

English
for Speakers
of Other
Languages



ESOL FOR LIFE

**KENSINGTON
REGENERATION
AREA REVIEW**
FEBRUARY 2007

 NEW THINKING NEW KENSINGTON
kensington
regeneration

edge hill fairfield hollyroad holtroad kensington fields

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ESOL FOR LIFE

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INTRODUCTION

The New Deal for Communities initiative in Kensington is based on partnerships that are firmly rooted in, and representative of, the community. These partnerships bring together residents, voluntary groups, the local authority, and other public agencies and business – all those with a contribution to make to the regeneration of the neighbourhood.

A research project, in and around the Kensington area of Liverpool, funded by Kensington Regeneration and Community 7, has been looking at the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages in the local area. ESOL is an important element of the Skills for Life programme in Kensington New Deal for Communities (KNDC) as it has been identified as an area of potential high local demand with BME residents requiring learning support and qualifications to enhance their personal development. Language skills are crucial to success in other areas and earlier studies have highlighted the issue in relation to health and housing in Kensington.¹

Multiple barriers exist to those wishing to access ESOL classes in Kensington and a review of these barriers has been carried out over several months in order to inform recommendations for future provision. The ESOL for Life Report's recommendations are based on written and oral evidence from providers, learners and non-learners in Kensington and citywide. The review comprised three main elements to take account of provider issues, and give an insight into learners' perspectives and experiences:

- A survey of current provision in Kensington and provision accessed by Kensington residents in the surrounding areas, which included face to face and telephone interviews with ESOL tutors and managers, and centre visits;
- A questionnaire study carried out by Refugee Focus Limited, aimed at non-learners of ESOL in the Kensington L7 New Deal Area, in order to determine un-addressed needs and evaluate existing provision;
- Focus group research undertaken by Local Livelihoods, using Meta planning problems and objectives trees, in a range of ESOL centres attended by Kensington residents and other learners.

The results of the Kensington Area ESOL Review will be presented in this report and developed in a one-day conference entitled ESOL for Life to take place on March 02 2007.

¹Kensington BME Housing and Initial Engagement Study Apr 06

SECTION 1

The ESOL community and recent national developments



1.1 ESOL AND THE ESOL COMMUNITY

ESOL is the provision of English language for adult speakers of other languages. It is estimated that around 1 million adults in England have a first language other than English. ESOL forms part of the government's wider Skills for Life (SfL) strategy and although it has benefited from increased funding as a result, the scale of demand and pressure on resources has risen beyond expectations. Since 2001 it has absorbed more than £1bn of the SfL budget but achieved fewer qualifications than literacy and numeracy. In 2004-5 fewer than half of Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded enrolments were onto nationally approved learning aims, whereas the benchmark figure is 80% of provision. The remaining 20% comprises learners below entry level and those not working towards approved qualifications. In the same year the LSC spent £279million on ESOL, of which £256m was in Further Education, although the LSC is not the only source of funding for ESOL provision. The overall expenditure is due to continue to rise until at least later in 2007.

A wide range of ESOL provision is needed to meet the varied objectives of learners with diverse educational and learning backgrounds, social and work circumstances, and legal status. Learners may be from settled communities, refugees and asylum seekers, or migrant workers who have markedly increased in number recently from the A8 countries. Enrolments by Polish nationals, for example, increased from 151 in 2000-1 to 21,313 in 2004-5, and demand has increased sharply since. Family members joining learners in each of the identified groups above represent a further challenge to meeting the demand for ESOL.

1.2 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Kensington Area Review of ESOL, which began in April 2006, has taken place against a background of significant national development and policy change in the field of ESOL.

NIACE Report

In October 2006 the NIACE (National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education) Committee of Inquiry on English for Speakers of Other Languages' report entitled "More than a language" was published. This gave an overview of the major challenges affecting ESOL provision nationally and made extensive recommendations. Priorities among these are the need for:

- a fundamental cross-government review of ESOL as part of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review;
- the delivery of ESOL to be co-ordinated across the full range of government policies and the full range of providers;
- more ESOL provision to be targeted on the world of work;
- a coherent package of activities to address the most significant quality issues;
- building on the progress made on ESOL teacher qualifications and to improve teacher supply and quality; and
- increasing the range of funding sources available.

Changes to ESOL funding rules

On 18 October 2006 a Learning and Skills Council document *Priorities for Success* revealed that from August 2007 asylum seekers aged over 18 will no longer be eligible for free further education and English courses. Only those granted refugee status, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave to remain will receive automatic fee remission.

Fees will be charged to ESOL learners who are not unemployed or in receipt of income-based benefit.

Migrant workers taking up employment will no longer be eligible for free ESOL. In the Learning Skills Council's Annual Statement of Priorities for the coming year they announced that employers who have recruited employees from outside the UK will be expected to bear the full cost of any necessary English language training.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Policies to restrict access to free ESOL and other courses would seem to be in conflict with stated priorities to promote social inclusion and integration and have been denounced by the Refugee Council. NIACE and the Association of Colleges support the idea that those who have the means should pay for ESOL courses. However NIACE maintain that provision up to Level 1 should remain free and argue that it would be unfair for ESOL learners to be treated unfavourably in relation to literacy and numeracy learners who continue to be eligible for free courses. Asylum and refugee support organisations locally have written to ministers and MPs to lobby against the proposals, and the University and College Union and Trade Union for Refugees (TUFRR) plan to lobby parliament.

New ESOL qualifications

New work-related ESOL qualifications were mentioned by the Minister for Lifelong Learning, Bill Rammell, at the launch of the NIACE Report and in the LSC Document Raising Our Game. A rapid development of separate qualifications for ESOL learners on work-related and/or vocational programmes is planned and these are intended to be available as soon as possible.

Citizenship and settlement

The Immigration Nationality and Asylum Act of 2002 introduced a citizenship test with a language component for people wishing to settle in the UK. Applicants for citizenship who do not have at least Entry Level 3 language skills are required to demonstrate both knowledge of life in the UK and competence in English and this policy has already led to increased demand for targeted courses in citizenship, using materials specifically designed to support the government's policy agenda.² In December the Home Office announced that those applying for indefinite leave to remain from April 2007 will also face a Life in the UK Test or have to attend combined English language and citizenship classes.

All of the above policy changes will affect national and local ESOL provision and their impact is discussed in detail in

Section 5: Key Findings and Recommendations

²Materials produced by NIACE and LLLU+ and commissioned by the Home Office and DfES

SECTION 2

ESOL and its importance for Kensington residents



2.1 The BME AND BILINGUAL POPULATION

In Kensington the BME (black and minority ethnic) census population has risen rapidly: from 4.7% in 1991 to 14.5% in 2001. In 2004 Kensington Regeneration undertook a diversity profiling exercise to establish characteristics of the BME population and of the 18% BME population, around 20% were Chinese and 20% of African origin. 14% of residents in the New Deal for Communities area did not have English as a first language. In the last few years there has been a marked increase in the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees, migrant workers, and overseas students moving into the area. Over half of Kensington's BME population was born abroad and today around 70% are speakers of English as a second or other language. Their cultural and linguistic diversity is continually evolving and the range of people's educational and employment experience, and immigration status is also increasing.

2.2 CURRENT PROVISION

ESOL provision in Kensington itself is minimal and fragmented, mostly daytime and part-time, and fails to meet the needs of residents, many of whom travel outside the area to attend classes in other venues which offer full-time or evening courses and a range of levels and accreditation, as well as support such as childcare. The survey of current provision will therefore include not only centres within the Kensington area but also a number of other centres nearby where Kensington residents also enrol for ESOL.

Providers

Current providers include Liverpool Community College (LCC) with outreach centres at Asylum Link and Al Ghazali, and the Adult Learning Service (ALS) with courses at Kensington Community Learning Centre (KCLC), Life Bank and Field of Dreams. Within Kensington there are also ESOL classes at City Church, while some Kensington residents attend the Frontline Trust or Toxteth Community College in Liverpool 8, Greenbank College in Liverpool 15, and Duke Street Centre of Liverpool Community College close to the city centre. The Bilingual Families project is based close to Kensington and supports parents in developing their own language skills, in helping their children and becoming involved in school life.

Voluntary ESOL tutors play a vital role in a number of venues supporting learners with no access to more formal provision due to classes being full. Waiting time can be excessive with some centres turning away hundreds of applicants each year. In addition to formal ESOL classes provided by LCC, Asylum Link has classes of 20+ learners and smaller groups totalling around 20, taught by volunteers who support newly arrived asylum seekers accommodated in the area for only 6-8 weeks under the New Asylum Model (NAM).

There has been a small increase in provision in Kensington since the start of the ESOL Review project in April 2006, including a WEA evening class and a Saturday morning class with almost 30 learners. These began in the autumn and were primarily intended to improve access for full-time workers.

Waiting lists

Where waiting lists are kept as at Liverpool Community College, the main centre will constantly monitor the situation, interview and filter in a proportion of new learners throughout the year as places come up due to drop out or to a new course commencing. The Adult Learning Service opts to enrol three times a year for 12-week blocks on part-time ESOL courses and both of the main providers run summer schools in July and August. Some centres have abandoned waiting lists as, when a place becomes available in a class, the student may no longer wish to attend a particular centre or they cannot be contacted due to having moved on or been dispersed. While some underused resources such as computer suites exist, tutors cannot be provided for learners waiting to enrol. In an attempt to meet demand for places, some centres already working with an established provider have secured additional classes delivered by a second provider within the same centre.

Funding sources

The majority of ESOL courses are LSC funded with some centres receiving European Social Funding, one Home Office funding, two with part-funding from Sure Start, and some classes are funded directly by Kensington Regeneration.

Types of Provision

There is no evidence of full-time ESOL in Kensington, with learners typically attending 2 classes a week of 2-3 hours, or 3 classes of 2 hours, the maximum attendance being 9 hours per week. In order to progress and achieve qualifications learners are driven to enrol in more than one centre if they can find a place.

The provision within Kensington is taught at Pre-Entry, Entry 1, 2 and 3 Levels only so that learners at higher levels have to travel outside the area or into the city centre to access courses at Level 1, 2 or in IELTS (International English Language Testing System), a pre-entry requirement for higher education courses.

The same situation exists for vocational courses, and ICT courses linked to ESOL are minimal. Asylum Link has a computer room and learners there would benefit from more tutor hours, while Frontline Trust has ICT/ESOL provision offering non-accredited and ECDL-accredited classes. ESOL with cookery and sewing has taken place in at Asylum Link but for the sewing class to continue some crèche provision would need to be reinstated. The Bilingual Families Project in Liverpool 8 run a number of ESOL classes linked to other skills and there is an ESOL/Art project at Toxteth Town Hall.

Accreditation

Most ESOL courses offer accreditation though there is also significant delivery supported by the faith communities and volunteer groups, which does not lead to formal accreditation. The Skills for Life ESOL qualifications are used citywide and the range of examination boards include Trinity, Cambridge and the English Speaking Board. Only the English Speaking Board has a single mode qualification in speaking English that is regarded as a SfL full qualification, while the other boards require a pass in the four modes of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The Life Bank Centre is currently developing a framework of accreditation to offer more flexibility and smaller units of credits in family learning which could potentially be linked to ESOL. Credit may be achieved for a short introductory course, for example as a first step back into learning at Pre-entry level, and may also be transferred if learners move on.

Considerations such as the cost of centre registration, conduct of examinations or assessment and flexibility all affect choice of examination boards and accreditation bodies, and these factors will be explored more fully in the Kensington ESOL for Life Conference on March 02 2007.

SECTION 3

Questionnaire Study: Research and findings



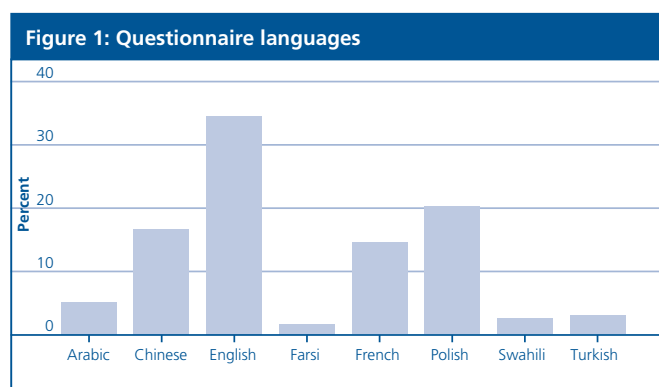
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Refugee Focus Limited carried out a questionnaire study aimed at BME non-learners of English as a Second Language (ESOL) in the Kensington L7 New Deal Area. The aim was to identify, collect and analyse views, in order to determine un-addressed needs and evaluate existing provision. The complete study is available from Kensington Regeneration (contact paula.murawski@liverpool.gov.uk).

