

Adult and Community Learning

NEWS

Winter 2006/07



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is a star



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the year



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in
partnership



Work starts on building new Community Centre.

Westleigh's Learning Village

Local MP and Honorary President of Westleigh Community Group, Andy Burnham, has supervised the laying of *another brick in the wall* at Westleigh Learning Village.

Thanks to the Learning and Skills Council's investment of over £400,000, Westleigh will soon have access to a new Community Centre for the provision of personal, family and community development activities.

The Community Centre will be attached to Westleigh Children's Centre - itself an extension to Westleigh Methodist Primary School - and will work closely with Westleigh High School next door.

The Centre will complete a cluster of buildings with superb learning facilities for the local community. The facilities will:

* enhance outreach into, engagement with, and active participation of a local disadvantaged

community, thereby contributing to building a stronger community.

* raise the aspirations, confidence and competence and reduce the alienation, dependency and worklessness in the community, thereby helping local people, from 0-90 years, to reach their full potential.

It's Westleigh's very own *Communiversality*!

Pictured from left to right are: Councillor Brian Wilson, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families; John Banks, Headteacher, Westleigh High School; Deborah Murphy, Chair, Westleigh Vision; MP Andy Burnham; Mark Lloyd, Senior Project Manager, Jackson Lloyd.



Working Wonders at Metrolite

Ian Featherstone and Paul Cooper, both employees at Metrolite Industries, have recently received Adult Literacy certificates at an awards ceremony held at the factory.

Working Wonders runs Skills for Life sessions at Metrolite aimed at helping employees improve their literacy and gain confidence and qualifications.

Tom Milner, General Manager at Metrolite said: "Our aim is to encourage our employees to widen their existing skills base in order to achieve adaptability. Working Wonders is helping us to achieve this aim by providing on-site literacy sessions for our workers.

Joyce Hanlon, Senior Tutor at Working Wonders added: "The success of our partnership working with Metrolite is proved when employees not only gain skills and qualifications but have the motivation to

seek out and gain permanent employment and have the confidence to take on the new challenges that represents."

Pictured left to right are: Joyce Hanlon, Senior Tutor, Working Wonders; Clare Unsworth, Tutor, Working Wonders; Ian Featherstone; Paul Cooper; Tom Milner, General Manager.



Shevington success story

June Brokas, who works at a children's nursery, wasn't confident about using a computer.

She attended a 20 week course on Word Processing and a 10 week course on Desktop Publishing at Shevington High School Adult Education Centre.

Now, she is very confident and enthusiastic about using the skills she has learned on these courses. They have helped her with administration and display work in the nursery.

June is keen to progress onto the CLAIT course and achieve accreditation for successfully completing it.



June Brokas (right) with her tutor Christine Williams.

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Tyldesley Centre Manager Sue Hanson nominates an outstanding tutor.

Christina is a star!

QIA Star Awards are designed to recognise individuals who make a difference in the Learning and Skills sector.

Tutors are nominated by education managers who recognise their special qualities and attributes. At Tyldesley Community Education Centre we have several excellent tutors but Christina Martin has stood out since I took over as manager 5 years ago. Christina teaches various Art courses at the Centre and has also worked for Wigan and Leigh College for 27 years. Teaching in our ACL provision and College provision, she has provided the learners with innovative Art courses which have been a huge success.

Christina puts her heart and soul into teaching. She loves Art and this is reflected in her teaching and the results she achieves with her learners. She inspires learners and gives them confidence to tackle new projects and techniques that previously they would not have attempted. Her enthusiasm motivates the learners to learn more and more. She arranges visits to art galleries and goes the extra mile to involve everyone.

I nominated Christina in the category for Outstanding Adult and Community Learning Practitioner, sponsored by NIACE. There were over 3,000 people nominated in 17 categories. We were absolutely delighted to receive a letter saying Christina had been shortlisted to the last 10 in her category. When asked for a quote by Star Awards, Christina said: "I am thrilled and delighted by my nomination for this award."

"It is a lovely experience working at Tyldesley Centre because of the welcome and encouragement I have always received and the continuing enthusiasm and achievement of all my learners."

Christina attended an event at Doncaster University where she met other shortlisted nominees and the judges.

They celebrated their local success before attending the national awards, at a glittering ceremony in London. The award winners received a trophy, certificate and £2,000 presented by Dame Kelly Holmes and Krishnan Guru-Murthy.

