

# INSPIRE West Midlands

## Progress report to the Steering Group – April 2004

This report should be read in conjunction with the financial report from LISU and the WM Project Plan attached.

### Training materials

For further details of the training materials, please see previous report for March 2004. Training was delivered to the pilot groups as follows:

- Coventry – 18 members of staff, including 2 visitors from the University of Warwick who expressed interest in the long-term roll-out of Inspire
- Stoke-on-Trent – 11 members of staff
- Wolverhampton – 8 members of staff

### DfES request to organise activities with ‘displaced learners’

At the WM Steering Group meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> March, Margaret Croucher from MLA informed the meeting that the DfES had a particular requirement to see evidence of ‘activities with learners’ in March and April. They were concerned that the financial report had no amount against learning activities. To meet this requirement, the pilot groups were asked to try to organise an activity which targeted ‘displaced learners’ to encourage them to access libraries through the Inspire scheme. It would also be useful if the pilot groups could let WM MLA know of any costs they have incurred through this activity, or through the production of publicity material for Inspire.

The feedback from pilot groups below includes the WM responses to the request from the DfES. All the groups expressed concern at the short notice to arrange activities. Many had staff shortages because of annual leave and sickness and would find it difficult to arrange activities in the time left in the pilot period. They would however continue to identify ‘displaced learners’ as individual referrals.

### Feedback from pilot groups

Following the training sessions, the university and public library partners were contacted to check that cascade training was taking place and learners identified.

All partners had concerns about the timescale, but were enthusiastic about the project and had started to brief staff and identify ‘displaced learners’. The following progress has been made:

- Coventry Public libraries. Have designed posters to publicise scheme. Have put together ‘Subject Guides’ to aid staff and learners in the target areas of ‘Family Health’, ‘Art and Design’ and ‘Returning to Work’. Working with the Coventry Health Promotions Unit to identify potential learners and referrals. Unfortunately the ‘Learn and Earn’ Centre has decided not to participate as a partner. Staff briefing continues throughout March and the INSPIRE scheme was launched officially on the 29<sup>th</sup> March. Individuals who would benefit from referral are being identified by library staff. Arranging a group activity would prove difficult. Many of the existing groups who visited the library, who could be asked to attend such an activity, are already learners.

- Coventry University. Have carried out staff training and distributed public library information about collections. They have made an informal start in identifying individual displaced learners for the Inspire scheme. Probably unable to organise an event because of commitments until the end of April, but are confident can continue to identify 'displaced learners'.
- Stoke-on-Trent. Library staff have been briefed and the partners have shared information and leaflets about each other's libraries. Although still identifying individual learners, the University are considering organising an event with both the University library and the public library targeting volunteers. The event would promote Inspire and the library collections.
- Wolverhampton. Public Library Service have briefed staff and the pilot started on the 15<sup>th</sup> March. Wolverhampton Reference Library do not have much scope for organising a group activity although they are identifying individuals who can be referred. The other public libraries were doubtful an activity could be arranged because of the timescale and staff leave.
- Wolverhampton University. The Harrison Learning Centre has briefed staff and produced publicity about the scheme. The leaflet has been distributed to the pilot partners. Public access PCs are also now available for the public to use. Reception staff are identifying individual learners. There have been two referrals through the 'Ticket to Find' scheme, which helps adults back into education. The Adult Education Service may identify further learners. There is a possibility of organising a group activity for asylum seekers who use the library but again, staff time may limit this.

### **Evaluation**

The pilot projects will be evaluated by the user surveys (the initial 'interview' of the user and the 'Exit' survey). There will also be a survey of staff who participated in the Inspire pilot scheme. These three surveys will include measurement against the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs). The questions for the staff survey are being circulated to WM pilot groups to check before the library staff are contacted. The staff survey may take the form of a telephone interview as time is short. All the evaluation will be carried out the week beginning 19<sup>th</sup> April and results fed into the poster sessions/presentations for the INSPIRE England conference on the 27<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Sustainability**

This was discussed at a joint meeting of the WM pilots on the 20<sup>th</sup> February and reported upon in the March report. All the groups are working closely and intend to continue the co-operation between sectors. Some are developing joint leaflets about their library services and looking into other ways in which they can work together to improve awareness and access.

### **'Mystery shoppers'**

Following discussion at the WM SG meeting in March, it was thought that the results of this exercise would be more appropriate to be discussed by the Inspire England SG.