

Annual Review 2015-2016

Lead Scotland
Princes House, 5 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh, EH2 4RG
Tel: 0131 228 9441
Fax: 0131 229 6941
Email: enquiries@lead.org.uk
Web: www.lead.org.uk
Scottish Charity Number: SC003949



Contents

Foreword from the Chair of the Board	3
Overview from the Chief Executive Officer	4
The Year in Review	
Who We Are	6
Our Learner Profiles	7
How We Offer Support	8
Our Lasting Impact	9
Investor in Volunteers	10
Strategic Funding Partnership	11
Regional Development North	12
Aberdeenshire Activity Agreements	13
Aberdeenshire Literacies Partnership	14
Highland	15
Moray	16
Regional Development South	18
Dundee	19
Fife Integrated Literacies	20
Fife Befriending Project	21
North Lanarkshire	22
Perth and Kinross	23
Head Office	25
Information Service	25
Influencing Change	26
Finance and Office Manager	28
Who's Who	29
Thank You	30

This report can be provided in a variety of accessible formats, including a plain text version. Please contact us at enquiries@lead.org.uk or 0131 228 9441.

Chair of the Board

Alan Goodman



The passion and enthusiasm of our staff and volunteers for delivering our services remains undiminished.

Another challenging year, but a year that has seen Lead make significant progress. During the year we have been able to support 280 marginalised disabled people and carers to engage in learning. They have achieved goals that many thought were beyond them, meaning they have been able to engage and participate in their communities, with family and friends. Importantly 79% of learners said after six months they were still using the skills they learned whilst at Lead. This is very rewarding for all the staff and volunteers, without whom this could not be achieved.

The passion and enthusiasm of our staff and volunteers for delivering our services remains undiminished during difficult and uncertain times. They have been enthusiastically led by Emma Whitelock who took over the role as CEO towards the end of 2015, and supported by a Board of Directors who share that passion for what Lead Scotland is able to deliver to its learners.

We also owe a big debt of gratitude for the continued financial support from the trusts that have supported us for many years and our local authority and Scottish Government partners. Their financial support allows us to deliver our services across a number of geographical areas of Scotland. This geographical reach is still limited, and our ultimate objective is to expand our services and reach, so that a significantly higher number of disabled people, carers and others across Scotland, who are experiencing social or educational exclusion or isolation, can benefit from Lead's services.

It's a challenging time for all charities, and Lead is no exception. Many of the challenges we have met over the last year will remain with us next year but with the enthusiasm and dedication that I've witnessed over the last few years from staff and volunteers, almost anything is possible.

Thanks to everybody that has helped us deliver such an important and invaluable service.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Goodman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alan Goodman

Chief Executive Officer

Emma Whitelock



This has been a successful year for Lead, increasing our reach and impact, within a challenging context for the voluntary sector.

Nationally, 2015-16 was a significant year for adult learning in Scotland. The policy context is now stronger than it has been in decades. The work of the Strategic Forum for Adult Learning, of which Lead is an active member, has been recognised within the annual programme of government. This year Lead has seized new opportunities by Co-Chairing the national Family Learning Working group bringing the national statement of Ambition for Adult Learning to life.

We were absolutely delighted to be chosen to pilot the new learner-centred Adult Achievement Awards at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 6, enabling more learners and volunteers to reflect on previous informal and non-formal learning to gain accreditation.

Locally, we made a difference through effective frontline services and nationally through our helpline and policy work. In 2015 we held a successful annual conference, bringing 130 cross-sector delegates together and involving disabled people in responding to eight national policy consultations (see p.25).

There's always more work to be done. For example, some learners require ongoing support in order to maintain and develop their learning and skills. We continue to work hard with a range of cross-sector partners to create positive, sustained transitions and pathways. We are delighted to have opened a new Befriending Service this year which creates greater breadth and depth of services within Fife for disabled people (see p.20). We have introduced a new James Hill Learner of the Year Award to celebrate learners' achievements. Additionally, we unveiled our fantastic new accessible website which positively showcases even more learner and volunteer journeys.

I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to Lead's staff, Board and volunteers who continue to be such an inspiring team, working with great energy and integrity to offer learners the very best services. Thank you! Volunteers are absolutely crucial to our success and we are delighted to report an increase from 33% to 41% of learners receiving volunteer support to learn this year. We are also proud that 30% of our volunteers are themselves disabled people.

Lead is extremely grateful to the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, local authorities and our other funders for the critical core infrastructure and project funding they provide. We are indebted to the trusts (detailed in our audited accounts) for their crucial funding support, enabling us to deliver services.

Looking ahead to our next three year plan, we are ambitious and optimistic that with your support we can empower even more disabled people and carers to improve their lives with higher levels of confidence, increased knowledge and skills. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Emma Whitelock'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Emma Whitelock
ewhitelock@lead.org.uk



Six learners from Robertson Road Resource Centre in Fraserburgh receive their Certificates of Achievement from Lead after attending a 10-week literacy group to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Two learners achieved SVQ Core Skill Units at SCQF Level 2. The group was supported by the Aberdeenshire Learning Co-ordinator Barbara Taylor (far left), Key Worker at Robertson Road Resource Centre Margaret Morrice (back centre) and volunteers including Shirley Leask (second right).

One learner said “Before I started the course I was worried that I would fail the assessments and that I would feel stressed with the work. I feel relieved because I proved myself wrong.”

Who We Are

Our Vision

- Lead Scotland's vision is of a Scotland where disabled people and carers of disabled people achieve their potential in an inclusive learning landscape.

Our Mission

- Empower disabled people and carers of disabled people to make well informed choices and engage confidently in learning.
- Provide person centred, individualised support for learning.
- Combat exclusion from learning.
- Inform and influence the development of policy and learning provision.

Our Strategic Aims During 2013-2016

- Supporting more learners and increasing our range of services.
- Influencing policy and strategy, promoting inclusion.
- Sustainability and growth to reach more disabled people and carers.



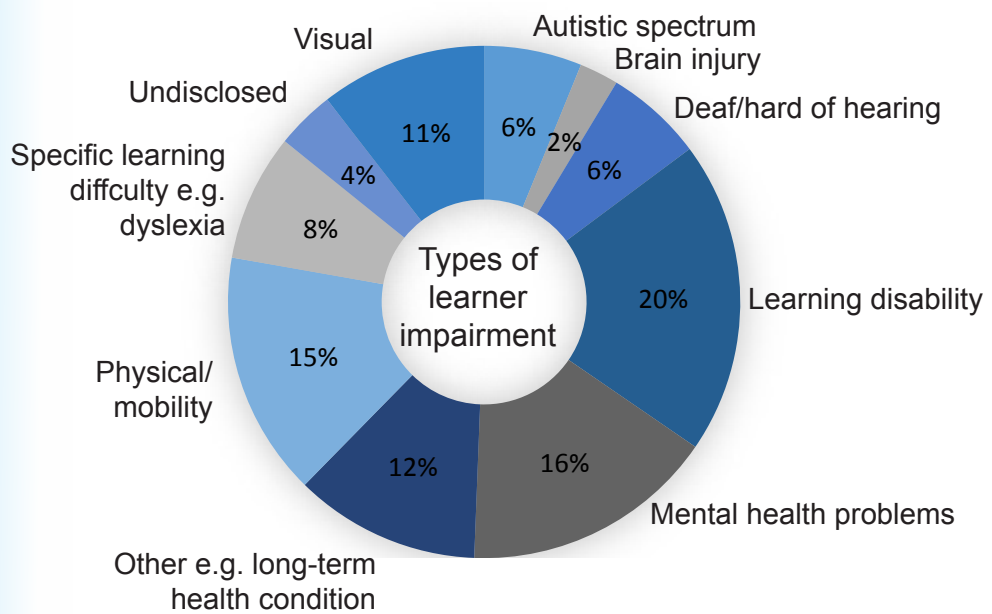
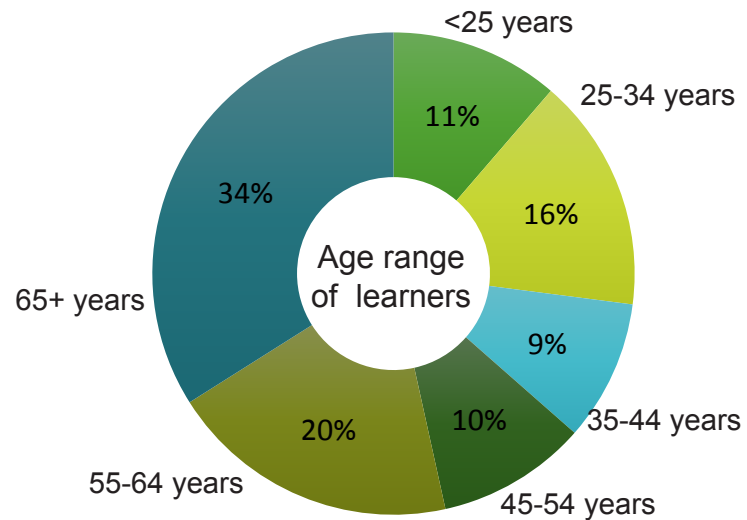
Our Learner Profiles

Lead Scotland supports a wide variety of disabled people and carers to pursue enriching life-long and life-wide learning opportunities.

