

IAG Launch events draw crowds in Holt, Stalham, North Walsham & Fakenham



Around 400 people enjoyed lively 'taster' events in Stalham, North Walsham, Fakenham and Holt in May to launch the new IAG service in the town.

Activities and demonstrations were offered by Norfolk Adult Education, Learning for Everyone and other training providers. "The activities on offer varied for each event, but there was really something for everyone", said Denise Treissman from Learning for Everyone. "For instance, people could use their own pedal power on a Blenda Bike to make a delicious smoothie, have a go at salsa dancing and computing and watch demonstrations of sugarcraft and Indian Head Massage." Other activities included wine-tasting, stained glass, art and patchwork workshops and nature walks.

Representatives from other organisations including Meridian East, Norwich School of Art and Design and local history group ARCHE were on hand and 26 people booked in for an hour-long one-to-one appointment with specialist advisers to explore directions they might take to improve their career prospects, brush up old skills and develop new ones.

"Good fun, a nice variety of activities to enjoy and entertain"

"Learning new skills can open up all kinds of new opportunities", said Tracey Alston of Norfolk Adult Education, which organised many of the activities for the events. "There's such a variety of learning options available, often close to home and at low cost. We were delighted that so many came along to find out what they could do."

"Over 100 people came to the Stalham event and find out what we have on offer in the town"

Sally Davies, Adviser



"Thoroughly enjoyable and constructive"

"Supportive staff, very friendly and eager to help"



An effective skills strategy for North Norfolk

Learning for Everyone is the operational arm of the North Norfolk Skills Partnership, whose aim is to raise the ambitions and aspirations of people in North Norfolk and promote learning and skills to create a thriving district. The Partnership provides a strategic steer for the current and future learning and skills needs of both individuals and businesses.

John Morgan, Manager of the Partnership, says "It's about making sure that the learning and skills development needed by North Norfolk employers, individuals and communities is articulated, and that those needs are met."

He adds that engagement with local employers is key. "We are closely linked to the North Norfolk Business Forum", he says. "By working together, we can make sure that best use is made of existing resources, we can identify gaps in provision and we can target resources where they'll be most effective."

To these ends, the Partnership has established a strategic forum meeting every six weeks and developed a skills strategy for North Norfolk which has been adopted as part of the Local Strategic Partnership's vision. It has also undertaken a pilot skills survey to establish local business needs, and initiated the Information, Advice and Guidance Learning Gateway project whose developments are highlighted in this publication.

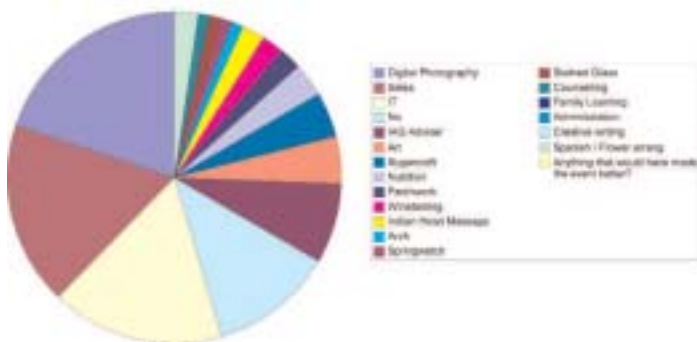
Leaflets are available at all the Centres and from Merchants' Place, or call 01263 519454

Free, confidential information, advice and guidance - when and where

What do people want to learn?

Questionnaires were completed by 123 people who attended the launch events. Here's what they told us they'd like to study.

Analysis of the results, shown in the chart below, indicates that digital photography, salsa dancing and IT were the most popular subjects, with art and a variety of other creative courses also attracting a lot of interest. One-to-one advice and guidance sessions were also in high demand.



