

PROJECT TITLE: Building Capacity in Neighbourhoods
PROJECT REF NO: ESF/0203/201
LEAD ORGANISATION: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council –
Lifelong Learning Service

Overview of the Project Activity and Partners

It was a 3 branched project which aimed to widen access to learning for those least engaged with education. It also provided them with the ability to manage their own learning. The different strands were:

1. Volunteers in mosques and Madrasahs to develop their teaching skills
(Madrasah Project)

The project delivered customised training programmes to the community tutors of the Madrasah project in order to develop their teaching skills. By acquiring modern teaching skills, these tutors were enabled to provide young people with a high quality learning experience and also increase their long-term employability and job prospects. These training programmes were developed and thereafter accredited through the Greater Manchester Open College Network and provided successful learners with a nationally accredited teaching qualification.

For the Teaching Skills and Qualifications Course male and female tutors were appointed to deliver the Courses. An internal moderator was identified to ensure consistent standards across all programme areas and an external moderator was appointed from GMOCN. On completion of the Course, participants submitted a portfolio of work which was both internally and externally moderated before accreditation was awarded.

2. Work with disengaged young people to raise the profile of learning
Bridge Project

The Bridge Project was made up of a further 6 different projects. Their aims to:

- Widen access and participation in learning by using outreach work to engage with young people who were disengaged or on the margins and
- Raise achievements of young people by piloting the adoption of a variety of programmes for accreditation of informal learning, based around their needs and interests.

The **Movin' Up** group - 25 young people leaving school and identified through partnership with the Connexions Service as unlikely to make a successful transition to Further Education, training, or employment. Following introductory sessions including them in programme planning, they attended a week long residential aimed at developing their personal and interpersonal skills through group work activities and focussing on their future options. Connexions staff were involved in supporting the young people and provided post event support and guidance. As an integral part of the residential the young people followed a course designed around their needs and validated through the Open College .

The **College Group** - 15 young people contacted through outreach work as hanging around College and not attending courses. Initial work with the group identified football as their collective interest and a course was held throughout August and September teaching football skills but focussing on teamwork and personal awareness. Youth work staff remain in contact with a majority of the young people giving further support and guidance.

The **Young Offenders Group** - 4 young men were identified through a partnership with the YMCA Through Care Project resettling offenders in the Blackburn with Darwen area. The young men identified an interest in environmental work and were engaged in a project building a patio at the YMCA premises. They took responsibility for the overall organisation of the project and recorded their efforts in all areas of organisation, as well as construction as part of their portfolio for the Youth Achievement Award. Where possible Youth Service staff remain in contact with the young men and offer support and guidance.

The **Young Women's Group** were recruited through outreach youth work as having had dropped out of education, training or employment to have children. They expressed interest in helping other young people learn from their experiences. 7 young women completed a residential course in peer education in relation to Health and Relationships Education and 1 young woman assisted in the organisation and running of the course, completing an Open College accreditation in positive volunteering (both course outlines submitted). Youth workers continue to offer support and guidance.

The **Sailing Group** (8 young people) were recruited through outreach at Blackburn College and undertook a 20 hour shore based training course followed by a 7 day sailing residential. 6 young people achieved the National Governing Body (Royal Yacht Association) Competent Crew Certificate and the other 2 received certificates from the Cirdan Trust, the organisation operating the sailing vessel.

The **Choices Group** - 7 young people were identified through partnership with the Nightsafe Woodvale Project as disengaged and were supported to choose from a variety of practical courses, including cooking, health and well being, and budgeting, leading to an Open College accreditation. Nightsafe staff continue to offer support and guidance to the young people.

Work was also initiated to explore the possibility of developing and supporting wider access to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme for disaffected young people and to develop accreditation of learning with Asylum Seekers. Whilst the potential for these was recognised, neither group was sufficiently developed to be able to support young people through the demands of an assessed scheme of accreditation within the time frame of this project. In both cases the work continues through mainstream Youth Service resources.

3. Learning Friends scheme to train residents to become mentors for adult learners Mentor Project

Learning Friends provided 8 training courses in many different formats. The variables which promoted inclusion were: venues, Transport, Crèche provision, Single gender groups, Times of day, Length of sessions.

