



Learning Community Accounts Pilots Case Study Report 4

Enable Project (Caia Park Partnership)



Research

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Learning Community Accounts Pilots Case Study Report 4: Caia Park Partnership Limited

Audience	The voluntary and community learning sector, providers of training and DCELLS programme delivery, funding and planning departments.
Overview	The evaluation of the Community Learning Account pilot has involved individual evaluations of each pilot and a collective evaluation of the overall approach. This report presents the individual 'case study' findings for one of the five pilot projects.
Action required	None
Further information	<p>Julie Owens Research Analysis Manager Research and Evaluation Team, DCELLS Welsh Assembly Government Unit 6, St. Asaph Business Park St. Asaph, Denbighshire LL17 0LJ</p> <p>Tel: 01745 538540 Fax: 01745 538501 E-mail: Research2@wales.gsi.gov.uk</p>
Additional copies	This report is available online at http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/research-and-evaluation/124540/?lang=en
Related documents	<p>Case Study Report 1: TDG Case Study Report 2: CwmNi Case Study Report 3: Fairyland (Neath) Case Study Report 5: Cardigan and South Ceredigion Evaluation of the Learning Community Accounts Pilots</p>

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1 Introduction to the Learning Community Account Pilots

In 2007 BMG Research was commissioned by The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Welsh Assembly Government to evaluate the Learning Community Accounts pilot projects. The LCA pilots ended in March 2008.

The purpose of Learning Community Accounts (LCAs) was to:

- transfer skill, knowledge and resources to communities to enable them to participate and design solutions to community learning needs by upskilling key individuals
- embed learning and skill development within community regeneration, by supporting communities, families and individuals to develop and engage in learning activity which is learner focused, flexible and accessible to all, and
- provide a mechanism that integrates communities in to the local planning process, and also supports and empowers them.

The desired outcomes of the LCAs were:

- increased learning activity that contributes to community regeneration, widening participation, skills and employment;
- opportunities to engage and up skill socially excluded individuals and allow progression to employment;
- a cohort of qualified development workers focused on learning and a general increase in the capacity of individuals involved in community development; and
- the availability of a collaborative and quality provision that meets the needs of communities and contributes to community regeneration.

There were five pilot projects in total:

- Caia Park Partnership Ltd, Wrexham
- Cardigan and South Ceredigion Regeneration Forum
- CwmNi – Communities First, Treherbert, Rhondda Valley
- Fairlyland Communities First, Cwmafon, Neath

- Cymorth Cymru –Housing Associations (pan Wales) Known as Tai Dysgu a Gwaith, (TDG)

The first four of these were identified as primarily geographical communities, whilst Cymorth Cymru was a ‘community of interest’ focusing on homelessness.

Each LCA project has been written up individually as a ‘case study’. Case studies are often described as a form of ‘qualitative’ or ‘thick’ descriptive research of an activity viewed in depth. This approach allows the provision of a comprehensive description of the project(s) being evaluated including the specific context and an exploration of the experiences of the people involved in it. In this context, therefore, they provide a detailed understanding of how each LCA pilot works and what the experiences are of those who have been involved. There are five case study reports in total, each reporting on one of the LCA pilots. This report focuses on Caia Park.

An evaluation report has also been produced, which brings together and synthesises the information from each of the case studies to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the LCA pilots to date in meeting their objectives as well as identifying areas of good practice and ‘lessons learnt’ with regard to this approach to community based learning. This in turn will inform the future development of Learning Community Accounts, and community learning as a whole.

1.1 The evaluation

The research aims and objectives suggest that a mixed-method ‘triangulation’ approach was most appropriate. It was agreed therefore that the evaluation should comprise a combination of qualitative and quantitative work, as well as incorporating available monitoring and administrative data.

