

ADULT LEARNING

2023-24 Annual Report



**Working4U Adult Learning and Literacies
West Dunbartonshire Adult Learning Partnership**

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INTRODUCTION

ADULT LEARNING IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

CLD Plan

Local Authorities are required to publish a Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan every 3 years. CLD covers Youth Work, Community Development and Adult Learning. The Adult Learning aspect of West Dunbartonshire's CLD Plan is delivered, in the main, by Working4U's Adult Learning and Literacies Team. At an authority level, West Dunbartonshire Adult Learning Partnership (ALP) is made up of different services who work together to improve the Adult Learning offer.

It was a big year for reviewing CLD: as well as coming to the end of the 2021-24 CLD Plan; Graeme Dey, The Minister for Higher and Further Education and Minister for Veterans commissioned an Independent Review of CLD, conducted by Kate Still; and we had an HMI CLD Plan Progress Visit. Adult Learning staff, volunteers, learners and partners all took part in these reviews.

This is the Adult Learning annual report for the final year of the 2021-24 CLD Plan. We hope you enjoy hearing about our progress in the 2023-24 Academic Year (August to June).

Adult Learning Delivery

Working4U's Adult Learning and Literacies Team runs a range of community-based courses across West Dunbartonshire. 2023-24 was a challenging year, as it was the first session which we had to plan in the context of a smaller team, due to budget cuts. As outlined in our report for 2022-23, we had to reduce some of our offer but, nevertheless, we were able to provide courses in the following areas:

Activity	Description
Community Based Vocational Courses in partnership with West College Scotland (WCS)	20 SQA accredited units at SCQF levels 4 - 6 were offered in a range of subjects including Gardening, Childcare, Fashion and Textiles, Creative Writing, History, IT, Cookery, Baking, Criminology, and Psychology. Courses were held in the Phoenix Centre, Alexandria Library, Dumbarton Library, WCS Clydebank Campus, Online, and St Joseph's Primary School.
Digital and Adult Literacies	Rolling programmes of Literacy, Numeracy and Computing. Learning is based on individual needs and includes an opportunity to achieve SQA Core Skills units. Groups included: An Additional Learning Support Needs (ALSN) group run in partnership with Unity Empower; Clydebank Literacies (2 groups); Alexandria Evening (Core Skills); Alexandria Core Skills & Digital Friends; Clydebank Getting started in IT; Dumbarton Digital Friends; Dumbarton Literacies.
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	Community ESOL classes funded through West College Scotland and New Scots ESOL funded through the Resettlement Team (Refugee support) offered learners English classes at different levels and included: Clydebank Beginners (2 sessions per week); Clydebank Elementary (2 sessions); Dumbarton Beginners; Dumbarton Elementary/Pre-Intermediate; New Scots ESOL (4 sessions per week)
Multiply	UK Shared Prosperity Funded Maths programme: Numbers online; Figure it Out (Core Skills Numeracy); Counting on Crafts; Family Cooking in Carleith, Goldenhill, Linnvale, Lennox, St Stephen's, and Braehead Primary Schools; and 2 Cooking on a Budget courses at Safe as Houses. Learners also completed SQA Core Skills Numeracy Units in our Literacies Groups (listed above).
Wellbeing	A Health and Wellbeing group met weekly in the Council Offices at Church Street. A Wellbeing and ESOL group met in the Hub Community Centre.
Learner Voice	Weekly group meetings in Church Street enabled this group of Adult Learners the opportunity to discuss current issues, plan the annual event and involve wider learners in consultations as they arise e.g. the Independent Review of CLD. 1 member of the Group attends West

	Dunbartonshire's Adult Learning Partnership meetings and Scotland's Learning Partnership's Learners' Forum.
Professional Learning	Staff training including: Maths on Toast Community Champion Training; Numeracy Tutoring Refresher; Volunteer Tutor Training; December Development Session; PDA in Adult Learning pilot course; West Alliance Winter Learning Festival; ESOL

Local Adult Learning Strategy

West Dunbartonshire Adult Learning Partnership (ALP)

includes staff from Working4U Adult Learning and Literacies Team (ALLT); Work Connect; WDC Communities Team; West College Scotland (WCS); Skills Development Scotland (SDS); West Dunbartonshire Council for Voluntary Services (WDCVS); Working4U Adult Employability; and West Dunbartonshire Learner Voice Group. We meet to share info and practice on Adult Learning and have an overall planning role for Adult Learning in WDC. At the end of each year of the CLD plan, we review and refresh the activities which we work on. In 23-24, we worked on the following activities:

Assigned to	Activity	National Adult Learning Strategy (2022)
Adult Learning Partnership	1. <i>Continue with a representative attending from West Dunbartonshire Learner Voice to ensure that the experiences of adult learners are at the heart of our work.</i>	Theme 1: Expanding and Extending Adult Learning
Working4U West College Scotland	2. <i>Working4U ALLT and WCS continue to analyse and review the partnership courses to ensure Learners' needs are identified and met</i>	Theme 1: Expanding and Extending Adult Learning

	3. <i>Re-visit joint self-evaluation and Framework of Responsibilities under the Service Level Agreement between ALLT and WCS</i>	
Working4U	4. <i>Working4U ALLT continue to take part in the West Region ESOL Partnership with WCS, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils</i>	Theme 1: Expanding and Extending Adult Learning
W4U Communities Team	5. <i>Promote democratic involvement and community empowerment through ALLT and Communities Team collaborating on supporting community groups</i>	Theme 1: Expanding and Extending Adult Learning
Working4U	6. <i>Promote the development of the Multiply programme</i>	Theme 1: Expanding and Extending Adult Learning
Adult Learning Partnership	7. <i>Share information on partners' work in order to provide positive pathways for learners</i>	Theme 2: Connecting the Adult Learning Journey
Adult Learning Partnership	8. <i>Adult Learning Partnership members continue to sit on local and national strategic bodies and share information.</i>	Theme 2: Connecting the Adult Learning Journey
Skills Development Scotland Working4U	9. <i>Continue to promote Skills Development Scotland services through input at AL groups.</i>	Theme 2: Connecting the Adult Learning Journey
Adult Learning Partnership Skills	10. <i>Connect with Strategic Employability Group with Skills Development</i>	Theme 2: Connecting the Adult Learning Journey

