

the area

Your newsletter from London West Learning and Skills Council

Celebrating success

The public areas of London West LSC, currently featuring art from GCSE students in Harrow, are a joy to visit thanks to the ongoing Art from Schools competition designed to celebrate the achievements of art students in the six local boroughs.

Hillingdon's winner was Kimberley Harrison, formerly a pupil at The Haydon School, whose autobiographical *Thimbles* painting earned her gift vouchers

for herself and for her school.

London West LSC Executive Director Peter Pledger said: 'It was a tough decision choosing the winning painting. Kimberley's work stood out from the rest. It had real presence and I really liked the use of colour to bring out the mood and emotions of the picture.'

Students from Hammersmith & Fulham will be displaying their artistic creations in the autumn.

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Pioneering project

Support from London West LSC has resulted in the opening of a learning resource centre on one of the most deprived housing estates in the area. From July, the new facility has been tackling skills shortages head on by providing estate residents with free access to learning opportunities on their own doorsteps.

London West LSC developed this pioneering project in partnership with Housing Potential UK, who worked with estate landlord Hounslow Homes and the tenants, residents and workers of the Convent Way Estate to bring the concept to reality. The new Cway4ward Resource Centre is located on the ground floor of a tower block on Convent Way, Cranford. Local residents can tap into the Centre's bank of computers and gain access to Learndirect and a wide range of free courses, including 'Maths Skills for Life' and 'Improve Reading, Writing and Spelling', all of which can be undertaken at a pace chosen by the learner.

Peter Pledger, Executive Director of London West LSC, said: 'Recent research has highlighted that improvements in basic and language skills are among the fundamental requirements for residents in deprived housing estates. The Cway4ward Resource Centre provides an effective solution by bringing learning to people's doorsteps.'

With the winning *Thimbles* painting: (left to right) Kimberley's dad, Kimberley Harrison, Peter Pledger and Olefine Hiron, Head of Art at The Haydon School

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StAR update

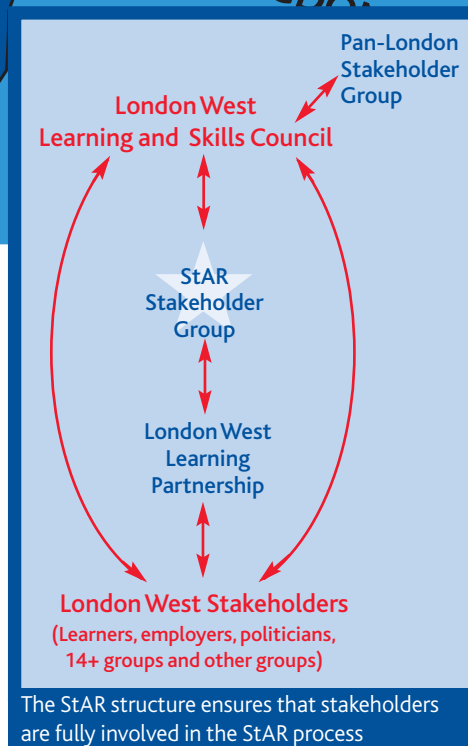
A diverse Stakeholder Group, led by London West LSC, now meets on a quarterly basis to ensure that progress on the new Strategic Area Review (StAR) process, which focuses on local Post-16 provision, is being made according to plan.

The London West StAR is approaching the end of its initial planning stage, after which the Stakeholder Group will work together to gather information about the needs of local learners, employers and communities. Wherever possible, pan-London information – such as the recent surveys on London employers and on travel to study – is being shared among the five London

LSCs, who are working together as a pioneer region for StAR.

The Stakeholder Group will then use the information gathered to advise the LSC on how to develop and improve to meet the identified needs. The outcomes of the StAR will begin to be introduced from March 2005.

Progress is being communicated with stakeholders at every opportunity. The soon to be merged London West Learning Partnership, which brings together local learning providers interested in collaborating on good quality education and learning, will play a vital role in ensuring that the wider community is kept informed of latest developments and fully involved in the process.



The StAR structure ensures that stakeholders are fully involved in the StAR process

A briefing event for all stakeholders will be held on 5 November.

