of FoE Birmingham was taken somewhat for granted and anyway, until they understood more about the work and function of FoE they were in no position to decide

which directions should be taken.

It appeared therefore that my ideas for taking a "planned" approach needed to be interpreted in more accessible and relevant terms and to be introduced in a fashion more appropriate to the modus operandi of the group.

(c) Partly as a result of the response to the education paper and partly as a result of imagined pressure to produce something tangible for IHD, I took a unilateral decision to develop the education function for a single project rather than try and service all the activities at FoE. The ideal opportunity to do this came in January, 1980 when the urban ecologist was employed to develop a practical nature conservation project and produce a layperson's manual on urban nature conservation.

Phase 3 THE GREENSITE PROJECT

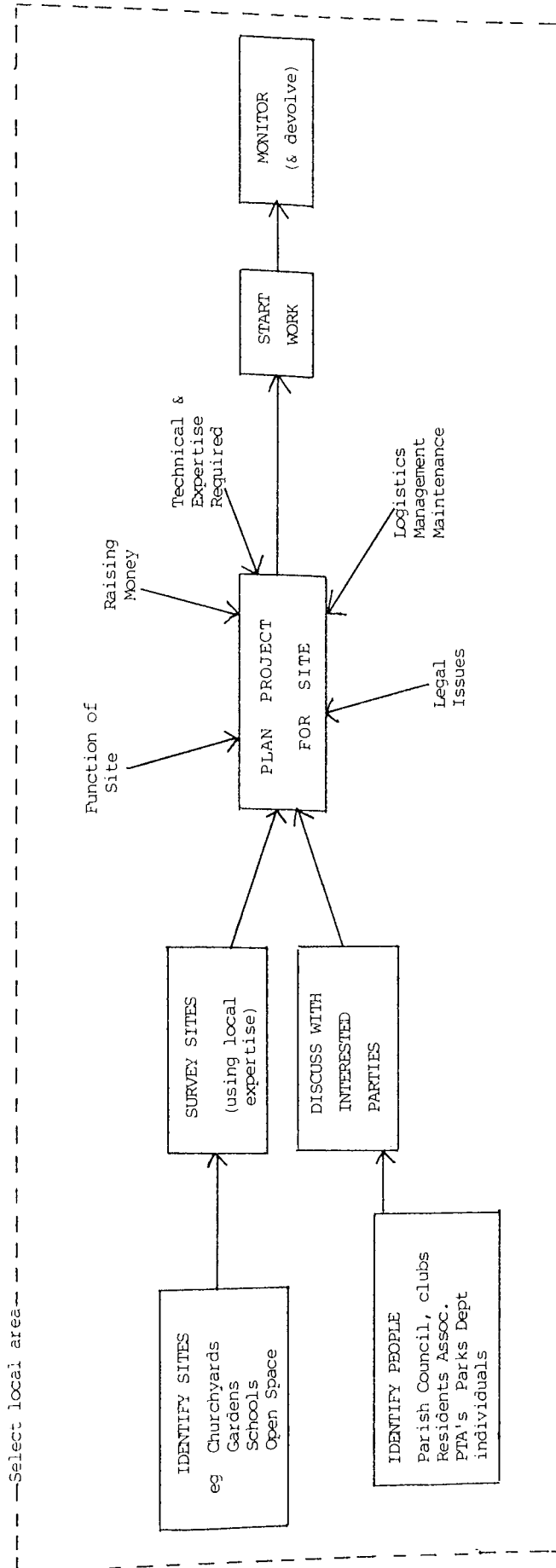
(i) Actions

Until January, 1980 two other workers, a few

volunteers and myself had been slowly developing FoE's nature conservation work. By the time the full-time urban ecologist arrived we had already carried out some practical conservation work, secured a little capital, gained access to five local sites and established a number of school and community contacts who wanted to be more involved in the conservation work. This project seemed particularly suited to providing community-based education concerning the environment, albeit only local urban wildlife. Moreover by developing the education aspect of the project I would be an integral part of a project group in FoE and thus in a better position to gain group participation in education.

Therefore I developed a model for a community-based nature conservation project. The model is shown in Figure 3.1.; essentially it places the responsibility for nature conservation within the community itself. Not only the land, but the expertise, labour and the beneficiaries would all be drawn from the community rather than from outside agencies or specialists. In this case FoE would take any number of roles, at any stage in the development of a local conservation project - depending on whether

Fig 3.1 A Community-Based Nature Conservation Project



the initiative came from the community, the level of expertise and interest available, and the sort of needs which were identified during development, FoE could adopt the role of instigator, co-ordinator, educator and campaigner, as appropriate. The prospect was exciting, the "Greensite Project" would be able to promote the concept and practice of urban nature conservation at a very immediate, locally-relevant level.

(ii) Response/Results

That anything should have been so easy. The four of us who were supposedly involved in the development of the Greensite Project were not working well as a group. So much so that there was no forum, formal or informal at which to present and discuss my ideas with the others. The urban ecologist refused to hold project meetings as indeed he also resented the right of anybody in the Co-op to ask him what he was planning and doing. He had been employed by FoE as an expert in urban ecology and he claimed a fair amount of previous experience in this field. Also he had a fairly well-articulated set of ideas of how he wanted the Greensite Project to develop. (Essentially he

wanted to set up a FoE-based labour force to carry out the conservation work on local sites rather than relying on people from the local community. He argued that the work was often extensive, heavy and soul-destroying and therefore inappropriate for occasional and weekend input from locals who would be likely to become disheartened.)

Within a few weeks of the ecologist having taken up his post the other three of us had been excluded from taking part in the project plans. Thus my education aspirations for the Greensite Project also slipped into oblivion and I bowed out of the project.

(iii) Conclusions from Greensite Project

This failure was personally insulting and demoralising but it was constructive in that it exposed further non-material constraints on change. In particular I began to appreciate some of the practical consequences of the collective ideal at FoE:

(a) In the collective at that time there were no explicit, generally acknowledged structures or

mechanisms through which to discuss, plan or make decisions let alone initiate change. There was no hierarchy or authority structure - decisions had to emerge from the consensus of the whole group. However the cohesion of the workers Co-op was not strong at this stage nor was there much corporate identity; patience would be necessary since this essential cohesion - if it happened at all - could not be hurried.

(b) My client was in effect the entire collective, sanction of new ideas would depend on gaining the support of every individual in the collective. I realised that this would be a slow and complex process. The challenge of the research project was beginning to emerge; clearly it would not be easy motivating and co-ordinating the others in FoE towards a common end. Particularly since as it appeared, most had joined in order to exercise a measure of self-determination.

(c) Just as this new collective had no clear mechanisms for facilitating change neither did it have any explicit controls over the actions of its individual members. Such controls came about through

the cohesive force of the group as a whole but in these early days when collective strength was almost non-existent the actions of a despot could go unchallenged. Thus even if each individual could see that these actions clearly violated the principles of collective organisation, the group/organisation seemed powerless to reprimand the offender. As the collective developed the notion of shared responsibility materialised and each individual contributed towards the maintenance of the collective ideal. However, in these early days of a leaderless group of this type, corporate responsibility hovered in limbo between the individual members; it was only over time that this responsibility started to be expressed as a set of shared values within the group.

Phase 4 COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

(i) Actions

Once again I turned my attention to the arena of education in general. This was not only because my Greensite plans had failed but also because environmental education for FoE was clearly about more

than just urban nature conservation. There was an ever increasing load of day to day education work in which I was involved, moreover my involvement in FoE's education at the national level had led to an interesting practical opportunity.

In the early stages of my research one significant source of information came from liaison with the wider FoE movement. As reported in Chapter 1, there had been a few efforts within FoE to set up education activities on a national basis (see App. 2). In the absence of much enthusiasm for education in FoE B'ham it was more likely that these other FoE members could tell me more about the concept and practice of education in FoE. Through this contact I had agreed to organise FoE's 4th National Education Conference on "Communication".

The concept behind the communication workshop was related to what I had been saying about education in FoE Birmingham - that in order to be effective, any communication needs to be seen as part of a planned process. The "product" of communication (literature, posters, interviews, talks, etc) should be controlled by the communicator such that maximum effect is

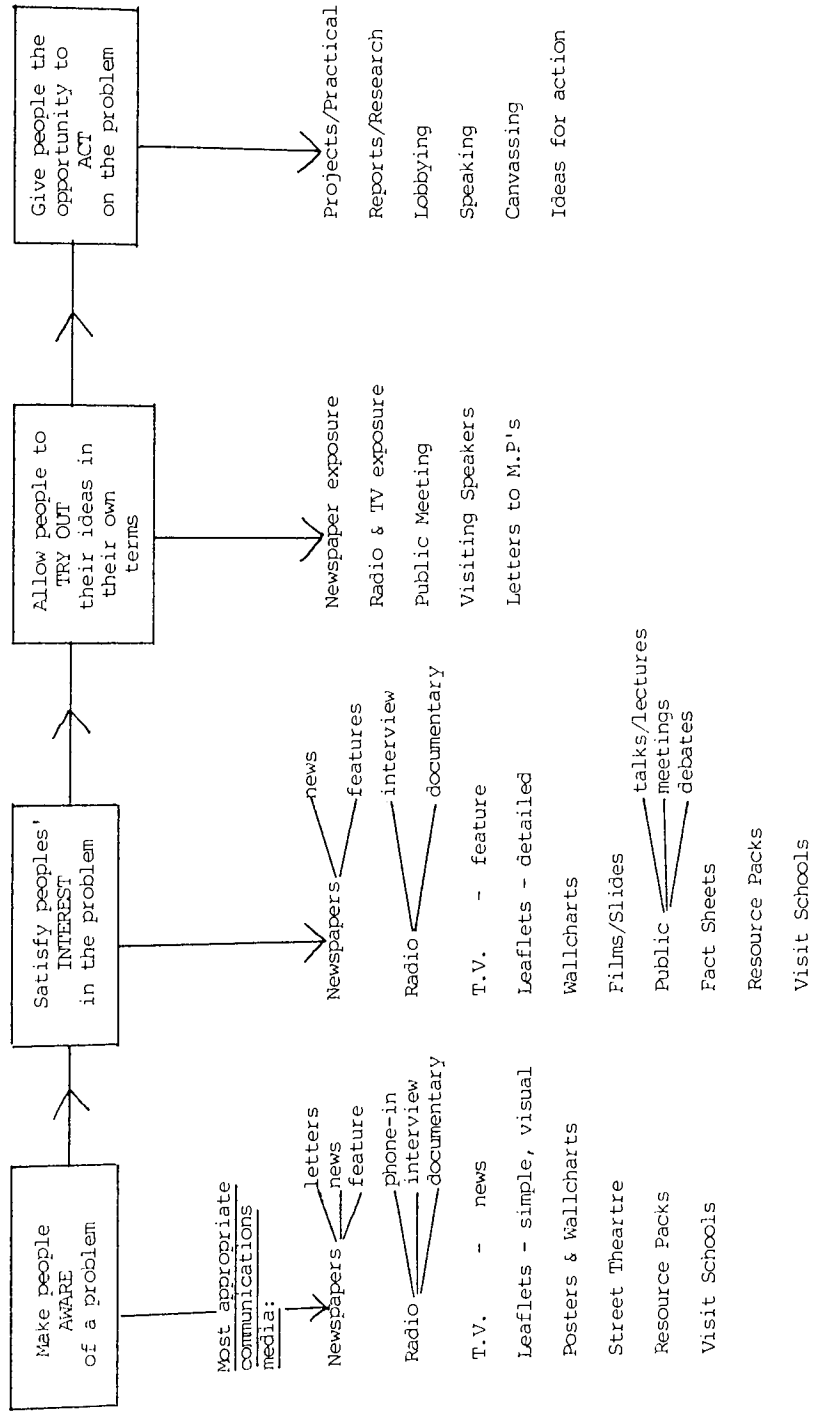
ensured. (193) (This process is illustrated in Figure 3.2.) This theme was presented through a set of practical sessions on the use of different types of communications media.

(ii) Response

The programme and report of the conference is given in Appendix 2 (ii). It attracted one of the largest attendances ever seen at a specialised national workshop - over seventy people came, representing fifty groups. Only one worker came from FoE Birmingham - for just one of the two days. The lack of interest and support from the other workers in the Co-op was disappointing to say the least. They had been aware of and apparently interested in the preparation and yet did not feel it their place to attend. However philosophical I tried to be the isolation I felt from the rest of the workers Co-op was very disturbing. There was plenty of activity and other group ventures going on in the warehouse yet in stark contrast the education work was static and apparently my sole responsibility. I could accept the obvious facts that manual and practical work took

Fig. 3.2 A. Process of Communication

Getting people to change involves going through a sequence of educational steps:



precedence over administration and that there were many other duties and priorities in FoE B'ham besides education but what was disturbing was the growing impression that my ideas and actions in education were apparently irrelevant to the "real work" or identity of the organisation.

(iii) Conclusions From Communication Workshop

I was becoming confused at this stage since on the one hand I had received support for my ideas on education from the national movement but on the other hand, FoE Birmingham had ignored my ideas yet again. I concluded three things:

(a) The practical skills of education/communication were useful to Friends of the Earth and there was a need for the development of these.

(b) The whole concept of education seemed alien to the people in FoE Birmingham therefore I had to clarify what function they felt it should have within the organisation, what form it should take and how it should develop.

(c) Everyone except myself in Foe Birmingham had an acknowledged role therefore I must try again to establish clearly with the group what my role should be.

Phase 5 ALLIES

(i) Actions

Self pity, a sense of outrage at having been repeatedly "misunderstood" and a need to strengthen my ideas on education, threw me back into the general education work - as if to prove that I was being useful. From this point on I made the day to day education work more "public" and actively involved the others in it since they appeared to feel some responsibility towards helping in the day to day practicalities. I made education more tangible, I "created" the role of education worker - by requesting that all talks be referred to me for approval, organisation and subsequent delegation as appropriate. All education-orientated enquiries were to come to me, as too were documents for filing, requests for

exhibitions, visits and the like. I learned how to share the education work - at Co-op meetings I explained how the information system worked; I co-ordinated the production of a set of exhibitions and set up a hire-system which was duly explained to everyone. I set up a slide hiring chart, sent new publications round for comment and so on. I even went so far as to bring the newly created charity BEEP (Birmingham Environmental Education Project) to life by designing a letter-head, writing letters in BEEP's name and producing a leaflet on "BEEP's services to schools and community groups". I talked about my work to the others, about the schools, groups and people I met in my daily round, about newly acquired publications and teaching aids. In addition I adopted a pragmatic approach to work - I identified immediate needs and generally entered into the spirit of making practical suggestions. ("We need a pollution pack" went down very well.) In other words I asserted myself as education worker. Also I made my references to education practical and specific; product-orientated not process-orientated.

In order to improve my level of understanding of the education work and so that its quality might

improve I carried out extensive personal research. Reading, nurturing contacts, carrying out market research into the materials and services already available and so on. In addition I tried to engender group participation in education at a more abstract level in so far as I used the repertory grid technique (53) (65) (55) (79) (170a) to access the environmental knowledge of people in the group. From these individual "knowledge trees" (57) (144) (145) I intended to use a socio-grid with the entire group in order to build a generally agreed knowledge base. (see Appendix 1 (iv) As the next phase shows, a crisis in the organisation around this time prevented this development taking place.

(ii) Response

(a) My appreciation of the subject matter of education increased during this time; the repertory grids proved a particularly useful source of information even though they never functioned as a group participation technique. In addition my skills in communicating to a wide range of audiences using a variety of media greatly improved. I came to understand more about the quantity and quality of

environmental education available elsewhere and generally became a more competent education worker.

(b) The immediate education services of the organisation were benefiting from such active co-ordination on my part.

(iii) Conclusions

(a) Market research had revealed a flourishing market in environmental education materials. Moreover, many large industries spend thousands of pounds producing booklets, charts, visual aids and games about the environment many of which are sent free to schools. If FoE B'ham was to start competing in this market then the quality of the education materials and services would have to improve. Given the financial constraints, the many other commitments of the workers, their abilities and varied interests this seemed unlikely to happen. Thus whatever the organisational/cohesive merits of this product-orientated group approach I was still not satisfied it was the most sensible course of action.

(b) Having said this, at one stage a group of

workers decided to produce an information pack on the nuclear-power debate. This was well received in the education press and demonstrated that whilst FoE could not compete in terms of glossiness and price it seemed to offer something in terms of content, style or approach which was lacking in the general field of environmental education. Also the other education services appeared to be fulfilling a need within this field - FoE's style of education was characteristically practical and experimental and tried to be accessible to anyone who cared to use it.

Indeed, by this stage not only was I convincing the others in FoE B'ham that I was fulfilling a useful role in the group but I was beginning to convince myself. This spontaneous, hand-to-mouth approach to education seemed to suit the general tone of the organisation. Not only was FoE small, poor and powerless but throughout its development achievements had depended upon the short-term enthusiasm of an individual's commitment to the movement, or on the fleeting creative dynamic of a group. This state of affairs was unlikely to change since if it did then the vitality of the organisation as a radical pressure group would be

threatened. The turnover of personnel would therefore continue to wax and wane unpredictably such that the purpose and priorities of the organisation could change at any moment. Thus attempts to adopt long-term strategy in any sphere of activity in FoE appeared to be in hopeless conflict with the modus vivendi of the organisation.

(c) The fact that it had been so easy to facilitate group participation at the practical level and yet previously so difficult to get this at a policy/planning level suggested a clear disparity between the work that I wanted to do in order to develop education and that which the group was happy for me to do. I wanted to bring about change in education policy whilst FoE apparently wanted me to continue in a co-ordinating role, developing the broad-ranging service. As the brief said: "To expand our already considerable commitment to adult and community education..., setting up courses, producing materials, expanding our teaching aids..., working closely with any other people and organisations".

(d) I felt trapped. It was as if the role of "change-agent" was totally incompatible with that of

"co-operator". So far I had been attempting to facilitate change through the extremely non-directive, client-centred process of co-operation. That is to say I had in large part adopted the role of colleague and on those occasions where I had taken the initiative as expert or change agent I had abided by the response of the Co-op thus when education paper 1 slipped into oblivion, I let it go and when the plans for the Greensite Project were ignored, I did not persist or try to push my case. In this last example had I strongly believed in what I was doing maybe I should have insisted rather than give in, however in order to implement these ideas I would have to win my case against the urban ecologist as he was not likely to compromise. A victory would not only have been unlikely but its long-term viability would be shaky.

Unfortunately it was beginning to look as though the principle of co-operation mitigated against change since the latter worked against cohesion. My record as a change agent was lousy, my recent success in education appeared to be due to the fact that I was complying with the wishes of the Co-op. It seemed that the only way to succeed, ie. evoke favourable response, in the Co-op was to play by the rules which

already existed, since change threatened the cohesion of the group.

This dilemma was however, resolved by a number of events which dominated the field situation.

Phase 6 CRISIS IN THE ORGANISATION

(i) Actions/Events

By April, 1980 the internal affairs of the organisation were in turmoil. At the AGM it seemed that the cohesion of FoE Birmingham had hit an all-time low. The meeting was supposed to reflect on the previous 12 months and look forward to the next. Instead it was a silent disaster, no points were raised for discussion and no contributions were made after the annual formalities had been executed. The atmosphere was filled with confusion and frustration and there was a considerable, not entirely covert, resentment of the founder members who appeared to be dominating the meeting. There were obvious cliques within the Co-op group. There was apparently little to talk about at the AGM, so no-body talked - however

it was at least acknowledged by those present that something was amiss in the organisation and it was agreed that another extra-ordinary general meeting be held three months hence to discuss the future, regenerate FoE Birmingham and re-organise if necessary.

(ii) Conclusions

(a) I sought to clarify some of the reasons why the organisation had apparently stagnated or was on the verge of disintegration. Over the preceding six months there had been a sudden influx of new full-time workers and the daytime work in FoE had expanded enormously. As a consequence the priority of FoE B'ham had shifted away from its traditional role as a local voluntary pressure group towards the daytime, practical work. Most of the important decisions were to do with this work and therefore tended to be taken at the Co-op meetings rather than the members meeting. Clearly the voluntary membership were becoming less vital to the functioning and survival of FoE B'ham. This was aggravated by the fact that the presence of so many full-time workers (relative "experts") at the members meetings inhibited the volunteers from contributing or even attending their own meeting. The

relationship between the full-time workers and the voluntary membership had deteriorated rapidly. The volunteers saw a thriving day-time organisation over which they had diminishing control. On the other hand, the workers saw the reticence of the volunteers as a sign of laziness or lack of commitment and resented having to continually take the initiative in any activity which involved volunteers. As a result the general and traditional function of FoE B'ham as an active pressure group had virtually disappeared. This tradition, on which FoE B'ham had been nurtured and which is characteristic of all local groups had stagnated. The organisation as a whole had no general aims, no sense of purpose or campaign zeal expected of a pressure group. Whilst individuals were committed to the movement, to particular campaigns or even simply to the lifestyle at the warehouse, it was as if the organisation as a whole was a floundering, aimless group.

This situation was aggravated by the development and characteristics of the full-time workers' Co-op. Essentially there had been polarisation into separate project groups. The Greensite Project was gaining momentum but at the

expense of most of the Co-op's energy and time. The urban ecologist's power was generally resented but challenges to his authority had so far had little effect. The intra-group atmosphere was so uncomfortable that the other workers took refuge in their own specific activities thereby denying any responsibility for the general well-being of the organisation. Team spirit in the Insulation Project was good, but at the expense of the Co-op as a whole, they had become rather exclusive. (cf. 92) The graphics artist, utterly confused by the complexity of FoE and the psychological pressures of working collectively had taken over the graphics studio and spent most of the time cleaning the warehouse, another worker was in retreat in mail order and I was bumbling around doing "general education".

In short, FoE was a discordant and fragmented organisation. A few of the longer-term employees and Co-op members were anxiously, albeit usually reluctantly, trying to maintain activities and traditions as the founders had developed them. In contrast, the influx of new workers were not keen on maintaining systems to which they had no loyalty and which often seemed pointless or passe. The general

areas of work like campaigning and education (as opposed to the practical projects) were openly acknowledged as the "grey area". For most workers this aspect of the work was important to maintain but it represented a nebulous, nagging area of responsibility which no-one knew how to tackle. The problem was compounded by the fact that the group was insufficiently cohesive; it was living off various interpretations of some inherited identity, it had not established an identity of its own. In consequence this new group as a whole had not established any structures or conventions through which to carry out corporate action of any description. There was a "new order" at FoE but it had not yet asserted itself hence the resentment of the "old order" and the present frustration.

(b) Attempting to initiate a co-ordinated education programme or indeed any form of concerted action in this situation was unrealistic. The first move must surely be to "put the house in order", thus for the time being at least I must abandon my mission to discuss education with the Co-op and turn my attention to FoE B'ham's corporate well-being.

(c) The organisation was more than ever in need of aims and objectives and a plan of action but the problem lay in how these could be developed. The obvious role I could take at this stage was to facilitate policy and planning discussion within the group. This conclusion was reached against a backcloth of failed attempts to facilitate discussion on education within the group; however I was not too pessimistic since in the first place the present situation was more relevant than education to everyone in the Co-op and secondly my understanding of the dynamics of the Co-op had increased making the choice of method easier. I concluded that whilst there might appear to be a good case for using one or more of the recognised facilitating techniques which have been used successfully in other settings such methods would be inappropriate in this particular group. Even a technique like Checkland's methodology(32a,b,c) (37) - seemingly ideally suited for use in a situation where aims and objectives are vague and open to negotiation - would not be appropriate in the Co-op. Insight into the dynamics of the Co-op pointed to a number of contra-indications to the use of any well-structured and relatively formal technique.

To cite a few examples: the co-operative ethic of "shared responsibility" made it difficult to adopt the role of 'facilitator'. I was expected to contribute to the debate as much as anyone else. The ethic of "equality" mitigated against the use of obvious, formalised management and social science techniques. Such action would assume or more importantly appear to assume, my superiority over the group, this would damage the trust I was aiming to build up between myself and the group by keeping a low profile as a researcher, working rather to be accepted as a colleague.

There were practical objections too. Unforeseen events and circumstances continually cropped up - key personnel left, the warehouse roof collapsed, a big demonstration took priority, arguments produced factions in the group or left ideas in limbo for weeks, months, even years, and the perennial problem of economic survival was always present. Such events could drastically and suddenly alter the priorities and character of the organisation and would hamper attempts to use a formalised discussion technique to its full potential. A second practical objection to facilitating techniques was

that the rigour of such techniques seemed incompatible with the characteristic mode of change and development in the Co-op. The output or achievements at FoE were unpredictable, spasmodic and dependant on individual personalities. This I concluded was in part due to the smallness of the organisation and the rapid turnover of personnel and partly due to the fact that FoE was a pressure group. As such, FoE consisted of people committed to a cause, this commitment provided the energy or dynamism of the group. Output therefore fluctuated in response to the enthusiasm felt by individuals or the group at any given time. To replace this modus operandi with a controlled rational approach would be tantamount to destroying the energy of the group.

One other significant practical obstacle which had to be taken into consideration at this stage stemmed from the co-operative principle of consensus decision-making. This put as much emphasis on means as on ends - if an end could not be produced through consensus then it was not worth pursuing for its own sake. This democratically pure mode of operation meant that the process of change in FoE tended to be slow, since change must evolve - spontaneously and

mutually within the group. The consequences of this for a "change agent" were pretty dire because what it meant in practice was that change could not be pre-planned or controlled from outside, or imposed on the group; rather it must emerge from the group dynamic itself. I concluded that this too would make the development of controlled, progressive programmes or plans unlikely.

In summary therefore I concluded that whilst I needed some means of facilitating group discussion to generate corporate aims and objectives it would be unwise to deny that the characteristics described above were important. The application of formalised facilitation techniques, however non-directive would, I felt, have little impact on the actual development of the organisation. Within a short space of time after any formal intervention the group would revert to its casual, ad hoc approach. Such intervention therefore would interfere with this strong co-operative dynamic; it would in effect be directive and seek to obliterate existing group processes which if ignored in turn, would obliterate any decisions or recommendations which had been produced. Where so much value was placed on non-alienating group

interaction the tools of social science would appear only to go through the motions of participation. The participation thus gained would be a sham compared to the level aspired to by the Co-op.

This is not to criticise such techniques per se, but to make the point that in this field situation their indiscriminate use would have been inappropriate to the extent of being counter productive. The nature and influence of the environmental factors were such that it was not feasible to "control" them to any effective degree. Instead the research would have to be developed around or in spite of these. In accordance with these conclusions my next action was directive intervention in the Co-op.

Phase 7 CAMPAIGN PLANNING

(i) Actions

Soon after the failed AGM I arranged a Co-op meeting to propose a solution to the impasse. At this meeting I suggested that the way out of the present situation in FoE was not to try and recapture the way things used to be but to take a new attitude to FoE B'ham. I argued that FoE B'ham could not expect to be "like other local groups" or "like the old days". The organisation was potentially much stronger than ever before but it was up to the full-time workers to realise this potential. Already comparative 'experts' in the organisation, the full-time workers should take the lead in motivating the voluntary members. The best way to do this would be to decide upon a number of specific, clearly defined activities in which the voluntary members could get involved. This would not only broaden FoE's scope beyond the practical projects, it would revitalise the voluntary, campaigning aspect of the organisation. I went on to give guidelines on how to run well-co-ordinated,

purposeful campaigns, from the existing projects (Fig. 3.3) This was essentially arguing that effective campaigns needed to be planned and controlled by the group. I later committed these ideas to paper which was circulated to the others in the Co-op (see "Education Paper 2" App. 1 (iii)).

(ii) Response

The other workers considered my arguments were reasonable. It would be an understatement to point out that I was absolutely delighted at their response since it was these same arguments for planning which had been persistently ignored on previous occasions. It was agreed that I could be usefully employed in helping to plan and monitor the chosen campaigns - using progress charts and other forms of feedback. Even more encouragingly, the Home Insulation Project (HIP) decided to pursue an ambition they had held for some months to run the national energy conservation campaign and that I could be involved in this from the start.

The extra-ordinary AGM in June was equally constructive and confirmed the feelings expressed at

Fig. 3.3 Campaign Planning

MODEL	EXAMPLE
Existing Project	Greensite Project
↓ Campaign	Urban Wildlife Campaign
↓ Main Goals	Preserve Habitats, Diversity, Participation in planning
↓ Strategic Options	Executive, Legislative, Specialist, Lay Public ...
↓ Strategic Choices	Lobby, Publicity, Set Example ...
↓ Targets	M.P.'s, Local Officers, Adults, Children, Teachers ...
↓ Tactics	Local publicity, Local action, minority report, education materials, publish survey ...

the Co-op meeting. The organisation was restructured so that there were fewer general meetings in the hope of making them more dynamic and essentially a "clearing house" through which voluntary members could move on to support the campaign groups of their choice. These were to be active campaigns on: energy conservation, lead in petrol, bicycles, material resources and nuclear power.

In practice, I adopted the role of "trainer" encouraging the group to interact constructively. (9) (45) (52) (61) (87) (111) (132) (151) (152) (157) (165) (170) Whilst the response to planning the energy conservation campaign within the HIP group was not rapturous, they did enter into the spirit of the exercise and we held three fairly constructive planning meetings. Decisions were made to run a national energy conservation conference; to edit a monthly national newsletter on the campaign and to carry out a national survey of local authority attitudes to the practice of energy conservation. In addition, at a more local level the group decided to start winding down their centralised practical project, replacing it with local satellite insulation projects from within the community itself. (See App.

3 (ii) (d) for details of planning the energy conservation campaign.)

After a few weeks it became obvious to the HIP group that it was unrealistic to try and co-ordinate the national campaign, particularly in the absence of any support or enthusiasm from the national office, FoE (UK). Gradually more and more time was devoted to the local aims (indeed from 1981 onwards a number of small, community-based projects were set up and funded by the group in order to replace the main project due to lose funding in May, 1983).

I pulled out of the energy conservation campaign after the national workshop had been held in September, 1980 because essentially I was superfluous. Clearly the group was happy with the decision to develop community projects so why push things further. A realistic objective had been set and the group was sufficiently experienced and capable of pursuing it. Thus my planning heuristics became unnecessary.

In more general terms, FoE had not become the dynamic campaigning organisation that had been envisaged at the Extra-ordinary General Meeting. The

brand new corporate image was never fully realised - of the campaign groups the anti-nuclear and bike groups continued to function more or less independantly of FoE, the resources group disintegrated and the lead group suffered from neglect for many months. The general meetings did not become report-back sessions and making them fortnightly meant even fewer voluntary members came because it was difficult to remember which week was "on" and which "off". (Exactly 12 months later, an extra-ordinary meeting was called to try to "save" the members' weekly meetings.) Thus in keeping with a natural group dynamic which appeared to have its own safety mechanisms FoE developed only within its own capacity to cope. The sparkling new campaigns created in July, 1980 each found a practicable level - some never got off the ground which indicated that the organisation could not maintain them so they were shed; they simply petered out. Similarly the HIP campaign evolved in a slow unforced informal fashion - at a pace in keeping with the time and energy available.

(iii) Conclusions

(a) Apart from the practical repercussions of my

actions, of particular significance was the fact that a planning discussion had taken place and policy decisions had been implemented. This marked a turning point in the development of the collective; it signalled the emergence of the "new order" at FoE. By June 1980 founder members had left and at the Extra-ordinary AGM the new workers had asserted themselves and made a public group statement. These decisions reflected that the workers had begun to feel jointly responsible for the future of the organisation. This being the case I concluded that my actions at this time had done nothing other than to nudge into action a level of awareness that was already emerging in the group. Thus the impact of my initiative lay in its timing, the constructive attitudes and actions of the collective were the result of an emerging group dynamic of which I was but a part. Likewise with the energy conservation campaign I had not been too proud to nudge the home insulation project when in terms of expertise I had little to offer. This acted as a catalyst enabling the group to define and achieve its own objectives by releasing itself from its inevitable self indulgence. Interestingly therefore my apparently directive action at this point had put me in the role of non-directive

change-agent.

(b) Also at this stage it appeared that my role as co-operator was beginning to pay off. My overwhelming albeit often reluctant, involvement in the daily affairs of the organisation appeared to have succeeded in establishing me as a colleague in the eyes of the others. The group came together because an element of trust had built up between all the members, including myself. This trust allowed me to introduce or suggest change without posing too much of a threat to the cohesion of the group. Moreover as one of the group I was aware that the time was ripe for intervention and I was better able to identify an appropriate means of stimulating group discussion at this stage - which in the event succeeded in achieving what it had set out to do.

(c) I became aware at this stage of my personal commitment to the organisation. During the first twelve months research I had come to appreciate how much of value FoE had to offer - to the environment, to education, to the community and last but not least to the people who worked there. I felt a loyalty towards FoE and was determined that it should not

collapse. FoE's corporate survival had been threatened and in consequence I felt the need to devise a corporate plan.

(d) The fact that the campaign planning for the energy conservation campaign only consisted of three meetings indicated to me the value of pragmatism in this sort of research. Clearly if an approach or method works in the field then it is sensible to use it but if that method becomes counter productive or inappropriate then it should be abandoned. Thus method is controlled pragmatically - if it works use it, if not, stop.

(e) My planning ideas had succeeded in gaining the interest of the group because they were expressed in terms which were familiar and relevant to the others. Exactly the same ideas were suggested in Education Paper 1 but this time they were interpreted in a familiar frame of reference - the language of campaigning. Planning had thus become relevant to the organisation since, after all, FoE was in the business of campaigning. If this was the main function of the group, then small wonder that my attempts to discuss the "nature of our message" and the "aims of our

education work" had fallen on deaf ears. The educational message was obvious to the others - it was the intricate arguments of the campaigns. Education thus becomes propaganda; it becomes a means whereby support is gained for the campaigns. Working for FoE meant being committed to an ideology, not challenging it. If this were so then the educational message became campaign dogma, the audience, potential supporters and the method, tactics. I concluded from this that to the other workers education in FoE was synonymous with campaigning and that therefore it may be unrealistic to pursue it as anything else.

Once again I was experiencing a conflict of interest, should I be developing campaigning or education and was there any difference between them as far as FoE was concerned. Clearly I alone wrestled with such dilemmas. Elsewhere in the warehouse the atmosphere was constructive and increasingly cohesive.

The practical projects were running well and had plans for the next 12 months. I was in effect redundant from the campaigning role and once again it seemed that everything in the warehouse was flourishing but education. If anything my actions over the previous few months had made the prospects

for a collective education project even more bleak. For all practical purposes, as far as education was concerned, I stood alone.

(f) The others showed interest and supported what I was doing but did not see that it was their role to be fully involved. Education was still my personal problem. I was exasperated and running out of steam!