- 280 learners engaged in formal and/or non-formal learning opportunities, exceeding our target by 40%.
- 41% of learners supported by volunteers
- 52 home loan computers and assistive technologies, exceeding our annual target of 50.
- 1260 recorded hours of impartial educational guidance.
- 273 courses undertaken by learners.
- 70 assistive technology self-assessments completed, exceeding our target by 17%.
- 199 learners supported to use enabling technology by staff, volunteers and other organisations, exceeding our target by 53%.

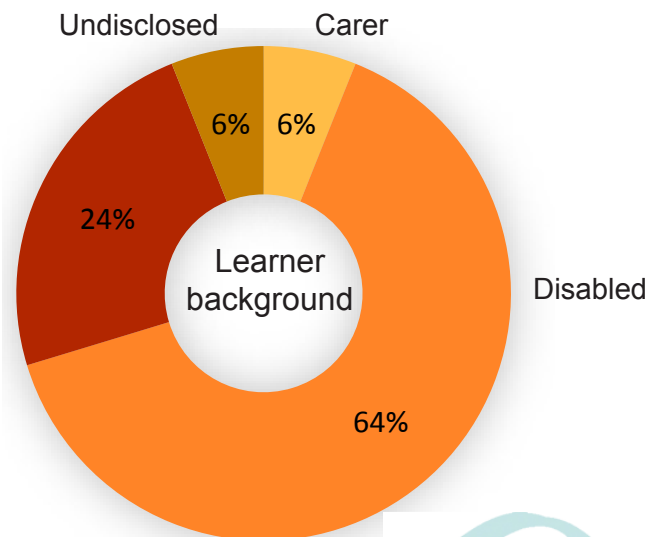
“I am very much looking forward to getting out and building up confidence not only in daily tasks but in working towards what I’d like to study.”

Aberdeenshire Learner



“I feel positive about starting to progress towards something that will help me make more out of my potential and life in general.”

Aberdeenshire Learner

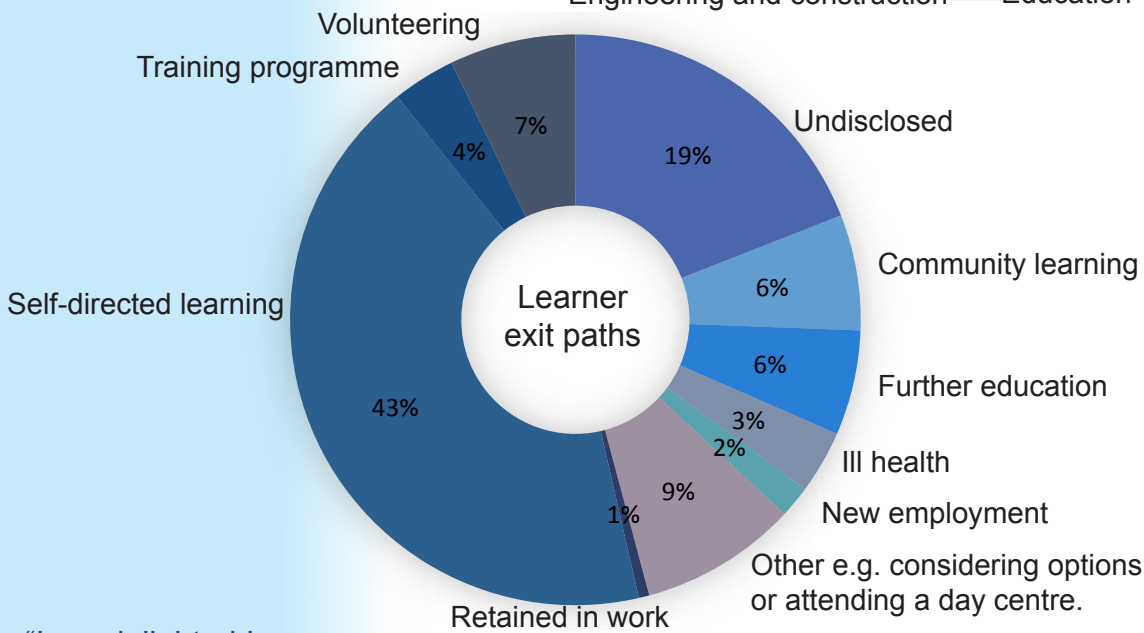
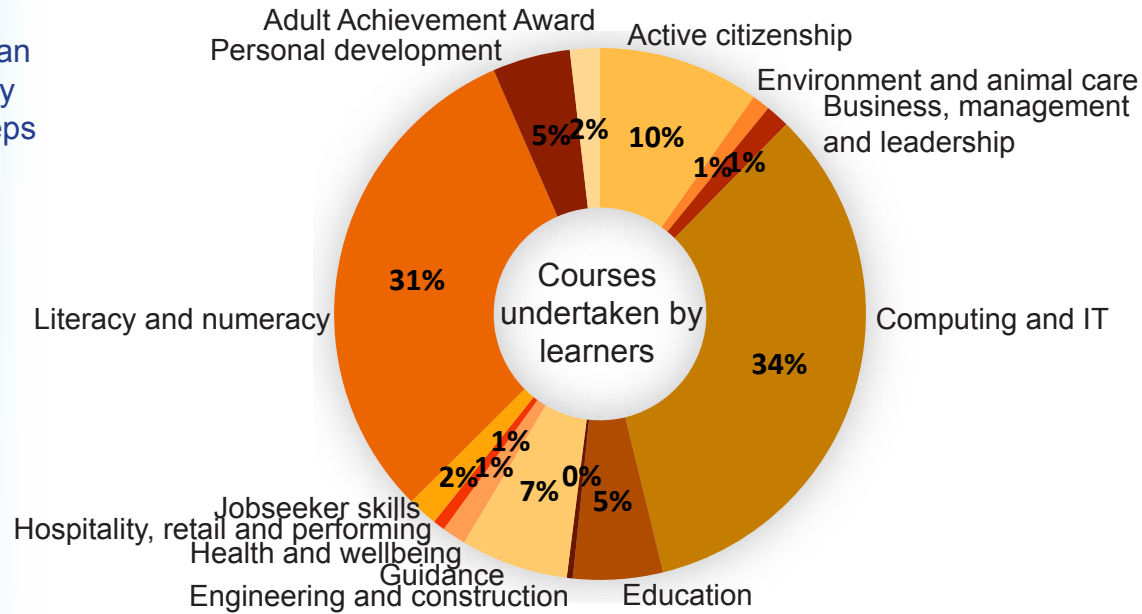


How We Offer Support

Lead Scotland empowers learners to meet their individually tailored learning goals through the support of local Learning Co-ordinators and Lead Volunteers. Learning opportunities are facilitated either on a one-to-one or group basis, in both home and community settings.

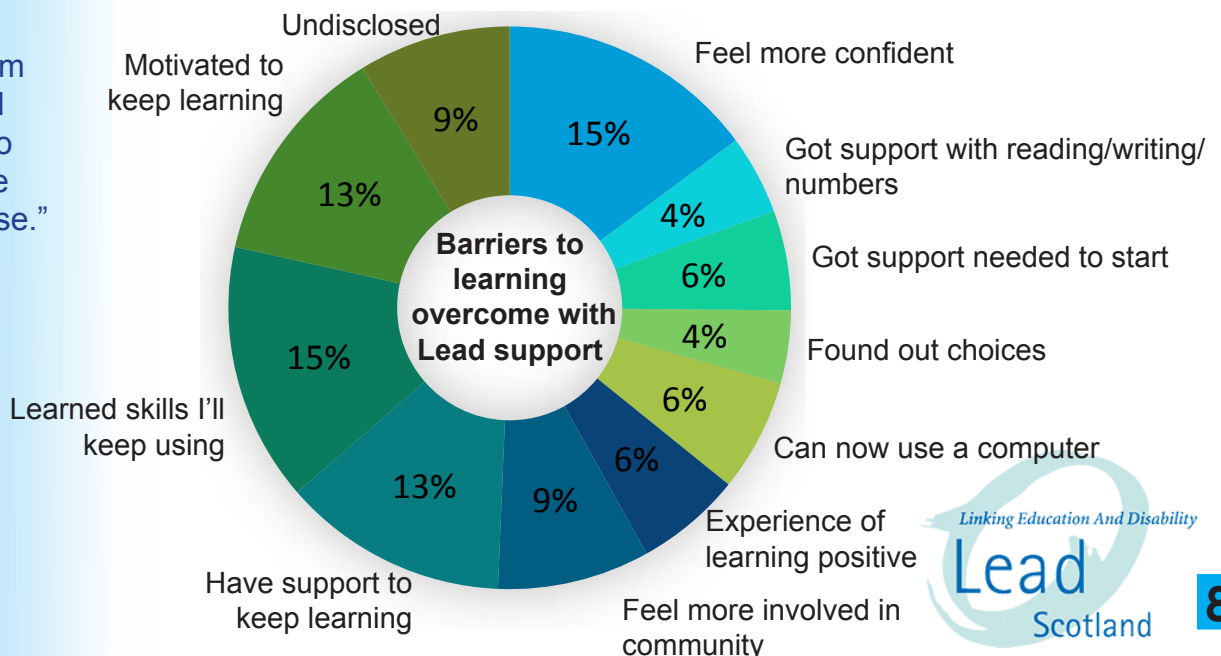
“If I believe in myself I can achieve anything. It may be difficult, but small steps make a big difference.”