Methodology

A questionnaire was designed in English and translated into nine languages.

Figure 1 shows that the languages most used by respondents in filling in the research questionnaire were English (34.4%), Polish (20.6%), Chinese (16.7%), French (14.8%), Arabic (5.3%), Turkish (3.3%), Swahili (2.9%) and Farsi (1.9%).



The questionnaire asked firstly about people's experience of ESOL provision in Kensington, and secondly about themselves. The first part had 14 questions while the second had 9, totalling 26 questions overall designed for self-completion. Three groups of non-ESOL learners were targeted: those who had attended ESOL at some point and dropped out; those who made attempts to register for ESOL but failed, and those potential learners who had not made any attempt to register for an ESOL course. A single questionnaire (see Annexe 1) with relevant questions for each group was used for practicality, easier administration and cost reasons.

Distribution and collection of questionnaires were conducted by Kensington Regeneration in July and August 2006, and data collation and analysis carried out in early September 2006 using MS Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 14.

Reporting

The sample from which percentages are derived is indicated. The base may vary from question to question, since some questions did not apply to all respondents. Therefore the percentage is not always based on the total sample of respondents. For this reason, caution is advised when reading and interpreting the figures included in this report. The second section of the questionnaire is analysed before the first in order to start with the characteristics of the sample.

3.2 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS: RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Country of origin (Q15)

Respondents from 37 different countries in Africa, Asia and Europe took part in the questionnaire exercise, the 5 largest national groups being from Poland (23.9%), China (14.4%), Democratic Republic of Congo (9%), Nigeria (7%) and Ghana (4%).

Table 1: Respondents' countries of origin (Base: all = 209)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Afghanistan	2	1.0	1.0
	Angola	2	1.0	1.0
	Bangladesh	2	1.0	1.0
	Belgium	1	.5	.5
	Bolivia	1	.5	.5
	Burundi	3	1.4	1.5
	Cameroon	2	1.0	1.0
	China	29	13.9	14.4
	Congo	2	1.0	1.0
	Czech Republic	1	.5	.5
	Dominican Republic	1	.5	.5
	DR Congo	18	8.6	9.0
	Ethiopia	3	1.4	1.5
	France	2	1.0	1.0
	Gambia	1	.5	.5
	Ghana	8	3.8	4.0
	Holland	1	.5	.5
	India	3	1.4	1.5
	Indonesia	1	.5	.5
	Iran	7	3.3	3.5
	Iraq	6	2.9	3.0
	Jordan	1	.5	.5
	Kenya	3	1.4	1.5
	Kosovo	1	.5	.5

TABLE CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Table 1: Respondents' countries of origin (Base: all = 209)
continued

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Latvia	1	.5	.5
Libya	1	.5	.5
Malaysia	5	2.4	2.5
Nigeria	14	6.7	7.0
Philippines	2	1.0	1.0
Poland	48	23.0	23.9
Rwanda	1	.5	.5
Somalia	2	1.0	1.0
South Africa	1	.5	.5
Sudan	4	1.9	2.0
Syria	2	1.0	1.0
Trinidad & Tobago	1	.5	.5
Turkey	7	3.3	3.5
Uganda	2	1.0	1.0
Yemen	5	2.4	2.5
Zambia	1	.5	.5
Zimbabwe	3	1.4	1.5
Total	201	96.2	100.0
Missing NA	8	3.8	
Total	209	100.0	

First languages (Q16)

There were 47 different languages spoken as first languages by the respondents and the top five groups were Polish (23%), French, (10.5%), Cantonese (9.1%), Mandarin (8.1%), and Arabic (7.2%). The languages profile found in the Kensington area corresponds in large part to those identified by the LSC as the "top ten" main languages spoken by ESOL learners nationally: Polish, Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish, Somali, French, Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin). These results came out of responses from 20 of the largest national ESOL providers.

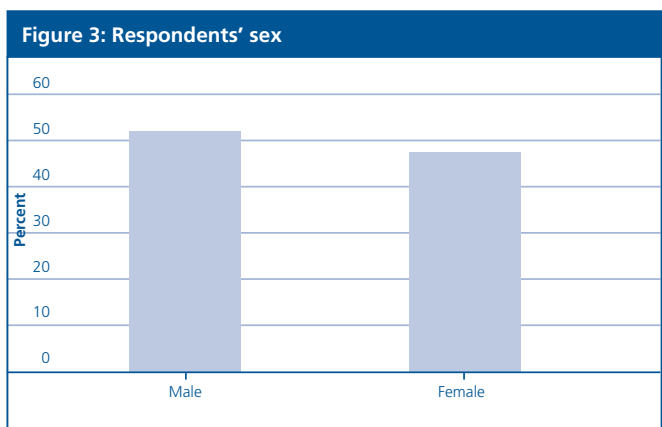
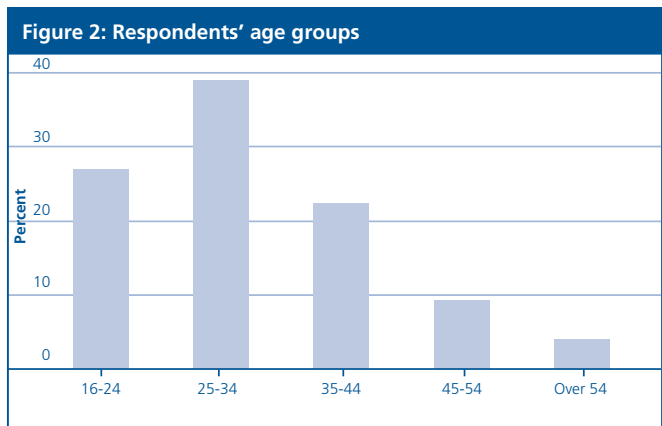
Age groups (Q17)

Figure 2 shows that most respondents (38.7%) were aged between 24 and 34 years. The next largest age group comprised those aged between 16 and 24 years (27%), followed by those aged between 35 to 44 years (22%), and those aged between 44 to 54 years (8.8%). Those over 54 represented only 3.4% of respondents. The cumulative

percentage of respondents aged between 16 to 44 years was very high (87.7%), which reflected the youthfulness of the BME population established in Kensington and surrounding areas. This finding is consistent with other research work done among ethnic minorities and migrants in Britain and across Europe.³ Nationally 70% of full-time equivalent (FTE) ESOL learners are aged 26+, which suggests a large majority of established foreign-born residents rather than new migrants, since the majority of the latter group are under 25.

Gender (Q18)

Figure 3 shows that just over half of the total of respondents were male (52.2%). Female respondents represented 47.8%. In contrast over 60% of FTE ESOL enrolments nationally are women (LSC figures for 2004-5).

**Marital status (Q19)**

Of those respondents who freely declared their marital status, most said they were single (57.6%). Those who said they were married represented 42%.

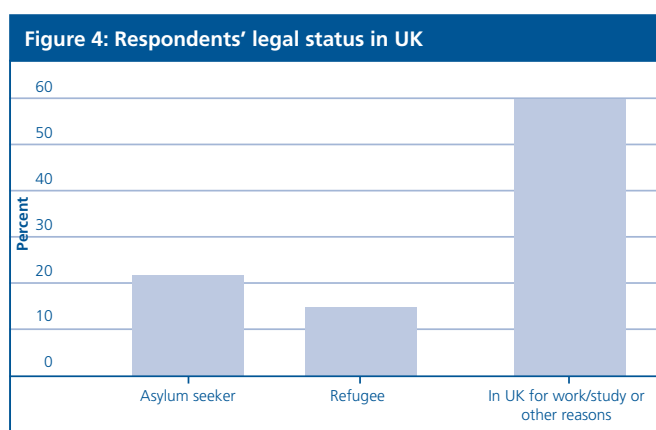
³See for instance: Steven Glover, Ceri Gott et al. (2001), *Migration: an economic and social analysis*. RDS Occasional Paper No 67. London: Home Office; Block, A. 'Refugee settlement in Britain: the impact of policy on participation', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol 26, No 1, 75-88, January 2000; United Nations, 'Replacement Migration: Is it a solution to declining and Ageing Populations?' March 2000; EU Networks on Integration of Refugees (www.refugeenet.org), project of European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE); Council of Europe, 'Current Trends in International Migration in Europe' (John Salt), 2000.

Dependants in UK (Q20)

Most respondents (67.2 %) said they had no dependants in UK while 32.8% said they had.

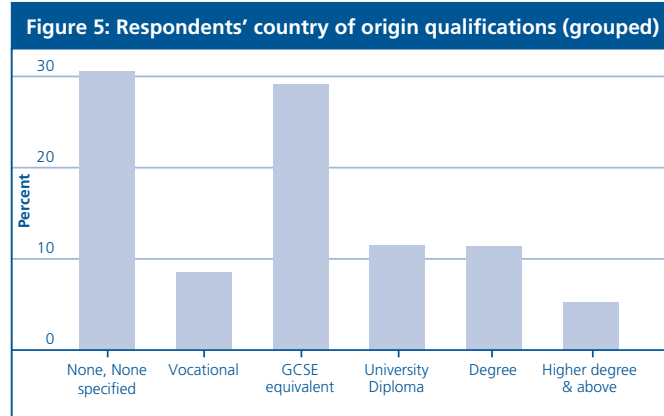
Legal status (Q21)

62.8% of all respondents said they were in UK for work, study or other reasons. Those who identified themselves as asylum seekers represented 23.1%, while refugees represented 14.1 % (See Figure 4).



Respondents' country of origin qualification in groups (Q22)

As illustrated by Figure 5 respondents with no formal qualification and those who did not specify any qualification on the questionnaire represented the majority (31.8%). The second largest group was made up of those who said they had GCSE equivalent qualifications (29.5%). This was not surprising given the age group distribution of respondents. Those with a university diploma equalled those with a degree at 13.1% each. Those with a vocational qualification represented 8% while those with a higher degree and above represented only 4.5%. The cumulative percentage of those with qualifications from GCSE to higher degrees was quite high (63.7%). This finding is consistent with other studies on the skills profile of migrants in UK and across Europe (See footnote 3 above).



Respondents' occupations in countries of origin (grouped) (Q23)

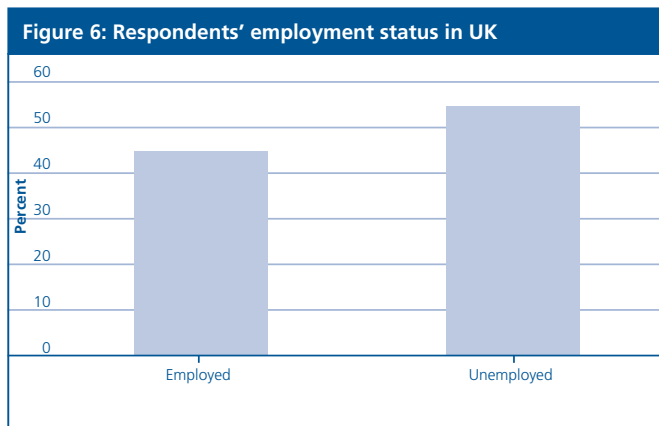
Table 2 (overleaf) shows that most respondents (20.6%) said they were students. A possible explanation for this is that students are most likely to be found among the younger age groups (the cumulative percentage of respondents aged 16-34 was 65.7 % of the total). A similar figure (20.1%) said they did not have any specific occupations. Among these there were women at home and those who may have had difficulty explaining what they did in their countries of origin. The other large groups were those in professional occupations (18.5%), skilled trades (16.4%) and those in sales and customer services occupations (10.1%). Associate professional occupations and technical occupations were mentioned by 5.8% of respondents. Only 3.7% said they were process, plant and machine operatives and in elementary occupations.