Development Scotland	<i>Scotland representing Adult Learning Partnership at the Strategic Employability Group.</i>	
Adult Learning Partnership	<i>11. Share information on Adult Learning including raising awareness of positive outcomes</i>	Theme 3: Access, Diversity and Inclusion
Working4U	<i>12. Joint Professional Learning and Development: continue to share Adult Learning Staff and Volunteer Training opportunities</i>	Theme 4: Workforce Development
Working4U West College Scotland (with Learning Link Scotland)	<i>13. ALLT and West College Scotland continue to work on the development and roll out of the new entry level Adult Learning Professional Development Award</i>	Theme 4: Workforce Development

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Adult Learning and Literacies Team

Community Based Vocational Courses in partnership with West College Scotland (WCS)

Due to budget cuts, 1 of the 2 Development Officers who worked on the Community Based Adult Learning (CBAL) programme left the service. Because of this, we had to cut provision by 50%, with 1 worker now covering a reduced offer across the whole Local Authority. As well as this, we had planned to continue with the

hugely popular British Sign Language (BSL) classes but, due to the sudden passing away of the much-loved lecturer, we had to postpone these. Despite these issues, the programme retained its appeal, and almost all the courses have had high levels of enrolments and retention.

The Phoenix Community Centre continued to offer their venue free of charge for two SQA courses in Gardening and Childcare and have been a valuable partner for delivery of the SQA in Dumbarton area.

The Plant Propagation Gardening was well attended; several learners completed all available SQA gardening units and gained the National Progression Award (NPA) in Horticulture. Learners from this group are now volunteering at the Phoenix Community Garden. New community contacts were made with Knowetop Community Project and Green Space; both have gifted resources to the class and visits were made to Levensgrove Park (Work Connect) and Knowetop Community Project.

Two Childcare units were delivered at the Phoenix over the year: **Play in Early Education and Childcare** and **Working in Early Education and Childcare**. An aspect of the Play unit is engagement with children in structured play, so a Christmas session was held in partnership with the local Dalreoch Nursery, giving the learners an opportunity to plan and deliver sessions with the children. As well as a valuable experience for the adult learners, it was good fun for the children. The progression unit (Working in Early Education and Childcare) had visits from Child Care providers in West Dunbartonshire to learn what's involved in a career in Child Care and what employment options are available when completing their study.

Of the 18 attending the Working in Early Education and Childcare class, 5 have successfully applied for the Child Care HNC at WCS and 3 gained full time employment. The rest of the group will progress in the new term to Supporting Children's Behaviour which is a level 5 WCS Certificate. This unit was chosen by the current learners, after discussion with lecturer, and it will also bring in new learners from the community.

St Joseph's Primary offered a venue for a new **Child Development** course, aimed at parents and friends of the school. This is the first time we have had access to schools since the pandemic, so it's a welcome step back to offering certificated courses in Primary Schools. It was another busy class, with 16 learners attending. Unfortunately, the class was hampered with poor Wi-Fi signal but despite this over half the class completed the course: 9 achieved the SQA, 3 have successfully applied for the full-time Child-Care course at WCS and 6 plan to continue with community learning. We have decided to move the location from St Joesph's to Linnvale Primary in Clydebank for the next session; and St Joseph's hope that we can resume classes after their new school build.

There were two **Fashion and Textiles** classes, held in Alexandria Library and WCS Clydebank Campus. They were very busy, with learners developing new skills, using environmentally friendly ways to make items of clothing, and cutting patterns with reduced waste. The Alexandria Library class was at full capacity and the learners started to meet outwith the course, booking the library separately to continue with their sewing. One learner from the Clydebank class started volunteering in a charity shop because of increased confidence from taking part in courses.

Unfortunately, the College has had to cut community sewing classes across all their campus areas. However, for next term, we will access UK Government Multiply funding to provide a textile course with embedded maths: Stitch in Time. This will ensure that learners continue to have access to learning new skills; and sewing is a good first step subject to engage with adults returning to education.

The **Criminology Crime Scenes** class, which was held in Alexandria Library, visited West College Scotland and learned how crime scenes are investigated and managed. They gained hands-on experience in a mock up crime scene, looking at the forensic science involved in the initial stages of an investigation of a crime. Running alongside Criminology Crime Scenes, 3 learners undertook the Crime in the Community Unit, which is self-directed study, and

they were able to attend class when they needed additional support from the lecturer.

Criminology was popular with 22 learners attending and 18 gaining the SQA Unit, the majority of learners plan to attend next session with a progression to a Psychology course.



Working with fingerprints in the Criminology class

The cooking courses proved extremely popular with learners and there was a high attendance rate for both **Craft Baking and World Cuisine**. 2 learners from World Cuisine were accepted for full time places in the WCS Hospitality Higher National Certificate (HNC). Given the popularity and good retention rate of these classes, we now have the opportunity to use SVQ units alongside SQAs in future courses.

The **Creative Writing Unit 'Creation and Production with a Scottish Context'** had additional new learners attending from the mental health organisation Steppingstones. Most learners in this class report that attending improves their mental health and cite the self-expression and creativity as having a positive impact on their wellbeing. The group regularly met outside class times on Zoom to support each other through course work and, as a social gathering. They also organised meet ups.

As most of the class had completed all the available Creative Writing Units from WCS, they were offered support to become an independent writing group. The Development Officer contacted the Communities Team to discuss support going forward and the group secured a let in Alexandria Library. Prior to the independent group being set up and it was agreed that we would fund a Creative Writing tutor for the next semester and the group were happy with this proposal. This had positive results as learners were supported to submit work for publishing, which was a great confidence boost.

8 learners out of 14 in **IT Solutions for Administrators** gained their qualifications and most are planning on moving into further education or employment. One learner successfully applied for the Applied Mathematics part-time course at City of Glasgow College, which has been supported through the Multiply fund. After discussion with lecturer and learners this course will revert to the basic level IT next session to encourage new learners to attend.