The actual content of the training varied depending on the length of the course. This could be an in-house one day course to an accredited four day course provided by Link-Up. Some of the volunteers who had undertaken a shorter course were able to further their learning by continuing on a longer course. The courses looked at communication and listening skills, understanding of barriers to learning, such as previous experience and lack of confidence or self-esteem and Basic Skills awareness. Also included were health and safety and mentoring relationships and potential difficulties around power and expectation of the different roles. Detail of different centres were also mentioned for participants to visit their nearest centres.

There were different forms of accreditation but all volunteers continue to work toward their Credit Framework awards.

Credit Framework

Credit Framework is a way of recognising the achievements of learners from both voluntary and community groups. It is accredited by the National Open College Network which is recognised by employers. It is also a useful stepping stone to further study. To complete the accreditation each learner must participate in 21 hours of learning. The in-house training and supervision available to Learning Friends volunteers were accredited in this way.

Basic Skills

A second course was later set up to provide a route to qualify people as teaching assistants if they wished to take it that far. We worked with Link Up, an agency to the Basic Skills Agency. They provided a Level I equivalent course specifically designed for mentors. This helped people understand the difficulties faced by those with basic skills needs and how to help them work through those barriers. We added our health and safety training to this as well as a mentoring session specific to Learning Friends. This could also be included within the Credit Framework of if volunteers preferred they could continue with an assignment to gain a Level I Qualification.

Basic Skills Awareness

This final course was a 3 hour introduction to the Level I course (above). It was also added to with elements of the original in-house training which included communication skills and an introduction to Learning Friends.

Achievements of the Project

1. Madrasah Project

The target for this project was a total of 40 learners consisting of 20 males and 20 females. This target was not only met, but due to the high demand and interest generated, was exceeded with over 45 learners successfully completing the course.

Training plan and implementation

A complete evaluation of the project

2. Bridge Project

Recruiting a total of 67 young people (23 young women) to accredited course against a target of 50 (17);

all 67 young people completed their course against a target of 25;

23 young people have so far received accreditation through National Governing Body Awards;

4 through the Youth Achievement Award; and 15 through Credit Framework (GMOCN);

8 through RYA against a target of 25.

It was a successful accreditation mapping exercise which introduced new courses to the Youth Service which will continue to be accessed.

Besides the specific qualifications gained, all the young people were supported to become aware of and develop their personal, interpersonal and organisational skills as integral parts of the courses. These were the skills identified by employers in research conducted by Anderson Consulting as those that were most often lacking in young people who came to them for jobs.

The key milestones relating to the production of a proposed framework of accreditation (Appendix I) and a celebration of achievement were met. In addition to these specified targets, valuable research was undertaken to identify and evaluate the variety of accreditation schemes available and appropriate for use in conjunction with youth work.

35 Youth Service staff were briefed in relation to accreditation and 21 were trained to operate the Open College Credit Framework.

3. Mentor Project

Outputs were achieved with 25 trained volunteers (5 above target).

22 were women and 3 female. The majority (17) were females aged 25-49, most of whom had not accessed learning for a long time.

- Production and Dissemination of a Toolkit for Development Officers and their community groups (Appendix J)
- 10 completing Level I of the Basic Skills training and waiting to progress to Level II at the end of January 2004.
- 5 completed Basic Skills Awareness course and waiting to progress to Level I
- 25 are working toward their Credit framework award

Beyond the target outputs there were further achievements such as:

- Raised awareness of adult learning opportunities for volunteers, mentees and their immediate network. We also have names of people who wish to take part in future courses, if available.
- Development of core skills in participants, such as confidence and communication skills, has led them to develop their advocacy and personal skills and abilities. This will assist them in finding their own progression routes in the future.
- Analytical skills have been improved as their ability to reflect, learn and improve their future actions and learning.
- Most participants have been motivated to further their learning as they have had such an enjoyable experience. Again their raised awareness gives them insight into opportunities they did not know were available to them.
- With the option to take their next step in learning either unaided or with knowledge of who to ask for support.

