



Development  
Plan for  
Adult Learning  
for transitional  
Year 2007 - 2008

June 2007

## Foreword to this plan

This Plan builds upon the success of:

- the 3 year strategic Development Plan for Adult Learning 2004-7 which was approved by the Executive on 18 May 2004 and the Council on 23 June 2004.
- the 2005 update to the Development Plan for Adult Learning which was approved by the Executive Member on 7 June 2005
- the 2006 update to the Development Plan for Adult Learning which was approved by the Executive Member on 27 June 2006

as a strategic plan of the Council and as the basis for receiving grant funding, from the Learning and Skills Council, for Adult and Community Learning over the three academic years.

This Plan has been designated as a transitional plan for the academic year 2007-2008. The production of a new three year strategic Development Plan for 2008-11 will be considered in 2008 when:

- it can align with the new medium term objectives of the newly elected Council
- the review of the priorities of the local community plan are available
- a reappraisal of the Lifelong Learning Partnership's agenda has been completed
- more is known of the LSC's plans to restructure the funding of adult learning from 2008.

An edited version of this plan was submitted to the Learning and Skills Council in March 2007 as an initial proposal to secure funding. Whilst LSC officers have suggested an indicative funding level similar to the 2006-2007 contract, no written confirmation has been received concerning the grant funding which the Borough Council is due to receive from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007.

This Plan will inform the anticipated inspection of the service by Ofsted which is likely to take place during the Autumn Term of 2007-2008. As a result it includes descriptors of key service developments that have been implemented since the last inspection.

## Organisational details:

The Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries is responsible for this strategic plan. The contact for matters relating to the plan is:

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## Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in this document

ACL	Adult and Community Learning
BFBC	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
BFLLP	Bracknell Forest Lifelong Learning Partnership
BNLCP	Berkshire Neighbourhood Learning Centres Partnership
BOLC	Brakenhale Open Learning Centre
ECSL	Education, Children's Services and Libraries
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
EU	European Union
FLLN	Family Literacy Language and Numeracy
GHTS	Great Hollands Talk Shop
GP	General Practitioner
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LA	Local Authority
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MIS	Management Information System
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PCDL	Personal and Community Development Learning
RARPA	Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement
RBWM	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SPA	Special Protection Area
WFL	Wider Family Learning

## 1.0 Strategic Summary

1.1 The Bracknell Forest Sustainable Community Plan – Living together, Working together sets Priority 1 as Promoting learning and training for all ages. Three key aims which relate to adult learning are:

- Increased range of learning opportunities
- Fewer people with difficulties in reading, writing, numeracy and ICT skills
- Improved outcomes for school leavers

The Borough Council's Local Area Agreements include targets for:

- Adults on 'first step' learning programmes
- Adults on Family literacy and numeracy programmes

The Borough Council's adult learning provision is managed by the Local Authority (LA) Lifelong Learning Team that is part of Education, Children's Services and Libraries (ECSL).

## 1.2 Summary of priorities for adult learning

The main priority for the LA's adult learning provision is to extend the range, appeal and access to learning opportunities, including those that enable, motivate and build self-confidence in new learners. There is a determined approach to de-institutionalise adult education and take learning to where people are in the local community. The LA also recognises the mutual benefits of linking adult learning to the learning of pupils and students and the Every Child Matters agenda through a significant family learning service.

Based on a clear understanding of local needs, the programme of learning provision developed through this plan by the LA's Lifelong Learning Team focuses on widening participation and engaging with new learners who lack the confidence, motivation or incentive to be part of a local learning community.

Activities are designed to promote learning, to facilitate a new start in learning and to provide information, support and encouragement to enable learners to progress to further learning or employment. Adults without a full level 2 qualification or those whose personal circumstances prevent them from accessing learning at or above level 2 are a key priority and deprivation data and local intelligence is used to inform programme planning and targeted marketing.

## 1.3 The strands for developing adult learning are:

1. To enhance individuals' quality of life by providing a broad range of Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) opportunities in the form of taster sessions and short courses and through the contract with the Ark for specialist provision for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities.
2. To widen participation in learning through First Step opportunities that motivate learners to re-engage with learning as a basis for future progression.
3. To provide First Step opportunities in ICT as part of the E-learning Strategy.
4. To develop and implement a Skills for Life programme which provides engagement opportunities leading to referral and progression to accredited courses.

