

THE LEARNING
REVOLUTION

Community
Learning
Champions



**Community Learning
Champions and local authorities:
opening up opportunities for
informal adult learning**

Informal adult learning and local authorities – how Community Learning Champions can help

This leaflet is for people working in and leading local authorities, officers and elected members. It explains:

- informal adult learning and how it can help to promote community well-being; and
- how community learning champions can help to get residents involved in informal learning.

What is informal adult learning? How can it strengthen community well-being?

Informal adult learning is learning for its own sake rather than to get a qualification. The

term covers a great variety of activities, from foreign language classes to local history clubs, reading groups, amateur dramatic societies or self-help bicycle maintenance groups.

This kind of learning makes a big contribution to the health and well-being of individuals and communities, especially those facing disadvantage and discrimination. Disability, mental ill-health and homelessness are some of the areas where informal adult learning can transform people's lives.

And learning that starts off informally, or on a small scale,



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may well lead to other things. Many people take up a new leisure interest or start to learn a new skill in an informal way and then find that they can use that skill to start their own business, move into a new career or become active in their community.

What are community learning champions?

Community Learning Champions (CLCs) are people who become active in their community by promoting the value of learning to others – friends, relatives, neighbours, workmates or people they meet at the school gates, at the local shops, or in groups or clubs.

CLCs are effective because they:

- speak from personal experience about the difference that learning can make to quality of life or job prospects; and
- connect with people who often live in the same community or work in the same place, and act as role models for learning.

As well as signposting people to learning, they are excellent sources of information for learning providers about what works and how to improve learning opportunities, especially for the hard to reach.

The government has set up a national support programme to raise the profile of CLCs and to strengthen their impact. The programme is part of the Learning Revolution, a national strategy to promote informal adult learning. Its main purpose is to build on and extend good practice, so that the CLC approach can help to open up the opportunities for informal learning wherever they arise. The approach has potential in health, housing, regeneration

and many other fields where service providers are keen to engage the community in service design and delivery.

What local authorities can do

Local authorities in any area can adopt the CLC approach to promote informal learning and as a means to involving citizens across the board in service design and delivery. This is especially relevant for councils that are becoming Lead

Accountable Bodies (LABs) for informal adult learning. Many local authorities will have a CLC scheme on their doorstep with which they can establish direct relations. You can find out the location of all the schemes funded through the national support programme from the website www.communitylearningchampions.org.uk or by emailing info@communitylearningchampions.org.uk.

Contact us:

Website: www.communitylearningchampions.org.uk

Email: info@communitylearningchampions.org.uk

The Community Learning Champions Support Programme is funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and delivered by a consortium of Martin Yarnit Associates, NIACE, the WEA and unionlearn.

THE LEARNING REVOLUTION COMMUNITY LEARNING CHAMPIONS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

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