



David Hillson

OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS it has been my privilege to chair the Literacies Action Group and to be involved with CLAN partners in shaping the future of adult literacies in Edinburgh. While it is clear that we have significant challenges ahead, we have made an excellent start by bringing together key organisations and employing a strong team of literacies specialists.

I would like, in particular to recognise the contribution made by Lesley Henderson in her role as Project Coordinator. Setting up and supporting a project as diverse as CLAN has not been an easy task. Just as one area of work settles down, another development comes along. The huge range of ideas and new developments (from a wide range of agencies and community organisations) has made the Coordinator's job very complex. Lesley has provided exactly the kind of support needed to staff, partners and groups. I'm sure that everyone involved will wish to join me in thanking Lesley for her contribution and to wish her all the best when she leaves towards the end of June.

My experience suggests that anyone involved in developing and supporting adult literacies provision will always be able to come up with a set of issues which need to be addressed. At our seminar on 12 June and in our discussions afterwards, I hope that we can both recognise successes to date and also come up with new ideas for future developments. While we have achieved a great deal, there is still a huge gulf between the number of people who are involved in our literacies provision and the number of people who potentially could take part. The challenge ahead is to build on what we have already achieved while coming up with new ways of marketing, delivering and supporting access, particularly from individuals and groups who are under-represented in current programmes.

Full of Beans!

Working with representatives of partner groups, staff from partner agencies, literacies workers and volunteers has been stimulating and rewarding for me. I very much look forward to sharing your ideas and experiences in the future.

events and conferences



MODESTY and short notice seem to have ruled out direct reports from many of the workers who have taken Edinburgh literacies to a wide range of meetings, events and conferences since last there was a newsletter, so here's a sample of the crop. Please try and tell the editor, direct from here on, every time you attend or stage something interesting!

Following Elsa Auerbach's visit to the CLAN Edinburgh Launch in January, an Edinburgh literacies worker returned the compliment and told Boston (known as 'Good old Boston, the home of the bean and the cod') all about literacies work here. She reported in detail to a workshop in Edinburgh in April, outlining scope for e-learning on a scale Edinburgh is not yet anyway near, though working towards via City Connect and others.

Two other workers went to Grundtvig conferences in Glasgow and Denmark respectively; one may be followed by joint project work, and the other is to be reported on in an ESOL research document which is imminent at the time of writing.

Several workers have played key roles in Adult Learners' Week events, workshops and open days in Edinburgh itself. A Practitioners' Conference in Fife, Careers and Guidance events, a Prison Literacies Conference, a Health/Inclusion Conference and a Scottish Executive 'Action Plan' Seminar have all seen Edinburgh Literacies representation.

All of these events have enhanced networking, and many are leading to further direct development improving service to learners.

Photo from 'Information Works', South Bridge Resource Centre, 28 May.

Bon Appetite!

Welcome to 'Beans'. Many of you may be thinking ...'Beans'? Well, after a brainstorming session at Canonmills, where ideas for the title ranged from 'Inform' to 'Debate', 'Beans' was the unanimous decision. We hope the newsletter will be an interesting and informative read, but we also hope that it will encourage debate and provide a platform for literacies workers to 'air' their views. Remember that this is your newsletter and if you feel that there is an area we have not covered, please let us know. Thank you to all those who contributed to this issue. Please keep the contributions coming. Your input is vital to the success of the newsletter.

The Editor



Rebecca McEwan, Driving Theory Test Course.

Recent Growth (some Challenge Funded)

Dedicated Literacies in Libraries • Literacies for Dress-making • Literacies for Football Coaching • Literacies for the Driving Test • Literacies/IT • Literacies for Health • You and the NHS • Literacies for Healthy Eating • Literacies/Drama • Literacies with Chinese Parents Writing Stories for their Children • Literacies/Ethnic Minority Carers' Website • Literacies/Reminiscence • Literacies/Scriptwriting • Literacies/ Horticulture

This sample does not capture, nor intend in any way to diminish more traditional literacies work with people wanting longer-term dedicated classes. If you have a summer or early autumn course you want publicised, email round fast and send a report for the next issue!

Further details from CLAN Edinburgh, 0131 270 6072.

TRAINING IN ADULT LITERACIES LEARNING



Workplace Literacies

The Workers Education Authority (WEA) is leading the way in workplace literacy delivery in Scotland, but it needs more trained tutors. We are looking for tutors with experience of working with groups, especially literacy groups, who would like to add workplace literacy awareness to their skills.