As each LCA pilot project was different, both in terms of its set-up and organisation as well as its delivery stage, the evaluation also adopted a case study approach. An evaluation framework was developed which was applied across all case studies (detailing, for example, the key research issues, proposed method and key stakeholder groups) with the acceptance that some projects would be able to provide greater access to an evidence base than others. It was recognised that the two pilots that were most advanced in

their development (Caia Park and TDG) would provide the fullest evaluation evidence whilst the remaining three needed to concentrate more on start up and process evaluation rather than any assessment of impact.

The research approach was therefore as follows:

- Telephone discussions with some key WAG staff involved in the inception and development of the pilots (ongoing)
- Early familiarisation site visits to each pilot, including initial discussions with the manager. The visits were also used to identify possible learner respondents (where available) and other stakeholder respondents and appropriate methodology to be employed.
- A review of key documentation including delivery plans, annual reports, monitoring data (including evidence gathered during familiarisation visits)
- In-depth discussions with operational and delivery staff (face-to-face where possible, supplemented with telephone interviews);
- In-depth discussions with learners (face-to-face), including the identification of potential individual case studies.

For the Caia Park evaluation, the following evaluation activities were undertaken:

- An initial site visit, which included discussions with the Chief Officer, the Enable Project Manager and other key staff, such as Workshop Tutors and Learning Champions.
- Observation of IT classes, workshops
- In-depth Interviews with Learning Mentors
- Interviews and discussions with eight learners

The longitudinal element of the evaluation (as proposed in the original tender) was reconsidered in light of the subsequent requirement by DCELLS to complete the evaluation by March 2008 and the recognition that there was therefore insufficient time to conduct follow-up work with pilot participants.

2 Project description

2.1 Project aim and objectives

The Caia Park Enable Project was a mentoring scheme for those most at risk from being socially excluded - learners with mental health issues, those with drug or alcohol dependencies or dual diagnosis. The Project aimed to support individuals to engage in learning activities and to ensure retention on learning programmes. The Project provided individualised support and guidance, helping to address barriers to learning such as low personal confidence and poor self esteem. Specific objectives for Enable were:

- To ensure Learning Champions and mentors have relevant skills to undertake LCA related activities by providing appropriate training opportunities;
- To enable people to access training opportunities that they would not otherwise be able to, through the provision and maintenance of mentoring support and through supporting learners to continue to attend learning opportunities which may otherwise discontinue and;
- To identify evidence of outcomes that result from providing support to learners with mental health needs and to establish the benefits that impact on the lives of learners in the community.

2.2 Community context

Caia Park in Wrexham is the largest council estate in North Wales, with some 4,000 dwellings with 13,500 residents (Clwyd CC, 1995). The estate contains two of the most deprived Wards in North Wales where 80% of Council tenants have an income of below £200 a week (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2005, Welsh Assembly Government) One of the Wards ranks 1st and the other 9th in the Education, Skills and Training Deprivation of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD, 2005).

According to the project staff, residents on the Caia Park estate are considered to be generally reluctant to venture very far from the estate, and the Enable Project, along with other Caia Park

Partnership projects, seeks to help combat this potential isolation by welcoming all local residents to its site.

2.3 Project inception/set-up

The Enable Project originated out of a European Social Fund (ESF) funded project, set up in 2001, to support people with mental health problems and access to education. It was considered to have been hugely successful by funders and local organisational stakeholders. Following the end of ESF funding, they applied to become a LCA Pilot Project, effectively using the previous model to engage with and support people with mental health needs and drug and substance misuse problems.

2.4 Organisational structure

The Caia Park Partnership (CPP) is a community development organisation, managed by a board of trustees made up of local residents. This, in turn, is guided by two local forums; an Advisory Group, made up from local residents and community groups and a Volunteers' Forum for the 90 volunteers at the Partnership. The CPP is managed by a Chief Officer and a Senior Management Team responsible for particular work themes delivered through a number of projects. At the time of writing there were 74 employees at Caia Park, of which 75% were local residents.