Moray Learner



“I am delighted I passed my assessments. I am happy with what I have been able to achieve and have enjoyed the course.”

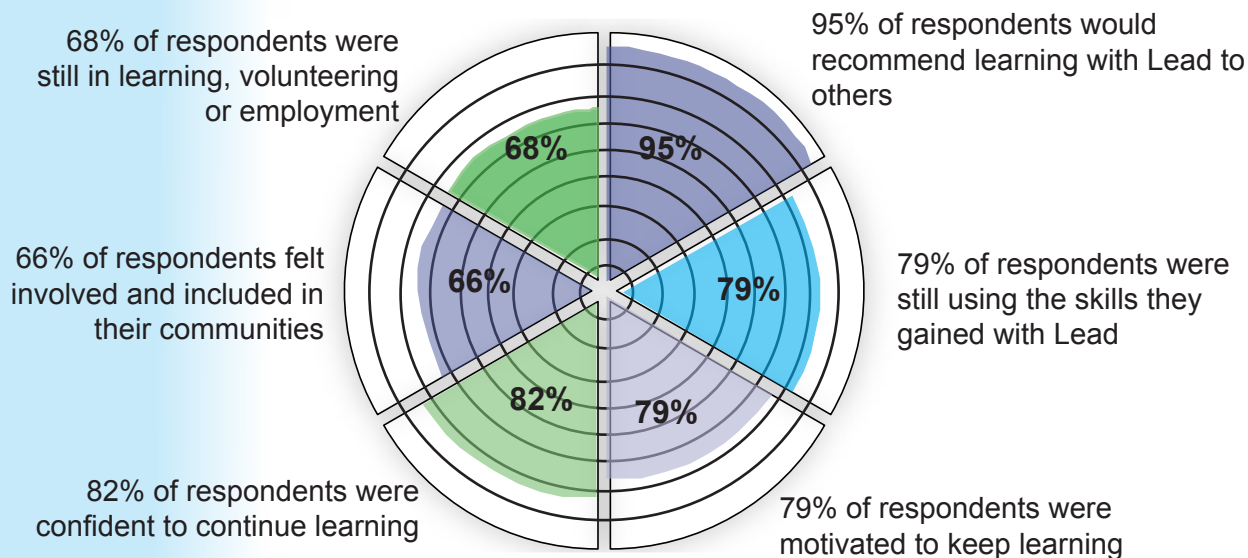
Aberdeenshire Learner



Our Lasting Impact



At Lead Scotland we are committed to ensuring that our support has significant and long-lasting positive effects in the lives of our learners. To assess the effectiveness of our approach, we tracked all learners six months after their last contact with Lead.



“I can’t thank Jan (staff member) enough for the help she gave me, and I’m using the skills she taught me on a daily basis.”

Moray Learner

“I was a little bit nervous when I started the group, but by the end of the course it left me with more confidence. I was able to participate a lot more than usual because it was a small group.”

Highland Learner

“I was quick to run away from things and give up but Lead taught me that even if you don’t like something you have to stick with it to be part of the adult world.”

Moray Learner

Mandy Attains Adult Achievement Award

“Amy (Learning Co-ordinator) came into my life at exactly the right point. I had been withdrawn and was frightened of people. The home visit was really important. Amy came to the house so, when I couldn’t get my words out, my mum was able to step in for me. By the next visit I was used to Amy. She has a way of making you feel at ease. I really wanted to start volunteering and going out but I was very worried about it. Amy understood the barriers. She offered to accompany me on a visit to a volunteer placement.”

That was then. Fast forward six months and Mandy now volunteers three times a week and “absolutely loves it”. She also supports a Lead learner who experiences agoraphobia. Mandy was one of the first people in Scotland to achieve the Adult Achievement Award at SCQF Level 4 - an amazing achievement!

Mandy says “I love what I do now. I feel part of society and I don’t give myself such a hard time. My mum can definitely see the change in me. She told me ‘I’m back’. I feel I’m about 80-85% back to who I used to be and I was probably 30% about eight months ago.”

Read more of Mandy’s [journey towards the Adult Achievement Award](#) on our website. Well done Mandy!

Investor in Volunteers

Lead Scotland relies on a fantastic team of volunteers across Scotland who undertake a variety of tasks, from delivering learning opportunities to fundraising. Lead has continuously held the quality standard Investing in Volunteers since 2005 and 91% of our volunteers surveyed in 2015 felt that their Lead volunteering opportunity had matched their needs and motivations.



Why Volunteers Join Lead Scotland

* comments from our [2015 Volunteer Impact Survey](#).

“The smile on their faces when everything clicks”

“I have moved into employment then on to college as a result of my volunteering”

“Meeting all the fantastic learners who are so keen to develop new skills”

“The support and training opportunities”

“Working with your amazingly dedicated Learning Co-ordinators and office staff”

- 57% of Lead volunteers report an improved understanding of the barriers experienced by disabled people and/or carers and how they can be overcome.
- 52% of Lead volunteers report feeling more included and involved with their communities.



Dr Ethel Gray Volunteer of the Year Award 2015
Jan Marshall

Jan shows off her award

“Receiving the Volunteer of the Year Award from Lead felt like an amazing acknowledgement of the work I share with our learners. As a Lead volunteer I have experienced a real sense of belonging to a truly worthwhile organisation. I have been supported and encouraged to develop my abilities as a volunteer. The opportunities to take part in personal development certificates has boosted my confidence on both a personal level as well as with learners and care providers. Dawn, my Co-ordinator, values and appreciates my efforts and thanks me in person as well as in emails. It is wonderful to feel so cared for and nurtured by Lead which in turn helps me to share this wonderful ethos with our learners.” Read more about Jan and the [Volunteer of the Year Award](#) on our website.

Supporting our Volunteers to Learn

Our 2015 Volunteer Impact Survey showed that 57% of Lead volunteers were seeking accreditation through volunteering. The Adult Achievement Awards are one such accreditation route for volunteers. Lead was delighted to be selected as one of the organisations to pilot the Awards as part of the implementation of the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning, highlighted in the Programme of Government 2015-2016. Since its launch, five Lead volunteers and learners have worked towards an Adult Achievement Award.

Strategic Funded Partnership

Exceeding our Targets



Education Scotland core funds Lead Scotland via a strategic funding partnership. This year we performed well and exceeded targets for many of our strategic outcomes.

1 Enhanced life chances for disabled people, carers and others at risk of educational and social exclusion through access to quality learning opportunities and sustained positive outcomes.

- 280 learners engaged in learning opportunities, exceeding our target by 40%.
- When learners were tracked at six months, 79% of respondents were still using the skills they gained with Lead.

2 Increased digital literacy and participation through improved access to enabling and/or assistive technology.

- 70 assistive technology self-assessments completed, exceeding our target by 17%.
- 199 learners supported to use enabling technology by staff, volunteers and other organisations, exceeding our target by 53%.

3 More supportive and cohesive communities, through inclusive volunteering and active citizenship.

- 57% of volunteers were supported to gain accreditation such as the Adult Achievement Award.
- 19 learners were supported by Lead to undertake the specially-designed Community Action and Leadership course (CALA) which encourages learners to become active citizens.

4 National and local policy better meets the needs and aspirations of disabled people, carers and others at risk of educational and social exclusion.

- Eight submissions to government consultations and parliamentary committees advocating for the rights of disabled people.
- 130 attendees at Lead's 2015 national conference. Of those delegates surveyed after the conference, 90% had learned something new.