Areas of Innovation

Each of the projects addressed at least two of the following:

- Development of a flexible in-house training programme
- Use of the unique Credit Framework accreditation and briefing staff teams to its value and use.
- Training of staff to delivery Credit Framework
- Wider beneficiary network to those working with mentors/community tutors, friends and relatives. Those meeting with mentors are also benefiting as are participants of the community tutors classes.
- Reaching the 'hard to reach' groups whose barriers to learning traditionally have been language, culture, previously not participated in such projects, at risk of or on the margins. Links were developed with Support for Ethnic Minority Achievement (SEMA) with one of the projects to promote opportunities for volunteers to work with asylum seekers and those of different cultures.
- Project development through listening to participants and their needs and finding ways to include their skills and natural proclivities.
- Provision of bi-lingual assistants

Identification of Areas of Good Practice and Areas for Improvement

The following areas of good practice or areas for improvement are across all 3 strands of the project unless otherwise stated.

Areas of Good Practice

1. A variety of accredited courses.
2. Views, needs, wants of learner were taken into consideration and the learner became the focus and placed at the centre of the learning experience
3. Ability of staff team to engage with a variety of disaffected young people and or disengaged adults and those unfamiliar with a learning environment.
4. Courses had appropriate progression routes or outlets to practice their learning through tutoring or mentoring.
5. Provision of support services such as crèche, transport, appropriate venues etc. to minimise barriers and distractions to learning and maximise participation.
6. Majority of participants were motivated to progress their learning to the next level.

Areas for Improvement

1. ESOL classes would have proven beneficial for some participants of the Teaching Skills Course.
2. Number of completions could be improved through better planning and time framing.
3. Increased flexibility of the mentor partnerships would allow for a more effective mentoring relationship.

Lessons Learnt

1. Madrasah Project

The religious and cultural considerations need to play a central role when providing learning activities for ethnic minority groups.

Some learners were unable to enrol on the course due to their weak English skills. ESOL classes need to be provided for learners with language difficulties.

Progression routes need to be made available but this is dependant on funding. For example the Teaching Skills Course was run at Level 2 and many learners wanted to progress onto Level 3 but couldn't do so.

The recording of activities through visual images could not be allowed due to the religious beliefs of the project participants.

2. Bridge Project

When presented in the right way, disaffected or underachieving young people really value the opportunity to have their learning accredited, witnessed by their attitudes at the celebration of achievement ceremony and their framing and display of certificates at home.

For those staff who had completed accreditation schemes with young people the positives outweighed the negatives and all were keen to continue with further courses and schemes.

Care needs to be taken to select the right scheme for a group in relation to group size; level of course; length of course; individual skills required; method of assessment; and process and skill requirements for staff.

The longer the course the higher the drop out.

Given the sometimes chaotic nature of their lives and circumstances, maintaining contact to support disengaged young people after planned programmes have finished is difficult.

Review needs to be built into the process at all stages so that learners are clear at all times what they are learning. This is particularly important, and proportionately more difficult to identify/get across to the learner, in relation to softer, process oriented skills rather than practical skills.

The need to design/establish/develop:

- an introductory scheme suitable for the mainstream of work in clubs - possibly some enhanced form of in-house accreditation.
- accreditation for 13-16 year olds through the Open College network, similar to Youthtrain;
- more individually oriented programmes of accreditation related to project development;
- the potential for closer links to basic and key skills.

Accreditation in general, and assessment in particular, can be very labour intensive - staffing levels need to be appropriate.

The need for a post to lead on, co-ordinate and support the development of practice in accreditation.

The need for continuing briefing, training, and review built into Youth Service staff events and schedules.

3. Mentor Project

- The need to keep awareness of this mentor service to all agencies to allow effective referrals.

- That provision of free training is a great motivator especially if participants know the project is being flexible to provide courses at convenient times and venues.

- When participants were in comfortable surroundings and with people who helped them feel safe they benefited much more from the course. Their participation in discussion and willingness to continue their learning was boosted by a positive

experience.