The Partnership aims to work with local people to provide activities, services and facilities that contribute to the regeneration of the estate and the Enable Project forms one of numerous community projects located within the wider Partnership, with a range of projects located within different buildings on the site. These projects are physically 'grouped' and include an IT centre, learndirect, job shop, New Deal, and advice and guidance; a Community Café, Family and Children's Team, crèche; and Credit Union and volunteers section (where the Enable Project is located). There are also workshops for woodwork and craft activities, and off site but very close by, a day nursery. A Learning Centre provides approximately 50 courses a year.

3 Current activities

3.1 Staffing

The Enable Project was overseen by a Chief Officer who had overall responsibility for all projects. The Chief Officer was responsible for putting the original bid together and had a lead role in establishing the monitoring system. Day to day management responsibility for Enable was undertaken by a Senior Manager. There were six members of staff who acted as 'Learning Champions', and two employed 'core' mentors. Line management structures were considered by senior managers to be very tight, with very clear lines of supervision and management. Staff received formal supervision bi-monthly. Team meetings were also held on a monthly basis to enable discussions of individual students.

Six Learning Champions were trained as part of the Pilot. Project staff were of the opinion that all staff, volunteers and partner organisations have worked hard to promote the aims and objectives of the Enable Project across the wider Caia Park Partnership to ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the opportunities for referral and of the availability of flexible support for students.

The Project had two part-time mentors employed who were dedicated to providing support to Enable beneficiaries. Other Caia Park Partnership staff acted as Learning Champions, providing support to Enable students either as tutors or by supervising a volunteer placement. The Learning Champions have received training or acquired qualifications in a range of subjects, including counselling, child protection, health and safety, first aid, sensory awareness, understanding mental health, recruitment and selection, community development, fire safety awareness, basic skills support and drug and alcohol awareness.

3.2 Learners

The Enable Project refers to its learners as 'students'. Caia Park had a total target of supporting 40 learners in year 1, 60 in year 2 and 70 in year 3), at a cost of £725 per learner. The actual numbers of learners supported was 58 in year 1, 67 in year 2 and

52 in year 3. This gives an average of 59 learners at £730 per learner.

At July 2007, of the 52 learners receiving mentoring support 32 had completed learning plans. Mentoring has helped a small number to progress to further education (4) secure employment (4) or gain accredited qualifications (24).

The characteristics of Enable students – mental health problems, alcohol and/or drug dependency, frequently underpinned by chaotic lifestyles – are those often associated with poverty and deprivation. For many, poor mental or physical health was exacerbated by practical problems such as debt, poor housing/tenancy support and limited access to public transport, or for some learners there are complications including offending behaviour (sometimes linked to alcohol or drug abuse according to project staff). There were also, for some, issues in relation to age and socio-economic isolation. Staff highlighted that a lot of Enable students spend time in hospital, with some undergoing detoxification regimes.

Staff reported that students often present to the project with no social networks or social or family support. According to staff, time keeping and regular attendance appears to be a challenge for many. Students' mental health problems included depression, Down's Syndrome and schizophrenia. Staff reported that students could present extremely challenging behaviours which have to be risk-assessed by staff.

3.3 Learner referrals

Referrals to the LCA pilot were made in a number of ways. Enable students could be identified via the initial meeting with a Learning Champion to begin the process of developing the Personal Development Plan (PDP); some students referred themselves; other were referred by external agencies (statutory sector organisations, voluntary and community agencies). The Enable Project has built up a network of professional and working relationships with welfare rights projects, Social Services, drug and mental health services and local colleges and employers.

Following the PDP stage, students could be referred to a number of sources within the Caia Park Partnership and externally. The Healthy Living Centre, for example, has a Substance Misuse Worker, and support here could be coupled with that provided by a

Mentor. Enable students could also be referred to a range of external agencies – dependent on student support needs – which may include First Access; Community Mental Health; Tenancy Support; Welfare Rights Advice Service; Community Nurses and Broker Cymru.

