workplace learning and ensure that they enable individualised support. The need for an individualised approach also suggests that formal and non-formal mentoring may be an important strategy within induction.

The project has led to the publication of a guidance document for induction of new university-based teacher educators (Boyd, Harris & Murray, 2007). The guidance document is aimed at deans, heads of department, and academic developers as well as at new teacher educators themselves. The guidance introduces some key ideas and literature on workplace learning and especially on the professional learning of academics. It then sets out some specific areas for review including mentoring, planning for individual staff, role design, developing a pedagogy for ITE, school-based roles, and support for scholarship and research activity. The guidance document is presented as a tool to help departments evaluate their provision for induction of new teacher educators. It aims to provoke reflection, review, and action by departments and individuals to improve the induction experience for new teacher educators within their particular institutional contexts.


The Trebullom Farm Project

John Burnett has been Programme Director of the University of Plymouth’s BA programme in Steiner Waldorf Education since 1992. He’s a Fellow of the Centre for Sustainable Futures at Plymouth and is currently working on developing a new degree programme centred around the idea of learning communities orientated towards a sustainable future.

The Trebullom Farm project was launched in September 2006 by tutors and students from the University of Plymouth. Its aim has been to develop a teaching and learning centre in rural Cornwall as a resource for higher education students wishing to develop skills and learn about sustainability issues in a practical ‘hands-on’ environment.

Trebullom is a beautiful, early nineteenth century farmhouse not far from Launceston which was converted in the 1970’s as a facility for the residents of Peredur Educational Trust. Since the 1950’s, Peredur has provided home and workplace for young men with learning difficulties, offering a rich cultural environment with workshops for high quality weaving, pottery, and wood-craft. Although, over recent years, Trebullom has been little used, its potential as a teaching and learning centre was recognised by Bowhill Educational Trust who offered to work with Peredur in running a series of pilot residennals at the site, culminating in a large scale public event which would celebrate a range of practical environmental activities led by student volunteers from the University of Plymouth. It was agreed that this could be the initial, exploratory phase of a longer-term project which, if successful, could lead to Trebullom coming into full operation as a centre promoting education for sustainability.

Student volunteers, who have
been supported by the Cornwall Centre for Volunteering and Higher Education Action in the Community, have engaged with enthusiasm in the project which is scheduled to take place on 1st and 2nd June. The event, which has been named LEAF '07 (Local Environmental Activities Fayre) will involve activities for local schools on the Friday and the general public on the Saturday. It will include a range of activities including tree-planting, greenwood turning, whole-food cafes, Slow Food, woodland crafts, produce stalls, circus skills, music, a ceilidh with country dancing and music performed in the local pub in the evening. Most of the activities will be led by students who have been acquiring skills through attending workshops and residential at Trebullom and at Ruskin Mill craft centre at Nailsworth. Students, University staff and members of the Peredur community have worked together coordinating and planning the event which has been supported financially by Awards for All and Aim Higher.

The first residential took place in September and involved eighteen 18 new students from the Faculty of Education. Catering, incorporating some produce from Peredur, was provided by volunteer second-year students who had a particular interest in holistic approaches to nutrition. Students got to know the Trebullom site and were introduced to the concept of community volunteering, particularly the option of working with the local North Cornwall community from their base at the University of Plymouth. The success of this initial residential showed how valuable Trebullom could be as a venue where volunteer activities and skills could be practiced.

The second residential took place in early December and was funded by Higher Education Action in the Community. Again, catering was covered by student volunteer activity but this time the residential focussed on group planning for LEAF 07. Students from the Steiner Waldorf BA at the Faculty of Education came together with others from the BA Music and BA Education Studies programmes. A number of lecturers in environmental education attended as well as Melanie Lonsdale from Widening Participation at Plymouth and Nigel Hillier from Bowhill Trust. Trustees and staff from the Peredur community joined with the volunteers and shared perspectives on the proposed event. Andrew Edwards, one of the participants, worked with John Burnett on a video film which shows well the activity of the group during the residential. The film can be viewed on-line at on www.steiner-teacher.org.

Since the residential, on-going work has continued with the project. A management group has been set up to oversee preparations for LEAF '07. In addition, there are activity groups concerned with Nutrition; Environmental Awareness and Outdoor Education, all of which are working on different aspects of the project. The various preparatory strands will be brought together in further residential which will take place in April. At this point, there will be training in Health & Safety; Risk Assessment and preparatory practical work involving the building of a clay kiln for bread baking, constructing shelters for performance and food serving as well as ensuring the land is prepared for the 150 trees which will be planted as part of LEAF '07. As previously, catering for the residential will be provided by student volunteers.

From a research viewpoint, the project provides an interesting study of the processes at work when a diverse group with distinct and different cultures finds ways of working together under the auspices of community volunteering with the aims of realising practical education for sustainability. Key questions are:
a) How effectively can the resources and culture of a rural residential community be integrated with the teaching and learning culture of an urban university and how fruitful can such working together be?
b) To what extent can such a project engage higher education students in sustainability issues and what impact can such engagement have on the community, the environment and the students’ own learning experience?
c) To what extent is the concept of community volunteering an effective ‘driver’ in realising the above project?

The initial, practical aspect of the project will come to a conclusion in June. Minutes of the work of the volunteers have been maintained and there will also be film and video evidence which will provide a valuable resource for evaluation of the project. It is anticipated that several research publications will be produced as a result of the evaluation process.

Once LEAF 07 has taken place and initial evaluation completed, the two groups of trustees will meet with volunteer representatives to discuss further developments within the project which is envisaged as taking a number of years to reach completion. There is a long way to go before a fully developed teaching and learning centre is realised at Trebullom but developments so far have been positive and encouraging.

Background:
My ESCalate funded research explored the opportunities for personal and professional reflection by engaging in a narrative enquiry in the form of learning biographies (see Domincé, 2000 and Kridel, 1998), in an online environment. The central feature was to create a temporal and physical space in a virtual environment to facilitate reflexivity. The focus on past learning experiences provides an ideal opportunity to engage in reflection that highlights the personal learner and the professional individual working with young people in educational contexts. The findings suggest that for some individuals this process of reflective enquiry may question traditional concepts of formal learning by placing learning in a