For further details e-mail helen.reeves@lsc.gov.uk

Welcome

This issue features lots of openings, including the Wembley and Heathrow Craft Training Centres and other projects, which will improve facilities for our learners.

I welcome Rod Kenyon as Chair of London West LSC. He has been a member of the Council since November 2000 and the Interim Chair for the past nine months. Rod has already played a significant role in developing the work of London West LSC. With his vast experience in business and his commitment to learning and development, I know Rod will continue to be influential in achieving our targets and will lead us in the delivery of our Strategic Plan.

Finally, the Strategic Area Review (StAR) is an opportunity to examine closely our current learning provision. It is absolutely essential that we all work together to ensure that it meets the needs of the local community, learners and employers both now and in future years. To help raise awareness about the process and how it will work, we are organising a briefing event in November and I hope that as many stakeholders as possible will attend.

Peter Pledger – Executive Director

Strategic launch

The Government's National Skills Strategy, launched in July, sets out to improve skills across the country in order to raise productivity and increase competitiveness.

The recommendations made in the White Paper have been informed by the results of various national employer training pilots taking place around the country and by The Great Skills Debate, hosted by LSCs nationwide, which gave organisations a chance to express their views about the current state of skills.

The National Skills Strategy makes the following recommendations:

- A Skills Alliance, designed to bring together the Government and its agencies in order to focus efforts and resources on skills
- A new delivery partnership, led by the LSC at a national level, which aims to articulate the skills needed by employers
- Better support for businesses of all sizes to help them plan, develop and access the skills and training they need
- New entitlements to learning, giving individuals a lifetime guarantee of free

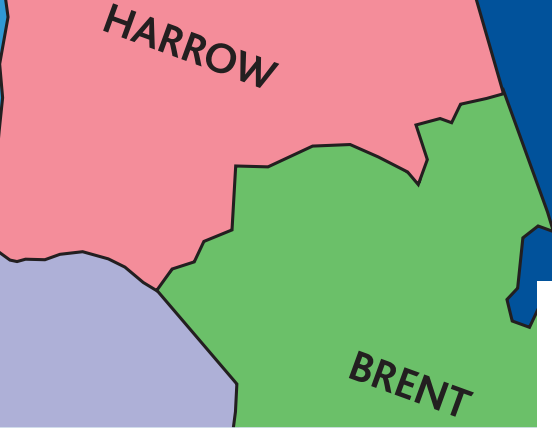
opportunities to gain Level 2 within the national qualifications

framework. Opportunities to gain Level 3 qualifications will also be offered, free of charge, within local priority skill areas

- Higher quality training provision that is geared more closely to the needs of employers
- A more flexible and relevant qualifications framework, including an opportunity to 'mix and match' units taken from different subject areas. This multi-skilling approach will suit employers such as construction maintenance companies, who seek multi-skilled staff, rather than specialists.

Clare Arnold, London West LSC's Director of Operations and Quality, is very much in favour of the National Skills Strategy. She said: 'I think it is a really good step forward to try and ensure we are matching skills demand with the skills available. The new Strategy also recognises the need to take into account employers' views on the national qualifications framework.'





New grant

As part of the Skills Strategy, London West LSC is participating in a two-year pilot exercise, designed to encourage young adults to undertake full-time learning.

The Adult Learning Grant builds on the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) that has been in place for some time now and benefits 16 to 18-year-olds in local authority areas like Brent and Hammersmith & Fulham, where the index of deprivation is high, by paying them up to £30 a week to continue full-time studies. The EMA has proved successful in raising staying-on rates and in improving retention, so from September 2004 it will be extended to all 16 to 18-year-olds.

For people between 19 and 30 the Adult Learning Grant will provide a means-tested payment of up to £30 a week for those who are living or working in London West, and who are enrolled on a full-time FE course. London West is one of 10 LSCs taking part in this pilot programme.

Director of Operations and Quality, Clare Arnold, commented: 'I think the idea behind the pilot exercise is sound. Extending the Adult Learning Grant to young adults will help focus attention on the possibility of going back into learning and is bound to help improve retention rates.'