5. To influence attitudes to learning and enhance the ability of families to support their children's learning through Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) and Wider Family Learning (WFL) programmes.

1.4 This plan links to the developing Community Cohesion Strategy as it seeks to:

- ensure that everyone has similar life opportunities through learning
- match activities to local need and aspiration
- build local learning communities based upon positive relationships
- strengthen local communities by offering access to new skills

1.5 This plan links to the developing Older People's Strategy as it seeks to address one of the seven dimensions of independence and well-being - 'leisure and learning', developed by Age-Concern and the Audit Commission. Programmes in this plan include opportunities:

- to learn for personal fulfilment, health and well-being
- to learn new skills in using ICT and new technology
- to extend and support the work of the University of the Third Age (U3A)
- to learn new skills for employment in later life.

1.6 Link to national LSC priorities:

The programmes of learning provided through this plan contribute to the LSC's priority 2 as set out in the 'Our Single Statement of Requirements – December 2006'. They provide opportunities for members of the local community to engage or re-engage with learning, to build their confidence and self-esteem as learners and to enjoy success as a foundation for future and higher levels of learning.

The range of courses offered by the LA can support adults to progress to further study with other providers who offer:

- The Adult level 2 Entitlement in order to sustain their employment in the workplace
- Programmes of Personal and Community Development Learning including those where there is no LSC requirement that learners progress to other learning or achieve accreditation
- The full range of Skills for Life courses and qualifications.

1.7 Quality improvement and trends in retention, achievement and success

The Lifelong Learning Team's effective quality assurance and improvement systems underpin strategic decisions and high quality service provision which evolves to meet changing needs. Efficient planning is based upon good management information systems and analysis of adult learning data from the last three years demonstrates an effective adult learning strategy. Learner retention and achievement across all provision types is 90% or higher and the percentage of learners enrolling for the first time year on year is rising. In 2005-6, 39% of learners were new, while only 7% of learners had enrolled on courses each year for the last four years.

## 2.0 Service Developments since 2004

### 2.1 Protocol with Bracknell and Wokingham College

Since 2004, the Borough Council responded to the LSC's proposal to develop a protocol whereby the previously sub-contracted mainstream adult learning programme provided by Bracknell and Wokingham College be directly funded by the LSC. This protocol was based on the following assumptions to which all parties agreed:

- *The Borough Council is interested in identifying the educational needs of its residents and wants to provide for them. It has a particular interest in small scale outreach provision, provision for economically disadvantaged communities, provision for "hard to reach" groups, Family Literacy Language and Numeracy, Wider Family Learning, provision for ethnic minorities, other First Steps provision and in involving community groups.*
- *The College is a volume provider of good quality Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) provision, which is delivered from their own and local community venues. Generally College ACL provision concentrates on delivering to groups of learners via courses tied to term times. They have particular skills in the delivery of basic skills provision and in ensuring that appropriate progression routes are available to learners.*
- *The Borough Council is best placed to identify the ACL needs of its residents and to plan, in partnership with providers, how best to meet them.*

### 2.2 Direct Tutor Workforce

In 2006 the LA recruited a new team of tutors for Adult Learning. The diminishing LSC funding for ACL and the lack of inflationary increases year by year meant that the costs of activity in the 2006-2007 plan using established delivery patterns, would have exceeded the grant by in excess of £40,000. Following a full review and budget planning process the only alternative open to the Borough Council was to reduce the tutor cost of its programmes. This was achieved by discontinuing the subcontracting arrangements with Bracknell and Wokingham College for teaching ACL and Family Learning and directly recruiting a pool of ACL sessional tutors and three part-time Family Learning tutors to provide the same service. Initial analysis suggested that this would reduce costs by 40% and enable the provision to be delivered within the indicative level of grant funding. Evidence from the year to date suggests an actual saving in excess of 45%.

Managing a recruitment strategy of this scale was a significant challenge to the Lifelong Learning Team and there was an inevitable risk in taking this decision. One year on, managing a direct tutor workforce has had other positive benefits for the overall service in terms of communication with tutors, programme content and quality assurance.