We are hoping to attract tutors who could work in workplaces in Edinburgh, the Lothians, Falkirk and Fife. We are planning a twelve hour training to prepare tutors for this work with the WEA to take place in Edinburgh in June 2003.

The aims are to encourage group tutors

- to adapt their practice to tutoring in the workplace
- to build on their groupwork expertise by adding skills, knowledge and understanding of literacies teaching
- to understand the social practices model of literacies and appreciate the complex capabilities involved

WEA is in discussion with Communities Scotland about the content and delivery of this pilot. If you are interested in this training please phone Liz Beevers or Vickie Hobson on 0131 225 7056 or email e.beevers@weascotland.org.uk or v.hobson@weascotland.org.uk

Training Officer keenly awaited

At the time of writing, the new Training Officer's start date is keenly awaited and is likely to be late June. Gillian Lawrence inherits high hopes and lots of goodwill, a long list of potential beginner tutors, 'conversion candidates' and in-service demands. These will all need to be prioritised afresh when she starts, because what is needed to build capacity and quality in Edinburgh now has moved on since January, never mind since Scottish Executive blueprints were produced.

Nationally, the ITALL (Introductory Training in Adult Literacies Learning) training has recently been validated, and will bring with it a whole range of implications (accrediting the accreditors among them). There is a draft Training Framework, aiming to address once and for all issues of professional quality standards across Scotland.

Locally, partner agencies and literacies workers have themselves offered training too, including Group Tutor Training, work on integrated literacies, on dyslexia and on literacies in the workplace. Some of it is open to all and publicised, though not everything. (Could this be one of the priorities for the next CLAN Action Plan?).

Fee assistance has been available from Literacies funding for Edinburgh literacies specialists undertaking (with the employer's endorsement/contribution) a new piece of relevant professional training. This is likely to continue. Three workers have benefited this session and amounts have usually been up to 25%.

Growing Plants Shuffle

A speeded-up film of healthy growing plants always shows a lot of shuffling about, and it seems we're no different. Since 21 May last year, a lot of people have taken up new posts across the city.

Margaret Teale, largely responsible for the current Action Plan, retired, though not in any recognisable sense of the word.

Lesley Henderson does the same from the Coordinator post in June.

David Hillson, Community Education Manager, has since July chaired the Action Group, more properly the Literacies Sub-group of CLIG (Community Learning Implementation Strategy Group).

Rachel Grant and **Sandra Hawker** left Community Education posts in Youth Literacies and City Centre/Leith for other City of Edinburgh Council posts.

Cath Smith was with us as Training Officer for a couple of months before transplanting to literacies training/development work with Communities Scotland.

Fiona Holmes took up post as Marketing Officer in January.

Catherine Macrae moved in May to the ICT / Literacies post, currently based at Canonmills, from Stevenson College.

Gillian Lawrence moves to the Training Officer post shortly from North East Edinburgh.

Emer O'Sullivan and **Rosemary Catson** are now Literacies workers at Pilton Youth and Children's Project and Pilton Elderly Project respectively.

Angus Whyte, retiring as Assistant Principal from Stevenson College, and one of the Action Group's founder members, has been contributing in the short term to specific projects.

Jacqui Bain, CEC Community Education CBAL (Community Based Adult Learning) Inclusion Worker has gone on maternity leave (We hope she will come back after Christmas).

Apologies to any others who may not be mentioned in this list.

ICT / Literacies

Hello and welcome to the new newsletter from Catherine Macrae. I am the new ICT/Literacies Project Worker at CLAN Edinburgh, setting up a project to develop and support the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in Literacies across the city, working with Edinburgh Libraries.

The Project will set up a central resource point for Literacies staff supporting and enhancing tutors' and students' use of literacies software and web based learning resources. We are already able to offer laptops, printers etc. on loan for tasters and courses and we will be providing training and support in the use of ICT. We will also be developing online resources and learning points and a central point for enquiries.

Keeping a finger on the pulse



Jo Aitkenhead and Elspeth Hosie share the CLAN Health and Literacy Project post in North West Edinburgh.