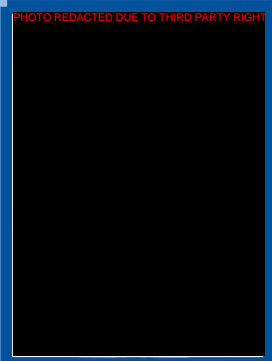
Top position

Rod Kenyon has been formally appointed as the new Chair of London West LSC.

Director of the British Gas Engineering Academy and a senior executive at Centrica plc, based in Uxbridge, Rod also supports Centrica Chief Executive Sir Roy Gardner in the National Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) Task Force, an employer-led body that aims to increase the number of MAs in the country.

And that's not all... Rod is also a Director of Energy and Utility Skills in the proposed Sector Skills Council for the energy and water industries, a Governor of Thames Valley University and a Council Member of the Dyslexia Institute.

Rod said: 'I am committed to building the LSC's role in increasing and improving the opportunities for learning in London West for individuals, businesses and communities. I look forward to the enormous challenges we face and to continuing the work of the LSC with Peter and the members of the Council.'



Planning for action

The joint Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham Action Plan has now been approved by Government without any changes.

Last autumn, Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham underwent London West's first ever joint inspection – a significant move prompted by the migration of students between the two boroughs. When a positive Area-Wide Inspection report was

published in March 2003, London West LSC used it to initiate the process for developing a joint Action Plan.

Collaboration has been very much in evidence throughout the entire inspection and planning process. Key stakeholders were actively encouraged to take part thanks to a number of committees, set up by London West LSC, comprising representatives from the two Local Education Authorities (LEAs), schools, Further Education colleges, West London Learning Partnership, Connexions, Jobcentre Plus, Government Office for London and local careers services. In total, more than 60 providers were involved in the consultation process.

Objectives of the Action Plan

1. To develop effective strategic collaboration which improves the range, choice and quality of learning in Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham
2. To improve access, retention, participation and progression through an increased range of curriculum provision matched to the needs of all students
3. To develop the capacity, relevance and quality of work-based learning for young people and employers
4. To sustain current good practice and build a culture of continuous quality improvement across all providers
5. To develop high quality information, advice and guidance for all young people to support their successful transition into further education, training and employment.

A sound vision

Stephen Twigg, MP and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, approved the Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham Post-Inspection Action Plan without changes. He said: 'I welcome the vision and strategic objectives set out in the Action Plan, which I believe will provide a sound basis for improvement in Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham.'

Peter Pledger, Executive Director of London West LSC, also made the following comments: 'This was an area inspection that covered two London boroughs and, as such, is a fine example of the collaboration of partnerships working

together across both boroughs to deliver key government strategies.'

London West LSC, the two LEAs and providers are responding to the Inspection Report by working together to increase access to a wider range of provision for 16-19 learners. The Action Plan will be formally launched on 16 December and providers are already taking steps to start implementing its recommendations.

London West LSC is currently working with the borough of Hounslow to prepare for its Area Inspection in spring 2004.

To access updates on the joint Area Inspection and other inspections, visit the London West LSC website: www.londonwest.org. Alternatively, contact Helen Reeves on 020 8929 8553 (helen.reeves@lsc.gov.uk).

HILLINGDON

EALING

Building blocks

London West has embarked on some of the most advanced, prestigious and futuristic construction projects ever undertaken.

At a national level, the LSC and the Construction Industry Training Board have committed £400 million in 2004 to transforming the planning of training and skills development for the construction industry. Here we look at the role played

Youth opportunities

Two new construction training centres based at Wembley and Heathrow will play a major role in helping to alleviate West London's growing skills shortage in the construction sector.

Funded by London West LSC, the two centres are stirring up considerable interest. More than 200 local young people attended an 'Opportunities in Construction' open day at the start of July to find out more about the Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) that will be available in four construction disciplines: bricklaying, carpentry, concrete dry lining and steel erection.

The Wembley centre aims to train up to 20 MAs each year to work on construction projects in the area surrounding the new National Stadium.

