

Adult Learning and Literacies Team

Learning programmes outlined in the CLD plan and achievements:

Vocational community-based SQA certificated courses (with West College Scotland):

Since September 2021 we have delivered 40 Courses, online via the WCS Moodle and have increased in-person courses as we have emerged from COVID mitigations. Subjects were across a range of Faculties and Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels. This partnership won a prestigious College Community Learning Award at Colleges Development Network (CDN) Awards 2021 and also won the Judges' Award, which recognises the very best overall submission voted by the judges.

Adult Literacies

The majority of our Literacies provision has returned to face-to-face classes in Dalmuir, Dumbarton and Alexandria, although we are still holding one session on our Zoom Learning Hub. We have been able to access community venues through good partnership working organisations such as Unity Empower, CAB and Libraries. Connecting Scotland equipment has been a real benefit to learners and they are much more confident in using tech.

ESOL

English for Speakers of other languages (ESOL) moved from online delivery to a blended approach. Our Community ESOL continues to be funded through the Regional ESOL Partnership with West College Scotland, which enabled us to support 50 learners over the Academic Session, achieving our target number. We were also funded by the Resettlement Team to deliver bespoke ESOL classes for Afghan Refugees.

Digital Learning

Our Digital Literacies programme, Digital Friends, had been particularly impacted by COVID restrictions as we typically work with learners who aren't confident or able to access the internet. As well as a group tutor, learners are supported on a 1-1 basis by volunteers so, with the return to community classes, we were able to provide our volunteers with opportunities to help out. This year, we were able to re-start one-to-one provision in libraries and, with further easing of restrictions after Christmas, we re-started groups, which due to COVID mitigations had to limited group size.

Family Learning

As we emerged from COVID restrictions, we re-engaged with Primary Schools to deliver Family Learning programmes. As well as encouraging the family to learn together, the programmes are often based on food, which means that the participants have access to a warm free meal which they have cooked together while learning about quick, easy low cost ways to save money and feed the family for less.

The adults are also encouraged to take up other opportunities. In the Academic Year 2021-2022, we ran courses in Linnvale, Carleith, St Mary's, and St. Michael's Primary Schools and the Phoenix Centre. We also ran a Maths Week Scotland funded, project, West Dunbartonshire Discoverers.

'First Steps' Courses

First Steps courses are aimed people who feel less confident about returning to learning. They provide an introduction to Adult Learning, building confidence to progress to other courses. Although we were able to run STEPS courses online, the very nature of these programmes meant that they were difficult to deliver online. However, this year, with restrictions being lifted, we were able to run a number courses which aimed to re-engage with the most isolated learners. These included: Inspire Groups; STEPS to Excellence; and Health and Wellbeing.

Professional Learning and Development (PLD)

Prior to COVID-19, we organised monthly sessions for staff, based on a Training Needs Analysis, this was open to paid members of staff, volunteers and shared with the ALP. However, with restrictions affecting our learning provision, including opportunities for our volunteers to support learners, we have had to adapt our PLD, which has been online and which, this year, included: STEM funded Science behind the Climate Crisis and OU Open Learn Champion Training

We also supported a BACD student on placement.

Areas for Development

Areas were identified for development:

- COVID recovery: reinstating face-to-face, one-to-one and group support, including identifying community venues and outreach and engagement;
- Looking at how to benefit from the increase in online learning to offer a blended learning approach;
- Reinstating face-to-face engagement with volunteers, depending on COVID restrictions;
- Reviewing Prison Literacies and how to take learning in terms of criminal justice forward;
- Communication/awareness raising of the benefits of adult learning and opportunities available;
- Refreshing community learning computers;
- Developing ESOL to support Afghan refugees;
- Reinstating regular PLD sessions, including Education Scotland funded STEM PLD.

Progress on Areas for Development:

Since September 2021, we have working hard on COVID recovery, re-engaging with learners and partners and have been able to increase our face-to-face provision for learners. We now offer a hybrid curriculum, with an increased cohort of learners.

Scottish Government CBAL Recovery Funds enabled us to achieve this by providing funding for:

- Delivery infrastructure: 45 laptops and peripherals for delivering digital learning;
- Outreach focus: let money for community venues;
- Re-engaging learners: Family Learning sessions; learning materials; College taster sessions;
- Addressing accessibility: 800 bus tokens to enable financially excluded learners to access classes

We also obtained Scottish Government funding to purchase digital equipment for CLD practitioners. Shared with the Youth Learning Team, we have used this to purchase 7 pool laptops for use by our peripatetic part-time tutors and youth workers.

Adult Learning Partnership(ALP)

The ALP continued to meet regularly on MS Teams, with two members of the Learner Voice Group now also attend. When formulating the 2021-2024 CLD Plan, we had identified a number actions, which we tied in with the then themes in the draft Adult Learning Strategy (ALS, May 2021 version). Activities included:

- ALLT and WCS colleagues continually review and plan the learning offer with learners and progression routes
- continued our ESOL partnership working with WCS, which funded our community ESOL programme
- information sharing and reporting back from other partnerships we're on
- SDS awareness raising sessions with learners.