5 Lead's national helpline and information service meets the needs of disabled people, supporters and practitioners through the provision of high quality/relevant information, guidance and advice.

- This year we received 153 in-depth enquiries to our information service (email and helpline), exceeding our target of 150.
- Queries came from 17 local authority areas in Scotland (see p.24).

6 Disabled/disadvantaged learners, volunteers and practitioners will support and work towards achieving the national priorities for the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning in Scotland

- Learning Co-ordinators were trained to deliver the Adult Achievement Awards; so far four learners have successfully achieved a qualification at SCQF Levels 3, 4 and 6.
- Lead is the co-chair of the Family Learning sub-group.

Regional Development North



Coming fresh to Lead Scotland in July 2015, the last year has been a steep learning curve for this Regional Development Manager. The first priority was to ensure that the portfolio of work developed by my predecessor Roisin Connolly was managed effectively, developed where necessary and sustained through to another year's funding.

While there have been a few white knuckle moments along the way, I'm pleased to report that the main local authority contracts and service level agreements with Aberdeenshire, Moray and Highland Councils have been renewed for 2016-2017 despite increasingly austere financial conditions. We have also managed to develop some new work strands in Highland and Aberdeen City, and recruited a new part time Learning Co-ordinator for Highland.

The lion's share of the credit for these successes must go to Learning Co-ordinators Barbara Taylor and Suzi Hughes, as well as Sessional Worker Lucy Hawkins, all of whom have worked hard to deliver a very high quality service to learners, as well as managing volunteers and putting in the long hours of travel that are required when delivering a service in remote and rural areas. They have also greatly enhanced Lead Scotland's reputation by establishing strong and positive working relationships with local funders and partners.

We have continued our active involvement with a range of local forums and partnerships, including the North Alliance Strategy Group, the Highland Adult Learning Partnership and the Aberdeenshire Learning Communities Partnership, and we work effectively with other public sector and third sector organisations to generate referrals and to share information and good practice. In Highland, a new partnership with Cantraybridge College near Inverness to deliver the Community Action and Leadership Awards course to a group of their students has been a great success.

For me, it has also been a privilege to be able to contribute in some small ways to Lead's strategic and organisational development and its communications work, working as part of a strong and purposeful management team.

Looking to the future, we have to consider now what is going to happen in the year 2017-2018, when funders have once again warned us of a lack of any certainty of continuation funding. We have begun exploring possibilities for new funding to allow us to expand the service provided by Lead in the North, including the possibility of delivering the Community Action and Leadership course to prisoners in HMP Grampian. We are also talking to other local authorities about developing new services in their areas.

The need for the unique suite of services that Lead Scotland can provide is greater than ever, and I am confident that the coming year will see an expansion in our work in the North as we find new ways to meet that need.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norman MacAskill'.

Norman MacAskill
Regional Development Manager North
nmacaskill@lead.org.uk

Aberdeenshire Activity Agreements

100%

of learners received a home visit from the Learning Co-ordinator

41

courses were undertaken by 11 learners, including Active Citizenship and Jobseeker Skills - an average of 3.7 per learner

85%

of learners reported an increase in confidence while being supported by Lead

Project Description

Lead supports disabled young people between the ages of 16 and 19 through Activity Agreements (AA) via one-to-one contact with the Learning Co-ordinator. This work takes forward the Scottish Government's national indicator, "to increase the proportion of young people in Learning, Training and Work". Courses undertaken by learners have a particular focus on attainment, citizenship and employability and include accreditation such as the Saltire Award.

Celebrating Success

- 100% of learners progressed onto positive destinations after their time with Lead including new employment, volunteering and further education.
- 80% of learners interviewed at closure said that they were more confident about learning new things and had learned skills that they would keep on using.
- One learner was supported by the Learning Co-ordinator to interview for and successfully obtain a place at college to study SCQF Level 5 Nursing.
- The Learning Co-ordinator has developed positive working relationships with other local agencies such as Aberdeenshire South Skills Development Scotland.
- Four young people in Angus achieved SCQF Level 3 Community Action and Leadership via Skills Development Scotland's Employability Fund with 100% moving onto positive exit paths (facilitated by Aberdeenshire Learning Co-ordinator).

Moving Forward

- We are developing the service to offer increased post Activity Agreement work to support the next steps taken by young people.

The Learner Experience

A learner who had been forced to leave college due to a lack of support was referred to Lead Aberdeenshire AA. They were experiencing continuous low mood and had been demonstrating threatening behaviour. With support from the Learning Co-ordinator, the learner was able to exercise greater control over their mood swings. They began to positively think about their future and applied for volunteering placements and part-time jobs while working on their interview technique. The learner began to regularly exercise at the gym and relationships with their family grew stronger. Using the Outcome Star monitoring tool, the learner recognised that they had greatly improved in many areas including wellbeing, communication, making a difference and hopes & dreams. The learner commented that "I'm feeling better about things and hope I get a job."

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Aberdeenshire AA Partners: Employability Partnership, Aberdeenshire Council and Skills Development Scotland.

"I feel more confident about starting college and possibly making new friends. I believe that I can make change."

"My confidence has improved, I feel good about going into work."

"In the future I would like to go to do science - work within that field. I am looking forward to traveling to college on my own."

Aberdeenshire AA Learners

Learning Co-ordinator: Susan Hughes shughes@lead.org.uk

Aberdeenshire Literacies Partnership

100%

of learners reported feeling involved in their communities when tracked six months after last contact with Lead

147

hours educational guidance delivered by the Learning Co-ordinator

80%

of learners were still in learning, employment or volunteering when tracked at six months

Project Description

Lead Scotland is funded by Aberdeenshire Literacies Partnership (ALP) to provide high-quality literacies learning opportunities for disabled adults and their carers in Aberdeenshire. Supporting literacies learning enables our learners to achieve their goals in their family, social and working lives. This service is currently provided two days per week.

Celebrating Success

- 18 learners were supported to reach their individual learning goals.
- 79% of learners reported an increase in confidence while being supported by Lead.
- 14 SCVQ Core Skill Unit Accreditations were achieved by six learners, including Numeracy Level 2 and Communication Levels 2 and 3.
- The Adult Achievement Award was successfully piloted, with one learner achieving the award at Level 3. They plan to continue to volunteer and hope to further develop skills by taking part in a Community Catering Project.
- Learning Co-ordinator Barbara Taylor qualified through Aberdeenshire Council as an SVQ Core Skills Assessor enabling learners to work towards these qualifications up to SCQF Level 4.
- Volunteers were trained to support learners through the Core Skills assessment process.

Moving Forward

- Lead ALP will build on its local partnerships to raise the profile of adult learning services
- Demand remains high but limited staff time and project resources are presenting a challenge.
- The project will conserve resources by working with learners in groups, while continuing to provide one-to-one and home-based support for learners for whom group settings are not suitable.

The Learner Experience

A learner was referred to Lead Scotland ALP by an Employability Support Officer from the Community Mental Health Team. He wanted to improve his literacy as he was concerned that his reading and spelling would hold him back in gaining employment. Due to a lack of confidence in social situations, he had his first sessions with Lead in a familiar environment and was accompanied by his Support Worker. Supported by the Lead Learning Co-ordinator and his Support Worker, he achieved an SCQF Level 2 Core Communication Skill and began to put a CV together. He gained greater confidence in reading and was motivated to practice at home between sessions.

“I know more words now and my reading and spelling is getting better. I can see the benefit of coming along to the sessions and improving my skills”

ALP Learner

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Aberdeenshire ALP Partners: Aberdeenshire Literacies Partnership, Community Learning and Development and the various resource centres in North Aberdeenshire.

Learning Co-ordinator: Barbara Taylor btaylor@lead.org.uk

Highland

28

learners supported by
Lead Scotland in Highland

10

learners loaned home
computers or assistive
technologies

5

courses in Digital
Literacies and Community
Learning and Development
delivered

Project Description

Lead Scotland facilitates a range of learning opportunities for disabled adults and carers in Highland. With funding from Highlife Highland and Highland Council, Lead delivers a customised award in SCQF Level 3 Community Action and Leadership (CALA) to groups of young people. With Digital Participation funding from Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), a Getting Digital course has been delivered by Lead Highland's sessional worker.

Celebrating Success

- Getting Digital course delivered to 18 older people in supported housing in Tain and Dornoch, enabling residents to develop digital and social skills.
- CALA course currently being delivered to seven young people at Cantraybridge College, with a reported increase in learners' confidence and community participation.
- CALA course successfully delivered to three people in Invergordon.

Moving Forward

- The Community Action and Leadership course will run at least at least twice more.
- The Thinking Digitally course will be run for Community Learning and Development practitioners and volunteers.
- The range of services provided by Lead will be expanded to more areas of Highland.
- Volunteers will be recruited to allow the provision of one-to-one support for learners.
- The North Regional Development Manager will endeavour to raise further funds for Lead's projects in Highland.