Table 2: Respondents’ occupations in countries of origin (grouped) (Base: all = 209)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Managers and senior officials	2	1.0	1.1	1.1
	Professional occupations	35	16.7	18.5	19.6
	Associate professional occupations & technical occupations	11	5.3	5.8	25.4
	Administrative & secretarial occupations	4	1.9	2.1	27.5
	Skilled trade occupations	31	14.8	16.4	43.9
	Personal services occupations	3	1.4	1.6	45.5
	Sales and customer services occupations	19	9.1	10.1	55.6
	Process, plant & machine operatives	2	1.0	1.1	56.6
	Elementary occupations	5	2.4	2.6	59.3
	Student	39	18.7	20.6	79.9
	None	38	18.2	20.1	100.0
	Total	189	90.4	100.0	
Missing	NA	20	9.6		
Total		209	100.0		

Respondents’ employment status in UK (Q24)

Figure 6 shows that more than half of respondents (56.7%) were unemployed while the remaining 43.3% were employed. These figures were influenced by the make-up of the group in terms of legal status. The results of a cross-tabulation between the respondents’ employment status in UK and their legal status reveals that the highest unemployment rate was among asylum seekers at 85.7 % certainly due to the legal restrictions on their right to work in UK. Among refugees 67.9% were unemployed while only 43.4% were unemployed among those in UK for work, study or other reasons.



Working respondents’ occupations in UK2 (grouped) (Q25)

Table 3 shows that of those respondents who said they were employed in UK, most indicated that they were in elementary occupations (36.7% compared to only 2.6% in their countries of origin), followed by those in skilled trade occupations (26.6% compared to 16.4% in countries of origin). Those in professional occupations were equal to process, plant and machine operatives at 11.4% each (compared to 18.5% and 1.1% respectively in countries of origin). Sales and customer service occupations represented 6.6% (compared to 10.1% in countries of origin) while those in associate professional occupations and technical occupations represented 5.1%.

Working respondents’ sectors of industry (from responses given in Q25)

As illustrated by Table 4 most working respondents said they were packer/warehouse operative/process operatives (19%), followed by kitchen and catering assistants (16.5%), cleaner/domestic staff (11.4%). Care assistants and home carers equalled those in the construction and land services at 10.1% each. Those (mostly registered nurses) employed in the health and medical services represented 11.4%. Those classified

as others were employed in various sectors including art, youth work, advice etc. They represented 11.4% of working respondents.

There is a noticeable concentration of Kensington respondents in the lowest paid jobs (48%) compared to their previous employment history in countries of origin where 45% were employed in the medium and highest paid jobs.

Table 3: Working respondents occupations in UK2 (grouped) (Base: all = 209)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Professional occupations	9	4.3	11.4	11.4
	Associate professional & technical occupations	4	1.9	5.1	16.5
	Skilled trade occupations	21	10.0	26.6	43.0
	Personal services occupations	2	1.0	2.5	45.6
	Sales & customer service occupations	5	2.4	6.3	51.9
	Process, plant and machine operatives	9	4.3	11.4	63.3
	Elementary occupations	29	13.9	36.7	100.0
Missing	Total	79	37.8	100.0	
	NAP	122	58.4		
	NA	8	3.8		
	Total	130	62.2		
Total		209	100.0		

Table 4: Working Respondents' industries (grouped) (Base: all = 209)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Health & medical services	9	4.3	11.4
	Food, fish, meat processing	1	.5	1.3
	Retail & related services	1	.5	1.3
	Construction & land services	8	3.8	10.1
	Transport	2	1.0	2.5
	Business	2	1.0	2.5
	Care assistants & home carers	8	3.8	10.1
	Cleaner/domestic staff	9	4.3	11.4
	Kitchen & catering assistant	13	6.2	16.5
	Packer/Warehouse operative/Process operatives	15	7.2	19.0
	Waiter/Waitresses	2	1.0	2.5
	Other (volunteering, security, art, advice, youth work)	9	4.3	11.4
	Total	79	37.8	100.0
Missing	NAP	122	58.4	
	NA	8	3.8	
	Total	130	62.2	
Total		209	100.0	

Respondents' postcodes (Q26)

Most respondents were from the originally intended postcode area of Kensington L7 and neighbouring postcodes of L6 and L8.

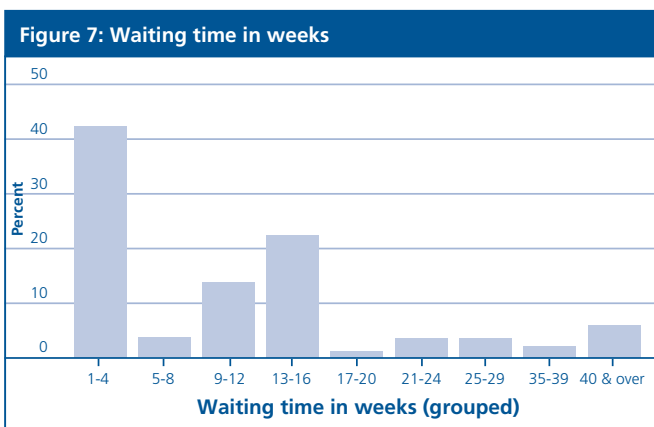
3.3 ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT ESOL⁴

ESOL take up in Liverpool (Q1)

Just over one third of all respondents (37.8%) said they had attended ESOL in Liverpool. The remainder (62.2%) said they had not.

Waiting times (Q2)

Figure 7 show that most respondents said they had waited between 1 and 4 weeks (41.8%), 22.8% between 13 and 16 weeks, and the next largest group between 9 and 12 weeks (13.9%). Taken together, all who said they had waited from 1 to 16 weeks were by far the largest group (82.2%). The cumulative percentage of those who said they had waited more than 16 weeks was 17.8%. This would seem misleading as we know that the largest providers turn away hundreds of applicants for ESOL each year and that it is much more difficult to access full-time study than a few part-time hours of classes a week (See Q5 below). Smaller centres, such as Al-Ghazali seem to have much shorter waiting times than larger centres such as Liverpool Community College. This may be explained by the fact that many learners will keep trying to get into College because of other non-ESOL opportunities available to those who enrol.



Contacted centres (Q3)

Respondents who attended ESOL in Liverpool were asked which centres they contacted and 13 specific centres were named (See Table 5). Liverpool Community College was

mentioned by the highest number (36% of respondents), followed by Toxteth Community College (10.2%), Al-Ghazali Centre and Asylum Link (8% each), Kensington Community Learning Centre, and the unspecified centres such as churches and "asylum centres" (6% each).

Table 5: Contacted ESOL Centres (Base: 79)

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Al Ghazali Centre	4	1.9
Asylum Link Merseyside	4	1.9
Blackburne House	1	.5
Cooper Building	2	1.0
Frontline	2	1.0
Granby Adult Learning Centre	1	.5
Hope University	1	.5
Job Centre	2	1.0
John Moores' University	2	1.0
Kensington Community Learning Centre	3	1.4
Liverpool Community College	18	8.6
Methodist Centre	1	.5
Sure Start	1	.5
Toxteth Community College	5	2.4
Other (unspecified asylum centres, churches)	3	1.4
Total	50	23.9
Missing NAP	130	62.2
NA	29	13.8
Total	159	76.0
Total	209	100.0

Centres attended (Q4)

Respondents who attended ESOL in Liverpool were then asked which centres they attended after initial contact. They mentioned 19 centres and a few other non-specified centres. Some said they attended courses in two centres at the same time. The analysis shows how the respondents ranked the centres they attended in terms of first, second and third centre where applicable.

⁴For full wording of questions, see Annexe 1

As a first port of call, Liverpool Community College was by far the most popular (36.8%), followed by Kensington Community Learning Centre mentioned only by 10.3% of respondents (See Table 6). These two main centres were followed by the Merseyside Chinese Community Development Association (MCCDA) mentioned by 8.8%, Al-Ghazali Centre (7.4%), and Asylum Link (5.9%).

For those respondents who said that they attended a second centre for additional ESOL course hours, Toxteth Community College was mentioned most.

Table 6: Attended ESOL Centre 1 (Base: 79)

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Al Ghazali Centre	5	2.4
Asylum Link Merseyside	4	1.9
Blackburne House	1	.5
Cooper Building	1	.5
Frontline	3	1.4
Granby Adult Learning Centre	1	.5
Hugh Baird College	2	1.0
Job Centre	1	.5
John Moores University	1	.5
Kensington Community Learning Centre	7	3.3
Liverpool Community College	25	12.0
Liverpool University	2	1.0
MCCDA	6	2.9
Methodist Centre	1	.5
Toxteth Community College	1	.5
Unspecified asylum centres, Churches etc.	3	1.4
Learn Direct	1	.5
Reed Partnership	1	.5
City Church	1	.5
Smithdown Primary Adult Learning Centre	1	.5
Total	68	32.5
Missing NAP	130	62.2
NA	11	5.4
Total	141	67.5
Total	209	100.0

ESOL hours per week (Q5)

Table 7 shows that most respondents said they were doing between 1 to 4 hours a week (26%) with those doing 5 to 8 hours a week at 18.2%. This may tie in with the intention on behalf of centres to offer fewer hours per week but take on a high number of students to satisfy ESOL demand. 19.5% were doing between 9 to 12 hours a week and 23.4% 13 to 16 hours a week. Students on 15-hour courses would normally be considered full-time, though Job Centre requirements may lower this to 14 hours per week for some students. The cumulative percentage of those doing between 1 to 16 hours a week was very high (87%). Those doing more than 16 hours per week represented only 13% of those who answered the question. The most plausible explanation to this may be that it is difficult for respondents to be offered more than 16 hours of ESOL per week, even by attending two centres.

ESOL attendance times (Q6)

Most respondents said that they attended their ESOL courses either in the morning or in the afternoon (41.6% for each time), giving a high cumulative percentage. This may simply be because these are the times offered by centres, but for those who have dependants morning or afternoon attendance means that they have some time to look after them. Only 9.1% of respondents said they were attending their courses in the evening while 6.5% said they combined morning and afternoon attendance (See table 8).

Table 7: ESOL hours per week (grouped) (Base: 79)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 - 4	20	9.6	26.0	26.0
5 - 8	14	6.7	18.2	44.2
9 - 12	15	7.2	19.5	63.6
13 - 16	18	8.6	23.4	87.0
17 - 20	4	1.9	5.2	92.2
21 - 24	2	1.0	2.6	94.8
25 - 29	2	1.0	2.6	97.4
30 & over	2	1.0	2.6	100.0
Total	77	36.8	100.0	
Missing NAP	130	62.2		
NA	2	1.0		
Total	132	63.2		
Total	209	100.0		

Table 8: ESOL attendance times (Base: 79)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Morning	32	15.3	41.6	41.6
Afternoon	32	15.3	41.6	83.1
Evening	7	3.3	9.1	92.2
Morning & Afternoon	5	2.4	6.5	98.7
Morning, Afternoon & Evening	1	.5	1.3	100.0
Total	77	36.8	100.0	
Missing NAP	130	62.2		
NA	1	.5		
System	1	.5		
Total	132	63.2		
Total	209	100.0		

Time on ESOL course (Q7)

Responses were very scattered with no clearly emerging clusters. The largest group (19.2%) said that had spent only 1 to 6 weeks on their course before dropping out, which suggests a high rate of early dropout. There were also two equal groups of respondents who said they spent between 19 and 24 weeks and between 43 and 48 weeks (16.4% each) on the course. Over half of the respondents (cumulative 57.5%) had spent up to 24 weeks on their course. The large disparities in the lengths of time spent on ESOL courses may be explored in the light of the answers to the next question. However, other aspects in people's personal circumstances (qualitative information) would have to be taken into account to get a clearer picture of the answers given.

Dropout reasons (Q8)

Table 9 shows that most respondents indicated that the main reasons for dropping out of their ESOL course was that they actually wanted a vocational course with ESOL support (23.1%). Most respondents said they had gained qualifications and were working in their countries of origin (see results of Q22 and 23 above) and therefore the response given here may

suggest a desire to retrain and qualify quickly and for ESOL to support this main goal. As Q7 points out more than 57% of those who took ESOL in Liverpool spent up to 24 weeks on the course before dropping out. This may suggest that it is mostly when ESOL language courses are lengthy with only a few hours per week that learners lose interest.

Lack of travel expenses and not enough ESOL hours (see Q5 above) were mentioned by the next largest groups (19.2% each), followed by "started work & was therefore no longer available" (11.5%), and "course times not suitable" (7.7%).