Heathrow's centre, the product of a partnership between London West LSC and BAA, will provide up to 92 MA training places annually. Trainees will gain their on-site experience at Terminal 5, where a £6 billion construction programme will be in operation until 2008.

Carillion, one of the UK's leading providers of Apprenticeship training, was chosen by London West LSC to deliver the training at both centres, in conjunction with the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board. General Manager Keith Donnelly said: 'Carillion is excited at the prospect of working with London West LSC and major clients like BAA to develop new construction training facilities in the local area that will help address the growing skills shortages in the industry.'

by London West LSC in driving up the level of investment in skills to help ensure that this priority sector continues to flourish.

Influential role

Since achieving Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for its construction provision in 2002, the College of North West London has made a significant impact on the sector.

With around 5,000 construction trainees currently in place, the College is now the largest provider of construction education and training in the country. Frank Horan, Head of the Faculty of Technology, has been working closely with Multiplex, contractor for the Wembley National Stadium and White City projects, to help the organisation recruit people from the local community into training and employment.

Frank said: 'At the moment, we have around 150 local unemployed people of all ages training to a minimum of NVQ Level 2 in areas like welding, blockwork, carpentry, plumbing and

electrical installation. They will be ready by the time Multiplex needs them.

'Our negotiations with Multiplex have also resulted in the introduction of six bursaries for local young people, which include payment of all fees and learning costs, plus paid employment for the students when they are not at college. That's a big WOW... and in 2004, the number of bursaries on offer will double to 12.'

The College is involved in many other activities, including attending monthly meetings of the strategic group responsible for managing the National Stadium development, the building of test rigs and panels for the stadium developments and working in partnership with T5 contractor Laing O'Rourke to successfully recruit 20 graduates into site engineering positions.

Joint pilot assessment and training

A radical joint pilot initiative between the LSC and the Construction Industry Training Board will fund the On-Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) programme for as many as 10,000 skilled construction workers across the country, including up to 700 in London.

London is one of ten regions participating in the pilot exercise. Under the new, fast-track and on-site programme, construction employees will be assessed and given the

opportunity to qualify at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 or 3 by July 2004. In London West, the pilot is being delivered by a partnership of three providers: College of North West London, Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College, and Carillion.

The NVQ qualification will also earn them a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card to prove that they are competent at their job and have passed the requisite Health and Safety test.

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Two of the 5,000 or so trainees from the College of North West London learning valuable building skills

Presentation of plaques and commitment certificates at GlaxoSmithKline House

Pan-London research

One of the driving factors in London West LSC's planning and funding activities is research. A recent study looked at learning and skills needs in London's construction industry from an employer's perspective.

London's five LSCs joined forces to work on the construction research project, in conjunction with the London Development Agency and the Construction Industry Training Board.

The research shows that:

- Existing forms of training delivery are not meeting the needs of employers or the workers the industry seeks to attract
- Women, career changers, Black and Asian workers are under-represented in the sector
- Employers require more flexible training, but current funding stipulations mean that colleges find this difficult to achieve
- Greater pan-London evaluation and co-operation on provision is needed.

Winning initiative

Welcomed by construction bosses, the combination of the OSAT assessment and the CSCS card looks likely to be a winning formula that will help to set professional standards and improve the industry's image.

Meeting the Training Challenge events, on 25 November and 2 December, will enable construction industry employers to learn more about the support available. For more information, e-mail david.boyer@lsc.gov.uk

Very keen, full of enthusiasm...

The recently published results of two complementary pieces of work are informing London West LSC's campaign for work-based learning, which is running until spring.

The London Employer Survey 2002 was commissioned by the five London LSCs, the London Development Agency, Business Link for London and JobCentre Plus, to find out the views of employers across the capital. The survey covered four main topics: employment structure in London; recruitment activities; labour market difficulties; and training response.

The results depict a very inconsistent situation across London in the provision of training and the need for skills. In general, employers are content with the mix of skills they have at their disposal, although there are gaps in certain areas, noticeably customer service skills, team skills and IT.

Larger firms are more likely to provide training opportunities than smaller organisations, and public services are more prominent in sector terms. Involvement with Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) is low – across London only 40% of employers are aware of the programme and it is estimated that only 2% have a young person employed on one.