Tutors with existing, recognised teaching qualifications have been recruited whenever possible, however a number of excellent tutors have been appointed with very relevant community teaching experience and/or good subject qualifications, but no formal teaching qualifications. The LA is committed to providing continuous professional development for all staff but this needs to be proportionate to the number of teaching hours delivered and many tutors are contracted to teach less than 30 hours throughout the academic year. During 2006-2007, the Lifelong Learning Team has followed the developments of the national post-compulsory sector qualifications framework. Thus far, it is unclear how to apply the new guidance to a large pool of sessional tutors, each delivering just a few hours of personal and community development learning that contribute much to a diverse curriculum offer with broad learner appeal.

In 2007-2008, the Lifelong Learning Team will continue to recruit sessional tutors who can contribute to the ongoing development of the LA's adult learning service. Existing tutor qualifications will be reviewed against the emerging qualifications framework and a staff development action plan will be drafted once appropriate guidance is available.

### 2.3 PCDL Provision

Formerly known as adult and community learning (ACL), Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) provision is now defined as learning for personal development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and enjoyment, without the requirement to progress to other learning or to achieve accreditation. This strand of learning was included in the safeguard of the 2006 White Paper 'Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances'.

Over the past three years the Lifelong Learning Team has developed a comprehensive programme of foundation level PCDL, planned and delivered on a term by term basis. The focus for this activity is learner engagement to widen participation and while progression is not a funding requirement for this programme area, learners are encouraged to continue learning. Most sessions take place at either Brakenhale or Sandhurst Open Learning Centre but other local community venues are used where cost effective opportunities arise. The majority of the programme comprises two hour sessions that are designed to provide learners with a 'taste' of a subject, build confidence in learning and motivate learners to explore further learning opportunities. Since 2005-2006 the Council's PCDL offering has also included short courses of up to ten hours in an effort to provide 'bridging' or 'next step' opportunities that may lead learners to full length courses delivered by other local providers.

Whilst the perceived remits of the Borough Council and Bracknell and Wokingham College are clear in the protocol, there are potential areas of overlap as each provider seeks to meet the needs of the learning community and meet its challenging contract volumes. The separation brought about by the withdrawal from the tutor subcontracting arrangements has had some detrimental impact on the relationship between the two providers.

In 2007-2008, the Borough Council will seek to regain the benefits of partnership working with the College through the terms of reference of the new local PCDL partnership, and will continue to plan provision to complement that of the College whose main programme of PCDL is a potential progression route for new and existing learners across a much wider geographical area.

### 2.4 First Steps Provision

In 2006-2007 First Steps was introduced as a new funding strand within the Borough Council's LSC grant. First Steps provision is intended to target learners without a full level 2 qualification, learners on skills for life courses and learners requiring skills for employment. The Lifelong Learning Team has worked hard to develop and deliver a First Steps programme that complies with the LSC's guidance and meets the minimum nine hours to qualify for First Steps funding.

Initial LSC guidance had suggested that this funding strand would come within FE funding rules but this was not the case when the final allocations were agreed and, although First Steps constituted a significant sum within the Borough Council's LSC grant, the LSC reporting mechanisms appear to treat First Steps as an afterthought.

In 2007-2008, the First Steps funding and corresponding programme will continue for another year, but beyond 2007-2008 the intentions of the LSC are unclear.

## 2.5 UKonline

From September 2005, the Bracknell Forest UKonline service was fully integrated within ACL provision. The centres are linked to the LSC funded Berkshire Neighbourhood Learning in Communities Partnership (BNLCP) which provides cohesion and support to those working in this sector. BNLCP also provides access to funding for technical support, training and technology upgrades for the centres.

The Great Hollands Talk Shop (GHTS) was established as a UKonline Centre in 2002 and was successful in providing a small community venue for ICT courses in an area of significant deprivation in the Borough. However, a Health and Safety Audit conducted by the Borough Council in Spring 2006 raised concerns about its operational usage. The number of issues raised had significant financial implications for minor works and for staffing, all of which fell outside available budgets. The Borough Council reviewed its services in this community as part of the Extended Schools initiative and rather than seek to sustain the provision in unsuitable premises, a decision was made to withdraw the UKonline provision from GHTS from September 2006. In an effort to find a suitable alternative venue, the Lifelong Learning Team scheduled an autumn term programme of evening UKonline sessions in Great Hollands Primary School. Although this was successful in recruiting 29 learners, the school's ICT facilities limited the type of provision that could be offered and the cost of hiring this resource on an ongoing basis was prohibitive. The Lifelong Learning Team will consider using the new mobile classroom for future UKonline provision in the Great Hollands area if parking and security issues can be resolved.

