

Community Learning and Development

in the Marr 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

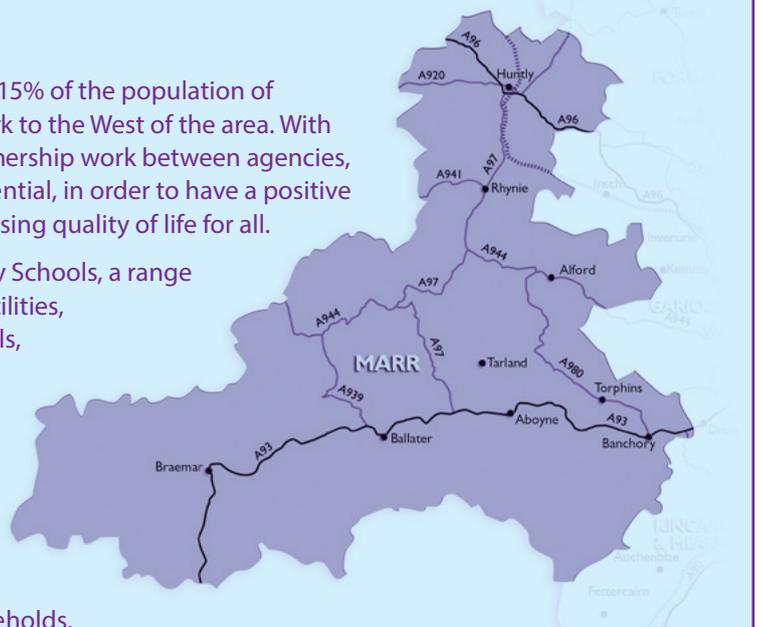
Across Aberdeenshire CLD work has led to some important achievements and outcomes for the people we work with. The following picture captures some of the results of our approach in the last year:

- 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 Marr Area...

- ☺ The Marr Area makes up 47% of the landmass and 15% of the population of Aberdeenshire and has the Cairngorm National Park to the West of the area. With an average of 12 people per square km, good partnership work between agencies, services, communities and voluntary groups is essential, in order to have a positive impact on communities, tackling inequality and raising quality of life for all.
- ☺ There are 30 main towns/villages, with 4 Secondary Schools, a range of community learning, sports, cultural and arts facilities, 3 Community Hospitals and 16 Community Councils, 3 Ward Forums, a range of Community Village and Business Associations and Tourism Groups. There are also 6 Local Community Development Companies and a Rural Partnership Group, MAP.
- ☺ The Marr economy is based on tourism, forestry and agriculture. The population forecast is for an increasing elderly population, a declining school population and an increase in the number of households. There is a high dependency on car use and lack of easily accessible public transport to all communities is regularly identified as an issue. There is dispersed rural deprivation and isolation across scattered small settlements which are affected by the 7.7% increase in cost of living in rural areas over the past year.



The Marr Area... how well are we doing?

Overall, CLD work in Marr shows good progression towards the high level outcomes from Aberdeenshire's Lifelong Learning and Leisure Strategy around the themes of Learning, Life and Work. Staff work in positive and productive partnerships to improve learning, increase life chances and increase well being for families, individuals and groups across Marr.

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

There is good evidence of progression and completion against targets agreed by young people in the Marr Youth Action Plan.

A focus on increasing accreditation has resulted in more young people registering and completing youth accreditation through Dynamic Youth Awards, Youth Achievement and Saltire Awards.

Partners report improvement in joint work with schools/CLD in supporting targeted young people towards increased confidence and improved skills ie More Choices More Chances groups, job clubs, focus groups.

CLD support through local employability groups, job clubs and the More Choices More Chances strategy group have resulted in young people attending and progressing into and towards positive destinations.

Alford Garden Community Project

Young learners and volunteers have been supported to get involved with planning and delivering a range of events to develop the new Community Garden.

Workshops have included winter edibles, planting, harvesting, supporting bugs and birds, preparing a spring garden and bug crafts.

CLD staff are planning with schools, groups and individual community members in order to get best use out of this learning facility in the future.