The second piece of work involved surveying over 10,500 employers and stakeholders to find out more about their needs, priorities and understanding of the LSC's role.

As a result of these two exercises a more targeted campaign has been developed, focusing on the increased productivity, profitability and customer satisfaction that can be gained from workforce development. It highlights the benefits of work-based learning for young people that is funded by the LSC. A new work-based learning information pack, guide and training provider directory have been produced to support the campaign.

To obtain copies e-mail harmee.sehmi@lsc.gov.uk

One team, one goal

GlaxoSmithKline's Facilities Management (FM) team has joined forces with its supply chain to commit to Investors in People as a single, virtual organisation.

London West LSC has been working with the FM team to help it prepare for the assessment. This in turn has led to a comprehensive review of workforce development needs within the virtual organisation, which goes under the inspirational name of 'One team, one goal'. Programmes currently being considered include Modern Apprenticeships, Skills for Life and other work-based learning initiatives.

Williams Lea, one of the service providers across five GlaxoSmithKline sites, also received a recognition certificate and plaque.

Skills for Life

Event for local authorities

Thursday 9 October, 09.30 to 13.30

The Irish Centre, Hammersmith & Fulham

London West LSC is joining forces with London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham to host an event for all local authorities in the area. The event will raise awareness of the business case for Skills for Life development in local authorities and to highlight the solutions supported by the LSC.

Delegates will be encouraged to participate in a new London West Workforce Development Network for local authorities. This network will share good practice on topical issues, identify support required from London West LSC, develop a strategic workforce development plan for the area and provide networking opportunities for senior management.

To reserve your place, e-mail harjit.hunjan@lsc.gov.uk

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YOUNG PEOPLE

CAN DO!

More than 200 young students with special educational needs benefited from the CAN DO! event at Uxbridge College, where they learned more about working life.

Sponsored by London West LSC and local Education Business Partnerships (EBPs), the annual event attracted students with learning difficulties or disabilities from 13 of London West's special schools. Participants took part in employer-led workshops in subjects ranging from aromatherapy, performing arts and first aid to painting and decorating, hair care and drumming.

All the sponsors are members of the West London Education Business Links Consortium. David Scott, Consortium Manager, said: 'CAN DO! enables these young people to develop new skills through an experience linked to possible future employment. For the employers, it is an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the potential of these young people and the wide range of their learning needs and capabilities.'

For more information about EBPs, e-mail leanne.sajero@lsc.gov.uk

Supporting the CAN DO! event, which included animal care workshops: (clockwise from left) Linda Gooch, LSC People with Disabilities and Young Enterprise; Tommy Masters, LSC Senior Account Manager; Tony Swatton, Young Enterprise; Fiona Kellam, London West Special Educational Needs/Education Business Links Co-ordinator; Ciaran De'Lacey, LSC Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Executive; and Amy O'Dea, Oaklands School in Hounslow

Preparation is the key

Entry to Employment (E2E) is a new national learning programme now available to young people in England.



Launched by London West LSC in July, E2E aims to help those who are not yet ready or able to join a Modern Apprenticeship programme, FE or other employment.

What really sets E2E apart from other learning programmes is its flexibility. The programme has three strands, which students can 'mix and match' to suit their own learning or training needs: vocational; Basic and Key Skills; and personal development.

Aimed at 16 to 18-year-olds who are not currently employed or undertaking any form of education or training, E2E targets in particular those young people whose life experiences have

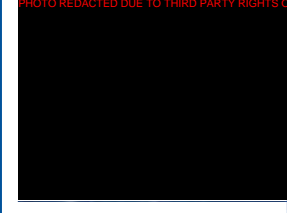
E2E will help young people achieve their full potential

made them fall into the 'hard to reach' category. E2E's vocational programmes are designed to help bridge the gap by preparing them for a work-based learning programme or further learning.

London West LSC is working with partners, Connexions Service, local advisory services for young people and training providers to

identify young people who will be able to use E2E to help them achieve their full potential.