It seemed that I had been working in, and researching FoE for over 12 months and still failed to understand what the organisation wanted in education and what role I should play within it. I felt that I had singularly failed to bring about any significant change in the education work at FoE. I was angry, but realised that it was preposterous to "blame" the organisation. Indeed I had failed to reach agreement with the group on education plans yet I had witnessed on many occasions during that first twelve months, planned collective activity within the group. I reasoned that if education was losing out then it must be due partly to the way I was handling the project. I decided therefore that the time was right for a re-appraisal of the project.

Phase 8 RE-APPRAISAL

(i) Actions

In order to become more receptive both to the organisation and to the education work, for the next few months I took a more passive role in the group, joining in rather than challenging or intervening. But also during this time I worked hard to clarify my own ideas on the education work and I carried out a broad literature survey and a series of interviews looking at environmental education in general.

I also wanted to re-appraise how this co-operative group really did function; to clarify my understanding of its culture - not some idealised understanding of the "Alternative Culture" but an appreciation of the group of people I was actually working with. Indeed to watch more carefully how the group operated, to identify the nuances of collective activity and in particular the processes of change and development in the collective. I needed explicit statements on the motives, attitudes and priorities of

the people in the group. So for six to nine months I made thorough field notes, paid closer attention to my diary, built up personnel profiles, noted successes and failures, monitored moods and activities, analysed group interaction and generally watched, listened and reflected.

Similarly I needed to step back from the day-to-day education work I had been doing so successfully over recent months in order to establish its nature, function and potential within the organisation. Now was the time to articulate what contribution, if any, FoE could make to the general field of environmental education.

I carried out extensive personal research into the general field of environmental education, spoke to local and national experts in the field, assessed existing provision in terms of its content and approach and surveyed opinion on the needs and gaps in present provision. (The fruits of this research can be found in App. 1 (v)).

(ii) Results

During this period I noticed that the workers' Co-op continued to stabilise and mature. The cohesive process which had emerged at the Extra-ordinary meeting in July, 1980 was gaining momentum and a core group was emerging which was becoming openly aware of its responsibility towards the survival of the organisation. It seemed that loyalty to FoE's ideals and to FoE Birmingham in particular was beginning to develop and be expressed in the words and deeds of the workers. Organising joint activities became easier and trust and reliability between the core workers was growing. Also during this period my ideas about the education work in FoE became more sophisticated and I began to identify the contribution which FoE could realistically make to environmental education. In short my depth of understanding about the organisation and about education increased enormously.

(iii) Conclusions

(a) Without the self-imposed pressure to bring about change, I began to appreciate the benefits of carrying out passive, non-interventionist research. Indeed such periods of apparent inactivity were not

negative, or a sign of stagnation, on the contrary they were a vital aspect of the overall research approach. They permitted an empathy for the field to develop which is denied by the more interventionist aspects of the research. Indeed I found the organisation altogether intriguing - it would have provided an excellent case study of the contemporary urban alternative movement. In particular I began to recognise the nature of the bureaucracy in FoE. This is based not only on necessity and efficiency but on trust. Trust develops between individuals in the collective through the development of shared meanings and values and from this the group works out rules for collective action. The structures which help make communication easier, which permit decision-making and facilitate change emerge as a result of the group dynamic and cannot therefore be imposed. (See App. 3 (ii) (c))

A consequence of this insight was the realisation that my approach to the project so far had been prescriptive or normative. For the first twelve months I repeatedly tried to organise or structure the situation in quite specific pre-conceived terms yet under the illusion that I was being non-directive

throughout. All the education initiatives during this time attempted to change how the organisation functioned.

On each attempt the education proposals appeared to be closer to meeting the needs of the organisation, but in fact each put the same basic argument in a different language. Each time the same case for planning was proposed but each time in language more relevant to the organisation. Thus Education Paper 1 spoke in educational language with "target audiences", "subject matter", "evaluation of learning" and so on. After a couple of months in FoE and with a clearer idea of the other priorities, these same ideas were interpreted in terms of practical projects underway in the organisation (Greensite Project); then even more rarified, in terms of FoE's campaigns (Education Paper 2).

As noted in Phase 6 the danger of taking a normative approach is that of making erroneous or invalid assumptions about the phenomena being studied. By imposing these ideas on the organisation I had fallen into the trap of masking important structural and dynamic features of the group. Clearly the

methods of participation I had used were at variance with the dominant mechanisms of planning and change which existed and which I had in fact already identified but repeatedly failed to accommodate in my approach to the project.

(b) Active research during this period served to re-affirm the need for education activities independent of campaigning. I became more confident in my analysis of the nature, function and potential of education in FoE; I now realised that it fulfilled a distinctive and important function which no other single activity in the organisation could do. Intuitively, I had always felt that education was essential to the identity and the long-term survival of the organisation but now I could articulate what it was that made education important:

(i) The Nature of Education in FoE B'ham

The distinctive characteristics of education in FoE B'ham stemmed from the nature of the organisation itself and the function it fulfilled in the wider social context. In the first place because of its environmentalist philosophy it took a wholistic

or systems approach to the subject matter - this was important because it meant no single aspect of the environment could be considered in isolation from other aspects but as part of an overall eco-system. Secondly because FoE was a pressure group set up to bring about change beneficial to the environment the emphasis in teaching about the environment was problem-orientated and more positively, change orientated. Thirdly, as a locally-based group FoE had to ensure that education was relevant at a community or grass-roots level therefore general issues of the environment were translated into local, personally relevant terms. Finally because FoE advocated the need to put principle into practice, education was practical and geared towards involving people in change. (A fuller exposition of the nature of education in FoE is given in App. 1 (iv) (B).)

(ii) The Function of Education in FoE

Briefly, the main difference between education and other activities at FoE was its broad perspective - it was concerned with all aspects of the environment not just those which happen to have been "taken up" by FoE at any given time. As such,

education provided the general framework to which the separate environmental topics could refer. Thus the function of education was to conceptually co-ordinate all other activities at FoE. Although the other projects reflected this general framework it was not their function to promote it. Their primary concern was to achieve quite specific, narrowly defined objectives.

Secondly, the education work provided a convenient and legitimate point of contact between the different projects within the warehouse because it had to continually cross specialist boundaries. This helped to give the organisation a corporate identity and counteracted the tendency towards polarisation into specialist groups. Its contact with the outside world enabled FoE to provide a broad-based information service of the sort expected of an environmentalist organisation. (See App. 1 (iv) (c))

Phase 9 EDUCATION PROJECTS

(i) Actions

By October, 1980 realising the value of education to the organisation I was determined to define and develop a specific education project. Thus in response to the news that government money was available for innovatory, community-based initiatives in education I devised a project which I felt captured FoE's unique approach to environmental education. A project application was made to the Department of the Environment and is presented in Appendix 1 (v); essentially the project was to co-ordinate the collation of information on the local Birmingham environment. This would be done through local teachers and community leaders thereby providing them with an immediate relevant focus for their own teaching as well as providing useful environmental information. Use was to be made of local media to co-ordinate the project. The conception and design of the project reflect what I understood to be the current priorities and emphases in the field of environmental education. (13) (14) (15) (25) (30) (46) (49) (64) (72) (75) (81) (123) (126) (146) (163) (180) (181).

Whilst waiting for the response to this project proposal, once again events in the field

intervened but this time clearly to the advantage of "Education". FoE (UK) had managed to get a 30 minute access T.V. slot (an "Open Door" programme on BBC 2) to mark the 10th Anniversary of the movement in Britain. It was felt that FoE Birmingham had much more visual information to offer because of the practical projects so FoE Birmingham agreed to make the programme. More specifically I, as education worker, and one other worker agreed to co-ordinate the script and programme content and liaise with the production team.

(ii) Results

These two events, so closely together, were extremely beneficial to my quest to set up an education project. Firstly, although the Department of the Environment proposal was commended, it failed to get a grant, however the initiative was far from a "failure" in so far as it indicated to the others in the Co-op that education could be defined and developed and that I was moving towards setting up a specific education project. In short it had the effect of making FoE acknowledge education; it boosted my status in the group and boosted my

confidence.

Immediately afterwards, the "Open Door" programme provided a wonderful opportunity for everyone at FoE to work together on an educational venture. (The BBC succeeded where I had failed.) In addition the programme itself was a simple but powerful demonstration of the link between all that was going on in FoE. To quote the co-worker on the programme: "The 'Open Door' programme really brought things together for me; it made me see the link between all we do." (Whilst this person had repeatably and openly for two years refused to help me in the general education work he has subsequently taken a job elsewhere in environmental education.) Furthermore for the first time all the separate activities at the warehouse were brought together. This was a great aid to "corporate identity" and was reinforced by the fact that this was a very public statement. The links were not only being acknowledged within the group itself but FoE Birmingham was telling the outside world about them. (cf. 93)

The programme was broadcast in February, 1981; it brought 2,000 enquiries and about £1,000 in

donations to FoE Birmingham. On balance it is fair to say that the programme was a success and a source of pride to everyone in FoE Birmingham at that time. The fact that such a small organisation could present such a coherent picture of environmental issues and offer ways in which these could be tackled had a timely impact on morale within FoE.

I capitalised on this atmosphere. I became relatively directive at Co-op meetings - at any opportunity I arranged for discussions on the development of FoE Birmingham. As a result there was a series of realistic group discussions about corporate identity and development. The first half of 1981 saw the group at its most constructive. Nearly everybody in the Co-op entered openly into the discussion of new projects. In addition the group excelled itself in terms of practical, collective achievements, organisational efficiency and interpersonal cohesion - working together on exhibitions, demonstrations and outings, sharing collective duties, making group decisions and so on.

An interesting indication of this cohesion was the rejection by the collective of the Greensite

Project. Throughout these discussions despite invitations to attend, the members of the Greensite Project were continually absent; this split within the organisation was discussed openly and it was agreed that FoE and the Greensite Project should part company as soon as was practicably possible.

Yet again unforeseen events influenced the field situation - this time in the form of a fire which gutted all the offices at FoE. Along with the fabric of the building all the project records, library, education resources and FoE's historical and financial records were lost. (It was at times like this that I was relieved that I had not based the development of the education work on anything so tangible as the resource base!) Significantly, rather than leading to the collapse of FoE after the initial despair, the fire served to increase the cohesion of the group and suddenly there was a strong and unified aim to rebuild FoE B'ham. In short the fire was a timely stimulus to the growing concern for the development of the organisation.

Although I stimulated planning meetings and encouraged individuals in the group to "think

development", the others in the Co-op were certainly receptive to new ideas. With my rapidly advancing ideas on education I was in a good position to propose that an education project should be developed. But things turned out better than anticipated - not only was it eventually agreed that I should develop a specific education project the whole group also agreed to follow up two further developments - funding for the satellite insulation projects, and a bike project to promote cycling facilities in the West Midlands.

Many other exciting ideas were also raised and discussed - it was as if the group had suddenly realised that they held the power over their own destiny.

(iii) Conclusions

I resolved to devise a means whereby education could be effectively channelled so that it might be of benefit to both the organisation and environmental education in general. In order to be viable I concluded that any specific developments in education would have to take account of numerous internal and external constraints; it would have to

fulfill the following criteria:

- (i) It had to capture FoE's approach to education.
- (ii) It had to fill a gap in the existing provisions in environmental education.
- (iii) It had to be self funding because of FoE's lack of financial resources and inability to raise sufficient money from other activities. Therefore it had to attract outside funding: this would be more likely for a clearly defined education project, producing specific results within a given time-span.
- (iv) It should be potentially income-generating in order to secure further development of the organisation. Thus the project needed to generate some marketable goods and/or services.
- (v) It must serve a co-ordinating function within the organisation therefore should try to encapsulate all the other activities at the

warehouse and interests of the movement as a whole.

(vi) Its operation must be compatible with the ideals of collective organisation.

Therefore it must gain both the support and involvement of the Co-op workers:

To gain support: the project must be seen to reflect the organisation's identity and culture; it must fulfill the collective's expectations of what should be done; it must be attractive enough to capture their imagination therefore must be glamorous, exciting and innovatory, as this boosts morale and gives personal and organisational prestige.

To get involvement: the project must allow for the fact that specialisation had already taken place therefore permit workers to contribute to at least parts of it; it must be relatively short-lived because of the rapid turnover of personnel and the short-term contracts of most of the other workers.

(b) It might appear that this sort of list could have drawn up early on in the project and have been

used to guide my research. However, many of the points in this list only became obvious as I slowly gained insight into the organisation and its work. Moreover the difference between a list like this at the beginning and one at the end of the research is that by the end of the project I had a good idea not only of which needs were potentially realisable but I had two year's work experience to draw on in being able to meet them. Moreover because I had been involved in the organisation for two years I had been able to nurture the trust of the others in the group and I had developed numerous intangible insights into the field such as "timing"; insights which can only develop from close, consistent contact with the field of the sort afforded by day to day experience. By this stage I knew that FoE needed new projects and more importantly wanted new projects and I knew they trusted and depended on me to provide one; in this sense therefore the time for an education project was right. Even if I had been in a position to make such clear proposals at the beginning of the project they would probably have been rejected; at this stage however the proposals were effective. Although it is not particularly worthwhile to speculate on what might have happened there was an interesting parallel in the

development of the Greensite Project which I believe demonstrates the point I have just made above.

The "Greensite Project", the other new project developed during this period, was more distinctive in many ways since in all practical senses it was an extremely successful project for such a small, poor organisation; it had a relatively big impact on the local community, received a lot of local and national publicity and expanded by 100% in terms of employees and practical conservation work in the first twelve months. However, it was imposed on the organisation in the summer of 1980, in an authoritarian fashion by the urban ecologist; it had been devised without consultation with the group and it was run along lines which blatantly contravened the rules of the co-operative culture, which time had allowed me to appreciate. The project was rejected first emotionally and latterly, legally and financially by the organisation. (Final proof that this project was rejected on ideological grounds lies in the fact that in early 1982 FoE began negotiations with a funding agency to set up a new urban ecology project - this time run along the "ideologically sound" lines originally intended.)

In short through research and experience which concentrated on the process of change as well as the product I had been able to develop a product which not only met the expressed needs of the organisation but which they felt belonged to them.

There was a place for innovation in the Co-op but it had taken time and experience to appreciate how it might be accommodated. The evolutionary democratic process of co-operation was incompatible with rapid and formal innovation, the Co-op's characteristic mode of operation was far too slow for putting new ideas into action since their momentum was likely to be lost. Instead, innovation required the foresight, determination and action of one or two people with one essential proviso - that such unilateral action had been sanctioned by the Co-op beforehand using the necessarily long-winded co-operative process. In the light of this new insight I felt no hesitation in developing an education project on the basis of the personal expertise in education I had acquired during the preceding 18 months.

Phase 10 THE BEEP VIDEO PROJECT

(i) Actions

From this point (about May, 1981) my task was relatively easy. At the request of the Co-op I set about devising and implementing an education project. The content of the project was beginning to take shape but the practicalities still had to be worked out. Over the next six months I consulted frequently with the others about the content of the project, about their contribution to it, about negotiations with funding agencies and so on.

(ii) Results

By October 1981 I had devised the "BEEP Video Project", funding had been secured and the candidates for the three jobs created by the project were being interviewed.

The "BEEP Video Project" was set up to produce two multi-media education packs (including video tapes) - one looking at Energy Conservation, the other at Nature Conservation. The emphasis of the

packs was to highlight the sort of initiatives being taken by local communities to improve their environment. The videos were to give inspiration and practical advice whilst supporting material in the pack would provide more detailed information, teaching aids and discussion of the wider issues. Appendix 1 (vi) gives full details of the project.

The project brief was not written with the intention of putting a straight-jacket on the people who were employed on the project. Indeed if the potential of the project was to be realised then it would be up to those involved to develop the video work in the most effective direction. Rather, the brief was intended to give a structure and a purpose to the education work in FoE which I never enjoyed. Moreover, my research and experience had led me to conclude that this particular project would fill a gap in the existing provision in environmental education today.

The BEEP Video Project ran successfully from February, 1982 to 1983 - at which point it received yet another 12 months funding to produce another video pack on pollution.

Whilst I had been developing the video project the HIP satellite projects secured funds and were gradually launched throughout 1982 and 1983; the Bike project started in October, 1982 and a number of other specific initiatives were launched - in particular trading activities expanded to fill the gap left at the demise of the national trading company in September, 1982.

(iii) Conclusions

(a) My much coveted ambition - an education project - had finally been achieved. The final product was all the brief had expected it to be in so far as it brought together "all other workers at FoE", it depended on contact with "significant people and organisations" outside FoE, especially the local community. It was broad in scope and had good potential beyond its initial 12 months. Pleased as I was at the successful implementation of the video project I realised that the achievement of the research was not this nor any of the other new projects; but rather the achievement lay in the fact that the projects were defined and agreed at all. For

this particular organisation to reach such a level of awareness and control was no mean feat. I did not claim the credit since the core group at the warehouse had evolved and matured together. However I was intrigued by the research role that I had been obliged to take in order to make best use of this. In particular I applauded my tenacity and I now acknowledged that this, along with other intangibles such as chance, pragmatism and opportunism had played as important a role as design in this research. Indeed the video project had emerged out of a series of thwarted attempts on my part to define and develop education in FoE. It was not the product of a well planned research project, on the contrary the research period had been punctuated by circumstantial obstacles, frequent unexpected changes in approach and direction and a fair amount of anxiety. The means to the end had not been quite as straightforward as I had envisaged in October 1979 but it had certainly taught me a lot and suggested that my story may contain lessons of value to other action researchers. Hence Chapter 4 examines in more detail the methodological implications of this practical achievement.

CHAPTER 4

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DISCUSSION: THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

Summary

- (i) Introduction
- (ii) Action Research vs. Pure and Applied Research
- (iii) The Role of Experience
- (iv) The Role of Applied Research
- (v) A Model of the Action Research Process
- (vi) Methodological Reflections on the Action Research Process

SUMMARY

Chapter 4 examines the means whereby the present project brief was fulfilled and in so doing raised a number of methodological points and presents a model of the action research process. It is argued here that action research requires the insights of an experienced practitioner to be combined with the rigours of controlled, systematic enquiry. The former permits depth of analysis in a relatively short space of time; the latter imposes controls on personal experience and allows this to evolve into publically verifiable models. In effect this makes action research an accelerated version of the overall process of scientific advancement - bearing in mind that the understanding acquired is specific to a unique field situation.

(i) Introduction

Whilst carrying out this project I was acutely aware that I was "dipping into" all sorts of research methods and approaches yet often felt that there must be a "correct" way of doing the research. I was confused by the apparently frequent changes in the purpose and direction of the project and I felt that I was involved too much in the day to day practicalities of the organisation. At the time these thoughts provoked anxiety and cause me to underrate or dismiss much of what I was doing as "preliminary" in some way to the "project" which was sure to emerge clearly at some point. In retrospect I recognise these "problems" as inevitable characteristics of action research. The research process recorded in Chapter 3 seemed haphazard at the time and looks so in retrospect. One can only conclude therefore that action research is fraught with circumstantial obstacles, radical changes in approach, understanding and direction and a fair amount of anxiety.

Clark (35) succinctly lists the main characteristics of action research thus:

Action research does not have a clear constant purpose, it is tentative, non-committal and adaptive; there is not a logical development of steps, the action researcher focusses only on the next stage; the present situation is not perceived in the context of the final outcome, but rather the future is evolved out of emerging opportunities; the interpretation of the present does not depend on knowing the answer to ultimate questions, rather it is interpreted as a basis for asking questions; action research does not focus on a limited range of factors, but attempts to comprehend a wide range of factors in a dynamic relationship (35).

Whilst these characteristics aptly describe the present research I would like to go beyond these generalisations and analyse the methods I used in more details.

Chapter 2 lists a number of methodological constraints imposed by the need to bring about particular change in the field. In particular the need for methods which assess a wide range of different sorts of information, which permit

intervention as well as data collection and which facilitate interaction between myself as researcher and the organisation as client. In practice these research demands were met by the use of two quite distinct forms of research - applied research and experience. Whilst these two types of research were described separately in Chapter 2, it was noted that their interaction and combination into a unified research process could best be discussed in the light of the case study presented in Chapter 3. The purpose of this chapter therefore is to show how these two approaches interact to produce the overall action research process. Section (ii) below describes how the purpose of action research can be differentiated from other forms of research; Sections (iii) and (iv) clarify the contribution to this research effort made by experience and applied research respectively; Section (v) starts by presenting a model of the action research process and goes on to show how this operates in practice, with particular reference to the present project and Section (vi) concludes the chapter by examining some of the methodological implications of the model.

(ii) Action Research vs. Pure and Applied Research

Most research aims, through a process of controlled observation, either in the laboratory or the field, to develop generalised models of phenomena in the physical or social world (124). Progress is made largely through extending current views/models to make experimental verification or prediction possible. Through this process many ideas and models are developed which may be used or applied elsewhere. Indeed applied research makes use of these general models/laws/methods to solve 'practical' problems (26). In the absence of alternative information such generalised knowledge may be the best that is available. The efficacy of applied research depends on the goodness of fit of the models available.

Action research can be differentiated from conventional pure or applied research in terms of its purpose. In order to effect practical change in a social situation action research seeks not to generate models which are universally relevant but one which is unique to the particular situation for which the research is carried out. In action research approximate models cannot be tolerated, an appropriate model of the situation must be generated if the

research is to effect change. The action research model needs to be broad-based, accounting not only for the definition of the change to be brought about but also for the working of the system in which the change is to take place. That is to say the researcher needs both a "product model" and a "system model"; the former enables the research to identify the practical needs of the client/field; the latter provides the capability to make predictions and carry out effective actions in the field. In practical terms the researcher has to be aware of such things as preferences of individuals in the system; has to acquire accurate clarification of the client's needs; has to identify the material and non-material constraints on change and has to develop an adequate working knowledge of the product change.

Having to take such factors into consideration means the researcher must generate a comprehensive description of the entire field situation and develop a model of the project which is flexible in so far that all the relevant factors cannot be predicted before the research has been done. For example, research into the needs of the client may reveal that the research goal changes during the

course of the research. In the light of the information from the field, the initial problem outlined in the project brief may not be the problem which is eventually tackled at the practical level. In reality action research has to accommodate an evolving definition of the problem. This point has been stressed before in the literature on problem solving in organisations (32a) (35) (56). Unlike most other pure and applied research carried out in response to a political/social decision which broadly outlines the purpose, parameters and end-point of the research, in action research such decisions come about as a result of the research itself.

Much of the descriptive detail and flexibility required for this purpose is acquired by people of wide and long experience in the field. Indeed an experienced practitioner, working within a system, is ideally suited to introduce change since s/he is aware of the needs and likely directions for change yet appreciates the various constraints on it at any given moment.

(iii) The Role of Experience

In any profession, be it management, law, medicine or whatever it is acknowledged that in order to function effectively in the field practical experience is essential; so much so that most professional bodies insist on a period of post qualification experience before a person can 'trade' in that profession. When talking about effecting change in the social world the emphasis moves away from text book principles towards the less predictable milieu of practical application (5) (35) (39a). It is necessary therefore that in action research there is some means of gaining such experience, some means of generating the breadth of knowledge available to persons in the field or system concerned.

In the absence of the more usual time span available to the practitioner the method of participant-observation has proved extremely useful. As explained in Chapter 2 this method collects data about the field by becoming closely involved in it; the rationale being that through identification with the field/system being studied, the researcher is able to gain greater insight into it. Weiss stresses the importance of qualitative data in holistic research of this sort:

"Qualitative data are apt to be superior to quantitative data in density of information, vividness and clarity of meaning - characteristics more important in wholistic work, than precision and repeatability" (190).

There is considerable debate as to the extent or depth of participation which actually occurs in such research (122) (150) (183), as well as ethical debates about the level of deceit often, although not always (69), required in covert research of this sort (187 a,b,c) (197). Such issues are relevant to the present research but rather than cover ground which has been well covered elsewhere I would like simply to acknowledge these points and concentrate on the role which participation can play in action research.

In the present project participation was achieved through direct involvement as a FoE member, a Co-Op member and the education worker. Through these roles I was able to identify with the field and acquire the insight of a practitioner. Such participation was particularly important in the

education work since there were no other experienced education practitioners in the field. As noted in Chapter 2 the knowledge generated by experience included a wealth of relevant "technical" detail, related factual detail and a buzz of other descriptive information on the less tangible aspects of the field (such as group dynamics, interpersonal alliances, changing priorities and so on). As witnessed in Chapter 3, involvement in these functions in the organisation made the acquisition of fleeting, co-incidental information unavoidable.

The value of "informal" knowledge of this sort has long been acknowledged as important in the advancement of understanding (21) (68) (124) (186) but more than that, such information was vital to the successful implementation of change. For example, it would have been extremely unlikely that I could have kept abreast of practical and interpersonal developments in the organisation had I not regularly participated in the Co-op meetings, been around at meal times, and been generally and informally involved in the daily life of the group. Particularly important in this respect was that by acknowledging experience as a bona fide source of information I was

able to include in the body of experience the effect of my own research activities within the field. That is to say, the research effort itself was useful experience; for instance I could note the reaction of people in the field to research intervention. This point is expanded in Section (v), where it is argued that the experience of doing research enabled the project to develop and proceed.

Furthermore, through such close contact, trust built up between myself and the group. The importance of the researcher-client dynamics of this sort cannot be overstressed and have long been recognised (34) (84) (120) (175); to quote Whyte on his own research experience:

"I found that my acceptance in the district depended more on the personal relationships I developed than upon any explanation I might give. Whether it was a good thing to write a book about Cornerville depended entirely on people's opinions of me personally. If I was alright then my project was alright; if I was no good then no amount of explanation could convince them that the book was a good idea."

(192)

Indeed, trust between the members of the Co-op proved to be an essential pre-requisite for the implementation of change at FoE.

The knowledge gained through experience is largely personal and uncontrolled. It is verified by frequent usage in non-controlled situations - practical success or failure of an action or idea providing an increase in the body of experience. Thus experience becomes valid in so far as it stands the test of time. Experience is pragmatically-oriented and in consequence tends to be uncritical of the field. This has advantages and disadvantages.

On the positive side a model or body of knowledge based on experience is highly sensitive to the field; the acquisition of experience is a flexible process adapting quickly to changes in the field. Experience speeds up the researcher's understanding of the field, indeed it would be impossible to generate such a wealth of information sufficiently quickly by the more usual controlled methods of data collection. This is partly because of

the sheer breadth of information available and partly because some of the information would be difficult to access in any formal sense (e.g. a sense of timing) and finally because formalised methods are more cumbersome so less able to keep up with an ever changing field situation - each change would invalidate previously established knowledge.

On the negative side, whilst the experienced practitioner may have deep insight into the field much of the knowledge on which it is based is unsubstantiated and poorly articulated since experience is personal and not subject to the rigours of independent verification. This has two consequences. Firstly whilst a practitioner may well succeed in bringing about change in the field s/he would not necessarily be able to reliably identify the reasons for this success because of the implicit nature of his/her experience. Secondly there is no control over the validity of the practitioners' assumptions about the field. Indeed as a participant in the system s/he is less likely to be critical of it so there is no reason why his/her model of the field is any more 'correct' or accurate than anyone else's or that of an independent observer.

So whilst the action researcher, through participation, may become a relatively experienced practitioner the knowledge so gained is largely personal and private and cannot be the basis of an activity called research. The purpose of any research is to share knowledge, to build "public" models which can be tested and modified by subsequent researchers. Likewise the product of action research should be public; more precisely the client/relevant people in the field need access to the product of the research so that it can be discussed, verified or validated and implemented. There needs to be some form of control over the output of the research, therefore in addition to direct experience there should be some means of expressing clearly articulated, explicit or public models of the research. In contrast to the close identification with the field, engendered through experience, the researcher must also adopt the role of dispassionate observer. Hence the need for applied research.

(iv) The Role of Applied Research

In order to carry out dispassionate or

objective research the researcher studies the field in terms of an explicit model which determines what it is valid to observe. Applied research therefore involves a process of deduction in which a specific situation is interpreted in terms of a general model. As will be show in Section (v), in the early stages of action research the models are taken "off the shelf" having been developed through similar projects elsewhere but later they rely more on the body of knowledge generated by the research itself. Compared to private, often covert experiential research, applied research is overt and generates information which is explicit and potentially verifiable. A number of research methods have been developed for use in the field including methods specifically for use in management. By making use of any such method the researcher is determining what constitutes useful/valid information.

Chapter 2 lists the various generalised methods of data collection and intervention applied in this project. Much of the data in action research lends itself to formal, quantitative methods. In this project this was the most efficient way of gathering data on financial constraints, materials on the

market, environmental phenomena and so on. For the more negotiable and qualitative information, such as clients' or experts' opinions, the "softer" (32a) techniques were more appropriate - hence the use of open interviews, repertory grid and the Delphin technique. These softer techniques tending to function more as a form of intervention in the system than as a means of data collection since they demand much greater participation on the part of the client.

The major significance of this more formalised and traditional approach is that it establishes a level of independence over the research findings. Furthermore it permits control, particularly client control, over the research since the overt/public findings or activities can provide a basis for discussion with the client. However, there is a limit in the value of information generated by formalised techniques - be they in the positivist tradition typified by many of the classic management science techniques, e.g. (3) (13) (26) (112) (116) (149) or the softer phenomenological tradition (150) typified by more recent methodological developments, e.g. (6) (32 a,b,c) (45) (53) (55) (111) (120) (170a) (171). The main limitation in applying general or

"off the shelf" techniques and models in action research arises from the degree of control which they require. This not only forces the field into a predetermined mould but generates information which represents only part of the field at a given point in time. Or as Mintzberg (128) describes it, "a slice of understanding".

"Systematic does not mean detached. Probably the greatest impediment to theory building in the study of organisations has been research that violates the organisation, that forces it into abstract categories that have nothing to do with how it functions. My favourite analogy is of an organisation rich in flows and processes kind of like a marble cake. Then along comes a researcher with a machine like those used to slice bread. In goes the organisation and out come cross-sectional slices. The researcher then holds up one of them and tries to figure out what he or she is seeing." (128)

Indeed the application of generalised models be they from elsewhere or from the research itself,

met with limited success in the present project. For example, the case history shows how many of the non-directive facilitating techniques, designed for group discussion and policy-making, made assumptions about the organisation which did not hold true. Many of the controlled methods available to aid this process depend for their success on a clear client and organisational hierarchy or structure through which to operate. In the FoE Co-op there were no clearly established channels through which to operate; furthermore the principle of consensus meant that change had to be accepted by every individual in the group - this took longer than most methods of decision-making allow. Even the apparently non-directive, participatory techniques forced the group to communicate/operate in a prescribed, atypical fashion. Following every instance of formal intervention in the dynamics of the group the natural dynamic soon re-emerged and overwhelmed any changes which had been imposed on it. In short these generally accepted and methodologically respectable methods were unsuitable for use in this collective organisation. Such methods therefore are not as generalised as they claim to be.

Misrepresentation of the field and the problem of hidden research assumptions are important methodological issues. The seminal work of Mayo (121), which uncovered the informal power networks operating within an ostensibly formal hierarchy, has stimulated a debate which continues today, e.g. (2a) (39b) (56) (71) (89) (90) (113) (125) (195). If this is an interesting methodological issue then it is crucial to action research since if the researcher fails appreciate the field accurately the chance of implementing change, particularly in the long term, is greatly reduced. Weick (189) uses a neat contrast to demonstrate the futility of believing there can be an ideal approach to the implementation of change: he points out that whilst some organisations might benefit from more structure, or as he puts it "freezing", in order to bring about change, other organisations, in particular those with rigid structures, would need to be encouraged to abandon structures or "unfreeze", if change is to take place. The action required cannot be prescribed until the researcher has developed an appropriate and specific model of the system in which change is to take place. By relying solely on applied research the action researcher runs the risk of

misrepresenting/misinterpreting the field.

The relevance of the general debate on this issue for action research is primarily that it highlights the risk. Indeed, in view of the constraints of control outlined earlier in this section, one would expect to misrepresent the field. One cannot avoid research assumptions but can acknowledge them. With this attitude it does not matter if a method fails in the field, on the contrary, in action research the experience of such failures is instrumental in allowing the researcher to refine an even more appropriate understanding of the field. As will be shown in the next section, combined with experience, applied research makes a useful contribution to the vital process of problem solving in action research.

In conclusion, if generalised methods/models/knowledge is to be of any value in action research it must be tested and interpreted within the context of the field situation. In action research one needs to clothe general models in particulars, it is not practicable to work with the generalisations alone as these are not the focus in

research aimed at bringing about actual change in a highly specific situation. Thus the function of formal or generalised models in action research is to contribute towards the development of an explicit model which is sufficiently specific and practicable to act as a basis for the implementation of change. The next section will explain how this model is developed in practice.

(v) A Model of the Action Research Process

So far it has been suggested that a data base develops which consists of discrete, public information generated from applied research with a wealth of other information derived from experience. By carrying out these two approaches concurrently they enter into a dynamic relationship which enables the research to proceed. In effect what happens is that from this data, through a process of induction, the researcher formulates a model of the project/problem. Because of the range of data on which it is based the project model is part public and part private and it incorporates information on both the product and process of change. The model is then applied to the field in so far as it serves as a basis for action

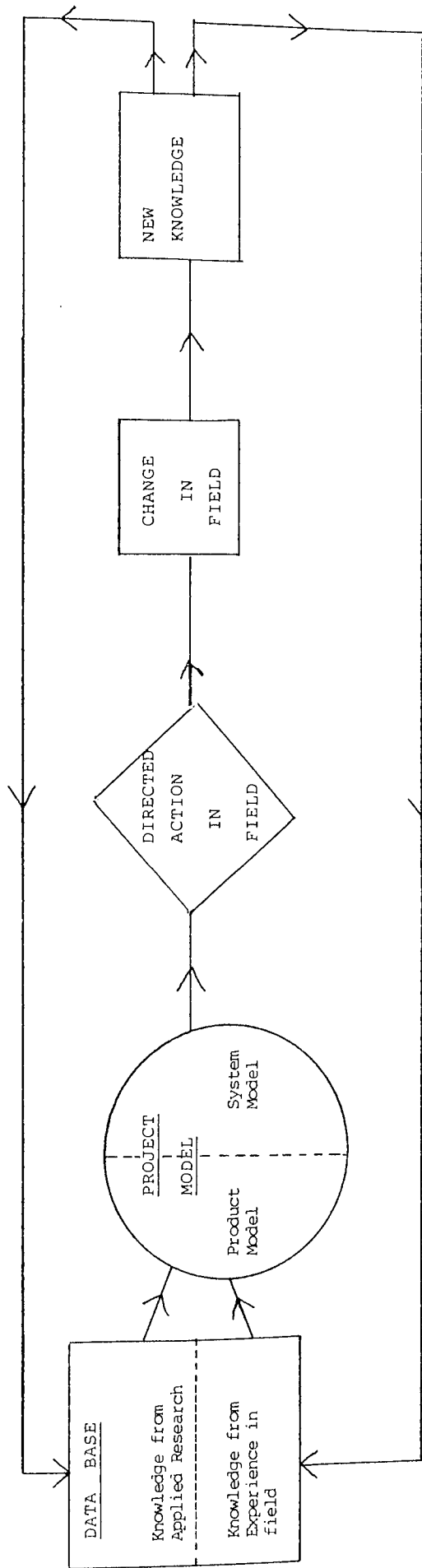
and/or intervention in the field. As this procedure of model formulation and application is repeated over time there is a gradual refinement of the project model. It develops in a mutually agreeable direction because of the interplay between applied research and experience. From the point of view of the client the project model becomes more appropriate because if it fails to predict the response of the field the researcher notes the reasons for its failure and adjusts the model in the light of this experience. From the point of view of the researcher the project model maintains independence or avoids total compliance to the field by assessing the field in terms of the model. On the one hand experience is emphasized, making the researcher sensitive to the actual field situation and on the other control is emphasized, making the researcher sensitive to the potential situation. In addition to changing the project model, action by the researcher brings about change in the field itself. As the model on which action is based improves the effect of repeated actions is to nudge the field towards some mutually agreeable direction. The point at which intervention ceases is a matter of mutual agreement.

