



MLA East of England Library Service Advocacy Survey 2007

Key Messages & Examples of Good Practice

Cambridgeshire
Essex
Hertfordshire
Luton Unitary Authority
Norfolk
Peterborough Unitary Authority
Southend
Suffolk
Thurrock

1. To what extent does your library service work with Skills for Life providers across your county/unitary authority?

Key Message

All Library Services work with a wide range of Skills for Life providers.

All Library services have links with local FE Colleges, Adult & Community Learning and Family Learning.

Examples

Essex - 2006 NRDC Practitioner Led research 'Weaving reading for pleasure into the curriculum' - library staff and tutors working together.

S4L tutor has developed a reading for pleasure course which has strong links to the library.

Cambridgeshire - Partnerships with Adult & Community Learning, Family Learning, Learning Trust, Probation Service, Unison.

Library learning Centres offer a S4L package from initial assessment through to National Tests.

Community Access points are based in public buildings (Post Offices, Public Houses etc) with computers/printers available free of charge.

2. To what extent does your library service make provision for adults with Skills for Life needs?

Key Message

- All Library services have reviewed and improved signage.
- All Library services have reviewed and simplified the joining procedures.
- Some library services do not require ID information.
- National Tests are available on paper or computer in Essex, Cambs, Luton, Herts, Peterborough, Southend, Suffolk.

Examples

Hertfordshire - The Library culture is to trust people. Adults can borrow one item and provide ID on their next visit.

People living in temporary accommodation can join the library. It is possible to join the library on line.

If adults have difficulty with forms library staff offer assistance and mention the S4L resources

Luton - Adults can join the library with no ID. Library cards are then posted to the home address as extra security. When one adult joins the whole family are included.

3. Are there any members of staff responsible for services for adults with Skills for Life needs?

Key Message

All Library services have staff responsible for co ordinating S4L work.

Examples

Norfolk -All Community Librarians have responsibility for Skills for Life - emergent readers are a target group.

Southend - The Community & Diversity team focus on S4L. - a professional librarian post is being advertised -focus on Quick Reads and RaW.

4. To what extent do members of staff receive training to work with adults with Skills for Life needs?

Key Message

All frontline Library staff have received information and/or training in Skills for Life awareness.

Examples

Luton - All front line staff (40+) have received S4L awareness training. 10 staff have completed the first module of the S4L level 2 course.

Suffolk - 50 staff across Suffolk have received awareness training and three courses have taken place.

Another S4L awareness course is currently being organised.

Library staff are able to signpost potential S4L learners.

Essex - All 'People's Network' managers at 11 largest libraries have received training for C&G Unit 1 of Level 2. Other staff have also received this training.

5. Is your library service involved with any regional/national Skills for Life projects/initiatives eg RaW, Quick Reads, The Vital Link?

Key Message

All Library Services are involved in RaW, Vital Link, Learn Direct & Quick Reads

Example

Hertfordshire - Watford Premier reading Stars project is linked to Watford Football Club.

Fire Service Project - reading linked to fire safety. Firemen read stories to an audience of 200+

RaW Story Writing Group – ‘Blast from the Past’

Essex - Essex was a partner authority in ‘Got Kids Get Reading’ in January - March 2007 . This involved library staff working with ACL tutor to encourage parents /carers in children’s centre to read for pleasure. The activity was filmed as part of the Vital Link advocacy material

6. Is Skills for Life work included in your service plan? To what extent is there any dedicated funding in your budget for Skills for Life?

Key Message

All Library services plan their Skills for Life provision. Not all areas have dedicated funding because S4L is integral to the provision.

Example

Peterborough - There is no dedicated funding for S4L work but S4L is part of the general library service remit and S4L stock is purchased. The S4L Awareness training sessions were paid for from the general budget. There is a reliance on partnership working with S4L organisations.

Southend - S4L material is included in the stock purchasing budget.

Thurrock - Skills for Life is included in the Diversity planning and funding.

7. We appreciate that demanding targets are set for your service. On a scale of 0-10 (0 the lowest) how important to your service is provision for adults with Skills for Life needs?

Key Message

All Library Services acknowledge the importance of Skills for Life. Range of responses – 5.....9+

Example

Thurrock

0.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....**8**.....9.....10

Cambridgeshire

0.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....**9**.....10

8. How do you think your Skills for Life work/experience/learning can be disseminated to other Libraries within your region and across the Eastern Region?

Key Message

MLA East of England events are valued because of the relevance and value of the information.

Information about projects & initiatives in other areas is shared and appreciated.

Examples of Ideas.

Peterborough - A manual of ideas that work would be very useful.

It would be useful to have a set of agreed basic standards for S4L work.

Southend - Meetings work better than written information on the Internet.

The Society of Chief Librarians Training Group also provides information about S4L issues and ideas.

9. Any other comments?

It is difficult for staff to be flexible because roles are so prescribed.

The availability of funding limits what can be achieved

Partnerships are very labour intensive

How you think S4L work can be moved forward?

Develop regional forum for learning /reading side

Better advocacy with key learning providers and funders

It would be useful to have short term (1yr) Kick Start funding to start reaching groups in the community, voluntary groups/homeless groups/single parents etc

Develop regional forum for learning /reading