Table 9: Drop-out reasons (Base: 79)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid 1. I had no travel expenses	5	2.4	19.2
2. I did not have enough ESOL hours	5	2.4	19.2
3. My course times were not suitable	2	1.0	7.7
4. There was no child care	1	.5	3.8
5. There were no single sex classes	0	0	0
6. The venue was not convenient because I have a disability	0	0	0
7. Health problems	1	.5	3.8
8. Wanted vocational course + ESOL support	6	2.9	23.1
9. I needed advice on employment	1	.5	3.8
10. I started work & was no longer available	3	1.4	11.5
12. I needed a lot of support in reading & writing	1	.5	3.8
13. I was concerned about status in Britain	1	.5	3.8
Total	26	12.4	100.0
Missing NAP	130	62.2	
NA	22	10.5	
System	31	14.8	
Total	183	87.6	
Total	209	100.0	

Current need for ESOL (Q9) and Possibility of a fresh start (Q10)

Table 10 shows that most respondents (78.7%) said they still needed ESOL while 21.3% said they did not, so that the majority of non-learners who had previously registered on an ESOL course in Liverpool were still interested in accessing an ESOL course. Of these 95.2% said they would resume ESOL studies if the difficulties that led them to drop out were addressed. (See table 11).

Table 10: Current need for ESOL (Base: 79)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid YES	59	28.2	78.7	78.7
NO	16	7.7	21.3	100.0
Total	75	35.9	100.0	
Missing NAP	130	62.2		
NA	4	1.9		
Total	134	64.1		
Total	209	100.0		

Table 11: Possibility of ESOL fresh start (Base 59)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid YES	56	26.8	95.2	95.2
NO	3	1.4	4.8	100.0
Total	59	28.2	100.0	
Missing NAP	150	71.6		
Total	150	71.7		
Total	209	100.0		

Failed attempts to register for ESOL and Centres contacted by those who made unsuccessful attempts to register (Q11 and 12)

Those respondents, who indicated that they had not registered for ESOL in Liverpool, were asked whether they had made an attempt to do so and failed. 80.7% had not attempted to enrol after arriving in Liverpool, with 19.3% making unsuccessful attempts at the centres named in Q12 and for the reasons given in Q13

First centre contacted while attempting to register for ESOL (without success)

Just over one third of respondents mentioned Liverpool Community College as their first point of contact when they attempted to enrol for ESOL without success (39.1%), then Kensington Community Learning Centre (17.4), and thirdly Granby Adult Learning Centre (13%). Others were on the same footing among respondents as first choice centres.

As a second centre contacted while attempting to enrol for ESOL without success, most respondents mentioned Liverpool Community College (42.9%), Kensington Community Learning Centre and Learn Direct (28.6% each). This again confirmed how popular Liverpool Community College's ESOL provision is among Kensington BME residents, followed by the locally based Kensington Community Learning Centre.

Only two respondents said they had made contact with a third ESOL centre: one mentioned Granby Adult Learning Centre and the other Hope University.

Difficulties faced by those who made unsuccessful attempts to register (Q13)

Most respondents (33.3%) found the greatest barrier to enrolment was the lack of people who could speak to them in their own languages at the ESOL centres. The other most frequently mentioned difficulties were the fact that no one contacted the ESOL inquirer and that the waiting time was too long (22.2% each). Respondents also mentioned that there was no ESOL information in their languages (11.1%) and that they were sent to a different place but could not find it (11.1%). Given that only less than half the number of applicable respondents gave answers to the question, the results can only tell a partial story to be complemented by qualitative information. Nonetheless, the result suggests that the lack of multilingual support in ESOL centres, both verbal when a learner presents in person and in print to show procedures and course information, as well as the length of waiting times, are the two main areas of concern for respondents.

Reasons for not making any attempts to register for ESOL (Q14)

The most emerging reason, given by just over a third of the respondents (37.1%) was that their level of English was already good. Since most respondents in the sample said they were in Liverpool for work, study or other reasons (62.8%) it could be assumed that many would already have a good level of English, and indeed English was the fourth top language used in the completion of questionnaires. However the second most emerging reason was that just above a quarter of respondents said (27.1%) they had just arrived in the area and did not know where to find ESOL provision. This may highlight the fact that information on ESOL is not readily available for people, especially in places they are most likely to frequent. As might also be expected given the sample, the third most emerging reason stated by 18.6% of respondents was that they were too busy working.

3.4 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the questionnaire exercise show that the group of Kensington BME residents who took part in the study was highly diverse in terms of country of origin (37 different countries), languages spoken (47 identified) and languages used to fill in the questionnaire (9 in total). However, groups such as Polish, Chinese and French speakers emerged more than others. In the sample most were between 16 and 34 years of age and most single. The majority had no dependents and there were slightly more male than female respondents. Respondents were overwhelmingly in UK for work, study or reasons other than asylum. They were well qualified with over 60% with GCSE equivalent qualifications and/or above. Although most were employed in their countries, the tendency was reversed once in Kensington as the questionnaire revealed a higher incidence of unemployment. Those employed were in the lower scale jobs, a reverse tendency to the situation in their countries of origin. Most respondents were from L7 and the surrounding area.

The results revealed that most respondents in the sample had not attended ESOL in Liverpool but of those who had (before dropping out), the highest number had waited between 1 and 4 weeks to start on an ESOL course. Surprisingly, this result alone does not highlight waiting times as a problem area. However, the total of candidates waiting between 1 to 16 weeks (82.2%) reveals that there is still a waiting time issue that needs to be addressed with length of actual waiting time varying from one provider to another.

In terms of centres contacted and attended, Liverpool Community College together with Kensington Community Learning Centre, Merseyside Chinese Community Development Association (MCCDA) and Al-Ghazali appear to be the most popular.

ESOL hours per week seemed to be an area of concern with most respondents doing 1 to 4 hours per week and less than a quarter accessing more than 12 hours per week. The study also shows that as a consequence, most respondents had attended more than one centre to supplement the few hours offered by the main centre. There is no doubt that a few hours of ESOL per week per person emerges as a strategy from providers to meet the local high ESOL demand. However, when extended over a long period this seems to be one of the reasons why candidates drop out of their course. Over half had spent up to 24 weeks on the course before dropping out, mainly because they wanted a vocational course with ESOL support. The results seem to indicate that for candidates who are mostly qualified and were working in the upper scales of the job market in their countries of origin, shorter more intensive courses with vocational input are needed. Virtually all respondents who had dropped out of their ESOL course said they still needed ESOL courses and that they would restart if their difficulties were addressed. These would include problems with travel expenses and the need to study at times that fit in with work patterns.

Morning and afternoon courses were attended by equal numbers of respondents though the question was not asked whether attendance times were of respondents' choosing; and few respondents appeared to be attending evening courses.

Among respondents who did not register for ESOL in Liverpool, there were two groups. First, those who made an attempt to get on an ESOL course but failed, even after contacting two or three different centres. The main difficulties included lack of multilingual support at these ESOL centres, lack of follow-up contact from the centre after the inquiry and too long waiting times. Improvements are needed in these key areas to overcome barriers faced by learners who fail to access ESOL.

Among respondents who did not try to enrol, most said they were satisfied with their level of English, they had just arrived and did not know where to get information from, or they were too busy working. Up to date information about ESOL courses needs to be readily available to referring agencies and to potential learners in other languages. Given that a large number of learners are working in a wide range of sectors there needs to be more creative timetabling of courses with more evening and weekend provision.

3.5 TECHNICAL DETAILS

Sample and statistical reliability

A total of 209 respondents took part in the questionnaire research phase. This was not a randomly drawn up sample and is therefore not strictly representative of the whole Kensington BME residents who are non-learners of ESOL. However, if compared to the most recent estimates of BME residents in Kensington, the sample would represent almost 10 per cent of the total. This would suggest that at least 1 in every ten Kensington BME residents took part in the questionnaire exercise but this would not be a correct estimate as the most recent estimates of Kensington L7 BME residents (2,100 people) were from 2004. The growth of this population was estimated at 7.5% per year between 1991 and 2001.⁵ Assuming that this growth remained at least the same between 2004 and 2006, current estimates would be 3,415 people. The same sample would therefore represent just over 6% of the estimated Kensington BME population. It has to be kept in mind that the BME residents constitute a very transient

population⁶ (due to a number of reasons beyond the scope of this study) whose actual number may be lower or higher than the estimates. In any case, the study sample size provides a good indication of the Kensington BME population's views on ESOL needs and provision.

Data processing

Data entry and analysis were done using MS Excel and SPSS packages. There are three types of missing data in the tables: NAP = Not Applicable when a question does not apply to a respondent given how they have answered previous questions; NA = No Answer when a respondent did not provide an answer to a question that applied to them. System = used when the answers given are not valid for analysis purpose (for instance if a string type answer is provided while a numeric answer is expected).

For accessibility, relevant SPSS generated tables and figures were copied into this MS Word report. In tables, cumulative percentages are shown where they may be useful in the interpretation of data.

⁵MORI, (2004), National Evaluation of New Deal for Communities Household Survey – Kensington New Deal for Communities.

⁶See Amion Consulting, (2004), 'A profile of Black and Minority Ethnic Population in the Kensington New Deal for Communities Area'. Stage 1 Report, March 2005.

SECTION 4

Focus Groups: Research and findings



4.1 INTRODUCTION

Local Livelihoods undertook 13 focus group exercises, using Meta planning problems and objectives trees, as part of the Kensington ESOL Area Review. This approach is open sourced where participants are not prompted by sets of questions but start with blank sheets on which they can say whatever they perceive or know to be true. The period of review took place from June to November 2006.

In all 154 people attended the focus groups, 70 women and 84 men, from 23 countries. Most were newly arrived in the UK, although a small number of participants had been in the UK for some time. Most of the 13 focus groups took place in different locations in the area of Kensington, with a small number taking place outside the area but including Kensington residents. The approach adopted was to take the focus group exercise to the people rather than expecting them to come to another venue, in this way capturing data at source.

In every workshop participants were eager to tell their stories and share their feelings and concerns about living in the UK. Their willingness was clear in writing how they perceived the problems to be, and what type of solutions they felt were appropriate to overcome the problems. All were pleased to be in the UK and were keen to work and contribute to society.

The results of the focus groups are summarised in the section on conclusions, individual focus group reports included in Annexe 2, and the full study will be made available from Kensington Regeneration (contact paula.murawski@liverpool.gov.uk). A summary matrix shows the problems of the 13 groups and how often the same problem was raised, and a second matrix shows the objectives. (see pull out pages overleaf).

What has been most striking about the responses has been the consistency of problem statements amongst a wide range of people from different countries and different backgrounds and ethnicity. A list of the countries from which participants come is provided on page 32.

4.2 PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVE WORKSHOPS

Workshops participants were invited to attend using a number of methods: from Local Livelihoods attending at the end of an ESOL class and inviting those there to stay for an extra hour or so, to sending out invitations by post and by word of mouth. All participants voluntarily attended and there were no incentives other than sandwiches and soft drinks on a few occasions. Therefore the fact that the workshops attracted 154 people is relatively significant and shows the level of interest in learning ESOL.

The Problems and Objectives Assessment is a single exercise done in three parts: a Problem Assessment, an Objective Assessment and the Strategy Options.

The first part of the exercise, the Problem Assessment, is where problems are identified and different people's perceptions are brought together into a single agreed set of related problems. No problem exists by itself; it is always part of a cause and effect chain of problems. The benefit of starting with a problem is that it creates equality between stakeholders; everyone, irrespective of their position, age, gender or ethnicity, can equally participate in expressing their view. Each individual, communicating if requested via a volunteer interpreter, could say what they thought without having to justify or argue the point. The exercises captured all the different perceptions and insights which must all be included as they form the basis of understanding the whole problem.

The workshops first debated the key problems and agreed a focal problem that participants felt was real and relevant to themselves. They all wrote on cards, again with the support of interpreters if requested, as many associated problems as they could think of and all were then placed on the wall in a hierarchy of cause at the bottom and effect at the top and separated into technical columns. Using a different colour card participants were asked to write objectives for each problem and place them on top of the problem card; they turned each problem into an objective. Once this was complete we had a hierarchy of objectives for each of the technical columns.