3.4 Learning activities

Typically, students started off in a craft class, which was considered to be a non-threatening environment, particularly for those lacking in confidence or with poor self-esteem. One-to-one support in a classroom environment was facilitated by mentors physically sitting with students. This support continued for as long as was deemed necessary, and included social and emotional support.

Types of learning activity available, with courses being run on a rolling basis and facilitating enrolment at any time, included informal and practical options such as art, woodwork, and plumbing, more formalised learning opportunities (over 40 accredited via the Open College Network) including counselling, psychology, maths, English, and a Foundation Degree in Community Development. New courses introduced in the last year included 'Health & Wellness', a Diploma in Counselling and English for Speakers of Other Languages.

The above 'curriculum' was driven by knowledge and learning gained by Caia Park during recent years, and around the capacity of those students or potential students with mental health or substance misuse issues to participate in learning – essentially courses were informed and built around the needs of the students themselves. There were often the added complexities of students having literacy and numeracy problems. Basic skills levels were assessed at the point of entry, and progress was tracked via quarterly reviews.

Each student had a Personal Development Plan to help identify key goals which identified their 'starting point', where they would like to get to in terms of learning and how they will get there. It is at this point that students in need of 'Enable' support were identified and referred. Reviews were undertaken with the mentor every three and six months. Ultimately, student support needs determined the type of course/class initially accessed – a student that presented as

not needing high-level support may well have, for example, gone straight into an I.T class unaided, whereas an Enable student would go through the same assessment process but have a mentor sit with them in the classroom.

Barriers to learning were often multiple. Staff reported that for many Enable students, chaotic lifestyles or isolation could result in difficulties with normal day to day activities such as getting out of bed or feeling sufficiently motivated to leave the house. Accordingly, regular attendance (and maintaining attendance) was often cited as a 'key goal'.

The Project assessed basic skills levels when students entered the programme and subsequently tracked progress through quarterly reviews. One of the Enable Champions has undertaken accredited training in assessing basic skills and three more will do so in the very near future.

The Project worked on the basis that all Enable students faced barriers to achievement, however, they were treated first and foremost as students with additional student support needs. Identified barriers were tackled and overcome in a number of ways. Actions to tackle the barriers were agreed by the student and the Enable Mentor. Actions may focus on, say, a period of one-to-one support in the classroom or practical support to address some of the underlying barriers to learning, such as housing issues or personal debt.

With regard to formal or accredited learning students have gained accredited qualifications. Qualifications gained include 'Text & Word Processing' (OCR) 'Art Class' (OCN) 'Level 1 & 3 Psychology' (OCN) 'ESOL' (OCN) 'Get ahead with English or Maths' (City & Guilds) 'Progression Programme to H.E' (OCN). These accredited learning opportunities sit alongside non-accredited learning such as art, plumbing and woodwork – these were the sorts of learning opportunities that may be accessed by students lacking in confidence or with high-level support needs or those who just wanted to learn for fun.

Essentially, there was creativity in the design of a flexible programme of learning to meet the needs of the learner. From the PDP process onwards the Enable programme is shaped around the individual learner – this approach was said to be vital as each student's needs were unique to them.

3.5 Delivery

The Caia Park Partnership is a significant feature on the Caia Park Estate, providing a physical focus for community development activity. Staff took the view that the design of the Enable Project and the mode of delivery has brought people together from a highly deprived community, subsequently introducing them to learning and, effectively, creating a 'community of learners' that otherwise would not have done anything. All learning and social activities took place in an informal learning environment which was non-threatening and which actively encouraged participation.

In terms of creativity, the Enable Project endeavoured to respond to individual desire and need whilst building in possible progression to other activities. The on-site Community Café, for example, was staffed mainly by Enable students and volunteers, and facilitated interaction between students, staff, volunteers and the wider community. Cooking classes were available, allowing for the development of practical skills and a better understanding of nutrition and the importance of diet in a healthy lifestyle. There were opportunities to use learning gained to progress to accredited courses.

