

the area

Your newsletter from London West Learning and Skills Council

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Thumbs up all round!

Local education authorities (LEAs) have benefited from capital funds in excess of £800,000 to help improve access to Adult and Community Learning (ACL) for disabled people. All six LEA submissions were fully funded by London West LSC.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) placed requirements on employers and service providers not to discriminate against disabled people. This requirement did not include educational institutions. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 amended Part IV of the DDA by placing anti-discrimination duties on bodies responsible for the provision of education, including further and higher education institutions, adult and community providers and specialist colleges.

LEAs involved in ACL provision were invited by London West LSC to produce a costed proposal, listing premises and the works needing to be carried out – such as installing lifts, ramps, grabhandles and disabled toilets, purchasing adjustable workstations and equipment, and improving lighting.

This capital injection has made an enormous difference to each of London West LSC's six boroughs. John Fitzpatrick, Principal of Brent Adult and Community Education Service, which received the lion's share of the funding, said: 'It's a joy to be able to spend the money on the buildings – it has made a heck of a difference. The buildings can now be used by more local people, who very much appreciate the changes that we've been able to make. A thumbs up all round!'

Geoff Trodd, Lifelong Learning Development Officer at Harrow Council, applied the funding to improve facilities at premises including the Mosque (a UK online centre), the Shree Kutch Temple, and the Marlborough Hill Resource Centre. He said: 'In the past, community-based venues and voluntary organisations have not
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Our first-ever Champions of Learning proudly display their certificates

Our Champions

Learners, providers and employers who are committed to education and training were recognised at a gala ceremony to celebrate their success in London West LSC's first-ever Champions of Learning Awards.

More than 60 entries were received for the nine categories from employers, young and adult learners and training providers across the area.

LSC Executive Director Peter Pledger said: 'This event has been a wonderful celebration of the achievements of our learners, providers and employers. These awards have highlighted the truly excellent training on offer in our area, and it is particularly gratifying to see the diversity of innovative training benefiting the whole community.'

'We hope to run these awards again next year and encourage all of you to enter and participate.'

See inside for details of category winners.

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Teachers welcome new resource

Aware that teachers in London West have many different and competing demands on their time, the LSC is creating a handy teachers' resource pack: A quick guide to 16+ options.

Advice on post-16 options is currently provided in local schools by a range of teachers, for whom

the amount of time available – and the resources to deliver it – can be limited.

The purpose of the new pack is to provide a user-friendly guide for teachers, containing practical help and advice on the basics, time-saving tips, classroom materials and useful contact details.

Its content is being developed after careful research among local teachers, who were unanimously in favour of the initiative.

Comprising a quick-reference folder and a CD-ROM, the pack is based on a successful project run by London North LSC and should be available in September. Links to web-based resources are currently being investigated.

Comment

Welcome to issue nine of *the area*, which I hope you enjoy.

This issue contains lots of news about different activities that we have been undertaking with employers, partners and providers to encourage, improve and promote learning in our area.

Not the least of which is the Strategic Area Review, which is moving into a crucial stage – consultation. I strongly urge you to come to Thistle London Heathrow hotel on Tuesday 19 October where we will formally launch the consultation period and outline the issues that have emerged following lively discussions among the Stakeholder Group. This is your opportunity to have your say and to help shape learning provision in London West.

Finally, many thanks to those who participated in our readership survey. I was pleased to note that the majority of you find *the area* informative and we will continue to develop it based on your comments and recommendations.

Peter Pledger, Executive Director

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Talented beginnings

17-year-old Kajal Patel, formerly a student at Villiers High School in Southall, won London West LSC's latest 'Art from Schools' competition for her vibrant and complex 'Beginnings' painting, shown above. Former Cardinal Wiseman School student Lucy Farrugia was the runner-up (pictured top left), with Lisa Patel (also formerly of Villiers High School) in third place.

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Learning Champions

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Amy learning in the kitchen and receiving her award (above and below left)

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Leana using her caring skills and receiving her award (above and left)



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Shining stars

The BEARS Youth Challenge charity celebrated the achievements of previously 'hard to reach' and 'excluded' young people at an Awards Ceremony held at the House of Commons.

As outlined in the 'Support is the glue factor' article in issue seven of the area, BEARS is doing a tremendous job steering disaffected young people away from street sub-culture and encouraging them back into mainstream social and economic life through a range of flexible and imaginative projects.