Visit us for a free, confidential one-to-one talk about what you need. Our qualified advisers can help you:

- Identify and update your skills
- Find out what is available
- Discover the right course for you
- Improve your job prospects
- Plan for a better future

Everyone is welcome

This service is available in the following seven centres:

<p>Cromer Merchants' Place, 16 Church Street, Cromer NE27 9GW Appointments: Flexible Call 01263 519454</p>	<p>Sheringham Sheringham Place, 3 Station Rd Sheringham NE26 8EE Appointments: Wednesdays/Flexible Call 01263 519454</p>
<p>Fakenham The Old Rectory, Fakenham NE21 90R Appointments: Tuesdays/Flexible Call 01328 851223</p>	<p>Stalham The Hopping Shop (next to the Post Office) High Street, Stalham NE12 9AH Appointments: Thursdays Call 01263 519454</p>
<p>Holt Half Day Services, Charles Rd, Holt NE25 5DA Appointments: Tuesdays/Flexible Call 01263 519454</p>	<p>Wells Wells Library, Seefin Road Wells NE23 1AE Appointments: Mondays from 2pm Call 01263 519454</p>
<p>North Walsham North Walsham Community Centre, New Road, North Walsham NE26 9DE Appointments: Tuesdays/Flexible Call 01263 519454</p>	

Pick up a newsletter!



Norman Lamb, MP, presented Awards recently to celebrate local learners' achievements

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Learning this Autumn at Merchant's Place - your guide to what's on

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What do people want to learn? We asked and they told us!

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North Norfolk

LEARNING & SKILLS OUTLOOK

Summer 2008

Popular advice service now in all seven towns in North Norfolk

This Spring saw the launch of new Information, Advice and Guidance provision in North Walsham, Wells, Holt, Fakenham and Stalham

People from all over North Norfolk can now take advantage of a free learning advice and guidance service provided by the Learning for Everyone project, following the launch of four new local venues in Stalham, Wells, Holt and North Walsham. Project Manager John Morgan, says, "The service makes a vital contribution to supporting skills development in the area, and has been very successful in Cromer, Sheringham and Fakenham for some time. We are delighted that, with this Spring's launches at the additional venues, we are now more accessible to people in all seven towns in the District and their outlying villages."

The IAG service provides expert, confidential one-to-one information, advice and guidance to anyone wanting to boost their career options or find a new direction. It is part of the Learning for Everyone (L4e) initiative being developed across North Norfolk and is funded by a number of sources including Investing in Communities, the North Norfolk Community Partnership and North Norfolk District Council. The locations for all seven towns are shown on the map below, and news and pictures from the recent launch events are included on the back page of this newsletter.

The locations for all seven IAG venues are shown on this map.

New leaflets giving more details on how to access the service are available at each of the centres and from Merchants' Place and we have also included all their contact details on the back page of this newsletter.



Ordinary people, extraordinary achievements...



Tutors Pauline Donaldson and Glenis Leach with some of their students outside Merchants' Place

Two learning projects at the Merchants' Place Community Resource and Learning Centre in Cromer have helped 147 people from all corners of North Norfolk to gain valuable qualifications.

The achievements of the Empower U and Biz3 projects were celebrated at an awards ceremony presented by Norman Lamb MP on Friday 4 July at Sheringham Little Theatre...read more about this event and just a few of the personal success stories behind it over the page.

Planning for retirement - got your finances sorted?



Whether you're fast approaching the time when you can retire from work or still have some years to go, sound financial planning is essential. Learning for Everyone is very pleased to be working in partnership with WETU Financial to provide a series of FREE one-hour workshops in the Autumn. **Open to both employed and self-employed people of all ages**, the workshops offer the chance to ask questions and learn more about longer term financial planning. They will be at:

Stalham Happing Shop	20 November	11.00am
Wells Library	24 November	3.00pm
Holt Community Centre	25 November	10.30am
N Walsham Community Centre	25 November	2.00pm
Sheringham Oddfellows Hall	26 November	11.00am
Cromer Merchants' Place	26 November	2.00pm
Fakenham Adult Education Centre	27 November	11.00am

Phone 01263 519454 for more details or to reserve a place.