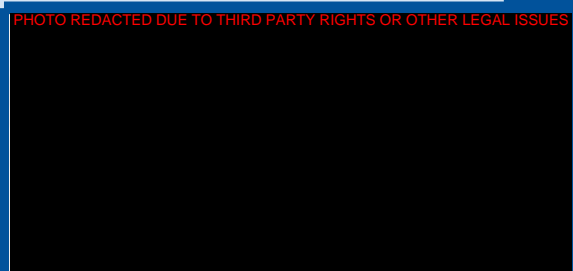
Executive Director Peter Pledger said: 'I look forward to seeing E2E motivate young people who have been turned off by traditional education and training, and to seeing them make a successful transition from learning to employment.'



Capital funding

Technological breakthrough

Modern, well-equipped facilities are essential for the effective provision of high quality learning opportunities. London West LSC has provided funding for a wide range of capital projects designed to benefit learners across the six boroughs. Here we look at three recent examples.



Supporting training in the knowledge economy: Rose Turner (left), Head of Further Education at the LSC; Brian Hadfield, Managing Director of Unisys UK; and Rachel Davies

An impressive £2.5 million New Technology Centre at Uxbridge College will deliver top quality training to help plug the skills gap in West London's hi-tech sector. London West LSC provided 35% of the funding required to build the Centre and will be working closely with the College to ensure that learners are addressing local skills needs.

College Principal Rachel Davies said: 'This Centre is significant for industry in the area. It will play a large role in training in what is called "the knowledge economy" – the use of increasingly advanced technology in computing and engineering.'

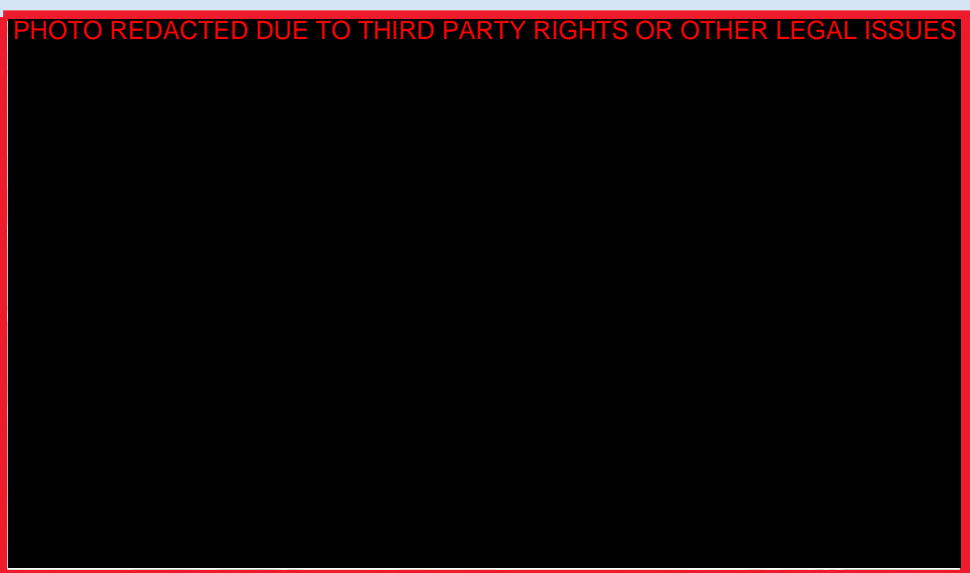
Well-oiled workshop

A grant from London West LSC helped to build a brand new £358,000 motor vehicle workshop at the Macbeth Adult Education Centre in Hammersmith earlier this year.

The workshop is helping to increase attainment rates and access to employment for local people by enabling them to acquire new skills and qualifications using trade standard facilities.

Students can currently choose from a range of courses, including motorbike maintenance, City and Guilds motor vehicle maintenance, and basic metalwork and welding.

London West LSC's Executive Director Peter Pledger said: 'This first-rate workshop is an important development that has substantially improved both the range and quality of the facilities and courses available.'