In general terms for the partnership courses, guidance and support for learners was available to help them move smoothly into full-time or part-time WCS courses, and many were successful in their applications to WCS. In guidance discussions, learners reported high levels of satisfaction around the quality, range, level and availability of courses. Opportunities were created to have CBAL courses returning to Clydebank schools. As well as schools, there is continued support for CBAL locally by partners, with cost free venues in WD Libraries and The Phoenix Community Centre, which are vital to the learning offer. We saw an increase in ESOL learners attending CBAL courses, particularly the Early Learning and Child Care courses which led to 5 ESOL learners progressing to Early Learning and Child Care HNC at West College Scotland. Through this partnership, 13 learners were also given Chromebooks to keep.



I wanted to go back to college but due to ill health I wouldn't be able to be a full-time student, so these community courses are perfect for me being able to learn. I like the fact that it gets me out of the house and socialising and it's helping my confidence by being able to speak in front of others.

CBAL Learner Feedback

HM Inspectors praised the work of the Adult Learning Partnership, saying: *Adult learners benefit from strong partnership arrangements. This enables adult learners to participate in accredited community-based adult learning opportunities and gain valuable skills for learning, life and work. Learners are better socially connected and have improved mental health. Most learners are improving aspirations for their future and are making progress with their learning. A few learners describe the support as life changing.*

Digital and Adult Literacies

Due to the reduction in the Team because of budget cuts, we had to adapt our Adult Literacies and Digital provision. This entailed: cutting 2 classes; amalgamating Adult Literacies and Digital Friends programmes in Alexandria; delivering an SQA Core Skills course rather than a bespoke rolling programme in some classes; and

changing some class times. The Literacies for Adults with Learning Support Needs (ALSN) group in partnership with Unity Empower continued unchanged.

The **ALSN** group was a busy, well attended group. As well as working on the alphabet, spelling, money and addition, they took part on project-based work with embedded literacies. These included sowing seeds and making hanging baskets. They also got involved in the UEFA European Championships by looking at countries playing in Europe and finding out about their flags and population on their iPads. Unity also had a visit from the local MSP Marie McNair and the group planned to visit the Scottish Parliament in September 2024. With Dalmuir Library moving to the same building as the group (Dalmuir Community Centre), they visited the library to see what services are on offer.



Unity Learners visiting the new Dalmuir Library

The 2 groups **Clydebank Literacies** also remained busy, with one group working on reading, spelling and money and the other group working on reading and working towards completing their SQA Core Skills Numeracy Level 3. We supported an individual learner on a 'twilight' drop-in basis, as she couldn't make the class due to work commitments. She achieved an SQA Core Skills Communications Level 4 and hopes to work on computer and numeracy next. Home Energy Scotland visited the groups in December 2023 to give tips to learners and volunteers on how to keep their homes warm.

The Clydebank groups also took part in a discussion with HMI Inspectors during their Progress Visit. The inspectors reported that: *A positive feature of the adult literacy and numeracy programme is its emphasis on personalised learning pathways. Each learner has personal goals which helps them to take ownership of their learning.*

Alexandria Evening (Core Skills) enabled learners, who are unable to attend classes during the day because of working or caring commitments, to undertake SQA Core Skills Units. 3 learners in the group achieved numeracy and communications units.

Alexandria Core Skills and Digital Friends was an amalgamated group, therefore activities were mixed, with learners working on ESOL, literacies and digital skills, and the group gelled well. 2 of the group were asylum seekers with a good level of English, but who needed to practise speaking and listening in the West Scotland dialect of Scots. Individuals in the group worked on spelling, reading and numeracy as identified in their Individual Learning Plans.

Dumbarton Literacies group learners were busy covering various subjects, starting with the news, word of the day and discussing subjects such as LGBTQ+ and religious celebrations as well as planting seeds and working on their division. 4 learners in the group were also working towards achieving SQA Core Skills Numeracy.

Clydebank **Getting Started in IT** was aimed at beginners and covered aspects of the SQA Core Skills ICT unit: using Word,

creating folders and saving documents, internet searches and staying safe online. 3 of the group achieved the qualification, 3 others gained employment, and another progressed to a CBAL course. One of the newly trained volunteers also supported this group.

Dumbarton Digital Friends this was a class for absolute beginners and was supported by volunteers who worked with learners on a one-to-one basis alongside the Group Tutor. Learning was tailored to learners' needs and based on an Individual Learning Plan. This means that learners were working on different activities, for example, one learner wanted to learn how to download knitting patterns, so only stayed for a few weeks, whereas others worked on aspects of the SQA.

In all our Digital and Adult Literacies Group, learners tell us that, as well as gaining skills, they have increased cultural awareness and coming to the groups has improved their mental health and wellbeing. The social aspect of being in classes is also important for learners, helping them to make friends in a supportive environment and boosting their confidence.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

ESOL continued with its 2 strands of funding: Community ESOL for the general public funded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) through West College Scotland; and New Scots ESOL for refugees funded through West Dunbartonshire Resettlement Team. In terms of the SFC funded programme, we are part of the West Region ESOL partnership with WCS, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils, which meets monthly to ensure the smooth running of the programme and share practice. As well as covering reading, writing, speaking, and listening, we aim to provide learners with opportunities to learn more about what's going on locally, and Scottish culture. We undertake an ESOL assessment with all prospective learners, using the Education Scotland ESOL assessment tool. This enables us to place ESOL learners in the best level of class for their needs. Learners may join a community class,

or we may refer them to higher level provision offered by WCS. Over the academic year, 119 initial assessments were conducted.

Clydebank Beginners ESOL worked on various aspects of English Language: reading, writing, speaking and listening. The group listened to and discussed an audio book: *Next Door to Love*, undertaking discussion and worksheets to ensure comprehension. They also visited Clydebank Museum at the Town Hall to find out more about Clydebank's past.