The Learner Experience

Our CEO Emma Whitelock (centre) was delighted to meet an enthusiastic group of learners at Cantraybridge College that are undertaking Lead's specially designed SCQF Level 3 Community Action and Leadership Award. As part of the course learners are supported to learn about active citizenship and become active members of their communities.



"Normally in a group I'd be really shy and not speak. Now I can because being in the leadership group has boosted my confidence."

Highland CALA Learner

**We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Highland Partners:
Cantraybridge College, Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations,
Highlife Highland and Highland Council.**

Regional Development Manager: Norman MacAskill nmacaskill@lead.org.uk

Moray

75%

of learners at closure felt more confident about learning new things

100%

of learners tracked at six months said they would recommend learning with Lead to others

75%

of learners exited into positive destinations including self-directed learning and volunteering

Project Description

Lead Moray supports disabled adults and carers two days a week to access bespoke learning opportunities tailored to the needs of the individual. Learning is facilitated at Moray College and Moray Resource Centre, while one-to-one home learning support is also provided for learners in Elgin, Findhorn, Forres and Kingston. Referrals are received from a diverse range of public and third sector organisations including Cornerstone and the Moray Council Adult Disability Team.

Celebrating Success

- 13 learners undertook 24 courses with support from the Learning Co-ordinator and volunteers.
- Four learners received laptop loans and assistive technology equipment.
- After their time with Lead, 75% of learners were motivated to continue learning.
- One volunteer achieved a Highly Commended Award in Lead Scotland's Dr Ethel Gray Volunteer of the Year Awards.
- The Learning Co-ordinator delivered an Introduction to ICT Assistive Technology session to four Essential Skills staff and volunteers.
- Volunteers were trained during technology taster sessions to enable them to be more confident supporting learners to use tablet computers.
- The Learning Co-ordinator attained an SQA Assessors Award, enabling learners to be supported to achieve Core Skills accreditation up to SCQF Level 4.



Barbara Taylor, Moray Learning Co-ordinator, with learner David who was supported to update his IT and digital skills and to build his confidence. He said "It has made the learning less stressful and focused on things I want to learn. I can use my computer in my own home."

Moving Forward

- Volunteer numbers are currently a challenge with only two presently available to regularly support learners. Lead Moray will seek to recruit and train more volunteers in the coming year.

The Learner Experience

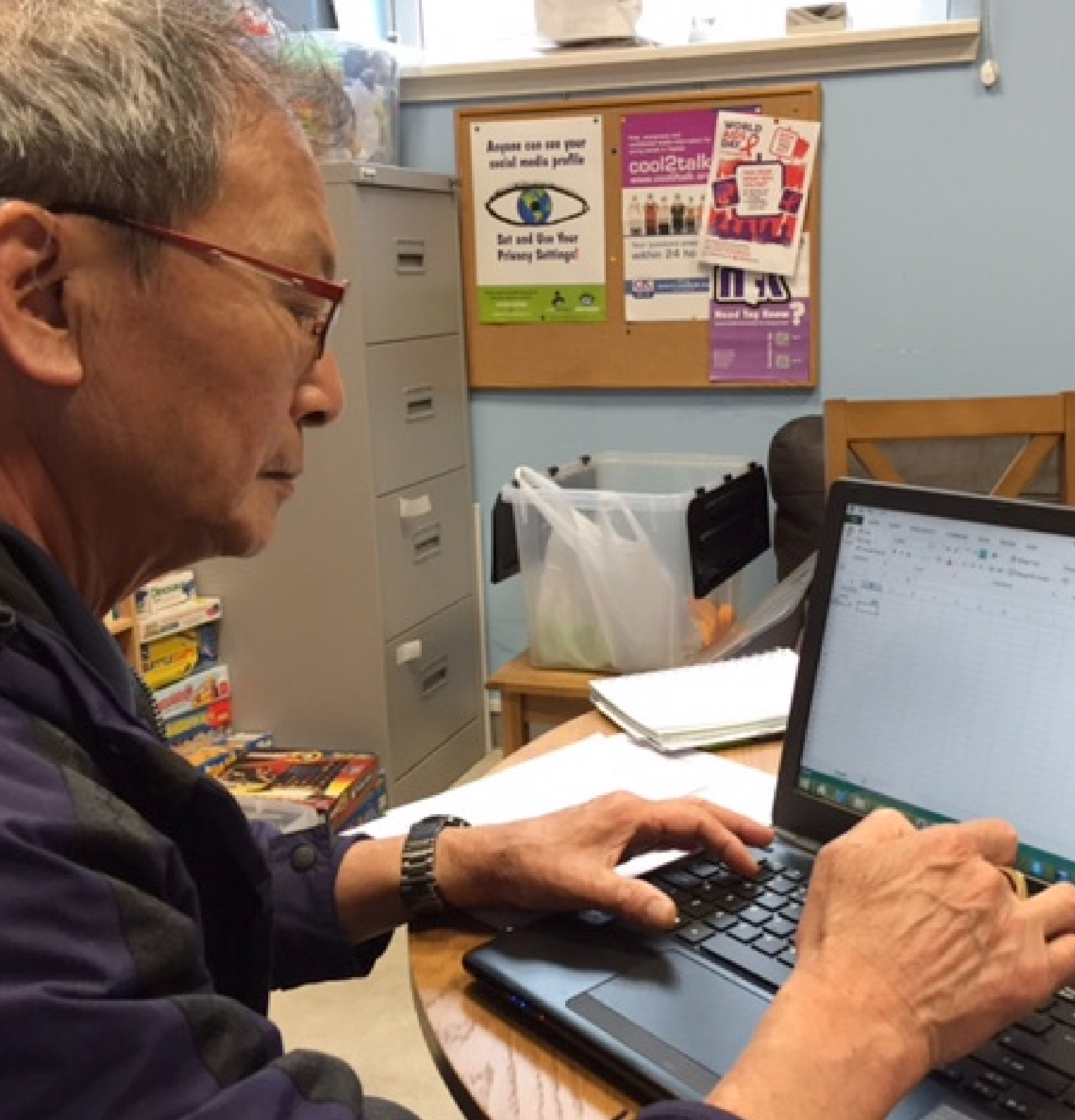
Charles was referred by Moray Resource Centre in Elgin as he wished to recover the digital skills that he had lost following an acquired brain injury. His aims were to learn how to search the internet and send emails. After receiving support from the Learning Co-ordinator and a volunteer, Charles exceeded his goals, became confident in using his computer independently and even learned how to send text messages.

"I can now text my son, my wife and other people now. I'm more confident in using a computer than I was before. I understand things better."

Charles, Moray learner

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Moray partners: Moray Council and Moray College UHI.

Learning Co-ordinator: Barbara Taylor btaylor@lead.org.uk



Learner Alexander was supported by Perth and Kinross Learning Co-ordinator Gail Phillips to use email and search online for volunteering opportunities. As a Tai Chi teacher, he wanted to find local groups that could benefit from his skills.

Alexander says: “Since you teach me computer skill I have improved it. I would like to say thank you. I am late learner. It is late better than never. I will keep learning in my computer skill. That is good for my memory. I could gain new technique and can use email to communicate with friends and family in Hong Kong. Go into the internet find out some information about teaching Tai Chi and volunteering at a walking group. Thank you very much indeed.”

Regional Development South



All of our projects successfully secured further funding which enabled the continuation of our frontline services to meet the ongoing need. Again our targets were achieved, and in the majority of cases were exceeded. Our projects received positive evaluations by funders, and we were able to show the significant difference and evidence the impact the services make.

We have continued to work with a range of local, regional and national level delivery partners which is the key to our success, working closely with our existing partners and forging new partners, where appropriate.

As well as continuing to successfully deliver our existing projects, I am delighted to report that we were successful in securing three year funding for a new Befriending Service in Fife, set up to support disabled adults and carers people to overcome isolation and loneliness by bringing new opportunities and people into their lives (see p.20). I am also pleased to report that we have secured several capacity building contracts in Perth, where we have been commissioned to build the digital skills of Perth and Kinross staff to increase tenant participation through digital technology.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Lead's Board, our CEO, and most importantly our dedicated team of Learning Co-ordinators, who have each achieved outstanding year-on-year performance for our projects and are the reason for our continued success in the face of a difficult funding climate.

Just a few highlights from each of the projects!

