

## Welcome

**Welcome to the second edition of *Revolutions* from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).**

As well as bringing you the latest news on individual Learning Revolution projects, *Revolutions* shows how projects are joining up to create a stronger informal learning infrastructure and signpost more learning choices.

Our first two stories illustrate how this is happening. We know that many groups are actively looking for somewhere to learn because they don't have the right space. That's why one of our projects is developing new guidance to support organisations that have occasional spaces available for local learning clubs or societies.

These organisations can then upload details of their space to the School of Everything portal, another one of our projects you can read about, to advertise it. So people looking for a place to hold their watercolour club, history society, reading group meeting or University of the Third Age class can go to a single website and find something that's right for them quickly and easily.

## Opening up spaces for learning

Several linked projects are developing guidance and toolkits to help organisations free up occasional spaces for informal adult learning.

During the informal adult learning consultation, lots of self organised groups said they found it hard to find convenient, low-cost spaces to meet. At the same time many organisations have suitable spaces, such as meeting rooms, study areas, IT suites, playing fields and sports halls, but are unsure how to go about making them available.

BIS has commissioned NIACE to produce guidance for many kinds of organisations with space to spare. NIACE programme director for the North West, Marie Kerwin, says, "We're developing guidance to support a wide range of organisations - schools, colleges, museums, libraries, archives, faith spaces, community centres, healthy living centres and workplaces - to open up spaces for learning at little or no cost."

The online guidance and toolkits will include advice, resources, signposts, case studies and sample policies that organisations can simply cut, paste and adapt for their own setting.

Marie adds, "Issues like health and safety and security are always coming up as barriers. We're working to identify the common ones and find ways of tackling them. People may think there are a whole range of barriers to opening up a space. The guidance will help organisations find a way through."

Other resources are being developed to encourage more informal adult learning in work environments and care settings. All

guidance and toolkits will be available via the School of Everything website.

We'll keep you posted.

## **Pilot partners sign up to the School of Everything**

More than 50 organisations ranging from local authorities to small arts clubs are helping to shape the services offered by the School of Everything.

At a workshop led by Becta in January, delegates from the private, statutory, voluntary and community sectors, representing the diversity of informal adult learning stakeholders, took part in discussions about the class, course, club, society and group information that should be included on the site.

Attendees also discussed free or low cost spaces and places, how to market and promote the School of Everything to the sector, and what issues should be considered.

Marion Morley of the Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers, says, "We talked about what sort of information would be useful to have about clubs on the School of Everything, including things like parking, transport and tea and coffee-making facilities.

"The workshop was very useful and I felt quite excited about the whole project."

To see the video presentation and question and answer session [click here](#)

If you would like to get involved in this pilot work, please email [Paul.Miller@schoolofeverything.com](mailto:Paul.Miller@schoolofeverything.com) or [Chris. Swaine@becta.org.uk](mailto:Chris.Swaine@becta.org.uk)

## **Help connect offline adults with Online basics**

This month sees the launch of Online basics, a new course designed to help thousands of offline adults take their first steps with computers and the internet.

Online basics, which is free, offers five key modules covering the basics people need to know to get started online. Everything is covered – from keyboard and mouse skills – to email, internet searching and how to stay safe on the internet.

Tutors in learning centres and family and friends supporting someone at home can also find guidance to help them help others use the course. Online basics is open to everyone and has been created as part of the Government's response to Estelle Morris' Review of ICT User Skills, published in June. The report recommended a single channel to help the 15 million offline adults in the UK get to grips with technology.

Online basics, [click here](#) is developed by BIS, Becta and UK online centres.

## Informal Adult Learning - planning and Implementation update

Many respondents to the 2008 informal adult learning consultation said they'd like to see increased local ownership of informal adult learning and more join-up between all the differently funded activities that happen in the same local authority.

In 2009, *The Learning Revolution* White Paper announced the Government's intention to introduce a new planning and funding model, led by local authorities.

The new model is taking shape and will be phased-in over the coming 18 months. English local authorities will soon be receiving a joint letter from BIS and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) with further information about the Lead Accountable Bodies (LABs) that will take on the leadership of informal adult learning in August 2011. Later this year, local authorities will receive the formal invitation to take up the LAB role.

During 2010, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will work with local authorities to develop the LAB model. LSC/SFA has already commissioned guidance to help flesh out the proposed remit and expectations of the LABs. It will include examples of good practice from 17 organisations involved in planning and delivering informal adult learning.

From 2011 onwards, the Skills Funding Agency will channel funding for informal learning (the Adult Safeguarded Learning budget) to the LABs and they will take responsibility for informal adult learning in their areas, providing the vision and leadership to innovate, join up, widen access and find creative local solutions. Each LAB will draw up a jointly-agreed delivery plan with other organisations in their areas.

For further information on these developments, [click here](#)

### Project spotlight

A team of volunteers in Gloucestershire is supporting people in their first steps towards learning.

Gloucestershire Community Learning Champions is a social enterprise that helps guide people into informal adult learning by sharing information about local adult education providers, community groups, voluntary organisations and colleges. It particularly supports people who are nervous about returning to learning.

The champions also inform education providers about the learning needs and opinions of people in their community. One volunteer alone has managed to recruit 20 people on to Healthy Cooking and Food Hygiene training courses in their area.

Team mentor Patricia Gibbs says, "I help the group to find project funding, giving them representation at formal bodies and providing a link to adult education at the city and county councils and other partners like housing associations and health action forums.

"The best thing about this role is being able to keep in contact with people who are usually outside learning and seeing them achieve.

"It's the same for our Community Learning Champions. When we get together they talk about people they've helped and we all get a real buzz from helping people."

Community Learning Champions (CLCs) work in their communities to promote the value of learning to friends, family, peers and neighbours. As part of BIS's £3million Community Learning Champion Support Programme, 36 new projects across England have been funded to encourage socially excluded and vulnerable people from England's most deprived postcodes to take part in learning.

For more information, [click here](#)

## Pledge corner

Public, private and voluntary sector organisations are embracing informal adult learning by signing up to the Learning Revolution Pledge. More than 2,000 organisations have pledged through the BIS website and over 3,000 individual libraries, museums and archives have pledged through the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

**Milton Keynes Libraries** has pledged its support for the Learning Revolution and is building closer links between libraries, adult learning and heritage organisations.

As a result 'Our Place MK', the annual showcase for heritage organisations, was held at the Central Library with stalls, demonstrations, talks and a newly formed 'electric picture palace' showcasing local films. The library hummed with activity all day – creating more learning opportunities for more people. It has also filmed vox pops of people talking about informal learning, [click here](#)

**Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library** has signed the pledge and forged a new partnership with the Forum Trust to support the 'What Next?' team at Fusion, the biggest digital gallery in Europe. Fusion offers free access to photography, art and community led projects.

'What Next?' advises the public on how to develop interests sparked by the productions they have seen. About 50 members of the public a week are referred from 'What Next?' to the library.

One elderly lady interested in family history who had come to a dead-end when she couldn't find the date of her Grandmother's death was referred from the 'What Next?' team to the library and was helped to find the answer. A man who wanted to find out about Great Yarmouth seafront and the Hippodrome Circus was helped to use a computer at the library to find the information.

To make the Learning Revolution Pledge, [click here](#)

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