The group took part in a workshop delivered by Migrant Voice about *Putting Ourselves in the Picture* Project, an exhibition of pictures at Kelvingrove Art Gallery about people settling in Scotland. While completing the questionnaire for the Independent Review of CLD (Still Report), some learners said they would like to volunteer. Due to this, the class visited WDCVS where they completed an introduction to Volunteering course.

One of the students from PDA Adult Learning: an Introduction started volunteering in this class.

The Centre 81 Elementary¹ class had been delivered on a blended format, but the learners decided that they would like to have both sessions face to face. The let paid for this through Employability Team funding. Being in Centre 81 means that learners have access to other community initiatives, for instance they can join other classes or groups in the centre. A member of Clydebank Housing Association came to speak to the class about becoming a member of the management committee and, although no one took this up at the time, it hopefully made learners feel more included in the community.

Dumbarton Beginners' class met in Dumbarton Library and covered the English needed for everyday living, such as food and drink. Being in the Library has helped with wider integration: they attended an event in the library called *Remembering through Gathering*, which was organised by the community arts project,

¹ For learners who have a basic understanding of English

Clifftop Projects. This event got people talking about their experience of lockdown. The class also took part in a treasure hunt round the library, which involved them looking for different pieces of information and books, including asking the librarians questions about the library. The group also had a talk from the NHS Winter Reach programme. The Digital Friends group met at the same time as this class, so they took their break time together, allowing ESOL learners the opportunity to converse in English.

Due to the numbers in the **Dumbarton Pre-intermediate**² class, we had to move it to the Phoenix Centre, which has more space. The group worked on the SQA Core Skills Communication Level 3 unit. To help them prepare for the Speaking and Listening part of the unit, they joined our gardening group, which also meets in the Phoenix, to find out what they were working on.

Following feedback from the end of year ESOL Tutor consultation in June 2023, we started an **ESOL Wellbeing** class in Clydebank (see Wellbeing section below.)

The **New Scots ESOL** class was very busy. For this programme, we work closely with the Resettlement Team who refer New Scots for ESOL assessment and guidance, once they have settled into their new homes. We also liaise with the team in terms of wellbeing issues which may arise in classes.

During the year we had to have a planning meeting to address the high numbers of learners. This resulted in progressing some learners to more appropriate learning and splitting the group into 2 classes: **ESOL Literacies**³ and **Beginners**, with each class having 2 sessions per week. This eased the issue over capacity and benefited the learners by ensuring each class was smaller and at the appropriate level. The Beginners' Group took part in the HMI Progress Visit, with the inspectors reporting that: *The tailored*

² For learners who have some fluency

³ For absolute beginners who also have literacy issues in their own language

design of adult learning, English for Speakers of other Languages ... is helping to address learners' individual needs.

As the Council received new refugees during the year, a third New Scots class was started, running 3 afternoons per week. This was a mixed class with some literacy learners and beginners and initially ran for 10 weeks. It is planned to continue this in the new Academic Session (August 2024 – Jun 2025).

To celebrate Robert Burns, learners from Community ESOL and New Scots ESOL classes attended a Burns celebration afternoon in Faifley Parish Church. At the start of the event a haggis was piped in and addressed, before being served along with neeps and tatties, followed by cloutie dumpling. Children from two local primary schools attended to sing Burns songs and display some Scottish Highland Dancing. A member of the church read a couple of Burns poems, before participants got up to do the Gay Gordons. Learners gave us good feedback on the session: they enjoyed the food and music and said that the people were friendly.

The 3 New Scots classes and Clydebank Library class also had a get-together at the end of the year in June. The participants played games and met with other ESOL learners. We also had to say a fond farewell to one of our tutors, who was moving on to a permanent post.



The Clydebank Library class formed a heart-shaped arch to show their appreciation of the tutor.

All ESOL learners took part in the consultation for the Community Learning and Development (Still) review. As well as progressing in their English, learners achieve a variety of outcomes:

- 9 learners gained an SQA, 6 of which were Core skills communication at level 3. The other learners gained a core skills speaking at level 2.
- 8 learners secured jobs
- 7 attended our partnership certificated courses, including Childcare, and Sewing
- 2 learners joined the Men's Shed in Dalmuir
- 14 learners signed up to attend a summer school at West College Scotland, with 5 applying to attend the college after the summer break.

From the What's Changed4U outcome evaluation, 92% of the learners said that they were more confident speaking, and 78% were more confident using their English outside of class.



I have stopped saying I don't speak English. I feel more confident in the store

ESOL Learner feedback

Multiply

Multiply is a UK Government funded numeracy programme, which aims to: "help transform the lives of adults across the UK, by improving their functional numeracy skills through free personal tutoring, digital training, and flexible courses." It is aimed at adults who do not have an SCQF Level 5 Maths or Numeracy qualification, with a view to helping them to gain a qualification and increase their confidence in maths. The Team's contribution to the Multiply offer in West Dunbartonshire consisted of SQA Core Skills Numeracy either in our existing Literacies Groups or in our Figure it Out class, craft and cookery courses with embedded numeracy skills development.

The **Figure it Out** class, a dedicated numeracy group, offered learners the opportunity to achieve an SQA unit. Of the 4 who registered, 2 decided to undertake the higher level SQA at WCS and 1 gained employment. We changed this class to a craft class with embedded numeracy in hopes of recruiting more learners: **Counting on Crafts**. One of the learners was attending to help them prepare for joining the Police where he got accepted. Another learner gained their SQA level 3 numeracy. Learners in our

Literacies groups were able to come to this group to supplement their learning by working on the SQA.

In the Literacies Groups, learners were encouraged to work on their numeracy, and we had an increase in people achieving a Core Skills Numeracy qualification.

We were able to use Multiply funding to deliver **Family Cookery** courses in a number of primary schools. Working towards the Multiply Outcome *S43: Courses for parents wanting to increase numeracy skills*, the numeracy skills in cooking were emphasised, such as weighing, measuring, portion size and ratios. Short courses were delivered by our Community Chef and a CLD Tutor in Carleith, Goldenhill, Linnvale, Lennox, St Stephen's, St Mary's and Braehead Primary Schools. Feedback from learners and schools was very positive. Parents and Carers especially enjoyed being able to spend time with their children and the schools value the programmes as a way to engage with parents.