This brief outline of the action research process is illustrated in Figure 4.1. In the rest of this section I will explain and justify the model in more detail using examples from the present project.

Although the model just described was developed in the light of a single project it is hoped that the ensuing discussion contains points of relevance to action researchers in other settings tackling different practical problems.

As already stated, information was collected in two ways - informally through direct experience in the field and more formally using methods from disciplines such as psychology and sociology. These two approaches however were not clearly separated in practice. When my research was ostensibly formal and controlled it generated both formal and informal information. For example, when using the repertory grid technique to clarify the nature of FoE's educational message I was also aware of the subject's response to the repertory grid procedure. However it was this response which prompted me to abandon the procedure since it appeared to be alienating me from the client (cf. 135). This illustrates the

Fig 4.1 A model of the Action Research Process



relationship between formal and informal processes in the research - whilst formal processes were involved in an explicit definition of the project it was the informal processes through which this was judged. To quote Mintzberg on this point:

"more and more we feel the need to be on site, and to be there long enough to be able to understand what is going on.....
for while systematic data create the foundation for our theories, it is the anecdotal data that enable us to do the building. Theory building seems to require rich description, the richness that comes from anecdote. We uncover all kinds of relationships in our "hard" data, but it is only through the use of this "soft" data that we are able to "explain" them, and explanation is, of course the purpose of research. I believe that the researcher who never goes near the water, who collects quantitative data from a distance without anecdote to support them, will always have difficulty explaining

interesting relationships (although he may uncover them). Perhaps this has something to do with how our minds work. These creative leaps seem to come from our sub-conscious mental processes, our intuition And intuition apparently requires the "sense" of things - how they feel, smell, "seem". We need to be "in touch". Increasingly in our research, we are impressed by the importance of phenomena that cannot be measured - by the impact of an organisation's history and ideology on its current strategy, by the role that personality and intuition play in decision making. To miss this in research is to miss the very life blood of the organisation. And missed it is in research that, by its very design precludes the collection of anecdotal information". (128)

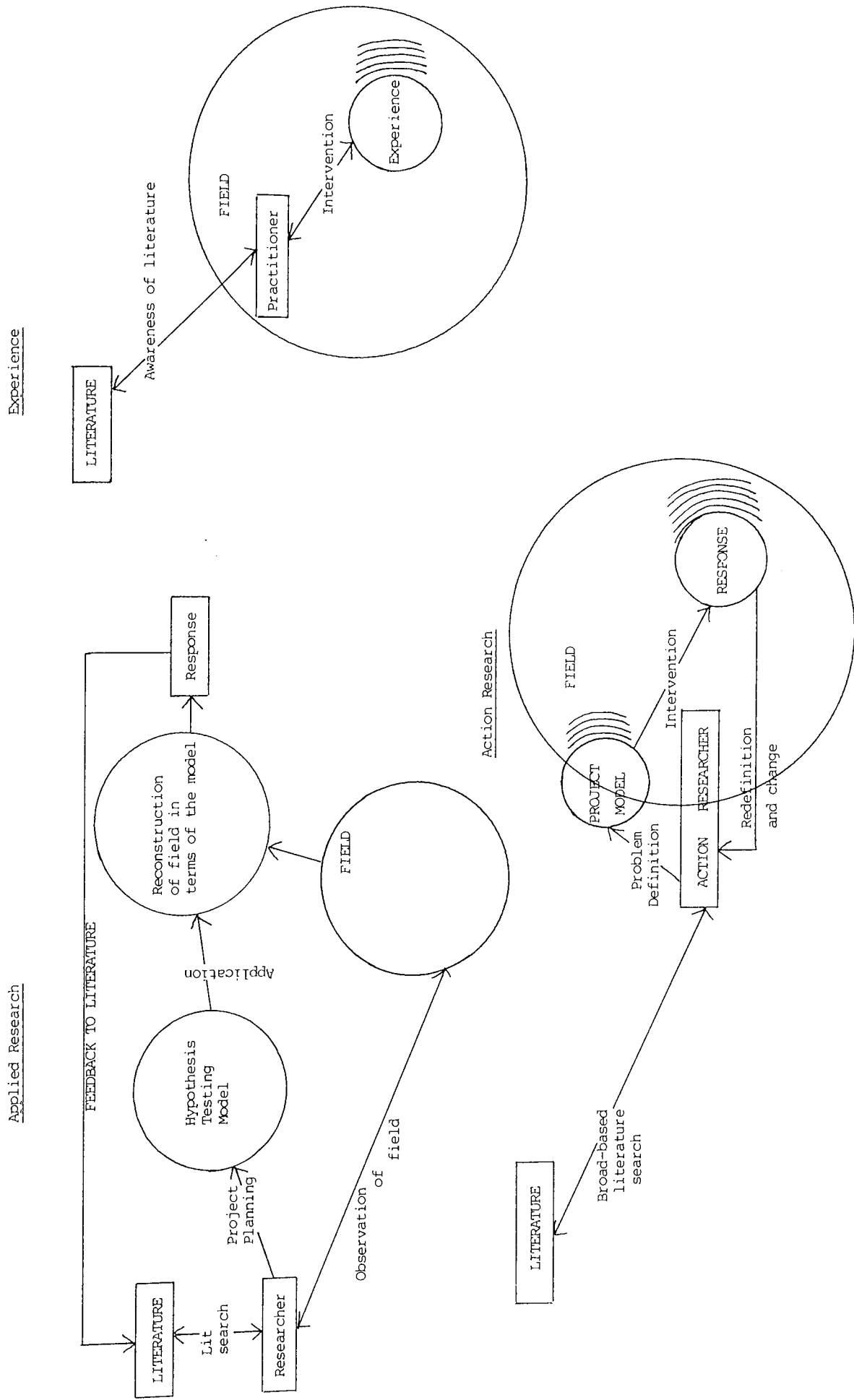
In action research the interaction between applied research and experience is crucial to the process of model development. Carried out concurrently the two approaches produce a dynamic,

mutually critical relationship in which formal research highlights short comings in the field whilst informal research notices short comings in the formal analysis. On their own neither approach can be critical of itself so the stimulus for model development would be absent.

This interplay between formal and informal research activities enables the research not merely to progress but to do so in a direction controlled partly by the researcher and partly by the client. This is because the relationship between the researcher and the field in formal/applied research is different to the relationship needed for experience. In the former the researcher aims for independence in the latter, identification. The relationship of the researcher to the field in these two approaches was illustrated in Chapter 2; these figures can now be amalgamated into a single illustration (Fig. 4.2) which shows that understanding in action research derives partly from identification with the field and partly from independent analysis:

Applied research is essentially an expert-centred approach in so far as the research is

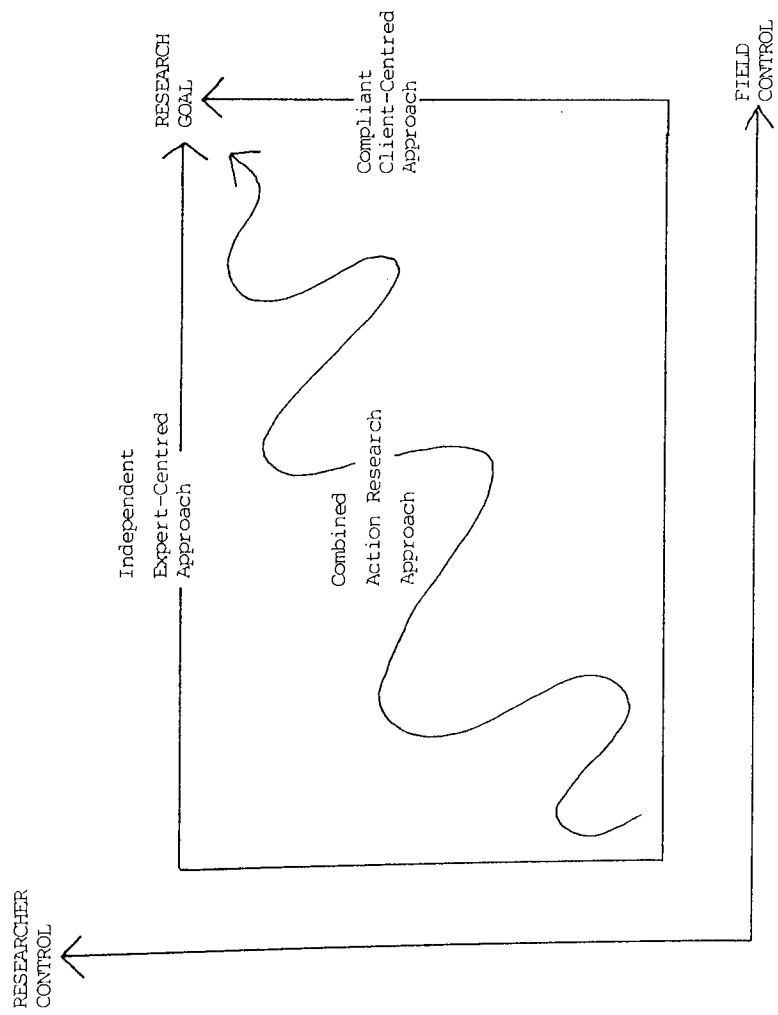
Fig. 4.2 The Amalgamation of Applied Research and Experience into Action Research



never out of the researcher's control. As already explained the risks of trying to bring about change by such means are that whilst the applied researcher may indeed recommend beneficial change this may well be rejected by the field who has essentially been excluded from the problem definition. Experience on the other hand represents a client-centred approach where the change agent, as a part of the system, is less critical of it. The risks of this approach being that many if not all of the assumptions of a change model may go unchallenged thus leading to change which may be inadequate in some way. Combination of the two approaches reduces these risks. The three modes of bringing about change are contrasted in Figure 4.3.

A particularly difficult aspect of action research lies in trying to balance the subjectivity and sensitivity of participation with the objectivity and independence of observation. By having to adopt two roles - sensitive participant and independent/critical observer - the researcher has a conflict of loyalties. This basic dilemma of participant-observation has been discussed extensively in the ethnomethodological literature (8) (29) (83) (183). Primarily the debate focusses on means of

Fig. 4.3 The Relationship to the Field in Independent
Combined and Compliant Approaches



combining formal and informal research processes and a number of methodological frameworks have been developed to this end. (24) (128) (168) (179) (186a)

The purpose of ethnography is to describe a culture/social situation in great detail and induce a general model from this single description. Given that a comprehensive understanding of the field is needed in action research and ethnographic methods are a particularly effective means of achieving this, much of this debate is relevant. However, the methodological frameworks whilst helpful, do not go far enough since action research has more demands than ethnography. The aim is not only to understand a field situation sufficiently to generate a model of it but also to bring about change within the field. The action researcher has to use the model as a source of information and as a basis for going on to design change. That is to say, in addition to the inductive process of model building the researcher, through a process of deduction articulates proposals for change based on this model and introduces them into the field. (It is interesting to note that these two processes - induction/synthesis and deduction/analysis - reflect the respective functions of the two cerebral

hemispheres - the right hemisphere concerned with global and patterned tasks such as imagination and space perception, the left hemisphere with verbal and analytic tasks (172).)

The model presented here (Fig. 4.1) accommodates both induction and deduction and because of this it functions to resolve the participant-observation dilemma. The model shows that through a process of induction a model of the project is formulated. Through a process of deduction the model is then imposed on the field by means of intervention; this in effect serves to test the model. Because the model was created out of knowledge from both applied/independent research and experience/compliant research the intervention will test and increase both forms of knowledge.

Reference to the present project illustrates how this cycle of induction and deduction works in practice. Moreover it also shows that throughout this cycle the model of the project is gradually designed.

At the start of the research my understanding of the project was crude. It was based on knowledge

generalised from the literature on education and the environment and influenced by my background in psychology, anthropology and management science. At the beginning therefore the direction of the research was fairly arbitrary and research activities were determined largely by common sense. After two months of data collection through a process of induction I formulated a definition/model of the project. Reasonably confident in my definition or understanding of the field situation I deduced a means of effecting beneficial change and approached the client with a set of proposals for change. (See Education Paper 1. Appendix I (ii))

The client's response to my intervention was unexpectedly negative but in retrospect it can be seen that this response forced me to examine my definition of the project. To be more precise, at that stage it forced me to examine my relatively implicit assumptions about the dynamics of the organisation. This re-examination of my model of the project in effect started a design process which continued throughout the research period. Subsequent initiatives or intervention in the system and observation of the group's response resulted in a

gradual refinement in the definition of the project. In this sense therefore, action initiatives which did not elicit the desired or expected response were not failures but design prototypes; the information gained from the response serving to eliminate practical possibilities. Thus in this research "negative evidence" (110) was used constructively to guide the research in an appropriate direction. Indeed in practical terms the present research can be characterised as a series of thwarted attempts on my part to define and develop education in FoE. Repeated interventions in the field bridged the gap between theory and practice, between idea and implementation.

The action research process functions to ensure that the direction of the research becomes less arbitrary. The research proceeds by selecting and rejecting options to narrow down an amorphous collection of ideas into a clearly identifiable, justifiable and acceptable course of action.

An important practical consequence of intervention by the researcher is that it automatically changes the field/system in some way. One clear example of this at work was the effect of my

presentation of Education Paper 2. Not only did the response to this intervention support my interpretation of FoE as a leaderless, aimless group but in addition it served to prompt the group to restructure itself so that it could work towards specific campaign ends. Depending on the nature of the action the effect or change could take place at different levels in the system - for example, it may have produced a change in some small, immediate practical operation or at a much broader policy and planning level. To take an example, at one level I re-organised the existing education duties at FoE and at another level I intervened to encourage policy decisions on education.

Intervention or directed action on my part was stimulated by my current model of the project therefore the level at which I intervened depended on my understanding of the field situation at a given time. This point is important since the implementation of change is unlikely if the change expected is at an inappropriate level within the field - as witnessed by the scores of failed attempts to discuss education policy with the group. Also witnessed by the rejection of the Greensite Project, which had been

imposed inappropriately and prematurely on the organisation. Harrison (80) has identified two criteria which can be used to determine the appropriate level - firstly he suggests intervention in a system should be no deeper than that needed to solve the problems in hand and secondly at a level that does not require a greater amount of energy and resources than are available in the system at that time. See also Espejo (58) who argues that systems have inbuilt safety mechanisms which act to prevent them from operating beyond their limits.

In the present project whilst it may have been desirable to intervene at the planning level within FoE, it was not possible to achieve this straight away. The Co-op needed time to gradually assimilate my ideas and I needed time to develop an adequate degree of understanding about the co-operative system. Thus whilst I started seeking policy decisions in October, 1979, one finally emerged in May, 1981. There is no "Eureka" experience in action research since the researcher essentially is having to monitor an ever changing field situation. Any social system is dynamic of its own accord but in addition change will have occurred as a result of

previous intervention. The researcher can never accurately predict the response of the field and would be unrealistic in expecting to do so. To quote Ocquist:

"Action Research is the production of knowledge to guide practice, with the modification of a given reality occurring as part of the research process itself. Within action research, knowledge is produced and reality modified simultaneously; each occurring due to the other." (139)

Thus unlike more conventional scientific enquiry, the model building process in action research is not concerned with precision but rather permits the researcher to "feel the way" and to adapt the research in accordance with the state of the field. Model development in action research is pragmatic, as Clark (35) says, the research develops "out of emerging opportunities". In this situation the main stimulus for re-design to the project model is failure to implement the change or recommendations based on it: refinement of the project model is as much a consequence of failure as a deliberate research strategy. Indeed in the present project it was often

only following intervention, failed or otherwise, in the field that I actually became aware of the assumptions or model I had been using. In these instances therefore, implementation clarified the design. Weick (189) goes further and suggests that design can be created by implementation:

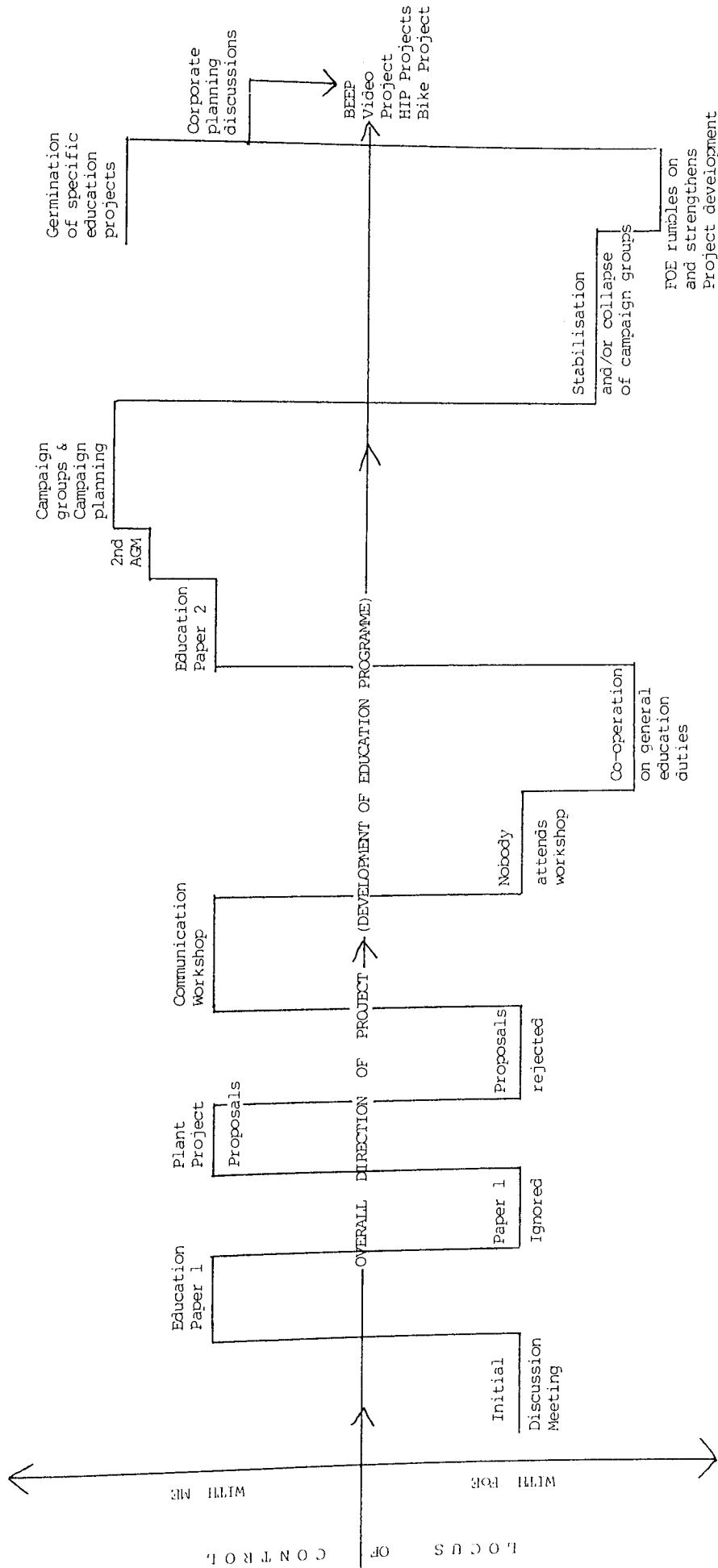
"Whilst planning, designing and implementing are distinct activities, frequently the implementation undertaken before the designs have been formed serves to create the design. After implementing the first steps of the "design", the designers discover what the the design was in the first place. Similarly, as the design unfolds this development actually amounts to implementation in progress. Although seemingly separate activities, design and implementation provide the opportunity to improve and learn more about their counterparts. Implementaion clarifies design; design clarifies implementation".
(189)

In action research planning, design and

implementation is not a linear process. Intervention in the field is not a discrete stage at the end of the research but is an integral feature of the research process itself. Innovation or change is slowly "diffused" (161) into the system with each successive intervention. Contamination of the field by the researcher is an integral part of the process. Far from being an unnecessary evil, contamination through intervention is a technique which helps the research to develop in a mutually desirable direction. Intervention allows the researcher and field to influence each other such that the distinctions between the "planner" and the "implementers"; the "researcher" and "subjects"; the "change agent" and "client" become blurred. The cycle of action and response facilitate collaboration between the researcher and the client since it allows the control over the direction of the research to alternate between the two. Figure 4.4 illustrates how the locus of control over the development of the present project shifted during the research period.

An open, two-way communication was indeed essential in the present project since it would have been impossible to effect change through a

Fig. 4.4 The Locus of Control at Different Stages in the Research



co-operative structure in any other way. Research in other organisational settings has also acknowledged the importance of the respective roles of researcher and subject in the research. In particular it has been found in many organisational settings that participation in the planning and policy process is a pre-requisite for implementation of change. This allows the client to identify with or "own" the change (2a,c) (51) (55) (102) (188). The active collaboration of the client in the research permitting, as Whyte (192) puts it, the "correction of blunders" by the researcher.

Through an action-response cycle shared meanings and values can develop such that the final product of the research represents a mutual agreement. This means that compromise is usually necessary - the extent of which depends on the commonality of purpose of each party. In my project there was a compromise - I ended up doing what was expected of the expert or specialist in education by defining an education project and the group ended up doing what I expected of them by planning and agreeing a specific target in education. Overall therefore the research process allowed joint definition and development of the

project and facilitated the implementation of mutually acceptable changes in the education work. Overall it can be described as a process of negotiation, of "debate and compromise". (10)

Because the development of a project is subject to negotiation neither side feels they have lost ultimate control or have been imposed upon. Whilst it can be disorientating for the researcher when the control slips away, rapport of this sort within the system is a sensible means towards a practical end. Having said this I hope I have shown in the case study that it is one thing to espouse an interactive approach and quite another knowing how to carry it out. Overall the action research process corresponds to the position that Churchman and Schainblatt (34) refer to as "mutual understanding" - where the "scientist" seeks to understand the management processes and the "manager" seeks to understand science: "let the manager learn science"....."let the scientist learn how to sell". (34)

In the management literature it has been shown that different management approaches reflect

particular relationships between researcher/manager and client/managed. A number of different relationships have been identified (34) (84) (175) each reflecting different philosophical positions regarding the function of management and/or the nature of problems. (129) (195) In practice a "mutual understanding" approach does not reflect a single relationship between researcher and client but incorporates many. In order to arrive at mutual understanding the relationship fluctuates as researcher and client gradually accommodate each other's position. From the researcher's point of view the relationship depends both on the phase and priority of the research and the expectations of the client at that time. In this project whether I was seeking to conceptualise a model of the project or test it out I could adopt any one of a number of different relationships - "diagnostician", "sparring partner", "experimentalist", "communicator", "expert" (84) - depending on the needs and expectations of the field. Since the main goal in action research is to succeed to ones own satisfaction within a social system and given that the system continually changes, the relationship between the research and client cannot be predetermined and rigid. The relationship

or role in the field needs to adapt frequently and pragmatically during the research period. Each relationship reflects a different philosophical stance thus action research is eclectic in overall style.

(vi) Methodological Reflections on the Action Research Process

It has been argued that research aimed at bringing about change in the "real world" is not science but technology since its primary aim is not to produce "general understanding of how things work but to contrive devices to make things work better". (43)

However the research process described in this chapter corresponds to traditional scientific discovery where this "...consists of an endless cycle of observation, classification, analysis and theory". (52) The means whereby the project model is refined in action research differs considerably from that used in science. In traditional scientific research, models are modified through controlled experimentation and observation. However in a social setting it is not possible to achieve acceptable levels of experimental design and control, primarily because replication is not possible, nor desirable, and

secondly the presence of the researcher in the field is a source of major contamination. Thus in action research idealised scientific method has to be modified. The experimental conditions of science are replaced by mechanisms which can accommodate such constraints whilst still enabling the process of model building to take place. As already described the means whereby this is done is to apply the current project model directly to the field in the form of an explicit intervention. The accuracy of the model can thus be assessed by observing the field's response to the intervention. If the response is not as would have been expected, the model is inappropriate, it has, in a sense been rejected by the field, and needs to be re-examined and amended if subsequent interventions are to succeed. Thus if this same cycle of model creation, testing, observation and amendment is repeated over time, understanding and clarification of the research problem increases or spirals on each successive occasion.

It is not the concern of action research to generate models of general importance but instead to develop one highly specific model. Precision in this situation becomes meaningless since there are not

control groups or norms against which to assess the research. As such the responses are not likely to be noted down in the traditional rigorous way. This is not so much because they could not be recorded this way but rather that the task would be very onerous simply for the purposes of making one or two points of relevance that may be independently tested in future. Moreover since the project model is based on both formal and informal knowledge the effect of any formal/precise hypothesis used to generate the project model is primarily influential not essential. Therefore potential invalidation of one hypothesis, although undesirable, does not necessarily invalidate the whole project model. What is more important to communicate are the details of the current project model, the grounds upon which it is based and its effect in the field. This produces essentially anecdotal/informal reporting - an amalgamation of controlled research assessed in the light of past and present experience - academically weak and imprecise but permitting sensitivity and flexibility essential in building the unique model.

Whilst model building is common to both traditional scientific method and action research

clearly the two approaches differ in what they accept as valid scientific knowledge. Definitions of what constitutes such knowledge vary with different epistemological positions. Ocquist (139) has pointed out that of the five philosophical stances of relevance to contemporary social science, empiricism, logical positivism and structuralism would reject action research as science but pragmatism and dialectical materialism would consider action research to be the most viable process for the production of human knowledge. The first three positions cannot accept that practice and values are relevant to science whereas the other two consider they are not only relevant but inseparable:

"Man produces all forms of knowledge by essentially the same types of activities. The differences between common sense, ideology and science are quantitative. Common sense forms one end of a continuum and science the other, with ideology occupying an intermediate position. The continuum runs from knowledge production with implicit theoretical presuppositions, little rigor in application, a lack of

consciousness as to how knowledge is being produced, at the end of common sense, to knowledge at the end of science characterised by explicit theoretical framework, a maximum of rigor, systematic research designs to plan knowledge production, and a maximum of consciousness with regard to how knowledge is produced, accompanied by an active quest to improve the mechanisms of knowledge production themselves. Ideology occupies the intermediate spaces in the continuum with extensive "gray zones" with both common sense and science". (139)

By relying on experience and applied research, action research spans this continuum of knowledge production and allows one extreme to temper the other. This produces a fluid process where understanding alternatively expands and contracts into loose then rigid structures. Whilst the knowledge generated by action research can never be of general value since it is situation specific, the process whereby this knowledge is generated cannot be distinguished from the traditional process of scientific discovery where intuition, irrationality and chance play an important

part in theoretical advancement. (21) (89) (124) (186)

(vii) Summary

The research approach described in this chapter is awkward and confusing to carry out because essentially it demands that the researcher fulfills two research roles which are philosophically incompatible. An active, deductive, expert-centred role has to be maintained alongside a passive, inductive client-centred role. The research process described here (See Fig. 4.1) proposes a means whereby the researcher can extract the best or most useful aspects of these two types of research in order to produce an interactive research process. The research task facing the action researcher is to strike a fine balance between independence from and sensitivity towards the field. In order to fulfill the project brief the action researcher has to overcome the tendencies of the sponsoring system to resist change yet minimise the threat posed by it. In practice the action research process is anxiety-provoking and frequently disorientating as control over the research periodically moves away from the researcher. The research is often blocked by circumstantial obstacles

and has to make unexpected changes in approach and direction. The researcher is caught in a two-tier process where he/she is both observer and subject; doing things and watching him/herself doing them. The action research process is characterised by self-reflections, disorientation and contamination but its compensations lie in fulfilling the brief to the satisfaction of the field, the academic community and oneself.

APPENDIX 1 EDUCATION IN FOE BIRMINGHAM

(i) DEVELOPMENT OF FOE BIRMINGHAM UP TO 1979 WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO EDUCATION

Table A1.1

The table below summarises the main stages in the development of FOE Birmingham from 1973 to 1982.

1973-77	Voluntary Group. Membership circa 50. Monthly Newsletter. Turnover circa £8,000.
Apr '77	Opened permanent premises - "Birmingham Recycling Centre". Several unpaid full and part-time workers. Membership circa 120. Involved in local and national campaigns, funding search, warehouse renovation.
Nov '77 - Dec '77	3 month 'Job Creation Programme' (MSC) - The Environmental Information Project (EIP). Funded 5 workers (4 EIP, 1 General). Produced draft of "Resources Pack", built up education activities.
Jan '78	FOE (B'ham) Ltd registered as a "Society for the Benefit of the Community". Set up voluntary Home Insulation Project (HIP) with £500 from Queen's Silver Jubilee Fund and £2,000 from B'ham Social Services shortly afterwards. Two unpaid workers.
Feb '78 - Dec '78	9 month extension of EIP granted. Funded 8 workers, wage sharing. Published: "Resources Reclamation & Recycling" (June '78); "B'ham Waste Directory" (Aug '78); "What on Earth are We Doing At Home?" (June '79). Also continued to build general education activities.
July '78 - Aug '78	Employed 1 person to find educational markets for Resources Pack.
Aug '78	5 year Inner City Partnership Funding (ICPP) for HIP. Funds 6 workers, wage sharing.
1978 - 1979	Several new local groups split off - Sutton, Solihull, Wolverhampton. New projects conceived - Plant; W.S.N.; BEEP; Whale Pack; Urban Wildlife Manual.
Dec '78	Fire destroys all insulation stock and

	part of the building. Produced "Cuddly Whale Kit" - good sales.
Feb '79	Took over the "Wholefood School of Nutrition" (WSN). Produced major exhibition for the "Energy Show" at the N.E.C. which brought in much needed funds.
Aug '79	Decide to appoint: 1 full-time Education Worker; 1 Urban Ecologist; 1 person to produce a Whale Education Pack; 1 general worker; 1 graphics artist - 15 full-time workers in all by October, 1979.

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

The focus of education activities until 1979 had been the "Environmental Information Project" (EIP).

The aims of the EIP were "to produced the "Resources Pack" and promote its use; to design and produce a "materials" exhibition and provide information as requested by teachers on such topics as: international wildlife conservation, habitats, ambient energy sources, water use and a survey of unused land with a view to developing urban nature sites". (66a)

During the 18 or so months of its existence the EIP published a teaching pack on "Resources, Reclamation and Recycling" (66c); a directory of firms and organisations in the area taking waste materials from the public, "Birmingham Waste Directory" (66b); and a book on the environmental impact of domestic life entitled "What on Earth are We Doing at Home?". (66d)

The wilful determination to share skills and responsibilities at FOE had affected the quality of these publications. To quote one key-worker from the EIP: "The final written product suffered from trying to use too co-operative a method and by avoiding overt leadership. This is not to say dictatorship is the most effecient form of running a project, but when material is being prepared for publication then it will benefit by being produced under one overall editor. This helps consistency of style and depth. The whole team should co-operate in decisions about overall approach and content". (153)

It was fairly obvious that the publications of the EIP had to some extent suffered from "committee production" but there were other factors which lowered the standard of publications. There was a chronic

shortage of capital, the principle of recycling meant that only recycled paper could be used - which does not compare favourably with most of the glossy materials on the market, and finally, none of the workers on the EIP had any experience in educational publishing.

Nevertheless, despite these problems of style and production the content of FOE's publications was original, and offered a dynamism and relevance to environmental education by linking the problems of the environment to urban-industrial lifestyles and development. In this sense the publications of the EIP were a great achievement and a source of pride not only to FOE B'ham but to the movement as a whole.

The EIP never supplied a reliable or comprehensive information service as its name would suggest. No exhibitions were produced and no publications on habitats, ambient energy or water. Neither was there a survey of derelict land. However, given the meagre financial and material resources available, the innovatory nature of the organisation and its short history, the team's results were far from poor.

The project officially ended in November, 1978 however most of the people who had been involved in it continued working for FOE B'ham until the Summer or Autumn of 1979. They were paid from the general wage pool and during this time they pursued a number of ideas for the continued development of education in FOE B'ham. So, by Autumn 1979, when the research project started, four ideas had been successfully implemented:

1. Two year funding procured for an Urban Ecologist to promote the concept and practical development of urban nature sites in the city and produce a lay person's manual on nature sites in Birmingham. The urban Ecologist was appointed in late December, 1979.
2. One year funding from "Clark's" to produce an educational pack on Whales for 11-13 year olds. This person was employed in December, 1979.
3. Granted charitable status for future education work under the auspices of "Birmingham Environmental Education Project" (BEEP) set up for: "The advancement of education of the public in matters appertaining to the conservation, protection and restoration of the natural resources and animal and plant life of the world". (66e)

4. Appointed a full-time education worker to develop the education work. The worker was employed through the IHD scheme i.e. me.

Thus the EIP left FOE a legacy consisting of a budding reputation within the FOE movement and in education circles beyond, an established charity for future education work and three new full-time posts in education of one sort or another.

(ii) EDUCATION PAPER 1 - FoE BRUM AND EDUCATION

I've spent the last three months looking at our educational activities from 1977 to date. It's probably fair to argue that most of our activities are educational in the sense that we spend most of our time telling people things which they didn't know already. The way, or rather how we tell people such things can vary from outright campaigning in the form of demonstrations, leaflets and petitions, through to giving general talks to local groups and schools, or answering specific enquiries from the general public. I don't particularly want to start discussing what is and what is not education. Instead to start with I shall concentrate on those of our activities which are overtly/apparently educational, such as talks, courses, written materials and so on. (This doesn't necessarily mean that these are the only educational activities that are possible, nor that they are the most desirable.)

Therefore, before looking at some of the 'education options' that we have at the moment I shall give a short resume of the sorts of things we have done over the last couple of years (apologies to all those who already know). I shall also outline some of the attitudes and policies which have been adopted towards education both in FoE Brum and other FoE groups. This history will be very brief, but should help us when discussing the relative merits of the options. I shall then go on to look at some of the options which I have tentatively identified, and finish by suggesting the sorts of role I could take in FoE.

HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN FoE BRUM

Over the last 2 1/2 years we have put most of our energies into two major areas - the production of written materials and giving talks or running courses. Taking materials first; we have produced the following:

- Basic information sheets on most campaign areas, including Glass, Paper, Metals, Lead, Energy, Whales. These were designed to explain campaign issued clearly and concisely and in everyday language.
- The "Birmingham Waste Directory" - self explanatory.
- "Resources, Reclamation & Recycling" - a pack for use by teachers and the general public on materials.

- "What on Earth are We Doing at Home?" - a book which makes the important link between lifestyle and the environment.

All of these were produced under the auspices of our "Environmental Information Project" (EIP), funded by MSC from Nov. 1977 to Dec. 1978.

In addition to these major publications we have also produced exhibitions on Energy and on Whales.

On a more commercial level we have produced the "Cuddly Whale Kit", recycled notepads, labels various badges and T-shirts.

(I have written a fuller account of our development since moving into the Warehouse, if anyone's interested.)

I think some comments about these materials are necessary since they will have a bearing on our discussion of the options later on. The comments are not meant to belittle the achievements of the people concerned, but only to clarify the nature of these materials and to help us learn from others' experience so that we can make sensible decisions in the future.

One thing which should be mentioned is that these have all been campaigning materials and not definitive works on the various topics. So perhaps before we embark on production of more materials we should clarify such things as: what sort of material it will be, what depth of understanding we are satisfied to acquire on any given topic before 'going to print', whether we would prefer to produce original research rather than reproduce material from other sources (eg. ERR, BSSRS, etc.) and so on. But first of all, and most importantly, what we are trying to achieve by producing such material. Another point which would be helpful to bear in mind apart from these policy issues is that in the past the production of many of our documents has been relatively piecemeal, has often defied all the "principles" of education, and has not really managed to incorporate anything of what is known about the production of educational materials (ie. "Educational Technology"). For instance, the resources pack is rather turgid prose - and not very well organised at that. I don't think it would inspire any but the "converted" teachers - which after all we don't need to do.

I think what I am saying is that if we are going to make a good job of producing materials (ie. have wide-reading and long-term effects) then it

should become a systematic and 'serious' activity rather than one which is piecemeal and ad hoc. More importantly, if we want to improve then we have got to be prepared to learn a lot about the production of materials for use in education and that this can only be done by taking a well-planned systematic approach.

Turning now to our talks and courses - assessment of these is not so easy because the records are rather sketchy. This is not surprising since on the whole activities here have been innovatory and flexible, seizing immediate opportunities to respond to demand. This had been one of the best features of FoE Brums approach, and has been the reason for its present strength. Nevertheless, now having got some experience to draw on it may be sensible to sit back and evaluate it, and feel better able to plan sensibly for the future. Previous activities were not especially well planned in that they were not seen as part of a continuous and growing process. As with materials production, if we are aiming to learn from and improve upon our "face to face encounters" with the public we need to plan - be they once-off talks or 11 week Adult Education courses. This means planning from the point of deciding our objectives right down to specific details of how to make contact with the audience.

In the past most of us have "given talks" yet the FoE general talk remains a mystery to most. Rarely do we discuss amongst ourselves what we talk about, or what should be the essence of a "FoE talk", let alone the purpose of it and whether it is a sensible use of resources. Obviously everyone has their own specialised knowledge, style and hobby horses and will therefore draw on these when giving a talk. However I don't think that a discussion on 'talks' would in any way restrict an individual's freedom, on the contrary it would probably help us all learn more about purpose, content and approach. I am not advocating a "set FoE talk" - this is nonsense since there is no such beast as a "set Friends of the Earth", but I am advocating a major discussion on "the general talk" where we can exchange views, successes, failures, information, teaching aids and anecdotes. The once-off talk seems to me to be a useful opportunity to start up grass roots action, it is often our first contact with people and as such should not be seen as a once only affair, but rather as the means to developing more permanent contact. We already have over 20 once-off talks to do in the spring - why are we doing them? Should we be doing them? What do we want to achieve by doing them?

As for courses, our experience is not so

great, but valuable all the same. I think it should be acknowledged that just because we go into educational establishments (Adult Education Institutes, WEA classes, schools) this does not mean that we are engaging in education. This may not be wrong but I do think that we should try to be a little clearer about what we are engaging in!

The courses we have run so far have not exactly hung together, the links between each section have tended to be taken "on faith". Again I can only suggest that if we are considering more courses, and if we want them to be effective (ie. encourage people to think seriously about the environment and do something constructive about it) then we must have our objectives clear before we start. This is not to say we should design rigid courses with set syllabuses, FoE of all things cannot afford to become inflexible, but to suggest that we take a more systematic approach to our courses, building on our experience and slowly improving our effectiveness. This would not be restrictive, but liberating, since it would give us foundations and direction. We have not been in the communication business long so we have got a lot to learn.

SUMMARY

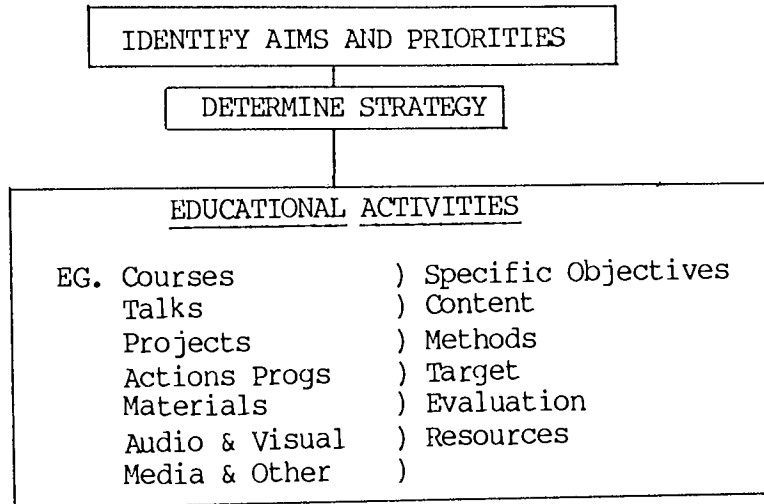
I think what I am saying about all our educational activities is that we would do better and learn more if we planned them. At the planning stage first we need to be clear why we should choose any given activity - is it the right one in terms of practicability, financial resources, human abilities, appropriateness and effectiveness? (ie. does it achieve our objectives in the most sensible and effective way possible?) Then for any given activity we choose we should ask ourselves the following sorts of questions:-

- What do we want to achieve by doing this?
(objectives)
(N.B. The objectives at this stage will be more specific. It is easy to miss out this stage and go straight on to talking about content, yet it is an essential stage and it determines the content.)
- What are we going to talk about? (Content)
- How are we going to talk about it?
(Methods)
- Who are we saying it to? (Target groups)

- How shall we know if we have succeeded?
(Assessment)
- What have we learned from it? (Evaluation)

I have tried to summarize this approach in the diagram below.

PLANNING EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES



That, believe it or not, was the brief history and assessment of education in FoE Brum so far.

Just before I go on to look at our present options, I'll give a brief summary of the history of Education within the broader network of FoE. I think it's important to mention this, since it reminds us that other people in FoE, apart from us, have experience and views on education, and that these will be helpful in our discussions.

HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN FoE NATIONALLY

"Education" hit FoE, so to speak, about 18 months ago with a series of papers from FoE members all over the country who, for various reasons, were interested in education. (Copies of these are in the education files. Also, I've written a fuller account of education development nationally, if anyone's interested.) These papers were in preparation for the first Education conference held in Harrogate in October, 1978. Since then there have been two other conferences - one in Sheffield, April, 1979 and one in Bristol, September, 1979.

Despite having had three conferences, FoE and Education do not seem to have really got off the ground at all; one reason probably being that there has never been anyone to co-ordinate on a full-time

basis. Having said this, there is one national structure to help cross-fertilization and co-ordination between groups, namely the "Education File". This is collated by Tom Varley in Durham and is essentially an open collection of papers written by people in FoE who feel they have something worth saying to others about education. This can be their own private philosophy, their local group's activities, or their experience with the W.I. Whilst it started with a flurry of papers, there have been hardly any new contributions recently; moreover a lot of the original people (at the Harrogate workshop) who conceived the idea of a "file", have not come to subsequent workshops and appear to have dropped out of the national education scene.

I went to the last workshop in Bristol in September, 1979. It was generally felt here that a good idea for the next conference would be to provide the participants with something useful. That is, a workshop where participants could learn something about education that would help them in their work in the local group. (This feeling was also apparent at some sessions of the co-ordinators' conference this year. Many of the local groups mentioned the lack of readable materials, useful visual aids and so on; also of their inability or rather ignorance of how to go about producing these for themselves.) So the next conference is being held here in Birmingham on Saturday, 8th March, 1980 and will be the most exciting thing that's ever hit the education scene in FoE. Essentially, it will be a day workshop on "Communication" - there is more to education (ie. effective communication) than simply having a battery of slides to show; for instance; knowing how to use them is essential, as the workshop in March hopes to show. The workshop will consist of a number of sessions taken by people with definite skills in various forms or processes of communication. The aim of the conference is to let the participants go away feeling they have actually learned something which will help them communicate better. It will be a fun day because the people taking the sessions really know their stuff - and are really nice people! (Anyone interested in helping organise the conference would be received with open arms (mine!)); the first major meeting of all the "speakers" is tentatively booked for 8th January.)

One final point on the state of education in FoE; at the last conference it was generally agreed that as FoE groups we are in the business of communicating our campaigns to the public, we are not in competition with JMB, AEB, CSE or the junior school up the road to provide all round "environmental

education". What we have to offer is very different - perhaps it would be useful at the strategy meeting to discuss just what it is we feel we are offering that is not being provided already in mainstream environmental education.

CURRENT EDUCATION OPTIONS

There are a large number of educational activities for us to choose from. Some will be more appropriate than others depending on the situation and on our objectives. To list a few of the options which I see available:-

- Research
- Producing Written Materials
- Producing Visual and Audio-Visual Aids
- Putting on Courses
- Giving Talks
- Initiating Local Action Programmes
- Setting-up Action Groups
- Training Volunteers
- Using the Media

At present we are involved in most of these activities, although some more than other. It seems to me that we do them in a piecemeal fashion, for instance we carry out research in food, produce materials on resources, slides on land use, courses on bits of everything, talks on FoE, exhibitions on energy and so on. This is not necessarily bad. Indeed it is this ability to respond to demand which has given FoE its strength. Nevertheless, I would like to make the point that potentially we could engage in all the activities on a very wide range of topics. Obviously this is not a good idea if we want to sleep at all over the next 12 months; the fact is that even if we concentrated on only those campaign areas in which we have projects at the moment the number of educational products within those areas is potentially enormous. Given that we have finite human, financial and temporal resources, we perhaps ought to make a few choices as to exactly what we are going to produce/do educationally in the near future. In other words, we ought to decide what to do in which areas; moreover, if decisions about strategy are made then they really ought to be made by the whole group rather than only within the individual projects, since we don't want to squabble over the Rotrings and typewriters, and anyway, if we set things up well we will probably find that we can all help each other across projects.

One way of making these decisions as a group may be to devise a sort of Matrix as shown below, in

which we can tick the boxes which correspond to our choices. Bearing in mind that the final matrix of "trade-offs" can only be completed when careful consideration of each choice has been made. See Figure A.1.1.

I can imagine the immediate reaction to this idea - that each project will want most of these things just to do its job, and that we have to do things like the Media, Talks and Training anyway quite apart from the actual projects.

I think that what I would say to both of these points is firstly that none of the projects could engage in all the activities and hope to do them well, so that within each project there has to be careful thought as to what is chosen, taking into account such things as the nature of the problem/project, time, money and capabilities. And to the second point I would suggest that we should perhaps go "all out" on the projects and try to trim down the "extras" - which, although in theory are peripheral, tend to encroach upon our time to a very great extent. Let's discuss the possibility of deciding to choose anyway!

MY ROLE

The job I do over the next 12-18 months depends entirely upon what strategy we choose. Having said this, I have given some thoughts as to what sorts of things I could be doing. There are several different roles which potentially I could adopt, and which I would like to discuss at the strategy meeting.

Given that I have been thinking about my role longer and harder than anyone else I do have "favourites" amongst the various possibilities; however I realise that what I end up doing depends upon how the group as a whole would like to see Education "happening" over the next year or so.

So to end this discussion paper I thought it would be useful to outline some of the ideas I have had about my role - which should help, maybe hinder, the discussion.

OPTIONS

- Co-Ordinate educational activities within each project - a sort of overseer-cum-asker of awkward questions and supplier of needed bits of information.
Comment: this would give the educational activities within each project the much

Fig. A1.1 Choosing a Strategy

Choosing a Strategy - Example

		EDUCATION OPTIONS									
SUBJECT AREA		RESEARCH	MATERIALS	VISUAL	ACTION PROGS	COURSES	TALKS	TRAINING	MEDIA	OTHER	
LAND USE			✓		✓						
WILDLIFE					✓		✓	✓			
ENERGY			✓	✓					✓		
RESOURCES			✓			✓					
FOOD		✓				✓					
POLLUTION			✓						✓		

needed forethought and direction. It relies heavily on team work where the members of the project are prepared to see their major role as educational. Also I imagine we would all learn quite a lot about communicating campaigns effectively.

- Get closely involved in one (maybe more) campaign/project, developing the educational side to a relatively high level.

Comment: I can see advantages in this in that it would give the opportunity to get into the educational process in depth. This understanding should have general applicability to other projects and undertakings and thus will have "spin-offs" for the other and future projects/campaigns. Also of course it would be easier for me in that I wouldn't have to be quite such a Jill of all trades.

- Original research into given topics.

Comment: This would not really fulfill our most immediate and practical needs, although obviously we should take a "research attitude" to all the topics we cover.

- Develop the FoE general side of things.

Comment: What is FoE general?!

- Go home (not serious!)

We have to choose the one that we feel will be most practicable and most effective in terms of educational "return". I have extended my ideas in some directions even further, but I won't go into these now, because they are too specific and may turn out to be inappropriate.

Before I close, I must mention BEEP. BEEP = "Birmingham Environmental Education Project". It is successor to the EIP and is a registered charity with the following objectives: the "Advancement of the education of the general public in matters appertaining to the conservation, protection and restoration of resources, animal and plant life of the world", which gives us quite a bit of scope! This is a useful vehicle for our educational work since charitable status will give us a certain amount of 'prestige' and better access to funds, I expect; so it is probably sensible to 'operate' through BEEP. For the moment I envisage myself as living proof of BEEP and hope to make it functional with a little help from my friends. BEEP I see as the "educational aspect of

each project", ie. everything I have been talking about.

One final point is that as a charity it has to have a formal structure, with a bank account and everything. As far as I can see, a BEEP management committee would actually be a good thing because it could not only involve us (or a representative from each project) but outside people who would "keep us on the ball" (eg. Val Stevens, Pete Hedges, Tony Soames, etc. ?) also it would help us keep on top of the educational strategy even better.

All the above ramblings are my own, they are not intended as definitive statements on either FoE or Education, but instead to stimulate the education discussion at the strategy meeting on 10th January. Education is such a major part of our work that we should try to build it into our campaigns as carefully as possible. The things I have been talking about indicate that we have a very big job ahead if we are to campaign effectively, and that this sort of job has to be done by a team. As a team we have to decide upon a direction for our educational/social/community activities. We cannot hope to branch out into these complex areas without being clear of what we are doing and, as important, what we are confronting. We cannot remain educationally and socially naive if we are to have any impact whatsoever at a grass roots level.

Love, Helen.
19.12.1979

(iii) EDUCATION PAPER: 2

It seems to me that we are at a stage in our development where we have the strength to expand quite substantially in whatever direction(s) we see fit. But it wouldn't be very wise to bash on regardless with what seem to be "good ideas". Whilst we are much richer and more secure in terms of person-power, experience, finances and good reputation than 3 years ago we are essentially a hand-to-mouth organisation with no power, and could so easily slip into oblivion, all we have achieved being seen as little more than a fashion of the '70s.

FoE Brum grew up like most other local FoE groups - voluntary members meeting in each others' homes, taking up campaigns, national and local, as they saw fit. As far as I can gather, FoE Brum has always emphasized local campaigns, trying to show ordinary people how they can help in their every day life (e.g. "Birmingham Waste Directory", "What on Earth are We Doing at Home?", local talks, home insulation project, Birmingham wasteland plans etc).

As the potential for action was recognized, as it realized how much needed to be done on the 'environmental scene', it was decided that a more permanent structure, with full-time workers should be set up. A visible public base in the centre of Brum, with full-time workers was seen as being an effective demonstration, to the Birmingham public, of the sorts of things we stood for; it would give them a chance to participate (the warehouse began life as a recycling centre for Birmingham) and would show we meant business!

Since the move to the warehouse in April '77, we have grown from strength to strength (with hiccups of course). In line with FoE Brum's philosophy of being practical, rather than armchair, environmentalists, projects were set up which were practical manifestations of FoE's campaigns, i.e. attempts to actually alleviate environmental problems. In addition, the projects allowed us to employ a number of full-time staff and establish a permanent base in Birmingham, which could continue campaigning activities on a firmer footing. Thus the Environmental Information Project and the Home Ins. Project, and latterly BEEP and Greensite were born.

As envisaged, plenty of other 'general FoE' activities went on during the first 2-3 years at the warehouse - talks, demos, trains, response to L.A.

plans, information leaflets, media work etc, i.e. FoE Brum continued to get involved in campaign issues. A lot of experience has been gained not only on how to run projects but on FoE issues in general - a group of people working "full-time on the environment" has provided a good opportunity to talk and understand FoE issues and to be better able to identify useful and appropriate new activities and projects. (The Greensite project and BEEP are both 2nd generation projects in this sense.)

The situation now is that we have one very strong and well-established project (HIP), and a second one (Greensite) which is threatening to be so but certainly which is about to become very big (funding willing); and have established an educational charity (BEEP) which will not only be a good reference point for future educational activities but also a good vehicle for fund-raising. These 3 projects, plus WSN, take up most of the time of the workers, along with the basic survival jobs of mail order, warehouse maintenance and admin. In addition we have a voluntary membership who have been able to watch the growth of the warehouse staff and the realization of the projects, and latterly have been causing the full-time workers a good deal of concern.

A lack of volunteering and a lack of participation in the Monday evening meetings by the members has caused a certain amount of soul searching on the part of the full-timers. Since, and no doubt before, I joined, on several occasions we have asked ourselves why they don't participate, what we should do to encourage them. At one time it was felt that full-timers should make every effort to go to Monday evening meetings as these were the decision making meetings and that absence was considered to be a lack of respect to these meetings, signifying to the volunteers that this was not where the real decision making went on. This we did, but still there was little participation and even worse, there were very few decision discussed let alone made. The members never joined in things which were already going on and never initiated new things - we began to feel they didn't come to campaign at all, they had no committment, just came for a chat and to alleviate their environmental conscience. At the same time, nagging at the back of our minds, we knew there were new members who came for a couple of weeks and just drifted away again - we felt we were failing these new people by not capturing their interest. We thought we should make more effort with new people, chat to them, show them what we do and where they could help. Then, contrary to what was decided before, we felt it might be better to stay away from Monday evenings. We were

the resident "experts" and dominated meetings either actively by contributing or passively by inhibiting the members from doing so. We held our tongues, even "gave them" some projects (Festival '81) but still no real initiative was taken.

The situation was getting more uncomfortable, here were the full-timers busy in their ivory-tower projects, wanting the members to be involved, and there were Monday evenings getting duller every week with no evidence of the usual FoE campaigning activities. Activities that should have spontaneously emerged from the initiative of eager, committed, local members! This problem finally came to a head and was taken for discussion at the AGM.

The crisis of the AGM was that we failed even to start discussing the problem, let alone resolving it. My feeling is that the initiative, to get us out of this impasse, must come from the full-timers. The onus is on us to make FoE Brum able to cope with and appreciate the contribution of "regulars" and new members. I think that the solutions we have toyed with in the past have been doomed to failure because they have been inappropriate to FoE Brum as it is now.

For instance, one 'solution' has been to give regular project reports to Monday evening meetings so that members would be kept in touch with what was going on and could start to become involved. This has not worked and I don't think it ever could because once a project has full-time workers they have to work as a team and take decisions within that team if they are going to get anything done at all. "Outsiders" can and do help a lot, but realistically only on jobs which have been identified by the project team, and not in the decision-making. So, reports to Monday meetings would indeed keep everyone informed and help communication, they would give members an opportunity to comment (although comment would probably not be very informed) and a chance for them to do jobs for the project. But the involvement would stop there, it is unrealistic for any but the team to be closely involved in the day to day running and planning of the project. (There is a way members can get involved but I'll come on to that when I've said why another of our favourite solutions is also doomed to failure.)

The other gut feeling to the problem has been to suggest stopping away from Monday meetings, so that members could develop new campaigns of their own, even have a "campaigner" to coordinate these activities. Perhaps meetings in members houses or within suburban groups, in fact, anything to help them feel it was their own group, so just like an ordinary local group,

FoE Brum would live again. I think this is the wrong direction, apart from being unlikely to succeed. It's wrong because it would be stupid to waste the experience, expertise and full-time availability of the full-time workers in planning campaigns in the future. For the first time in its history FoE Brum has 16 full-time workers on the spot, which is a tremendous situation for any campaigning initiatives. Apart from this, I think this solution is a cop-out on our part.

If some of the full-timers do become more involved in active campaigning then it makes sense to build on what we already have, to develop the areas in which full-timers are already interested and involved, i.e. energy, wildlife, land use, food. In other words active campaigns should grow out of the existing campaigns (now called projects) in which case the full-timers are in the best position to take the initiative in the early stages at least. So instead of a return to ad hoc Monday evening campaigns, we should develop the projects into the broader campaigns of which they are a part.

Once these have been initiated there would be real things to discuss with members, they could get involved, even take the major role in directed, purposeful activities. This, I think, is the sort of solution we need. At present I believe we offer very little for members coming in to latch onto in any constructive sense; in other words we have a 'member problem' because we have no active campaigns - get these and the members will sort themselves out. But the initiative has to come from us if we want it to happen.

Building up the campaigns would also put FoE Brum back on its proper track - we are an environmental pressure group. Recent pre-occupation with projects (necessary to launch them) has tended to obscure our main objectives, namely to save the world! There are many routes to improving the environment, we must not lose sight of other routes even if the ones we are now on are working well and are relatively effective - this might not always be the case. One other reason for the development or "putting into context" of the projects is, I think, that we owe it to the early members of FoE Brum who struggled (much harder than us) to make FoE Brum happen - they got something out of nothing, except their own commitment and determination. For myself, I would like to feel I was working towards something which has a chance of succeeding, rather than continually being a busy, albeit well-intentioned, fool.

What I have been saying has tended to imply a lack of "vision" in FoE Brum, a pre-occupation with the present and a dearth of active campaigning. This was meant to be descriptive not critical, narrowing of horizons has been necessary in order to build up the projects. Moreover the projects will continue to take a lot of energy and time if they are to succeed. More significantly, if we do 'broaden out' I suspect we will be doing a great service not only to the rest of FoE but to the environmental movement as a whole.

At a national level FoE has concentrated on specific issues, and got results; however, this approach does carry with it the problem of losing the broad overview and the long-term view. Whilst the continuation of the 'specifics' approach in FoE (UK) has been supported there is general feeling (viz the last co-ordinator's conference) that some of the original vision of the environmental movement is fading. This is echoed by the general lack of debate within FoE of the broader issues (i.e. the social, economic, political effects of our policies) a failure to make very clear links between the campaigns, and a complete and utter failure, after 4 attempts, to start a "futures" debate within FoE. So in broadening out we would help ourselves and the movement generally to move forward. FoE Brum has reached a good level of sophistication, we have a fair amount of grass roots experience, and what is more important we are in a position to get it, and we have a strong core of workers - who better to keep the ball rolling?

I think that part of the difficulty in getting out of the narrow approach is that there is no framework for doing so. Without some framework, discussion and even plain information - gathering is difficult. This is where I come in! Contrary to conventional wisdom I don't think this broadening-out is a particularly easy or plain common sense thing to do. There are too many issues involved to simply sit down and brainstorm all the possibilities for action and then choose between them. Instead it needs to be a systematic development of ideas - which can be tested out in practice. Even if, at the end of the day, there are only a few choices open to a group like ours, and even if we only carry on doing what we are already doing, or do what would have been the 'obvious' next thing to do, I still see no reason for ignorance - of the other options and of the wider implications of what we are doing. Broad understanding and an appreciation of strategic thinking is essential for the group's credibility and survival, and absolutely essential for our educational activities, where woolly, idealistic, ideological statements are just not on.

Without a broad approach to the issues we are fighting for (energy, wildlife, etc.) our strategic choices become limited. I suggest that one way of broadening out would be to start from individual campaigns - develop a policy which is fairly sound and from this build up a strategic plan which should help to bring our policy ideas to fruition. Then we can, as a group, decide which strategy/strategies to adopt and start working out tactics. On the next sheet I have given a rough example of what I mean, taking as a starting point the campaigns we are already involved in. Put down on paper like this makes it look very static, I'll try on the next page to show that it will not be static in practice. See Figure A.1.2.

These are methods and techniques available which will help us build up these networks, I can see several immediate benefits for doing them as well as a good deal of potential spin-offs. To list a few of the benefits:

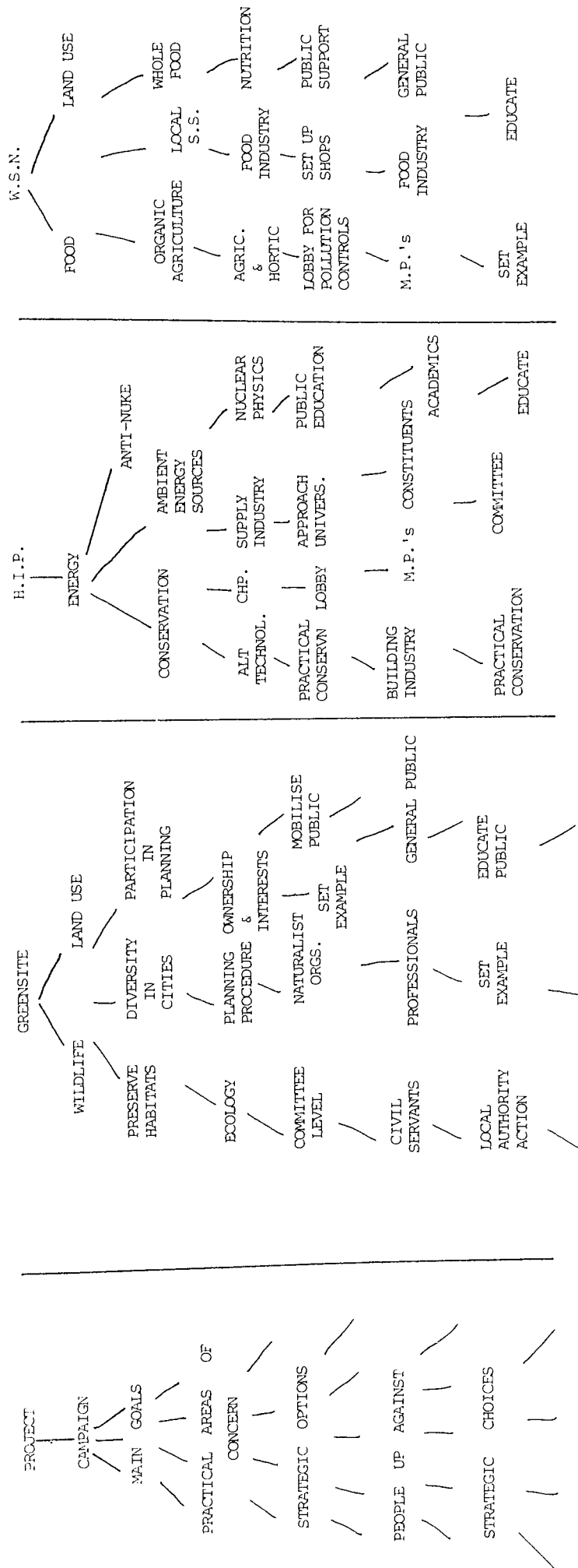
1. Clarify our own thoughts and build up our knowledge across a wide range of topics (not just 'academic' topics).
2. Develop broad policies - for ourselves and FoE generally.
3. A useful knowledge base for 'educational' activities - enabling us to field better questions, put better arguments and enter better debates, etc.
4. Allow us to build up clear well-thought out strategies, hence, campaign more effectively.
5. Teach us a lot about the actual nuts and bolts of strategy within a given campaign but also give us some understanding of the process of campaigning itself. Communication rules OK.

Once we have developed frameworks for thinking in this way there is no limit to the number and sort of networks we could build up - "made to measure" networks of all sorts - linking across campaigns, comparing scenarios of the future, building up a model of the argument being used by the 'other side' and so on.

I'd like to make a few points about this idea right from the start - lest anyone should think it little more than an academic exercise from which I gain a PhD! I shall indeed be developing the methodology or techniques we use, this will be the

Examples

Fig. A1.2 Campaign Options



major part of my thesis, but the point about the techniques is that they will be designed to enable us to develop "working models" - so will be of immediate use to the development of FoE Brum. Essentially they will be self-teaching techniques, so their success will depend on the amount of effort the 'learner(s)' want to put in and on a willingness to learn and develop along with the model. The whole point of the sorts of methods I shall be using is that they help the person or group to clarify their own thoughts, correct misconceptions and most importantly to test out ideas. The networks that can be derived may sometimes move onto the broader all-embracing ideas and sometimes onto specifics and practicalities, depending on what is needed at the time, they can be used to develop strategies or just to come to grips with an area - in other words they will be flexible. Given our need to develop campaigns then a useful working model for us would be some sort of strategy planning device into which we could feed our options, build up programmes of action, test them out and so on. But I can also see the value in developing broad based campaigns which would have a working model which made links between the various individual campaigns. The possibilities are endless.

To end up on a few practicalities, I shall have to spend a good deal of time over the next couple of months in getting the ball rolling. I haven't worked out the mechanics exactly but when I have a clearer idea I can let everyone know so we can start properly. I don't envisage any concerted action on our part being possible until July-August - in which case it might make more sense to wait until September when summer hols and madness have passed. Until July I suggest I spend only a couple of days a week at the warehouse (Mondays and Wednesdays) and the rest on the project I have outlined.

I can see no reason why I cannot continue to do the following jobs on the days I do come in:

- arrange general talks (and do some)
+ get a policy together
- continue to set up the library/info systems and resources base
- continue the Bookshop ordering
- continue "wholefood" - depending on further discussion
- continue Saturday rota & 'extras' like stalls

- exhibition bookings

I'll willingly continue rota duties but given that I shall not be in so often over the summer could I cut my turns by a half on both office and cooking rota? - or I'll be on rota everytime I walk into the building!

Love

Helen

18.5.1980.

P.S. Supervisory Team Meeting 20.5.1980

To bring this report up to date, here is a report of what happened at my last Supervisors' meeting in Aston, which discussed what should happen next.

A sensible place to start the ball rolling would be to hold strategy discussions within the individual projects. Given that we are aiming to present strategy reports at the meeting on July 26th, I propose that between now and then I begin to introduce some of the techniques I am talking about, into these discussions.

I see no reason why these should be vastly time-consuming - a couple of half day sessions on each project should be sufficient to get things to a useful point for July 26th. Also I see no reason why only the workers on the project be involved in these discussions.

So could we arrange a couple of dates to do this for H.I.P., G.T.'s and Food (if anyone other than Lyn and myself in the building is interested - How about it Muesli Base?!) Can we fix the dates during the last two weeks of June and the first week of July?

Ta.

Helen

20.5.1980.

(iv) EDUCATION ON BEHALF OF FoE BIRMINGHAM

(a) Overview and Description of Main Education Duties

The information in this section is based primarily on personal experience. The education worker at FoE was expected to accommodate a number of practical responsibilities which can be broadly grouped as follows:

- (i) Talks and Courses
- (ii) Library, information systems and resource base
- (iii) Liason with outside contacts
- (iv) Materials Production
- (v) Mass Media Work
- (vi) Dealing with Educational Enquiries

Reference to the first three of these will give a clearer indication of what the work actually entailed.

FoE Talks

Local community groups, schools and colleges requested talks, which it was FoE's policy to accept. These were usually 'general talks' about 'your organisation and it's work' - especially in the case of adult groups such as Housewives' Register, Rotary Clubs, Mothers and Toddlers Clubs, Church Pensioners' Clubs and so on. General talks were usually given to schools as part of their sixth form general studies course, but more often in schools and colleges the request was for a talk on a specific topic such as Energy, Pollution or Recycling. Our talk would form part of a course being run on these topics. By 1981 some schools were requesting talks about 'pressure groups' to fit into GCE Sociology.

The number of talks in 1979 was 46, of these, 34 were to local community groups, 6 to schools and 6 to other educational institutions. The number rose to 65 in 1980 and in 1981 80 talks were given, the number to schools and colleges reaching 36. The talks service had never been widely advertised; most community groups found out about it through friends and contacts. Traditionally, anyone willing to give a

talk had been encouraged to do so and it had worked out that three or four workers and one or two voluntary members did most of the talks whilst I was there.

Talking about, and on behalf of FoE was a challenge to say the least. There is no text book or syllabus to work from, nor any teaching notes and when I started there were no visual aids, except a few free sets of slides from the World Wildlife Fund on whales, penguins and the like. The contents of the 'general talk had to be gleaned from the campaign documents and books published by FoE and kindred organisations and then, hopefully to put into a coherent message.

