



**Annual Review 2010-2011**

**Adult Education, Learning and Skills**



**Learning Link Scotland** is the national organisation representing the interests of adult education, learning and skills delivered by the voluntary sector.

We promote, support and **represent** a dynamic membership of organisations across Scotland. In partnership we develop innovative programmes for professional development and evaluation.

Our **Members** are voluntary organisations providing a wide range of adult education, learning and skills opportunities. They are leaders in addressing inequalities, empowering people and communities, and effecting positive change.

By working together, we take **preventative** action, improve opportunities for communities and contribute significantly to Scotland's National Outcomes.

In **2010-11** we embraced a number of changes throughout the year from the status of the organisation to staff changes.

In April, HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) carried out and reported a very positive review of the organisation and its services. We became incorporated with Companies House in June 2010, trading as a company with charitable status in the latter six months of the year. We have two accounting periods for the year; however our annual review will highlight the activity and achievements over the full year.

While Jayne Stuart our Director was on maternity leave from June, Susan Walls took on Acting Director and we welcomed Shirley Howitt from WEA Scotland on secondment to the team in managing the policy work. We also welcomed David Bass, Apsara Goonesekera and Gillian McKay to the support roles in the organisation and the Executive Committee took on the roles of Board of Directors.

During these changes the work of raising the profile of voluntary adult learning sector and influencing the Scottish Government's Adult Literacy Strategy continued. We worked in partnership with Evaluation Support Scotland and the members to evidence the impact of the sector and share this with policy makers.

We explored the possibility of an adult learning award with practitioners and developed a new online toolkit for members. All the above highlights will be described further in the review.

So as we move into the next year we want to consolidate the achievements we've made, retain consistency, and build on the achievements by reviewing the structure and roles of the organisation for the future.

We want to thank the Board of Directors, staff, Members, partners and Funders for another successful year and look forward to reporting on next year's achievements.

**George Thomson** Chair

**Susan Walls** Acting Director



## Endorsing Our Role

In mid April we undertook a review of the organisation with HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), commissioned by the Scottish Government. Using the framework *How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development?* (2) we achieved a positive report shown by the quality indicators in the table that are used to evaluate the organisation.

They found our key strengths to be; well targeted work with member organisations leading to very good outcomes for practitioners, the range and quality of events run at national, regional and local level, very effective partnership working with members and stakeholders and high regard for Learning Link Scotland amongst the adult learning sector and Scottish Government colleagues.

### Quality Indicators

Improvements in performance	very good
Impact on participants	very good
Impact on the community	good
Impact on paid and voluntary staff	very good
Inclusion, equality and fairness	good
Participation of service users and stakeholders	good
Operational planning	good
Leadership and direction	very good

## Growing the community and improving intelligence

Our network of Members and Partners, our growing community are essential to our mission and vision. We are developing our online presence, connecting with other education and third sector networks and developing partnerships to expand our reach. We launched the new website, with Members only access with information and tools, profiling the Members work and aim to grow the intelligence on the sector to share with Members and Partners.

**97%** of participants who attended our programmes said they had increased their knowledge and understanding



## Achieving Excellence

Over the year we ran a series of events and programmes across Scotland designed to enhance CPD and improve organisational sustainability.

To support our Members in developing Quality approaches, we ran a one day workshop Evidencing our Success, which aimed to increase the understanding of the process of Inspection and Review currently carried out by HMle and increase knowledge of HGIOCLD? (2), a tool for self-evaluation. All the participants reported increased knowledge and understanding due to the training.

We attracted **168** delegates from the voluntary and public sectors to our events this year.

## Enhancing Services

Our national conference this year, Creative Times, allowed participants to explore a number of areas that are key to the delivery of services; designing and delivering choice and range within adult education, improving Quality in adult education and increasing sustainability of services through improvements in evaluation and social enterprise.

It was varied, interactive and up-beat; we had presentations on concepts, professional development and policy. The highlight of the event proved to be the 12 Session Bites – mini workshops hosted by Members to show case their work and run dialogues with the conference participants.

Very good conference, a good culture of exploration and engagement by participants.

Conference delegate

## Increasing Sustainability

Developing our programmes and services in partnership will help to increase our sustainability.

“Explaining the Difference” (EtD) our innovative approach to evaluation was delivered in partnership with Evaluation Support Scotland. We ran a successful programme of 7 training events, in 6 different locations under the national CLD Upskilling the Workforce programme. We’ve developed the pack as an online resource which members can access via our website.

This programme has added to my skills base and I intend to do more in this area.

EtD delegate

Great opportunity to share practice and ideas

EtD workshop delegate

In partnership with WEA Scotland we reported our findings in September on the Embedding the Curriculum Wheel and we carried out a follow up survey with CLD Partnerships and developed resources. These findings and ideas have been taken on board by Education Scotland.

