

CAEL GWAITH, ADDYSG a CHYNGOR
mewn ardaloedd gwledig

GAINING WORK, LEARNING & ADVICE
in rural areas

GWLAD

Adran Dysgu Gydol Oes
Department of Lifelong Learning



EQUAL 2 PROJECT - GWLAD

GAINING WORK, LEARNING AND ADVICE IN RURAL AREAS (2004-2007)

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CHARACTERISTICS OF NORTH WALES

- a predominantly rural area and tourist destination
- picturesque image of the region masks high levels of deprivation and poverty,
- a legacy of industrial decline and an agricultural sector in crisis (BSE and foot and mouth)
- Poor transport links, especially away from the coastal belt
- A number of wards are amongst some of the highest on the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (2000).
- West Wales (and the valleys) was an Objective 1 area, and is a Convergence area (2007-2013)

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

- High rates of inward migration, especially (but not only) of older people into rural areas
- more recent influx of other migrants, especially from Eastern Europe
- High rates of outward migration, especially of well qualified young adults
- Approx. 60% of population in NW Wales bilingual (Welsh speakers)

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- Importance of working in partnership with a range of other agencies (education, voluntary and employers)
- Goal was to engage those often excluded from learning
- Importance of lifelong learning in developing social cohesion/citizenship
- Importance of empowerment
- value of wide range of learning activities – informal, non-formal and formal

TARGET GROUPS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Women in isolated areas
- Older men in rural, farming areas
- Incomers from other parts of UK
- Recent migrants
- Substance misusers
- Members of BME communities

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

- Provided short courses – Welcome to Wales, and language taster courses for incomers
- Worked in partnership to identify and liaise with migrant workers; provided short courses for migrant employees, e.g. health and safety, but incorporated rights and citizenship topics, also arranged trips to education providers for initial advice and guidance.
- Developed informal learning activities related to environment and guide to learning and employment opportunities in environ. sector in N Wales (aimed at BME communities)

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

- Informal learning activities through medium of Welsh, aimed mainly at older men
- Business courses and IT courses aimed at women
- Confidence building courses for substance misusers
- Trialled and evaluated blended learning and other distance learning approaches

CONCLUSIONS

- Lifelong Learning has an important role to play in developing skills and in fostering social cohesion
- Informal learning opportunities are important as well as formal learning
- Flexibility of funding needed to respond to changing circumstances