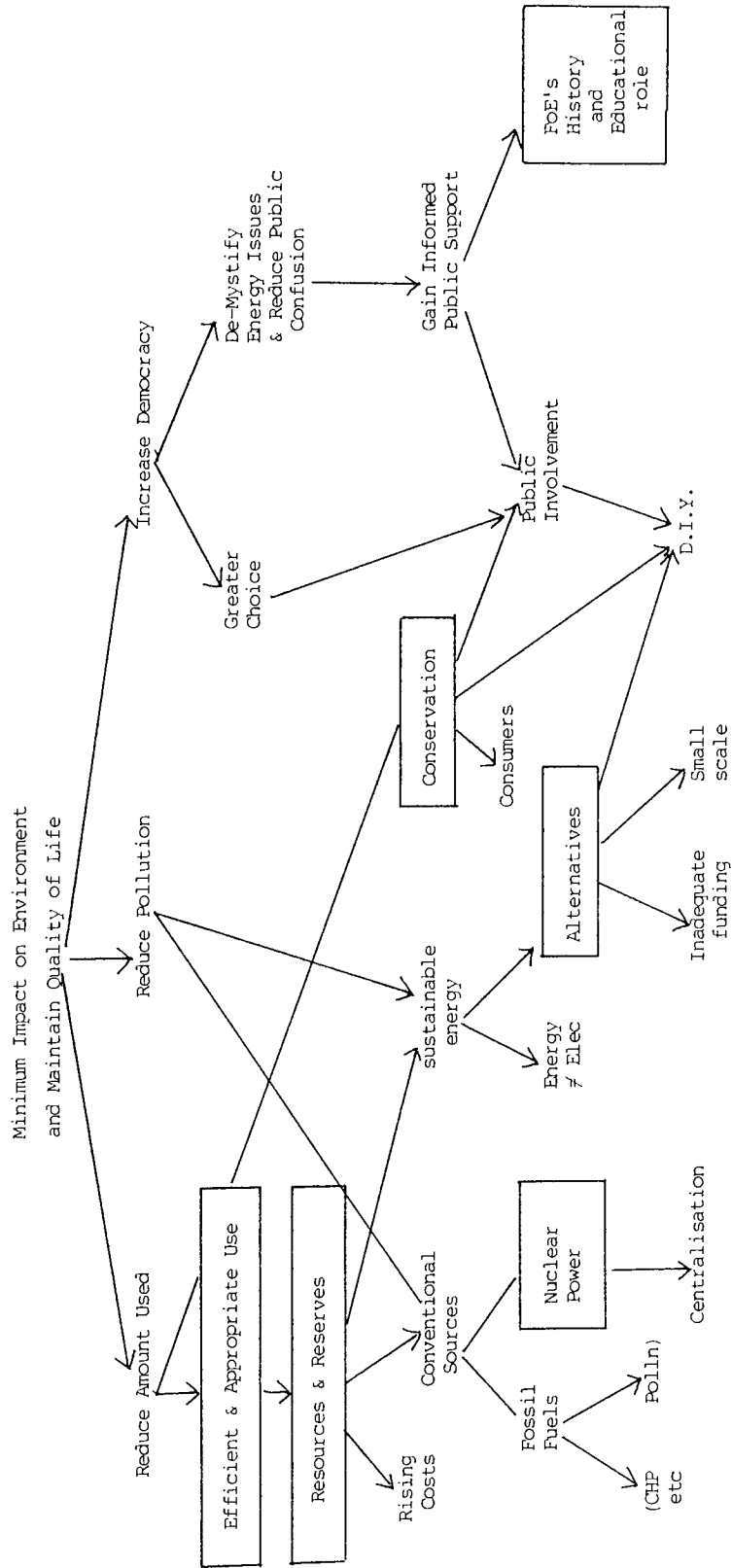
Over the first six months, full of apprehension at the thought of giving talks, I picked the brains of people who had given them in the past. Through open ended interviews, conversations, attendance at campaign meetings and the use of the reportory grid technique I set out to establish what topics were covered in talks, what exactly was FoE's message or stand on these topics and how these were presented as a coherent message.

I found that most of the speakers concentrated on specific issues in their talks - energy conservation, endangered species, paper recycling - that they adopted the view of the FoE campaign policy on these issues and most significantly, they were not particularly concerned about presenting a coherent total message or view of the environment as a whole as seen by Friends of the Earth. Each person tended to emphasize or include only those topics about which they felt knowledgeable or most passionate. In other words, the general talk could be tailored to fit the priorities and inclinations of each speaker, there was no single format and no single acknowledged educational message.

Having said this, when pushed, using the laddering techniques of the Reportory Grid technique, the speakers could easily identify certain principles underlying the specific topics covered. For example figure A1.3 shows the basis upon which one speaker advocated energy conservation.

The same principles kept emerging on different issues and these I took to be the tenets of environmentalism held by FoE. Each topic or FoE campaign likely to be included in talks was based on a policy guided by a constant set of environmentalist principles. The basic principle was that of conservation which led to other principles of varying degrees of abstraction. Thus a policy based on

Fig. A1.3 A Talk on Energy



[] = the "topics" into which the talk was broken down.

conservation led to the concepts of eco-design, of decentralisation and so on which in turn implied specific codes of conduct such as re-cycling, insulation, pollution controls and so on.

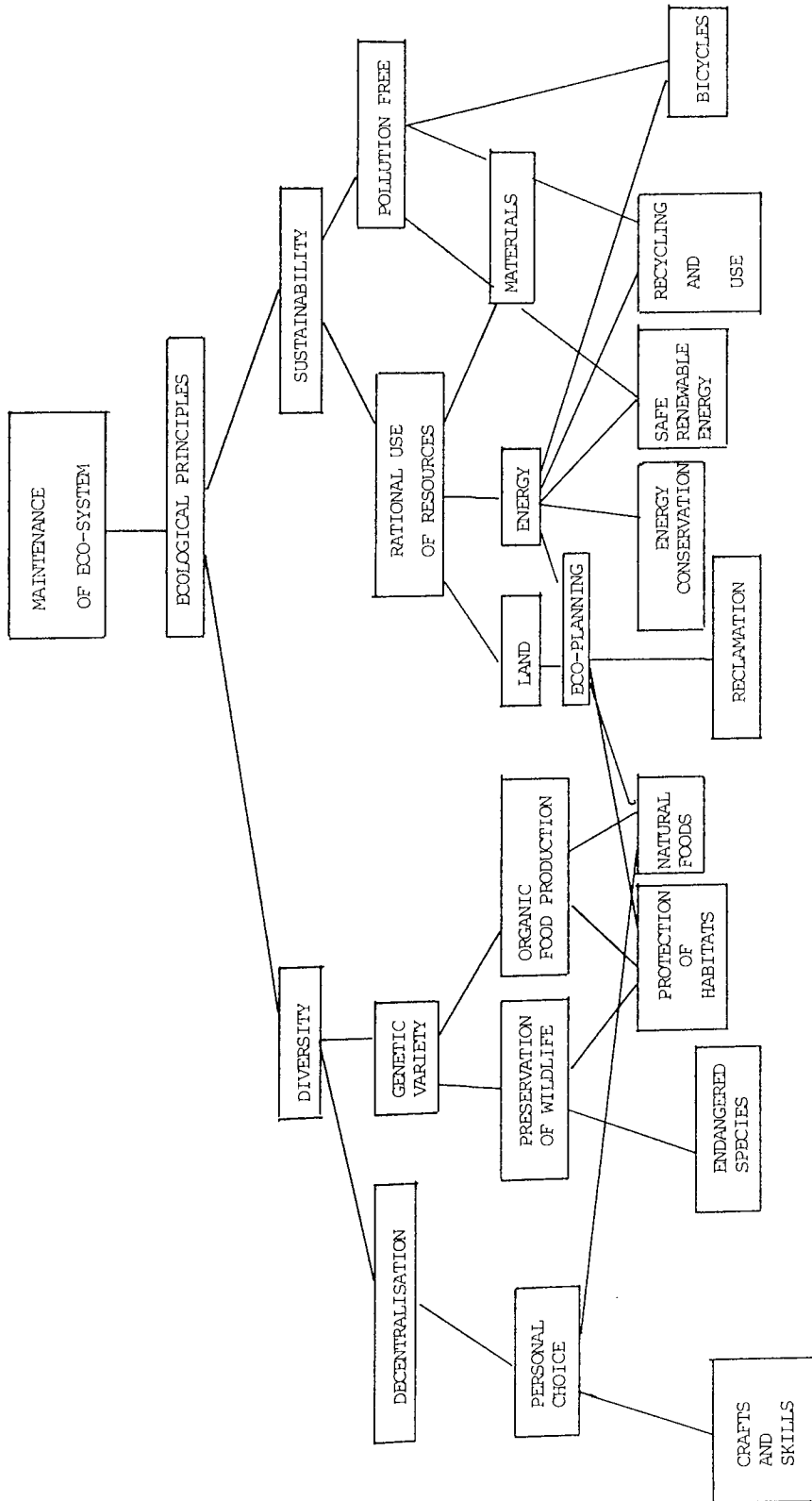
Using a heuristic developed by Pask and his associates (57) (144) (145), I built up a 'knowledge tree' for my own use, which showed how these principles related to each other and to the specific FoE campaigns. This knowledge tree represented FoE's 'educational message' and I saw it as a knowledge base to which all future educational activities should refer - be they talks, publications, practical projects or whatever. As far as talks were concerned then whatever topic or campaign was chosen to talk about the underlying principles were the same and could be reached by following the branches of the tree.

Pask's idea was that the teacher starts at a 'node' in the tree most suitable for the audience - thus the teacher could start on concrete facts or go straight to abstract principles depending upon the ability of the learners and the aims of the course. Wherever the teacher starts, the tree ensures that the course of study is comprehensive and coherent. The notion of the knowledge tree apart from being a useful heuristic was devised by Pask in order to help teachers and experts come to terms with complex subject matter. The knowledge base I developed is shown in figure A.1.4.

The development of this sort of integral knowledge base to represent FoE's educational message was essential in so far as it allowed me to come to terms with the subject matter but it was of limited use to the practical education work in FoE. There were two reasons for this: Firstly, had I been a full-time teacher in contact with a captive audience over time as were the teachers for whom Pask developed the notion of a knowledge base, then I could have used the base as was intended, to run a coherent and integrated course.

Although there had been attempts to set up series of evening courses in Adult Education Institutes, these had been poorly supported so the main vehicle for 'live' teaching was still the short one-off talk. The subject matter in FoE's knowledge base was vast and could not be covered in the 30 minute to 1 hour sessions which the FoE talks allowed. Given this extremely limited contact time, the techniques and approach required were quite different to the academic leisurely approach embodied in the knowledge tree.

Fig. A1.4 A FOE Knowledge Tree



Essentially, the general talk was a public relations exercise during which time one aims to capture the interest and support of the audience. In some cases simply raising awareness of environmental issues was about as far as one could go in a short talk. A more useful heuristic for the FoE talk was to see it as part of a process of communication which proceeded in distinct phases. First the audience becomes aware, their interest is gained and this interest is satisfied with information. When the interest is sufficiently high for them to want to do something to help then they must be given the opportunity to act. This process is shown in Figure A.1.5.

The time limitations of talks were such that one rarely progressed beyond an awareness and maybe as far as the interest stage. Many adult clubs seemed concerned primarily to fill a slot in their "talks programme" and others invited you to provide light entertainment for their members before tea. The likelihood of engendering active concern for the environment in these circumstances seemed fairly remote. Moreover, the opportunities for personal involvement or group action were limited since many only came once a month of so.

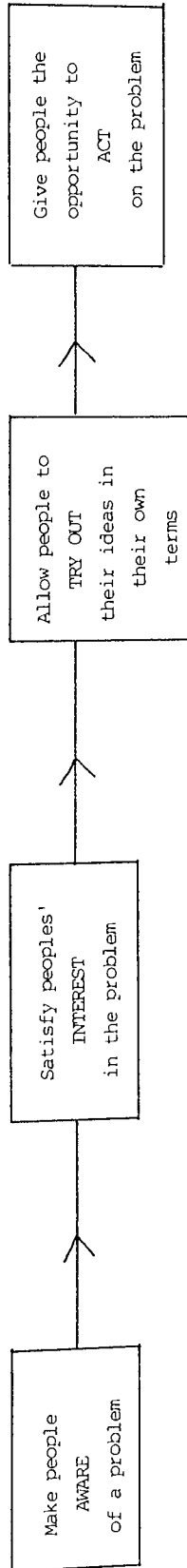
Nevertheless, in order to make best use of this situation there were a number of ground rules which could be followed. For instance it was always the group or school who took the initiative, so you could always expect a few allies in the audience - even if it was only the talks secretary and her friend.

The skill lay in being able to build on this sympathy which meant that each talk had to be tailored to suit the interests, and prior knowledge of each group. Thus the content of the general talk could vary enormously - Women's Clubs like to talk about Wholefoods, and although their initial interest was usually health and beauty they were usually intrigued and concerned about the broader environmental, social and political issues raised by diet. Pollution is suprisingly popular with primary schoolchildren since litter and city grime are so easy to demonstrate, touch and do something about. Big and cuddly animals are also a sure route to many children's environmental conscience. Male sixth formers like energy - especially taking part in the Nuclear Debate. All schoolchildren seem to sympathise with recycling (they can get money back on returnable bottles) and all adults like British Wildlife habitats.

These are wicked generalisations but make the point that the content of any given talk depends on

Fig. A1.5 Stages in Changing Attitudes to the Environment

Getting people to change involves going through a sequence of educational steps:



the audience. The skill lies in choosing the right topic through which to introduce the broader environmental issues and principles. To dwell on the enormity of the problems facing the environment is a prophecy of doom which most groups do not want to listen to and will cause children either to switch off or become extremely anxious. Therefore talking about positive subjects, looking at what can be done to improve existing situations and exploring what is meant by environmentally sound lifestyles is much more productive with young groups. Conversely at a businessmen's lunch club, talking about windmills, community recycling schemes and self-help brands you as an amiable and harmless crank. Here the harder policy issues can be tackled head on - as long as you are not too dogmatic and alienate the audience. Using political arguments with middle aged female groups is guaranteed to produce embarrassed silence and disapproving looks and it inhibits constructive discussion since they maintain they are "not political dear". Here the "what-can-we-as-ratepayers-do" approach is much more fruitful and it makes it very easy to link contemporary lifestyle to environmental problems.

Just as the content varies so too does the style of presentation. With some groups the talk needs to be light and entertaining, with others it has to be highly informative, with others (especially children) it has to be very visual. Some groups expect to participate and discuss issues, others do not want to. The point to be remembered is that the audiences are voluntary, no one has to listen or pay heed to what is being said; and even in the case of schoolchildren who are compelled to attend there is little point talking to them if you fail to capture their attention. Other influencing factors include: one's mood and the amount of mental effort put into a talk; the relative social position and age of the audience; their interests and geographical position; the cohesion or antagonism which already exists in the group; their experience of speakers in the past and so on. Visual aids help most, but not all talks, so too does a supply of literature which can be bought or browsed through at the end.

Audience reactions ranged from empathy and support through disinterest to hostility. Disinterest was the most deflating and embarrassing and suggested that the talk had been inappropriate to the group. Support was super, especially at evening talks when you had little energy to win arguments, but could also become insipid and inactive. Hostility was the most stimulating as long as it came out in discussions where it could be used to raise major issues; if there was

a silent hostility one simply left wondering whether it was all worthwhile.

Schools and colleges appeared to offer more and quicker rewards. These audiences, already in a learning environment, entered into much livelier and often better informed debate than adults. Many of the young people showed concern, even anxiety, over the future of the environment and went to great lengths to think about solutions and alternatives. In addition, schools and colleges are in a better position to take follow-up action - newspaper collection, can recycling and so on is more realistic in a large school than in a small social club. Also many schools have grounds thus the potential for developing nature sites or teaching horticulture is increased. Most schools invite FoE to speak as part of a course already being run so the talk could be put into a context and they were likely to do follow-up studies such as energy audits, pollution surveys, litter projects and transport studies, some even set up school FoE clubs.

Thus I "gave talks" for FoE and I soon realised that there was no such thing as "the general talk". I never gave the same talk twice, each audience required an individual approach, different topics had to be emphasized at different stages during the talk and what was particularly unnerving was that the response could never be accurately predicted even when going into apparently similar groups.

It was debated from time to time in FoE whether "talks" were an effective use of time but it was usually concluded that some contact, however brief, with as many and varied groups as possible was preferable to no contact at all. It was openly acknowledged that their value was limited but the group felt duty bound to meet this public demand. In my opinion the only way in which talks could become an effective means of communication would be if they were incorporated into a programme of action which permitted some formal follow up on any contact which had been made. However, as it was there was little point encouraging audience participation until there was both moral and practical support within FoE to cater for this.

FoE Library, Information Systems and Resources Bank

The saga of the library and information systems captures the flavour of trying to carry out education work at FoE.

As the education worker I was presented with the library - 'to do'. The 'library' was a small

collection of second hand books, pamphlets and reports thick with dust and heavily smoke-stained from the fire six months earlier. It was a communal facility and as such showed the usual signs of communal neglect.

There was evidence of some 'organisation' in the past as there were 'FoE Library - For Reference Only' notices on most books and there was a loan book with one page of entries. No doubt in the past the library had been a useful and cherished resource but its keeper had obviously left. Stocks I understand had been built up mainly from donations by FoE members - this would account for the more unexpected titles like 'Rough Ride to Hanging Rock' and 'Verses by Patience Strong' as well as four years' worth of 'New Society' and a substantial pile of 'Aircraft and Aviation'.

I set about sorting, dusting and cataloguing the books, documents and leaflets heaped precariously on to a motley collection of cabinets and dangerously wobbly shelves. I ploughed through an amazing selection of publications - minority reports, radical pamphlets, campaign documents, old newsletters - most were out of date but I kept them anyway since I knew that this archive was unique; even though the information was of no use to the present information system, I learned a lot about the history of the organisation, the environmental movement in general and the subject matter by going through these files that I considered others should have the opportunity to do so too.

Having recorded what was already there, the next task was to set up an indexing system which would make it accessible to everyone else. The idea was to create a comprehensive, dynamic information resource base carrying not only the basic books but also catalogues showing other materials available, information on kindred and relevant organisations, completely up to date files on the main FoE campaigns, and for the education work, audio-visual aids, posters, wallcharts, lots of references, games and any other teaching aid which could be useful. This meant doing two things - devising a classification system and building up the stocks.

Building up stocks was not too difficult since many publishers are only too willing to send inspection copies and complementary copies of new titles to resource bases. The book stocks were doubled in six months, and in over a year I had managed to put together 30 sets of slides and a selection of other teaching aids - all for very little expense on the part of FoE.

The classification system posed more problems. I shared this task with a full-time voluntary worker who had been in the movement for many years and was much more knowledgeable than I on 'things environmental'. After about 3 months it appeared that the volunteer was beginning to display the classic symptoms of a thought-disordered schizophrenic. This did not bode well for the classification system since this condition is characterised by conceptual over inclusion, that is, conceptual boundaries break down so that everything becomes related to everything else!

In addition to this setback, three times during the first twelve months the library was simply uprooted to a different part of the warehouse - which of course meant sorting through all the books again, because on none of these occasions was I given any prior warning. There was always a plausible reason for the rearrangement - the library was either caught up in someone's bid for territory or it was obstructing the latest ideas for interior design. Added to this the warehouse was constantly filthy and so too were the books and resources I was carefully procuring. After the third move my mind was made up, whatever education function FoE might finally decide upon it should not be as a resource and information base. A nice idea but impracticable in this particular organisation. So despite the progress I was beginning to make with the classification through my "knowledge tree" ideas (see earlier), after about six months I made no determined efforts to pursue the idea of a classification system and information base or of trying to set up a resource base, communal or otherwise, at FoE.

At this time I was seriously questioning whether this was a particularly valuable resource anyway. The mood of the organisation was one of action, of having fun, of trying out new things, somehow a complex, meticulously catalogued information system seemed inappropriate. In order to run efficiently and effectively it would necessitate a librarian, the volunteer had been admitted to hospital and I did not want to commit myself to this role at this stage. Moreover in order to be a reliable information system the stocks would have to be much larger than we could manage to beg or borrow. There are a number of much richer resource bases for environmental education (e.g. CEE, DES, CoEnCo, Urban Base) both national and local so I abandoned grandiose plans for the information system and just kept my eye on the files and concentrated on building up information that seemed useful specifically to

education. Had there been a team of people working on education then it would probably have been realistic to consider running an information service but so far in the project I was experiencing difficulty in getting help with such esoteric education work. I found the information system I did build up adequate for and largely controlled by the day to day education work. Unfortunately the final demise of the library and information files came in May, 1981 when the warehouse office was gutted by fire - I was so relieved that my instinct had warned me not to base any education initiative on anything quite so tangible!

Liason with Outside Contacts

As the education worker it was necessary to liase with two sorts of people outside the organisation - clients and colleagues.

'Clients' were the schools, colleges, librarians, community groups and anyone wanting or likely to use our services. Such people contacted FoE every day and it was policy to make time for them since they represented important points of access to the public. A group like FoE has no captive audience and as such tends to make the most of any potential audience which comes its way. This 'availability' to all-comers is indeed ad hoc but it would be foolish to snub people who have been sufficiently aware and interested to make contact; on the contrary it is good policy to capitalise on this sympathy and commitment. Moreover the contacts in the education world in particular can be a useful outlet for marketing education materials so are worth including on a mailing list.

Whilst I was education worker I never went out to seek these grassroots contacts, I relied only on those who came to FoE. There was never any point in building up an extensive network of these contacts because we had very little to offer them and without a well co-ordinated education team we could not have run any community based education programmes, projects or resource base. I did not resent being available to callers, on the contrary this contact was a good opportunity to find out what was the awareness in the general population, what was needed and wanted and to generally assess the potential of these clients for involvement in any future projects which might be developed.

'Colleagues' are those organisations and people who are doing similar work or are in similar situations. These include other environmental organisations, especially environmental education

bodies, kindred pressure groups, community action groups, volunteer projects, advice centres, people compiling directories or setting up employment schemes and so on in both the statutory and voluntary sectors.

I was eager to build up these contacts so in addition to those who contacted FoE I actively sought contact with many more, and close contact with a few. It appears to an outsider watching this liason going on that there is some mysterious underground, alternative or appropriate network at work. To some extent this is true but it has to be activated personally if it is to be of any use; it is there to be tapped but has to be created and it exists only in so far as it is used.

From the point of view of formal research these contacts were a vital source of information about the environmental, educational and community scenes, but in practice they provide more than information. These contacts are working colleagues, they may be spread out geographically and they may never work with you directly, but they are a vital "reference group". This group functions to keep you up to date with events, trends, opinions, it is a way of keeping your ear to the ground and where the action is. Furthermore, and very importantly, it is a source of support since basically it tends to operate on the principle of 'you scratch my back - I'll scratch yours'. This underlying code of behaviour is a vital aspect of the alternative, voluntary, non-established service since it is this camaraderie which can turn otherwise straightforward bureaucratic contact into creative interaction, into new projects and initiatives which can pioneer radical approaches to education to employment or whatever.

(b) The Nature of Education in FoE Birmingham

Education in FoE B'ham has a number of distinctive characteristics which stem from the nature of the organisation itself and the role or function it performs both in the local community and in society as a whole. I would contend that overall it offers a unique approach to environmental education and as such can offer something of value to this general field.

The idea of a pressure group being involved in environmental education suggests that it can offer only its own partisan view which inhibits broad understanding of the subject. Indeed FoE does take a political stance on environmental phenomena but it can be argued that there is no such thing as a-political education merely different ways of looking at phenomena, different types of analysis. Furthermore,

there are certain aspects of being a pressure group which can be an asset to environmental education, relating mainly to the fact that a pressure group always seeks to bring about change. These and other characteristics of FoE's brand of education are described below.

(i) A Wholistic Approach to the Subject Matter

It can be argued that because of its environmentalistic philosophy FoE takes a wholistic or systems approach to the subject matter (the environment). With the environment as an eco-system specific phenomena cannot be considered in isolation but as part of a system which in turn belongs with other systems all part of the universal environmental system. Thus any topic within environmental education is seen as belonging to a set of dynamic interacting systems which go to make up the environment as a whole. This systems view of the environment is elaborated in section (v) of this appendix, but a couple of examples to show what implications a systems approach has for environmental education will be given here.

The systems approach provides a set of guidelines for teaching about specific topics: specific topics like Energy, Minerals, Food, Air, Land can be seen as resource systems thus giving the concept of The Energy Resource System, The Food Resource System and so on. The resource system is made up of all factors - natural or social - which come into contact with the resource, thus in The Food Resource System it is necessary to look at not only the biology of food production but also its geography, industry, distribution, consumption and so on. Figure A.1.6. shows how The Food Resource System can be broken down for teaching purposes and in order to fit in with whatever syllabus requirements are in existence.

As already noted, the systems are not separate, they impinge on and form part of other systems. Therefore when looking at The Food Resource System it is necessary to consider its relations with other systems such as The Energy System, Land System, Mineral System and so on. From an educational point of view the purpose of this approach is to ensure that any given aspect of the environment is studied in relation to the other aspects thus leading towards a better understanding of the environmental system as a whole. Figure A.1.7. shows some links between Food, Energy, Land, Minerals and so on.

(ii) Problem - Oriented

As a pressure group set to protect the environment, FoE identifies contemporary environmental problems. This orientation highlights the relationship between human activities and the natural environment and shows that both these aspects have to be studied in relation to each other in order to gain understanding of the eco-system as a whole. Thus the study of mineral resources looks at not only the geological distribution but at consumption patterns, distribution networks, economic development and investment, end-use, misuse and so on. The study of wildlife becomes a study of natural history but also considers its relationship to farming, human migration, trade, industry and development.

This leads to a dynamic and pragmatic form of education which questions the use of the natural environment. Figure A.1.8. shows this pragmatic approach being used in the study of Energy.

(iii) Change Oriented

As a pressure group FoE seeks to bring about

Fig. A1.6 The Food Resource System

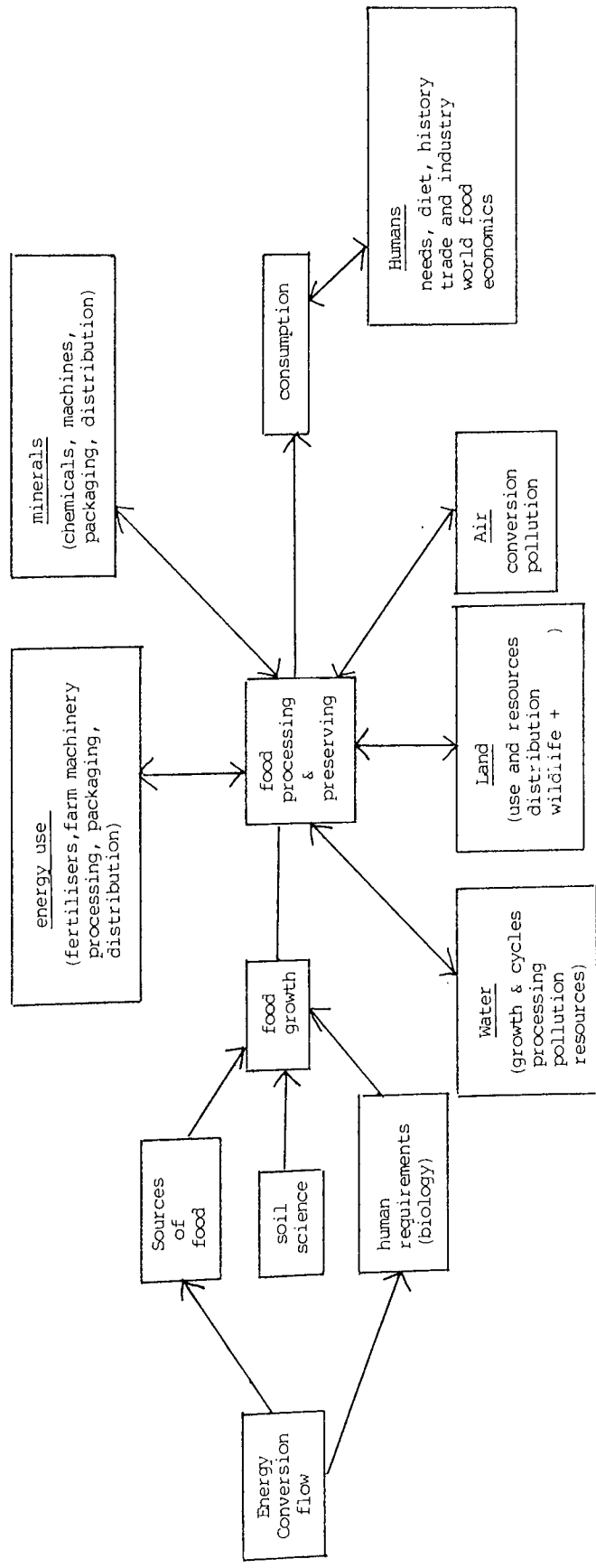


Fig. A1.7 The Relationship between Food & Other Resources

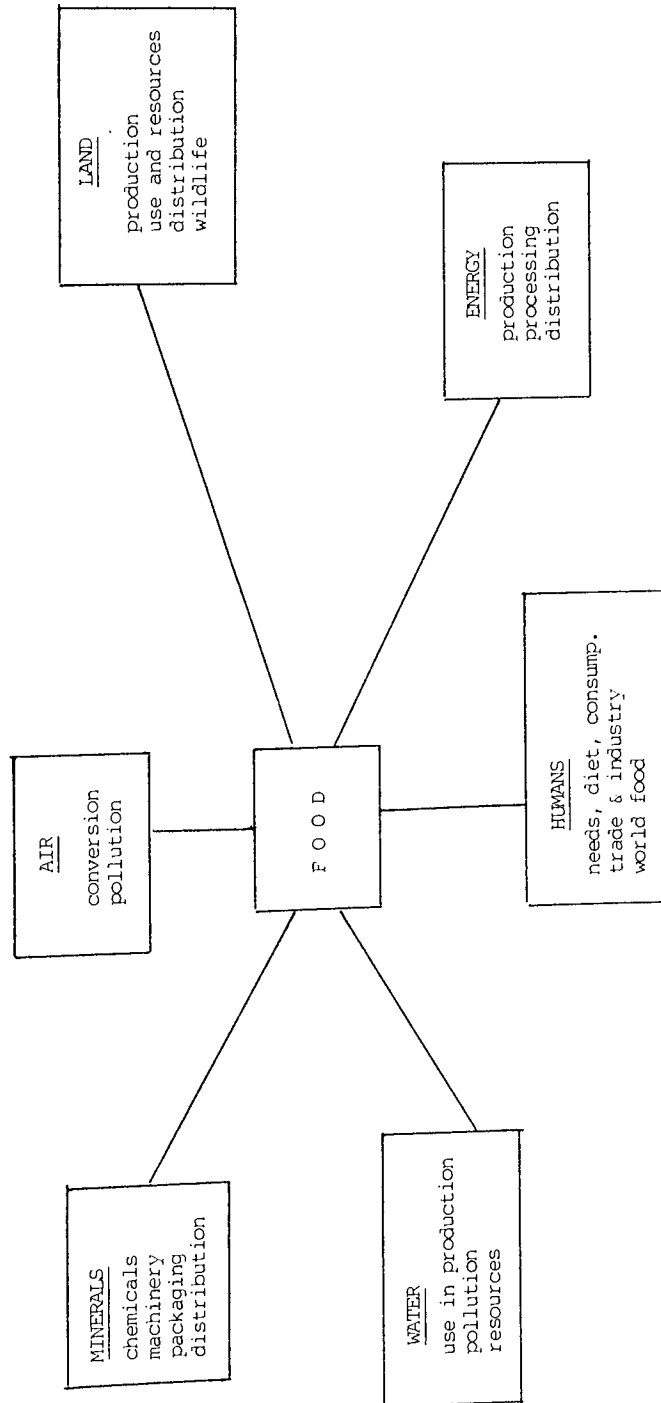
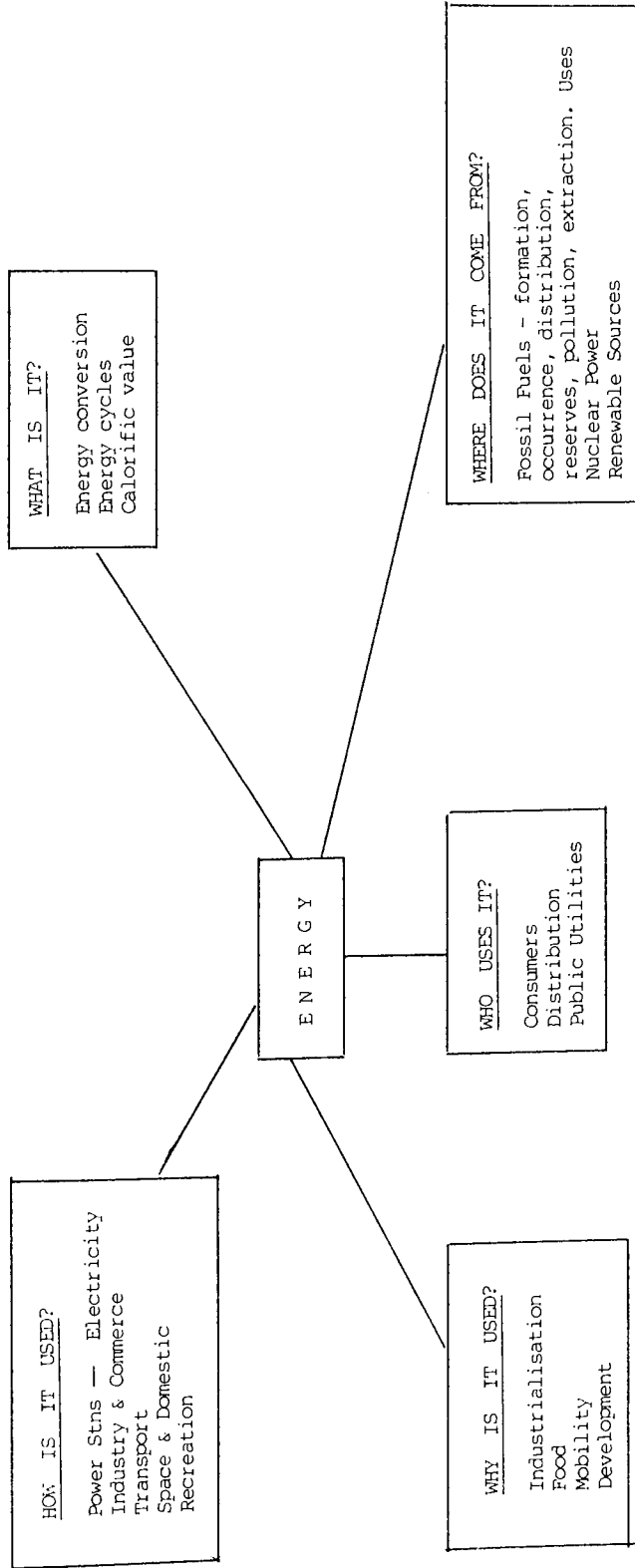


Fig. A1.8

The Use of Energy



(Based on CSE Environmental Science Syllabus plus additional material introduced as a direct result of the resource systems approach)

change in many different spheres of human activity. In the individual or personal sphere FoE aims to effect change on three levels of human learning, the cognitive, affective and behavioural levels. In other words, FoE's education sets out to enable people to understand (cognitive) the problem, to want (affect) to do something about it and to actually do (behaviour) something. Thus FoE's aim is to raise awareness, gain interest and enable involvement.

(iv) Relevant

As a locally-based pressure group FoE is concerned primarily with influencing local public opinion thus has a local orientation and operates at a community level. This necessitates interpreting general environmental problems and abstract issues into locally and personally relevant terms. For example one talks about urban wildlife, about food packaging, about lead in petrol in order to introduce the general problem and wider issues to which these relate. Alternatively, one could start by looking at the immediate environment and work out from this to the wider environment. Figure A.1.9. shows how land use issues can be introduced by looking first at land in Birmingham.