In 2007-2008, UKonline provision will remain a key component in the LA's PCDL and First Steps provision. The Community ICT Coordinator continues to develop a varied and often innovative programme of tasters, First Step courses and next step opportunities. Courses have a broad appeal to a wide range of learners needing basic ICT skills and are developed in response to learner need.

## 2.6 Mobile Classroom / Learning Bus

In February 2007 a Community Outreach Tutor/Driver joined the Lifelong Learning Team to develop and implement a programme of Skills for Life engagement activities in the new mobile classroom. The appointment ended the protracted recruitment effort to find a tutor with level 4 Skills for Life teaching qualifications and the ability to drive the mobile learning vehicle. Following a period of induction, training and technical development, the 'Learning Bus' entered service in April 2007 for pilot activity during the summer term.

The learning bus supports a new approach to taking learning to where people are and is based on existing knowledge and new partnership arrangements. As with any new initiative it will have a development period before reaching full scope and the balance of course content and targeted usage has still to be fully evaluated during the year of this plan. Initial pilot activity has identified the criticality of the marketing and recruitment process.

In 2007-2008, the Learning Bus will contribute to the First Steps provision covered by this plan and a further development programme is planned for the Autumn Term 2007 followed by an expanded programme of outreach activity for the remainder of the year.

## 2.7 Family Learning Provision

The LA has been delivering family learning at Brakenhale Open Learning Centre and other partner venues since 1999 and this programme area is the most embedded strand in the adult learning service. Both Family Literacy Language and Numeracy (FLLN) and Wider Family Learning (WFL) include a significant schedule of intensive 60 hour courses and shorter 30 hour courses as well as introductory courses and workshops. Most are joint programmes benefiting the children as well as the parents/carers and an Ofsted registered crèche enables parents/carers with very young children to participate.

The Family Learning Coordinator advertises the programmes through selected partner schools in the Borough where educational achievement is historically lower and where adults are known to have low attainment in basic skills. As well as widening participation in learning and raising adult skills, these programmes also go some way towards breaking the cycle of poor school achievement by enabling parents to better support their children's learning and attainment. Family Learning Tutors run recruitment sessions in each school to promote the provision and while parents with below level 2 qualifications are the main target for FLLN courses, those with low self-esteem and little confidence in their ability to help their children are also enrolled.

The Family Learning Coordinator liaises with other personnel and services in the LA to establish links between family learning and the Every Child Matters agenda. These include Children's Centres, the Education Library Service, the Behaviour Support Team and the Extended Services Team.

Parents are encouraged to achieve accreditation at the end of the longer FLLN courses. In the past this has been facilitated by learndirect, but the Family Learning Coordinator will manage external accreditation when Brakenhale Open Learning Centre becomes an Edexcel examination centre in the near future.

In 2007-2008, Family Learning will continue to be developed and delivered as a significant strand of the adult learning service.

## 2.8 Recruitment strategy, Provision Planning and Marketing

In line with the protocol, the PCDL and First Steps provision delivered through the contract between the LSC and the LA focuses on community outreach provision, targeting economically disadvantaged communities and 'hard to reach' learners, including those who may not have enjoyed their previous learning experiences. Indices of educational and multiple deprivation, together with local intelligence are used to identify areas of the Borough where adults are less likely to be engaged in learning or where educational standards are lower.

In support of this recruitment strategy to widen participation, PCDL and First Steps learning programmes are planned and marketed on a termly basis. PCDL Tasters and First Steps courses are designed to encourage engagement and build confidence in learning and intermediate bridging courses provide next step opportunities.

House to house street delivery of course advertising literature gives enrolment-priority to new learners in the targeted districts, before learners from the previous year receive the literature by post. Course literature is also displayed in libraries, community centres and other public buildings, including Council offices and GP surgeries and the course programmes are advertised on the Council's website.

Family learning courses are recruited through partnership arrangements with local schools and other agencies.

## 2.9 Enrolment and Fees

Brakenhale Open Learning Centre administers all adult learners in Council provision. Learners book their PCDL and First Steps courses in person or by telephone to the Centre, giving only their name and telephone number. This 'soft enrolment' procedure has been deliberately implemented to remove the barrier of more extensive written or online enrolment procedures.