Although Christina didn't win an award in her category, she felt it a great honour to have been nominated by the Centre and shortlisted by the judges. She really enjoyed the award ceremony and meeting other people in her field of expertise.



We have lift off!

Tyldesley Community Education Centre recently held an Open Day.

The reason was to officially open the lift for disabled learners and the new main hall. It was also to let everyone see the completed renovations in the building.

Over the last 3 years we have undertaken major renovations to the 100 year old building. This year we have installed a new state of the art fire system, new toilets throughout and modernised the entrance and hallway.



Councillor Brian Wilson opens the lift supported by: Susan Hanson, ACL Centre Administrator; Brian Hills, Centre Manager; Judith Monks, Noah's Ark Playschool; Joyce Houghton, Account Manager.

We received Learning and Skills Council funding for the lift from the ACL DDA grant. It is a massive boost for the Centre as it enables learners to use all the facilities.

The lift was officially opened by Councillor Brian Wilson, who thanked the ACL team for their support. He remarked that the Centre is the hub of Tyldesley's community and the improvements will be of great significance to the users. He also opened our newly renovated main hall, funded by a grant from Viridor. The hall will be used by community groups and is also where we will be holding exercise classes. We advertised the Open Day to the general public so they could come along and see the new look Centre, get information on our activities and courses and talk to the tutors.

An art group demonstrated painting with watercolours and there was a card making demonstration. Many people have enrolled onto the introductory ACL courses starting in the New Year. A buffet was provided to welcome our guests and the Open Day was very successful. It let people know what we do at the Centre and let them have a look around for themselves.

It was also an excellent opportunity to thank the learners and tutors for their support, when all the building work was being carried out. The management and staff at the Centre would like to thank ACL for the tremendous help and support over the past few years. They have not only helped with funding, but have been of great support through difficult times.

Success at Hesketh Fletcher

Vicky

One of the most dedicated learners over the life of Hesketh Fletcher Community College has been Vicky Robinson.

When the College was established Vicky initially took part in our series of ACL *one night tasters*, particularly designed to attract new learners into an education environment. These sessions included: Camp Fire Cooking; Making Hanging Baskets; Origami; Christmas Table Decorations; Pilates; Music Making; Computing for Beginners; Card Craft; Email techniques.

Vicky took part in many of the courses and, together with her mother Kathleen, became a regular attendee at the college. After completing the ACL courses Vicky progressed to Wigan and Leigh College in the Community courses, held at Hesketh Fletcher ACL Centre. She has successfully completed New CLAIT and ECDL. She has studied Italian for Beginners and has gained a Level 1 Numeracy qualification in her Skills for Life Course.

Vicky is a hard-working, dedicated learner who is working towards her Level 2 Numeracy qualification. ACL courses certainly were successful in tempting Vicky into learning and all the staff at Hesketh Fletcher Community College send their congratulations for being one of our success stories.

We'd like to highlight two of our many success stories at Hesketh Fletcher Community College.

Joanne

One of our great learner successes has been Joanne Taylor.

ACL taster courses at Hesketh Fletcher Community College have encouraged her to become involved in learning in order to further her career.

After completing the taster courses, including Spanish for Beginners, Joanne set out to develop her Numeracy by enrolling on a Skills for Life course. Within a few months she had improved her confidence and had passed Level 1. By the end of the academic year she had completed her studies and had taken and passed Level 2 Numeracy, while also taking Literacy.

With new found confidence, Joanne successfully applied for a new position and is now working for a different employer.

She has written to Centre staff: "Thank you for giving me the confidence to realise I can do whatever I want. Only with the help of Night School can we continue to learn and change our career for the better. Plus, I can help my sons with their homework. How cool is that!!" Well done Joanne! Hesketh Fletcher Community College sends you congratulations for being part of our success story.

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Family Learning

Marie's story

My learning journey started with a visit to the Careers Office in Wigan.

They sent me on a Sure Start eight week course called *Stepping into Childcare*. This gave me an insight into the different avenues in childcare: childminding; nursery nursing; mum and baby; playgroups; after school clubs.

Following that course, I embarked on the Teaching Assistant's course and passed. I also have Levels 1 and 2 in Adult Literacy and Level 1 in Adult Numeracy. I am now taking the next level in Numeracy.

To complement my learning about child development, I have joined the Early Start course with Sue and Dionne. This will help with my new baby, Morgan.