(v) Practical

FoE pioneers and demonstrates practical ways in which improvements can be brought about. These ideas and projects plus FoE's physical presence within an urban community makes community and personal involvement possible. FoE's practical activities provide the opportunity for people to change their behaviour towards the environment; this happens either through direct participation or by example.

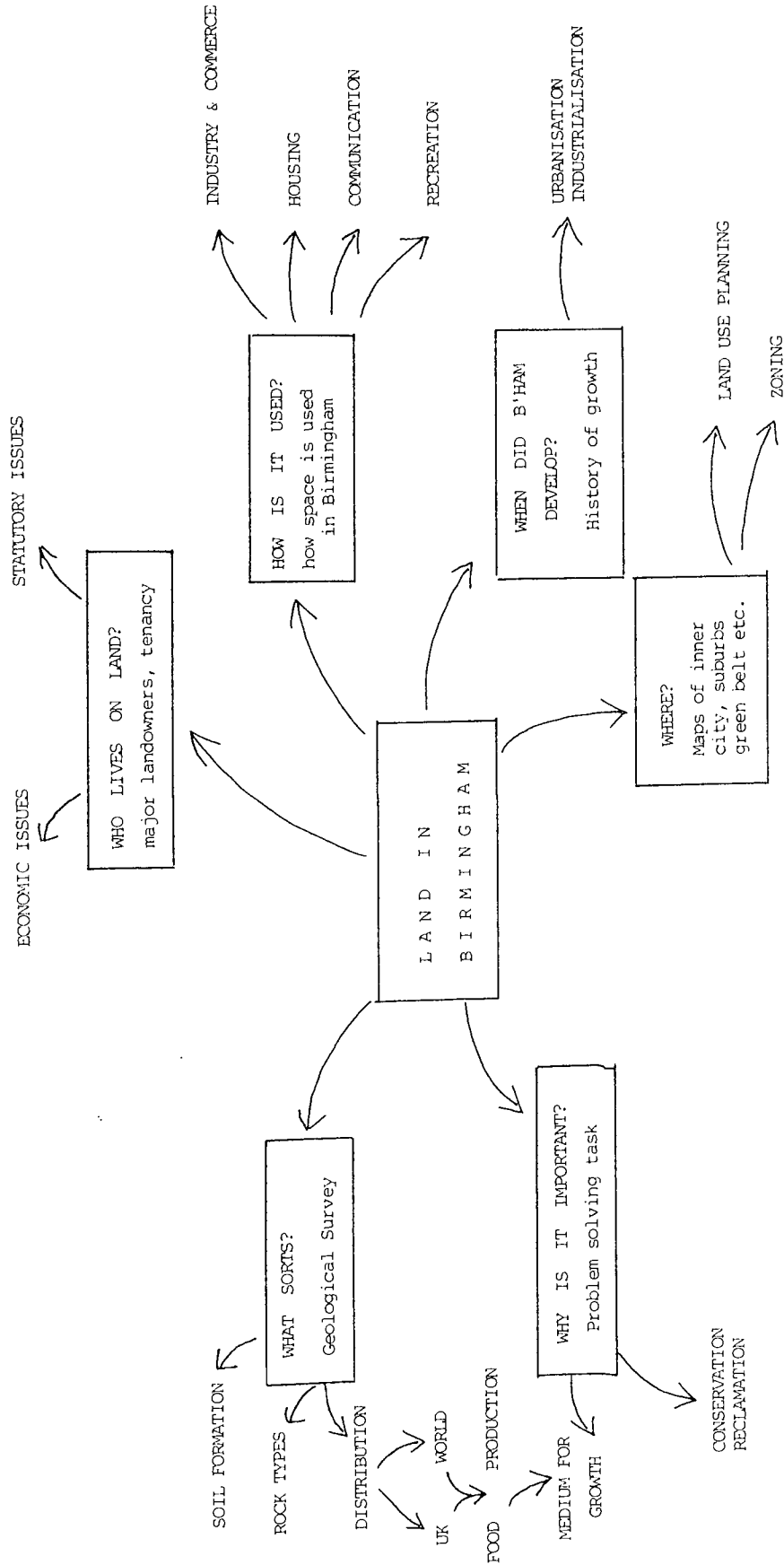
In summary, FoE's approach to education is wholistic, it highlights problems in the relationship between man and nature, it is pragmatically change-orientated so interprets phenomena in terms which are both familiar and practical and thus is able to operate on all three levels of human learning. This approach is characteristically unique within the general field of environmental education, it offers a 'dynamism' which although desirable is often absent. As such FoE can make a useful contribution to environmental education in Britain today.

(c) The Function of Education in FoE Birmingham

"Education" fulfils a distinctive and important function in FoE Birmingham which no other single activity in the organisation can do. The main

Fig. A1.9

Land in Birmingham



difference between education and the other activities at FoE is its broad perspective - it is concerned with all aspects of the environment not chosen aspects or those which happen to have been taken up by FoE at any given time. Based on an environmentalist philosophy, education provides a wholistic framework to which the separate environmental topics can refer, thus the function of education is to put specific activities and functions into a wider perspective - it conceptually co-ordinates all other activities at FoE.

Although the individual activities belong to this wider framework it is not their function to promote it, their primary concern is to achieve quite specific, narrowly defined objectives.

From the organisation's point of view, the education work provides a convenient and legitimate point of contact between the different projects and activities within the warehouse because it has to continually cross specialist boundaries. This helps to give the organisation a corporate identity and prevents polarisation into specialist groups.

It's contact with the outside world is broad based, rather than limited to a single sphere, and as such provides an education service of the sort which is expected of an environmentalist organisation.

(v) APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
FOR THE "BIRMINGHAM ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECT"
(BEEP)

Introduction

Leaders in the field of environmental education suggest that it should be broad and interdisciplinary in scope; dynamic, participative and value based (see appendix 1). In practical terms this means that it should consider all aspects of the environment from many different points of view. It should inspire and allow people to come into contact with and develop a responsibility towards their environment.

A review of the present state of the field indicates that environmental education is falling short of these ideals (see appendix 1). This is understandable when teachers are faced with timetable and syllabus restrictions, or lack the facilities or initiative to put the ideas into practice.

This project is designed to explore ways of making environmental education more effective. It is experimental and as such will be useful to the development of educational practice in general. It has evolved over a period of four years during which time we have operated a range of environmental projects including tree planting, building insulation and materials recycling. In addition we have researched and disseminated information on numerous environmental themes: for example wildlife, energy, resources, pollution, etc. (see appendix 2). In all our work we have considered it important to look at the relationships within and between the natural and social environments. Thus our study of resources becomes a study of consumption patterns, distribution networks, use and misuse of resources and so on. Similarly, our study of wildlife becomes a study of farming, development and human migration, trade and industry.

Our education is both broad and practical. Because of this we feel our approach to environmental education is one which has long been advocated but has naturally proved difficult to put into practice.

Because of our financial constraints and the increasing complexity of our operations, we feel that our approach needs to be focalised and improved.

Unless we can adopt these proposals there is great danger of losing the fragile balance between the broad and specific which characterises our present work.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

We would like to propose a two year project which will expand our existing work in environmental education.

Aims

1. To build up information on the West Midlands environment, using the systems approach.
2. To involve local people in the implementation of the project.
3. To disseminate the expertise and information generated during the project, to help other educational groups throughout the country.

Method

Set up, facilitate and co-ordinate a programme of environmental fact-finding activities throughout the region. The programme and the projects therein will be based on a systems approach and will involve schools and youth and community groups. (See appendix 3)

Techniques

1. Projects will be chosen on the basis of:
 - (a) local needs and relevance, e.g. lead pollution, derelict land, etc.
 - (b) abilities of the participants, e.g. adults, secondary, primary schools, etc.
 - (c) Curriculum requirements
2. Projects will be run in a number of ways:
 - (a) new projects developed in liason with participants
 - (b) participants join existing projects
 - (c) experimental projects based on accumulated experience
3. Projects will be co-ordinated using various

mechanisms:

- (a) an initial booklet explaining principles and giving contacts and resources
 - (b) a newsletter and notice board for participants
 - (c) joint projects, exhibitions, etc.
 - (d) media coverage by newspapers, radio and television
4. Projects will be evaluated by, for example:
- (a) systems theory
 - (b) educational theories
 - (c) theories of social psychology
 - (d) empirical feedback e.g. popularity

Beneficiaries

1. Educators:
- (a) models for curriculum development
 - (b) ideas and projects for environmental education
 - (c) information on the local environment
 - (d) teaching materials
2. Local adults and children:
- (a) increased awareness and knowledge of their environment
 - (b) opportunity for practical involvement
3. Environmental Science:
- (a) methodology evaluation (it is hoped to achieve an academic appraisal of the subject)
 - (b) data on West Midlands environment

APPENDIX 1: A REVIEW OF THE NEEDS AND PROVISION IN
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND LIST OF PEOPLE AND
ORGANISATIONS GIVING SUPPORT

1. National and international opinion

During the 1970's a number of reports were presented on the aims and achievements of environmental education, plus the directions it should take in the future. Certain key opinions emerged over and over again which are best summed up in a short excerpt from one of the major reports (1); published by UNESCO in 1977 and quoted below:

"The guiding principles of environmental education (2) define 'environment' as that which contains both natural and man-made factors, on which environmental education should focus. They also state that environmental education should be a continuous life-long process, interdisciplinary in nature and favouring active participation in the prevention and solution of environmental issues and problems."

Thus environmental education is seen as dynamic, participative interdisciplinary and value based.

Suitable projects are needed to develop this sort of education at grass roots level. One way of doing this was suggested by a second important report (3):

"...an approach that involved children in useful collection of data in their local area, or in interviewing local people for their views on environmental issues was warmly welcomed."

Our methods, existing projects and future plans incorporate these ideals and have been shown to work in the past.

2. Grass-roots opinion

Although these reports are inspiring, we have also spent considerable time finding out the opinions of people actually involved in environmental education.

We interviewed a number of people at national

level (see below) to find out their own organisation's roles and what they considered to be pressing needs for further developments.

At present, it seems that there are two sorts of provision in environmental education:

1. information and advice for people wanting to run projects (e.g. COENCO, CEE, HEG, TCPA, Watch, NAEF, etc.)
2. practical projects for people who actually want to get involved (BTCV, Naturalists Trusts, WWOOF, and many local preservation societies)

Whilst the information and advice services are broad-based and interdisciplinary, they put the onus on the professional teacher to take the initiative. In contrast the practical environmental projects are usually single issue projects often concentrating on rural areas. This not only neglects the pressing need for practical nature conservation in urban areas but also leads to a narrow view of the environment.

Moreover, a major problem with this approach stems from the fact that the two functions are never truly combined. The broad-based information services do not operate in an interdisciplinary way but collate and disseminate information under specific headings. Both services therefore encourage a limited view of the environment leading to the study of single isolated aspects rather than the environment as a whole.

Understandably therefore, the quality of much of the current environmental education falls short of the ideals outlined above. To quote a member of the Birmingham Education Committee:

"I can go into one school and find a project exactly the same as projects in half a dozen other schools in the area; I can even tell which books they've copied from, and none of the teachers have stopped to consider the contribution these projects make to the curriculum - map reading, developing an attitude towards the environment and the like..."

Certainly many of the teachers we come into contact with are searching for relevant projects and often ask for our ideas and the use of our teaching materials. There is therefore an obvious need for

projects which are interdisciplinary in design.

Adult education, let alone adult participation, is virtually non-existent in the environmental field. Adult and community workers are waiting for a lead in this field since environmental improvement projects can be very relevant to the problems they are tackling such as vandalism, loss of community and failure of citizens to take part in local affairs.

References

1. UNESCO-ENEP; Regional Meeting of Experts on Environmental Education in Europe; Helsinki; 27-31 January, 1977.
2. UNESCO-UNEP; The International Workshop on Environmental Education; Belgrade; October, 1975.
3. Department of Environment - Environment Board; Environmental Education in Urban Areas; 1979.

Appendix A List of People Interviewed and Giving Support to the Project

National Bodies

Keith Egelstone	Heritage Education Group
Ann Armstrong	Town & Country Planning Association
Philip Neal	National Association Environmental Education
Stephen Stirling	Council for Environmental Education
Graham White	Volunteers Environment Resource Centre
Peter Berry	Conservation Trust
Stephen Joseph	Committee for Environmental Conservation Youth Unit
Ms Lincoln	Watch, Society for the Promotion of Nature Conservation
Co-Ordinator	Youth Environmental Action
Peter Raine	Centre for Alternative Technology

Robert Plant Ecoropa, European Environmental
Group

Local Bodies: School education contacts

Paul Topham Schools Inspector for Environmental
Education, Birmingham Education
Department

Paul Bennett Chairman, Birmingham Environmental
Studies Association

Pat Lennard Director/Tutor in Charge, Urban Base
Bordesley Teacher's Centre,
Birmingham.

Jean Forster Martineau Rural Studies Centre,
Birmingham.

Tony Sames Birmingham Schools Environmental
Education Fieldworker, Birmingham
Education Department.

Mike Kingham Lecturer in Environmental Studies,
Faculty of Teaching Education and
Training, Birmingham Polytechnic.

Adrian Cholmandley Faculty of Teacher Education and
Training, Birmingham Polytechnic.

Vic Milne Westhill College, Birmingham.

Roger Hammond Chairman, Urban Wildlife Group.

Local Bodies: Adult and Community Education Contacts

Patrick Laird Education liason officer, local
studies, Birmingham City Libraries

John Aitken Reader Tutor, Extramural Department,
Birmingham University.

Graham Prize Tutor Organiser, WEA Birmingham

Barrie Thompson Adult Learners Enquiry Centre,
Birmingham Joint Committee for
Adult Education Information and
Advice

Stuart Daniels Fieldworker, Highgate and Moseley
Centre, Birmingham Joint Committee
for Adult Education Information and

Advice

John Knight	District Youth and Community Worker, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Education Committee, Youth and Community Service, West Midlands.
John Rowbotham	Education Programmes, Producer BBC Midlands TV
June Harburn	Education Producer, BBC Radio Birmingham
Michael Goater	Education Officer, ATV Network
Mike Owens	Education Producer, BRMB independant local radio
Dick Williams	Features Editor, Birmingham Post
Christina Hill	Keep Britain Tidy Group, West Midland Co-Ordinator
Colin Beard	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, West Midlands Branch
Nick Pinder	Birmingham Nature Centre
Tom Pettitt	Pushbikes Cycling Campaign Group

b

APPENDIX 2: EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN FRIENDS OF THE EARTH (BIRMINGHAM) LIMITED

Birmingham Environmental Education Project (BEEP) is the charitable arm of Friends of the Earth (Birmingham) Limited. Friends of the Earth Birmingham is financially and legally autonomous from Friends of the Earth (UK), although its aims stem from the same environmental philosophy. It is the only FoE group to employ people specifically to develop environmental education.

The table below details our involvement in adult and youth environmental education over the last two and a half years. It shows that we have provided broad ranging education of all types, ranging from information sheets and talks to practical projects. BEEP was set up as FoE Birmingham's environmental education body in October, 1979. Our aim is to stimulate debate about a broad range of environmental issues and to explore the various options open to us, but emphatically not to present a rigid environmental dogma. We encourage people to discuss and form their own opinions in the belief that until they do so they are unlikely to become aware and responsible citizens.

Main Projects, History and Development

April, 1977	<p><u>Recycling Centre</u> established in city premises marking the launch of FoE Birmingham.</p> <p><u>Paper Recycling:</u> We are a base for consumers, local industry and commerce to bring waste card and paper thus providing a facility for people wanting to recycle paper and help FoE. We also market a range of recycled paper products, with the intention of stabilising the demand for recycled paper. As with all our projects, our recycling scheme is run with the view of helping other local self-help groups to set up their own schemes; an activity especially suited to schools and youth groups.</p> <p>This project, along with other trading activities enables us to employ four workers.</p> <p><u>Plastic recycling:</u> This is a new</p>
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	<p>area currently being researched by a management student on placement from Aston University, and is likely to be a fairly large project collecting and recycling waste plastic from local industry and commerce. We are in the process of negotiating finance from an oil company for this project.</p>
November, 1977	<p><u>Environmental Information Project</u></p> <p>Four workers funded for 12 months by Manpower Services Commission Job Creation Programme.</p> <p><u>Aims:</u> To research the requirements of local educators and produce material to meet these needs. This project was the forerunner of BEEP.</p> <p><u>Publications:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>"Resources, Reclamation and Recycling"</u> An education Pack published June 1978 and having sold 1500 copies to date, 80% to schools and colleges. 2. <u>"Birmingham Waste Directory"</u> A recycling directory for Birmingham. 1500 copies sold to date, many to other groups wanting to produce one for their own areas. 3. <u>"What on Earth are we Doing at Home?"</u> A book showing the effect of contemporary lifestyles on the environment published in June 1979. 2500 copies to date with financial assistance from the Bryant Trust.
August, 1978	<p><u>Home Insulation Project</u></p> <p>Set up with five years funding from the Inner City Partnership Project employing 6 workers.</p> <p>A practical energy conservation project insulating the houses of pensioners and disabled and offering a free advice service on energy conservation in the home.</p>

	<p>The project used as many volunteers as possible which includes pupils from 4th-6th form community programmes, the probation service, international voluntary service, training for life schemes and individuals from the local community. We can see the volunteer scheme expanding rapidly over the coming winter, eventually leading to the setting up of self-help schemes at local level.</p> <p>Running the project in this way means that more houses are insulated, but that we also provide useful skills training, and raise the general awareness of the need for energy conservation and what can be done about it.</p>
December, 1978	<p>"<u>Cuddly Whale Kit</u>" produced. A sewing kit complete with poster badge and information about whales aimed at younger children. 2000 sold.</p>
February 1979	<p>Energy exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre's <u>Energy Show</u>.</p>
April, 1979	<p><u>Wholefood School of Nutrition</u></p> <p>FoE took over this national charity which aims to promote the use of wholefoods. The main activities of the school are to publish a bi-monthly magazine, to run courses in wholefood cookery and nutrition, and to run teacher training courses.</p> <p>Run entirely by volunteer workers. Magazine sales are 2000 per issue and membership of the school is 800.</p>
October, 1979	<p><u>Birmingham Environmental Education Project</u></p> <p>FoE Birmingham's educational charity.</p> <p><u>Aim:</u> "To advance the education of the public in matters appertaining</p>

to the conservation, protection and restoration for the public benefit of the natural resources and animal and plant life of the world"

Activities to date

1. Education worker appointed, funded by the Science and Engineering Research Council for three years. The worker is a doctoral student attached to the Interdisciplinary Higher Degree at Aston University, looking into and developing environmental education in Friends of the Earth.
2. Graphic Designer appointed in October, 1979 for production of educational materials and funded by FoE's trading activities.
3. Urban Ecologist appointed to develop work on the conservation of urban wildlife in January, 1980. Funded by the Cadbury Trust for two years to produce a manual on urban conservation in the West Midlands.
4. December, 1980. "Whale Pack" to be published; a teacher's pack on whales and endangered species. Funded by Clarke's Shoes and a local school.
5. Urban Trail on River Rae to be published in January, 1981. Funded by Birmingham City Planning Department.
6. National Friends of the Earth Conference on Communication Skills; March, 1980.
7. Resources Bank has been built up over the last 12 months, used by schools and groups all over the country. Resources include portable exhibitions, slide sets, posters, wall charts, games, action ideas, information, lending library,

	information sheets and FoE publications.
February, 1980	<u>Tree nurseries</u> established and <u>urban conservation</u> with help from the Queen's Silver Jubilee Fund and the Inner City Partnership Project.
June, 1980	<p><u>Greensite Project</u></p> <p>Set up with one year's funding from the Manpower Services Commission STEP Scheme for 17 workers. A practical urban conservation project. At present work centres on the development of a nature reserve at an inner city churchyard and the creation of an urban farm in an inner city school, in co-operation with the congregation and schoolchildren respectively. A third activity is the development of low maintenance nature gardens for pensioners and the disabled so that they can continue to enjoy their garden and the wildlife it attracts. This activity is ideal for involving neighbours and local groups.</p> <p>There are many more sites and gardens awaiting this sort of work, we act as advisers for other groups wanting to get on with it themselves. The Greensite Project has lead directly to the setting up of the "Urban Wildlife Group" a body set up to promote the alternative or "natural" approach to urban open-space environment. The UWG has just received funding from MSC for 4 workers to survey potential sites.</p>

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

The projects above have brought us into contact with most ages and sectors of the population both locally and nationally. Moreover since 1977 we have provided a good deal of "incidental" education - this becomes less incidental each year and is one of the major reasons for our need to employ more education workers. For example:

- (i) Publication of a series of up to date information on topical environmental issues
- (ii) 20 different courses run either by ourselves or in conjunction with WEA, Extramural Departments and A.E. Institutes.
- (iii) Talks to teachers' centres local organisations, schools, colleges, trade unions. These totalled 30 in 1977, this year we have given over 100 yet have never dared advertise this service. A recent survey of secondary schools brought an 80 % response of schools wanting talks.
- (iv) Umpteen open meetings on topics of local, national and international interest.
- (v) Service a continual stream of general enquiries (letters, phone calls, callers). This year we have had 500 enquiries, 2/3 were from adults, the other 1/3 from school children doing projects at school. Most of these projects are for GCE 'O' level and CSE - materials on pollution in particular appear to be scarce.
- (vi) Media work - including a 12 month, fortnightly series on "The Environment" with BBC Radio Birmingham.
- (vii) Looking after numerous volunteers who turn up on our doorstep everyday. These are usually unemployed young people or school children in their holidays.
- (viii) Liason with educaion and other bodies over environmental and educational events: Birmingham Planning Department, Birmingham Education Department, Birmingham Council of Churches, Cannon Hill Arts Centre, Co En Co, Walsall Youth and Community Service, Youth Employment Resources Unit, International Voluntary Service.

All this adds up to quite a lot of work for BEEP who officially does not have any one worker employed full-time to work on education.

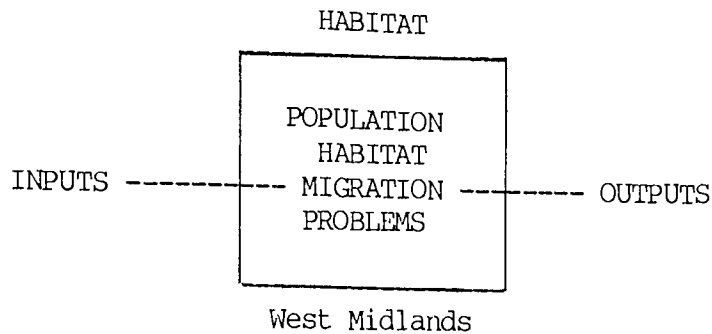
APPENDIX C: PROJECT THEORY AND RATIONALE

1. The Systems Approach

Our study of the West Midlands environment will be based on a systems or ecological approach whereby a specific aspect of the environment will be studied in relation to other aspects, thus contributing towards a better understanding of the system as a whole.

Initially, this model would be based on the following broad topic areas, listed below and summarised in the diagram:

HABITAT	Built Environment Wild Spaces Natural Systems Operating
POPULATION	Dynamics Composition
INPUTS	Energy Food Resources People
OUTPUTS	Products Skills People
MIGRATION	Transport Systems
PROBLEMS	Pollution Overcrowding Social Tensions Vulnerability
IMPROVEMENTS	Suggestions for Improving the Current Situation.



An example may illustrate the advantage of using the eco-system model:

A popular school project is the study of transport. This usually involves a survey of the types and numbers of vehicles along a particular road or roads. Sometimes some interpretation is carried out, however, it is only gifted or interested teachers who will attempt to go further and link the transport findings with other social and environmental factors.

Using the eco-system model, the following questions would be asked:

- * What is being transported into and out of the city?
- * Where do the vehicles come from?
- * Where does the energy come from to run the vehicles?
- * What is the future of this energy?
- * How many of the population only come to work in the city, and live outside?
- * How does transport effect development and settlement patterns in the city?
- * What pollution effects are there?
- * How does transport effect the economy of Birmingham?
- * Does transport contribute to, or alleviate social problems?
- * What effect does public transport have?
- * How could transport systems be improved?
- * What future changes are there likely to be?

* Do we need transport as much, etc. ...?

Starting from the basis of an appropriately simple transport survey, our eco-system approach would expand into a broader and more relevant project.

By building up links between schools and publishing a regular newsletter, these individual projects could develop.

Environmental Aims

1. To research neglected aspects of the local environment, eg. energy consumption, migration, local pollution.
2. To produce an information dossier on the West Midlands region which will facilitate better understanding of the environment, by bringing hitherto dispersed material together.

Educational Aims

1. To encourage students' study of their own environment.
2. To encourage them to relate their immediate surroundings to the wider environment.
3. To interpret environmental topics in terms of the student's own experience.
4. To provide a framework for teaching any environmental topic. The model allows isolated topics to be put into context.
5. To encourage teachers and students to look for causes and to link practical education with theoretical - so that they are doing more than just a class exercise.
6. To provide ideas, information and facilities for use by local teachers and residents.
7. To foster a sense of responsibility towards the environment.
8. To build up a sense of community by running a co-ordinated project across the region.

APPENDIX 4: SCHEDULE

Phase 1; Basic Research; April - August 1981

1. Production of handbook to stimulate interest laying out the principles of the project and giving references.
2. Make contacts in schools and community groups who will contribute to the project, and find out what projects will be most attractive to them.
3. Develop a programme of projects.
4. Run pilot projects.

Phase 2; Running; September 1981 - June 1982

1. Run specific projects.
2. Record the information by setting up an active environmental dossier of the West Midlands.
3. Co-ordinate the 'groups' activities.

Phase 3; Evaluation; July - August 1982

1. Continue the project, keeping the dossier up to date and maintaining relations with participants.
2. Preparation of materials for publications.

Phase 4; Publications; September 1982 - April 1983

1. Pack or Manual on the West Midlands environment using informaion from the files.

Schedule

The project is expected to run for two years from April, 1981 to April, 1983. It will consist of four phases:

1. Basic Research
2. Running
3. Evaluation
4. Publications and Developments

Personnel and Budget

The project will need the following staff:

A Co-ordinator/researcher
A schools field worker
A community field worker

Existing Funding:

£4,500 capital from non-government sources (See App. 2)
£2,600 from government sources (Science Research Council - see App. 2) This will pay the co-ordinator until October 1982.

TOTAL: £9,700

Funding sought for the following;

	amount/ annum	Total over 2 years
1. Schools Fieldworker Salary	6,500	13,000
Plus 13% NI	880	1,760
2. Community Fieldwork Salary	6,500	13,000
Plus 13% NI	880	1,760
3. Running Expenses		
Rent and Rates	240	480
Heat and Light	40	80
Telephone	250	500
Insurance	30	60
Travel	300	600
Library Materials	75	150
Office Expenses	125	250
	-----	-----
TOTAL	£15,820	£31,640
	=====	=====

We would like to request funding from the Department of the Environment for:

(a)	two years salary for the <u>community field worker</u>	14,760
(b)	two years running expenses	<u>2,122</u>
	TOTAL SOUGHT FROM D.O.E.	<u><u>£16,882</u></u>

We are in the process of negotiating with Birmingham Education Department for the salary for the schools fieldworker.

(vi) BEEP VIDEO PROJECT

(a) Overview

The 12 month project will produce and market 2 multi-media education packs showing how urban communities are involved in caring for their own environment. One pack will look at energy conservation and the other at wildlife conservation; each pack will contain a video-film and a set of supporting material in the form of illustrated booklets, wallcharts, survey sheets, slides and games. The video film will show the initiatives being taken by community groups and concentrate on practical advice. The 2 packs - 'The Energy Community Action Pack' and 'The Nature Community Action Pack' will be available for use in schools and community groups.

There will be a number of themes underlying the packs:

1. A systems approach will be taken towards each topic so although each pack will cover a specific topic this will be done by showing how it relates to other aspects of the environment.

Thus 'transport' links to energy, pollution, community lifestyles, land use and so on.

2. Each pack will demonstrate the impact of contemporary lifestyles (urban-industrial) on the natural environment. This will be done using data on Birmingham for example.
3. Each pack will make a point of highlighting initiatives being taken to improve any current problematic situations. In particular they will show the community initiatives. Where these are not happening, solutions and compromises will be explored.

(b) Schedule

1. Months 1 - 3 Research

- (i) Find out and visit community projects in Birmingham working on
 - (a) Energy Conservation
 - (b) Nature Conservation.
- (ii) Meet and discuss the needs of secondary

school general studies teachers and F.E. college tutors.

- (iii) Learn about the key issues in (a) Energy Conservation and (b) Nature Conservation through reading and discussions with leaders in these respective fields. (Contact files already available.)
- (iv) Research basic local information on (a) Energy Supply and Demand (b) Nature Sites and Land Use.
- (v) Research the Audio-Visual and Printed materials already available on the market in both energy and nature conservation. (Comprehensive information files already available.)

2. Month 4 Planning

- (i) Outline the content of the video films on (a) "Energy Community Action" (b) "Nature Community Action". (see Appendices c and d below)
- (ii) Outline the content of the back-up material which will go with each video to form the (a) "Energy Community Action Pack" and (b) "Nature Community Action Pack". (see Appendices c and d below)
- (iii) Fix and Book filming and printing dates and set copy deadlines.
- (iv) Arrange distribution through (a) Film Distributors (b) Publications Distributors (c) Education and Community Networks. (contact files already available)

3. Months 5 - 6 Writing

- (i) Design the 2 video programmes, including a fairly detailed outline of the script.
- (ii) Write and design the 2 sets of back-up material - 1st draft.

4. Months 7 - 10 Production

- (i) Produce the 2 video films - final product by month 10.

(ii) Final draft of the back-up materials - to go to printers by month 10.

5. Months 11 - 12 Distribution and Follow-up

(i) Local distribution of the 2 packs through personal contact (talks, visits, etc) with community and education bodies.

(ii) National distribution through carriers (see 2 (iv) above).

(iii) Write up an assessment of the project as a whole and the material produced.

(c) Topics Likely to be Included in the "Energy Community Action Pack"

1. The Video

The film will aim to show the importance of energy to urban industrial living - where it comes from at present and its end uses and to show various alternatives for the future. This will be done by making explicit reference to energy use in Birmingham - in housing, commerce, industry, transport, recreation and so on. Taking the view that energy should be used as wisely as possible the film will show examples of initiatives to conserve energy already being taken within the Birmingham community - building insulation, solar heating, waste-derived fuel plants, energy audits, cycleways and so on.

2. Back-Up Materials

Illustrated Booklets on:

- (i) Energy Use in Birmingham 1900 - 1980.
- (ii) Conserving Energy in the Community. (domestic and communal, commercial, industrial, transport, other)
- (iii) Renewable Energy in Towns and Cities.
- (iv) Projects and activities on Energy. (What's going on; ideas and so on)

Other Media

- (i) Wall Charts on: Energy Trends, energy in the home, etc.
- (ii) Energy Audit Sheets (for reproduction) and other survey sheets.
- (iii) Energy Policy Game - along lines

- of "World Energy Game" but with a conservation factor.
- (iv) Slide sets and commentary on: conservation techniques.
- (v) Colouring Charts (for reproduction) showing, through pictures and colour use, contrasts in consumption, in policy and so on.

(d) Topics Likely to be Included in the "Nature Community Action Pack"

1. The Video

The video will aim to show that the conservation of wildlife is not incompatible with urban land use. This will be done by showing the wide range of existing wildlife habitats already within the conurbation. It will go on to describe how various other sites could be developed in order to fulfill their social function whilst encouraging wildlife into the city. There are already a number of community based nature conservation projects using local land in imaginative ways, these will be featured throughout the programme in order to show what can and is being done by local people.

2. Back-Up Materials

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Illustrated Booklets on: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Land use in Birmingham 1900 - 1980. (ii) Open Space in) Greensite Brum) Manual Nature Conser-) Useful vation in Brum) Here (iii) Projects and activities on urban land. (What's going on; ideas and so on) |
| Other Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Wall charts on: urban species; nature sites in Brum, etc. (ii) Survey sheets (for reproduction) on land use; wildlife surveys, etc. (iii) Land Policy Game along lines of "Greenham Common". (iv) Slide sets and commentary on: nature conservation techniques; wildlife in Brum, etc. (v) Colouring sheets (for reproduction) showing through pictures and the use of colour, developments, effects of different policies and so on. |

(e) Job Descriptions and Sponsors

Birmingham Environmental Education Project

Birmingham Environmental Education Project (BEEP) is the educational charity of Friends of the Earth, Birmingham. We are looking for 3 people to work on this project for 12 months to produce and distribute 2 multi-media education packs. The packs will look at environmental improvements at a community level; one will concentrate on Nature Conservation and the other on Energy Conservation. Each pack will contain a 30 minute video film which will highlight the community initiatives being taken in these two areas. The videos will be backed up by a set of supporting material in the form of booklets, wallcharts and so on. The team of 3 will be responsible to a number of sponsors (1) and other outside agencies (2) and will work in conjunction with an advisory committee (3) which represents relevant bodies.

Although the 3 workers should work as a team each one will have personal responsibilities since basically the project will need a Producer, a Researcher and a Community Artist. The job descriptions below appear to demand hyper-efficient geni and to be honest we are looking for competence and experience. We don't expect people to have all the abilities we've outlined but we do need people who are willing to learn. The success of the project depends entirely on the team's motivation, imagination and hard graft - there are no bosses in our organisation so no-one to tell you how to do the job!

Producer

This person will be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the project. This means planning and co-ordinating the team's work programme so that the project is completed within the 12 months and within the budget. It also means liaising with and being answerable to all the sponsoring bodies; the outside agencies involved in the project and the advisory committee. For these duties the person must have proven administrative ability and be capable and willing to accommodate a number of viewpoints.

In conjunction with the other members of the team and the advisory committee the producer will conceive, develop and produce (i) The Nature Community Action Pack and (ii) The Energy Community Action Pack. Together with the researcher, the producer will be

particularly responsible for the written content of the packs. For the first 6 months of the project the whole team will concentrate on research - during this period the producer must familiarize him/herself thoroughly with the subject and with the technical aspects of production.

For this, the person must have experience of producing educational materials (although not necessarily in every medium that will be used in the packs), an ability to write and must have some prior, broad-based understanding of conservation issues.

The third major responsibility of the producer is to identify the 'market' for which the packs are intended and to supply this market when the packs have been produced. This will involve two activities: firstly becoming familiar with existing educational material on the two topics and secondly identifying the film and publication networks.

The producer will then be responsible for determining the quantity to be produced, the method of distribution and eventually for distributing the packs through the relevant channels. Therefore, prior knowledge of environmental education materials, of the education system and of community networks would be an advantage.

Researcher

This person will be the subject matter expert. This will involve the researcher in gaining an understanding of the main issues involved in Energy and Nature Conservation; in being familiar with the state of both, at the local, national and international level; and finally in researching the community initiatives being taken in these spheres, both locally and elsewhere.