The Centre telephones all learners a few days prior to each course as a reminder; this enables last minute substitutes when a learner can no longer attend. Learners then complete a minimal paper enrolment at the beginning of each taster session or short course.

This strategy continues to encourage adults who would be reluctant to go through more formal enrolment processes.

The current fee strategy is being reviewed in the light of emerging LSC guidance and the impact of the Age Regulation Guidelines.

In 2006-2007 the following strategy was used:

- All Family Learning provision is free to the adult learner and accompanying child/children.
- All First Step provision is free to the adult learner.
- Taster courses aimed at widening participation and building confidence for new learners are free to the learner, although those participating in practical courses resulting in outcomes that can remain the property of the participant are required to pay, typically, £2.00 per session. There are no concessions for this material fee.
- Intermediate 'bridging courses' aimed at encouraging learners to progress to longer courses attract a fee equating to £4.00 per hour. These fees are subject to a 50% concession for all learners over 60 years of age and those in receipt of means tested benefits.

In 2007-2008 the following changes will apply:

- Learners over 60 years of age will no longer receive this age related concession although those in receipt of means tested pension credit will qualify for a 50% reduction in fees.

## 2.10 E-Learning Strategy

In February 2005, the LA published its first adult E-Learning Strategy and an update was released in June 2006. The Community ICT Coordinator attended training to become an E-Guide. The requirement for an E-Learning strategy is a national LSC initiative, supported by NIACE and the Regional Support Centre (RSC) for the South East. The original strategy secured grant funding that contributed to the cost of equipping the Learning Bus and paid for tutor training.

The vision behind the strategy is to enhance the learning experience through the use of technology and to promote social inclusion and community cohesion by addressing the ICT skills deficit among adults in the Borough. In support of these goals, the Community ICT Coordinator has developed and delivered training to up-skill individual tutors based on training needs analysis while generic tutor training promotes the use of technology where appropriate in course preparation and delivery. The second goal is achieved through the

extensive UKonline programme and more recently through programmes delivered on the Learning Bus.

## 2.11 Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) in non-accredited adult learning

From September 2006 RARPA has been a requirement for LSC funded providers. The RARPA approach has two aspects which together are intended to raise the quality of non-accredited teaching and learning; these are the staged process and the quality assurance arrangements necessary to form judgements about the learning for self assessment and quality improvement. The staged process focuses on the needs and interests of learners. It takes into account the many diverse reasons learners choose to learn and enables learners and tutors to recognise and discuss progress in learning and the achievement of learning objectives. The RARPA guidance states that the learner is at the centre of the RARPA approach, the approach should be non-bureaucratic and the application should be fit for purpose.

The Lifelong Learning Team is committed to delivering high quality adult learning and gave considerable thought to the implementation of RARPA in the context of its service. Given that the PCDL programme comprises taster sessions and short courses, a written record of individual learning objectives and personal achievements is not feasible, but a RARPA process at course level with group objectives can be applied to the provision. By embedding RARPA into course planning and delivery, the quality of the learning programme can be assured by demonstrating effective teaching practice and learner achievement, even in short sessions. By reviewing and evaluating the outcomes of the process, the quality of the service can be continuously improved.

During 2006-2007, the Lifelong Learning Team has worked with the new tutor workforce to implement a fit for purpose RARPA process into PCDL and First Steps course planning and delivery.

Within the Family Learning programme, individual learning plans are fully embedded in longer courses, many of which offer opportunities for accreditation. For shorter courses, tutors have developed and implemented RARPA procedures specifically tailored to the course objectives. The outcomes are discussed in termly evaluation meetings and used to further develop and improve the Family Learning provision.

In 2007-2008, the Lifelong Learning Team will ensure that RARPA becomes fully embedded in non-accredited courses throughout the adult learning service.

## 2.12 Quality Monitoring

Since the summer term 2004-2005, the Lifelong Learning Team has conducted formal lesson observations each term. Initially the majority of the tutors being observed were from Bracknell and Wokingham College working for the LA under the terms of the teaching subcontracts; the LA's quality monitoring requirement met some resistance from both the Contract Management Team and the tutors at the College. The Council's direct tutor workforce has fully accepted the principle of monitoring for the purpose of quality improvement.