Local learning really makes a difference

John Morgan, Manager of North Norfolk Skills Partnership, writes

It's just over two years since the Merchants' Place Community Resource and Learning Centre opened in May 2006 in Cromer. In that time it has achieved a huge amount and touched the lives of many people, not just from Cromer but from towns and villages right across North Norfolk.

The Learning for Everyone Team, based at the Centre, is the operational delivery arm of the North Norfolk Skills Partnership, which is driving the strategic vision for learning and skills in the District. Thanks to funding from a number of sources, it is able to support skills development in North Norfolk in a variety of ways: by providing the information, advice and guidance service featured in the article on this page, by researching into what people want to do in the district (see page 4 for more about this), and by delivering expert training to fill identified skills needs, as illustrated so well by the success stories highlighted in the centre pages of this newsletter.

Local learning really does make a positive difference to people's lives and to the economic health and sustainability of North Norfolk. The team is now looking to create two more centres for skills development in the District...watch this space!

Free laptop loans offered through Virtual Business Support Project

An exciting initiative is bringing valuable help to new and existing home-based micro-businesses in coastal areas of North Norfolk

Funded and supported by North Norfolk District Council, North Norfolk Community Partnership, ESF and other key partners, the Virtual Business Support project can provide eligible entrepreneurs from specific coastal areas with a laptop on loan for up to six months. The state-of-the-art Dell PC laptops come complete with software and Broadband connection. Free expert training is also offered to help the new entrepreneurs maximise the success of their fledgling business ventures.

Could this be for you? For details and an application form please contact Stuart Hutcheson on 01263 519454 or email info@vbusiness-support.net. www.vbusiness-support.net



FREE ROADSHOW

Thurs 11 Sept
Merchants' Place
10am-5pm including buffet lunch

Call to book.

More events to follow - see website for details



Learner success celebrated

In July Norman Lamb MP presented awards to mark the extraordinary achievements of students from two valuable programmes taught at Merchants' Place in Cromer

North Norfolk MP Norman Lamb applauded the commitment and determination of adult learners from villages and towns all over North Norfolk when he presented awards at a special ceremony at Sheringham's Little Theatre in July. The award recipients have all undertaken courses run by Cromer-based Learning for Everyone (L4E), achieving over 200 nationally-recognised qualifications between them while studying on popular programmes Empower U and Biz 3.

Empower U provides Skills for Life courses in English and Maths, while the Biz 3 project offers skills in business administration. Taught at Merchants' Place in Cromer and the Happing Shop in Stalham,

the business courses are the only ones of their kind available in the area and have enabled

nearly 150 people to boost their skills and career prospects by studying close to home and at times convenient to them.

John Morgan, Project Manager, said, "Learning not only improves skills for employment but also gives a sense of confidence, self-esteem and well-being. It transforms people's lives for the better". Denise Treissman, Learning and Guidance Manager for L4E, said that some of those receiving awards had overcome significant personal hurdles to study. "And in some cases this is the first time in people's lives that they have achieved a qualification", she added.

Empower U Maths Tutor Steve Gaskin, whose company Right Angle Events had sponsored the event, said, "I feel very privileged to teach at Merchants' Place - it has taught me a great deal. We have great students and my company is proud to have sponsored this event."

Praise for the projects also came from Robin Smith, Economic Development Manager at North Norfolk District Council, who said, "This awards evening is such a celebration. It's about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. It's really important that these courses are available locally for people".

"Ordinary people doing extraordinary things"

**Robin Smith, Economic Development Manager,
North Norfolk District Council**

In his introductory speech, Norman Lamb pledged to support L4E's attempts to gain funding to secure the longer term future of the courses, which are currently in doubt. He spoke personally to each of the learners as he presented them with their certificates along with specially-engraved glasses depicting the L4E logo - a person jumping over a hurdle. Presentations were also made to the tutors and the Merchants' Place team in recognition of their hard work and dedication.

