

Transplanted Bean

Cath Smith got a mention in the first issue of 'Beans' as a 'has-bean' when she moved from CLAN to her post as Development Co-ordinator with Learning Connections.



Learning Connections is based within the Regeneration Division of Communities Scotland. It was set up in response to one of the recommendations in the 'Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland' (ALNIS) 2001 Report.

One of its functions is to support the work of the Literacies Partnerships throughout Scotland. Part of Cath's remit is to be the first point of contact within Learning Connections for Edinburgh's literacies workers and their managers.

Cath says, "I'll do my best to keep you informed about the progress we are making at Learning Connections and about developments in other parts of Scotland - look out for the first edition of our newsletter, 'LC News', due out this autumn. It was good to meet some of you at the 'Listening to Learners' seminar, recent Learning Connections events and here at 27-29 Palmerston Place. I hope more of you will come and visit our resource base which is soon to move to a larger space on the ground floor. I would also welcome opportunities to come and visit you and the learners you work with so that I can keep in touch with my roots".

Contact Cath Smith. Tel: 0131 479 5493.
Email: smithc@communitiesscotland.gov.uk

Learners on video

Learning Connections are on the lookout for learners who would be willing to take part in a video about their personal experiences of literacies learning.



The video will ideally feature a range of learners from new to experienced and from different sectors (Further Education, Community based, etc).

The learners' responses will either form part of a promotional video designed to attract new learners or as part of a training video supporting the training of literacies tutors. Either video will have a national distribution and there will be an expectation that learners sign a disclaimer consenting to their participation and to the video's usage.

The filming will probably take place in local areas throughout November and early December (although this is still to be confirmed).

If you would like more information about the project or can identify learners who would be willing to take part in the video please contact:

Vince Moore, Development Co-ordinator, Learning Connections.
Tel: 0131 479 5437. Email: moorev@communitiesscotland.gov.uk

www.lc.communitiesscotland.gov.uk

Did you know that for the last seven years, influenced by Elsa Auerbach's research, Adult Literacy Workers have been developing a literacy and numeracy curriculum with parents and carers in schools?

Nancy Somerville, Co-ordinator for Family Learning, explains, "The literacies we work with are situated in the home and school. So we have always worked in collaboration with parents/carers and schools to make literacy and numeracy accessible, interesting, relevant and fun."

As stated in the ALNIS Report,

'initiatives such as this are vital to grounding literacy and numeracy programmes in the life situations of adults and communities'.

Family Learning reaches parents/carers at a point of interest, helps to identify everyday literacies that make a difference to children's and parents learning; works with groups of parents around their interest in children's education; works with parents/carers and children together and finally works in areas of deprivation with parents/carers who are considered 'hard to reach'.

Contact details for your local Family Learning Worker:

South East	Jane Prowse	0131 672 2629
South West	Mhairi McNeill, Eve Jannetta	0131 458 5959
City Centre	Karen Buist	0131 555 6035
	Pauline Ross	0131 558 3545
North West	Beth Blue, Michelle McDougall	0131 467 0909
North East	Barbara Middleton, Linda Gibson	0131 661 7463

For more information about Family Learning contact Nancy Somerville.
Tel: 0131 200 2000 ext 4002.
Email: nancy.somerville@educ.edin.gov.uk



Ted, kite-making and flying, one of many Family Learning summer activities.

www.familylearning.edin.org

TRAINING IN ADULT LITERACIES LEARNING

Literacy & Numeracy in the Workplace

AN AWARENESS RAISING COURSE for Council Managers and Supervisors to look at ways of responding to and supporting staff who may need help with English and Maths in their everyday lives, has been developed by the Workers' Educational Association (WEA).

The half day course looks at and discusses written communication in individual departments and will explore how a lack of confidence in reading and writing affects people in the workplace and how the manager/supervisor can help.

Staff who lack confidence with reading, writing or number work are frequently too embarrassed to acknowledge it and often develop other strategies for coping. For example taking forms home, getting colleagues to complete paperwork for them or avoiding going on training events. They are often worried that revealing their concerns about writing may mean losing their jobs. In other instances skilled staff deny themselves chances of promotion because they fear increased paperwork.

The aims of the course are for managers and supervisors to gain further understanding about the impact that a lack of confidence in written and communication skills has at work, share their experiences in this area and develop their own expertise in recognising and supporting individual employees who may face these difficulties. In addition the course will enable staff to gain information about other sources of support, training and learning opportunities.