Last year we started a new Digital Skills project funded by Perth and Kinross Council to address the wider digitalization agenda and the impact of this on our learners. This year our project won the bronze medal "Securing the Future" award (see p.22). Our dedicated team of Friends of Lead North Lanarkshire volunteers have successfully raised several thousand pounds for our North Lanarkshire service. Similarly, our Friends of Lead Dundee volunteers have been successful in fundraising for our Dundee service. Our Fife Integrated Literacies project has achieved impressive results (see p.19) and last but not least our newest Fife Befriending project is being coordinated with considerable skill.

Through both the individual and collective team approach to our work, I am confident that we can achieve continued growth and success of our services in the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Fernand". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Stephen Fernand
Regional Development Manager South
sfernand@lead.org.uk

Dundee

89%

of learners received
an initial home visit

113

educational guidance
hours delivered by the
Learning Co-ordinator

37

learners during
2015-2016

Project Description

Lead Scotland receives funding from the Dundee Partnership to provide accessible learning opportunities for disabled people in Dundee three days a week. Using a person-centred approach, the Learning Co-ordinator and volunteers support learners to establish and work towards individual learning goals in both group settings and on a one-to-one basis.

Celebrating Success

- Four learners undertook courses at SCQF Levels 3-5, including Cake Decoration Level 5.
- Learners were supported into a range of positive destinations after their time with Lead, including further education, community-based learning and employment.
- 17 dedicated volunteers facilitated learning opportunities throughout the year.
- A Lead Dundee volunteer gained an SCQF Level 4 qualification in the national pilot of the Adult Achievement Award - her first learning opportunity in over 10 years.
- Four young people in Angus achieved SCQF Level 3 Community Action and Leadership via Skills Development Scotland's Employability Fund with 100% moving onto positive exit paths (facilitated by Dundee Learning Co-ordinator).

Moving Forward

- Lead Dundee will extend its project and recruit more volunteers by raising the profile of the organisation in the locality. This will be achieved by pursuing advertising opportunities and building relationships with local organisations.
- An IT skills course will be developed in partnership with the Craigowl division of the Hillcrest Group Housing Association to meet current high demand.
- Following its success, the Adult Achievement Award pilot will be extended.
- The volunteer group Friends of Lead Dundee, which raises vital funds for projects, will seek to increase its numbers.
- Community income generation activities will be extended through the implementation of a fundraising plan, facilitated by the Friends of Lead committee. Funds will be used to purchase learning resources and assistive technologies.

The Learner Experience

A learner who suffered from severe agoraphobia and anxiety was referred to Lead Dundee as he hoped to improve his IT skills and gain confidence. He particularly wanted to gain independence through learning how to shop online. Although initially nervous, the learner was determined to develop new skills and was supported by the Learning Co-ordinator and volunteers to progress at his own pace. He gained confidence through developing his interest in music and learned how to create playlists and research albums online. This has reduced his anxiety and he hopes to build enough confidence to begin to get out and participate in his local community.

“Thanks to Lead I feel that I am getting back to being the old me. I feel my independence coming back and that makes such a difference to me and my family.”

Dundee Learner

**We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Dundee partners:
The Dundee Partnership and Hillcrest Group Housing.**

Learning Co-ordinator: Amy Browne abrowne@lead.org.uk

Fife Integrated Literacies

259

hours of educational guidance delivered by the Learning Co-ordinator

87%

of learners received an initial home visit

100%

of learners tracked six months after last contact were still using skills they had gained with Lead

Project Description

Fife Learning Co-ordinator and volunteers facilitate person-centred learning in both home and community settings to enable learners to develop literacy, numeracy, IT, active citizenship and personal development skills. Learners are referred by a variety of organisations, including the Occupational Therapy Department of NHS Fife and are supported by Lead for up to six months. Group learning this year included a money-skills session using a loan of an electronic till from Adult Basic Education Fife, while other learners were individually supported on a one-to-one basis.

Celebrating Success

- 84% of learners reported increased confidence while being supported by Lead Fife.
- 89% of learners tracked at six months felt more involved/included in their communities.
- 100% of learners tracked six months after leaving the service said that they were confident to continue learning and would recommend learning with Lead to others.
- 70% of learners felt more confident to learn new things when interviewed at closure.
- One learner was supported to submit a successful application to the Princes Trust Programme, a 13 week full-time employability training course.
- Volunteer Jan Marshall completed Level 6 of the Adult Achievement Award and her dedication to Lead was recognised with the 2015 Lead Scotland Volunteer of the Year Award (see p.9).

Moving Forward

- Lead Fife will continue to recruit new volunteers to enable greater numbers of learners to be supported on a one-to-one basis.
- Learners who are on the waiting list (18 as of June 2016) will be supported to achieve their learning goals.
- Two new learner groups have been identified and support to develop literacy skills will commence in the coming year.

The Learner Experience

Before Susan came to Lead, she found it difficult to communicate with other people due to her visual and hearing impairments. She hoped that working on her ICT skills would enable her to communicate more effectively and made a self-referral to Lead Fife for support. The Learning Co-ordinator met with her to discuss her learning goals and how she could best be supported. Susan received support from volunteers to use Dragon speech recognition software. She can now open and read documents, complete online forms and send emails to her friends and family.

“I am very happy with the support I have received and feel I have progressed.”

Learner Susan who was supported to improve her communication skills.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Fife partners: Adult Basic Education, Fife Adult Literacies Partnership and Fife Literacies Operational Group.

Learning Co-ordinator: Dawn Robb drobb@lead.org.uk

Fife Befriending Project

NEW

48

initial enquiries

100%

of befriendees have an initial home visit

10

charity partners in Fife with which Lead works to reduce social isolation through befriending

Project Description

Fife Befriending Project is a new Lead initiative that supports people who are socially isolated by matching them with befriending volunteers. Every befriendeed receives an initial home visit to assess their eligibility and to gather information about their interests, needs and current social contacts. They are then matched with a volunteer who supports them for between four and six months and helps them to build stronger relationships with family and connect with their communities. The project is still in its early stages, with volunteers being recruited for suitable befriending matches as we write this report.

Progress So Far

- Referrals are being received from all over Fife, particularly Dunfermline.
- Project Co-ordinator Louise Andree has adapted existing Lead documentation and has been creating new resources for the service.
- A press release was published in a local newspaper to advertise the service and attracted five potential new volunteers.
- Training has commenced for those volunteers already recruited.
- Three befriending matches have been made as of June 2016.

Next Steps

- The Project Co-ordinator will continue to create project resources.
- Relationships with appropriate referral agencies will be developed.
- Recruiting volunteers and processing PVG checks is a priority in order to match befriendees with a befriender and manage the growing waiting list.
- Opportunities will be created for volunteers and befriendees to connect with one another and with people from other Lead projects.

What Our New Project Co-ordinator Has to Say...

“Loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health: research shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.”(Holt-Lunstad, 2010).

“Many studies have shown the importance of tackling social isolation. This new Lead project aims to give support to people to improve their confidence, to try new activities and to make more connections within their communities. For someone who is socially isolated, a volunteer befriender is someone who they can meet with regularly who has time for them. Not a carer, a doctor, a social worker, or someone paid to be there. In the short time that I have been running this project, I have met a lot of people whose lives would be greatly improved by having a befriender and I have recruited some excellent volunteers to fill the role so far. It will be fantastic to see the befriending project grow and make a difference in the coming years.”



Louise Andree,
Project Co-ordinator

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Fife Befriending partners: Fife Forum, Fife Council and the Health and Social Care Integration Fund.

Project Co-ordinator: Louise Andree landree@lead.org.uk

North Lanarkshire

208

hours of educational guidance delivered by the Learning Co-ordinator

66%

of learners received an initial home visit

75%

of learners tracked at six months were still using the skills they had developed with Lead

Project Description

The Learning Co-ordinator works with Lead volunteers to facilitate person-centred learning opportunities for disabled adults and carers in North Lanarkshire. Learners are referred by a variety of public and third sector organisations and are either supported in groups or on a one-to-one basis. Learning support is delivered either in learners' homes or in community settings, including at public libraries and local churches, depending on the needs of the individual learner.

Celebrating Success

- 31 learners were supported in North Lanarkshire during the last year.
- When tracked six months after leaving the service, 75% of learners were still engaged in employment, volunteering or continuing education.
- The Learning Co-ordinator raised the profile of Lead's services by delivering training sessions to local authority staff studying for their Professional Development Award, Supporting Adult Literacy Learning.
- Lead was promoted at six Dementia Community Cafes which led to more learners being referred to the project and the strengthening of partnerships with local agencies.
- Funding totalling £2396 secured by Friends of Lead North Lanarkshire was used to purchase additional digital learning technology for the project, including iPads, Microsoft Surface computers, wireless keyboards and Bluetooth speakers.



Learner Tommy receives the Adult Achievement Award from Learning Co-ordinator Donna Morley.

