

Welcome to the first quarter Adult Community Education Newsletter. If you have any forthcoming events or courses that your organisation will be holding in the future that you would like included in our next newsletter covering August - October 2012 then please email susan.preece@merthyr.gov.uk or telephone 01685 727099



Community Education provides learning for individuals and groups in their communities using a range of formal and informal learning

Courses range from OCN's in Arts & Crafts, Basic Skills and ICT, BTEC's in Business Admin and Jamie Oliver Cookery, language courses such as ESOL and Spanish are available and we also offer ECDL computing course

Our classes run for approximately 20 weeks with the prospects of a further 10 week extension and are open to anyone aged 16+

If you would like more information on courses available or you have a course in mind that you would like us to deliver for you then please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Community Education staff on 01685 725058/725306

Please note this publication is also available in Welsh on request

Bridges into Work

The aim of the Bridges into Work project is to support local people to gain the skills and confidence to help them move towards employment. The project also delivers accredited courses in Computers, Retail, Learning through the Outdoors, Confidence Building, Job Search Skills and Construction Trades amongst others. We also run a number of pre-employment courses, where we partner up with local employers to design bespoke courses to help our learners to gain employment.

The project also hosts personal support programmes such as Hospitality & Life Support programmes through partner organisations which include Merthyr Tydfil College & The 3G's Development Trust. Support workers are also available to help with paperwork, transport or can provide support when attending courses.

To date, the Bridges into Work project has supported 2,849 participants in gaining 3,800 qualifications and 663 participants have gained employment in the last 2 years.

If you are aged over 16, currently unemployed or working less than 16 hours per week, living within the Merthyr Borough and not part of the Government Work Programme contact us for more information.

Venture Out

Learn through the Outdoors & Bridges into Work, commissioned through Merthyr Tydfil College, have recently delivered a 10 week 'Sport that Works' programme in Partnership with Job Centre Plus and Newport Council flexible support fund programme. The participants aged between 18 and 24 took part in a range of activities which included gorge walking, climbing, Nordic walking, cycling, canoeing, navigation/map reading, hill walking, archery and indoor sports such as table tennis, badminton and tennis.

The programme aims to deliver various skills which can be transferred to the work place, i.e. teambuilding, working with others, communication, personal wellbeing, health and safety, planning, problem solving, leadership, time keeping and mock interviews.



The Venture Out Programme is now being run through Bridges into Work LTTO Department. Current activities are indoor and outdoor climbing, gorge walking, cycling, abseiling, caving, canoeing, hill walking, Nordic walking and map reading/navigation.

We have also had three participants gaining employment recently, ranging from a position as a support worker to a financial advisory role.

News Stories

BRIDGES INTO WORK (TTEC)

A special programme of courses was designed for the lower end of the valley to help to equip people to successfully gain employment in the retail sector.

The programme involved a compilation of different courses, most taking place in TTEC. The participants gained qualifications in Retail (Bringing in the Orders), Food Hygiene, Manual Handling, Emergency First Aid, Job Search Skills and CV Building. All learners also travelled to Pontypridd to attend the Sainsbury's Open Day, which was a fantastic opportunity to meet with a large retail employer and ask questions outside of a formal interview situation.

The participants have been supported with applications to retail employers and are continuing to search for suitable employment. So far, two of the individuals who participated in the retail training programme have secured jobs within retail environments, and we hope that all of our participants will be successful in their job search in the near future!



News Stories

BRIDGES INTO WORK (NLC)

The Big Portrait Project was an art exhibition which was held throughout March at Cyfarthfa Museum and Art Gallery.

The exhibition centred on portraits of Welsh personalities painted by local artist Steve Samuel. Personalities such as Aled Jones, Julien Macdonald, Bonnie Tyler, The Blackout and Tom Jones are just a few who agreed to have their portraits painted for a display and will eventually be auctioned, with proceeds going towards the Mayors Appeal: Macmillan Cancer Care.