Representatives from a range of departments including Corporate Services, Environmental & Consumer Services, Culture & Leisure, Housing and Social Work have already signed up for the initial courses starting in October.

The course is free to Council staff and will be run by Vickie Hobson, Workplace Learning Tutor with the WEA. Vickie will also arrange courses for individual departments if requested.

For more information contact Vickie Hobson. Tel: 0131 225 7170. Email: v.hobson@weascotland.org.uk

Tutor Training

Two different introductory training courses for tutors are currently being run by CLAN Edinburgh

Run jointly with Claudia Esslinger of Community Education, the **Introductory Training for Adult Literacies Learning** is aimed at those who would like to work as assistant tutors and covers the core elements for tutoring adult learners in literacy and numeracy. Tutors who successfully complete the introductory training will be matched into Edinburgh groups from the end of October. Twenty-two participants have enthusiastically attended the six full day course.

One participant commented, "I liked the fact that it stretched my knowledge and expectations of the people we might be working with and the problems faced".

Another commented on the friendly delivery of the lectures and the broad content of the training.

The second course, **Getting Started in Adult Literacy and Numeracy**, has been planned and delivered jointly with Oonagh McGarry from Second Chance to Learn. Nineteen participants from voluntary organisations, Jewel and Esk Valley College, Community Education and CLAN project workers have been attending this fifteen hour training which is for people who are already experienced in working with adults. The purpose of the course is to enable participants to consider how they can integrate learning about literacy and numeracy within

other learning programmes and attract new learners from CLAN target groups. They identify how their organisation could become involved and how they can support potential literacy or numeracy learners within their own settings.

Gillian Lawrence, CLAN's Training Officer, said, "We were delighted with the response to the training courses. This was my first experience of running cross-sectoral training and it seemed valuable to have such a wide forum for exchanging ideas".

If you would like more information on future training courses, please contact Gillian Lawrence.

Tel: 0131 270 6070

Email: gillian@clanedinburgh.org

PHOTO: Students on the Introductory Training for Adult Literacy Course





Web Review

The web sites listed in this edition are ones that aim to support practitioners.

Learning Connections Scotland, has been adding to its website www.lc.communitiesscotland.gov.uk

The Adult Literacies pages include a learners' zone, discussion forums and information and resource pages. You can also find newsletter and conference presentations on the site.

PROS: The site looks at literacy and numeracy from a Scottish perspective, adopting a social practice model which sees literacies as a key dimension of community regeneration and part of a wider lifelong learning agenda.

CONS: The site is huge and you will need quite a bit of time to get to know it all and take part in the discussion forums.

The independent Basic Skills Bulletin has started up a web site at www.basicsskillsbulletin.co.uk

The publication covers literacy, numeracy, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and ICT issues for those who manage, deliver or coordinate programmes. The site gives examples of the Bulletin's usual mix of news, professional issues, good practice, resources and training articles.

PROS: A useful site to dip into if you don't subscribe to the Bulletin with a guide to the basic skills acronyms and an archive of back issues.

CONS: The information and updates are written from an English policy perspective and the points at issue are not always interesting or relevant to practitioners here.

www.education.ed.ac.uk/hce/ABE-seminars

This is the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) Adult Basic Education Seminar Series web site which gives a feel of the academic debates around literacy, numeracy, communication and language learning.

The site offers references and resources relevant to the topics in the series and, for the seminars already held, background papers from the speakers and an account of the issues explored.

PROS: An interesting site for practitioners wanting to reflect on the current research and theory related debates and very useful for anyone doing academic study.

CONS: Not easy yet to see "an emphasis on the practical benefits" that the organisers hope will be gained from sharing research findings and policy developments. Achieving this is challenging and the paper by Peter Lavender from the seminar on Social Inclusion is really thought provoking.

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec holds a major resource collection and the web site www.nald.ca/litcent.htm offers ideas from a Canadian perspective.

The site has lists of resources, online articles and a publications section with downloadable bibliographies on topics such as literacy and the arts and learning disabilities and technology.

PROS: The online articles are lively and interesting reading and the health project reports are really useful (health education is an area where Canada has an international reputation).

CONS: The huge collection of resources held at the Centre is listed in the standard print format with no sample or comment so it can help you find the correct details of something you already know, but won't help you find out what else is available.

New Practitioners' Base

WE EXPECT TO BEGIN MOVING IN TO the new CLAN practitioners' base in the basement of the refurbished McDonald Road Library this Autumn, with a launch in the new year. The base, which we hope to be the first of several, comes as a result of collaboration between two of CLAN's partners, The City of Edinburgh Council's Library and Education Departments.