Sue Arnold, Chairman of North Norfolk District Council, who also contributed, said it was good that the Council supported this valuable project, improving the skills of local people. "And it is a real honour to meet these learners and to hear about their wonderful achievements", she said.



Norman Lamb, MP, left, and Sue Arnold, Chairman of North Norfolk District Council, with Empower U and Biz3 tutors Rosemary Covell-London, Glennis Leach and Steve Gaskin at the Learner Awards event in Sheringham in July.

Empower U and Biz3 courses to continue to Easter

Funding is being sought to continue these valuable programmes longer term

For the last six years, Learning for Everyone (L4E) has been helping people all around North Norfolk to improve their employment prospects and gain the skills that employers need, a focus high on the government's agenda.

L4E's Business Administration project, Biz.3, in particular, fulfils a real need, providing an opportunity for people to update their qualifications and gain important new skills. Run from Merchants' Place, it is the only programme of this type available in North Norfolk in the evenings and is highly valued by employers as well as the students themselves.

"I have gained three Level 3 OCR Advanced Certificates in the past year, thanks to the Merchants' Place programme", says student Esther Wright. "Working full-time, there is no other place in North Norfolk I could do such courses in the evening. Without this opportunity a lot of people will miss out on getting qualifications to help them find jobs or to progress in the jobs they have."

Local employer Simon Purslow, adds, "Some of my employees have benefited from the project - it's very useful and helpful that these courses are available in Cromer."

Skills employers need

Denise Treissman, Learning and Guidance Manager for L4E, said "Students have done so well - 75 certificates have been gained in Business Administration and 44 in Maths and English in this academic year - and people really want them to continue". She added that the focus for funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is now on National Vocational Qualifications.

"These are fine if you already work in your chosen field, as assessments are done in the workplace", she said. "But for those who are either not working, or are working in an unrelated field, our courses are the only option locally. They teach skills that employers want - for example, personal assistants, medical secretaries and administrators have all gained qualifications at the Cromer Centre."

John Morgan, Project Manager, said that longer term funding was still being sought, but Learning for Everyone were committed to continuing these vital courses at least until Easter 2009.

Students say...

"I've been attending classes at Merchants' Place for nearly two years now and the service has been both encouraging and valuable. I have gained confidence to go on to Higher Education, which I would never have contemplated before. It would be tragic if this very popular service were lost."

Joanne Godfrey

"I've been attending the Business Administration course for two years now and have managed to achieve five exam results with distinction - something I would never have been able to do had the class not been locally situated, as my boss allows me time off work to attend. He is delighted by my results as I'm able to carry out much more complicated presentation tasks in my secretarial work now."

Anna Thorsen

"This course is priceless to me - I am very dyslexic and have always struggled with literacy. It's helping me to gain confidence as I improve my literacy skills. I believe the Empower U course I am attending at Merchants' Place is essential for me because there is so little help available for dyslexic people."

David Little

Merchants' Place - a great place to learn!

In my opinion...



"Merchants' Place has the X-factor: the staff are superb, so friendly and encouraging, the facilities are wonderful and the whole learning environment is really conducive to success because the students are relaxed and enthusiastic about learning locally."

Glenis Leach, Business Administration tutor

"I feel very privileged to have been asked to teach at Merchants' Place. It has taught me a great deal, and we have great students!"



Steve Gaskin, Empower U Maths Tutor and MD of employer Right Angle Events

Students say...

"I thought that I was the only person who had problems with reading and spelling. It was good to come along and meet others with the same difficulties. We all help each other. The classes give us confidence."

Ann Gray, Empower U student

Merchants' Place - a great facility for local learning and more....

The Merchants' Place Centre provides an excellent venue for study. With modern computer facilities and training rooms and a welcoming reception and resource area, the Centre has also recently become an authorised Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts (OCR) Examination Centre.