The Rt Hon Paul Boateng MP, guest of honour at the ceremony, presented the 'Young Man of

Trevor Igumba (left) receives his prestigious award from the Rt Hon Paul Boateng MP

the Year Award' to 20-year-old Trevor Igumba, who was sourced by BEARS Outreach Youth Workers from the streets of Stonebridge two years ago. A shining example of the success being achieved through the BEARS initiative, having participated in personal development and educational projects, Trevor now holds down a full-time job at McVitie's.

New starts

The Government's new Entry to Employment (e2e) programme, which seeks to engage young people who are not yet ready or able to start Apprenticeships, is well under way. London West LSC has signed up two new providers to deliver this flexible, vocational programme.

Gateway Technology Centre, Shepherds Bush, offers care and support to all its learners, including the provision of opportunities and a stimulating environment for course participants. It continues to support learners after they have completed their courses, to assist them in further development.

Project Manager Joseph Jacobs is delighted to have been signed up by the LSC as an e2e provider. He said: 'Our initial target was to recruit 12 e2e learners between March and July. London West LSC has supported us through our learning process and linked us to the Connexions service in Hammersmith and Ealing. This has helped us enormously.'

Learner support

Intuition PIMS has recently opened a new centre in Ealing to provide e2e, alongside mediation and adult learning programmes. Its e2e provision is filling a gap in the local area by supporting post-16 learners who have been excluded from school and referred from the local Connexions and Youth Offending Teams.

The organisation aims to provide a positive learning experience to disengaged and de-motivated young people by offering a flexible programme to meet their learning and emotional needs. Learning areas include self-esteem building, anger management, effective communication and life skills. An engagement programme is also provided, with activities like rock climbing, archery and kayaking.

Promoting inclusion

Intuition's annual target is to provide 60 learner places. Barbara Quartey, Director of Intuition PIMS, said: 'We are excited by the challenge of offering provision which has previously been underdeveloped in the community. We are also pleased to have been awarded a contract by the LSC and to be part of a national initiative that promotes social and educational inclusion.'

All change

Neville Ransley, Principal of St Dominic's Catholic Sixth Form College in Harrow, is due to retire in the summer.

During his seven years as Principal, the College has become one of the top sixth form colleges in the country, with an A level pass rate of nearly 99%. An active member of the West London Principals' Group, Neville has worked tirelessly with local schools and London West LSC to meet the challenges facing 16-18 education.

Neville said: 'One of the greatest joys in teaching is to have seen so many young people, from diverse backgrounds across North West London, come to the College at 16 and develop into mature, confident and successful young men and women. The College has been able to achieve this success because of the consistent support of the London West LSC, and the hard work of its Governors and staff.'

Patrick Harty, currently Headteacher of Marlborough School, will be taking over from Neville in September.

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Neville Ransley

Congratulations to Leana Hughes and Amy Gilbey, Modern Apprentice category-winners at London West LSC's Champions of Learning Awards 2004.

Modern Apprentice of the Year Leana, aged 17, is due to complete her Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Early Years Care in July. And 16-year-old Amy Gilbey won the Personal Achievement Award 16-18 in recognition of her achievements on the Increased Flexibility Programme while battling against Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, a debilitating condition she has suffered from all her life.

Funding matters

From 2002 to 2003, the LSC has financed 33 successful projects through the £2.1 million Local Intervention and Development Fund (LIDF), which supports learning and training initiatives for people who live or work in London West.

The LIDF aims to raise participation and achievement in learning, and to improve the quality of education and training. It also sets out to address gaps in current mainstream education and training provision, and to support innovative projects that meet the needs of high priority learners identified in the LSC's Local Plan.

A recent evaluation exercise involving 22 of the funded projects found that the LIDF 2002-2003 programme has made a contribution towards the achievement of London West LSC's local strategic objectives and identified many significant examples of good practice. In particular, it has:

- Enabled new collaborative approaches to be developed among providers, including multi-disciplinary partnerships between colleges and voluntary or community sector organisations

- Created the right conditions for developing innovative approaches to learning (see 'Improving communication' article)
- Engaged those from the most disadvantaged groups (including refugees, the 40+ age group, disengaged young people and young people with profound disabilities) and widened participation and inclusion in learning
- Helped raise the achievement of adults and young people, by enabling those from disadvantaged groups to work towards and obtain qualifications.