At the end of the autumn term 2005-2006, the Lifelong Learning Team received formal training in the observation of teaching and learning and the grading of sessions according to the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework. The training was provided by a trained Ofsted Inspector, working as a Consultant for the then Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). As much of the LA's provision is delivered as stand-alone

taster sessions, designed to widen participation, the training resulted in the establishment of specific criteria for making observational judgements of short, taster courses. In January 2006, the Lifelong Learning Team published an Observation Policy, Protocol and Guidance document which is issued to Tutors prior to their session being observed.

In 2006-2007 approximately 10% of the LA's provision has been observed over the three terms. Provisional outcomes suggest that 82% of sessions are good or better and 97% are satisfactory or better. Weaknesses and areas for improvement are logged and reviewed by the Lifelong Learning Team at the end of each term and actions to address the issues are agreed. Any matters of urgency are brought to regular team meetings.

In 2007-2008, the Lifelong Learning Team will continue to observe approximately 10% of the provision and outcomes will be used to further improve the quality of the adult learning service.

### 2.13 MIS and the Use of Data

At the end of academic year 2006-2007, the Adult Learning Management Information System (MIS) holds four years of comparative data. Internally, the Lifelong Learning Team uses the demographic statistics and learner numbers for projects and subject sectors to plan provision and analyse outcomes. The MIS also fully meets its primary design requirement to return individual learner record (ILR) data to the LSC, but in doing so it affords very limited capability for reporting learner progression within the LA's adult learning service. Learner progression beyond the LA's provision is also unattainable through the MIS. The requirement for a data feed from Bracknell and Wokingham College to the LA was written into the protocol in August 2004 but because the College has its own ACL contract with the LSC, the data feed that is based on the ACL ILR data format excludes learner names and addresses. The anonymous data provides College learner numbers for Bracknell Forest and enables demographic and provision analysis but cannot provide information about learner progression. In Spring 2007, BNLCP commissioned a pilot data sharing exercise between ACL service providers. Again this had limited success due to the anonymous ACL data format and further pan-Berkshire development was abandoned due to data protection issues. The Lifelong Learning Officer attends the regular MIS Supplier-User Group meetings where future MIS developments and LSC requirements are discussed and agreed. The User Group has recognised that until unique learner reference numbers are introduced, progression data between providers will not be readily available. The Lifelong Learning Team records anecdotal evidence of learner progression.

### 2.14 Quality Improvement Framework

The Lifelong Learning Team has created a Quality Improvement Framework (QIF) to support the leadership and management of the service. This resource file demonstrates the established procedures and processes for the team which continue to evolve in response to changing circumstances and strategic developments. As such, the framework will always be a 'work in progress' but it provides the means by which the quality assurance and the quality improvement of Adult Learning in Bracknell Forest can take place. It links to actions taken as part of earlier self-assessment and review (SAR) processes.

### **3.0 Quality Improvement**

#### **3.1 Baseline of Ofsted inspection and action planning – November 2002**

The vision and strategy of the Borough Council was recognised by inspectors who reported in 2002 the following key strengths for Adult and Community Learning in Bracknell Forest:

- Effective strategic direction of adult and community learning
- Productive partnership arrangements to widen participation
- Good use of scarce resources to target hard-to-reach learners
- Good teaching and learning
- Achievement of significant personal development and social skills
- Good resources for community learners.

Areas for improvement were identified in a Post Inspection Action Plan in May 2003 and were subsequently integrated into the SAR process.

#### **3.2 Monitoring inspection – September 2005**

The overall judgement was that the quality of provision had improved following implementation of the post-inspection action plan. Areas for further improvement or development were integrated into the subsequent SAR process.

#### **3.3 Self-assessment report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**

The self-assessment process is now well established within the annual planning cycle. Work begins in September for each strand of the service to review the work and outcomes of the previous academic year; each strand contributes to a SAR for the whole service which is published each October. The SAR identifies key strengths and key areas for on-going development. The latter are then consolidated into a QIP for the service which details planned actions, timescales, lead responsibilities and intended outcomes. Two team progress meetings, in January and April, are then used to review and report progress against the actions and outcomes. On-going developments are then subsumed in the next annual SAR cycle.

A detailed SAR and QIP, for academic year 2005-6, setting out responsibilities, timescales and planned outcomes has already been produced and is being implemented by the Lifelong Learning Team.