- Citizens who are looking to volunteer prefer accredited courses.
- The benefits of the project are much wider than originally anticipated. Not only do the immediate participants benefit from their learning but their family and friends, community, learning centres and project partners also benefit from this volunteer resource. Learning is shared. For this to continue there is need for a post which can continue the development, co-ordination and delivery of this service.
- Evaluation is key to providing a beneficial training course and mentor service, this should be continuous and results implemented where applicable.
- Partners make a big difference in the effective promotion of a scheme.
- Accredited courses with progression routes are extremely popular.

Dissemination of Good Practice including Details of Dissemination Materials Produced

1. Madrasah Project

The Teaching Skills Project along with other projects run through the Blackburn with Darwen Lifelong Learning Department, have created a "Good Practice Website", whereby details of the project are shared and disseminated to interested parties. The project has received many enquiries from organisations in other boroughs and throughout the UK and project material has been forwarded to various organisations in Scotland, Yorkshire, and Manchester etc on their request. Also, a conference was held in partnership with NAICE (Appendix c) at Ewood Park, Blackburn in which the Teaching Skills Project was selected to run a workshop for delegates from around the UK.

2. Bridge Project

Initial learning from the pilots was shared within staff training and briefing sessions. The research into schemes of accreditation and the Framework for Accreditation will continue to be used as a basis for informing and supporting Youth Service staff in introducing accreditation programmes into their mainstream work.

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3. Mentor Project

Learning Friends has been developed and delivery in a wide range of ways.

Recruitment has been through several networks but beginning and ending with the Neighbourhood Learning Planning Groups. These groups focus on neighbourhood renewal through enabled citizens who plan learning for their neighbourhood and learn through action and experience. They work from a group agreed vision of their neighbourhood and look at what is needed to work towards it.

The dissemination of Good Practice has been to the Development Officers within the Neighbourhood Learning Planning team so they can effectively recruit, refer, promote and potentially enable each group to have their own volunteer 'champions'.

A toolkit has been produced and can be used by professionals and citizens to follow the vision of Learning Friends to a successful outcome. This Good Practice has been disseminated through the Local Strategic Partnership.

The mentor course is available to these groups regardless of the citizens intention to volunteer. The courses are there for personal development and learning progression to help provide a progression route for those involved in community groups.

Details of Publicity Undertaken (attach copies of any advertising/ publicity materials produced)

1. Madrasah Project

At the beginning of the project a flyer was produced, which outlined the basic details, aims and objectives, course details etc. These were distributed to potential participants and organisations. See Appendix A

Many meetings were held with responsible parties from the organisations to promote the project and provide further information.

A promotional brochure was also produced which provided a more in-depth account of the project both in English and Urdu. See Appendix B

The project ran a workshop at the NAICE Dreams, Dialogues and Desires Conference.

A project summary document was prepared for this project, which was also part of a promotional pack, given out to interested parties. See Appendix C

2. Bridge Project

Recruitment by targeted outreach work, not publicity.

3. Mentor Project

Leaflets and posters. These were used in a generic way to promote the project.
(Appendix K)

Profile raising was done in a number of ways:

Stands at:

- Centre openings
- Learning festivals
- Special event days for Blackburn,
- Learning celebrations
- Community fetes
- Volunteer exhibitions
- Library

Visits to:

- Access Point workers
- Community Centre workers
- Library Information/Hot Desk sessions
- Mother and Toddler Groups
- Community groups
- Relationship building at Neighbourhood Planning Groups
- Agency Forums

Mail outs to:

- Credit Framework Participants
- Neighbourhood Learning Planning Group members
- Agencies who can refer people to Learning Friends
- Charities who would benefit from Learning Friends
- Those contacted through networking

... throughout Blackburn with Darwen.

Case study

Madrasah Project

Salma a resident in Blackburn teaches at a local Madrasah. Prior to the course Salma held no previous teaching qualifications. She has been teaching for 2 years and has taught in a variety of settings. Her subject specialisms include Urdu and Islamic Theology.

Barriers

The following barriers were quite common amongst many students on the course:

Financial, Prior Attainment Level, English as a second language, Other commitments, Keeping up with work, Group dynamics

How the barriers identified above were overcome.