2 Budget Cookery groups were also delivered in Alternatives Safe as Houses. It was the first time we were able to run cookery classes in the unit. They were well received, and we have been asked to deliver further courses in the new session supporting the development of essential life skills.

Wellbeing

In previous years, the Team delivered a First Steps programme of courses, which were targeted at people who feel less confident about returning to learning and have multiple barriers to opportunity. We no longer have the capacity to run a full First Steps programme, however, given the importance of increased wellbeing for our learners, (which is continually shown in learner feedback) we delivered 2 specific wellbeing groups.

The aim of the Wellbeing groups is to provide a safe space for learners to take part in activities, which they identify, and at the same time to provide an opportunity for participants to develop a

scheduled for the end session of each month, and they made blankets and fidget mitts, which they planned to donate to Milton Animal home and Care homes after the summer holidays. The SLP input was about selling crafts on their Elfies website and a couple of members of the group were interested in joining it to sell their crafts.

Wellbeing reflections were carried out, and they revealed that coming to the group helped reduce social isolation and in turn improve anxiety and depression. What's Changed4U evaluations highlighted improved confidence, increased ability to contribute and socialise, thereby reducing social isolation and loneliness; 100% were very satisfied with course. Most of the group also completed the learners' survey for the Independent Review of CLD.



I enjoy meeting each week
with all the different
personalities. Each person
brings knowledge of many
different topics. It's also
good fun.

Wellbeing participant's reflection

The **Clydebank ESOL Wellbeing** came about following a self-evaluation session with ESOL tutors, who felt that ESOL learners would benefit from it. It would also give learners the opportunity to practise speaking and listening in English. This group took part in various activities: arts and crafts; an input from Home Energy Scotland; a discussion about anxiety and how it affects us; store cupboard beauty; and arts and crafts and ball game activities with their children during the February mid-term school holiday. A member of the group took 2 sessions, showing the other members how to make flowers from plastic bags, they also made draught

excluders. The group had a visit from the Golden Jubilee hospital about volunteering opportunities. A worker from the Libraries' Heritage Centre gave a talk about the history of Clydebank, where he showed photos of how it has changed over the years from farmland to how it is today.

The Clydebank group enjoyed their afternoons as a time for them to improve their confidence and mental wellbeing and improve their English language skills.

West Dunbartonshire Learner Voice Group (WDLV)

This year, WDLV's work has been focused on campaigning about the cuts to Adult Learning in 2023 and threats of cuts again in the spring of 2024. This meant that they didn't hold an event in the autumn of 2023, and it also affected planning and fundraising for a learners' event, which they originally hoped to have in Summer 2024. As part of the campaign, the group contacted all learners, WDC Councillors and national partners to highlight the impact further cuts to adult learning would have on learning programmes offered. They organised a meeting with councillors, current learners, and the Working4U Manager. At that meeting 5 learners came forward to support the learners at future events. Thankfully WDC made the decision not to cut the service further in March 2024. The group continued to raise the profile of adult learning with councillors.

As well as having a representative in West Dunbartonshire's Adult Learning Partnership, the same member also attends the national Adult Learners' Forum, managed by Scotland's Learning Partnership (SLP), which means that WDLV are aware of and can influence local and national adult learning priorities. The group attended several national events hosted by SLP and met with other learners from across Scotland to discuss the CLD review and hear about adult learning. At one SLP meeting they discussed the future hopes for adult learning nationally and drew up 5 Key points for the future of adult learning in Scotland:

- 1- We support the idea of an Adult Learning Bill – (incorporating sustainable funding, rights and access)
- 2- We need recognition for adult learning as a route for social prescribing- (to enhance our health and wellbeing)
- 3- We require parity of access for adult learning groups across Scotland – (centres, hubs, creches)
- 4- We need a new national awareness campaign to promote the benefits of Adult Learning
- 5- We need a national implementation plan to support current adult learning strategy

WDLV took part in the consultation for the independent review of CLD led by Kate Still. They also took part in the HMIE Progress Visit in March 2024, with inspectors reporting that: *Learners have a strong voice that is valued highly and contributes to strategic planning of adult learning.*

In May WDLV were invited to the Adult Learners Week ceremony hosted by SLP in Edinburgh and were surprised and delighted to be awarded a Special Recognition Award for their work in campaigning and raising the profile of Adult Learning in West Dunbartonshire. This was also attended by WDC councillor Johal Sing and W4U Manager, Stephen Brooks.



WDLV and Council reps with award

The group took part in the Volunteers Week Celebration on June 6th with other Volunteers and tutors in Levensgrove Training Suite, where they participated in Volunteer self-evaluation and planning. As a group they also took part in the What's Changed4U evaluation survey.

In terms of work going forward, WDLV worked with the Development Officer to apply for Big Lottery Community Fund money to host the annual learners' event in the Autumn of 2024. Forward plans include:

- 1- Have an annual Learners Event
- 2- Raise the profile of adult learning using media and social media
- 3- Make links with local and national learner's groups,
- 4- Raise the concerns of adult learners locally by having a representative on the Adult Learning Partnership

- 5- Continue to work with SLP to campaign nationally for adult learning to have the recognition, stability, and protected funding from Scottish Government.

Professional Learning and Development

Each year, we strive to offer a programme of professional learning for paid staff and volunteers, which aims to support staff to deliver a quality service to learners and to engender a culture of lifelong learning within the team. Informed by consulting with staff and volunteers, the programme is also designed around emerging topics which are relevant to Adult Learning, such as the new Multiply programme. Team members are also encouraged to take part in relevant staff development opportunities as they arise, including CLD Standards Council provision and in national providers' networks run by Education Scotland. However, as we no longer have the capacity to attend all the networks available, we prioritised the following: the Adult Literacies Network; ESOL Leads; and Numeracy Network. We are also active members of the West Alliance CLD professional development network, and the Team Leader chairs CLD Managers Adult Learning Subgroup.