ESOL PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVE WORKSHOPS

PROBLEM AREAS

PULL OUT

ESOL Problem and objective workshops

Problem areas					
	1	2	3	4	5
No access to computers	X			X	X
Don't understand how the buses work		X		X	X
No single place to get advice and support		X			X
Not enough ESOL classes			X		X
ESOL classes are not at the right time	X	X		X	
No childcare or baby care facilities		X			X
No initial support for speaking English				X	X
No access to English people where we can practice and have conversation classes	X		X	X	
Had to wait a long time to get on ESOL class					
Local people speak very fast		X		X	
Have to pay for ESOL		X			
Poor level of teaching and discipline in class					
Fear of walking because of racism on the street, especially from young kids		X	X		
Difficult getting to ESOL venue, no transport	X				
No money for dictionary and other books			X		
Not enough ESOL for women only					
No opportunity for other training subjects					
No choice where I learn English			X		
No information in foreign languages		X			
We have free accommodation, medicines and food, but have to pay to learn English		X			
Difficulty with documents					
Have to attend Home Office everyday			X		
No option to change time of classes	X			X	
No different level of ESOL classes	X		X	X	

Workshop Session									
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Totals
									3
									3
								X	3
		X	X					X	5
	X	X							5
			X		X	X		X	7
								X	3
	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	10
	X	X	X				X	X	5
								X	3
									1
	X						X		2
				X		X		X	5
				X	X	X	X	X	6
			X						2
			X						1
			X		X		X		3
									1
		X							2
									1
						X			1
		X	X	X		X			4
									2
				x					4

ESOL Problem and objective workshops

Objective Areas					
	1	2	3	4	5
English conversation classes	X			X	
Assistance with travel costs (e.g. bus pass)	X	X	X	X	
Basic computer instruction	X		X		
Flexible timing of classes	X	X		X	X
Make friends and communicate with people		X			
ESOL alongside other classes, e.g. maths, or vocational training	X				
Bilingual information on bus stops, and travel information		X			X
Improved Home Office procedures, e.g. signing on.			X		
Classes in understanding Liverpool accent				X	
Deal with racism in Kensington			X		
Childcare for students with children, and for under 1's		X			X
Use computers to teach ESOL and translation					X
Link with other childcare providers					X
Link advice services and interpreting services together					X
Organise people to walk to class together					X
More formal style of teaching					
Classes for different levels of ability	X				
Social Events and activities					
1st language teaching assistants in classes					
English speaking buddies and exchange classes					
Phone interpreting service					
Put information in 1st language newspapers					
Make the content of ESOL training relevant e.g. shopping					
A clear scheme of work					
Dictionaries and homework books			X		
Embedded courses e.g. ESOL and cooking					
Assessment of individual language level at the start					
Have the same teacher all the time					
Integrate the ESOL provision at the three Congolese churches					
More ESOL classes	X			X	X

Workshop Session									
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Totals
	X				X	X		X	6
				X	X	X	X	X	9
							X		3
	X	X					X		7
				X	X				3
			X	X			X		4
									2
				X		X	X		4
									1
				X		X			3
			X			X		X	5
									1
									1
									1
									1
	X								1
	X								2
	X				X				2
	X								1
	X								1
		X							1
		X							1
			X		X				2
	X		X						2
			X						2
			X	X					2
				X					1
					X				1
								X	1
			X	X					5

ESOL PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVE WORKSHOPS

OBJECTIVE AREAS

PULL OUT

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Country of origin:	Iran, Turkey, Somalia, China, Afghanistan, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Russia, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Poland, Pakistan, Libya, Iraq, Holland, Egypt, Congo DRC, Cameroon, Bahrain, Slovakia, Eritrea, Sri Lanka, Albania
Total nationalities:	23
Number of women:	70
Number of men:	84
Totals participants:	154

4.3 CONCLUSIONS

There were 9 venues in the study supporting ESOL learners from Kensington and most operated as an independent and stand-alone provider. Some were well equipped and had good facilities such as childcare and catering and offered a range of scheduled activities and events; while other venues were poorly resourced and operated on a much more ad hoc approach. However, all seemed to be in full use and clearly provided an essential service.

There was clearly no central point of contact, information or co-ordination for ESOL learners, ESOL providers and referring agencies. Thus learners cannot be directed to the most appropriate ESOL provider on the basis of location and additional resource needs, such as childcare, level of ESOL required, and others. Information regarding locations of venues within and around the area needs to be mapped out and made accessible to new arrivals and referring agencies

The single most stated issue was to do with the inability for participants to engage with and converse with local English people. This is partly explained by the third joint place issue of racism, especially from young white males, and expressed by participants who were themselves young. The great majority of participants spend most, if not all, of their time alone or with people from their own community and have no opportunity or experience of being with English people, which naturally affects their ability to understand and communicate in English.

The lack of childcare was cited amongst half of the groups from the workshops. Although some venues had good quality and a large nursery provision many of the small venues had no childcare provision. Also, where there was little provision for under-ones or for babies, so that some mothers may have to abandon courses they have already started, and find themselves isolated at home again after having a child.

The timing of the ESOL provision was mentioned many times as classes are available between 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. As many participants are working or looking for work this means they are not available at this time and a more flexible approach to timetabling is needed.

Transport to and from ESOL learning venues was cited often as a problem. Participants expressed the need for bus passes but were not clear about why some people had them and others did not. The reasons are mostly to do with cost, due to the fact that if you live within 2 miles of the venue you are not entitled to free bus travel and the actual cost of the tickets is difficult for those who have no money and cannot work. Apart from the difficulty for some participants in walking to the venue, for example learners with babies or those not fit enough to walk up to 2 miles each way, this is often the time when they are racially abused. Some participants mentioned that they do not understand how the bus routes work and where to get off and again they have no information in other languages.

Racism on the street is not confined to colour prejudice, although there is clear evidence of that, as many white East Europeans explained that when young people heard them speak with an accent they receive abuse.

Many participants explained that they had to wait a long time, between 2 and 5 months, to be enrolled on ESOL courses, highlighting that there is clearly an insufficient supply of ESOL classes in relation to the demand.

Many participants complained that the levels of ESOL learning were not clear, nor were appropriate levels actually available in practice. The structure of ESOL courses seems to be unclear and a number of participants complained that the classes would repeat what they had done the week before. This is partly explained by the turnover of ESOL students moving about or not turning up regularly while at the same time new students are enrolling, and partly because of the availability of teachers and, in some cases, the ad hoc nature of the provision itself.

Poor quality of teaching and lack of classroom discipline were also mentioned. There was no evidence of the ESOL providers working together to co-ordinate ESOL and promotion activities.

For some of the participants their involvement with the Home Office dominated their lives and the requirement, for some, to have to sign on daily and weekly prevented them from focusing on the ESOL learning, as did accommodation, and other asylum issues.

Quite a number of participants mentioned that if computers were available they would be happy to use English Language programmes to help them learn English. But many venues do not have computers and/or tutor support.

It was often cited that participants would like to have access to other training subjects, both vocational and academic, as well as learning English. Everything from sewing to maths was mentioned and there is a need for more embedded learning.

There was poor information about ESOL learning and no central place to go to obtain information in a number of languages on the full range of provision. Data could be gathered and translated into the main languages identified during the research projects.

A less often mentioned concern was the lack of learning aids such as textbooks, materials and the cost of providing general stationery.

A few participants were unaware of how to get assessed to determine at what level of ESOL they should attend and more resources and creative ways of carrying out initial assessments are needed.

SECTION 5

Key findings and recommendations from the Kensington area ESOL review



Following from the review of the national and local policy framework, the questionnaire research findings and the focus group research findings, the reports sets out a series of recommendations. These recommendations have been grouped under the following sub-headings:

- **Working together to improve access to ESOL**
- **Translated information and promotion**
- **Programming of courses**
- **Vocational and embedded ESOL**
- **Employability and workplace ESOL**
- **Quality, assessment and accreditation**
- **Tutor support**
- **Childcare issues**
- **Travel and other study costs**
- **Social cohesion and integration**
- **Current funding**
- **Future funding**

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE KENSINGTON AREA ESOL REVIEW

5.1 WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO ESOL

The main recommendation of the report is that all ESOL information, resources, and delivery in and affecting the area of Kensington be co-ordinated and planned strategically to work towards establishing a more comprehensive, stable and sustainable provision in the area.

We recommend that a stakeholders' forum lead ESOL strategic planning and implement collaborative work to expand and improve the limited provision currently available in Kensington.

A group including representatives from the ESOL providers, local authority, community and voluntary sectors, and employment and training agencies, should meet regularly to promote greater co-operation and sharing of experience and expertise, and forge stronger links between statutory and voluntary sector members.

The Merseyside ESOL Providers Forum could form the basis for such a group or could be extended with revised terms of reference. Sub-groups represented in the main forum could include the Kensington Regeneration ESOL Steering Group, which should continue to work at local level, an employability forum and others.

The journey of individuals from arrival in Liverpool to ESOL class has been explored as part of this project in consultation with referring agencies and potential learners. Obstacles include out of date information being distributed (which is only in English) where agencies are not fully informed, lack of orientation in the city, the cost and lack of information about public transport when people are sent to another venue to enquire or to be assessed, and additional resource needs such as childcare or level of ESOL being unavailable. Should potential learners reach the ESOL centre, and there is no way of knowing whether they do, they may be confronted by a notice (in English) which reads "ESOL CLASSES FULL", or by someone who has information (only in English) about provision which may not be suitable.

A centralised directory mapping courses which could be accessed by providers, potential learners and advice agencies alike, should be developed. This would be used to direct learners to the most appropriate ESOL provider on the basis of availability, location, level of ESOL required and additional resource needs, such as childcare facilities. It is essential that this be updated regularly to manage waiting lists and referrals and it should be available both in print and on-line. The directory could also be used by providers for joint planning and promotion of courses. Partnership funding could include sponsorship from colleges, ESF and IAG.

5.2 TRANSLATED INFORMATION AND PROMOTION

Robert's Story

Robert is Polish and neither understands nor speaks any English, although he is employed full-time. He relies on his friend to help him get by as he has so far been unable to find any information he can understand about learning English and fears he would not be able to deal with the enrolment process itself because of the form-filling involved. He is very keen to enrol but only free in the evening or at the weekend and he needs a beginners' course. He will also need to manage issues related to employment such as national insurance and taxation and will need language directly related to the employment sector in which he works. Robert was relieved and delighted to be told via a volunteer interpreter about an evening and weekend class running in Kensington. In the space of only 3 months enrolments for the Saturday morning WEA class have reached 27 including other Polish learners and there are plans to divide the class according to levels.



Initial contact with providers, enrolment and induction for learners with little or no English skills would be greatly facilitated if information were given in other languages. Polish, French, Cantonese, Mandarin and Arabic emerged in the questionnaire research as the major languages, with Farsi and Kurdish emerging in the focus groups as well, and Somali being one of the main languages spoken in Liverpool. All eight feature in the top 10 identified by LSC research into main languages spoken by ESOL learners nationally.⁷

The report recommends research take place into funding a partnership translation project, to produce paper-based and on-line information in eight languages. This should aim to include audio information on CD or on telephone message services accessed via key ESOL and other venues.

Strong links exist in Kensington with the Chinese and African Associations and Polish community, and bilingual information could be promoted by community leaders, in newspapers and newsletters, and on local radio programmes in community languages.

ESOL provision should be promoted visually in posters and leaflets displayed in venues such as advice agencies, libraries, employment agencies, community centres, doctors' surgeries, sports facilities, schools and children's centres, and workplaces.

⁷Main languages other than English spoken by ESOL learners, LSC

5.3 PROGRAMMING OF COURSES

In order to provide a more inclusive service, programme planning needs to be shared and co-ordinated between centres and could be more flexible and creative in the range of courses offered. Full-time intensive courses of 10-15 weeks can be the most popular especially with beginners and newly arrived learners whose motivation to get to grips with the language is high, and will decline if they can only access a few hours a week and thus make little progress. In fact the earlier provision can be offered the more effective it will be. In addition the part-time provision should include a wider range of levels locally according to demand. Level 2 is the level at which people are considered to be fully effective in employment and in their lives outside work. However there is little evidence of courses meeting the range of needs in terms of levels in the area of Kensington, with most courses at Entry Levels. Most importantly for learners in full-time employment and sometimes with varying shift patterns, more evening and weekend classes should be provided.

Further research is recommended to identify those providers who have the facilities for full-time intensive courses, evening and weekend provision, and to investigate the incentives needed for them to develop such courses.

A more balanced provision in terms of different levels and course content should be planned to include the full range of learners.

Courses in communicative English for new learners, linked to knowledge of the area and how to access local services could be developed. Learners would have opportunities to engage with local English speakers in order to build their confidence and ability to understand and speak to people in a variety of situations.

5.4 VOCATIONAL AND EMBEDDED ESOL

VOCATIONAL COURSE: INTERPRETING SKILLS

In 2002-3 the ESOL Pathfinder Project funded activities carried out by Liverpool Community College, which included developing courses in Interpreting Skills. Leicester College had previously shared training and course materials for a Level 1 introductory course accredited by Open College Network, and a progression to Level 2 was devised through interagency work involving Refugee Action and the then Liverpool Translation and Interpreting Service (now Novas LTIS) as well as Liverpool Community College ESOL staff and an interpreter trainer.