During the first 6 months of the project the researcher will be helped in the research by the other two members of the team but he/she will be responsible for organising and recording all the subject matter research which is carried out. In other words the researcher will be expected to provide the project with comprehensive, accurate, up-to-date information on the practical and theoretical aspects of Energy and Nature Conservation.

In conjunction with the other members of the team and the advisory committee the researcher will conceive, develop and produce (i) The Nature Community Action Pack and (ii) The Energy Community Action Pack.

Together with the producer, the researcher will be particularly responsible for the written content of the packs.

For this post an academic background in broad-based environmental studies/science is essential as is an ability to write clearly. Past involvement in practical conservation projects would be an advantage.

Community Artist

The main responsibilities of this person lie in the design and community aspects of the two packs. This will involve researching and getting to know the community-based environment improvement schemes which will be featured in the video; and secondly will involve determining the artistic expression and graphics design of all the materials in the two packs.

During the 6 month research phase the community artist will be especially responsible for two things - local community relations and determining what it is technically and financially feasible to produce. Thus he/she will research and liaise with those outside agencies involved in the actual production of the packs (facility houses, printers, etc).

In conjunction with the other members of the team and the advisory committee the community artist will conceive develop and produce (i) The Nature Community Action Pack and (ii) The Energy Community Action Pack. Being particularly responsible for design and layout.

This person must have experience and proven ability in graphics design and community work. An ability to draw and some experience in video or film making would be an advantage. So too would familiarity with conservation issues.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth (FoE Brum)

As well as BEEP there are a number of other projects and activities going on at the FoE Brum warehouse (see leaflet). The warehouse runs as a co-operative so everyone involved is expected to operate within a co-operative structure and to contribute to the overall maintenance of the warehouse.

The three workers on the BEEP Video Project will automatically become co-op members. In practice

this means that the BEEP workers will be expected to take their turn on the general office rota, on the cooking rota, answering callers' enquiries on matters related to many aspects of the environment, looking after volunteers and generally being a chirpy helpful sort of person around the warehouse.

The continuation of the work done at the warehouse depends on the enthusiasm and energy of the people involved. So PLEASE don't apply for the BEEP jobs unless you are prepared to work within a co-operative structure and unless you are prepared to see your role as being much broader than the job description makes it sound.

Basically we are looking for energetic, broad thinking, compassionate people!

Notes

1. Sponsors of the Project

This project is being sponsored jointly by the Manpower Services Commission (MSC; Friends of the Earth (B'ham) Limited and West Midlands Arts.

Under their Community Enterprise Programme, MSC are providing wages and operating costs, the two other sponsors are helping to pay production and sundry costs.

2. Outside Agencies Involved in the Project

The videos are being produced through the Visual Communications Department of West Midlands College of Higher Education. Supervised students from this department will be involved in the production of the packs, as part of their final year projects. The college has full Eumatic colour equipment, studio and graphics facilities.

There are a number of local organisations carrying out practical conservation work in the West Midlands - for example, Birmingham Planning Dept.; Birmingham Education Dept.; MSC Special Programmes Division; The Urban Wildlife Group; FoE Home Insulation Project; The Department of Energy - these bodies will be involved in discussing the content of the packs.

3. The Advisory Committee

The BEEP team will work in conjunction with an advisory committee made up of representatives from

the following organisations:-

BEEP, FoE, MSC, City of Birmingham Planning
Department, Department of Energy.

Helen Jellicoe
November, 1981.

APPENDIX 2: EDUCATION IN FoE IN THE UK.

(i) DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES
IN FoE

The table below summarises the main activities in education at the national level from 1977 to 1980. It can be seen that this consists primarily of a series of workshops from which little of a practical nature was implemented. Initiatives at the national level in education effectively ceased in 1980.

Table A2.1 Education in FoE Nationally from 1977 to 1980.

Dec 1977	"FoE and Education" circulated to local groups from Cheltenham FoE > FoE needs a clear education policy > 1st Education Workshop agreed.
Sept 1978	2 Pre-Conference discussion papers: "FoE and Youth"; "Environmental Education" to stimulate debate and action.
Oct 1978	1st FoE Education Workshop (Harrogate). 16 local groups represented > set up "Education File"; organised "Philosophy and Policy Workshop"; agreed 2nd Education Workshop.
Feb 1979	1st FoE Philosophy and Policy Workshop > agreed a 2nd workshop; changed name to "Futures" > met Oct '79; later disintegrated.
Apr 1979	2nd Education Workshop (Sheffield) > agreed to set up "Teachers Ecology Group"; set 3rd Workshop. FoE Bristol awarded 12 month funding for an education project > build up schools liaison.
Aug 1979	FoE Birmingham appoint full-time education worker.
Oct 1979	3rd Education Workshop (Bristol). 20 attend only 6 of whom attended 1st and 2nd workshop > covered same ground as earlier workshops; abandoned idea of "Teachers Ecology Group", agreed 4th

March 1980	workshop on "Communication". 4th Education Workshop (Birmingham). See Appendix 2 (ii) below for details.
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Summary

The objects of FoE (see Chapter 1) are to make people aware of and responsible for the environment. Indeed the most successful pressure tactic used by FoE has been to arouse public awareness of the environment and gain support for specific campaigns. But despite this emphasis on influencing the public it is only since the end of 1978 that "Education" has become a topic for debate within FoE.

The national initiatives in education were started with a number of discussion papers from local group members. These discussion papers: "FoE and Education" (33), "FoE and Youth" (88) and "Environmental Education" (94) were circulated to people around the movement who had expressed an interest in education at the previous co-ordinators' conference. On the basis of these papers and education workshop was organised to be held in October 1978 at Harrogate. The aim of the workshop was to discuss FoE's role and function in the general field of environmental education and to discuss the setting up of co-ordinated (i.e. national) education activities in FoE.

The outcome of the workshop was promising. An "Education File" was set up for the exchange of ideas and experience in education throughout the movement; contributions were encouraged from any local group who had worked in adult or youth education in the formal or informal sector. A date was set for two more workshops - one to explore FoE's philosophy and politics and the second to continue the education work.

At the second Education Workshop held in Sheffield in April 1979 it was agreed that a "Teachers' Ecology Group" should be set up to focalise and stimulate FoE's activities in schools. The group would be started by working-teachers who already belonged to FoE, but aim to liaise with other teachers in the future. The first meeting of this group was to be at the 3rd Education Workshop planned for October 1979 in Bristol. Unfortunately, no teachers came to the third workshop so the idea of a Teachers' Ecology Group was abandoned.

At the third education workshop fewer people than expected came and of those, only two or three had

been to any of the previous workshops. Because of this unexpected lack of continuity the 3rd workshop decided to re-define what FoE had to offer the general field of environmental education. This exercise started with a brainstorm of FoE's assets and shortcomings. It was concluded that the advantage FoE had over the formal education system was its flexibility, its youth, its action orientation and its wholistic approach to the environment. As for shortcomings, the most obvious complaint was about FoE's publications which were considered to be inappropriate for all but the dedicated environmentalist with a lot of spare reading time (67b). Out of this discussion it was decided that the next education workshop should concentrate on the art of communication. I agreed to organise the 4th Education Workshop in March 1980; the details of this are reported in section (ii) below. This was the last initiative in education at the National level.

The "Philosophy and Politics Workshop" which evolved from the 1st Education Workshop was set up to articulate FoE's philosophy and therefore the educational message it was trying to put across. This became the "Futures Workshop", it met twice and then the group disintegrated.

Although no education co-ordinator has ever been appointed by FoE (UK), before the 4th Education Workshop they appointed an "Information Officer". This post was created in order to improve the quantity and quality of printed information available to the public. As a result the range of 'popular' literature was increased which local groups could use as required - this promoted a better level of standardisation of the information given out by FoE nationwide. A short-coming of this facility was that the information service concentrated on current campaign issues, thus information was piecemeal rather than providing a coherent picture of, and approach to the environment as a whole - which would have been of greater value to general education work.

Evaluation

There had been little continuity between workshops because different people attended each one. It appeared that it was only the committment of one or two individuals which kept the workshops going as long as they did.

The national debate on education had assumed a fairly narrow definition of the concept of education seeing it as that activity which goes on in schools with brief acknowledgement of formal adult education

facilities. If a broader definition were used and educational activities were seen as those activities aimed at informing people about the environment then FoE's role in education becomes much more extensive. The classroom becomes only one of the many vehicles used; others include books, pamphlets, exhibitions, marches and demonstrations, T.V. and radio programmes, news coverage and even practical projects. These are all means by which information can be imparted. With the broader definition of education it could be said that all local groups' activities whether these be demonstrations, stalls at fetes, running re-cycling schemes, as well as the general information service they offer, can be seen as fulfilling an educational role.

(ii) PROGRAMME AND REPORT OF THE 4TH EDUCATION
WORKSHOP

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH - 4TH EDUCATION WORKSHOP ON
COMMUNICATION

Date: Saturday 8th March & Sunday 9th March, 1980.

Time: Sat. 9.30 - 5.30 (plus evening excitement)
Sun. 10.00 - 1.30

Venue: The Festival Suite, Birmingham Co-op,
High Street, Birmingham 4.

FoE's business is communication - delivering our message, educating, persuading, lobbying, mobilizing, advertising. We do this in lots of ways. The workshop is about exploring these so that we can be more effective in what we do. Lateral thinkers welcome!

A number of small workshops have been arranged, covering those methods of communication which are important to most groups:

- planning a campaign
- written materials (from press releases to weighty tomes)
- visual aids (designing and using them)
- using the media (the dreaded interview)
- working with others
- working in the local community
- working in the education system (schools and adults)

Each workshop will be stimulated by someone with skills in that area. They want to share these, but learning is a two-way process so participation rules OK!

It is worth pointing out that some of the workshops will run concurrently so choices (and sacrifices!) will have to be made. A few details of each are given below.

There will be a permanent display-cum-market of current materials - not only FoE materials but also others of interest. These should provide both information and inspiration.

Have fun!

P.S. Donations of £1 - £2 will be gratefully received on the day.

P.P.S. Please bring a sleeping bag if accommodation is needed.

Another P.P.S. A fare pool will operate if desired.

SATURDAY

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9.30 Arrivals and Introductions -
please be on time because this is
linked to:-

10.30 Workshops: Planning a Campaign

12.00 Plenary

12.30 - 2.00 Lunchbreak (lunch 60p)
Market place

2.00 Workshop Options - Session 1

3.30 Tea

4.00 Workshop Options - Session 2

5.30 Plenary - Tomorrow?

6.30 Forage for Food

8 ish Party

SUNDAY

=====

10.00 The Education Systems - Schools
- Adult
Education

10.45 "I know let's
(a short game devised for 6 - 8
players which provides each player

with the opportunity to skilfully combine knowledge, common sense, creativity, realism and intuition)

11.45 Discussion

1.45 Lunch

Bye Bye

THE WORKSHOPS

Planning a Campaign - or when do I keep my mouth shut?
Paul Willcox - FoE Loughborough

Local groups face a major constraint if they plan any type of major education campaign. They have too few people, too little time, too little money. When thinking about education campaigns, it makes sense therefore to consider the investment involved in choosing each of a wide range of available communication or education channels.

More important are considerations about the sequence of educational activities during a campaign. Most local FoE campaigns are trying to get people to adopt a new behaviour, for example, to save energy. In order to get people to change you have to go through a definite sequence of educational steps:

- you have to create awareness of the problem
- you have to follow this by satisfying interests about the problem
- you have to allow people to try out your ideas for themselves in their own terms
- then they are likely to act on the problem, if they are given a choice of opportunities whose commitment value varies.

The different media available are not all suited to creating awareness; nor are they all good for satisfying people's interests. The media has to be matched to the level of education we're concerned with.

USING THE MEDIA - OR HOW TO HANDLE AN INTERVIEW

Tim Manning - BBC Radio Birmingham

The media are there to be used - but a good cause does not automatically mean good coverage. To make best use of media opportunities it is important to understand how the beast works. A T.V. news spot might allow just three minutes to put the case across, at the other extreme the local rag, although often ridiculed, can be a powerful means of reaching ordinary people, it is more immediate to their experience and can provide an opportunity to get involved.

One method used in most forms of media is the interview. It is an efficient and up to the minute way of bringing an issue to the public's notice - provided it is handled carefully. A poor interview performance can do more harm than good to a campaign or organisation's image.

This workshop will include some simulation interviews so that we can examine what does and does not constitute a good interview.

LEARNING IN SMALL GROUPS

This workshop aims to look at designing activities to enable learning in small groups.

Discussion will enable us to explore the application of such techniques with FoE groups - with a group's planning, and with groups FoE is asked to 'talk' to.

We will identify the types of group you are interested in - the type of issue you would like to help them learn about - and consider a framework for introducing different types of activity at different stages:

- (a) activity to enable thinking about individuals, images and attitudes to the issue;
- (b) activity to enable enquiry into an issue;
- (c) activity to enable debate about the factors which make up the complexity of an issue and applying this to planning for action.

It is proposed that we learn from each other by using some activities ourselves. Opportunity will be given to reflect on their usefulness.

WRITTEN MATERIALS - OR THE ART OF USING PLAIN ENGLISH
Mike Jackson & John Walker
Communication Studies, Birmingham
Polytechnic.

When putting pen to paper, knowing how to write about something is important if the communication is to be effective. Written style, language, the complexity of the argument depend upon the context in which something is written - a press release is a different species to a research document, a kid's book is not an adult's book with bigger print - this workshop is about the how of writing, how to produce material which is appropriate and therefore effective.

COMMUNITY WORK - OR ENVIRONMENTALISTS IN THE REAL WORLD
Bob Davies
Inner City Community Worker
Birmingham Voluntary
Services Council.

Community work is concerned with change; it aims to encourage collective action, and it is an extremely effective form of education. Working within the local community is not advisable for the impatient, the feeble, or the doctrinaire.

The workshop will examine some of the issues and problems arising in community-based activity. There is no magic formula, no one style - each situation has different needs. Being aware of the issues likely to crop up - power struggles, conflicting interests, apathy, inarticulateness, cultural influence, bureaucracy, personalities - should make working within the local community more effective.

COMMUNICATION - THE ESSENCE OF HUMAN CONTACT
John Warwicker-Le-Breton
Visual Communications,
Dept. Art and Design,
Birmingham Polytechnic.

The workshop on VISUAL COMMUNICATION is difficult to describe in words! An overview of communication through cultures and ages promises to give us a better understanding of communication in the modern world. We shall explore the effects and potential of such things as badges, posters, slides, adverts, T.V., video - just some of the ways that communication is taking place today. The workshop is visual not verbal - it has to be seen to be believed!

REPORT OF THE 4TH EDUCATION WORKSHOP
BIRMINGHAM, MARCH 8TH, 9TH, 1980

The Rationale

The emphasis on communication at this workshop arose out of a navel gazing exercise at the 3rd Education workshop in Bristol in October. There we agreed that FoE was "good at" campaigns and that these should therefore form the basis of our educational activities. However we were not so good at putting our ideas across to others - we felt here was a need to learn much more about the design and production of materials in particular and about communication skills in general. Relatively limited resources mean that materials and public relations as a whole need to have optimum impact. So, after three educational workshops of discussion - looking at the problem, identifying priorities, discussing policy - the time seemed right for action. Action was duly taken in the form of the 4th Workshop.

The Workshop

This was ambitious in scope - we looked at the process of communication right from the planning stage to the finer details of producing material. If anything was demonstrated at the workshop it was that we covered a lot of ground very quickly!

The weekend was divided into a number of small workshops:-

- Planning a Campaign
- Graphic Design
- Writing Skills
- Handling the Media
- Working on a Community Level
- Working with the Education Systems

The first of these ("Planning a Campaign") looked at the ways that campaigns depend on communication and that "fitting the message to the moment" is extremely important. Communication is a major component of any campaign, and campaign planning should take this into account.

The other workshops concentrated on particular forms of communication or, to use the jargon, they looked at the various communication media - verbal, written, visual, action.

It wouldn't be very meaningful to report back on each workshop since it was assumed throughout that individual participants had different amounts and types of experiences thus had different expectations of the workshop and different needs fulfilled by them.

Having said this it is probably fair to mention two themes which seemed to recur throughout the weekend. Firstly, whatever a workshop ostensibly set out to explore the same basic questions were raised - what is being said to whom, where, when, why, and how. Answering these questions appeared to be the essence of communication - if the message is inappropriate it is unlikely to get through. This point is particularly important from a campaign point of view since good campaigns depend on effective communication. The second point which came up was that each of the workshops only began to tackle what they set out to - more time was needed and some seemed worthy workshops in their own right.

The Outcome

This was decidedly positive - we had learned a lot and wanted to learn more. The workshop had covered a number of major areas and at the final plenary four areas in particular were isolated as important and in need of another workshop.

Certain groups of people agreed to organise these in the near future; they were as follows:

Proposed Workshop

1. Planning a Campaign
(an extension of the first session of this workshop)
2. Communication Skills
(an extension of the practical session on the different communication media - with more time to practice)
3. FoE and the Community
(Tim Clarke was going to look into this possibly a variation will happen in Sept. 1980 in Birmingham)
4. FoE and Schools

Contacts/Organisers

Poland Street in the form of Liz Reason, Maggie, Jim Read, Andy Cawdell and Hugh Brayne.

FoE Brum in the form of Lyn Roberts, Roger, Kevin Booker, Mike Hall and Ray.

Regions: certain regions said they would be arranging these for themselves e.g. East Midlands.

(W. Midlands groups are setting up a working party with the environmental education advisors of the Education Department)

The enormous attendance at this workshop (about 70 people from 17 groups - list of participants attached) indicated there was a need to learn about communication. The enthusiasm at the end of the workshop indicated the priority of this need. It's an exciting development for FoE, let's keep up the momentum.

Helen Jellicoe, FoE Birmingham
April 20th, 1980.

P.S. The presentations and workshops held on Sunday have been written up in detail since they contained information which should be of general interest. These are "FoE and Adult Education", "FoE and Schools", "FoE and the Community". Copies have been put into the "Education File" and can be obtained from: Tom Varley, 'Earthcare', Saddler Street, Durham.

4th Education Conference. Birmingham 8/9th March '80

Participants

John Aitken - University of B'ham Extramural Department
Vic Barnes - FoE Birmingham
Pauline Bartlet -
Carey Bennet - FoE Bristol & CSV
Kevin Booker - FoE Birmingham
Evelyn Bowles - Stratford
Stuart Boyle - Coventry FoE
Lesley Bradnam - FoE Birmingham
Roger Brewis - FoE Birmingham
Hugh Brayne - Poland St.
Steve Buckle - FoE Bristol & CSV
Andy Cawdell - Poland St.
Suzanne Clark - FoE Birmingham
Anne Clarke - London
Tim Clarke - Poland St.
Stuart Daniels - B'ham Joint Committee for Adult
Education Information and Advice, Field Worker
Lesley Darnborough - FoE Birmingham
Bob Davies - B'ham Voluntary Service Council -
Inner City Unit.
Caroline Fitzgerald - Nottingham FoE
Phil Foggit - Oxford FoE
Derek Fletcher - Redditch

Ray Franklin - FoE Birmingham
 Greg Glendell - Weston FoE
 Peter Godfrey - Bristol FoE
 Jenny Groden - Norwich FoE
 Mike Hall - FoE Birmingham
 Mick Hans - London
 Pete Hedges - Sutton Coldfield FoE
 John Holmes - London
 Mike Jackson - B'ham Polytechnic - Communication
 Studies
 Maggie Jee - Poland St.
 Helen Jellicoe - FoE Birmingham
 Mike Jenn - 'Interaction' London
 Jack Jazek - Penrith
 Jennifer Johnson - Ormskirk FoE
 Stephen Joseph - 'CoEnCo' London
 Rowena Knox - FoE Birmingham
 Sheila Lloyd - Ormskirk FoE
 Di Lucas - Sutton Coldfield FoE
 Tim Manning - BBC Radio Birmingham
 Geraldine McNeill - Birmingham
 Jon Merritt - FoE Birmingham
 Garry Milnes - Wirral FoE
 Richard Moulson -
 Frances Nicholas - Lower Shaw Farm, Swindon
 Pete Raine - Birmingham/London
 Jim Read - Poland St.
 Liz Reason - Poland St.
 Alison Robers - FoE Birmingham
 Lyn Roberts - FoE Birmingham
 Ivan Robertson - University of Aston, Birmingham
 Tony Somes - Birmingham Education Department
 Hellen Scadding - Coventry FoE
 Scott Sinclair - Dept. Education Centre, B'ham
 Pari Sokolor - Ormskirk
 Hugh Starkey - Ely
 Steve Sitling - Council for Environmental Education
 University of Reading
 Steve Taylor - Aldershot
 Tom Varley - Durham FoE
 Bridget Volland - Nottingham FoE
 John Walker - B'ham Polytechnic, Communication Studies
 John Warwicker-Le-Breton - B'ham Polytechnic
 Joe Waters -
 Pam Waters -
 Anna Weston - Oxford FoE
 Joe Weston - Oxford FoE
 Patrick Wheatley - FoE Birmingham & Holy Trinity Urban
 Farm
 Paul Wilcox - FoE Loughborough

FoE AND SCHOOLS

The following is a summary of a talk given by

Tony Somes at the 4th Education Conference in Birmingham on March 8th 1980. Tony suggested practical ways in which FoE could make interventions in the education system (schools in particular). He advised on how to cope with the bureaucracy and hierarchical structure of the schooling system as well as commenting upon the usefulness and appropriateness of the FoE educational materials already produced. He also suggested where there might be gaps in the provision of materials and the contents of school curricula which FoE could possibly fill. He had used the Birmingham Resource Pack and Waste Directory in schools and had found them informative and stimulating and suggested that similar packs on topics such as pollution and food could well be incorporated into the classroom. He stressed that materials and teaching aids should be appropriate for the ages and interests of the children and also for the requirements of teachers and the various examination syllabuses. Thus, at the secondary level, it would be useful for FoE to be informed of the content requirements of the several G.C.E.'s and C.S.E.'s which include an environmental element; at lower secondary and primary level, where the need is often for a broader based project approach, FoE could suggest contents and ideas which could be used for basic skill teaching in English and Maths, and extended into the teaching of creative skills, such as art, craft and drama.

Tony pointed out that there is already available a great deal of resource material dealing with environmental issues, and that FoE could compile a guide to cheap and recommended materials which would be extremely helpful to schools faced with ever diminishing allowances.

Tony suggested ways in which FoE speakers could legitimately enter schools and favourably impress the teaching staff (and pupils). The head teacher must be approached first, even if you have a contact amongst the lower ranks of staff. Head teachers assume responsibility for all activities taking place within the schools, and may be wary of a pressure group or political organisation which appears to be infiltrating behind his or her back. So, the headteacher should be informed of an intention to visit the school, and his or her permission sought prior to the event. In addition, a written, clear and concise plan of the proposed talk, sent in advance with duplicates for relevant Heads of Department, would reassure the headteacher of the speaker's serious intent. Initial appearances are also important, so, scruffy or way-out clothing should be avoided. In order not to alienate the class teacher, it is important to arrive on time - a teacher's

nightmare is to be left with a bunch of kids and nothing to do!

To effect and sustain a more long term involvement with the schools of an area it could be useful to approach the inspectors or subject advisory teachers, or the teachers centres. Write to the Chief Education Officer enclosing copies for the attention of the relevant inspectors; write directly to the Teachers' Centres, the address of which should be obtained from the C.E.O. Many authorities will have an Environmental Studies Inspector who may be sympathetic to FoE's aims.

Having convinced the schools staff and Education Authority hierarchy or the validity of FoE's message, the next stage is to convince the kids. It is most important that you find out, in advance, as much as possible about your audience, and aim and structure your presentation accordingly. Aim for variety of delivery, and encourage participation through activities such as completing questionnaires or playing simulation games.

WORKSHOP

Useful and interesting contributions were made by all present. We discussed further many of the points made by Tony, as well as discussing ways in which a specific FoE contribution could be made.

We discussed how to deal with school visits so as to make them most beneficial to the school and to FoE. Careful planning and preparation is essential, preferably in consultation with the teachers involved. It is crucial to identify the group. Find out whether the group is exam/non-exam, its average reading age, and any other relevant information. Make sure, that in your talk technical terms are explained and that the language in general is suitable to the age range. Also that any reading materials are suitable; teachers should advise on this. If possible leave the children with some kind of follow up work in the form of a practical activity; it is important that they use and incorporate any new knowledge or ideas. It could also be useful, especially from the teacher's point of view if the speaker can provide or advise on preparatory work prior to the visit. This may seem like a lot of hard work for no immediate returns, but success breeds success - good news spreads fast by word of mouth especially amongst primary school heads!

We discussed whether FoE should have an

education policy. FoE does not have a permanent education campaigner so the likelihood and the desirability of a cohesive policy developing seemed questionable. Educational involvement usually developed locally and activities reflected local needs and concerns. A possible outlet for FoE activity could be to concentrate on influencing the attitudes of teachers and advising on materials, rather than to actually teach kids in schools and produce materials. FoE could also usefully play a part in the local branch of the National Association for Environmental Education which would put FoE in contact with interested teachers. It was suggested that FoE groups could form regional groups of teachers to discuss educational issues and ways in which FoE could influence and participate in educational activities. In some areas, e.g. Birmingham and Sutton Coldfield, groups of teachers were already meeting and various education projects were under way. A great interest in educational activities and the furtherance of educational projects was expressed by all members of the workshop.

ADULT EDUCATION - 'THE SYSTEM'
John Aitken, Extramural Department,
University of Birmingham

(This talk, given at the 4th Education Workshop on 8/9th March 1980, is reproduced more or less as delivered, except that a few points made late in this version were omitted at the time and dealt with in the group discussion later.)

The talk we have just heard about possible FoE involvement in schools was able to make the assumption that everyone knows what a school is. The speaker on adult education, however, can make no such assumption. To talk about getting involved in the world of evening classes, Saturday schools and so on for the general public usually requires some prior explanation of what the system is which organises these things. What I'm giving, then, is a general outline of what may seem a complicated and maybe conflicting network of services, to which I will add a few speculative comments about the possibilities for courses in the ecological field, and an idea of the (not very numerous) things done here in Birmingham.

It should be said at the outset that this 'formal' adult education, of which I am speaking, is only a small part of the education of adults. Such a process goes on wherever people gather to talk about common concerns, and indeed this whole weekend has been about it. It can take place in informal groups,

or it can happen in organised groups not primarily concerned with 'education' - Townswomen's Guilds, church meetings and so forth. What I'm discussing, however, is the formal system, or series of systems, which organises courses under Government or Local Authority auspices: courses which may be long (up to 20 weeks perhaps) or short (maybe 3 or 4 meetings or a one day school). The typical adult education class, in fact, meets weekly in the evenings, but there are exceptions, particularly in the way of Saturday and weekend work. They don't lead to certificates or diplomas, except in fairly rare instances organised by a few University Adult Education Departments. I am not therefore including in my remarks anything about the Open University or about any other form of part time or external degree.

This formal system has three main bits, and the first of these consists of the work of the Local Education Authorities - the aspect of Adult Education with which most people are familiar. It consists of a vast number of classes - far more than anyone else organises - attended by a vast number of people, and it's run in a variety of ways depending on which town or county you happen to live in. In Birmingham, for instance, the city is divided into 12 areas, each with a fulltime Principal and Vice Principal, and these would be the people with whom to make contact about courses in their area. In other places, the local College of Further Education may have an adult courses organiser with general responsibilities over the whole town. There may be other variants too. As a general rule it is probably best to contact the person in the field rather than the City or County Education office - but these will of course have all the information about who the person to get in touch with is.

The bad news about LEAs is that there doesn't seem to be a bit in current provisions (at any rate in Birmingham) for study of the kind of subjects we have under consideration here. Perhaps there's more elsewhere, or maybe there never has been such provision. I can find one current course in Birmingham - 'Ecology', held under Saltley Institute. This general, and possibly traditional, lack of involvement means that people interested in such courses are unlikely to expect to find them in LEA publicity, and will not look for them there. Hence organisers are less likely to run them - a descending spiral of effects which make LEA initiatives difficult to launch. (Another bit of bad news is that LEAs are maybe more badly hit by the current cuts than the other agencies I'll be mentioning).

The good news on LEAs is, I believe, that many Principals and local heads would like to break out (money permitting) from the constraints of needlework and car maintenance; and also that (especially in the inner city and other disadvantaged areas) many adult educationalists see themselves as part of the local conscience, if I can put it like that, and are anxious to be active in fields of social concern. Hence a short course, particularly about some local issue of ecology, might well find local organisers receptive.

(Note: it's worth putting in at this point in the written version what came out in discussion - namely that the Saltley Ecology course mentioned above was not able to attract any enrolments, which rather underlines the fact that courses of a general nature, with titles like 'Ecology' may not have much future in local adult education centres. However, courses exploring some real local issue may well command interest. The Saltley course, by the way, was a FoE initiative it seems.)

The second adult education organisation is the Workers' Education Association, which has 900 branches in England and Wales. The branches are voluntary associations of adult students, but their incidence is rather haphazard and depends on the fluctuations of voluntary commitment. It also depends on local tradition: some areas are strong in WEA branches, while others (perhaps quite nearby) may have none at all. Even so, if you can contact a branch and influence its thinking, join it, offer it help in planning and publicity, it does provide a base for courses. The relation between Birmingham FoE and Birmingham WEA Central Branch is an encouraging, but at the same time a cautionary, tale in this respect. By a sort of genial FoE takeover, it turned out that the Branch (while continuing to have some of its usual courses) put on about half a dozen classes in 1977/8 and 1978/9 with titles like 'Technology and Society', 'Food Today and Tomorrow', 'Energy and Society' etc. Enrolments fluctuated, but on the whole this was a successful venture, especially in its early stages. I should say, perhaps, that the centre of a great city is the best place to put on courses with such general titles. These courses had the benefit of WEA and University publicity all over the city, besides having many members of FoE enrolling too.

That is an object lesson in successful cooperation, but its sequel is also a cautionary tale - a lesson in how uncertain these things are. So far as I can see, FoE involvement in Birmingham Central Branch has fizzled out, and in fact the Branch itself

is in a shaky state right now as well. Even so, I do believe that the WEA, because of its voluntary nature (anyone can join it), because it provides for determination by members and students of what courses should be offered and because of its long and distinguished tradition of classes with themes of social concern, is a particularly useful body for Friends of the Earth to relate to. If you can't find a branch, there is also a good network of organising tutors and administrators, and the best first contact if there is no branch to be seen (or if you can't get anywhere with the local branch) is with one of the 17 District offices of the WEA in England and Wales.

Attached to this written version, is a current list of these.

The third and final agency is, or are, the Adult Education Departments of Universities (sometimes called Extramural Departments, or occasionally Departments of Continuing Education, Extension Studies or some similar title). Not all Universities have them - many recent ones don't. These departments run courses not only in their University or their University town, but also in major (and sometimes minor) centres of population all over the surrounding counties. England and Wales is divided up between 27 Universities for this purpose of providing classes for the general public in subjects suitable for Universities, and certainly ecological and energy concerns are that. It might seem that they would be a little on the academic side, and certainly they are (or they should be) for people prepared to think things through, though this surely should apply to all classes. An extramural course might however be expected to go rather more deeply than most other classes, and would probably last longer to enable this to happen. All the same they too may be related to specific local issues.

Most of the WEA classes I spoke of were in fact put on in cooperation with the Birmingham University Extramural Department, which has also done a few things on its own, for instance "Introduction to Ecology", "Solar Energy", and a course on Urban Ecology in the West Midlands. Also, the WEA, FoE and the University Department put on some rather 'prestigious' series of Saturday schools on 'Alternative Futures' and 'The Great Nuclear Debate'. They were quite successful, but I think I should say that on the whole courses in what I have called already themes of social concern are not things for which the University, any more than any other agency, has been particularly successful in getting a good enrolment.

Contacts with Adult Education departments of Universities can be made by writing to the Head of Department, if you have not been fortunate enough to hear the name of the individual member of staff (who will be one of the Science tutors usually) who is responsible for the kind of classes we are discussing. A list of current addresses is attached.

Two other bodies might be mentioned. One is the National Adult School Union, Drayton House, Gordon Street, London WClH OBE (01-357-5920) which has a number of small local groups throughout the country, pursuing courses in a fairly informal way. Such people might be receptive to one-off meetings (for instance) on ecological themes. The other agency is the National Cooperative Education Association, Stanford Hall, Loughborough, Leics LE12 5QR (050-982-2333), the Educational branch of the Cooperative movement, which also has a theoretically large network of groups and individuals.

The Adult Education system, I've tried to say, is a pretty open one for those who want to cooperate with it. Adult Educators are on the lookout for new ideas, and they are also on the lookout for already existing groups for whom courses might be organised. They tend also, I think to be socially aware and conscious of a responsibility towards the community. Of course, they may be snags: for one thing, staff in your area may not be particularly like this! (One of the strengths and weaknesses of the service is that it is very dependent on personalities). Or, with the best will in the world, they may not be able to help you on any given occasion. Or if they do, as I have said they may not be able to deliver the goods in terms of large numbers attending. And you may also find (and I think this should be said) that there may sometimes prove to be some sort of tension between what they see as the proper content and method of an educational exercise, and what you do as promoters of a particular 'Friends of the Earth' point of view. But I also think that you will also find goodwill, and a desire to help wherever possible.

In closing, let me repeat: this formal structure is only one aspect of educational provision for adults. And one trouble with it may be that its courses are likely to catch the eye of, and be attended by, only those who are at least part converted. They can do a lot for such people, but as consciousness raisers of the public in general I doubt if they are much use. For that, different, less formal and maybe more propagandist methods are likely

to be needed.

APPENDIX 3: THE ENVIRONMENT MOVEMENT

(i) ORIGINS OF THE ALTERNATIVE ECO-CULTURE

The "Alternative or Eco-culture" represents a coherent yet evolving contemporary subculture. This culture primarily promotes a lifestyle which permits a sustainable harmonious relationship between humans and the natural environment. The culture is based on an eco-centric philosophy (140) which holds that all technology, by definition has a harmful impact on the environment. Therefore in order to maintain balance within the eco-system humans must develop socio-technical systems which take account of this balance (19) (38) (48) (54) (70) (74) (100) (103) (107).

The contemporary alternative culture gained most of its momentum in the 1960's with the emergence of the "Hippy" culture, "flower power", and other peace movements. This most recent upsurge began in the U.S.A. as the articulate middle class youth began to revolt against some of the more obvious horrors of the time. War, violence, expansion, exploitation, colonialism, dominance, greed, overconsumption represented evil and the Hippy culture emerged to put the case for love, peace, tolerance, naturalness, moderation and sharing. The philosophy soon spread to all the developed countries (18) (41) (62) (141) (156).