The evaluation highlighted the need for a long-term, joined-up approach to capacity building. It also shed light on the fact that many of the projects funded under more than one LIDF priority lacked focus and effectiveness.

Extending the curriculum

Almost 70 delegates learned more about the implications of the new statutory requirements at key stage 4 around extending the variety of curriculum options post-16 at an event organised by London West LSC and Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham LEAs.

The interactive conference opened up discussions around the wider curriculum offer by highlighting the differences and similarities between work-based and work-related learning, and offering delegates a better understanding of both.

This event was organised in response to Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham Post Area-wide Inspection Plan, which highlighted the need to improve access, retention, participation and progression through an increased range of curriculum provision which matches the needs of all students.

For more details, visit www.londonwest.org/Partners/area_inspection

Two cherries to bite...

This year, small and medium-sized businesses and community and voluntary sector organisations in London are being given two chances to apply for financing from the European Social Fund (ESF).

The Pan-London ESF Co-financing Programme, launched in May, will bring nearly £30 million of additional funding to the capital. London's five LSCs have delivered a series of workshops throughout June in order to provide further information to prospective applicants. Eligible projects must meet a pan-London strategic need (outlined in the prospectus) and be delivered in partnership across at least two London LSC areas. *The deadline for completed Pan-London ESF tenders is 5pm on Monday 16 August 2004.*

Improving communication

London West LSC provided £80,000 from the LIDF to finance the West London ESOL Project.

Roz Carter, Head of Hounslow Language Service, explained: 'We identified that a number of our students – particularly refugees and asylum seekers – were underachieving in GCSEs and post-16 qualifications because of language difficulties.

'The LIDF support has enabled us to develop a strong partnership with the LEAs in Hounslow, Hammersmith & Fulham and Ealing, and with four teaching institutions. We have worked together to share best practice and to develop shared resources and materials, including a scheme of work for ESOL students to help them prepare for examinations. We have also set up cross-borough professional visits and support, involving mainstream staff as well as ESOL specialists, which has helped build capacity.'

Although the final examination data is not yet available, teachers have reported that the additional support provided by the project has resulted in significant improvements in students' coursework, attendance levels and motivation in class.

To find out more, or to view some of the training materials, visit the Hounslow Language Service website at www.ealinhounslow.org.uk

In addition, London West LSC is offering £15 million ESF Co-financing to add value to its local strategy and fill gaps in provision for 2004-2006. Following consultation on the plan and prospectus, the programme is expected to be launched on 1 September. More than 800 stakeholders have been advised of this new round of discretionary funding, which will be used to support integrated projects that improve participation and retention of learners in the local area. *The deadline for completed London West ESF tenders is 5pm on Wednesday 20 October 2004.*

For more information, contact Ingrid Zuck at the LSC on 020 8929 8538 (Ingrid.zuck@lsc.gov.uk) or visit the website at www.londonwest.org

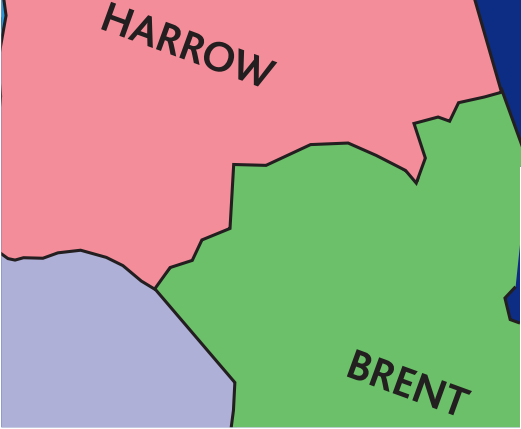


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StAR: don't miss out!

London West's Strategic Area Review (StAR) is moving forward according to plan. Stakeholder engagement and involvement remain crucial to ensuring the success of the process.

The information gathering and analysis stage is progressing well, fuelled by a number of lively and productive discussions in recent months. Two

Laying firm foundations

A steady supply of skilled, young construction workers will soon be available to service the needs of Terminal 5, thanks to the opening of the Heathrow Construction Training Centre.