Moving Forward

- Friends of Lead North Lanarkshire will continue to raise awareness and funding for the North Lanarkshire project. This will be particularly valuable given the reduction in grant funding for the 2016-2017 period.
- To allow learners to recognise their progression more fully, learner journeys will be documented using videos, photos and audio, to enhance the current paper-based system.
- The Learning Co-ordinator will further develop her knowledge of technology to keep abreast of developments and support learners to use the most recent IT.

The Learner Experience

A learner was referred to Lead by Coatbridge Social Work locality team as she had requested support with basic literacy and numeracy. She wanted to be able to help her autistic daughter with homework. Through support from a Lead volunteer, by accessing local library and computing facilities and through familiarising herself with her daughter's school resources, the learner significantly improved her confidence. She "enjoyed every minute" of her learning experience with Lead and now feels better equipped to support her daughter with her learning.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead North Lanarkshire Partners: Alzheimer Scotland, Coatbridge Social Work Team, Friends of Lead North Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Council.

Learning Co-ordinator: Donna Morley dmorley@lead.org.uk

Perth and Kinross

85

learners supported,
exceeding annual
target by 70%

73%

of Lead Perth and Kinross
learners were supported by
volunteers

100%

of learners tracked at six
months said they would
recommend learning with
Lead to others

Project Description

The Learning Co-ordinator teaches digital skills to disabled people and carers throughout Perth and Kinross. Five week Tablet for Beginners classes are run in local libraries, community centres and using the facilities of local partner organisations. Depending on the individual needs of learners, digital skills training sessions are also delivered on a one-to-one basis. Learners devise their own learning plans and are supported to meet their individual goals, including getting online, using apps and doing online shopping.

Celebrating Success

- 462 hours of study facilitated by the Learning Co-ordinator and volunteers.
- Lead and its volunteers attained a bronze Perth Council Securing the Futures Award in the Equalities Category in recognition of their contribution to the local community.
- The Tablet for Beginners course at North Inch is popular, with classes usually fully booked.
- High demand has led to classes being extended to Blairgowrie, with further referrals taken from Lewis Place and Kinnoull day centres.
- Following a highly successful tablet course at Lewis Place day centre, two learners bought iPads and had Wi-Fi installed in their own homes, while the centre purchased a MiFi unit. The centre is now in discussions, supported by the Learning Co-ordinator, to install a permanent Wi-Fi connection.
- 81% of learners continued with self-directed learning after being supported by Lead.
- 79% of learners tracked six months after last contact with Lead said they were still using the skills they gained with Lead.

Moving Forward

- The Learning Co-ordinator is adapting the project to work in partnership with larger organisations including the Get Online Team and Citizens Advice Scotland.
- The Learning Co-ordinator will continue to build relationships with local key workers.
- The classes will be adapted to meet the changing needs of individual learners and teaching will continue to be delivered in an energetic, fun and exciting format.

The Learner Experience

"I love getting pictures of my grandchildren and it is so easy to take a photo and send it to my daughter, just finding out how to attach a photo to an email has transformed the way we communicate with each other. I actually taught her how to do it!"

Learner Freda, who was supported to use an iPad to receive pictures of her family.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our Lead Perth and Kinross

Partners: Perth and Kinross Council and North Perth Community Partnership.

Learning Co-ordinator: Gail Phillips gphillips@lead.org.uk



Learning Co-ordinator Gail Phillips accepts a bronze Perth Council Securing the Futures Award on behalf of Lead Perth and Kinross.



“I really enjoy working for Lead. It is great to work with lovely people who are so eager to get started and are so enthusiastic about learning. It is such a pleasure to help them achieve their goals. Lead provides a very supportive environment to work in despite us being so spread out across the country. I feel like I am a valued part of the team.”

Amy Browne, Dundee Learning Co-ordinator (left) with learner Darlene.

Head Office Information Service

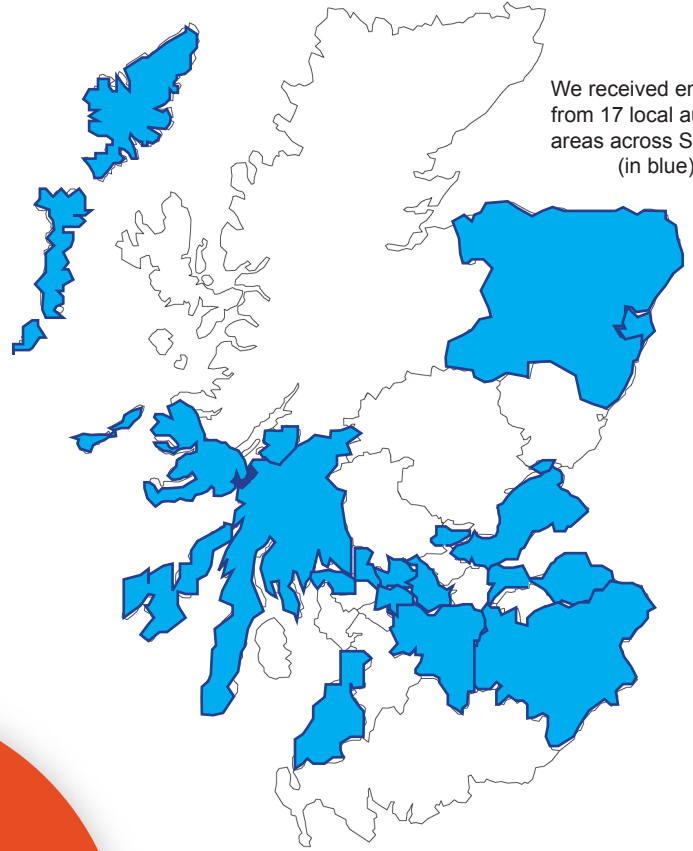


This year we received 153 in-depth enquiries to our information service (email and helpline), exceeding our annual target of 150.

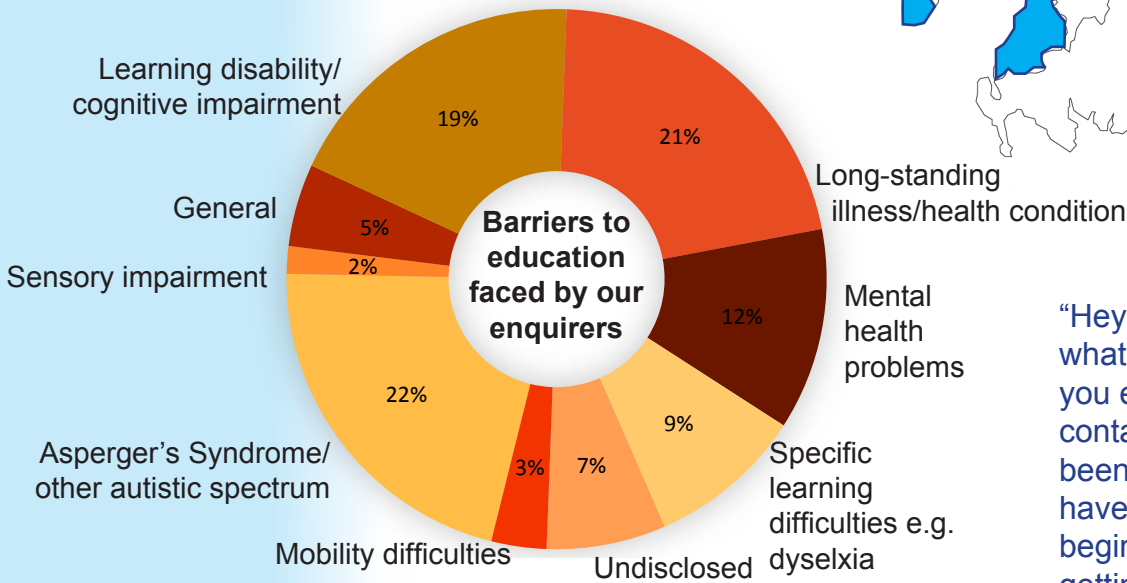
We provide information and advice on a range of issues including applying for courses, sources of funding for disabled learners and information regarding equality and discrimination.

“I don’t know what you’ve said or who you’ve spoken to, but I cannot thank you enough for your input. The university has now completely backed down and are allowing every single one of the adjustments we asked for and my daughter now feels unbelievably relieved.”

