

04.02.10: Community Learning Champions

Brent Learning Leaders Blaze Trail

The London Academy for Social & Economic Development & Catalyst Housing Group is delighted to announce the start of Brent Learning Leaders which brings together the London Academy for Social and Economic Development and Catalyst Housing Group in a pilot project to encourage adults living in Brent to take part in informal learning.

The project will recruit Champions from Brent, especially those living in social housing estates like Church End and Roundwood, who would not normally take up such opportunities and who would normally be classified as 'hard to reach'. This Project will find innovative and exciting ways to engage with 30 Community Learning Champions (CLCs). Each CLC will build up their knowledge and confidence to the extent that they will themselves encourage and signpost their friends, neighbours and peers to take up informal learning opportunities. This will happen through taster seminars, cookery classes, outreach, and business networking. The project combines the Academy's fresh ideas and entrepreneurial approach with Catalyst Housing Group, which is one of London's largest and most progressive registered Social landlords, with over 10,000 properties across London. 80% of the Group's tenants in Brent are from BME communities.

London Academy's Director, Colin Gilfillan, says "We want to make the most of this unique opportunity to inspire and enthuse local people, business owners and faith leaders to establish a cohort of Learning Champions who will be inspired to continue to encourage informal adult learning in Brent or many years to come".

Over the next year the Project will be following the progress of the Brent's Community Learning Champions to witness some of the extraordinary things which it believes ordinary people can achieve. Look out for progress reports on the Academy's website www.londonaed.com

The London Academy, a joint venture between ABi Associates and the Gilfillan Partnership, promotes international understanding, networking and co-operation on economic, social and community development issues. We work with agencies from all sectors (public, private, non-government, social enterprise) in all parts of the world.

About the Community Learning Champions Programme

The project is funded from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills Community Learning Champions Development Fund through the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education. Community Learning Champions (CLCs) are volunteers who promote the value of learning in their own communities and to support them, the programme offers training, regional support networks and a toolkit. A new CLC badge is also being developed to raise the profile of their role.

Minister Kevin Brennan welcomed the initiative, saying, "Community Learning Champions play a vital role in their communities, encouraging peers, neighbours, family, and friends to take up learning. They act as role models, showing it is never too late for anyone to develop new interests, learn new skills and embark on new career routes."

You can find a link to the other successful Community Learning Champions projects in England via this link www.communitylearningchampions.org.uk