Saltire Awards were presented to 34 youth volunteers at a recent ceremony in Banchory. The awards ranged in hours from 10 up to 200 and were for participating in a variety of projects within Banchory and Aberdeenshire. The young people involved are supported by Banchory CLD staff to find and take part in volunteering opportunities.



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

There has been a substantial increase in the number of new literacies volunteer tutors recruited, trained and matched to new learners in some networks although there is also some reduction in speakers of English as a Second Language learner numbers in other networks due to people moving. The number of adults participating in accredited Core Skills training have increased as have numbers of learners achieving Elementary Food Hygiene certificates.

'Food for Thought' - Huntly Community Kitchen

This group involves parents with young children and is coordinated through the local Early Years Development Group. It is an 8 week nutrition and cooking programme supported by a crèche.

Parents get the opportunity to learn, understand more about the food they eat and to enhance their cooking skills. They cook a variety of dishes and their children join in for a family lunch. Five members of this group have now completed and passed a Working with Others Scottish Qualifications Authority core skill course.



The Mid Deeside pilot project was supported to develop and deliver community based adult learning opportunities. This resulted in 10 new activities and 70 new learners.

Family Learning support for young parents has increased confidence and developed new skills. Banchory Young Mums and the Alford Parents Network are now able to organise opportunities for themselves in their community.

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

Young people have been supported to work with local partners and community groups to build capacity and share skills ie Team Huntly, IT learning.

Some groups have been supported to operate independently of the Council and as a result of this approach under 5's groups, for example, are continuing to operate in communities.

A high number of Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers are supported in Marr. Other volunteer opportunities include IT tutoring, youth work and Adult Literacies volunteering. The successful Finnish Exchange was supported through volunteering.

CLD supports capacity building with young people ie involvement with all Marr Ward Forums, local policing project, Tarland Inspiring Aberdeenshire Award.

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

CLD staff have worked with MAP and Community Planning partners to facilitate the progression of Marr Youth Action Plan resulting in positive outcomes for young people being met. CLD staff co ordinate and facilitate a number of More Choices More Chances and Job Club multi agency groups across Marr, with good participation and progression for young people reported.

CLD staff make a positive contribution to Community Planning in the Marr area by facilitating the Community Planning Group annual self evaluation which is designed to plan for improvement. Community engagements for the new Alford Community Campus and more recently Hill of Banchory Community Sports facility, have resulted in good stakeholder and community involvement.

Partners work well together in Banchory and Aboyne to use referral processes effectively in work with individuals and families. This has led to an increase in referral numbers. English as a Second Language work has been reviewed and new volunteers recruited and trained and matched to new learners. New Lifelong Learning and Leisure Strategies have provided a focus for CLD delivery in Marr.

CLD use of our management information system is much improved. This has allowed a clearer picture to emerge on performance. For example there has been a clear increase in accreditation for learners. Targets for adult learners have been met. CLD staff have been involved in setting priorities for the 2013/14 Marr Community Plan.

Staff training has resulted in increased confidence to deliver against new strategies. Staff also report increased confidence in using outcome focussed planning. All CLD work is now developed using an interactive planning and evaluation tool enabling learners and partners to be easily involved in the whole process of planning and evaluating work.

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

- Strengthen partnership approaches and capacity for early intervention, family learning and disengaged young people, through working with schools, NHS and Social Work services. In particular, establish a partnership pilot programme for youth development in the Huntly area with a focus on employability and early intervention.
- Improve our family learning programmes through review and development guided by the emerging Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) groups.
- Strengthen support to the volunteers involved with the Duke of Edinburgh Award and further clarify the roles of council staff involved.
- CLD staff will work towards strengthening our evaluative practice to ensure quality in our work. We will also increase the involvement of learners in this improvement area. We will work to focus our resources effectively to areas of greatest need.
- Set challenging but achievable targets for achievement through accreditation both for adults and young people as learners and ensure effective monitoring.

Tarland Youth Cinema

Young people received the Inspiring Aberdeenshire Award for Marr, having developed a Youth Cinema Project.

A successful regular film club is now being run by young people. Three of the young people have gone on to do their Bronze Youth Achievement Award.



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