The aims were to improve the quality of interpreting service delivery in the city, increase the pool of trained interpreters where demand was very high, and offer accreditation and prospects of voluntary work experience and paid employment to ESOL learners with advanced language skills.

In addition to evaluating work experience, the Level 2 course assesses awareness of the role of the interpreter and good practice, and competence in consecutive interpreting. The courses are now in their fourth year and demand for places remains very high.

Expertise in this vocational area has been extended via partnership work with the Regional Language Network (RLN) and a Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (Health) is in its second year. Some trainees have received grants from Merseyside Refugee Support Network and RLN, or loans from Novas Liverpool to assist with course fees.

Nearly half of respondents to the questionnaire research who were in the UK for work, study or other reasons are in employment, but in areas not commensurate with their

qualifications, skills and experience gained in the home country. Nearly a quarter of those learners who dropped out of ESOL did so because the course failed to meet their needs for vocationally linked training.

Language support is offered on vocational courses at college sites in the city in a range of curriculum areas such as catering, fashion and clothing, and mechanics. There are also discrete Step Into full-time courses for ESOL learners in, for example, information technology, which lead to a subject qualification and have English language support. The level one and level two interpreting skills courses are in extremely high demand and are oversubscribed (See Vocational Course profile above).

Resources to research, identify and apply for funding for additional ESOL are needed, which could take place within existing or new venues and should include more vocational and ICT training.

It is recommended that a skills audit be undertaken to identify the vocational training needs of Kensington ESOL learners, and that these be mapped against any appropriate current provision. Delivery of vocational ESOL should be extended to more outreach and community settings.

Embedded ESOL develops language as an integral element of another learning programme and guidelines were drawn up based upon the lessons learned through Pathfinder Activities across the colleges in Liverpool and Blackburn.⁸ ESOL-trained specialists support learners on course and courses should lead to accredited outcomes and have a progression route into the next level of study and into the specialist area. Embedded learning materials entitled "Get on in the Community" include modules in Education and Employment, and Citizenship and are available from the DfES.⁹ To date vocational and embedded ESOL is concentrated on city centre sites and this strategy seems unlikely to change in the near future.

Areas and courses for embedding ESOL should be identified through consultation with learners and other relevant bodies with a view to developing provision and delivery in community settings.

⁸ESOL Pathfinder Project Embedding ESOL Good Practice Guidelines <http://www.thenetwork.co.uk/providertoolkit/documents/vault/goodpracticeguidelinesforembeddingesol>

⁹Embedded paper-based materials to order or available on-line www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/embeddedlearning

5.5 EMPLOYABILITY AND WORKPLACE ESOL

Fikre's Story...

Fikre already spoke some English when he came to the UK from Eritrea in 2002. He has studied a wide range of courses in various centres including a basic skills programme, IT, travel and tourism and interpreting courses. He worked for a refugee organisation and one day a week supported Eritreans and Ethiopians at the Ethiopian Community office in Mount Pleasant. He lived in Kensington until his family were able to join him in 2005 and his links with Kensington Regeneration continue now that his son plays football in the area. Fikre gained letters of credit in the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting last year and now works as a freelance interpreter, mainly in immigration contexts. His wife enrolled on an outreach course before progressing into mainstream ESOL this year.



While “survival English” is a necessary starting point for beginners, and furthering personal development a main goal for many, learners have extensive skills and experience and are highly motivated to enter further training, improve employment and academic prospects. Language skills are not only the key to increasing people’s chances of securing employment, but also to increasing earnings compared to people with underdeveloped language skills.

People claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) may have to take low-paid unskilled work, which prevents them from studying English to improve their job prospects long-term. Job Centre Plus continues to fund New Deal and lone parent programmes but a lot of the ESOL linked to employability provision it previously supported has been transferred to the LSC with reduced funding and targeting higher level learners. JCP advisors can currently only refer many bilingual clients who are from A8 states seeking work, refugees and members of settled communities to general courses (if they have the relevant up to date information), which may not focus on entry into the job market or progress within it. However a new programme is being developed to combine employability and embedded language, literacy and numeracy.

Workplace ESOL not only improves workers’ communication, productivity and business success, and awareness of employment practices; it also impacts on workers’ access to other services for themselves and their families in the community. There are examples of partnership projects between LCC and employers such as communication skills for NHS staff, for bus drivers, and restaurant workers. Experience in the city and in other regions could serve as models for future development work in workplace ESOL.

Ways should be explored of carrying the successful Pathfinder projects forward with other employers and focusing on specific sectors of employment, for example through an employability forum.

The potential for employers in relevant sectors to assist with funding, for example through Train to Gain, and for trade unions to support workplace learning with language support, for example through the Union Learning Fund, need to be investigated.

5.6 QUALITY, ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION

Mai's Story...

Mai attends part-time ESOL in Kensington and has a good level of English but lacks confidence in speaking and would therefore like more opportunity to meet and converse with English people. She finds that the use of teaching materials and lessons are sometimes repeated due to new learners continually joining the class in which learners have a wide range of language needs. She herself feels the syllabus is not demanding enough and would like to study more intensively at a higher level.



There are many challenges involved in the effective teaching and learning of ESOL across the wide range of providers, which include the Grade 1 Ofsted inspected Community College, the Adult Learning Service and numerous smaller organisations reaching groups in community and faith settings. There are examples of smaller providers feeling under threat from bigger contracts with mainstream providers, and from ESOL funding sources being linked to unachievable targets and qualifications. In addition there is pressure to bid constantly for funding which may be limited and interim, so that provision cannot be ensured long-term.

The majority of learners are keen to gain ESOL qualifications, which are based on the ESOL core curriculum and are at levels Entry 1, 2, and 3, and at Levels 1 and 2. Certification is offered in Speaking and Listening, Reading, and Writing with a notional 300 hours of learning attached to each level qualification. This would seem clearly beyond the reach of learners on part-time courses, those who may move by choice or forced dispersal, and those unable to read and write in the first language. For these reasons, as well as the cost of centre registration, one centre offers a Speaking and Listening only qualification. Another centre is currently developing a flexible framework aiming to accredit smaller chunks of learning of as few as 10 hours that could include ESOL, and that would be transferable

when learners move on. A range of boards and accreditation bodies are used currently including Trinity, UCLES, Edexcel and OCN, and we recommend that providers share their experiences of accredited ESOL.

Learners in the research claimed not to know where and how to get their language skills assessed and initial assessment is not available in some centres where the delivery takes place, thus causing communication problems. NIACE recommends funding of up to 3 hours per learner but in practice the initial assessment may have to take place in normal class time and may consist of a test put together by individual tutors¹⁰.

The report recommends that new learners be assessed where possible in centres where the delivery takes place during allocated hours which are paid and additional to class times. Managers and tutors should manage the time according to demand and provide for ongoing assessment on a regular basis.

Quality should be consistently improved by providers collaborating and sharing good practice wherever possible in areas of systems, assessment and accreditation.¹¹

¹⁰ Both initial and diagnostic assessments are available at dfes@prolog.uk.com and include ESOL Initial Assessment of Speaking and Listening ref: IAESOL and Diagnostic Assessment materials Ref: DAM3

¹¹ See handbook on accreditation guidelines by Pamela Frame and Anne Greenhall: [http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/luplus/resources/esol sfl handbook 3rd.shtml](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/luplus/resources/esol%20sfl%20handbook%203rd.shtml)

5.7 TUTOR SUPPORT

ESOL in Kensington is delivered in the main by part-time hourly paid tutors, some working for the larger providers in outreach centres and others working directly for local centres. Tutors often work for a number of smaller providers in an attempt to earn a living wage, and these community or voluntary organisations may not be able to fund or provide training. The majority of tutors do not enjoy the benefits of a permanent contract and secure career structure, and so may be forced to move on or change career after a relatively short time. Information on continuing professional development may be unavailable and opportunities non-existent without funding, the criteria for which are not always clear or consistent. Liverpool Community College, Liverpool John Moores' and University of Liverpool all offer courses leading to qualifications in the teaching of ESOL.

TESOL qualifications and course information could be collated and, together with research into funding subsidies for trainees and information on current developments in TESOL qualifications, circulated to all providers to distribute to their tutors, including their volunteers.

Resources and materials vary widely but are often basic with photocopied handouts at best in some classes, particularly those where volunteers are struggling to cope with demand. Kensington Regeneration has provided funds for course books and learners' stationary in some classes and in others resources are sometimes donated from the larger providers. Learners continually joining groups present tutors with the challenge of supporting beginners alongside more advanced learners who can be frustrated at their own lack of progress.

Experienced tutors may wish to top up existing qualifications and continually face new challenges such as working in new environments, with new groups or in a specialised area like language support.

Continuing professional development (CPD) events should be organised jointly through a network of providers to develop closer collaboration and share costs. This would strengthen links between sites, give more opportunities for tutors who work in isolation and greater sharing of resources and expertise, for example in creative and flexible course design, assessment and accreditation.

In addition to linguistic support, ESOL tutors are often willing to support learners with wider issues and are frequently asked for help and advice. **While many tutors have the knowledge, experience and commitment to respond effectively, this area of expertise needs to be developed in training. Areas could include signposting, for example to relevant legal and health services, and raising awareness of tutors' boundaries.**

ESOL-trained learner support workers could be appointed to specialise in Information Advice and Guidance work (IAG) and have an outreach role, linked to statutory and voluntary agencies, to guide learners into progression routes and to other centres.

5.8 CHILDCARE ISSUES

Leila's Story...

Leila attends a women-only class twice a week and feels there should be more of this provision as she had to wait a long time to find a class. Ideally she would like a female Arabic-speaking tutor. She is very highly motivated and feels more structured learning, a course book and regular homework would help her progress. She didn't know how to access classes linked to cookery or vocational training, but she would like to do so.

Leila has a baby who is looked after while she comes to class by her mother. But when her mother returns to their home country Leila may have to give up her ESOL course because the centre nursery does not take under-ones.



Childcare is the issue most central to mothers with babies learning English. We have found women completely isolated with their babies, unaware of where to go and unable to communicate at all in English. Where childcare exists no provision may be made for under-ones and many women have no family support, or this may be for a temporary period only after the child is born. Women already learning English may have to abandon their course when they have a child in the hope of resuming after the child is one, and this would naturally affect their progress. At the Life Bank in Kensington, Sure Start provides childcare for babies from 6 months and has the potential capacity for 22 children. There are a total of 4 ESOL classes a week which are funded by Sure Start and 2 by ALS, and there is a waiting list for places. Courses are open to women and men, and learners attending ESOL are encouraged to take part in other activities like music, toddler groups and Munch and Crunch, a healthy eating and cookery session. Field of Dreams also has a nursery and is pictured in the report. Frontline Trust is near to Kensington and has a full-time crèche and Sure Start family support workers on site who can help learners with health, housing and education issues.

Informal childcare arrangements take place in some centres with volunteers looking after the children, sometimes in the same room as the class and this is distracting for learners and potentially unsafe. LSC figures on total ESOL funding by gender show over 60% for female learners. In contrast we found a higher number of men participating in the focus groups (84 to 70 women) and, in a centre with no formal childcare provision, as many as 26 men to 2 women in a class.

The possibility of shared funding for additional childcare should be explored and those centres with childcare facilities could negotiate with other venues to offer places for learners with childcare needs.

5.9 TRAVEL AND OTHER STUDY COSTS

Asylum seekers receiving £35 per week in emergency accommodation have to pay prohibitive fares to sign at the Home Office and fares to reach classes as well. We found a large number of learners eager to access college provision in order to obtain a bus pass, but eligibility for bus passes has recently changed and learners supported by NASS or on means tested benefits must live at least 2 miles from the college centre and attend at least 3 days a week. A daily rate of about £2 per day is paid if learners attend only 1-2 days a week, and learners who do not qualify may apply for a discretionary waiver via Learning Services. Where a learner is unable to walk up to 2 miles, perhaps due to health reasons, an assessment can be made for eligibility for taxi travel.

A Hardship Fund may also be utilised for travel costs and books or other needs. The Community College also subscribes to EGAS (Educational Grants and Advisory Service) and Learning Services will assist in making on-line applications which are matched to potential bodies awarding educational grants, usually of up to £200. Asylum seekers under the age of 19 years whose application is still being considered cannot currently apply for EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance).