One of the therapeutic options for Enable students was the gardening project. The Partnership grounds – lawns, flowerbeds, hanging baskets, pathways etc – are maintained by students. These gardening activities are particularly valuable to those with mental health problems and could act as an appropriate diversion for those at risk of returning to drug or alcohol misuse. As a result of this input, the grounds and surrounding areas of the Caia Park have been greatly improved over time, giving both students and the immediate community a real sense of ownership regarding their immediate environment.

One of the other practical options for learning was for students to participate in activities available in the arts and crafts workshop. Here, students could develop practical skills and enjoy the creative benefits of physically making something from scratch, such as greetings cards. These activities are considered to be particularly beneficial for those students with severe mental health problems.

Another key (and popular) option for Enable students was to undertake learning activity in the workshop which is devoted to woodwork. Here students, under the full supervision of an

experienced instructor, could design and make small pieces of furniture or restore items that have been salvaged. Some students attended the workshop for four days a week, and were working towards NVQ qualifications. Again, indications are that this type of 'hands-on' practical sort of learning was both therapeutic and beneficial for those with mental health problems.

4 Partnerships with other organisations

4.1 Formal partnerships

The Enable Project has built up a network of professional and working relationships with welfare rights projects, Social Services, drug and mental health services and local colleges and employers. These partnerships, according to staff, have helped facilitate Enable students to progress into further education, volunteering and employment. A special relationship has been built with Barclays Bank which, in addition to providing some funding, has helped provide support and volunteers for Enable events and trips.

Networking is an on-going process. Presentations have been made to the local Lifelong Learning Partnership and the Local Health Board to ensure that professionals are aware of the Enable Project.

The Partnership is well-represented on relevant multi-agency groups related to learning, including the Communities First Education Sub Group, the Lifelong Learning Partnership and the 'Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider' Partnership.

4.2 Informal links

The Caia Park Centre is both welcoming and informal, and the learning environment is such that it helps facilitate informal links both within the immediate estate and the wider community. The Partnership is deeply embedded in the community and its services are developed and provided in response to locally identified needs. These links have helped the Enable Project recruit and retain learners.

5 Quality standards

All parties are included in a process of self-evaluation. The monthly progress meetings are considered to be a valuable forum for self-evaluation by Enable staff and managers. The appraisal process includes a section whereby staff are asked to consider the performance of their project and to help feed into annual targets.

All Learning Champions received formal supervision on a monthly basis, and any 'quality' issues were dealt with during those sessions. The Caia Park Partnership has secured 'Investors in People' status. A review undertaken by an independent external assessor showed that the Partnership as a whole performs well with regard to quality assurance and monitoring.

There was also a project self-assessment process, on top of the DCELLS monitoring requirements. There was extensive measuring of the impact and effectiveness for both internal and external purposes. Year end and self-evaluation reports including cost analysis were submitted as and when required.

6 Identifying outcomes

Initially, a judgment was made regarding the most appropriate method/approach to encourage engagement with learning and to identify goals in conjunction with the individual student through the Personal Development Plan process. The evaluator was able to observe this first hand during the site visits and it clearly helped the students focus on how they were engaging with aspects of learning.

Outcomes were defined in two main ways. Firstly, there was the monthly collation of training provided for Learning Champions and the learning support needs from the Learning Profile forms. Secondly, data were gathered in respect of mentoring and learning activity as identified on the Learning Plan.

6.1 'Hard' outcomes

There were some 'goals' which were more tangible that can be identified as 'hard' outcomes, such as securing a job or gaining a qualification. According to the latest figures submitted to DCELLS, at March 2008, 52 students out of a target of 60 had completed what they set out to do in their Learning Plan, thus:

- 9 students have gone on to further education
- 5 students have secured full-time employment
- 5 students have gained part-time employment
- 24 students have gained 28 qualifications
- 3 students completed a confidence-building course, and
- 3 students sat examinations and are awaiting results.

