



Community Learning and Development **in the Kincardine & Mearns Area of Aberdeenshire**

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2012/13

Community Learning and Development (CLD) staff in Aberdeenshire work to deliver positive change in communities and in the personal lives of those living and working in our council area through informal learning. You will typically find us:

- in school settings working with young people to overcome challenges, building youth representation through local forums and the Aberdeenshire Youth Council, delivering tailored learning programmes and offering accreditation through Youth Achievement Awards and other routes and developing skills for employability for those young people who need that extra support to make their way in life;
- supporting adults through informal family learning groups, improving skills in English as a second language, delivering ICT learning programmes to enhance employability and quality of life and providing particular support through improved reading, writing and numeracy in small groups or one to one learning; and
- supporting volunteers to make contributions in their community but also to enrich their own lives, working with community groups so that they operate effectively, delivering training programmes for individuals and groups which lead to inclusive approaches in community settings and assisting with advice and guidance on managing and delivering local services.

The national guidance for community learning and development asks us to work with partners and to focus on:

- **improving life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development and active citizenship; and**
- **building stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.**

Making a difference...

CLD work in Aberdeenshire

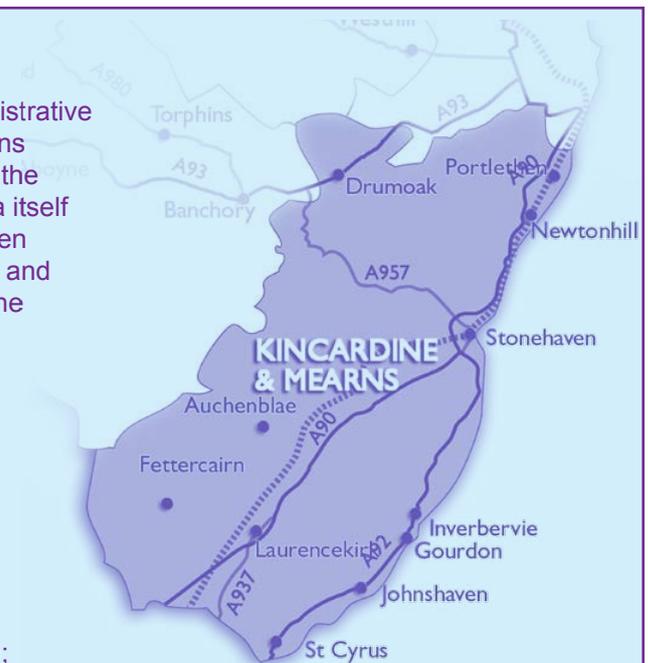
Across Aberdeenshire CLD work has led to some important achievements and outcomes for the people we work with. The following picture captures some of the results of our approach in the last year:

- 1,474 young people have been involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Over 500 young people achieved an award in that period. There have been 186 expeditions supported by 86 volunteers.
- 8,892 adults have been involved in CLD supported activities developing confidence, increasing well being, gaining accreditation and improving employability.
- 71 volunteer tutors helped 416 learners improve their literacy skills building confidence and lifeskills to improve quality of life.
- 897 adults were supported to improve their English as a Second Language skills leading to increased confidence and access to training and employment opportunities.
- Adults were involved in 117 family learning activities particularly focusing on positive early years child development and parental involvement.
- 690 young people were involved in youth representation activity, strengthening youth citizenship and participation.
- 341 volunteers gave 3123 hours of their time in the past six months contributing to stronger and more active communities often managing services themselves.
- Learning in Aberdeenshire's communities has been delivered by CLD staff in over 1,500 projects, involving 15,351 sessions and 26,864 hours of contact time.

CLD staff use a national framework called *How good is our community learning and development?* to measure the quality and impact of their work. The following section uses quality indicators to report on some of the success stories and what we aim to do next.

The Kincardine & Mearns Area...

- ☺ Kincardine and Mearns is the most southern of six administrative areas that sit within Aberdeenshire. Kincardine and Mearns is defined by 59 km of dramatic coastline to the east and the foothills of the Grampian Mountains to the west. The area itself is very diverse. Whereas in the north proximity to Aberdeen has encouraged considerable development of population and industry, the southern part contains the rich farmland of the Mearns and a series of attractive former fishing villages.
- ☺ The coastal area from Kinneff to St Cyrus is a Regeneration Priority Area. Increased funding has led to more resources in that area to look at engagement and building community capacity, employability and health and wellbeing outcomes.
- ☺ Scottish National Statistics figures for 2010 put the population of Kincardine and Mearns at 41,381. The breakdown into broad age ranges was comparable with Aberdeenshire levels: 19% children; 61.5% working age and 19.6% pensionable age. The Local Development Plan has a forecast of increased housing in many of the settlements that will have an impact on the need for infrastructure and services. In particular the proposed development at Elsick will bring significant change to North Kincardine and Mearns.



The Kincardine & Mearns Area... how well are we doing?

CLD work in the Kincardine and Mearns Area has had a positive impact on improving life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development and active citizenship building stronger more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities. CLD Service work in Kincardine and Mearns shows good progression towards the high level outcomes from Aberdeenshire Lifelong Learning Strategy around the themes of learning, life and work.

How well do we support young people to achieve through learning? (Q1 2.1)

Good partnership projects have supported young people through periods of transition. High levels of participation from young people in Primary to Secondary transition groups and More Choices More Chances programmes have increased confidence and life chances.

