

NIACE Research and Development



Key Findings



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RaW Extension Project

Abstract

Part A: Consolidating the BBC RaW (Read and Write) approach by piloting RaW sessions in community locations and offering specialist workshop capacity-building support to VCS.

Part B: Extending the RaW approach by developing models, delivery mechanisms and progression pathways which build upon the RaW approach and are tailored to the needs of specific regional priority groups identified within sub-regional Investing in Communities business plans. The five priority groups were:

- offenders;
- lone parents;
- travellers and gypsies;
- older people; and
- users of mental health services.

Research methodology:

Part A: RaW sessions and capacity building workshops.

Part B: Desk research, interviews and preparation of final report.

Key Findings

The main conclusions of the project are:

- ❖ The RaW extension project has provided examples of new and effective ways of engaging adults in reading and writing, in informal learning and in motivating them to take up further learning.
- ❖ Some VCOs need more support to embark on RaW promotional activities.
- ❖ RaW could be an effective approach for all thematic groups and other groups e.g. homeless people and tenants of social housing, substance misusers etc.
- ❖ Promotion of *Skills for Life* has been effectively developed through Move On, through RaW, through the Get On campaign and many local promotional drives.
- ❖ As well as being ideal materials for promoting reading and writing to new learners the RaW materials will be equally useful and exciting for existing teachers and others.

- ❖ There are elements of the RaW approach that cannot be easily funded through mainstream funds. Providing quality teaching in community locations is more expensive with cost of venues, additional travel time for teachers, joint planning with community-based organisations. To develop, provide and sustain effective community based provision requires additional funding.

Recommendations

- ❖ EEDA should extend and embed the RaW approach by supporting further capacity.
- ❖ Building for VCOs, working with different priority groups, developing tracking mechanisms and disseminating project findings.
- ❖ EEDA, LSC and other planners and funders should commission research into adult learner engagement and progression outcomes in order to identify key success factors and cost effectiveness.
- ❖ EEDA, LSC and other planners and funders should: ensure there are a variety of promotional activities available for adults including RaW and other informal approaches; ensure there is a SfL learning offer available to follow on from the promotional activities; provide additional professional development for *Skills for Life* teachers to equip them to work with thematic groups in the community and the workplace; support schemes to recruit, train and support mentors and learning champions, and ensure there are outreach or development workers to put promotional activities and learning pathways in place.
- ❖ EEDA should ensure *Skills for Life* is a key strand of all Investing in Communities and other regional programmes and activities and should adopt the frameworks included in the report and expect applicants for funding to meet the criteria listed.

Output

Part A

- Seventy four RaW sessions, involving a total of 540 participants.
- Six capacity building sessions, one in each county in the region. 88 in total attended the workshops including 54 from voluntary and community organisations with 44 such organisations being represented in total.

Part B

- Preparation of a report “Raw in the East of England – to explore the effectiveness of the BBC RaW campaign in attracting and motivating adults from the five thematic groups into Skills for Life Learning.”

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