The evidence gathered from the qualitative interviews with staff and students indicated that because of some of the very complex needs that many of the Enable students have, without the intensive mentoring and advocacy support available to them as a result of the LCA project, it was unlikely that they would have engaged with learning opportunities. When the student respondents were directly questioned about this, and about what they would have done had there not been the LCA project, most agreed that they would have not engaged in any form of activity but would have remained inactive.

6.2 'Soft' outcomes

The Enable Project staff acknowledged that it was harder to evidence the less tangible improvements, despite the fact that these were considered by staff to have the greatest impact on their students because they are the outcomes that students make most progress with. Most students gained increased confidence and self esteem, and felt in a stronger position to take control over their lives, with many also achieving their personal goals. (For some these might be considered to be very basic, such as getting out of bed in a morning, getting to a class on time etc.)

6.3 Capturing progress/'distance travelled'

The Enable Project attempted to track the distance travelled against identified 'soft' outcomes such as regular attendance, improved communication skills, behaviour management and social skills.

By November 2007 the monitoring data produced for the Welsh Assembly Government showed that 43 students attending the Project with low self-esteem and experiencing social and economic isolation had an improved sense of self-confidence. This was largely attributed by project staff to regular attendance and mentoring support delivered.

Where there were 'planned exits' from the Project, into employment, education or volunteering opportunities, students were still able to receive support from staff for a short while where appropriate (See the Case Studies for examples). There was recognition by both staff and students that these 'transition points' could be a severe struggle for some students, as they moved from a very supportive student-centred environment to the 'real world'.

7 Project funding issues

7.1 How was the funding used?

The LCA funding allowed for the employment of one full-time Co-ordinator/mentor and two part-time mentors who were dedicated to supporting Enable students/beneficiaries.

The funding, in addition to helping fund staff costs, has been used in relatively small amounts to help fund one-off activities, for example, day trips to woodwork exhibitions for those Enable students who attend the woodwork workshops. Staff suggested that student social networks are often non-existent, and any trips which are broadly 'educational' also have a social aspect, and allow for the development of communication and negotiation skills.

7.2 Cost per learner

The budget for 2007/08 was £43,536, which equates to £725 per learner (with a target of 60 learners).which covers the costs of the Enable Project.

8 Added Value of Learning Community Accounts

Enable staff suggested that they had never encountered a similar project either locally or nationally, and were firmly of the view that the Project fits in with and enhances existing mainstream learning provision. Accordingly, the Project does not seem to be replicating anything that was already in existence. Enable appeared to be consistent with the aims and objectives of the Caia Park Communities First Strategy and Action Plan, Wrexham's Community Strategy and the Lifelong Learning Strategy in terms of supporting those most at risk of social and economic exclusion.

According to staff, the complex and often long-term support needs of Enable students are not always fully addressed by some mainstream agencies until a statutory intervention is needed (arrest, eviction, mental health referral etc). This often leaves the Enable Project with a perceived need to 'go the extra mile' for some of its students, negotiating with a range of organisations to help secure the well-being of project users.

Some Enable staff were of the opinion that key agencies, such as housing providers, the police, social services and mental health teams, would experience an increase in caseloads and resourcing requirements if the Enable Project was no longer in existence to provide intensive support for its clients, particularly those with mental health support needs.

9 Case studies - Individuals

The brief case studies were selected by the evaluator following initial discussions with Project staff. Discussions with 'Sean' were held at the time of the initial site visit – a follow up was not possible because of his prison sentence. Both 'Andrew' and 'Angela' were briefly interviewed on the second site visit.

The purpose of these brief individual case studies is to illustrate some of the challenges faced by many of the Enable students, with a significant number presenting with complex emotional support needs and poor mental health. Hard evidence to quantify the impact of the LCA pilot on these individuals is not immediately obvious, however, discussions with these individuals and observations made during mentoring sessions and during classroom activities, give the distinct impression that the Enable Project has helped 'make a difference'.