With Rosemount Lifelong Learning and Glasgow CVS we’ve begun to test the appetite for an award in Adult Learning. We’ll be taking this forward next year.



## Representing the sector

Our Strategic Partnership Agreement with Scottish Government supported us to represent the Members at 19 national committees and groups this year as well as attend meetings with partners, MSPs and NDPBs on practice and policy agendas. We were invited to 11 external events to raise the profile of adult learning delivered by the voluntary sector. Two key committees were the Strategic Adult Literacies Group and the National CLD Up-skilling the Workforce Board. We ensure that voluntary sector are promoted as national and local delivery of CPD and to ensure Members can take up CPD opportunities.

Measuring impact and evidencing outcomes are an integral part of my role. It is important to me to continue to develop my skills in this area.

Explaining the Difference participant

## Influencing Policy

The Adult Literacies Strategy for Scotland 2020 needed to reflect the work and innovation of the Members. Over forty-two percent of our Members deliver literacy programmes. We were invited to represent the sector at this national group to help shape the strategy. We believe the outcomes of the strategy have been strengthened because of the Member's input.

Our information service aimed to inform Members on education developments in Scotland in particular Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). The sector can be a key provider in supporting CfE aims as the learner's place is at the centre of the learning provision.

## Stimulating debate

It is challenging times for the voluntary sector and we created the opportunity for Members to hear from and talk with national agencies that are setting or implementing the Lifelong Learning and the Community Learning and Development policy agendas. The Plan for the Future event held in Edinburgh offered Members the chance to engage with Scottish Government, Learning and Teaching Scotland, CLD Standards Council and Skills Development Scotland. Feedback from members helped shape our future ideas; a Policy Forum for members to discuss the issues that affect them and a place they can share these with policy makers.

Voluntary Organisations must keep raising awareness of what they are achieving collectively for Scotland's residents.

National Agency Representative



## Strengthening the organisation

By the end of the year we had completed the change in legal status of the organisation with OSCR and Companies House to become a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Going into the third year of the Big Lottery Fund investment we are developing products and services with the aim of creating a more sustainable model of delivery by the end of the 5 years. Investment in staff skills and knowledge in social enterprise and leadership are essential in strengthening the organisation. We would like to thank the Scottish Government for supporting our staff development in these areas this year.

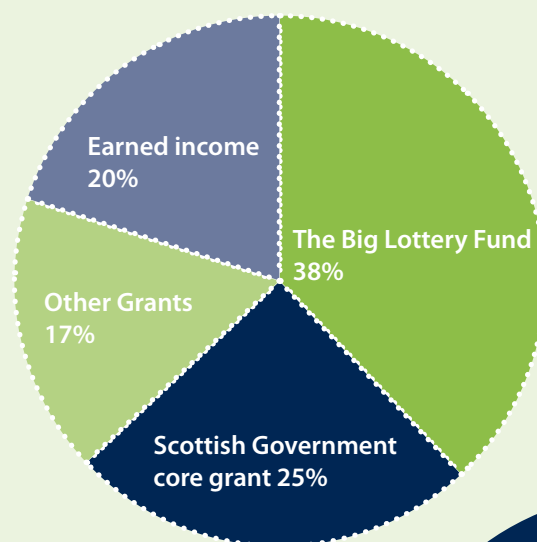
**85%** of the delegates said that their expectations of the event attended were fully met or exceeded

The main sources of our income over the course of the year are shown in the chart. We have two sets of accounts for the year, six months for the charity and the remaining six months we traded as a company. Please contact us if you would like full copies of these accounts.

Our auditors were Cowan & Partners, Edinburgh.

We would like to thank our trustees who worked closely with the staff team during the transition from charity into the new company. We would like to thank the Big Lottery Fund, Scottish Government and Learning and Teaching Scotland, who have been our main supporters over the course of the year.

### Income sources 2010-11



#### Executive Committee (April 2010)

The Board	(October 2010)
George Thomson	Chair
Fiona Craig	Vice-Chair
Joyce Connon	Treasurer
Asma Abdalla	
Stephen Fernand	
Kenny Anderson	
Jack Dyce	
Lara Moir	
Jackie Slater	
Sarah Cox	

#### Staff Team (April 2010)

Jayne Stuart	Director
Susan Walls	Deputy Director
Shirley Grieve	Head of Practice
Stephanie Haigh	Administration

#### Staff Team (June 2010 – March 2011)

Susan Walls	Acting Director
Shirley Grieve	Head of Practice
Shirley Howitt	Policy Manager
David Bass	Information
Apsara Goonesekera	Administration
Gillian McKay	Finance Officer



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