Mother of a young person

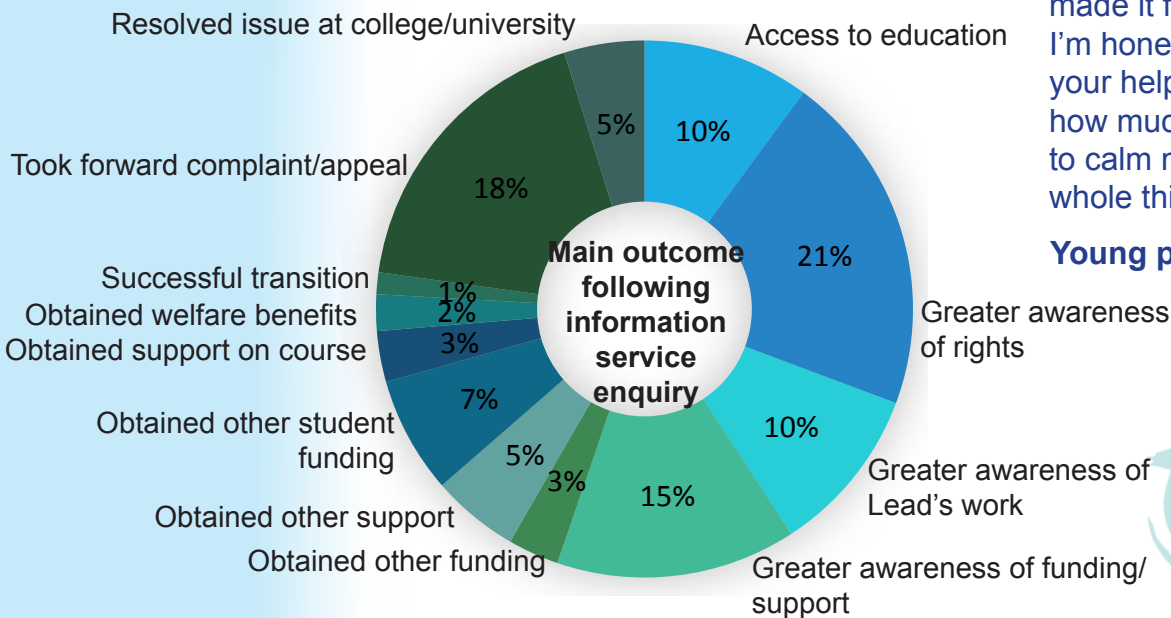


We received enquiries from 17 local authority areas across Scotland (in blue)



“Hey! I honestly don’t know what to say or how to thank you enough. I think contacting you has probably been the best thing I could have done as I was really beginning to lose hope of getting to uni and you’ve made it feel possible again. I’m honestly so grateful for your help. You have no idea how much you’ve managed to calm me down about this whole thing!”

Young person we advised



Influencing Change

2015 Lead Conference: Can We Make Things Better? YES WE CAN!

130

delegates from the private, public and non-profit sectors

90%

of delegates contacted after the conference had learned something new

79%

of delegates contacted after the conference had been inspired to take action

- Our 2015 conference brought together a range of partners to discuss barriers experienced by disabled learners accessing inclusive learning and employment opportunities.
- Workshops covered a wide range of topics including transitions into work, higher education and disabled learner progression through education.
- Feedback from delegates surveyed after the conference was very positive with 79% commenting that they made at least one new contact. See the full [2015 conference report](#) on our website.

“Research was really interesting and it was great to see what other institutions are doing.”

Conference Delegate



(Left to right): Speaker Tressa Burke, Chief Executive of Glasgow Disability Alliance, Conference Chair and journalist Keith Aitken, speaker Dr Elisabet Weedon, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. Also speaking at the event but not pictured was BBC Reporter Ian Hamilton.

Impact of Our Policy Work

Our policy work allows us to represent the voice of disabled learners and those who support them in issues related to post-16 learning, training and employment. Lead submitted evidence to eight parliamentary committees and government consultations. These included:

The UK Government Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' consultation on changes proposed to Disabled Students' Allowance. Lead voiced concern over the potential negative ramifications for disabled students.



The Scottish Government's consultation on the future of Employability Support in Scotland following greater devolution. Lead advised what support, programmes and initiatives work best for disabled people and those with complex barriers to prepare for employment.



The Scottish Government's Commission on Widening Access, set up to identify recommendations for closing the income-determined attainment gap. Lead highlighted the additional barriers that disabled people and carers face in accessing inclusive learning opportunities.



The Scottish Government's draft Delivery Plan regarding the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Lead highlighted the need for greater transition support and improved access to modern apprenticeships for disabled people.





Emma Whitelock (front left), CEO of Lead Scotland was pleased to meet then Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning MSP Angela Constance (front right) at the Strategic Forum for Adult Learning meeting in December 2015.

Lead is an active member of the Strategic Forum who are working to make the national Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning a reality. Lead learners were involved in producing the Statement of Ambition which promotes life-long, life-wide and learner-centred learning for all adults in Scotland. See [Lead's briefing for Angela Constance](#) on our website.

Finance and Office Manager



2015/16 brought a settled year for the admin team at Head Office with our team being together for the full year.

In June, together with the Senior Policy and Information Officer, we organised the fourth Lead Scotland National Conference “Can we make things better? Yes We Can! Delivering positive outcomes for disabled and disadvantaged learners”.

This took place at Queen Margaret University Edinburgh Campus. This event was a huge success and learning curve, and the whole Head Office team, along with support from Learning Co-ordinators, were instrumental in making the day such a triumph.

With new projects and staff changes within Lead the admin team were busy ensuring that the recruitment processes ran smoothly.

Unfortunately, after many years, our ICT Support and Development Officer Gordon Findlay left us to move on to a new adventure. Due to changes in the sector we have taken the decision that in the short term we will outsource our IT Support. This has been a challenge as new systems and equipment had to be installed to allow this to happen remotely. The remaining team has taken on some of the support tasks internally and this has meant a steep learning curve.

We organised another successful AGM in October which was once again held at the Lovat Hotel in Perth. We heard a number of inspiring stories from both learners and volunteers. The Volunteer of the Year Award was also presented to Jan Marshall and we heard a summary of all the great work the nominees have been doing throughout Scotland.

We were joined by an Administrative Assistant, Asha Bekiroglu, funded through Community Jobs Scotland who was with us for five months before moving into full-time employment. She was a fantastic addition to the team and helped us raise our social media presence and start work on a new Volunteer Database which we hope will be up and running by the end of this year.

As the support for our financial software was coming to an end we have decided to move with the times and go on the Cloud. This will take time to bed in but will in time hopefully provide management information quicker with less manual input required – watch this space.

In January we were faced with the news that we will need to move office this year and the admin team have been hard at work in looking at options available to us on a tight budget. We will miss our office but look forward to a new adventure.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doreen O'Donnell'.

Doreen O'Donnell
Finance and Office Manager
dodonnell@lead.org.uk

Who's Who

Members of the Board

Alan Goodman (Chair)
Don Jarvie (Treasurer)
Colin Anderson (Company Secretary)

Pat Black*
Gillian Brown
Tricia Illsley
Kevin Mallon
Muriel Masson
Pamela Maxwell
Bev Smith
Ahmed Yousaf

*Many thanks to Pat Black for her significant contribution over many years (stepped down March 2016)

Chief Executive Officer

Emma Whitelock

Head Office Staff

Doreen O'Donnell (Finance and Office Manager)
Rebecca Scarlett (Senior Policy and Information Officer)
Rita Capaldi (Senior Administrator)
Jessica Brennan (Assistant Administrator and Bookkeeper)

Regional Staff North

Norman MacAskill (Regional Development Manager)
Barbara Taylor (Aberdeenshire and Moray Learning Co-ordinator)
Susan Hughes (Aberdeenshire Learning Co-ordinator)
Lucy Hawkins (Highland Sessional Worker)

Regional Staff South

Stephen Fernand (Regional Development Manager)
Amy Browne (Dundee Learning Co-ordinator)
Dawn Robb (Fife Learning Co-ordinator)
Donna Morley (North Lanarkshire Learning Co-ordinator)
Gail Phillips (Perth and Kinross Learning Co-ordinator)
Louise Andree (Fife Befriending Co-ordinator)

Please Get in Touch

Lead Scotland
Princes House
5 Shandwick Place
EH2 4RG

Email: enquiries@lead.org.uk
Telephone: 0131 228 9441
Textphone: (18001) 0131 228 9441
Fax: 0131 229 6941

Helpline: 0800 999 2568

Chief Executive Officer:
ewhitelock@lead.org.uk

Regional Development Manager North:
nmacaskill@lead.org.uk

Regional Development Manager South:
sfernand@lead.org.uk

Thank You!

Lead Scotland is indebted to the many funders that enable us to deliver accessible and person-centred learning opportunities for disabled people and carers across Scotland.



Aberdeenshire Council

Dundee Council

Fife Council

Highland Council

Hugh and Mary Miller Foundation

Moray College

Moray Council

New Melville Bridge Club

North Lanarkshire Council

Perth and Kinross Council

Ronald Miller Foundation

The Scottish Government

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Scottish Women's Rural Institute - Juniper Green Branch

Skills Development Scotland

Tay Charitable Trust