Due to the funding from the Learning Skills Council it allowed the students to be offered the course free of charge. In addition to this, resources and stationary were provided at no expense to the students.

Like many students on the course, returning to the classroom and playing the reverse role can feel strange and is very difficult. Teaching and Learning go hand in hand and as a tutor I emphasized how the course was a learning experience for all participants, tutors and students alike. The students were from different educational backgrounds the course had to reflect that in its delivery. Salma had very little confidence in her abilities and she felt that her lack of qualifications might put her at a disadvantage. The course is designed to provide basic teaching skills and does not have entry requirements. This reassured Salma, nonetheless she still feared that she might be exposed in the classroom. Having explained the course objectives and after the initial registration where Salma was introduced to other students on the course, helped deal with her anxiety.

Salma possessed a very basic level of English. Her written and oral work reflected this. As a multi lingual teacher I was able to converse with Salma in her mother tongue, and she made full use of her dictionary which was presented to all students at the beginning of the course.

The makeup of Asian families in Blackburn means that the family and its duty towards it are central and can override other commitments. Salma felt that her family was quite demanding and this may conflict with her commitments towards her study. I was fortunate enough to negotiate with Salma's parents for her study time.

The effort and time Salma committed to this course is commendable. Through her perseverance and determination Salma successfully completed the course. She faced challenges and talked about difficulties rather than shying away from them. Giving students the opportunity to express themselves, exploring how assessments could be adapted, changed, improved the quality of the output. An occasional moan and groan about the week allowed students to share their experiences with each other empathetically.

The group worked well together, Group work, 'breaking the ice' games are accountable for this.

Salma expressed how she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. She felt that coming together with others in the profession allowed a wealth of ideas to flow and made the shared experience more worthwhile. She said overall the course definitely exceeded her expectations.

A reserved student started the course with many apprehensions Salma has now developed into a confident classroom practitioner.

Quotes from Learners:

Have you benefited from the course? In what ways?

"Through this course I have learnt how to present my lessons in an interesting and effective way."

How has the course changed your attitude to learning?

"Would love to attend similar courses in the future."

"I have realised that there is a lot more than just teaching and learning, before teaching there is a lot of preparation and time to be give in order for the lesson to be interesting and successful.

2. Bridge Project

One of the young men on the YMCA Patio/Cafe Project first had contact with the Youth Worker whilst serving time in Lancaster Young Offenders Institute. On release he was living rough in Blackburn when the Youth Worker invited him to the YMCA.

He then disappeared for a time before returning to live at Project 66 in Blackburn. At this time he again had contact with the Youth Worker who was just planning the project

for the patio and cafe area. He enthusiastically joined in the project and attended on a regular basis whilst moving between sheltered accommodation, homelessness and the Salvation Army hostel.

Since completion of the project he is in more settled accommodation and continues to attend sessions at the YMCA where he is a regular member of their music group.

Some quotes from young people:

- "When I first started the course I was a nervous wreck! Taking part has given me a lot of confidence in myself. Without this help I don't think I would have gone to College"
- "These experiences helped me in finding my first job"
- "I have learnt to get on with other people better and have been able to sort out any problems by talking and staying calm"
- "I am a stronger person and can make decisions for myself"
- "I met lots of new people from different backgrounds and cultures and think I now understand them better"
- "I understand what needs to happen for a group of people to work well together"

3. Mentor Project

Munira Gormy

Munira has been chosen as she is typical of many of the women who took part in the course. First contact with Munira was at an opening event at her local Neighbourhood Learning Centre. She picked up a leaflet and telephoned to ask details about the training course.

She did not want to book a place on the course as she was too nervous so she arranged to meet with the Development Officer at the centre in familiar surroundings. This informal conversation helped her feel reassured enough to agree to come to the first session of training. This was only to find out more without committing herself to completing the course. This was a big step for Munira who only intended to meet for a chat. She had been unemployed for 3 years and before that had worked at a factory for 16 years. She had really enjoyed this work and had formed close friendships with those she worked with every day. Since being made redundant Munira has spent most of her time caring for her father-in-law and husband, both of whom had serious health concerns. Munira's husband was much better and had successfully completed several IT courses and she began to wonder if it was something she would be able to achieve.