In the early days of the movement the chief means of attaining an ecologically sound lifestyle was thought to be by living in small communities, normally in rural areas, which aimed towards self-sufficiency. (130) (167). Such communities - which developed into the commune movement - attempted to adopt a lifestyle which reflected every aspect of the alternative philosophy. (1). Thus food was produced using natural organic cycles, energy was generated from ambient renewable sources, waste products were recycled, transport was non-polluting and so on to ensure minimum impact on the earth's natural resources. Self-sufficiency aimed to reduce the dependence of the developed countries on under-developed ones. Indeed living in harmony with the environment and rest of the world was simply part of a more general attitude which included living in harmony with other human beings (184). Therefore such communities or communes operated as collectives, based on principles of altruism, cooperation, non-exploitation and non-alienation. (28) (956) (196).

In the early stages, the alternative

philosophy was strongly influenced by the Eastern religions - which were seen to offer a wholism and harmony considered lacking in modern christianity, science and technology. However as the movement developed humanitarian and environmentalism arguments became sufficient justification for the alternative lifestyle. Thus come "back to the land" arguments became critiques of the established socio-economic systems of the world. For example, in the light of increasing awareness of the world food markets and international economies the arguments for self-sufficiency at home were diverted into criticism of the multi-national corporations and the workings of the world commodity markets (33). Also see (23) (31) (106) (114) (115) (119) (147) (160) (177) (182) (191).

A minority movement towards small scale community living is not new. It has existed for centuries, periodically re-emerging in different forms depending upon the philosophy which inspired it. (95a). However, such has been the strength of this latest movement that over the last 20 years, "the environment" has become an important political issue (164) (See also Appendix 3(iii)). Minority arguments have become conventional wisdom and fashion (27); some European elections have been decided primarily on environmental issues (164); and at the international level a number of environmental protection agencies have been set up (141).

Indeed as the influence of the alternative culture has spread pragmatism has replaced religious fervour. The movement has been strengthened and politicised by the formation of practical research and pressure groups set up to fight for its cause. (See section (iii) below). Alongside this development, as the next section will describe, the means of attaining a sustainable lifestyle became less idealistic and more compatible with industrial urban-based society. (12) (26) (40) (85) (91) (117) (133).

(ii) CONTEMPORARY URBAN-BASED ECO-CULTURE

(a) Philosophy

Latterly a form of ecological lifestyle or culture has been realised in urban settings. FoE Birmingham can be used as a good example of how the principles of the alternative culture are being practised within an urban-industrial framework.

In this culture the more conventional rewards of money and social status are spurned in favour of working for ecologically-sound ideals. Work in most established fields is considered distasteful for a number of reasons. In particular the work is rejected because it is not socially useful; that is, it does not increase the quality of life, on the contrary it degrades both humans and the natural environment.(91) The high levels of consumption afforded by high wages prop up a system which is contemptible not only because it over-exploits rapidly diminishing resources but demonstrates human greed. People in established jobs are either dissatisfied, alienated, reactionary or ignorant of the "real problems" facing humanity - caring instead for selfish gain and "security". Unemployment therefore has never been a stigma, instead it holds a fairly high status and can be justified by recourse to the rottenness of the established ideals. (98)(142).

Rejection of previous education and/or training is common; the ideal work situation being one which permits a mixture of intellectual and manual ability. Indeed the value of manual work and craftsmanship is elevated in an attempt to re-skill or dignify work. In terms of being socially useful the work is aimed at restoring the degradation of human life or of the natural environment; thus popular work within the alternative culture includes reclamation of land, energy conservation, craftwork, growing and/or selling organically grown foods, recycling waste products and so on.

Attention is paid also to method of working; work is organised democratically through collective structures in an attempt to ensure that the workers have control over the means of production. (185) In the last 5 to 10 years a number of advisory and funding agencies have been set up to promote the development of cooperative enterprises. (4) (148). (See Section (iii) (c) below.

On a more general level the culture favours the working class who are superior although in need of education about the problems facing the environment.

Marriage is unnecessary in that a relationship between two people should not need any legal props and selfish in that it rejects the group/others. Homosexuality of both sorts is acceptable and in some sense revered since it so blatantly rebels against convention. Feminism and non-sexism in general is ardently pursued. Over-excitement, enthusiasm and clear, categorical organisation of work are embarrassing - being casual or "laid back" and non-directive is the norm. Finally, camaraderie with kindred spirits is strong but so too is the contempt of individuals, groups or institutions which stand for different ideals.

(b) Individual Behaviour

On the individual level the ecological lifestyle is expressed in a number of ways. FoE Birmingham was particularly aware of the environmental impact of contemporary, urban-industrial life and produced a booklet highlighting this relationship (66d). Just three examples will be given here to illustrate the personal ramifications of an environmentally-conscious lifestyle. Firstly, riding bicycles and using public transport reduces both air pollution and the consumption of oil, and other resources. Secondly, eating a wholefood and primarily vegetarian diet is not only making a statement about health, politics and economics but it means one can be closer to the means of production. Such a diet enables one to feel in closer contact with the environment in that much of this food can be grown indignously, locally and/or personally. Finally, the principle of recycling can be practised in many ways - all materials be they newspapers, clothes, furniture, are reclaimed, re-used or recycled until their usefulness has been depleted.

(c) Institutional Mechanisms

At an institutional or group level the alternative culture is expressed through such mechanisms as collective organisation, consensus decision making, job and wage sharing and non-specialisation. These practices were particularly significant to the progress of the present project so will be discussed in a little more detail below.

(i) Collective Organisation

Outsiders often conclude that collectives are a bunch of soggy liberals who don't like work

therefore never "pull themselves together" and "get organised". In my experience this is not true, it misses the point that collective organisation is an acquired skill which takes time to develop and requires constant mental effort on the part of everyone in the collective.

Collective organisation is based on the belief that people will be less alienated from their social surroundings and therefore lead a richer life if they share in the control of these. Thus everyone in a collective is given a chance to share the responsibility for its well being. Ideally therefore each member of a collective is committed to working in its best interests, they will not need motivating to do work which, after all, is in their own interest. The members of the collective will come together and work out sensible solutions to their own survival. (95b).

This ideal assumes that everyone wants to take the responsibility for their own "destiny" and that everyone knows how to or is capable of doing so. The 'flaw' in the ideal lies in the concept of "commitment". By definition this is not an equal phenomenon. Everyone has their own level or interpretation of this, moreover this changes over time either increasing or decreasing in intensity depending upon the experiences a person has in the collective.

In practice this means that some people will do more work and take more of the responsibility for the well being of the collective than others. This can cause friction and again delay decisions if these "leaders" are reluctant to push decisions. In my experience a collective works on compromise, everyone gets to know the others' virtues and limitations and working relationships are developed which make allowance for these. If this compromise were not reached then effective decision making would be perpetually blocked by the potentially negative principles of equality and tolerance in which the members get caught in a spiral which paralyses group action.

Thus members of a collective have to work out for themselves the rules from which they will operate. They have to come to terms with roles and relationships in the group, define its boundaries and develop the structures which enable it to act effectively as a group. There is no bureaucracy outside the group itself; all aspects of a collective's existence, internal and external, are subject to and result from negotiation within the

group. In FoE this could mean even having tortuous debates about buying chalk for the blackboard.

This means that the survival of any structures or rules which are developed depends upon the agreement of the group. If the group ceases to agree with it then no decision necessarily has to be made to abandon it, it will simply be ignored or not done. It also means that any rules created are flexible and transient, they do not exist outside the people who designed and created them. They are a product of that group, its dynamic. If for any reason the group splits up or is substantially weakened the bureaucracy collapses.

In the FoE collective, during the two years I was there, as it matured and developed, a realistic and extensive network of rules and regulations built up. To an outsider or newcomer this looked like any other bureaucracy. Indeed it was one but a "Collective Bureaucracy". That is to say it would not exist if that group was substantially changed as indeed was the case around the time when I left. A number of the group had left and there was an influx of new workers, this was forcing the group to develop new boundaries, new rules of operation and production. The FoE collective was entering a new phase, it was in effect a new collective.

A "collective bureaucracy" is based not only on necessity and efficiency but on trust. In FoE this trust built up strongly over the two years and was mirrored by a corresponding efficient structuring of the collective. The more members trusted each other the more efficient the system became.

Thus a collective bureaucracy depends on a high level of interpersonal contact. This is significantly higher than in other forms of organisation since it is the only vehicle through which structured activity takes place. This constant state of interaction between the members is psychologically exhausting. I would maintain that this dependence on a very high level of interpersonal interaction is the single biggest reason why people leave collectives. Organised, concerted action under these circumstances is an uphill struggle. Hence collectives have an inbuilt inefficiency because it is a struggle with which most people don't want to be bothered or with which they can't cope.

It is also exhausting; unsettling and confusing working in such a fluid situation. Small matters like working hours can cause no end of anxiety because they are reached by a sort of "competitive

consensus" where everyone watches when everyone else comes and goes. This tends to lead to ridiculous extremes - either members do very little work or they never stop, but whichever it is they all tend to do the same.

Collective organisation is certainly not the easiest framework in which to operate. But in my experience it is worth pursuing since it is a sound principle on which to base small group relations. As a collective "matures" the commitment of the individuals becomes more similar, or put another way the values, desires, cognition and behaviour of the group gets closer, reaches a sort of standard. Under these circumstances consensus of opinion is much easier to attain and decisions are more likely to be reached. The group works cohesively and the constructive decisions emerge.

Groups with a 'mission' or target (like FoE) face particular problems because collective operation is not the most efficient means of achieving it. With an important end in sight it is easy to ignore the means by which this is reached. In the alternative culture the end itself is to achieve a better quality of life in interpersonal and working relationships. (28) FoE Birmingham treads a fine line between achieving objectives as a pressure group and maintaining the ideal of collective operation - an extremely interesting experiment in human behaviour.

(ii) Consensus Decision Making

The FoE Collective's meetings were not distinguished by their lively democratic debate and the collective was not a particularly non-alienating environment. Meetings and decision making is a standing joke in many organisations - FoE is no exception. But meetings at FoE, particularly for the first 12 months of the project were more often than not such cumbersome, non-productive affairs that they deserve special mention. The main reason for this being adherence to the principle of consensus decision-making.

In this form of decision-making roles are not taken, decisions are expected to emerge from a general agreement of the group. If everybody in the collective is not happy with a decision it is not worthwhile implementing since it would mean compliance rather than cooperation.

Unfortunately, in practice the principle of consensus decision-making often inhibited constructive

decisions ever being made because members were reluctant to seem too dominant in the group. This left agenda items hovering in limbo for weeks - especially in the early days of the collective. This 'indecision' was aggravated by two more features of collective life. Firstly the sphere of interest and concern of these meetings was exceptionally broad, it covered every aspect of FoE's work. As such workers were frequently being asked to discuss issues about which they understood very little. Secondly, everyone took turns in chairing the meeting: last week's minute taker = this week's chairperson. This helped to produce lousy meetings because like all collective behaviour the art of chairing had to be learned by trial and error. This unspoken code of behaviour takes time to learn and unfortunately for meetings someone was usually on trial or in error. Most people improved with experience, the practice of rotating the chairperson's role is one of the mechanisms used by collectives to develop cooperative spirit and awareness. And indeed in the long-term the experience of chairing does encourage members to take a more constructive and responsible stance in meetings. But it does require a lot of patience and persistence from everybody in the collective.

(iii) Non Specialisation

The principle of non-specialisation leads to the practice of skill-sharing in general and job-sharing in particular. There are advantages and disadvantages to this practice of job sharing. The most positive aspect of non-specialisation is that it breaks down the conventional barriers between jobs, thus providing the opportunity to gain a varied experience in jobs and skills otherwise out of reach. This advantage cannot be stressed too much, FoE Birmingham was indeed an inspiring and exciting place to work because of this. Provided of course one could cope with the sometimes overwhelming disadvantages. Firstly the external impact, efficiency, scope or whatever of the jobs can be impaired because of lack of consistency in service, standards and "vision".; this stemmed from the fact that ultimate responsibility for the work falls into a sort of "no-mans land" in the group. It can be frustrating to do work to a mediocre standard all the time. Secondly, for apparently peripheral jobs, shared duties can occupy a disproportionate amount of time, physical and mental energy. This is because when there is no specific person to oversee the work, to keep it moving smoothly and to keep a check on it the systems are much more likely to collapse. This means that a lot of time is spent paying for or putting

right mistakes and simply refreshing your memory on how to do a job because you only have to do it once a fortnight. The problem was aggravated in FoE because no-one was given much training in work duties, these were "picked-up" as necessary. Shared responsibility in general can be very distracting when trying to concentrate on any specific work, especially if this is developmental or innovatory. It is very easy to get absorbed into the haze of general day to day events and responsibilities. This tendency is probably true of many organisations but the distinction between these and FoE is the "haze" which is a direct result of shared responsibility.

(iii) ENVIRONMENTAL PRESSURE GROUPS

(a) Development of the Ecology Movement

The foundations of today's ecology movement were laid down during the 18th Century but it was during the 19th Century that the conservation movement rapidly grew. There were according to Park four distinct themes to this development - a growing scientific interest in the environment; the rise of amenity groups and concern for the preservation of the countryside; moves to ensure protection of nature from cruelty and overcollecting; and government intervention through laws governing the use of the countryside. Although voluntary activities and government activities developed alongside each other during this period it was, according to Park, the lobbies of the voluntary sector that brought about most of the legislation.

The pattern laid down in the 19th Century has persisted into the 20th Century during which time there has been continued increase in voluntary, governmental and even international action. So that today there is a "strong and informed environmental movement, with ever increasing pressure on the environment in general, and with a growing concern amongst individuals, government and interested bodies over the 'quality of life' and of the environment, the pressure century has heralded the arrival of a strong and informed environmental movement, which has become manifest in many ways". (141)

(b) Environmental Pressure Groups Today

The main pressure groups currently campaigning for the protection of the environment are summarised in Table A3.1 overleaf. The groups have been classified into those campaigning on a single issue and those campaigning on behalf of the environment as a whole. Only the major national groups have been included although it is acknowledged that many local-based, locally-oriented groups are actively campaigning for the environment.

(c) Campaigning

Pressure groups can operate at any or all of three levels within the establishment - at the executive, legislative or public level (76) (996) (158) (178). Pressure can be applied at the national or local level.

Table A3.1 Environmental Societies and Pressure Groups Today

GENERAL ENVIRONMENT	SPECIFIC ISSUE
<p>Friends of the Earth Conservation Society Greenpeace Committee for Environmental Co-operation Socialist Environmental Resources Association Civic Trust Council for the Protection of Rural England World Wildlife Fund Town & Country Planning Association National Trust Society for the Promotion of Nature Conservation Council for Nature Lawyers Ecology Group Green Alliance Environmental Information Service British Society for Social Responsibility in Science Society for Environmental Improvement International Union for the Conservation of Nature Watch Council for Environmental Education Centre for Environmental Studies Schumacher Society British Association of Nature Conservationists Ecoropa Volunteers Environmental Resources Centre Youth Environmental Action National Association for Environmental Education Wildlife Youth Service British Trust for Conservation Volunteers Environmental Factshop Limited</p>	<p><u>Wildlife</u> British Trust for Ornithology Marine Action Centre International Primate Protection League Royal Society for the Protection of Birds British Trust for Ornithology Animal Activists Animal Aid Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals International Fund for Animal Welfare</p> <p><u>Water</u> Coastal Anti-Pollution League National Pure Water Association Pure Water Council</p> <p><u>Air</u> Campaign for Lead-free Air Campaign against Lead in Petrol</p> <p><u>Habitats</u> Fauna Preservation Society National Tree Campaign The Woodland Trust British Naturalists Association Save the Village Pond Campaign Meanwhile Gardens Community Association Street Farmers Commons, Open Spaces & Footpaths Preservation Society Ecological Parks Trust</p> <p><u>Energy</u> Anti-Nuclear Campaign International Solar Energy Society Campaign Atom World Information Service on Energy Safe Energy Petitioners Students against Nuclear Energy</p> <p><u>Technology</u> National Centre for Alternative Technology Network for Alternative Technology & Technology Assessment Alternative Technology Information Group Intermediate Technology Development Group</p> <p><u>Food</u> Organic Growers Association Soil Association Farm and Food Society Henry Doubleday Research Association</p> <p><u>Waste</u> Keep Britain Tidy Group National Anti-Waste Programme</p> <p><u>Transport</u> Transport</p> <p><u>Noise</u> Noise Abatement Society</p> <p><u>Arms</u> Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament</p>

Because of its extensive network of self-motivating/autonomous local groups the most common strategy adopted by Friends of the Earth was to influence public opinion. In any given campaign pressure applied at the national level by FoE (UK) could be augmented by a ground swell of "grassroots" opinion mobilised by the local groups within their respective community. The tactics include public meetings and demonstrations, petitions, publicity stunts and dissemination of information through the media or direct contact. Another effective tactic used by FoE was to influence the public by direct practical example such as setting up recycling schemes, selling wholefoods and so on.

This is not to say that FoE operated exclusively at the public level. By 1980 with ten years research and campaign experience to draw on, some impact was being made at other levels on certain issues (e.g. Amendments to the Wildlife and Countryside Bill 1980). The tactics used to influence the executive and legislative include minority reports, law suits and directly lobbying M.P.'s.

(d) Planning the Energy Conservation Campaign

Talk Given to the H.I.P. Group on 2nd October, 1980.

1. What is Planning and Why?

Last December I wrote a paper pointing out the need to plan our educational activities, the arguments for planning are still as strong when we are campaigning because essentially in the latter we are still trying to convey a message to others. In this sense therefore campaigning can be seen as communicating and planning as deciding to whom, when, where, how and what. Planning a strategy for a campaign is advisable in a situation where there are various options and various constraints likely to prevent aims being achieved. Trying to achieve something which is not realistic given time, money and human resources and given other constraints in the outside world means the aims are less likely to be achieved. Thus strategy formulation is a process of translating what we would like to do into what is feasible in the light of our observation and judgement of the situation. A good strategist therefore, is one with an ability to observe and judge both the internal environment (own resources, etc.) and the external environment (what we are up against). Having said this, we would probably go crackers if we tried to assess all the advantages and disadvantages of all the options. All we really need to develop is an

"approach" or a "planning attitude" to the campaign.

Summary: So What is Planning and Why?

- Choosing objectives given constraints.
- Overall purpose of Energy Conservation Campaign is to reduce energy consumption. We have to decide the best way to do this.

2. How to Go About It.

There are a number of clear steps we can take which will help us to do this. To start we need to clarify the overall aims of the energy campaign and then agree specific objectives. Thus if the overall purpose of the campaign is to reduce energy consumption then there are a number of different strategies we could take. For example we could concentrate on reducing the consumption of domestic consumers. In order to actually put this strategy into action we need to identify some very concrete objectives (in line with the general aim) which we can make towards and know when they have been achieved. For example the objectives could be

- "to insulate 300 houses in Birmingham next year"
- "to increase sales of insulation materials by x% next year"

Thus as the planning progresses we move towards more and more specific and concrete ideas. Once the objective is decided next we have to decide on the tactics or logistics of achieving it. This means identifying our target, e.g. private householder, council tenant, council maintenance department, contractors, social workers or voluntary groups and so on. Then go on to decide the optimum way to 'reach' the target, e.g. letters, visits, press, ads, meetings and so on.

Now the crux of the planned approach - the tactics and strategy have to be monitored and evaluated to see whether they are being effective in achieving the aims and objectives of the campaign. This means allowing for feedback; tactics, which need to be flexible and adaptive to the world outside cannot be planned very far ahead so this is where the "planning attitude" comes in. This prompts the creation of mechanisms whereby progress can be evaluated such as regular meetings and report back, decision trees and progress charts and so on.

Summary: So How Do We Go About Planning?

- (i) Set and agree specific objectives

- (ii) Work out target and tactics of campaign
- (iii) Assess success of the tactics in terms of their contribution towards achieving the objective
- (iv) Re-plan accordingly.

See Figure A.3.2.

3. The Energy Conservation Campaign
(Summary and Analysis of HIP's Individual Statements)

Taking the papers you gave me it is possible to identify various "objectives", "targets" and "tactics" as shown in Figure A.3.3.

I'd just like to say a couple of things about all the suggestions that were made in the papers:-

- (i) There were essentially 4 "types" of objective. These are detailed in Figure A.3.4.

Each type puts us into quite a different role and warrants a quite different approach and attitude to the campaign.

- (ii) In all there were about 30 options in the five papers. This means decisions have to be made regarding which are priorities, which are more feasible, which could go into cold storage and whether any should be abandoned altogether.

- (iii) Any individual objective was not specific enough to guide action. Most failed the "Hey Dad" test. For example compare these two statements:-

"Hey Dad, watch me develop Energy Action" vs. "Hey Dad, watch me publish a D.I.Y. Manual/arrange a stall in the market".

and these two

"Hey Dad, watch me get local communities to insulate" vs. "Hey Dad, watch me set up six inner city community-based Insulation Projects".

Our objectives need to be - concrete that is they must state the actual change you want to bring about.

- Specific enough to imply a target.
- Agreed if we are to work as a group.

For example, see Figure A.3.5.

Table A3.2 Planning the Energy Conservation Campaign (Visual Aid)

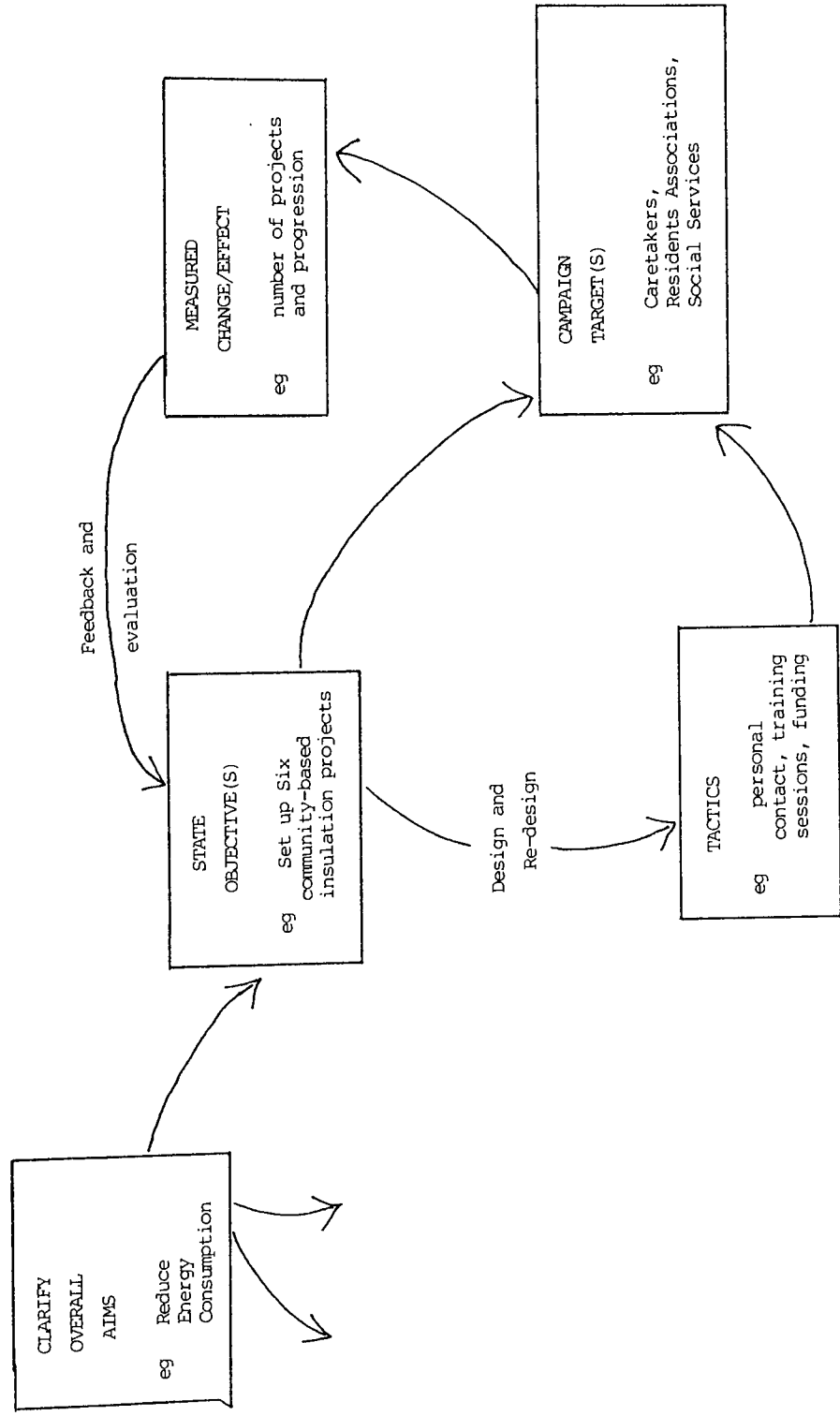


Table A3.3 Objectives, Targets and Tactics (Visual Aid)

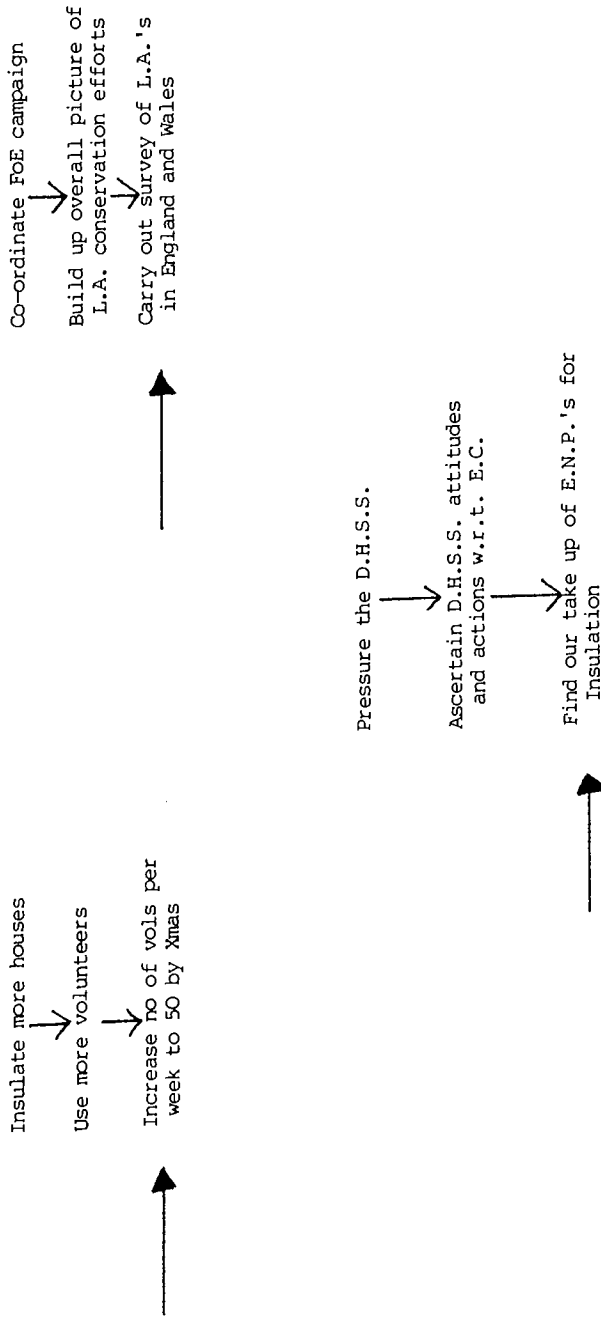
<u>OBJECTIVE</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>TACTICS</u>
("Insulate more houses" (" ("Encourage more projects"	Local People Volunteers Other FoE Groups	"Get local communities to do it" Training Progs.
("Co-ordinate other FoE Groups" (" ("Publish DIY Manual"	Other FoE Groups None	Newsletter Editing Run Workshop None
("Get changes in building regs for installation" (" ("Develop Energy Advice"	Local M.P.'s Schools, M.P.'s General Public	"Pressurise" Talks, Posters Information Sheets

Table A3.4 The Nature of Objectives (Visual Aid)

There were essentially four "types" of objective
 Visual Aid (3) :-

<u>Practical objectives</u>	eg - Insulate houses - Train people - Co-operate with local groups
<u>Educational objectives</u>	eg - Publish DIY Manual - Collect a base of teaching materials - Produce materials for schools, M.P.'s/decision makers - Encourage local groups to campaign for E.C.
<u>Managerial objectives</u> (co-ordinating role)	- Build up overall picture of L.A. energy use in the UK - Co-ordinate other FoE groups via newsletter etc - Keep abreast of overall UK energy policy
<u>Direct action objectives</u>	- Pressurise L.A.'s to adopt schemes from elsewhere - Pressurise M.P.'s for more L.A. E.C. funding - Comment on UK energy policy - Contact local decision makers and pressure points

Table A3.5 The Development of Objectives - Example



Breaking down each objective in this way it becomes obvious that the amount of work involved in any one is pretty large (especially for the "national" objectives). So to do any effectively we need to make choices. When we are agreed upon a single or small number of objectives we have to plan how to achieve it. For example, taking a practical objective "to get 50 vols per week by December".

Table A3.6 Fulfilling Objectives - Example 1

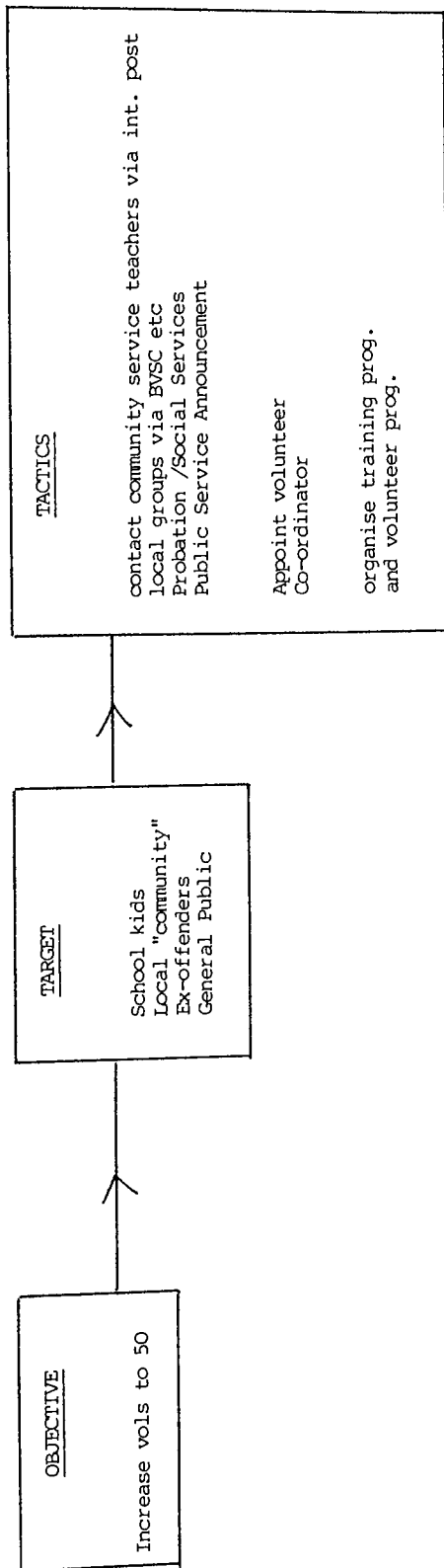
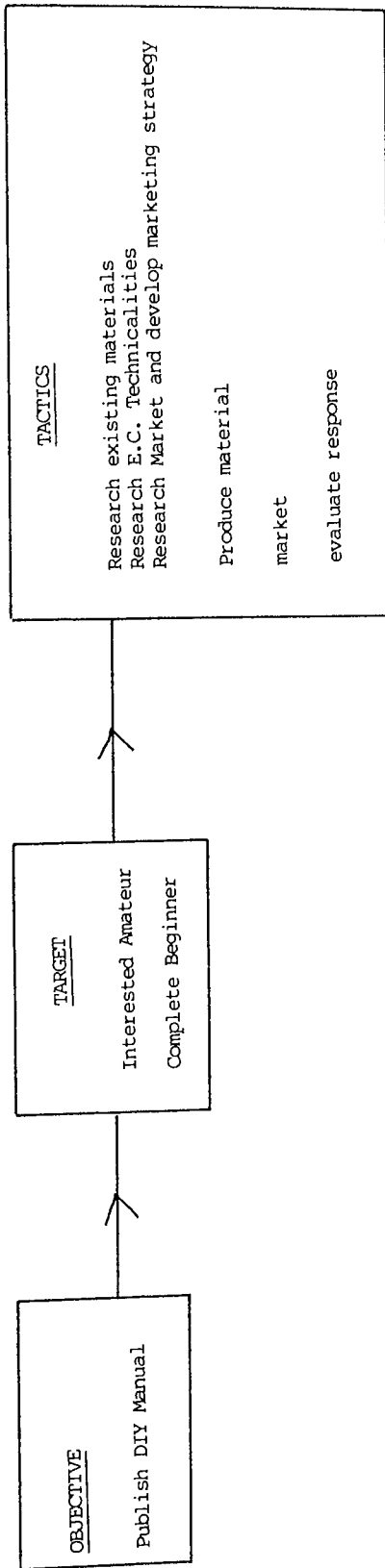


Table A3.7 Fulfilling Objectives - Example 2



Breaking down each objective in this way it becomes obvious that the amount of work involved in any one is pretty large (especially for the "national" objectives). So to do any effectively we need to make choices. When we are agreed upon a single or small number of objectives we have to plan how to achieve it. For example, taking a practical objective "to get 50 vols. per week by December". See Figure A.3.6.

To re-iterate, to achieve even one objective effectively there is an enormous amount of work. Take another example, an educational objective. See Figure A.3.7.

The point of what I'm saying is that we have to make judgements and decisions all the way along - continually assessing how effective a particular task is, what else would be useful and so on. This means in effect, regular 'planning' or progress meetings. The papers you wrote showed not only a wide range of objectives but also a range of targets (Environmentalists, Voluntary Groups/Reformers, Decision Makers, Schools, General Public) and a range of tactics (Insulating, Training, Meeting/Talking, Co-Operating, Co-Ordinating, Information Seeking and Disseminating, Pressurising). It is as important to be clear about our choice of targets and tactics as it is about our objectives. We will be most effective if we choose one or two quite specific objectives rather than spread the group's time and energy too thinly. It is not possible for six people to successfully influence M.P.'s, L.A.'s, public, local community, local leaders, set up practical schemes and so on. It is quite likely that we will be contacting just such a range of people in the execution of a specific objective. Indeed to be effective in achieving one objective we need to consider all channels but not to dilute the effect by diluting our efforts across several objectives.

4. Next Move

To end I'd like to suggest we either consider from the various options which ones to work on over the next few months. Alternatively maybe we first need to look at a few of the favourites to see how much work each would entail, how likely they are to succeed and so on before we make a choice. Then at our next meeting, we can confirm the choice(s) and go ahead to work out tactics.

Today - think around options already suggested and define a number of feasible objectives.

Next Week - develop initial tactics for our objectives, map these on a decision tree.

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