Recently, I have joined the new Languages and Play course to help 2 year old Harvey, before he starts school.

The courses are very enjoyable and enable me to meet other people who care for children – mums, grandparents and childminders, in a relaxed setting.



Marie Ann Kelsall and her children Morgan and Harvey

I also gain an insight into how children interact, learn and develop, as well as learning new ideas for stimulating my children.

The weekly handout is very informative and the gift enables me to continue the theme of the session at home.

Two learners describe their experiences in adult learning.

Donna's story

I attended the Early Start course in Hindley because a friend recommended it.

My elder child Jack was 10 months old and I was expecting my second child 2 weeks after the course started! I went into hospital to give birth and my husband took Jack to the Early Start course. After 2 weeks I attended the rest of the course with both my children.

I enjoyed meeting the mums and having other children for mine to mix with. I learnt lots of new facts about child development and was given ideas about how to stimulate my baby at home.

Having a gift every week was lovely and we still use the shaving foam, on the tiles at bath time, to write and draw. I've kept the photographs which Dionne and Sue gave me of my children on the course, in keepsake boxes.

I'm now attending the pre-school Literacy and Numeracy course as my children are older and I



Donna Cuff and her children Jack and Rebecca

am looking forward to finding new ways of helping them learn before they go to school.

When they are older I am very keen to attend some courses for myself as my goal is to train as a midwife.

Terry is our ACL Learner of the Year!

Terry Donnelly has recently turned 70 years of age and is proof that you are never too old to learn!

He has recently won Westleigh High School's Adult and Community Learner of the Year award and has attended a ceremony to collect the trophy and a gift voucher!

His Adult Learning story started at Westleigh High School's Adult and Community Education Centre in 2002 when he enrolled on a Computers for Complete Beginners course.

He enjoyed the course so much that he returned the following year and signed up for the New CLAIT. He studied hard for this, attending an additional 2 nights a week at the school and also going into Wigan and Leigh College in the daytime for self study. Despite a couple of resits he managed to pass the course in his first year.

The following year Terry returned to Westleigh High's ACL Centre and advanced onto the ECDL course.

Again, he put in lots of self study and, despite working really hard, he was unable to pass all the modules in his first year. This did not stop him and he came back again in 2005-2006 to resit the modules. Last June he passed his ECDL certification.



Terry is not only an adult learner at the school's ACL Centre. He has become part of the team and often helps at enrolment evenings and supports other learners on their computer courses.

The story does not stop there! He continues to learn and has now moved on to the Advanced Spreadsheets course at Wigan and Leigh College.

Terry would like to thank Paul Lewis, IT Tutor at Westleigh High School's ACL Centre and Andy Walters at Wigan and Leigh College, for all the support they have given him over the last four years.

Motoring to success

Working Wonders is now the proud owner of a minibus thanks to funding from Wigan's Adult and Community Learning.

The minibus serves a number of purposes. It is regularly used to take learners from across the Borough to the Community and Enterprise Centre at Bedford High School. This is where they can take national standards tests in literacy and numeracy.

The vehicle can also be seen at Open Days and community venues throughout the Borough, promoting Wigan Council's ACL service and Working Wonders' Skills for Life sessions.

This means that WW tutors are now able to offer learners the opportunity of participating in educational trips to places such as Wigan Little Theatre, local libraries, museums and art galleries.

WW Senior Tutor Joyce Hanlon said: "Everyone at Working Wonders believes that learning should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. The minibus is a valuable asset and will help to enrich the learning process for all our learners."

The minibus is also available for use by other community groups.

If you require further information please contact Julie on 01257 423366.



Progress in partnership

Working Wonders' partnership with Wigan's Adult and Community Learning has been such a success that Bedford High School's Community Learning and Enterprise Centre will become the Skills for Life Testing Centre for WW learners.

In addition to offering Adult Literacy and Numeracy Levels 1 and 2, the Centre has recently received accreditation to offer Skills for Life Entry Level qualifications. Pauline Birchall, Centre Manager, said: "The partnership arrangement has worked to the benefit of all parties."

Joyce Hanlon of Working Wonders added: "Our relationship with Bedford High School has proved to be extremely beneficial to all concerned. We offer literacy and numeracy courses at the Community and Learning Enterprise Centre. These are popular, very well attended and, importantly, extremely successful in helping adults to gain the qualifications they need to enter the workplace or progress at work."

