



Literacy Matters

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Adult Literacies Funding Award

TAG, an organisation which provides guidance, training and work placement opportunities for people who are predominantly long-term unemployed and who are recovering from mental health problems, has been awarded a grant of £18,789.

TAG has identified a group Mental Health Services users who lack basic literacy skills but who they are currently unable to help because they cannot offer one to one tuition and they lack the appropriate resources. In many cases, problems such as erratic attendance or short attention span prevent referral to other agencies such as ABE.

Co-ordinated by a part-time project officer, TAG aims to develop and test a package of Adult Literacy courses and materials. The courses will range from one-to-one teaching to small group work and self teach courses. It is hoped that this will enable learners to progress to TAG's mainstream provision and eventually on to employment. TAG will also provide a mobile resource centre to support their 9 remote outreach units throughout Highland.

The project will run from January to December 2004 after which it is hoped that literacy will be offered as part of TAG's main repertoire of courses.

Funding Deadline



The next deadline for applications for Adult Literacies Funding is:

Friday 27th February 2004

Decisions will be made on 11th March 2004 and successful applicants informed as soon as possible after those dates.

Website Launch

Highland Adult Literacies now has its own website on www.halweb.co.uk. The site includes details of partners, projects and training courses together with all past newsletters. There is also a forum for practitioners to share ideas and good practice and a link to the new ABE website on www.abeweb.co.uk.

Celebration of Learning



The websites were launched at the Celebration of Learning event held in the Town House, Inverness on Tuesday 2nd December. Also launched were the Sandstone Press website on www.sandstonepress.com and the Highland Libraries Reader Development website, which is particularly aimed at new readers, on www.hi-read.org.uk.

The event was hosted by Cathy MacDonald, the well known television and radio broadcaster, who presented awards to learners for personal achievement in learning and to voluntary tutors for recognition of their valuable contribution to adult learning.

The day also included workshops by the Scottish authors Des Dillon and Suhayl Saadi, both of whom are involved in the Vista Books project, to be published by Sandstone Press, producing novels for emergent readers.

Also featured were demonstrations by Learndirect Scotland of the new games software, aimed at young adult learners, developed by Abertay University. In addition there were displays by a number of adult learning providers and by Am Baile/the Gaelic village project.

Adult Literacies Projects in Highland Libraries

John A. H. Dempster

Since the very early days of public libraries, library staff have been committed to supporting adult learners at all levels through the provision of appropriate learning materials. More recently, they've realised that this provision can be significantly enhanced through close partnership working with other learning agencies.



It's not surprising therefore that Highland Libraries' staff have shown great enthusiasm for the opportunities provided by the Highland Adult Literacies Project. Partnership initiatives funded by the Project and involving libraries are currently under way in four Areas – Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland (where work has been under way for some time) and Skye and Lochalsh and Caithness (where the projects are still in the early stages.) It's important to add that libraries in the other Areas are also working to support literacies development, but have not yet approached the Project for funding.

The projects in the four Areas are assisting library staff in their mission to support learners in three ways – provision of funding for stock and guidance in selecting appropriate materials, access to training, and interactive working with learning professionals.

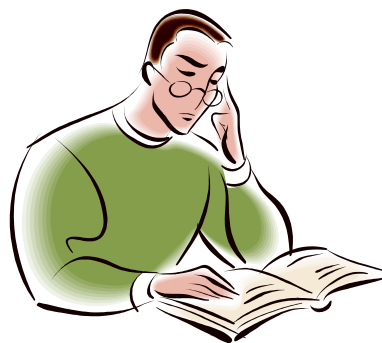
Participating libraries have acquired books, recorded books on tape and CD and CD ROMS. There are sets of books for developing readers from, for example, the *Open Doors* series, and in addition books on Maths, Spelling,

Punctuation and Grammar. CD ROMS, available to work through in the library or (in some Areas) to borrow for use at home, include titles such as *Superspell*, *The Alphabet* and *Interactive Picture Dictionary*.

Alison Forrest, Area Libraries Officer in Sutherland, describes the stock held there – 'we have aimed our collection at those needing help with basic skills such as how to open a bank account, how to read a train timetable and how to programme your video recorder as well as mainstream publications on numeracy and literacy skills. As well as adult material we have a collection of material aimed at "helping your child with literacy" which is often an unthreatening way of encouraging adults to take material which will also benefit them.'