As well as the Biz3 and EmpowerU students whose success is highlighted in this issue, many other organisations and learners regularly use the facilities at the Centre, including huge numbers of people attending Adult Education classes. Active Talk runs twice-weekly computer days, Mencap has a drop-in afternoon every Thursday, and advice sessions are run by the Citizens Advice Bureau, Business Link, Aimhigher Norfolk, Connexions/Next Step, the Shaw Trust and other agencies.



Merchants' Place inspired new beginnings for David

"I've been attending classes at Merchants' Place for around two years now and it has given me a new lease of life!"

I'd had a long career in the construction industry but then received a work-related injury which left me registered disabled and I honestly didn't think I would be able to work again. I came into Merchants' Place just to see what was on offer and it was so relaxed and welcoming that I haven't looked back. I've achieved some useful business qualifications - seven so far and four more I'm working on - and am more confident about my future now. The learning facilities, support and staff here are excellent. It's a great place to study not only for those living in the town, but for the surrounding area.

Merchants' Place has given me the chance to advance my education and skills, with help and advice that I never thought would be available. I cannot express how important Merchants' Place is in my life and would like to thank all the members of staff for their help and support."

David Armishaw, Biz3 Student

Where do our learners come from?

Students on the Biz3 and Empower U programmes hail from no less than 22 different towns and villages in the district. While just over 70% of the 147 learners live in either Cromer, Sheringham, Holt or North Walsham, others come from Stalham, Mundesley, Gorleston, Felbrigg, Melton Constable, Reepham, Happisburgh and Briston, amongst many others.

"The staff are very good. They are friendly and helpful. They help us with advice on what to do next."

Empower U Students

"I've been teaching for many years but there is a positive atmosphere at Merchants' Place that I have never experienced anywhere else. Learning there demands high standards but is relaxed."

Business Administration Tutor

AUTUMN PROGRAMME AT MERCHANTS' PLACE

MONDAY	DATES	TIMES	RUN BY/ CONTACT
Move on Maths	Term time	9.30-11.30am	Adult Education - 01692 407526
British Sign Language Level 1 Intro - 6 weeks	From 22 September	10.00am-12 noon	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
Computer Courses: - Beginners to ECDL	Year round	10.00am-4.00pm	Active Talk - 01603 627766
Basic Food Hygiene Certificate	Year round	10.00am-4.00pm	Active Talk - 01603 627766
Empower U - English	Term time	12.30-2.30pm	Merchants' Place - 01263 519454
Genealogy - Who do you think you are? One week	13 October	7.00-9.00pm	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
TUESDAY	DATES	TIMES	RUN BY/ CONTACT
Computers - PC Internet Skills	From 23 September	10.00am-12 noon.	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
Empower U - Maths	Term time	9.30-11.30am	Merchants' Place - 01263 519454
Computers - Modular IT (CLAIT) - 10 weeks	From 23 September	7.00-9.00pm	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
WEDNESDAY	DATES	TIMES	RUN BY/ CONTACT
Understanding Counselling Theories - 5 sessions every 3 wks	From 1 October	9.30am-12.30pm	Merchants' Place - 01263 519454
Spanish Higher Intermediate - 10 weeks	From 24 September	10.00am-12 noon	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
Text/Word Processing - Beginners to Level 3	Term time	12 noon-3.00pm	Merchants' Place - 01263 519454
THURSDAY	DATES	TIMES	RUN BY/ CONTACT
Drawing for Absolute Beginners - 3 weeks	From 2 October	10.00am-12 noon	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
Learn to Paint in Watercolour - 3 weeks	From 6 November	10.00am-12 noon	Adult Education - 0844 800 8002
Computer Courses - Beginners to ECDL	Year round	10.00am-4.00pm	Active Talk - 01603 627766
Text/Word Processing - Beginners to Level 3	Term time	6.00-9.00pm	Merchants' Place - 01263 519454