The new Centre, managed by Carillion, is a key initiative of the Heathrow Employment Forum, a partnership between London West LSC, BAA, the construction industry and various public authorities and agencies, that has helped to implement a new construction training network for 14 to 19-year-olds from the local area. Over the next three years, more than 200 young apprentices will use the Centre to train in trades such as carpentry and joinery, brick-laying and steel erection.

It was officially opened by Ivan Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Skills and Vocational Education, who described it as: 'An important project in pulling together all public and private sector parties to address a real and pressing issue.'

Ivan Lewis MP (centre) surrounded by young construction trainees

important meetings were held on 14 and 22 June, for the StAR Stakeholder Group and the Council, to discuss the issues emerging from the research carried out to date and to start the process of developing London West's strategic options. A workshop on 29 June also enabled a wide range of stakeholders to have their say.

Further meetings with the StAR Stakeholder Group and the Council will be held in September to finalise the consultation document, which will be distributed widely in the London West area.

The start of the formal consultation period will be marked by a stakeholder conference at the Thistle London Heathrow hotel on 19 October, when the consultation document will also be available. This important event will provide an invaluable opportunity for all those involved in education and training, including employers, to have their say and influence learning provision in the area. **Book your place now at www.livegroup.co.uk/StAR**

The consultation process will end on 4 January 2005. Plans for reform will be included in London West LSC's Annual Plan for 2005-2006.

Building a better picture



London West LSC recently launched the findings of two research projects, which were financed by the European Social Fund:

■ **Building your Future** – this report investigated the range of barriers preventing working age women from joining and pursuing a career in construction, a male-dominated industry which is currently suffering from acute skills and labour shortages

■ **Discrimination in the workplace in London West** – the findings confirmed that, although in many traditional areas of employment discrimination is reducing significantly, some people with disabilities, refugees and asylum seekers still feel they are being discriminated against in the workplace.

London West LSC is using the findings from these and other research projects to inform the Strategic Area Review (StAR) and future funding decisions.

For more information visit the website at www.londonwest.org/Research
For a copy of *insight*, London West LSC's regular research bulletin, contact Martin Freedman, Head of Research, direct on 020 8929 8483.

New Council Member

Professor Geoff Crispin, Vice-Chancellor of Thames Valley University, was appointed to the Board of London West LSC in February. We asked him why he decided to become a Council Member.

‘ This is a very exciting and challenging time for post-16 education in Britain. The Government has clearly stated ambitions for FE and HE, which are not just about the number of students participating in learning, they are also about ensuring that students do succeed and that the learning on offer meets the needs of the individual, employers and the wider economy. It is only through strong and effective partnerships between all the key agencies that the Government's targets can be met. No agency has a more important role to play here than the

Learning and Skills Council.

I am delighted to be a Council Member and will work to ensure that the provision in London West meets the very diverse needs of our sub-region. I intend to draw on my extensive experience in education to help shape an effective strategy and approach that will best serve the community and employers of west London. ’

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HILLINGDON

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EMPLOYERS

Training in the 24:7 world

A skills partnership comprising London West LSC, Quantica Training and the British International Freight Association (BIFA) has provided an effective response to the overwhelming demand by employers in the Logistics sector for better-targeted, flexible and affordable 'bitesize' training courses.

'Nothing in our society would function if we could not transport goods,' Colin Beaumont, Director General of BIFA, pointed out at a special Employer Engagement and Training Initiative event to celebrate the partnership's innovative approach to training. The statistics (shown right) demonstrate the importance of the Logistics industry to the UK – and to the London West economy, where it is a priority sector for the LSC.

Engaging employers

Employers within the industry have voiced the need for high quality training provision for some time. By way of response, in December 2003 the partnership embarked on a groundbreaking project – 'Moving Forward with Logistics' – which aims to engage employers in the concept of lifelong learning and to celebrate the training achievements of young people. Dominic Kemple, Managing Director of Quantica Training, said of the project: 'It is a question of not only recruiting but retaining staff. To make sure they stay in the Logistics sector we must encourage and enable them to train, in order to improve their career opportunities.'

Flexible, affordable and industry-relevant beginners' courses in exporting and importing were arranged by the partnership. Employers appreciated having a single contact for training support and all 80 course places available were snapped up immediately by local logistics

'The project has given a broader scope to our training programmes and modules. It is good to know we have this level of commitment from an external source to develop people as individuals.'