It is interesting working alongside health professionals, finding out about their workloads and clients and the role literacy plays. We have made presentations to a range of health teams, including Health Visitors, Community Psychiatric Teams and health support groups, to raise awareness of literacy links to health in the belief that health workers are ideally placed to recognise any literacy problems their clients might face. We presented information on the extent of literacy problems within communities and how workers might recognise how poor literacy skills can affect their clients. We also offered suggestions on how to broach the subject of literacy and to offer local support.

Establishing roots

We have established a referral system so that any health workers in the area can refer clients to us and we will follow them up with either a home visit or meeting in a local centre. This system is starting to bear fruit with referrals coming in. We are then able to refer some learners to existing local groups whilst others we continue to work with individually. We are confident that this referral system is identifying people who would not otherwise have opted to return to learning.

We are developing partnerships with local health projects and are currently working on a literacy and cooking programme, literacy and parenting and healthy eating for families. By attending local health meetings we are able to raise the issue of literacy and effective communications and how these might be improved.

It's been a busy few months, but we have been made very welcome and our ideas and questions have been generally well received by our new colleagues. It has been a new experience for us working away from an education setting. Coffee time chat with district nurses and midwives has been quite an education for us!

The Health and Literacy Project, Pennywell Resource Centre.
Tel: 0131 537 4230.

'Looking back to look forward'

THIS WAS THE NAME CHOSEN for an evaluation morning held recently at Second Chance to Learn (Edinburgh University Settlement). The CLAN Project Worker based at Second Chance, Oonagh McGarry, has a remit to work with voluntary sector organisations.

Invitations went out to anyone involved in the new literacies work at Second Chance: learners, volunteers, tutors and keyworkers. We asked people to share their thoughts and ideas to help shape future learning opportunities. Additional aims included raising awareness of the scope of literacies provision in Edinburgh, recording learning paths and raising awareness of other learning opportunities.

The morning began with a description of the various groups and courses that had taken place so far. Lesley Henderson, CLAN Literacies Co-ordinator, outlined some of the literacies work being developed across the city. We then split into two groups and recorders got down on their knees to flipchart the masses of feedback. This was followed by Annie Rankine, Student Support Services (Jewel and Esk Valley College), who spoke in general terms about opportunities at college, support available and funding.

Main points

Sixteen people attended the session. These are the main points recorded:

- would like longer courses, more hours
- would like information about welfare rights and educational guidance sessions built in
- opportunity to take qualifications would be welcome (sometimes)
- individual approach is important – should be flexibility to offer 1:1 (perhaps using volunteer / buddy help)
- access to computers very important
- keyworkers require some advice and training in identifying learners and marketing techniques

This has all been written up and the main points discussed with EUS management and Lesley Henderson. There are no real surprises here – but there are implications for resource management and training. A reminder that we must not lose sight of the quality of provision in the drive to reach those target numbers.

The Pack

The Literacies in the Community pack highlights the importance of listening to learners and we intend to repeat this evaluation on a regular basis, probably three times each year. If this form of consultation is to be meaningful, however, it is vital that this feedback is taken seriously and, wherever possible, put into practice. The proof of the pudding is in the eating ...

Oonagh McGarry

New pods to be filled

At the time of writing, adverts in the national press are likely shortly for a Youth Literacies post (F/T) and an ICT/Literacies post (0.5). There is a possibility of substantial 'locum' tutoring and other work, and although dates are not known yet for filling other vacant posts, they feature in the current Action Plan.

Also at the time of writing, one large Challenge Funded research post is on hold awaiting someone who combines good experience with Deaf learners and suitable availability.

In the pipeline, but with no dates yet, may also be a Prison Literacies post.

Taking the bean analogy, allowing three beans for each plant (one for the mice, one for the birds and one for growth), then it is as well that the tutor database is still growing, and that the supply of people keen to train in Edinburgh remains buoyant.

Appetizers

Look out for a decision in early June from the Scottish Executive on joint marketing, possibly to coincide with 'International Literacy Day' in early September or in December/January. Even if it's 'no' nationally, we and the other Lothians may go ahead with some joint marketing.

Look out also for news of a Resource Base network, to be set up jointly with Libraries. Talks are well in hand, and there will be more as the plans develop, with contact points, a helpline, and all that's needed to support a full citywide 'Launch to Learners'.



In the next issue, 'resources' will be one of the main items on the menu. Keep a note of resources you have found useful and share it with the editor.

Contributions for the next issue of 'Beans' should reach the editor's desk by Monday 23 June:

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