The base will be a multi-media library of online and offline resources and ICT hardware and peripherals, designed as a space where literacy and numeracy workers can easily find useful teaching and learning materials, as well as stimulating articles, web pages and books on research, theory and practice.

We want the base to also be a place where those delivering and managing programmes can meet each other to share ideas and professional issues and feel part of a city wide 'community' of practitioners.

We will try to make the collections easy to use and accessible to everyone. All of the resources will be listed on a user-friendly database (searchable from any Internet connected computer) and items will be available for people to take away or have sent out to them on request.

Top 5 most useful resources

At this stage, we are planning an initial spend of around £10,000 on print and software resources. Catherine would like to hear 'my top five most useful resources' from as many practitioners as possible.

We will buy multiple copies of the most highly rated items and make sure they feature prominently on the database.

Contact Catherine Macrae, CLAN Edinburgh,
ICT & Literacies Development Officer.
Tel: 0131 270 6034. Fax: 0131 270 6074.
Email: catherine@clanedinburgh.org

NEW BEANS

Youth & Literacy

I have recently joined CLAN as a Youth Literacies Worker, based in Community Education. My remit is to increase and improve the literacy/numeracy provision for young people aged 15-25 years throughout Edinburgh.

I intend to do this in three main ways:

- young people being referred to me for one-to-one help
- working with existing groups to develop/input a literacies element
- developing a training programme for youth workers



It would be great to hear from you if you are working with, or hoping to work with, young people at the moment. Also, please pass on my details to any interested parties.

I have developed a referral form, which I will be sending out soon. Let me know if you would be interested in receiving one.

Contact Ann Breen. Tel: 0131 469 3970.

Email: ann.breen@educ.edin.gov.uk

Stevenson College

I have been the CLAN Co-ordinator at Stevenson College since the summer, having also been involved in some of the work the year before.

We offer classes at lunchtimes, twilight and evening sessions as well as during the normal college day.

We are now encouraging volunteers to get involved and already have helpers coming to classes. At the moment a group of volunteers including students and staff members are having in-house training in understanding adult learning, what makes a good tutor, assessing student needs and supporting spelling, writing and reading needs. We hope to further extend this and offer the training again.



Reading Club

There certainly is a buzz about literacies in the college now. One of our major successes has been the Reading Club where volunteers have worked in pairs with literacy students.

I plan to write more about this for 'Beans' shortly. If you cannot wait until then, I'd be delighted to hear from any of you individually.

Contact Evelyn Freeman. Tel: 0131 535 4676.

Email: efreeman@stevenson.ac.uk

●● Health & Literacy update ●●

Hi folks, Jo here from the CLAN Health & Literacy post, (Elspeth having pointed out that it's my turn to deliver the goods for 'Beans'!).

Elspeth Hosie has got a course off the ground in collaboration with the Harbour Project who work with parents with issues around the use of drugs and alcohol. The course is called 'What's Next for Me?' and includes college guidance, learning skills and personal development including relaxation and assertiveness.

We are very pleased to have established the Pennywell Adult Learners (Pals) group, which meets weekly at Pennywell Resource Centre and we hope to soon have the walls of Pennywell covered in interesting bits and pieces of students' work.

We are still meeting a variety of people through the referrals route. The challenge for us is to fit literacy learning into complex and unpredictable routines.

To help us with this we have recently employed Janet Cole as an additional literacy tutor. Janet is going to work with some of our learners who work from home and will be providing the intensive support needed to prevent them giving up. Intensive one-to-one support doesn't come cheap but we reckon it's money well spent in the long run. We would be interested to hear people's views.

Recipe booklet

Other work includes work on a recipe booklet with the Outlook cookery group, which includes learning about digital photography and using computers to produce the finished article. Recipe books will be on sale soon!

Storysacks

My personal favourite (if I could be said to have one) is our storysacks idea. With the help of two very talented nursery nurses who work with the health visitors we are currently making storysacks for use with babies and young children.

I am hoping to start another Pennywell Group which will lend storysacks, make new storysacks and hold storytelling sessions with building users. As well as being a thoroughly enjoyable way to learn how to read it also encourages talking with small children which is hugely important in their own development and literacy learning. Again we would be interested to hear from any CLAN people (or others) who have any thoughts on this idea or who would like to develop this idea with me.

Contact Jo Aitkenhead. Tel: 0131 537 4230.

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MORE BYTES

Contributions for the next issue of 'Beans' should reach the Editor's desk by Monday 3 November 2003.

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