



Highland
Adult
Literacies

May/June 2010
Issue 41

This Issue

- 1** Learners' Conference
- 2** Learner Web Pilot
- 2** Funding Awards
- 2** Funding Deadlines
- 3** Gypsy Traveller Project
- 4** ABE News
- 4** New ESOL Projects
- 4** Farewell to Judie Holliday
- 4** WEA ESOL Tutor Workshops

Highland Adult Literacies
Library Support Unit
31A Harbour Road
Inverness IV1 1UA
Telephone 01463 251276/7
Email mary.rhind@highland.gov.uk or
christina.mclintock@highland.gov.uk
Website www.halweb.co.uk

Literacy Matters



Learners' Conference

As part of our literacies network project – Literacies Highland Adult Literacies successfully received funding from LEADER, the Scottish



Government, and Moray Adult Learners Forum, to run a conference on March 5th and 6th March in Nairn for adult literacies learners. The conference was called “Learners Got Talent” and was unique in several ways. Firstly it was organised and run by literacies learners for literacies learners. Secondly it involved learners from all the Adult Literacies Partnerships across the North. This meant that in addition to Highland there were learners from Moray, Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen, Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles. Learners from Moray who had been involved in running a learners’ conference previously acted as consultants to advise and coordinate activity.

The problem of coordination across such a wide area and over local authority boundaries was overcome with the use of technology, namely video conferencing and the setting up of a conference wiki which the learners used to pass information around, gather views and generally communicate.

The conference itself included workshops on subjects as wide ranging as textile jewellery making, creative writing and drumming, run by learners who demonstrated the wealth of talent that there is out there.

Andrew Chisholm, Haven Products Ltd, and Donna Overmeer, Rag Tag n Textile, were the organisers from Highland and were supported by Sheila Maher, WEA, who



also created a Bear Hunt activity which was one of the highlights of the event. Donna also ably co-introduced the conference items throughout the day and ensured that the whole conference ran smoothly. Several learners from Highland

attended the conference, along with learners from all over the North of Scotland, and all thoroughly enjoyed themselves and found much to inspire them. One learner summed it up, "It was brilliant!"



The learners were delighted also that Sandy Park, Convenor of the Highland Council and Member for Nairn agreed to come along and welcome everyone to the event.

A group of the organising learners are still writing the report of the conference and that will be available from the HALP Office in due course. If you are interested in receiving a copy please let us know.

Learner Web Pilot



Tutors and learners from Highland have been involved with Portland University in Oregon, USA in an exciting pilot of a Learner Web supported by the Scottish Government and Learning Connections. The pilot ran from January to March and was testing a new way of delivery of Adult Literacies via the internet that could prove very useful to some learners, either for those who are isolated or in remote

places or those who would like to practise and stretch their new skills in between official class times.

Tutors and learners from Highland were invited to take part in the pilot and two tutors Mark Newman and John Nethercott took up the challenge as did several learners. The biggest hurdle was the very tight timescale in which the tutors had to learn how to create and load on to the Web learning programmes which were tailored to their learners. The tutor training was carried out via Webinar from Portland University.

Both tutors and learners enjoyed the experience and were enthusiastic about this as a future optional way of learning in Highland and we hope that this may eventually become an accessible facility for adult literacy and numeracy delivery. Many thanks are due also to ABE coordinators and tutors who supported learners as they undertook this pilot project on the Learner Web.

The final report is not yet produced but feedback has been very positive and I will let you know when the report becomes officially available.

Funding Awards

Three organisations have been awarded funding to undertake year long literacies projects commencing in April 2010.

The **Workers Educational Association** has been awarded £ 38,925 to continue to support individuals and groups of employees in the workplace to progress with their personal and

professional development by addressing gaps in their basic skills. In addition they will embed and further develop the progress made in the recently undertaken, HALP funded, numeracy pilot in which existing learning programmes have been registered for core skills with the SQA.

Apex Scotland has been awarded £37,158 to develop and continue to provide, in partnership with other agencies, a community based one to one and group specialist support service to clients who are identified as requiring literacy support in order to help motivation to change and to gain and sustain employment, training or further educational opportunities.

Lead Scotland has been awarded £27,654 to continue to provide support for learners in their target group who require individual support and programmes designed to reflect particular health related literacies needs. A feature of this project will be the use of adaptive technology solutions with learners who require them.

In addition, **Lochaber College** has been awarded £1,470 to run a 15 week ESOL course. Students will be enrolled on to an SQA Unit at Access 2 in either Beginner Literacies 1 or 2 or Everyday Communications. The course runs from February to July 2010.

Funding Deadlines

The closing dates for the next funding rounds are:



20th August 2010
19th November 2010

Integrated literacy and numeracy through sewing and craft with Gypsy/Travellers

A group of Gypsy/Traveller women from the Inverness Gypsy/Traveller Site recently engaged in a short integrated literacy and numeracy project through sewing and craft. It was supported and led by the Interrupted Learning Service, Highland Council Education, Culture and Sport Service (ECS), and Workers' Educational Association (WEA) Inverness.