At a national level, we continued to work with partners on creating an entry level SQA Professional Development Award at SCQF 6: Introduction to Adult Learning.

We used Multiply funds to purchase numeracy specific training, and we also ran a development session in response to our training consultation with staff and volunteers.

Maths on Toast, the Family Maths charity, delivered Community Champion training in August. This 1-day session looked at maths anxiety, seeing the world through 'maths eyes' and gave us hands-on experience in delivering creative maths activities as well as resources to deliver a 4-week Family Learning programme. 11 people took part, it was a lively session and feedback was positive.

Learning Link Scotland delivered 2 half-day **Tutoring Numeracy** sessions in September. These were aimed at working with adults and covered: maths anxiety; seeing the world through maths eyes; assessing learners' needs; tutoring techniques; evaluating learning; and gave advice on a range of resources that can be used with learners. 13 people took part, including Working4U staff, volunteers and partners from the city region.

We held a **December Development Session**, which gave participants the opportunity to share practice, particularly around motivating learners and sharing pieces of good practice. We also included the obligatory Christmas quiz! 11 tutors and volunteers attended, as well as the team. Feedback was good, with participants enjoying meeting other members of the team, sharing practice and, of course, the quiz. We also took the opportunity to find out what other training staff and volunteers would undertake; a range of topics was provided for participants to select, and options were spread across these, with Cyber Security and Mental health/Suicide prevention having most votes.

When we ask about training, we consistently get asked for training to help support vulnerable or neurodiverse learners. Volunteers are now offered the range of Mental Health courses offered by HSCP partners.

We ran a **Volunteer Tutor Training Introductory Course** in Clydebank Library over the winter. This 7-week course introduced participants to adult learning and how to support learners with their literacies and digital skills. 5 people attended the course and feedback has been very good with 3 of the participants commencing volunteering in classes.

As part of our support to volunteers, we hold a thank you and consultation event each year during **Volunteer Week** (1st week in June). This year we returned to the lovely surroundings of the Work Connect Levensgrove Training Suite to celebrate the contribution volunteers make in the delivery of Adult Learning and to consult with them regarding what they think of the service, what

improvements can be made and what professional learning they would like to have to support them in their work. This year we took the opportunity to consult on the CLD Plan as we reach the end of one 3 year plan and start a new one. We also asked them what their '3 wishes for Adult Learning' would be.



It's amazing how students
love coming to class. No
matter how they feel, they
can be distraught, but they
still come

Volunteer Feedback

The **PDA Adult Learning: an Introduction** was a major piece of work. The group award was published on the SQA website and is available for centres to seek approval to deliver. The small partnership working on this (WDC Adult Learning and Literacies Team, West College Scotland and Learning Links Scotland) received Scottish Government funding to develop the Assessment Support Pack (ASP), Delivery Pack and to pilot the course. A small working group, made up of colleagues across Scotland and sectors, completed the ASP, which the college submitted for prior verification. The pilot course started in West College Scotland, Clydebank Campus in January with 6 very engaged students, which was an ideal number to experience and evaluate the design and input of the course. The resources are now available for any approved centre to run the qualification.

We had a lot of interest nationally, with people enquiring from all over Scotland. Because of this, we organised a launch event in Clydebank Town Hall to go over course content, resources available and the feedback we've had from course tutors and students. Colleagues who attended were excited to hear more about the award and are keen to deliver it in their own organisations. We also followed up with an online session hosted by Education Scotland.

PDA Launch

CLYDEBANK TOWN
HALL



As well as participating in national networks, Team members also attended national conferences, including: SLP's Adult Learning Policy Seminar and All Things Adult Learning event; and a joint CLDMS/CLDSC Conference. These help team members network with colleagues across the country, sharing good practice and influencing policy.

West Dunbartonshire Adult Learning Partnership

The Adult Learning Partnership had updated their plan for 2023-24. Activities and progress can be seen in the following table:

Activity	Progress
1. <i>Continue with rep attending from West Dunbartonshire Learner Voice to ensure that the experiences of adult learners are at the heart of our work</i>	WDLV rep continued as a member of the partnership and contributed by supplying updates from WDLV and the work of Scotland's Learning Partnership's Learners' Forum.
2. <i>Working4U ALLT and WCS continue to analyse and review the partnership courses to ensure Learners' needs are identified and met</i>	Semester 1 learners were consulted on courses and progression. Progression for Semester 2 negotiated with Faculties for a January start. Courses evaluated and classes for new academic session agreed.
3. <i>Re-visit joint self-evaluation and Framework of Responsibilities under SLA</i>	Self-evaluation has been an ongoing process.
4. <i>Working4U ALLT continue to take part in the West Region ESOL Partnership with WCS, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils</i>	Continuing monthly meetings ensured the smooth running of the programme. We also had the opportunity to have discussions on different aspects of practice within Local Authorities and College, which was informative and helpful.
5. <i>Promote democratic involvement and community empowerment through ALLT and Communities Team collaborating on supporting community groups</i>	On hold during Communities Team re-structuring.
6. <i>Promote the development of the Multiply programme</i>	WCS have delivered 2 Multiply courses: Applied Maths and Level 4/5 Core Skills Numeracy. ALLT delivering Numeracy in Literacies Groups; Family Learning and 2 dedicated classes: Figure it Out and Counting on Crafts. Most learners for ALLT are in the Literacies Groups and Family Learning.
7. <i>Share information on partners' work in order to provide positive pathways for learners</i>	Partners update work at the 6 weekly ALP meetings, this has been a good opportunity to share info.
8. <i>ALP members continue to sit on local and national strategic bodies and share information.</i>	Info shared from Scottish Adult Learning Partnership Learners' Forum, Local Employability Partnership, Community Learning Development Managers