Pictured at the launch of the workshop are (left to right): Councillor Charlie Treloggan; LSC Senior Account Manager Lorraine Freeman; motorcycle maintenance student and biker Alison Grade; Hammersmith & Fulham Council's Head of Post-16 Education and Training Janet Bell; and former police chief Anthony Wills seated in his Formula Ford racing car

Sensational setting

Funding from London West LSC has resulted in the creation of a unique and exciting Further Education (FE) facility.

The new sensory room at West Thames College is providing a stimulating and challenging environment for students with profound and complex learning difficulties who have not previously been able to access FE.

The sensory room is used for class-based and individual activities with the students and their tutors. It is a calming environment that provides an opportunity for students to enhance their communication skills and improve their posture. The room also provides students with a chance to explore their sensory perceptions and practise hand to eye co-ordination.

Glitter balls, bubble tubes, an aromabox and moveable fibre optics are just some of the many products contributing to an exciting, full sensory experience for students and teaching staff.

Peter Birkinshaw, Curriculum Manager for Adult Life Skills, said: 'We are pleased to have opened up this facility to provide our students with a unique learning environment.'

8
ADULTS

Overcoming barriers

An innovative project financed by London West LSC through the European Social Fund has helped 11 west London women from ethnic backgrounds become radio presenters.

The well-equipped training centre at the Panjabi Centre in Southall provided an ideal environment in which to learn about subjects ranging from operating equipment, interview techniques and presenting skills to broadcast law. London West LSC Executive

Accredited radio presenters line up outside the Panjabi Centre

Director Peter Pledger said: 'We are very pleased to have supported this project, which targeted people who face barriers to entry and progression within the labour market and who don't access traditional learning and training opportunities.'

Capacity building

The Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund (NLDCF) aims to increase community learning opportunities and get to 'hard to reach' learners.

Taster totals

Approaching the annual Bite Size campaign on a pan-London basis has certainly paid off for the capital's five LSCs, who joined forces for the first time in order to create a bigger impact.

The three-week campaign in June and July inspired Londoners to book themselves onto a total of 2,865 Bite Size Intros lasting between one and three hours. Participants experienced 'taster' sessions in one or more of seven categories: Information Technology, Arts and Crafts, Basic Skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Sports, Languages and Health and Social Care.

In 2002, a total of £148,000 was allocated for NLDCF activities in Brent, Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham to improve the quality of the learning provider base, including the support and development of 34 local voluntary and community organisations, through capital funding and learning delivery.

This year, London West LSC has refined its NLDCF application procedures, in consultation with partners and stakeholders. The new approach will build capacity by helping organisations to meet eligibility criteria for discretionary funding.

Helping hand

Ellen Quaye, Head of Adult and Community Education, explained: 'We want to help organisations in each of our six boroughs move away from relying on short-term discretionary funding.

'With certain structures in place, such as classroom observation of staff, feedback on the quality of provision and a self-assessment report mapped to the Common Inspection Framework, these organisations could become eligible for mainstream funding.'

A talented approach

A new quarterly publication aimed at London West's Basic Skills practitioners aims to promote and explain teacher training initiatives from a local perspective.

Written by Helen Cross, who is currently seconded to London West LSC as Teacher Training Development Manager, *talented west* provides a reliable source of information for new, existing and potential Basic Skills specialists during a time of great change and ambitious government targets.

The first issue carried an article highlighting London West LSC's plans to open a Professional Development Centre (PDC) by March 2004. In addition to offering Initial Teacher Training, the PDC will support trainers and teachers to ensure that their skills match new national requirements. Satellite centres across all six boroughs are also in the pipeline and will encompass libraries, Leardirect, voluntary, community, adult, workplace and FE organisations.

Copies of *talented west* can be obtained by contacting Helen Cross direct on 020 8740 6675.



STOP PRESS

New Council Members sought

London West LSC is looking for two business people with substantial business and commercial experience who have significant presence in the area to become members of the Council.

If you are interested, please e-mail nasir.lakhanpal@lsc.gov.uk before 17 October 2003.

New appointment

Mindset 2000 Ltd has been appointed to run the new Work-Based Learning Provider Support Unit. More details to follow in issue 7 of *the area*.

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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EUROPEAN UNION
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