After meeting others taking part in the training she was put at her ease again and realised that everyone was just like her. Nobody was there to intimidate her or make her feel stupid. She then completed the training and committed herself to becoming a learning friend.

From this she has helped three mentees overcome their main barrier to learning which is confidence. Through her own recent experience she was able to empathise and provide appropriate support to her mentees.

After seeing them successfully complete a course she has signed up for a 10 week IT course at her local Neighbourhood Learning Centre. However, Munira has not stopped there she has also been to Blackburn College to sit an entry test so she can complete her GCSE maths. This is so she can continue with the Basic Skills Training to Level II. Munira has totally transformed her outlook on life and become aware of many new opportunities which she originally was unaware. She did not consider herself a learner or in need of any personal development. Now she is confident, eager to learn and a natural support and motivator to others who are struggling with their own self-doubts and confidence. She has become a truly inspiring woman.

Barbara Clarke, a volunteer at a community centre would not take part in training as she had little confidence due to her very negative experience at school. She was a mentee with one of our Learning Friends and speaks highly of the scheme.

" It's a bit embarrassing sometimes having a learning difficulty and I found there was no stigma ... she made it so we could gel, she helped us just gel with everyone. It was like there was no stigma and we had a laugh and a giggle and it went a bit serious but it was all fun.

I would do something else now knowing I could have a Learning Friend 'cos I know if I ever needed a Learning Friend I could ring up, its like having that bit extra. It's like having another mind, it's difficult to explain, I was made to feel special without it being pointed out, having someone there just for me.

I think it's a marvellous thing, I think everyone should know about it, I keep telling everyone because it's marvellous, I can't explain it enough."

Views of customers and/or partners

1. Madrasah Project

All learners completing the Teaching Skills Course completed an "End of Course Evaluation Form". A copy of the evaluation form and a summary of their comments are included in the previous section (Appendix D). The Madrasah Principals also completed evaluation forms (Appendix E).

As all the learners went through the Open College accreditation process, an internal and external moderation report was also produced (Appendix F).

2. Bridge Project

Worked with Connexions, Blackburn College, YMCA and Nightsafe as outreach bases for the youth service in recruiting has been highlighted when outlining the achievements of the project.

They helped further when considering and implementing an effective exit strategy as each project continued its relationship with the young people after the Bridge Project. This benefited the young people greatly, especially in their progression routes.

3. Mentor Project

Strong support has been gained from various Access Points, Centre for Volunteering Services, Volunteer Bureau and agencies who also refer potential volunteers and participants. Their enthusiasm toward the project has reflected their recognition for this service and support to their clients. Training rooms and smaller rooms for mentors to meet participants have been made available and their appreciation of Learning Friends continues. One Access Point Manager said:

"I would like to thank you and 'our new' Learning Friends who supported the 3 out of 6 women on the 4 day First Aid at Work Course at Roman Road Access Point. This enabled our community volunteers to achieve accreditation to ensure that the events and groups they ran had adequate first aid cover to meet the required quality and safety standards. Three of the women had been out of education for many years and had never attempted exams in their school life. All of the women were extremely fearful of the course work involved and the exam process and in addition one of the women was dyslexic.

Through the support offered before they took part in the course, during the course and at the exam, the women all passed with flying colours! Without exception the women have stated that without the support of their Learning Friends they would not have been able to identify and achieve their goal and have stressed the importance of them in obtaining the accreditation and the impact this has had on their work in the community. I am inspired and full of admiration of the Learning Friends and thank them for their dedication and commitment in helping others to achieve their goals."

Sheralee Turner, Manager, Women's Resource Centre

Comparison of how the project dealt with Information Communication Technologies, Equal Opportunities and Sustainability

1. Madrasah Project

ICT: This was centrally done by the admin support for the project on the whole. Learning was negotiable but due to the venues of community teachers ICT was not requested by the learners for this particular course.

Equal Opportunities: This was twofold process:

- 1) Followed the guidance set out in the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council policies
- 2) Followed guidelines governed by the OCNGM, as outlined in the Teaching Skills Submission Document

Sustainability: From the outset it had been anticipated that the Teaching Skills Project would become mainstream; however this was subject to sustainable funding and senior management approval, however, this may still happen.