Over the last five months, 2,350 items have been purchased as part of these local projects, including over a hundred CD ROMs. This stock is available at all library sites in participating Areas – including mobile libraries, and also in local learning centres – for example at Portree and Auchtertyre.

Staff from the libraries participating in these partnerships receive training in 'spotting and referring', and learn how the stock in the new collections can help developing readers. An additional benefit of this training, where it is offered cross-sectorally is that library staff build relationships with folk from other agencies, personal links which are vital if partnership working is to be really fruitful. Alison comments on her



colleagues' enthusiasm about the benefits to the library service of the Sutherland Partnership – 'the staff are very positive about us having this material and following their training they feel they will be able to encourage the public to make good use of it.'

And finally, the quality of service to developing readers is enhanced by interactive working between library staff and other professionals – in Ross and Cromarty, for example, Sheena Paterson (Mid-Ross Librarian) reports that library staff are referring folk who would benefit for literacies support to Adult Basic Education; correspondingly, ABE tutors are bringing their clients to the library and offering them support in the selection and use of appropriate materials.



Staff in the four Areas plan to vigorously promote the new collections. The Sutherland Partnership is preparing a press release for the *Northern Times*, which will also contain a leaflet about the material. Ross and Cromarty is similarly using the press to reach potential clients, and also preparing a leaflet targeted at the various agencies who may already be doing informal literacies work with clients who might benefit from referral to the local library.

The real benefits of these projects will only become clear in the longer term when qualitative analysis of the benefits to the clients is undertaken. In the mean time, the statistics of loans of this stock through public libraries are very encouraging. Since August, there have been around 850 loans of material from the project collections at libraries in the four Areas, mostly from Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland libraries. Topping the league, with the most loans of any library, is Achiltibuie, where there have been 126 loans. This is followed by Alness (99), Dingwall (92), Dornoch (88), Lochcarron (71) and Ullapool (62). One phenomenon reported by some library staff is that the literacies material is sometimes used by 'mainstream' library users wanting 'a quick read'!

The Highland Adult Literacies Project is enabling libraries to do more effectively something we have always aspired to. And we're still in the early stages.....



M-learning – update

Julie Simmons

What is the M-learning Project?

This is a 4.5 million euro pan-European project supported by the European Commission’s Information Society Technologies programme. It is being co-ordinated through the Learning and Skills Development Agency in three EU countries – Britain, Italy and Sweden. Public and commercial organisations are participating in the research and development of the project, which is taking place over a three year period. Through this project new technologies and learning materials will be developed which will be inexpensive, portable and accessible to learners. These include new generation mobile phones and palm computers.

The target audience for the m-learning project is young adults, aged 16 to 24, who have not succeeded in the education system, and have low literacy and numeracy skills. It is specifically aimed at those who are not currently involved in any type of education or training and who may be unemployed, under employed or even homeless.

The project will investigate how mobile technology can be used to re-engage these young people, positively influence their attitudes towards learning and contribute to the improvement of their skills, opportunities and lives.

M-learning Trials

Twelve organisations will be taking part – ten are based in England, one in

Wales and one in Scotland (Highland Council Adult Basic Education and partner organisations). Most of the twelve chosen to participate operate in urban areas so the Highland trials will test the technologies’ potential in rural and remote areas.

The learning packages to be trialled are “On the Road” based around the driving theory test, “Travel”, “Health and Lifestyle”, “Sport” which focuses mainly on football, “Urban Survival” aimed at young people living independently, and “Skill” which allows individuals to give themselves a Literacy Health Check and a Numeracy Health Check.

At a recent meeting in London, I had the opportunity to use the equipment which will be used to deliver the learning materials, including palm computers and the next generation of mobile phones (which have internet access and a video camera!). This was very exciting. It is easy to imagine how the use of such technology will be a “hook” to engage learners.

This project is at the forefront of using new technologies to attract people back into learning. It is especially exciting that partnership organisations in Highland have been chosen for the trials. Nationally, m-learning has



attracted a lot of attention and many practitioners will be keenly interested in the evaluation and results of the project.

For further details about the project please contact:
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Adult Literacies Strategy Officer
Julie.simmons@highland.gov.uk
Telephone: 01463 251278



Training Course



The session is free and open to anyone who is interested. To book your place, please

telephone or Email Chris McLintock at the Highland Adult Literacies Office.