	Scotland, and the Inclusive Working Group. Info shared on Independent Review of Community Learning (Still Report) commissioned by the Scottish Government.
9. <i>Continue to promote Skills Development Scotland services through input at Adult Learning groups.</i>	On hold due to re-structuring
10. <i>Connect with Strategic Employability Group, SDS representing Adult Learning Partnership at SEG</i>	Skills Development Scotland attend meetings regularly.
11. <i>Share information on Adult Learning including raising awareness of positive outcomes</i>	Info shared at ALP meetings. Annual Report uploaded to WDC Website. Good news stories shared on Facebook and the new Multiply Website.
12. <i>Joint Professional Learning and Development: continue to share Adult Learning Staff and Volunteer Training opportunities</i>	ALLT share Staff Development info with partnership which has included Numeracy Tutor Training, and Volunteer Tutor Training this Academic year.
13. <i>ALLT and WCS continue to work on the development and roll out of the new entry level Adult Learning PDA</i>	SG funding received to develop Assessment Support Pack (ASP), Delivery pack, pilot course and launch. Writing group recruited; ASP pack completed; and approval obtained to run pilot in WCS. 6 learners taking part in 2 sessions per week: in person in WCS Clydebank Campus, and an online session. May Launch event in Clydebank Town Hall.

The ALP took part in the HMI Progress Visit, which evaluated our progress against the CLD plan. The feedback from the Inspectors was very good, with the ALP being praised as *a strong collaboration of a wide range of service providers and an adult learners' voice group. They are jointly planning to maximise their impact on adult learners across West Dunbartonshire...Learners have a strong voice that is valued highly and contributes to strategic planning of adult learning. As a result, the ALP have created clear and flexible learning pathways to ensure progression.*

The Inspectors recommended us as an *aspect of highly effective practice.* These are examples of work which they share on their

website to promote improvement in CLD practice. Our example can be found here:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/promoting-improvement-through-sharing-highly-effective-practice/community-learning-and-development/west-dunbartonshire-adult-learning-partnership/>

EVALUATION

As our delivery is learner-centred, it's extremely important to obtain the views of our learners. They are consulted on an ongoing basis to find out how they are getting on with their learning and for the Team to achieve continuous improvement. At the end of Block 1 (August -December) each year, learners in CBAL courses are consulted on SQA progression units for the next term and ESOL learners undertake a 'mid-term review' to find out what they have learnt and what they wish to cover in the new term. Literacies Learners undertake a 6-weekly reflection and 6-month review, recorded in their Individual learning Plans (ILPs).

At the end of the academic session learners are asked to complete a What's Changed4U evaluation form so that we can find out what outcomes learners feel they have achieved and if they are satisfied with the service. As well as the questionnaire, we have group discussions with learners, staff and volunteers. In 2024, this also focussed on the 2021 -2024 CLD plan so that we had information for the new plan published in September 2024.

This year (April 2024), we had a Progress Visit from HM Inspectors. The aim of this visit was to review our progress against the 3-year CLD Plan, which gave us opportunity to have our work professionally reviewed by external partners.

Learners' Feedback

The **What's Changed4U** survey was completed by 79 learners at the end of the academic year. The **ESOL What's Changed4U** learners was completed by 76 learners.

The non-ESOL survey was completed by learners in our CBAL programme, Digital and Adult Literacies, Wellbeing and the PDA Adult Learning. When asked about skills learnt, based on the SQA Core Skills⁴ the top 3 answers were:

- 90% working with others as a team or a group
- 62% speaking, listening, communicating, doing presentations
- 57% making better decisions/choices, critical thinking or problem solving

When asked about other skills learnt, the top 3 answers were:

- 46% living a healthier lifestyle
- 34% cultural awareness, knowledge of West Dunbartonshire or citizenship
- 22% art, drama, creative writing, photography or something creative

When asked about personal goals, the top 3 answers for positive outcomes achieved were:

- 71% in mental health and wellbeing
- 65% in social life/relationships (e.g. friendships, social networking)
- 61% in personal life

When asked about what difference the course has made, learners told us that their confidence has increased, that the social aspect and meeting others has made a difference as well as learning new skills.

⁴ SQA 5 Core Skills: Communication, Numeracy, ICT, Problem Solving, Working in a Group

86% of the learners felt that their confidence had increased because of taking part in the course. Learners were also asked if they were confident to go on to other opportunities and their top 3 answers were:

- 74% more learning in the community with Working4U
- 49% going to college
- 47% getting a job

When asked about satisfaction with the service, 70% said they were very happy with 25% saying they were happy, giving a 95% positive rating. 76% said they were very likely to recommend the service to a friend and 16% said they were likely, giving a 92%

"This course of study has given me confidence and understanding of English in language and in life and every day at work."

"Make new friends, get more information, learn the language better by talking with teacher and friends."

"Less shame in life (Scotland). Confident to speak more in class, go places alone (shopping, park, walking), not use Translate at all."

Selection of learners' quotes on the difference coming to ESOL courses has made

positive rating. From the results, we can see that ESOL learners are gaining skills to use English outwith the class situation, enabling them to become more active in the community and develop friendships.

Learners' Focus Groups

As well as the surveys, the Team conducted discussion groups with the classes at the end of the academic session, based on questions about:

- what they thought worked well in the group and what could be better
- how they thought the Team performed against the CLD Plan
- how they thought the ALP performed against the CLD Plan
- their 3 wishes for adult learning which thought should be included in the next CLD Plan

In terms of what worked well in groups, the development of personal and social skills was discussed. Learners spoke about the different teaching and learning activities undertaken in specific classes, which they felt worked well. The social aspect of learning was something which came up a lot, with learners saying that making friends and helping each other was good, as was learning from each other. Libraries and the Phoenix Centre were good venues for classes. The WDLV group said they felt stronger as a group because of their campaigning over the year.

When asked about improvements, learners gave suggestions on specific learning activities they would like to undertake, such as more reading in ESOL. We were also asked to deliver more classes in Wellbeing and ESOL. Learners said that we should advertise our courses more. There was also an issue around the length of time it takes to set learners up with Teams (in CBAL classes), with a suggestion to have an extra session to support this. Learners also felt that there should be ground rules set in certain CBAL classes, emphasising respect, as some of the discussions could highlight differences, resulting in some learners feeling uncomfortable. The trauma of uncertainty about provision, due to budget cuts was also mentioned. Some suggestions were made again about improvements to accommodation in Dalmuir.