Members of the community were involved at as many different stages as possible, which included the frames for the portraits being made by a local community group – **Bridges into Work**. This also helped the participants of Bridges into Work as they are working towards accredited qualifications in Carpentry and Painting & Decorating.

The launch was held at Cyfarthfa Museum on the 29th February 2012 and was a high profile event attended by the First Minister. Due to the success of the event a request was made for the exhibition to be taken down to the Senydd between the 28th May 2012 – 1st June 2012 and participants of Bridges into Work, who were involved in the project, will be invited to attend.

For more information on Construction courses offered by Bridges into Work, please contact Mark Kwiecinski on 01685 727099.



News Stories

Community Education

This is the digital journey of a 77 year old gentleman who attended a Community Education computer class in Treharris.

I first turned up in class with no laptop and no idea of what to do or how to do it. However Cheryl soon sorted me out: “Turn on your computer and I will get you started”. With a blank stare I said, “Which button?” and so it began. I had no clue on keyboards so the ‘One Fingered Wonder’ began.

The first operation was Microsoft Word - the strange thing was that everything was checked and marked; it was back to school again after many years! The second task was Microsoft Office and by this time I was getting good (but still ‘one finger’ good!). I began to enjoy it and looked forward to going on a Thursday morning.

Next came emails and internet - I struggled but under some great tutoring it all fell into place, but still with one finger. However I discovered I have two hands, so now I have two fingers! Then came Powerpoint, making slides hiding them and moving them and making slide shows with animation and sounds. It was great fun.

Then Excel spreadsheets; if you are not too hot on maths, this is for you! With a few formulas that are easy to remember, it does it all for you. Many thanks to my long suffering tutor for stirring my grey matter and making me so enthusiastic as now I am into this digital thing.

For more information on Community Education Computer Courses or other courses on offer in your area, please contact Ryan Stokes on 01685 725058

News Stories

Growing to Succeed *Cyfarthfa Community Greenhouses*

A group of adult returners recently had great success when they all passed a horticulture OCN based around growing herb gardens. They completed a 10 week course at Cyfarthfa Greenhouses working in partnership with the 3G's to enable them to grow fresh herbs at home and understand their medicinal qualities. For some of these adults this was the first qualification they had achieved and were delighted.

Cyfarthfa Greenhouses in Cyfarthfa Park provides a program of accredited horticultural learning opportunities including OCN's and BTEC's, open to all community members from Merthyr Tydfil. Members can also attend the facility on an informal drop in basis to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables. Specialist advice and guidance is given from qualified staff in a relaxed environment.



**For more information on courses at Cyfarthfa Greenhouses,
please contact Leanne Williams on 01685 722340**

News Stories

GENESIS

Catherine, a lone parent from Merthyr Tydfil, was referred to Genesis by the Family Programmes Team. Catherine and her Genesis Advisor met at her home and they discussed Catherine's hopes to retrain. They discussed the barriers faced by Catherine and what support she required, such as lack of childcare.

With the support of free childcare provided by Genesis, Catherine was able to attend Genesis short courses and the STEPS programme which helped build up her confidence and motivation and encouraged Catherine to set personal goals for the future.

Catherine soon began volunteering once a week for a local Skills class; she had previously identified that this was an area she would like to work in.

Catherine thoroughly enjoys volunteering and supporting people's learning. She began an essential skills tutor course and the volunteering enabled her to make links between the theory she was learning and the practical support she wanted to offer others. Catherine still meets up regularly with her Advisor and has gone on to access support from other projects in the community to help her with other barriers that she has faced.

Catherine is looking forward to her and her family's future and hopes to find a teaching post this summer.