The skills of the community tutors have brought about improved practice which will continue and the delivery of these sessions will result in increased learning in the community.

2. Bridge Project

- Male: 64%. There were 21 black young men and 22 white young men.
- Female: 35.8%. There were 3 black young women and 21 white young women

- The project was particularly effective at recruiting young people to courses who identified themselves as having a disability of special learning need
- 28 of the young people identified themselves as having a disability of a special learning need.
- Childcare provision was made and transport costs were met wherever appropriate.
- ICT was used as an integral part of courses where relevant, including in review processes on the Movin' Up programme and in production of portfolio materials with the young offenders group.
- Staff used IT packages to communicate, record, report, chronicle and produce materials.

Young people have been supported to develop skills which will enable them to live more independently although young people will continue to be supported where possible and appropriate. Opportunities for accrediting young people's involvement with the Youth Service will continue to be developed within mainstream activities.

3. Mentor Project

ICT

Training of ICT was not a requirement for mentor training so was not a focus for participants. If the project were able to continue volunteers would be able to further their natural abilities and interests and develop newsletters, leaflets and/or web sites alongside the Neighbourhood Learning Planning groups.

Elements of the training incorporated Power Point presentations. All forms, artwork, communication, database development and recording developed and used the IT skills of the Development Officer.

Future negotiated learning has been discussed with the volunteers, one volunteer requested web site training which will be implemented in January, the women requested an

introduction to aromatherapy which will take place in February. The follow up Level II course is to happen late February with Link Up most volunteers have expressed an interest in taking this course.

Equal Opportunities

Learning Friends was extremely flexible in its training provision with evening courses which were less popular for those with day-time commitments. The times considered Madrassah hours and school hours.

Day time courses considered school hours and venues changed to enable those in closed communities to access learning closer to home. This enabled many women to take part; this was more effective with crèche provision.

However due to funding we were not able to recognise all learners who benefited from the project because of their age.

Sustainability

Those that have taken part as mentors have gained valuable skills that have enabled them to access learning independently. They are also confident in signposting, assisting and accompanying other people toward support services and routes toward learning.

Future negotiated learning has been discussed with the volunteers, one volunteer requested web site training which will be implemented in January, the women requested an introduction to aromatherapy which will take place in February. This has been with the support of a Development Officer. Further funding is being sought for this.

The follow up Level II course is to happen late February with Link Up most volunteers have expressed an interest in taking this course. Many of those participating in the project are looking to continue to Level II of the Mentor training and some towards Level III which will see them qualified as Teaching Assistants.

To effectively sustain this project further funding is needed for appropriate expenses such as crèche, travel and food allowances for full day courses. A full time post is essential to continue recruitment and supervision of mentors and mentees.

Details of tools used to evaluate the impact of the project

1. Madrasah Project

To provide a rounded picture of the impact the project has had, the following tools were used to evaluate the Teaching Skills Project:

- 1) Internal and external moderation (Appendix G)
- 2) Evaluation forms & questionnaires were completed by learners and participating organisation (Appendix D and E)
- 3) Interviews and one to ones with Madrasah Principals and learners.

The interviews and questionnaires completed covered four main areas:

- ❑ Details about the learners and the Madrasah they taught in
- ❑ Overall opinion of the training and project
- ❑ The use of resources
- ❑ Progression and any other comments

2. Bridge Project

External moderation/accreditation

Pilot project to enable staff to better prepare for learners needs

Evaluation forms and questionnaires were completed by learners (Appendix L)

3. Mentor Project

A database was developed to record all the participants information to look at age, gender, address, crèche requirements etc. We could look at the number of participants those who have successfully accessed the project and what they had in common.

We could also look at gaps in provision to see why others had not accessed the project. Despite the low number of male participants and efforts to encourage their involvement, we have more women than the national average participating and many more unemployed people participating compared to the national average. (National Survey for Volunteering NCVO)

Evaluation forms were completed after each training session for qualitative information for learning outcomes. (Appendix M)

Additional Information

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____