

Networking in the West Midlands

West Midlands CETT has launched three regional support networks for teachers and trainers working with adults in the voluntary and community sector. The aim of each network is to support the work of practitioners by keeping them informed of developments nationally, and assessing their CPD needs, as well as helping to provide for those needs.

The Shropshire Teacher Support Network launched in October 2008 with a day of workshops. The network is currently moving ahead with proposals for a mentoring scheme and is organising another day of activities in April 2009, to include workshops on working with adults in the autism spectrum, CPD and the Institute for Learning's Reflect portal, and assessment.

Many of the 22 network members came from a PTLLS course delivered by WMCETT, and it is hoped to boost numbers following a further course in May, which is being funded by the Children's Workforce Development Council. WMCETT's Jean Garner says she sees part of the role of the network as helping people in the voluntary sector who deliver training to realise they are also in the training sector.



The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Network was launched in January 2009 when Louise Jones addressed representatives of 60 organisations at the Voluntary Sector Assembly in Hereford. The network has 50 members, and it is hoped more will join following a PTLLS course for the voluntary and community sector, which is being run in Hereford in April.

Louise is looking at CPD and ways of running courses accredited by Open College Network (OCN) so that they could be funded through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). She also has support from Herefordshire County Council, which wants to work with the Network on CPD. In addition, she is assembling a list of trainers, specialisms and venues in order to help members identify what training is available to them within their sector.

Members of the Warwickshire Teacher Support Network and others working in the voluntary, adult and community sector in Coventry and Warwickshire found out more

about teacher training workplace reforms at a WMCETT roadshow held at Wolston, near Rugby, in March. There were speakers from Lifelong Learning UK and the Institute for Learning, accompanied by workshops on qualifications for teaching Skills for Life, and the role of mentors.

The Warwickshire Teacher Support Network was launched in August 2008. Loraine Hayley, Training and Quality Officer for Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action and the network's co-ordinator, is currently making plans for the coming months. As well as a network newsletter, she is hoping to set up an internet discussion site for trainers. She also wants to look at running PTTLS courses for people in the community and voluntary sector, outside of colleges, and hopes to develop observation and set up peer groups.

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