Quotes from our Learners

“ Through working with the Genesis Team, in particular Rachael, I have found a new career and regained my confidence to re-enter the work place.”
(Catherine April 2012)

“I enjoyed the course and the tutor made me feel at ease and at home, they were first class at their job and had lots of patience and very caring”
August 2011

“I found the tutor very easy to get along with and we had fun learning, the whole environment was calm and interesting and well presented. I enjoyed it a lot”
July 2011

“I was more than happy with the way everything went, I wasn't intimidated at all but did feel a little bit apprehensive when I was entering the room but I was made to feel really at ease by the tutors everything was made a pleasure”
June 2011

What's on



Work Club

Are you over 16 and looking for employment?

Drop into Work Club and gain free assistance with:

- Compiling a CV and filling in application forms
- Access to the internet and a job board displaying the latest vacancies
- Contribution towards the cost of posting applications
- Job search skills and interview techniques
- Friendly and welcoming atmosphere

Monday 2pm—4pm
Neighbourhood Learning
Centre, Gurnos
Contact 01685 727099
and
Treharris Training and
Employment Centre
Contact 01685 725040

What's on

Below are some of the courses offered by Bridges into Work, feel free to contact us to join in or find out more information.

Course Name	Duration	Location	Tutor Contact
Retail	3 days	Neighbourhood Learning Centre	Julie Jones 01685 727098
Back to Work Basics	5 days	Neighbourhood Learning Centre / Llangorse	Julie Jones 01685 727098 Martyn Humphreys 01685 727300
Job Search Skills	2 days	TTEC / Castle House	Sylwen Thomas 01685 727093
Confidence Building	2 days	TTEC	Sylwen Thomas 01685 727093
Construction Trades	9 days over 3 weeks	Neighbourhood Learning Centre	Mark Kwiecinski 01685 727091
Learning through the Outdoors	1 day per week	Neighbourhood Learning Centre	Martyn Humphreys 01685 727300
Pre Employment Courses	Various	Neighbourhood Learning Centre	Hannah Hickey 01685 727301
Basic Skills Classes	Various	Neighbourhood Learning Centre / TTEC	Paul Cross 01685 727058
ECDL	Various	Neighbourhood Learning Centre / TTEC	Ken McCaskill 01685 727078
BCS Short Computer Course	Various	Neighbourhood Learning Centre / TTEC	Ken McCaskill 01685 727078

What's on

Bridges into Work Celebration Event

Last year Bridges into Work held a Celebration Event in the form of an awards ceremony recognising the outstanding achievement of a number of participants. The event was held in the Myfanwy Theatre in Merthyr College, with celebrity guest Jonathan Owen present to give out the awards.

It was wonderful to be able to share and celebrate the success stories of some truly inspirational individuals, and it was an excellent way to showcase to the local community the work that projects such as Bridges into Work do to help people back into learning or employment.



Bridges into Work are currently planning another awards ceremony to celebrate the achievements of this year's participants in July 2012 at the Guest Keen Club, Dowlais.

What's on

Community Education runs a variety of courses in all areas of Merthyr. For more information on the courses, please contact Ryan Stokes on the number below.

Course Name	Duration	Location	Contact
Word Processing	10 weeks	Bedlinog Resource Centre	01685 725058
Word Processing Foundation	10 weeks	Dowlais Library	01685 725058
Introduction to Digital Photography	10 weeks	Communities 1st Troedyrhiw	01685 725058
The Art of Craft	10 weeks	Cilhaul	01685 725058
Introduction to Drawing	10 weeks	Quakers Yard	01685 725058
Patchwork	10 weeks	Trelewis OAP Hall	01685 725058
Art	10 weeks	Troedyrhiw Boys & Girls Club	01685 725058
Drawing	10 weeks	Trelewis OAP Hall	01685 725058

What's on



Genesis 2 Activities Programme (GAP)

Free short courses with **FREE** childcare and transport
Cwm Golau Integrated Children's Centre, Pentrebach.