WEDNESDAY 14th JANUARY 2004
12.30 – 3.00 pm preceded by lunch

Learners' Forums

The barriers we encountered and how we overcame them

Presented by Tracey Livingstone,
Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinator,
Rosemount Lifelong Learning,,
Glasgow

Location **Beaufort Hotel,**
11 Culduthel Road, Inverness

Mid-year Report

The Adult Literacies Sub-group of the Highland Community Learning Strategy Partnership recently received feedback from Scottish Executive following the submission of the mid-year report.

The report, used as a basis of assessing progress, received a "Very Good" grading, which is the second highest of the five achievable ratings. It was also noted that the Partnership "has made significant progress in a relatively short period of time". Many innovative projects have been undertaken in the past year and this is reflected in the assessment and there is no indication that this momentum is slowing down.

The Scottish Executive has extended national funding for Adult Literacies and Highland has been allocated £700,900 for the years 2004 – 2006 This will enable more adults with low literacy levels to access new learning opportunities.

Action Plan 2004 - 2006

The new funding is dependent upon the satisfactory production of a new Adult Literacies Action Plan to be submitted to the Scottish Executive by 12th December. A meeting, attended by representatives from a large number of partners, was held on 5th November to help progress the plan. We are now working to incorporate feedback from this meeting into the new plan.

"Engaging Ways"

The conference held at the Thistle Hotel on 3rd November was a great success, attended by over 90 practitioners from a wide cross section of organisations. It provided an excellent opportunity to find out about a variety of initiatives both in Highland and further a field. Delegates enjoyed some very informative speeches and workshops which covered an broad range of issues, ideas and practice with input from many diverse groups.



ABE News

ITALL Courses

In addition to the ITALL courses currently underway, further courses are due to commence in Lochaber and Alness in January/February 2004. If you are interested in becoming an ABE tutor and would like to attend one of these courses, please contact the co-ordinator for the relevant area. ABE are currently developing a 2-day fast track ITALL course, aimed at partners, practitioners and current tutors, which they plan to pilot in the New Year.

New Appointments

Barbara Watson the new co-ordinator for Sutherland took up her post on 15th October and Peter Mackenzie commenced work in Skye and Lochalsh on 24th November. Also working very closely with ABE will be Norman Ross, the new Prison Literacy Liaison Officer, who will take up his post later in the year.

Adult Basic Education Co-ordinators	
Caithness	
<i>Libby Cook</i>	01995~605423
Inverness	
<i>Jill Crawshaw</i>	01463~710013
Ross & Cromarty	
<i>Norma Christie.....</i>	01349~864579
Lochaber	
<i>Ann-Marie Donoghue</i>	01397~705003
Badenoch, Strathspey & Nairn	
<i>Isabel Duncan</i>	01479~811689
Sutherland	
<i>Alison Dunbar</i>	01408~623900
<i>Barbara Watson</i>	01549~402406
Skye & Lochalsh	
<i>Peter Mackenzie</i>	01478 612386



Christmas Prize Word Search

Hidden in the grid below are over 30 words and phrases connected with adult literacy and



learning which appear in this edition of our newsletter. Words can appear backwards or forwards, up or down or diagonally. To enter, write the words and phrases you have found on a piece of paper together with your name, address and telephone number and send to us at the address on page 1 by Friday 19th December. Entries with the most correct answers will be entered into a draw and a prize will be awarded to the first to be drawn.

S	S	R	P	R	A	C	T	I	T	I	O	N	E	R	S	S	N
C	U	C	B	L	P	R	O	J	E	C	T	S	S	K	O	O	B
X	P	E	O	I	A	H	B	M	B	T	P	B	L	Q	I	K	L
F	E	L	P	T	R	C	L	X	P	F	P	Y	N	T	A	G	I
M	R	E	P	E	T	R	B	I	A	U	I	T	A	L	L	K	B
S	S	B	O	R	N	I	R	T	B	G	T	C	M	C	E	E	S
V	P	R	R	A	E	V	S	C	M	R	U	E	L	O	A	R	Y
Q	E	A	T	C	R	I	A	H	L	D	A	L	R	U	R	Y	A
E	L	T	U	Y	V	N	S	Z	E	A	E	R	O	R	N	C	W
C	L	I	N	L	O	I	E	Y	A	X	W	M	I	S	E	A	G
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F	G	U	M	F	O	I	E	O	G	T	R	A	I	N	I	N	G
N	O	M	F	J	O	V	W	F	U	N	D	I	N	G	T	V	N
O	O	O	G	Y	R	E	S	O	U	R	C	E	S	Y	A	B	E
C	D	S	A	N	D	S	T	O	N	E	P	R	E	S	S	U	W