Mike Gillet, Managing Director,
Lupprians Cargo Express

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Participants on the 'Moving Forward with Logistics' project

Logistics statistics

- Logistics is a £55 billion market – the fifth largest sector in the UK
- 63,000 UK companies are involved in logistics, including 1,000 in London West
- The UK Logistics sector employs 1.7 million people, including 100,000 in London West

organisations. Every learner subsequently completed the course.

Peter Pledger, Executive Director of London West LSC, said: 'Logistics is a 24:7 business, so it's vital for this sector that training is flexible, easy to find and customised to meet employee and employer needs. Employers have welcomed the "Moving Forward with Logistics" project because it addresses all these requirements.'

'Learning Excel, through the "Moving Forward with Logistics" project, has made me faster at my job because I no longer have to replicate work. I am now going to study for a diploma in multi-modal freight forwarding.'

Zaur Mansurov, Project Coordinator,
FH Bertling Ltd

Filling the skills gap

The Government has announced radical reforms to improve Apprenticeships and put employers firmly in the driving seat.

Speaking at the Apprenticeships launch in May, Education and Skills Secretary Charles Clarke urged more firms to offer places, saying that the reforms would provide a major boost to company productivity and give employers a much bigger say in how Apprenticeships are developed. He added: 'Apprenticeships are one of the best ways we can fill our skills gaps. They provide young people and adults with an "on the job" training experience which gives them the direct skills needed in the workplace.'

The reforms will build on the success of Modern Apprenticeships, which have seen numbers in England grow from 75,800 trainees in 1997 to a record-breaking 255,500 today.

They will deliver a more flexible, stronger Apprenticeship 'ladder of opportunity' beginning at the age of 14.

The LSC is working with Sector Skills Councils and employer organisations to drive forward the Apprenticeship reforms and ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet employers' needs. This includes:

- Giving employers a bigger role in the design, content and entry requirements
- Developing greater 'portability' arrangements
- Creating a 'clearing house' for school leavers, to match prospective trainees to employers
- Working towards awarding 'Accredited' status
- Exploring credit-based qualifications
- Reviewing financial incentives

Discounted training

Fusion Training is using ESF funding to offer up to 100 businesses the chance to gain qualifications in computer networking, thus eliminating the need for expensive call outs to engineers. Courses designed to teach employers and employees of small to medium-sized enterprises how to engineer and maintain their computer networks are being offered at discounts of up to 85%.

London West LSC's Executive Director Peter Pledger said: 'Most businesses require IT expertise. By providing ESF funding for this project, we help local businesses develop themselves and their workforces, which can save them money in the long term.'

To find out more about the ESF-funded courses offered by Fusion Training at the College of North West London, contact Feraline Whyte at Fusion on 0208 208 5446.

Up- skilling at Heathrow

Since 2001, London West LSC, BAA Heathrow and Workbase Training have been working together to up-skill employees at Heathrow airport.

'Consolidating Skills for Life at Heathrow' is a programme of activities, run by the partnership, that focuses on the training needs of large employers. More than 20 employers are now involved, including airlines and organisations specialising in cleaning services, facilities management and catering. Quarterly network meetings are proving hugely popular in enabling them to share ideas and best practice on a regular basis.

Workforce development

Workbase, an organisation with 22 years' training experience, conducted needs assessments with a number of organisations, including Initial Cleaning Services and American Airlines, with a view to improving the skills of the workforce.

Chief Executive Frances Graham said: 'Initial Air Services, part of the Rentokil Initial group of companies, manages the cleaning contract at T3. It sought to improve the communications skills of its cleaning operatives and to enhance the supervisory skills of its team leaders. So we interviewed 59 employees to determine their training and development requirements in line with the organisation's needs.'

As a result, Workbase is currently running a supervisory skills course for 10 team leaders and will soon be embarking on a programme for cleaning operatives, designed to enhance the communication skills needed for their work role and to provide an improved service to their customers.

A similar process took place for American Airlines. Frances explained: 'We interviewed 76 employees to assess what skills they needed

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Learning Champions

The following organisations were category winners at London West LSC's Champions of Learning Awards 2004:

- **Training Champion of the Year – Small:**
Project 2041 Ltd
- **Training Champion of the Year – Large:**
Omnibus
- **The Community Award:**
West London Mental Health Trust
- **Employer of the Year – Modern Apprenticeship:** BAA Heathrow
- **Employer of the Year – Large:**
American Airlines
- **Employer of the Year – Small:**
Sahara Communities Abroad

to do their jobs better. The company is pretty IT-driven; a great deal of staff communication is carried out by e-mail or on the intranet. So we are currently developing a course that will enable employees to improve their communication skills through IT, which will make it easier for them to function within and engage with the organisation.'