All places to be booked in advance; please ring (01685) 727389

Course	Date & Time	Info
STEPS	1st May - 3rd July 2012 (usual session time: 9.45am-2.15pm)	Delivered by the Genesis 2 advisory team; STEPS is a motivational and confidence building course that's accredited at Level 2. STEPS runs 1 day per week for 8 weeks.
De-Clutter	25th April 2012 9.45am-2.15pm	This session aims to increase participant's confidence and explores issues of self esteem. This session is facilitated by Max Chadwick
In the Know	17th May 2012 9.45am-2.15pm	Delivered by the Genesis team; this session offers participants info on training, learning and employment in the local area. Find out more about volunteering; support available if you're going back to work; local training etc.
Assertiveness & Communication	30th May 2012 9.45am-2.15pm	Integral Life Coaching deliver this session which offers participants an insight in language and communication and their impact on how we interact with one another.
Food Safety	20th June 2012 9.30am-4.00pm	This Level 2 accredited course covers the principles of food hygiene. There will be a test of what you've learnt through the session at the end of the day to gain the certificate
Tastebuddies	27th June 2012 9.45am-2.15pm	Whether you want to build on the knowledge gained during the food safety course or find out more about producing affordable, tasty meals; you'll enjoy this session.
Up 2 U (For people who are interested in working in the childcare and playwork sector)	4th July 2012 9.45am-2.15pm	This friendly and informal session offers an opportunity to find out more about employment, volunteering and training opportunities within the early years and playwork sector.
Basic First Aid	11th July 2012 9.45am-2.15pm	This certificated First Aid training will offer guidance on basic first aid principles including risk assessment; wounds and bleeding; correct lifting methods and CPR.
Coffee Morning	18th July 2012	This offers an opportunity to talk with people from other organisations about training and support available.



You'll also need to bring photographic ID with you to this **FREE** course



Want to find out more? Why not contact the **Genesis 2 team** on (01685) 727389 ... and remember; training places **MUST** be booked well in advance!!

What's on



Bilingual summer craft and horticulture
workshops at Cyfarthfa Greenhouses



Gweithdai Crefft a Garddwriaeth yn Nhau Gwydr Cyfarthfa



Free workshops to include beaded spiderwebs, plant
stakes, flower planting and much more!
July 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th 1pm to 3pm
Booking required

For further information or to book contact:

Leanne Williams: 01685 722340 or

Greg Snelgrove: 01685 722176

Gweithdai am ddim yn cynnwys gwe pry cop gleiniog,
ffyn planhigion, plannu blodau a llawer mwy!

Gorffennaf 6ed, 13eg, 20fed a'r 27ain 1pm tan 3pm

Mae angen archebu lle

Am ragor o wybodaeth neu l archebu lle cysylltwch â:

:Leanne Williams: 01685 722340 neu

Greg Snelgrove 01685 722176



Learner voice

Your voice is important to us!

We need your help!

Our service is all about helping people and providing them with the support they need to return to learning or employment. This means that it's really important for us to find out what you enjoyed, what worked for you and also what you think we can improve on.

Would you be like to join a Learner Forum and be part of a 'Learner Council' where you can regularly meet to discuss your learning experience, your needs, issues and enable us to have productive two-way feedback?

If you are interested please get in touch.

Please contact: Gail Powell on 01685 727456



Contact Us

If you have any queries about the courses we offer, the events we are running, or you'd just like to talk to us about what we can do to help you please don't hesitate to get in touch with us at the relevant number below

Bridges into Work:

Neighbourhood Learning Centre	01685 727099
Treharris Training and Employment Centre	01685 725040
Merthyr Tydfil College	01685 726061

Life Support:

Deanne Rebane (Life Support Coordinator)	07977 618245
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Cyfarthfa Greenhouses:

Leanne Williams	01685 722340
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Community Learning:

Ryan Stokes (Project Coordinator)	01685 725058
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Venture Out:

Ryan Stokes (Project Coordinator)	01685 725058
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Genesis:

Rachael O'Hara	01685 727398
Belinda Foulkes	01685 727368