The SAR and QIP are a requirement of LSC funding and in the past have formed part of the contract monitoring process.

#### **3.4 Key improvement indicators**

The following key priorities have been agreed with the LSC having been developed from the (SAR) for academic year 2005-6 and from emerging policy changes advised by the LSC since that time.

	<b>Key Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Evidence monitoring</b>
1.	Quality Improvement Framework	Revise and complete the quality improvement procedures in response to the needs of a directly employed workforce linking to self-assessment and the service's QI cycle.	Revised framework for LA core staff by June 2007. Updated QI guidance to all LA sessional tutors by Sept 2007.	Reviewed at Contract Monitoring Meetings.
2.	PCDL Partnership Task Group	Review strategic approach to local provision in conjunction with other partners and in the light of emerging LSC policy.	Balance of local provision meets the community need and LSC requirements	Mapping exercise to identify local priorities and gaps in provision
3.	Professional development of adult tutors	Review existing tutor qualifications with new national qualification framework and draft a three-year action plan for staff development.	Complete qualification audit. Impact assessment of National Framework. Publication of CPD Action Plan	Reviewed at Contract Monitoring Meetings.

## 4.0 Working in partnership

Effective provision is based on working strategically and collaboratively with a wide range of partners, inside and outside the Council.

4.1 The Extended Services (Schools) programme in Bracknell Forest is progressing and the LA Team is represented on the Steering group. It is likely that as the programme develops in the next few months there will be new opportunities for Family learning and for community based provision. Some of this can be linked to the learning bus. School communities have indicated frustration that there is no new money to support programmes of adult learning as part of this initiative. There is an inevitable risk that alternative ranges of provision will compete with potential learners targeted by ACL provision.

4.2 As a result of longstanding partnership working through the Bracknell Forest Lifelong Learning Partnership (BFLLP), the Lifelong Learning Team has well established relationships with appropriate partners. It is anticipated that the introduction of the PCDL Partnership, working as a Task Group to BFLLP will offer a new opportunity to work with a number of these provider organisations including:

- BFBC Libraries Team
- BFBC Leisure Services Team
- Bracknell & Wokingham College
- South Hill Park Arts Centre
- Grow Our Own Regeneration Project
- Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action
- The Ark Trust
- Stepforward Mental Health Employment Project
- University for the Third Age (U3A)

4.3 The Lifelong Learning Team is also working with specific organisations that support clients for whom our adult learning provision is appropriate and relevant. These include:

- Parents and Children Together (PACT)
- Bracknell Family Centre (BFC)
- NRG supporting young people 16 – 25
- Be Heard advocacy group for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities

4.4 The Lifelong Learning Team participates regularly in wider networking and partnership activities across Berkshire. These include:

- Berkshire ACL Managers Group
- Berkshire Family Learning Network
- BNLCF
- Grow Our Own Project Board and Operations Group
- Pan Berkshire LearnerTrack MIS Group

4.5 The Grow Our Own Regeneration Project

BFBC has formed a unique partnership with Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) and South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) to address the learning, training and employment needs of local people resulting from large scale regeneration projects. In Bracknell this will focus on the major regeneration of the Town Centre during the period from 2008 to 2013. The project has begun an initial phase in RBWM linked to a number of smaller regeneration projects across that area. The approach uses a model, developed in Bracknell, to grow a new workforce from the indigenous population of non-

employed and under-employed people by improving their skills, confidence and aspirations to access new and better employment opportunities with an appropriate level of mentoring support. Whilst some of the learning and training will achieve formal qualifications, SEEDA is able to support skills development which does not result in accreditation. The project will create a single entry portal (a one stop shop) but will offer a range of development pathways depending on individual need. It is anticipated that the strategy for adult learning described in this plan will form an ideal foundation for this project and will particularly support those lacking appropriate qualification or confidence and with a longer distance to travel in their personal development.

This project is funded by SEEDA as part of implementing its Regional Economic Strategy and has already been the subject of a positive Ex-Ante Evaluation process which highlights the value of the innovative model as a means of meeting the employment requirements for regeneration in areas where the level of local employment is high and the pool of registered unemployed is very low.