“I’m stressed at home,
coming here makes me
happy”

Focus Group Feedback

In terms of actions against the CLD plan, learners said they thought the Team did well. Depending on the programme, some learners didn’t notice that we had to change our provision, whereas other felt it was a worrying time but that the Team coped with the transition. When asked about how they thought the ALP did, they felt the Partnership should keep doing what it’s doing. They thought that having a learner rep on the partnership was a good thing, as was the focus on volunteering. They felt we need some stability and that we should raise the profile of adult learning more.

When asked for 3 wishes for Adult Learning to be included in the next 3-year plan, we certainly got more than 3 wishes, but we have attempted to classify them into 3 areas:

Stability

- Protect the courses
- Plan 3 years’ of adult learning at least, in line with CLD Plan
- Not worrying whether adult learning will be shut
- Ensuring funding for adult learning
- Increase awareness with decision makers

Access

- Ensuring learning takes place in local communities
- Better resources and technology
- Improved advertising
- Modern venues

Learning Offer

- Longer classes
- More lessons
- More trips and visits
- More on local culture/tradition/history

WDLV took their '3 wishes' to a meeting with MSPs in December 2023:

- There should be 'ring fenced' funding for adult learning (funding specifically only for adult learning)
- There should be an equal share of funding spread between Adult Learning and Youth Work in Scotland
- Adult Learning should be statutory so there would be a continued good level service, resources and funding.

Staff and Volunteers' Focus Groups

We held 2 discussion groups with volunteers and staff, focussing on the same questions as the learners' focus groups but with added questions around staff development.

When asked about what went well, ESOL tutors felt that splitting New Scots ESOL groups into learner levels worked well, although it meant that learners received fewer classes. They felt that Centre 81 and the Phoenix had good facilities and staff. Having the library opening in Dalmuir Community Centre Dalmuir was good as it gave learners access to computers, the printer/photocopier, and books. The addition of a Wellbeing Group for ESOL learners was also felt to be beneficial.

Staff felt that the Digital and Literacies groups gelled well, with learners progressing in their learning and more achieving SQA Core Skills qualifications. When asked about what could be improved, staff spoke about resources, IT and accommodation. They also felt that it would be good to have more volunteers supporting classes.

In terms of the CLD Plan, staff felt that the Team had done well considering the difficult circumstances we were in. When asked

about priorities going forward, they said we should try and keep the programmes we have, with no more cuts to provision. When asked about the ALP's progress with the Plan, they said that there could be more representation at ALP including higher level ESOL learners. They also discussed the possibility of WDLV visiting groups.

The staff's 3 wishes for adult learning:

1. More modern rooms with Smart board and projectors in all venues with internet that works without hassle.
2. More help from Council to help with big celebration event that WDLV organise. Also, smaller learner events a couple of times a year for groups to socialise, meet up and exchange ideas and views.
3. More classes for example Conversation café / Drop in / Reading groups with libraries at different levels.

Volunteers felt that, in general, classes went well, and they gave some suggestions for improvement, mainly in terms of resources. When asked about the Team's performance against the CLD Plan, they said that they didn't realise how much the Team did and talked about the positive outcomes for learners. They said that WDLV had shown a different dimension to their work with their campaigning. When asked about the ALP's progress, they said it was good that it exists and suggested making more connections such as events in Libraries and following up the CVS input with ESOL learners. Volunteers also had more than 3 wishes for adult learning but the most popular were around secure funding, more activities and trips for learners, and more awareness raising/communication about what we do.

We asked staff and volunteers additional questions around professional learning, including suggestions for further training sessions. Topics suggested included practice sharing; the rights of Asylum Seekers and Refugees including citizenship; awareness raising from Libraries and Museums including heritage walks; supporting vulnerable learners; wellbeing; and the cost of living. We

will use this information to plan training sessions or signpost staff and volunteers to provision.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

Indicator	Year 1 of the CLD Plan August 21 to July 22	Year 2 of the CLD Plan August 22 to July 23	Year 3 of the CLD Plan August 23 to July 24	TOTAL for 3 Year Plan 2021-2024
Number of people supported	443	878	466	1,787
Number of people with health issues/disability	127	287	157	571
Number of adults in Family Learning	21	100	52	173
Number of children in Family Learning	44	128	49	221
Number of people gaining a qualification	103	222	196	521
Number of people in Literacies classes	75	124	122	321
Number of volunteers working in groups	45	23	21	Not cumulative
Number of learners reporting improved mental health and wellbeing	69	54	68	191
Number of people involved in consultation structures – Learner Voice Group	6	8	6	Not cumulative
Number of learners involved in consultation	158	281	559	998

Number of learners in ESOL classes	72	108	122	302
Number of ESOL initial assessments	45	112	119	276
Number of partnership events	1	1	0	2

This year's numbers reflect the reduction in the size of the Team, with the total number of adults supported decreasing by almost 50% from the 2022-23 academic year. (It's interesting to see the increase from 2021-22 when we were still affected by the pandemic). There was a slight increase in the number of ESOL learners, due to an extra class for New Scots. The large increase in the number of learners involved in consultation was due to the Independent Review of CLD. Although the number of volunteers decreased during the pandemic, in 2023-24, volunteers contributed around 2940 hours of tutor support, equating to approximately £55,000 worth of tutoring work. The 20 CBAL classes, which were run in partnership with WCS, also contributed around £40,000 of Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funds to adult learning in West Dunbartonshire, which equates to around £58,000 if purchased outwith the partnership agreement. Between the SFC funding through the College and the Resettlement Team, ESOL attracted over £20,000 of funding.

GOING FORWARD: CLD PLAN 2024-27

By law, every local authority must provide a 3 year CLD Plan. 2024 sees the end of one plan and the start of a new one. Information gained from our evaluation and review sessions contributed to the development of the Plan, which has been published on the WDC website here:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/jppbaftr/cld-3-year-plan-2024-27-final-draft-oct-24-updated.pdf>

The Team and the Partnership will base our work on activities outlined in the plan.