



Community Learning Champions

Experts in their own communities

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Let me introduce you to some very special people



- They are just a few of the 1200+ Community Learning Champions who have been registered over the last 6 months on the national register of CLCs.

What are Community Learning Champions?

- Community Learning Champions are volunteers whose passion for learning makes them want to pass that onto others.
- They make difference because they can speak from personal experience about the difference that learning has made to their quality of life and job prospects.
- A CLC is someone others can trust as they are likely to be like the person they are helping; living in the same community and having similar life experiences. As many people describe them- they are 'someone like me.'
- CLCs can be called advocates, ambassadors or even angels the name does not matter- just what they do.
- Take Leroy for example



- The project in Bristol where Leroy is a CLC is one of the 50 Development funded projects supported by BIS as part of the CLC national Support Programme .
- These are targeted in the most disadvantaged communities and show how effective CLCs can be in reaching helping their peers into learning and work.

Vivien Hindley, schooling effectively ended at 12, when she became her little brother's carer. Twenty odd years later, after a series of jobs in shops and with four small children, her marriage broke down. A close friend, who was a learning champion, encouraged her to think about taking up learning.



After doing an English course, a maths course and a listening skills course, she became a learning champion supporting others to get into learning as she did. Eventually she got a job at West Cheshire College, supporting the community learning team. Viv's next step is university- something she would never have dreamt of without the support of a CLC



Stephanie Pickett is 19 years old and she lives at the Coventry Foyer.

The Coventry Foyer is a foundation that provides safe, supported housing to young people aged 16-24. Through the Foyer Stephanie was encouraged to take up learning -taking the step was a difficult one for Stephanie as her she had been regularly bullied at school and so her experience of learning had been negative. Stephanie was approached to become a Community Learning Champion

“As a Learning Champion I now encourage and support other residents to participate in the different activities that go on at the Foyer by outside organisations including Groundwork. Many of the residents that I now support have had negative learning experiences in the past, like me.”

Stephanie’s life now is much different and she is more confident about herself. ,She is a Foyer Resident Representative, a position created to form a closer link between residents and Foyer staff and has successfully got work as a Project Assistant at Groundwork West Midlands through the Future Jobs Fund.



Northwich Railway Station has become an important point of departure for a group of people who use learning as their vehicle for getting on in life.

The Zone, an internet café that any traveller can use as they step on or off the train, is also the headquarters of the community learning champions (CLCs). Set up by the local council, Cheshire West and Chester, this group of twelve mainly young people are learning about how to spread their interest in learning to friends, neighbours and sheer strangers. And at the same time, they are learning more about themselves and what they would like to do in life.

Chris Huxley says that becoming a learning champion has changed him for good. An unconfident student throughout his schooldays, he has finally discovered learning with a purpose. He is training to equip others with his new found passion for self-directed learning.

So a little more about what CLCs do.

CLCs play a variety of roles. They can:

- signpost people to the formal and informal learning opportunities that suit their needs;
 - introduce them to learning providers, sometimes accompanying them to a library, learning opportunity or college;
 - support and mentor people through their learning;
 - help to set up new learning opportunities, filling gaps in provision; and
 - feedback suggestions for improvements to learning providers.
- CLCs can be specialists or generalists depending on their interest and experience. Some work with fellow parents at the school gates encouraging others to follow their own steps perhaps taking a first step into a family learning activity. Others help people in their community build the confidence they need to overcome significant barriers such as poor literacy or mental health problems.

The national support programme

The Support Programme is funded by BIS until March 2011 to develop a national framework for CLCs. It has:

- Established a brand which is gaining national recognition
- Supported 50 Development Fund projects
- Developed the new badge and registration scheme for CLCs and CLC projects
- Developed toolkits for those wanting to set up CLC projects
- Established CLC networks in each of the English regions
- Developed a national training programme offers accreditation for CLCs
- Developed a website which is a source of expertise and good practice for CLCs and those who support them.

<http://www.communitylearningchampions.org.uk/>

Thank you
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