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Literacy Matters

Alness Mothers Against Drugs

by Mark Chamberlain, Literacy
Officer

After careful planning for some time, AMAD have put into action a year-long scheme providing clients and service users with support in all areas of literacy. This does not just mean basic help with reading and writing, although that kind of assistance is available. The emphasis is on practical support with letter writing, putting together CVs and job applications and understanding and filling in documents and forms (which can often seem confusing or just plain difficult). As much as anything else, it is hoped that clients will benefit from the scheme by gaining confidence in the use of language.

How this came about

It was gauged clients would benefit from assistance, on an individual needs-assessed basis, in the area of literacy, broadly to boost confidence, improve competencies, and enhance employment prospects. Obviously, other literacy agencies exist, but AMAD's reputation is that of an informal first line of support, and we are of course liaising with, for example, Adult Basic Education.

As Literacy officer, I'm charged with the task of putting together tailor-made programs for any client interested in the scheme, and providing support as and when clients require it. My own background is in English language teaching for adults, both in the UK and abroad, largely in ESOL and

English for Industrial/ Business purposes.

Finally, although AMAD's plans had been in place for some time, launching this scheme was conditional on sufficient funding being available. It is funding again which determined the initial length of one year for the scheme; this and the need to monitor clients' response. The aim is for it to be open-ended, and should client interest develop, we hope to expand this area of support.

The scheme runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays every week, 9am – 5pm. Anyone interested should contact AMAD on 01349 880007.

Grundtvig Update



Subsequent to our successful funding bid to set up a Grundtvig 2 Learning Partnership, Highland Adult

Literacies are now engaged in an action research project entitled "Methodological Exchange between Trainers of Disadvantaged Adults." (METODA). With partners in Denmark, France, Italy, Spain and Austria, the aim of the project is to look at the various ways in which partners are using peer mentoring with young disadvantaged adults and to share and exchange good practice. In Highland, Calman Trust will be taking part directly but it is hoped that the whole Literacies Partnership, and indeed the wider Community Learning Partnership, will be able to become involved and benefit from ideas gained through this Grundtvig partnership.

A briefing seminar on the funding for the project and an overview of Grundtvig has now been held in London at the British Council where the opportunity was given to delegates to outline their individual projects. An initial meeting of METODA partners is to be held in November to plan how the project will be rolled out over the next two years and regular reports through this newsletter will update on the progress of the project. If anyone has any questions relating to this project please get in touch with Mary Rhind.

Adult Literacies Funding Awards

7 Successful Bids

Youth Highland has been awarded £35,634 to employ a Youth Literacies Worker to work with the Highland Youth Network to develop a co-ordinated approach to youth literacies across highland. The project will initially run from September 2005 to August 2006.

TAG Invergordon has been awarded £15,525 to run an arts based project in Easter Ross to be carried out jointly with Birchwood Highland. TAG will also extend their previous literacies project to create and expand book groups and writers groups with recipients of Mental Health Services in both Inverness and Easter Ross. The project will run from October 2005 to October 2006.

Following the success of their previous 'Reading the Game' project for ESOL learners, **Ross County Football Club** has been awarded further funding of £2,310 to continue with this. They have also been awarded a further grant of £4,187 for a pilot project aimed at increasing ESOL learners' writing skills. The plan is to publish the group's writing and photographs in book form with the help of a grant from Learning Connections. The book will be

launched on World Book Day in March 2006.

Highland Libraries has been awarded £3,691 towards a project to provide suitable resources for ESOL learners. Highland Libraries has made a commitment to purchasing books in these learners' own languages but will be using the extra literacies funding to buy bi-lingual dictionaries, reading group book sets and 'learn together sacks' for parents and children. The project will run from September 2005.

Caithness Voluntary Group has been awarded £3,050 to deliver ESOL classes both for beginners and more advanced learners in Wick and Thurso. The project will run from September 2005 to March 2006.

Inverness Caledonian Thistle has been awarded £1,310 for a 'Reading the Game' project for ESOL learners in Inverness. The project will run from September to December 2005.

Funding Deadlines

The next deadlines for applications for Adult Literacies Funding are:



Friday 7th October
Friday 2nd December
Friday 3rd February

Decisions will be made about a fortnight later and successful applicants informed as soon as possible.