Sean is 46 years old and has been attending the Enable Project for two years. Prior to this, he had held down a good job, but the close bereavement of both parents had a major affect on his emotional well-being. Sean's marriage consequently broke down and this led to problematic drinking which, in turn, led to a further deterioration with relationships with his wife and children. The Enable Project proved to be a much needed distraction and, ultimately, a timely intervention, underpinned by intensive mentoring support. Sean began working on a gardening project, which gave him a real practical focus. His emotional support needs were high, but he was thought by staff to be making progress and developing his communication and social skills. However, Sean re-offended resulting in him breaching the conditions of his Probation Order, and he was sentenced to 16 months in custody. Since being sent to prison, Sean has written to his Enable Mentor, indicating that he is continuing with his studies whilst in prison. At this stage it is unclear whether he will return to the Caia Park estate as he has lost his tenancy according to staff.

Andrew is 39 years old and was born in Wrexham. He has been involved with the Enable Project for 18 months and usually attends for 3 days a week. After leaving school at 16, Andrew took part in a Youth Training Scheme course as he was keen to develop a career in the construction trade. He also travelled, but always

maintained contact with his family in Wrexham. Alan had a nervous breakdown, and he is still recovering from this. Alan has also experienced housing difficulties but has recently been rehoused. Alan currently spends most of his time in the workshop and has developed an aptitude for woodwork, making small items of furniture. At present he is working towards an NVQ Level 1 and says that eventually he would like to get a job with a local firm.

Angela is 31 years old and has a family history of being abused resulting in being brought up with foster carers. Angela's three children have all been adopted. Angela volunteers at Caia Park for three full days each week, helping out with Enable Projects such as the arts and crafts group and in the community café. Outside of this, she has no social interaction with anyone – when not at the Partnership she stays at home. Angela secured a number of academic qualifications at school – but feels that she lacks the confidence to consider making the transition from a very supportive environment to the real world of work.

Both 'Andrew' and 'Angela' attend on almost a daily basis, for example, and discussions with both learners highlighted the importance to them of available support and access to informal learning such as arts and craft classes.

10 Overview and next steps

The Enable Project is evidently working hard to put knowledge and resources into the Caia Park community, encouraging active participation and the development of new skills for residents.

Project staff work flexibly, in terms of their physical availability, to provide tailored packages of support to students for as long as the beneficiary needs it. This is, perhaps, not an approach that sits particularly well with time-limited funding streams but is testimony to staff dedication commitment.

For those beneficiaries with mental health problems, both service users and project staff suggest that the Project's approach is helping reduce reliance on prescribed medication and dependency on statutory support services. For those with drug or alcohol issues it is a similar scenario – the Enable Project is providing an alternative to substance misuse. For those with, say, anger management issues or behavioural difficulties, engaging with informal learning or therapeutic options reduces the likelihood of anti-social behaviour and, ultimately, contact with the criminal justice system.

The Project as a pilot LCA project is demonstrably contributing to the wider Welsh Assembly Government agenda. In particular, in working to support those excluded (or those more at risk of exclusion) the project cuts across policy areas such as health, education, social justice, regeneration, crime and housing.

In particular, efforts to regenerate its immediate community are evidenced in a number of ways. Firstly, the actual involvement of local people in the design and delivery of projects and services – 75% of Caia Park employees are local residents and an estimated 150 volunteers – points to real potential for community learning and sustainability for the wider organisation. Secondly, the Enable Pilot has further enhanced this approach, by actively engaging with the very hard to reach.

The Enable Project is, with a very challenging client group, attempting to provide a bridge between socio-economic inactivity to supportive learning and wider community engagement. Whilst not currently meeting the target of engaging with 60 learners in 2007/08, the project would appear to be delivering learning activity

relatively successfully with the help of learning champions to learners with mental health needs.