Since many learners cannot access college provision due to excessive demand for ESOL, it is important that local provision be increased where suitable accommodation and tutors can be provided.

More information on travel routes and economy fares should be provided and physical locations of the ESOL centres mapped out. The possibility of acquiring educational grants for travel and other costs should be explored by local centres via advice and guidance services.

5.10 SOCIAL COHESION AND INTEGRATION

MENTORING AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

MENTORING SCHEME: TIME TOGETHER

On entering the UK refugees face many barriers to successful integration in addition to difficulties with English: lack of knowledge of UK systems, financial hardship and often hostility and discrimination within the host community. Time Together Mentoring Scheme is a TimeBank national initiative which matches refugees with volunteer mentors and has been launched at Asylum Link in Kensington. Trained mentors encourage and guide their refugee mentees as they pursue their goals in

education, employment and integration. Mentors and mentees also practise English, share knowledge and experience, and enjoy friendship and leisure activities together. The project aims to build bridges between cultures, promote positive images of refugees and benefit the community as a whole.

Participants in the focus groups stated overwhelmingly that they wished for more opportunities to engage with English speakers in conversation to develop their understanding and spoken English. Research shows that experiential learning is at least as important as classroom learning and many learners have little or no opportunity to develop this. The isolation many learners feel is sometimes exacerbated by hostility within host communities and a number of projects, funded by the Home Office, Big lottery and others, are designed to tackle the multiple issues impacting on building new lives in the UK.

In a national survey of Refugee Action clients, 44% said they had suffered harassment or abuse because they were seeking asylum or were a refugee, while almost 60% lived in fear of harassment.¹² In a questionnaire study in Kensington respondents were asked about their fear of racism.¹ Results cross-tabulated with ethnic origin in Table 12, show that fear of racism was highest among members of the Chinese and Black African communities.

Table 12: How would you describe your ethnic origin? How worried are you about racism? Cross-tabulation

		How worried are you about Racism?					
		Very Worried	Fairly Worried	Not Worried	Don't Know	No Answer	Total
How would you describe your ethnic origin?	Malaysian	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Chinese	10	2	2	1	0	15
	Black African	13	21	5	1	1	41
	Kurdish	0	3	0	0	0	3
	Arabic	1	3	1	0	0	5
	Turkish	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Mediterranean	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Indian	3	2	1	0	0	6
	Muslim	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Somali	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Nigerian	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Asian	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Black European	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Mixed Race	0	1	1	0	0	2
	Yemini	2	1	0	0	3	6
	White European	3	6	0	0	0	9
Czech	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Total		40	43	12	2	4	101

¹² Michael Bell Associates 2005

Refugee Action's Refugee Awareness Project is delivered by refugees and local people, and aims to improve the awareness of key opinion formers in the community by providing reliable information and challenging attitudes towards those seeking safety. Other Refugee Action projects include peer mentoring with young asylum seekers to improve their access to support services, and volunteers working with refugees who are "moving on" from the asylum system.

Major support for specific groups is also provided in faith settings, while sports, cultural and social events such as festivals and celebrations encourage a sense of community cohesion. Among these are a calendar of events organised by Kensington Regeneration which include a Chinese New Year fun day, an anti-racist football tournament, and African, Arabic and Polish festivals. The first Polish event in October 2006 was attended by 300 people, 90% of whom were Polish, and links were made with health, education and other agencies.

Projects which aim to raise awareness of issues and listen to people's concerns could be developed further in the area among schools and local residents.

There are excellent initiatives nationally and locally which combat racism, and promote English language skills and social inclusion. These should serve as models for other voluntary and statutory bodies to promote opportunities for people to play a full role in community life. Bilingual volunteers engaging in the projects should be given training and work experience leading to accreditation in working in the voluntary sector, mentoring, advocacy and community interpreting skills.

Other community projects could combine English language with topic-based discussion groups, arranging for learners to go into schools to talk about their country and culture, drama and other workshops.

5.11 CURRENT FUNDING

Funding from the LSC for ESOL has increased in recent years to £279 million for 2004-5, from £256m in 2003-4, £212m in 2002-3 and £170m in 2001-2. Enrolments increased over the same period from 296,899 to 496,662.¹³

The Skills for Life strategy currently supports free courses for migrants and settled communities, refugees and asylum seekers, up to Level 2. There are issues regarding learners traditionally considered to be English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners enrolling on courses and taking qualifications which do not necessarily suit their language needs but which are funded. This presents difficulties for tutors in the classroom and some providers find the demand from EU students including those from A8 countries restricts access to ESOL by learners deemed to be in the greatest need. Separate classes are proposed by some providers, timetabled in the evening and on Saturday morning, and some LEA's are already charging migrant workers.

Where employers fund language training for learners with different eligibility for ESOL, they have to pay for some employees at higher rates while others have free places. One solution that has been found to this problem is to charge the employer a flat rate for the course. While employers may have been willing to pay for tailor-made provision to date, they may in future have to pay for other provision which was previously free to individuals.

In addition to LSC funding for ESOL, numerous other sources of funding exist, each with individual requirements and targets. However the voluntary and community sector face the problem of acquiring stable funding which will allow them to provide sustainable provision in ESOL. They may have limited capacity to make bids and deal with the bureaucracy involved, and may receive short-term funding only, for example for a few months at a time. Naturally this will impact on learners' opportunities for progression and a centre's ability to establish itself and retain tutors. However there are examples of European funded ESOL in Kensington and nearby, including women's courses supported by Sure Start, and it is vital that these continue.

The range of funding sources needs to be maintained and increased to support stable and sustainable improvements in ESOL provision.

¹³KPMG May 2005

5.12 FUTURE FUNDING

The national policy developments which have occurred during the Kensington Regeneration Area Review of ESOL project, including proposals to cut free provision to asylum seekers and migrant workers later this year and to charge learners not in receipt of benefit, will present huge additional challenges to learners and providers at national and local levels. Clearly removal of free ESOL provision and the introduction of means tested fees for certain groups would be unjust while free literacy and numeracy remains. However this proposal looks set to go ahead and it is as yet unclear how much modelling of its impact has been carried out by the LSC.

Provision for under-18's is unaffected and exemptions may be made for people with failed asylum claims who cannot be returned to certain countries. Estimating the numbers of potential learners affected who are unemployed or in receipt of income-based benefit would be extremely complex and difficult to resource.

What proportion of learners will be affected by the funding changes? Bill Rammell, Minister for Lifelong Learning, expects more than half of ESOL learners will continue to qualify for free courses but some colleges estimate fewer than half will do so. During 2004-5 15% of full-time equivalent ESOL learners in Further Education were asylum seekers. Despite claims that 80% of asylum claims are processed within 2 months, decisions and appeals for some can take many months. During this time people will be excluded, lose the opportunity to learn soon after arrival when learning is most effective, and risk losing their motivation to learn.

Pressure will undoubtedly increase within the voluntary sector to offer support to many more asylum seekers denied access to mainstream ESOL and other courses.

Due to the removal of access to free ESOL, there is a risk of creating an underclass of learners comprising asylum seekers, the poorest workers, those not in work and those with no access to income in their own right (possibly a majority of women). It is likely that the demand for interpreting services and associated costs will rise as clients will need interpreters for longer periods; and the impact on people's health could be significant, with vulnerable and often traumatised people being more isolated than before.

Who will assess learners' status and how will it be done? Clear advice will be needed for providers and guidelines on the evidence base acceptable for remission of fees. What kind of fee structure will be used and will this need to be competitive with the private sector? Where will the earnings threshold be set and how many learners will fall below it?

More courses will need to be funded by employers and provided in the workplace, where lack of English language skills can leave employees vulnerable to exploitation and exposed to health and safety risks. Will employers who fail to invest in their workers be allowed to get away with it or will a regulatory framework be imposed?

There has already been an impact on planning for the next academic year with courses aimed at asylum seekers being cut from existing provision. In centres where a proportion of learners will no longer be eligible for ESOL, changes in the accommodation strategy has meant that rooms equipped and previously utilised for ESOL will be taken over by other curriculum areas or for another purpose.

The government is committed to maintaining the overall level of expenditure on ESOL but with different funding priorities, and it is hoped that LSC's will uphold this commitment and not seek to make local or regional cuts.

To inform planning for September 2007, there needs to be an in-depth evaluation of the potential impact on demand of the proposed removal of free state-funded ESOL for certain groups.

The possibility of people already on courses, those enrolling on summer courses in 2007, and those already on waiting lists being able to qualify for fee remission in September should be explored.

Enhanced sources of funding will be needed in the voluntary sector if asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups are denied access to mainstream ESOL from September 2007.

Training for volunteers in teaching ESOL could be linked to existing training for mentors working with asylum seekers who are unable to access courses.

Ways of making funding available to support the most disadvantaged groups should be investigated, for example to support asylum seekers under the NAM via a welcome and orientation course with intensive survival English.

SECTION 6

Summary of recommendations
and looking ahead



6.1 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Establish a stakeholders' forum to strategically plan, co-ordinate and extend sustainable ESOL provision; continue the work of the Kensington Regeneration ESOL Steering group; and form a training and employability forum in Kensington
- 2 Increase collaboration and strengthen links between statutory, community and voluntary sectors involved in ESOL
- 3 Seek partnership funding to develop and maintain a centralised directory of courses, available in print and on-line, for information and the management of referrals and waiting lists
- 4 Research funding a translation project to produce written, audio and on-line information to be accessed in key venues in eight languages: Polish, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish and Somali
- 5 Promote ESOL information via community associations, publications and local radio; and via posters and leaflets in key venues in the community
- 6 Identify providers with the facilities and tutors to resource additional courses in the daytime, evening and at weekends; and research incentives and funding needed to enhance delivery in community settings while demand in mainstream centres continues to exceed places available
- 7 Programme a more balanced provision in terms of levels and types of courses with more full-time intensives, vocational and IT courses, and courses linked to knowledge of the community and local services
- 8 Based on a skills audit of Kensington learners to identify training and employment needs, explore new projects with relevant employment sectors, which could build on the experience of successful Pathfinder projects
- 9 Investigate the potential for employers and Trade Unions to assist with funding for workplace learning with language support
- 10 Allocate time and payment for tutors for on-going initial assessment to take place for all new learners in ESOL teaching centres
- 11 Organise joint CPD events through the network of providers to share resources and expertise in curriculum planning and creative course design, assessment and accreditation, and appropriate ways of supporting learners and sign-posting
- 12 Collate and distribute information to all providers on developments in TESOL qualifications and courses in the region, and investigate funding subsidies for tutors including volunteers
- 13 Seek to appoint ESOL-trained learner support workers to specialise in Information Advice and Guidance work (IAG) who would have an outreach role linked to statutory and voluntary agencies
- 14 Explore the possibility of shared funding for additional childcare and of centres with childcare facilities negotiating with other venues to offer places for learners
- 15 Map the geographical locations of ESOL centres and relevant travel routes and research sources of educational grants for study and travel costs via advice and guidance services
- 16 Combat racism and promote opportunities for bilingual adults to play a full role in community life through current and additional awareness-raising and mentoring initiatives
- 17 Train and offer work experience and accreditation to volunteers including bilingual adults who would engage in projects involving advocacy, interpreting and ESOL teaching in the community
- 18 Carry out an in-depth evaluation of the potential impact on ESOL demand of the proposed removal of free state-funded courses for certain groups
- 19 Explore the possibility of people already on courses, those enrolling on summer courses in 2007, and those already on waiting lists, being able to qualify for fee remission in September
- 20 Seek enhanced sources of funding for the voluntary sector if vulnerable groups are denied access to mainstream ESOL from September 2007, for example to support asylum seekers under the NAM via a welcome and orientation course with intensive survival English.

6.2 LOOKING AHEAD

Kensington Regeneration are launching the ESOL FOR LIFE report to coincide with their one day ESOL conference on 02 March 2007 at the Life Bank in Kensington. The findings of the research project will be presented against the background of national policy and current developments. The conference will explore ways of providers, practitioners and funders working together in order to identify solutions to overcoming barriers faced in acquiring English language skills. Innovative models of partnerships and delivery will also be presented and discussed, as will models of community projects.

The ESOL FOR LIFE report outlines the many challenges facing learners and providers, and recommends a clear infrastructure being developed through partnership working to support sustainable ESOL provision in the Kensington area.