If you have an idea for a project but you are not sure how to carry it forward, please contact us at the Adult Literacies Offices as we would be very happy to discuss this with you. An updated application form was issued this January and is available in both hard copy and electronic formats and is available from the Adult Literacies Office.

Learning Buddies

The Learning Buddies are a group of adult learners in Edinburgh who go out and give talks to different organisations within their communities. Supported by CLAN Edinburgh, the scheme uses members' own experiences of adult learning to encourage others to take up learning opportunities. Adult literacy and numeracy is de-stigmatised by positive role models of active learners.

We were delighted to welcome a group of the Learning Buddies to Inverness where they gave an inspirational presentation to the Northern Connections meeting of the Adult Literacies Co-ordinators from Moray, Orkney, Shetland, Western Isles, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen. They also kindly consented to do a presentation on the previous evening for anyone unable to attend the Northern Connections meeting. We were delighted that a group of members of Moray Learners Forum were able to come through and join us and a pleasant and useful evening was had by all.

It was unanimously agreed that this was a constructive way of sharing good practice and we hope that these connections can be kept going to allow learners to share good practice across area boundaries.

ESOL Tutors

We are compiling a database of anyone in Highland who has a professional ESOL qualification, for example CELTA or Trinity TESOL. It may be possible that some of the literacies partners will be looking for tutors in this field and there may be freelance work available. If you would be interested in hearing about ESOL teaching opportunities, please let us know and we will keep you informed.

Laptops & Tablets



Please remember that we have technological resources that are available for all partners

to use for any literacies teaching. These include 2 digital cameras, 15 laptops and 6 tablet PCs. The digital cameras and one laptop are held in the HAL office.

The other laptops and the tablet PCs will be circulating round Highland in three sets. Until March 2006, the two sets of 7 laptops will be based in Alness and Fort William. If tutors would like to borrow these to use, please contact Chris on 01463 251 277 who is arranging a rota for them.

Training

The set of Tablet PCs will be based in Inverness until the beginning of December and will then move to Easter Ross. If tutors would like to use these, they will need to go to a training session to find out how the machines differ from laptops and to become comfortable using them with learners. This is an interesting and fun training. Two sessions are currently about to be held in the evenings in the **Spectrum Centre, Inverness on Monday 10th October and Thursday 13th October**. Places on these are limited to 6, so please book with Chris (telephone above) to ensure your place.

Please will all those in Easter Ross who would be interested in using the tablets anytime after December and through to March also get in touch to stake your claim in the rota. Training sessions will be arranged for tutors in Easter Ross nearer the time.



Discovery Game

The Discovery Game was developed by the Dundee Literacy Partnership in conjunction with Abertay University. The game, based on and used with the commercial Deus-ex game, was designed to provide an engagement tool for work with literacies learners. The games are now available for borrowing by literacies partners.

Other Resources



New resources since the last newsletter include collections of writing by adult literacies learners. Complete sets of these are held both in this office and at each area ABE office. People are welcome to come and browse at anytime and borrow as required.

Curriculum Framework

The Scottish Executive has published 'An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland' which promotes the social practices approach to adult literacy learning and teaching. This approach puts the learner at the centre, working to a curriculum negotiated around his her own uses for literacy and numeracy. The Framework should be available to all adult literacies tutors. We have multiple copies of the Framework, so if you would like one or more, please give us a call.

International Literacies Conference

On Thursday 8th September, the International Literacies Conference was held at Murrayfield, Edinburgh. The Highland Adult Literacies Partnership was

represented by a stall in the marketplace, where a selection of the projects was showcased using posters and leaflets.

There was a range of interesting and informative workshops to be attended in the morning and afternoon facilitated by members of the local authority based adult literacy and numeracy partnerships throughout Scotland.

The event also marked the launch of the new Big Plus website which is designed to support the national literacy and numeracy awareness raising campaign. Deputy Minister for Communities, Johann Lamont, made the opening address and in the afternoon, Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, Allan Wilson, presented the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Annual Report to Conference.



M-Learning Update

Following the successful trials which took place last year as part of a pan-European project, Learning Connections have agreed to financially support more work in the area of m-learning in Highland. The target group will again be young people aged between sixteen and twenty-five who have left school and are currently not engaged in education, training or employment.