Numbers of young people starting and completing Dynamic Youth, Youth Achievement and Adventure Service Challenge awards have increased. The demand for the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme continues to grow. This is well supported by volunteers and CLD staff.

Good partnership with schools has led to important outcomes being achieved by young people.

Joint working with school guidance staff and use of the Integrated Assessment process has increased flexible pathways to learning. One to one support for vulnerable young people is developing.

Young people are encouraged to have a role in decision making. They are supported to contribute to Community Council meetings and Community Planning events. The newly established Kincardine and Mearns Youth Forum are setting goals and taking part in relevant training. One young person is involved in the wider Aberdeenshire Youth Forum and is now supported in the role of Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament. Members of the Mearns Youth Forum presented at a national research conference in Canterbury – the first time young people have ever taken part.

How well do we support adults to achieve through learning? (Q1 2.1)

In the Regeneration Priority Area a weekly Job Club in Inverbervie has been successful. An increased focus on Welfare Reform and employability has allowed adults to gain skills, knowledge and support towards employment and further education. A partnership project with Pillar Kincardine and CLD has developed "a safe place to write". This project was originally established through regeneration funding responding to mental health issues in the area. The group has evolved to

a mixed group of 10 who can share issues, access support and also increase literacy skills.

There has been an increase in literacy learner numbers across Kincardine and Mearns. 30 learners have been involved in this period with 6 learners achieving SQA core skills awards in Communication or ICT. CLD staff and partners have delivered certificated training to volunteers in literacy. This will lead to a greater ability for us to meet the needs of adult learners.

Family learning supports parents/ guardians of children of all ages to increase their skills and confidence in supporting their child to develop. PEEP courses help parents think about how to give their child the best start in life. Parents of teenagers learn strategies and build confidence in dealing with children growing into young adults in the "Time out for Teens" programme. "Drug Proof your kids", which raises awareness and increases confidence around drug issues for parents, has been co delivered by CLD staff and volunteers in Portlethen, Stonehaven and Laurencekirk.

Gear up 2 Go is a Portlethen project which supports young people to prepare for the workplace, further education or training. Of 10 recent participants all gained experience of interviews, completing job applications and developing CVs. 9 were awarded First Aid certificates. 94% attendance was achieved with the programme and guidance staff reported improved school attendance and behaviour.



National older people's week 2012

CLD staff in the Laurencekirk area took account of the increasing older population and worked to provide 20 opportunities during older people's week. Engagement with a range of local organisations took place to encourage them to be open and inclusive to all but particularly older people. A guide for the week was produced and 306 people attended meeting one of the actions in the Local Community Plan. As result a computer class was established, new volunteers/members were recruited for Mearns and Coastal Healthy Living Network gardening group, family history group, Laurencekirk Heritage Society and adult learning classes.



How well do we support communities to develop through learning? (Q1 4.1)

A high number of volunteers are supported and trained by CLD staff in Kincardine and Mearns. They help run a range of opportunities which include the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, Adult literacy and English as a second language learning, adult learning groups and youth work.

CLD staff support local groups to increase their skills and knowledge and ensure that they are meeting local needs. The "Effective Community Group" pack was created by CLD staff and local organisations and funded through the Community Planning Group. This pack helps groups work through tasks to ensure they are more effective.

CLD staff have assisted communities to look at the options and issues around the development of the new Academy Community Campus in Laurencekirk. Across Kincardine and Mearns local people have been supported to become involved in creating Community Profiles which have helped to identify key issues and assist communities to address these.

Gourdon Arts Project

Community members involved with the Gourdon Arts Project have been supported through partnership to identify priorities and to influence decision making that affects them.

The GIG group has set up a community website to enable the wider community to gain information and publicise local activities. This group has helped to consult the wider community on a gateway piece and been involved in its creation. The group is working with CLD staff and Planning Officers to look at the best way to make harbour improvements. As a result of this project, membership of Gourdon Community Council has increased.



How well are the Service and partners working together and improving the quality of services and provision? (combination of Q1 1.1 / 5.10 and Q1 8.1)

CLD staff make a positive contribution to community planning in the area by forming and delivering on actions in the Kincardine and Mearns Local Community Plan. Staff have had a key role in engaging with communities around future developments in Hillside and Mearns.

Good partnership work has enabled the CLD service to deliver quality projects that have positive outcomes and impact around important transition stages in life, early intervention and employability.

Performance management has significantly improved with all staff using the Service Management Information System and applying the Quality Assurance Framework. Staff are using the national framework for self evaluation and inspection *How good is our community learning and development?* to plan and evaluate work.

What do we want to do next? (improvement priorities)

- Increase our dialogue with partners to ensure that we jointly identify need and to plan and evaluate against set targets and outcomes
- Create a team plan that reflects local need and also the outcomes set in the Lifelong Learning and Leisure strategy, ensuring our resources are targeted towards achieving these outcomes.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are supported to meet challenging targets set.
- Better understand the area by ensuring access to accurate data

CONTACT DETAILS

Claire D Thomson (CLD Team Leader) 07881838897
Portlethen, Lynn Buchan (Senior CLD Worker) 01224 786198
Laurencekirk, Natalie Cooper (Senior CLD Worker) 01561 378298
Stonehaven, Leslie Murison (Senior CLD Worker) 01569 762688