The local non-employed and under employed people being targeted by the project include:

- Teenage parents
- Women returners
- Carers
- The 45/50+ age group
- Career developers and job changers
- Those being made redundant
- Those seeking relocation to avoid travel
- New residents to the area
- Those on incapacity benefit
- Those in informal economies
- Adults with mental health problems
- Adults with moderate learning difficulties
- Ex-offenders
- NEET Groups
- 14-19 age group
- ESOL Groups
- Minority Ethnic Groups
- Immigrant workers from EU

The Grow Our Own Board and Project Team are working closely with local developers to identify the precise timescale within which this work will be launched in Bracknell in response to the availability of the new jobs created.

## **5.0 Capital Plans**

The Capital rebuild and refurbishment of Brakenhale Open Learning Centre (BOLC), funded jointly by the LSC and the Borough Council is scheduled to take place during the 2007-08 academic year. This will be a flagship project for the LA. BFBC made a commitment to the concept of establishing Open Learning Centres in 1999, to provide learning within the community in non-institutional settings. BOLC is the operational base for the LA's adult learning service and has developed a strong reputation for welcoming new learners, supporting those who lack confidence and self-esteem and encouraging their progression to other learning providers. It provides learning for a wide age range, from pre-school children within Family Literacy and Numeracy courses to 'silver surfers' learning ICT skills for the first time.

This capital development will create a new enhanced facility which will support and develop adult learning for the 21st Century and build on the existing reputation as an open accessible centre of learning for local people. It will include new provision for general teaching, specialist facilities for creative arts and crafts and ICT as well as the refurbishment of the accommodation for the successful family learning service.

This project has been delayed by planning restrictions imposed by Special Protection Area (SPA) issues affecting the region, relating to ground nesting birds, which necessitated the development and implementation of mitigation procedures. It is anticipated that the final timeline for this development will be available in September 2007.

Work is in progress to minimise any disruption to service delivery during the period of construction, subsequent demolition of redundant accommodation and the provision of road access to the site.

## **6.0 Health & Safety – procedures and outcomes**

In line with its Safe Learner Policy, the LA promotes good health and safety practices for staff, tutors and learners in all adult and community centres and across all learning provision. Concise health and safety information leaflets are maintained for each centre and these include additional advice for learners using a computer. Members of the core Lifelong Learning Team exercise a daily duty of care of premises used for adult and community learning, including family learning. Health and safety performance is reviewed in team meetings and with partner providers in review meetings and the Lifelong Learning Officer participates in the termly ECSL Departmental Health and Safety forum to be aware of changing standards and legislation. Health and safety is included on the checklist for quality improvement lesson observations by the Lifelong Learning Team and appropriate recommendations are made and implemented where unsatisfactory practices are observed. During 2006-2007 one minor accident was reported and in the previous two academic years there were no reportable incidents involving learners at any LA adult and community learning venue.

Going forward the LA will continue to observe the highest standards for health and safety, through regular audits supported by the Borough's Safety Advisers, to ensure that all adult learning activities take place in a healthy, safe and supportive environment.

## 7.0 Activity Volumes

### Overall Planned Learner numbers 2007-2008

	2007-2008
	Learners
ACL - PCDL	1330
ACL – First Steps	300
FLLN	200
WFL	350
PCDL – The Ark	60
<b>Headline Performance Measure: all learners</b>	<b>2240</b>

### FLLN Learner numbers for 2007-2008 (estimates after de-duplication)

COURSES	Joint Programmes	Parent/Carer Only Programmes
<b>Taster and Workshops</b> 2 – 6 GLH		<b>26</b> = 80 GLH
<b>Introductory</b> 12 GLH		<b>54</b> = 572 GLH
<b>Short</b> 30 GLH	<b>15</b> = 900 GLH	
<b>Intensive</b> 60 GLH	<b>90 * 60 = 5400 GLH</b> <b>15 * 120 = 1800 GLH</b>	
<b>Total FLLN</b> <b>200</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>80</b>

### Family Learner numbers for 2007-2008 (estimates after de-duplication)

COURSES	Joint Programmes
<b>Taster and Workshops</b> 2 – 6 GLH	<b>228</b> = 1140 GLH
<b>Introductory</b> 20 GLH	<b>50</b> = 1200 GLH
<b>Short</b> 30 GLH	<b>24</b> = 900 GLH
<b>Intensive</b> 60 GLH	<b>48</b> = 3600 GLH
<b>Total FL</b>	<b>350</b>