The first phase of the project will be based in Skye. ABE will work in partnership with the Learning Centre to deliver and evaluate m-learning. The equipment used will be new "smart phones" which are hybrid mobile phones and Personal Digital Assistants.

The new project will be officially launched in November. It is hoped to roll it out to other areas of Highland next year.



ABE News

Welcome

Welcome to Mark Richardson and Judie Holliday who joined ABE this September. Mark who has been employed by Community Education to develop adult literacies work in Alness for the last 2 years, started work with ABE as Adult Literacies Support Worker for East Ross on 5th September. Judie, who was previously a work-based education consultant in Canada, has been appointed as ESOL Support Worker for Inverness, based at the Spectrum Centre and she started work on 19th September.

ITALL Courses

The ITALL course has recently been revised and the updated course will be delivered shortly. For anyone interested in becoming an ABE Tutor, there are new ITALL training courses starting shortly as follows:

Inverness 25th October
 Portree 7th November
 Dingwall December

Also, the 2 day Fast Track ITALL Course for literacies practitioners is being held in Kinlochbervie on 12th and 26th November

If you would like to join one of these courses, please contact the ABE co-ordinator for the relevant area.

Adult Basic Education 01463 251278	
Caithness	
<i>Libby Cook</i>	01955~605423
Inverness	
<i>Jill Crawshaw</i>	01463~710013
Ross & Cromarty	
<i>Norma Christie</i>	01349~864579
Lochaber	
<i>Ann-Marie Donoghue</i>	01397~707371
Badenoch, Strathspey & Nairn	
<i>Isabel Duncan</i>	01479~811689
Sutherland	
<i>Barbara Watson</i>	01549~402050
Skye & Lochalsh	
<i>Joey Graham</i>	01478~614064

Celebrating Cultural Diversity

Friday 18th November

The Highland Community Learning and Development Strategy Partnership's annual conference takes place on Friday 18th November at the Thistle Hotel in Inverness.

The aim of the conference is to explore how the achievement through learning by young people and adults can have a positive impact on the culturally diverse communities in the Highlands. It is aimed at all learning practitioners

– organisers, providers, tutors and lecturers – and will be an opportunity to gain insight and inspiration through sharing local good practice and hearing about national projects.

There is an exciting programme available covering many aspects of adult education in relation to cultural diversity. In addition to keynote speakers, and a panel session presented by learners, there are 10 workshop/sessions on offer.

For further information, please contact Karin Bleibaum on 01463 251249, email karin.bleibaum@highland.gov.uk.

Training



These sessions are **free** and open to anyone who is interested. To book your place, please telephone or

Email Chris McLintock the Highland Adult Literacies Office.

MONDAY 10TH AND THURSDAY 13TH OCTOBER

Using Tablet PCs

These courses are primarily for adult literacies tutors who are planning to use the tablet PCs with groups of learners.

Presented by John Nethercott, Literacy/IT Co-ordinator, BaSIL+

Location: Spectrum Centre, Margaret Street, Inverness

Further courses will be held later in the year and if you are interested in attending, please let us know and we will put your name on the waiting list and contact you with specific details when finalised.

WEA AUTUMN COURSES

The WEA has issued its programme of courses, which caters for a wide range of interests, for Inverness and Ross-shire for this autumn. If you would like a copy, please call WEA on 01463 710577

TUESDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 10.30 to 12.30 followed by lunch

Understanding Career Planning

Using a mixture of fun activities and Labour Market myths, this workshop aims to stimulate an awareness of the effective career planning approach promoted by Careers Scotland and the importance of career planning skills in a world of change.

Presented by Shona Laidlaw Senior Advisor, I, N, B & S, Careers Scotland

Location: Beaufort Hotel, 11 Culduthel Road, Inverness

FRIDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 10.30 to 12.30 followed by lunch

Prison Literacies

Have you ever wondered what working in prison is like? This workshop will tell you about the work of prison education and would be particularly useful to literacies tutors interested in working with prisoners in the future.

Presented by Norman Ross Prison Literacies Liaison Officer

Location: Beaufort Hotel, 11 Culduthel Road, Inverness