

Service highlights and developments

1. The Kent Apprenticeship scheme (Kent Success) has achieved National recognition as a model of local authority leadership in expanding apprenticeships for young people. Kent Success has contributed significantly to the award of a 'green flag' for learning and skills within the *One Place Area Assessment*. The target of 250 apprentices within KCC has been exceeded 9 months ahead of schedule and additional LSC funds have been secured to continue the expansion. 122 of 138 young people (88%) who have completed a Kent Success apprenticeship to date have found a full-time job. Of the 100 apprentices currently in training within KCC 32 are within the Communities Directorate.

2. Since 2007 the Service has run the *Response* programme, in South Kent partnering various voluntary and community organisations to develop skills and confidence among people unemployed or in low wage/skills jobs. The programme focuses on the most deprived communities in Dover, Shepway (including Romney Marsh) and Ashford. Over 800 adults who have not undertaken any recent learning or training have benefited from the scheme which maximises public funding from LSC and DWP through collaborative working with Royal British Legion and Romney Resource Centre. *Response* contributes directly to Local Area Agreement targets for employability skills and a range of social and economic indicators.¹ A typical case study '*Jan, an unemployed lone parent whose prospects have been transformed by Response*' is included at the end of this appendix.

3. In 2009 the Service launched *Active Living* a new suite of learning programmes designed to meet the needs of people over 55. The approach has been based on the *3 phases of ageing* identified by the Department of Health and British Heart Foundations reports of 2001 and 2007.²

Programmes are designed to meet the differing needs of people as they age and aim to promote physical well-being, maintain mental agility, support employment and volunteering options in later life, promote independence and higher quality of life and support the active contribution of older people in their communities. New chair-based fitness for the frail elderly in residential settings is being developed. The programmes are targeted at Kent residents and a membership format³ has been introduced to maintain an ongoing relationship with learners as needs change. In addition to courses free advice and information sessions on nutrition, healthy hearts, falls prevention and safe exercise are held in partnership with voluntary and other agencies throughout Kent.

4. Other highlights in brief...

- KEY training will be relocating its Canterbury operations in the new year to work in partnership with Canterbury High School where an innovative and ambitious programme of vocational skills training for young people and the community will take shape.
- The service has expanded its 'pay-as-you-go' courses in Fitness, Yoga, Dance and Tai Chi from the Dartford pilot to 9 Districts. 370 adults regularly attend at lunchtimes and after work.

¹ Adult Skills/Employment NI161, 162, 163. 152. Supports NI 16, 18, 11.

² Phase 1 – entering later life 'making activity choices'. Phase 2 – Transitional old age 'Increasing the circle of life' Phase 3 Frail elderly people - Movement in later years'

³ Current membership of Active Lives is 700 adults over 55.

- The service works with over 30 voluntary sector organisations to help build their capacity and effectiveness. Programmes include First Aid training, providing professional qualifications in teaching/mentoring, confidence building and basic skills, Health and Safety training.
- In Thanet the service is delivering a wide range of community and return to learning programmes, employability skills and family learning as part of the Thanet Works programme. The service initiated the Wide Open Door scheme (led by KCC 14-19 Innovation Unit) and is raising aspiration and opportunity among young people and their families through developing the skills and confidence to find jobs.
- In the heart of Folkestone there has been a transformation in community learning opportunities with the opening of the new Cube learning centre, the new Skills Plus centre in the Library and development of innovative progression pathways to Higher Education at the University Centre through which learners completing pathway courses are guaranteed places with Canterbury Christchurch University delivered locally. Young peoples learning needs are met by KEY Training at Café IT. All Communities facilities are located within the small regeneration area around Tontine Street.
- At Holmesdale Technology College the service has begun work with a consortium of local schools to improve vocational learning and choice to older school pupils. Adults and young people study together on a year long Beauty Technicians qualification which can lead directly into paid jobs or self employment
- The new Ramsgate Library is becoming a popular venue for adult and family learning. Courses in Arts, English, Maths, and *enjoying your library* (for families) have been well attended and new courses and activities are being developed for Ramsgate in partnership with Library & Archives staff.

Case Study by Jan

“Jan”, unemployed, lone parent, aged 35, who has slight hearing problems.

Jan first contacted Response 2 to attend a Skills for Volunteers Course. She later contacted us, through the Job Centre Plus and attended the Level 2 Food Safety Awareness Course.

After attending the courses she decided to try applying for jobs again, previous attempts had been unsuccessful, she managed to secure the first job she had an interview for and is now working part-time as a Care Assistant for elderly people in her home town. Her employers are now arranging to send her on NVQ Level 2 Health & Social Care course later this year. She says that she never imagined that she would find work and that her life has been permanently changed for the better and her children have new respect for their mum.