The Gypsy/Traveller group requested this type of learning experience to fulfil a number of reasons – 'something to do', 'to learn to sew', 'to get support with reading and writing and number' and 'to be busy with their hands so they would try not to smoke as much!'

The request created an opportunity for a partnership between Education, WEA and Rag, Tag 'n' Textile, a Skye based social enterprise company, to be forged to look at how a sustainable package could be developed. This would support an immediate need and also recognise how to look at putting strategies in place for further development.

Tutors were involved in training sessions led by Rag, Tag 'n' Textile to support the delivery of integrated literacy and

numeracy through sewing and craft following which a series of sessions ran for the Gypsy/Traveller group.

The Gypsy/Traveller group learned individually to operate a sewing machine and create customised pieces of work whilst simultaneously focusing on and developing reading and measuring skills. The technique of rag rugging also allowed for measure, pattern and reading to be integrated into the sewing experience.



The weekly sessions were not without challenge due to weather, family, and pet! commitments, but the enthusiasm and willingness to attend and learn new skills were evident. One member of the group purchased a sewing machine during the project and brought it along to the sessions.

This learning opportunity for a small group of Gypsy/Traveller women has highlighted a willingness to learn skills that

not only support themselves and their families but has also given them access to learning not previously experienced, possibly due to their lifestyle and opportunities previously available to them. It is not easy to commit to a project when living a mobile lifestyle. But this learning experience has highlighted that enthusiasm, enjoyment and a willingness to learn can overcome barriers. It has also shown that the group has worked in partnership with

agencies allowing for alternative ways to be created supporting a need and interest. One lady forgot to bring her 'work' on one occasion and said she just came along 'for the craic' that week!

There has already been a request to do something next year!

Karen MacMaster
Interrupted Learning
Development Officer



ITALL Course

An ITALL course will run at the Apex Scotland office in Inverness, starting on **Friday 28th May**. Although the course is primarily for Apex staff, there are a small number of places available for others. If you are thinking of becoming a literacies tutor and are interested in attending, please contact Norman Ross.

Adult Basic Education
Strategy Officer Julie Simmons 01463~251278
Caithness Libby Cook 01955~607037
Inverness Mark Richardson 01463~710013
Ross & Cromarty Norma Christie 01349~864579
Lochaber Ann-Marie Donoghue 01397~707371
Badenoch, Strathspey & Nairn Mohamed Hamada 01667~458556 01479~811689
Sutherland Barbara Watson 01549~402050
Skye & Lochalsh Joey Graham 01478~614064
Prison Literacies Norman Ross 01463~251279

ITALL PDA

Over the next eighteen months, everyone undertaking ITALL training will also be registered with SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) for a Professional Development Award (PDA). This is not as onerous as it may sound. There are no exams to sit and plenty

of time to work through the four units. Short pieces of writing will be required for each unit but, as always, the ABE staff will be on hand to help everyone through the whole process.

If you are interested in taking this course, please get in touch with your local ABE Co-ordinator. Places are limited.

New ESOL Projects



HALP are pleased to announce that we have received funding from the Scottish Government and ESF which will allow ESOL work to be carried out over the next three years on two projects “*ESOL Skills for Life for Migrant Workers and Their Families*” and “*ESOL Tutor Training and e-Training Development*”. ABE will be running one to one and group ESOL classes and the WEA will be coordinating all ESOL activity across the partnership, and will be focusing delivery on Workplace ESOL, classes in the community for women from ethnic minorities and young people needing English support on leaving school. The WEA will also be providing a robust tutor training programme for both new tutors and in service training for those already engaged in tutoring. This training will also be developing e-Training to allow tutor training to be more accessible.

Farewell to Judie

It is with great sadness that we have to say goodbye and thank you to Judie Holliday who has been an able ESOL Coordinator and Workplace ESOL Organiser working with the WEA over the past few years. We shall miss greatly her efficient ways and knowledgeable experience with which she has coordinated ESOL provision in Highland, setting up the successful Highland ESOL Providers Group, drawing up a Highland ESOL Strategy and making all the preparations for the launch of an ESOL website in Highland not to mention her work nationally with SQA and accreditation.

Our loss will be Canada’s gain but, who knows, with the advent of Learner Webs and other advances in internet technology, maybe we will be collaborating again in the future via the airwaves!



**WEA
ESOL
Tutor
Workshops**

WEA are planning to run another PDA ITESOL (Professional Development Award: Introduction to Tutoring English for Speakers of Other Languages) this autumn from September to December.

Also planned for the near future is further series of stand alone workshops which are being finalised out the moment.

Details will be posted on the Adult Literacies Website at www.halweb.co.uk as soon as they become available. Or for more information, please contact Gillian Scott, on 07851 413276 email g.scott@weascotland.org.uk