Flexible training

An American Airlines IT Skills programme will commence shortly and employees seem very keen to take part – 76% of interviewees indicated that they would be happy to undertake training in their own time.

The airport operates all day, every day, so the training is designed to fit in with shift patterns, and includes courses run in the evenings and at weekends. In August, the partnership will set up a resource room at the airport to enable learners to continue their studies at any time of the day or night. Employers will also be eligible to make use of the facilities available.



Apprenticeships

- Introducing an eight-week probationary period.

Demand from young people currently outstrips the supply of places on offer from employers, so the LSC has embarked on a national advertising and marketing campaign to promote the benefits of Apprenticeships to employers and increase the number of businesses offering them.

To find out more about Apprenticeships, telephone 08000 150 400 or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

At the frontline

London West LSC is piloting a national Frontline Workers project designed to provide high quality development for staff who deal with adults who have literacy, language or numeracy needs, and to signpost learners to appropriate provision.

The project tests ways that organisations can work together to identify and address the skills needs of their clients. It is piloting different approaches to referral through a network of agencies including Jobcentre Plus, the Probation Service, Information, Advice and Guidance Partnerships, the Prison Service, Connexions, Libraries, voluntary organisations and Social Services.

Harrow College, the College of North West London and Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College are involved in delivering the training – the first unit of the Level 2 Adult Learner Support Qualification.

Adele Finch, Lifelong Learning Coordinator at Brent Library Service, completed a two-day

Thumbs up all round!

(continued from page 1)

been eligible to receive this sort of capital funding. We have combined improved access with the purchase of adaptive equipment, meaning that we can now offer high quality learning centres to support learners with disabilities in environments where they feel comfortable.'

London West LSC still has some unallocated funding available and will monitor progress with local authorities to ensure that any outstanding requirements are fully funded by March 2005.

For more details, contact Ellen Quaye (ellen.quaye@lsc.gov.uk)

The London West Learning Partnership team (left to right) Ashna Khan, Connie Colli, Sarah Aldridge and Joanna Lewis

Learning is fun

In May, national Adult Learners Week was celebrated in London West through eight cross-borough events targeted at non-learners.

London West LSC and the London West Learning Partnership worked together to attract and support a range of delivery partners to collaborate for the first time on the series of events to show adults that learning can be fun and accessible.

Visitors could see and try a range of activities from massage to arts and crafts, and computers for beginners, as well as finding out how to improve their skills and job prospects. Information about summer courses in London West and advice from IAG advisers on what steps to take next were also available. By bringing together different local providers in one place it meant visitors could find out more easily about the wide range of learning opportunities in their area.

Events were held in each of London West's six boroughs, in easily accessible locations such as busy parks, shopping centres and local health centres. Free disposable cameras and a prize draw competition provided an added incentive for people to come along to the events. This proved to be a winning strategy – the events attracted more than 840 visitors, including 65% who had not undertaken a course in the last three years (the figure rose to 80% at White City). Nearly three quarters of visitors were female and just under a third were aged between 31 and 40.

course at Wormwood Scrubs Prison as part of the pilot project. She said: 'The Head of Libraries suggested to six of us that we should go on the Frontline Workers course. We learned about the scale of basic skills needs in London West and it gave us a great chance to meet up with other frontline workers, to learn about the services they provide.

'We also experienced what it would be like to have basic skills needs, thanks to a range of very effective, practical exercises. The course taught me how frustrating it must be to be in that position, the best way to go about suggesting to someone that a basic skills course would be of benefit to them, and who to refer them to.'

Learning Champion

Christopher Jervis, who suffers from mental health problems, was the winner of the Personal

Achievement Award 19+ at London West LSC's Champions of Learning Awards 2004. In addition to staying out of hospital for the last 19 months – his longest hospital-free period to date – Christopher has undertaken two advanced computer courses and holds down two jobs, one with Work Rehabilitation and a supported permitted job with Acton and Ealing Council.

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If you have changed your address, have some article ideas to put forward for future issues of *the area* or require additional copies, please contact us on 0845 019 4164.

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