Adult and Community Learning has funded alterations to the Learning Room at the Centre and also purchased new computer equipment and furniture.

This means that Working Wonders' learners benefit from the first class facilities now on offer.

Further, extensive refurbishment is now being carried out to the Learning Centre, using LSC funds. This will create a state of the art Skills for Life Development and Assessment Centre. There will be space for an interview room and 1:1 dyslexia screenings in addition to a fully equipped learning room, dedicated to Skills for Life provision for adults.

Joyce concludes: "This is a very exciting time for us. Our successful partnership, working with Bedford High School and ACL, means that we are able to increase the number of adults receiving our service. Given the number of our learners who achieve Skills for Life qualifications and progress, this has to be excellent news for the Borough which needs a skilled, effective workforce and an engaged and motivated adult population."



Bedford High's Community Learning and Enterprise Centre

Janice blossoms at Lowton

Last year Janice Mapleston enrolled on a basic 20 week floristry course at Lowton Community Sports College.

The course was provided thanks to funding from Wigan's Adult and Community Learning.

The floristry course was one of a number of practical courses (including woodwork, pilates, yoga, aerobics and tap dancing) that were made available to local people, with a view to providing a gentle reintroduction to learning.



Floristry work produced by Janice and her fellow learners.

At the time of enrolling, Janice, a local newsagent, had not taken part in any educational courses since leaving school in 1969.

She said: "The opportunity to get out of the house and do something that interested me was what appealed most about the course. To learn something new (as I had only ever put flowers into vases prior to the course) in a supportive environment, together with other like-minded adults, made the experience all the more enjoyable."

At the end of the course Janice was keen to discover what other opportunities existed to continue developing her new found floristry skills.

The staff at Lowton were able to guide her to Wigan and Leigh College where she has embarked upon a two year part-time course leading to a BTEC 1st Diploma in Floristry.

The Adult and Community Learning courses provided at Lowton Community Sports College are designed specifically to provide adults with a warm and welcoming experience that in turn generates the self-confidence required to take on new challenges.

If anyone would like to find out more about the range of courses on offer at Lowton Community Sports College please contact Stephen Toole (Director of Community) on 01942 767040 (Option 4)

Sign Language is one of many successful courses on offer.

Sign up for Orrell

Orrell Community Education Centre is a thriving adult evening centre based at Abraham Guest High School.

We offer over 40 ACL courses in a variety of subjects ranging from the general leisure courses such as Pottery, Painting and Yoga to the more specific ones like Hieroglyphs and Salsa Dancing.

All our ACL courses offer progression routes which allow learners to continue to improve in a particular subject area. One example is the *Sign Language* course where the Centre initially ran an introductory ACL course in the subject.

Such was the demand for a follow-up to this course that the Centre offered a Level 2 and then a Level 3 course. We now have a successful Sign Language 'Club' where learners are able to continue to perfect their skills under the guidance of a qualified tutor.

All learners are able to learn in a relaxed, sociable and informal environment where, in certain subjects, the learning takes place outside the classroom. For example, the Spanish class went to a Spanish restaurant and learners were asked to order their meals in Spanish!

The Egyptology and Hieroglyphs class had the option to go to Egypt to see at first-hand the history of the country, rather than just on a slide show. The Centre, in responding to learners' wishes, has run workshops over a weekend in Tai Chi and Yoga so that learners can gain more experience in these subjects.

Another case study from Family Learning

Louise's successful learning

I was a learner on the pre-school Foundation Literacy and Numeracy courses at Douglas Valley when my daughter Jessica was attending the nursery.

I found the courses very useful in helping Jessica before she started school. Following this, I attended the Early Start course in Hindley with my son Ben and found the sessions very stimulating and enjoyable.

Now, I am now going to the new Languages and Play course at Shevington High School with Ben. I am concerned that, as he has an August birthday, he will be one of the youngest in his class when he starts school. The ideas I am gaining on this course will help me to prepare him for school.

Each week we receive a handout and gift which helps me to continue the learning at home. All the courses I have attended have been stimulating and informative and the tutors are very knowledgeable, patient and kind with both parents and children. Tutors Sue and Dionne were a positive reason for me continuing and moving onto further courses.

I have now become very interested in education and volunteered my services in various capacities, at my daughter's primary school. I am also looking forward to pursuing Key Stages 1 and 2 courses, as my children grow and develop. This is so I will be well prepared to help them throughout their education.



Louise Cooke and Ben