In view of the proposed removal of fee remission for certain groups of people potentially in greatest need, we hope that interim and longer-term strategies may be devised to minimise the impact of impending policy changes, both for those learners already on course and for newly arrived learners.

English for speakers of other languages is a vehicle which enhances the well-being, achievement and prosperity of local people as well as their full participation in the community; and each individual deserves the right to challenging, enjoyable and safe learning- for life.

SECTION 7

Annexe 1-7



ANNEXE ONE

Questionnaire

- 26 Questions
- 14 questions about ESOL experience: needs and provision
- Q1: all respondents
- Q2-9: Group 1: Respondents who registered for ESOL course in Liverpool but ended up dropping out
- Q10: As in Q2-9 & still interested in ESOL
- Q11-13: Group 2: Respondents who made attempts to register for ESOL courses in Liverpool but failed
- Q11&14: Group 3: Respondents who did not make any attempt to register for ESOL in Liverpool.
- Q15-16: all
- Designed for self-completion or with minimal help
- Incentive: £100 draw prize for respondents
- Main completion period: July- August 2006
- Main distribution points: ESOL centres, churches, BME gathering points (shops, hair salons)
- Central collection point: Kensington Regeneration
- Base depends on questions since some do not apply to all respondents

**KENSINGTON L7 "NEW DEAL" ESOL AREA REVIEW
IDENTIFICATION OF UNADDRESSED NEEDS OF NON-LEARNERS
QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Kensington resident,

Kensington Regeneration recognises the importance of excellent ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses for Kensington BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) residents. This questionnaire has been designed to identify the unaddressed needs of non-learners.

You can help by telling us about your needs and difficulties. What you say is important and will be used to improve ESOL to Kensington BME learners. All the information you provide will be treated in confidence and only for the purpose of this study. We will not ask you your name. In section A we ask questions about your ESOL experience. In section B we ask some questions about you. We'd be grateful if you could take a few minutes to fill this questionnaire in and return it. All returned questionnaires will be entered into a prize draw for vouchers up to £100! Don't miss out!

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read carefully and answer the relevant questions by writing your answers clearly in the space provided or crossing (X) alongside the right answer(s) to show how you feel about your ESOL experience. If you have any queries at all about the questions or this study please contact: **Aime Claude Ndongezi, Refugee Focus Ltd, Tel: 0151-2599728**

A. ABOUT YOUR ESOL EXPERIENCE

1. Did you attend ESOL in Liverpool?

- YES _____ NO _____

❖ If YES, please continue with question 2. If NO, please continue with question 11 below.

2. How long did you wait before you could start after registering?

- _____ years _____ months _____ weeks

3. Which centres (college/other organisation) did you contact?

4. Which centre did you attend? _____

5. How many hours were you doing a week? _____

6. When were you attending your course?

- Morning _____ Afternoon _____ Evening _____

7. How long did you stay on your course?

- _____ years _____ months _____ weeks

8. Why did you stop your course? (You may cross all the correct answers for you)

1) I had no travel expenses	
2) I did not have enough ESOL hours	
3) My course times were not suitable	
4) There was no child care	
5) There were no single sex classes	
6) The venue was not convenient because I have a disability	
7) I had health problems	
8) I wanted to do a vocational course with ESOL support	
9) I needed advice on employment	
10) I started work and was no longer available	
11) No course was offered at my work place	
12) I needed a lot of support in reading and writing	
13) I was concerned over my status in Britain	

9. Do you still need ESOL?

- YES _____ NO _____

10. If YES would you start ESOL again if your difficulties were addressed?

- YES _____ NO _____

❖ Please continue with question 15 below.

11. If you answered NO to Question 1: Did you attempt to register for ESOL but failed?

- YES _____ NO _____

❖ If YES please continue with question 12, if NO, please continue with question 14 below

12. Which centres did you contact?

13. What difficulties did you face? (You may cross more than one answer)

1) There was no ESOL information in my language	
2) No one spoke my language at the centre	
3) When I visited the centre, there was no-one available to deal with my enquiry	
4) No one from the centre kept contact with me	
5) I was sent to a different place and could not find it	
6) The waiting time was too long	
7) The process of registering was too difficult	
8) I did not feel safe going out on my own	

❖ Please continue with question 15 below.

14. Why have you not yet tried to register for ESOL? (You may cross more than one answer)

1) I've just arrived here and don't know where to go for ESOL	
2) I am pregnant	
3) I have pre-school children and no child care	
4) I have health problems	
5) I have no support from my family	
6) I need basic literacy courses first	
7) My English level is already good	
8) I can learn English by other means	
9) I have never been in a classroom before	
10) I do not feel the need to learn English	
11) I am too busy working	

B. SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

15. What country are you from? _____

16. What is your first language? _____

17. How old are you?

- 16-24 _____
- 25-34 _____
- 35-44 _____
- 45-54 _____
- Over 54 _____

18. What sex are you?

- Male _____ Female _____

19. Are you:

- Single? _____ Married? _____

20. Do you have dependants with you in UK?

- YES _____ NO _____

21. Are you:

- An asylum seeker _____
- A refugee _____
- In UK for work/study or other reasons _____

22. What qualifications do you have from your country?

23. What was your profession in your country?

24. Are you employed?

- YES _____ NO _____

25. If YES could you tell us what your job is

26. What is your post code? (For example L7 4LE) _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

ANNEXE TWO: INDIVIDUAL WORKSHOP REPORTS

THE 13 WORKSHOPS

The focus group exercises were undertaken in the venues detailed below, with an average attendance of 12 learners supported by volunteer interpreters.

WORKSHOP 1

Date:	27th June 06
Location:	The Life Bank
Ethnicity:	Eritrean, Chinese and Sri Lankan
Participants:	7 women
Ages:	Young to middle-aged
How long in country:	Some had been in the UK for some years.

THE GROUP

This group were keen to learn and have had more opportunities to get involved.

PROBLEMS

No access to computers for those who feel able and comfortable using them was raised, and while most did not seem to be that concerned there clearly was a gap in the provision for those who are IT literate. Although the number of computers needed would be few, 2 or 3, there was currently none.

Inappropriate time of class, nearly all classes take place during the week day, people felt that they were not able to discuss the time with anyone or negotiate the best time for them. Also, there was insufficient number of classes available.

Travelling to class was identified as difficult due to the distance.

Have difficult with speaking English.

Only one level of ESOL, whereas the need is for optional levels for different participants.

No interpreter in attendance to assist with understanding during class.

No option for ESOL and vocational training together.

OBJECTIVES

Provide a small number of computers with relevant ESOL software.

There is clearly a need for more ESOL classes and at different times of day. Some participants were keen for more concentrated classes over a shorter period of time, as well as at different times.

Provide bus passes or organise group travel.

Those ESOL venues that have childcare facilities should be encouraged to provide the childcare support to ESOL learners and negotiate with those venues that do not have facilities to take their learners who have childcare needs.

There are women only ESOL classes and more information about them should be made available to all women ESOL learners.

Provide conversation classes or opportunities for more conversation with English people.

For beginner ESOL classes it might be useful to have interpreters on hand to assist the initial getting to know each other amongst the students and between students and teacher.

Link ESOL learning with vocational training, such as in health care.

WORKSHOP 2

Date:	28th June 06
Location:	City Church
Ethnicity:	Chinese, Russian, Iranian, Polish, Slovakian, Congolese
Participants:	6 men and 7 women
Ages:	Young to middle-aged
How long in country:	Some were newly arrived and some had been in the UK for some years.

THE GROUP

The group were already in ESOL training but it was not enough and they were keen to attend more ESOL classes, if available, and get on with work and living. Their main concern was with the quality of ESOL, they felt that there were too few classes and too many interruptions, such as tea breaks. This group were clearly able and willing to learn English more quickly and intensely than what was on offer.

PROBLEMS

The ESOL classes being attended were, by themselves, insufficient for the participants to learn how to read, write and especially speak English. There seems, from what was written, a haphazard approach to providing ESOL.

The most difficult area was with speaking English.

Racism from young teenagers 13 – 15 year olds in the street and low respect by English people.

There is no information in Chinese (Mandarin) languages.

Bus service is a problem, especially for Chinese people.

Not enough ESOL classes, only in the day and only 2 classes a week.

For people outside of the EU classes have to be paid for.

Difficulty in accessing GP, accommodation and other services.

Difficulty with understanding people on the street.

OBJECTIVES

Provide venue/resources for foreigners to meet English people and exchange cultural information, experiences and languages.

Engage foreigners and local English people in social, recreational and vocational skill training together. Combat racism amongst young people in Kensington.

Provide more basic information in Chinese and other languages.

Provide more and intense ESOL classes so that participants could learn English as a full time subject for a shorter period of time.

Provide free ESOL classes

WORKSHOP 3

Date:	13th July 06
Location:	Asylum Link
Ethnicity:	Iraqi, Afghani, Somali, Albanian, and Turkish
Participants:	26 men and 2 women
Ages:	Young
How long in country:	Most were newly arrived and mainly asylum seekers

THE GROUP

The group was made of newly arrived, young people who were just beginning to learn English and get their accommodation, etc. sorted out. They had no money and were in need of some basic assistance such as textbook, more opportunities to learn and to have access to things like computers.

PROBLEMS

This place is too small, too few students, few activities and no opportunity to mix with English people.

Cannot speak English and have no opportunity to spend time with English people to learn how to speak so that I can understand and English people can understand me.

For people from outside the EU they have to pay for ESOL classes.

Have got to spend lots of time signing in with Home Office and cannot attend classes sometimes.

Transport costs money and people live a long way from the ESOL classes.

Young English people are abusive on the street and try to fight with us on the way to classes.

Want to go to college but it is full.

Lots of problems to do with status and not knowing what is going to happen, it make us worried and unable to concentrate on learning English.

No facilities like textbook, language dictionaries, bus pass, and other items that need to be bought, have no money.

Not enough ITC facilities available at this centre.

OBJECTIVES

Opportunity to attend larger place for ESOL and other learning

ESOL homework and other teaching aids

Resolve issue of status of who I am, less signing on with Home Office and quicker response to immigration issues.

Provide bus pass

Deal with racism in Kensington, especially amongst young English males.

Provide more and longer ESOL provision, more in-depth full time ESOL

Provide more resources to help ESOL learners

Provide access to ITC resources

WORKSHOP 4

Date:	13th July 06
Location:	City Church
Ethnicity:	Chinese, Czech, Russian and Polish
Participants:	8 men and 5 women
Ages:	Young to middle-aged
How long in country:	Some had been in the UK for some years and others were newly arrived migrant workers.

THE GROUP

Mixed group who shared the same experiences especially in meeting English people.

PROBLEMS

First contacts are the most difficult and that is where there is least support.

No social events in Kensington to meet and talk with people.

Spend too much time with people from the same country, have no opportunity to meet English people.

Very difficult to meet and befriend English people

No financial support for learning English

Timing of ESOL classes too rigid, no weekend classes, no evening classes

Cannot find part time job to allow time for ESOL classes during the day.

OBJECTIVES

Provide transport for those living far away.

Have more ESOL classes

Change style of ESOL learning to allow for more conversation and discussion, more focus on Liverpool accent.

Improve the physical conditions in which ESOL is taught

Provide many more ESOL classes, more times a day and at different times of the day and week

Provide ESOL on TV, Online, distance learning, etc.

Help foreigners to find work

WORKSHOP 5

Date:	18th July 06
Location:	Granby Learning Centre
Ethnicity:	Chinese, Iraqi, Polish and Czech
Participants:	3 women and 3 men
Ages:	Young to middle-aged
How long in country:	Newly arrived in UK

THE GROUP

Mixed group of people both in terms of length of time in the UK and country of origin, but they shared many similar experiences and attitudes to their situation.

PROBLEMS

No access to computers for those who feel able and comfortable using them was raised, and while most did not seem to be that concerned there clearly was a gap in the provision for those who are IT literate. Although the number of computers needed would be few, 2 or 3, there was currently none.

Travelling to class was identified as not knowing how the buses operate and the fear of walking was expressed. While there was no overt mention of racism the 'fear of walking' seemed in this instant to be connected to the fear of racist abuse on the street.

The provision of advice was complicated and difficult for newly arrived people to understand, when they need it the most.

Inappropriate time of class, nearly all classes take place during the week days, people felt that they were not able to discuss the time with anyone or negotiate the best time for them.

Childcare facilities are not available.

Very difficult to start classes because people come on their own not knowing anyone and if they can't speak any English find it difficult to get to know people.

OBJECTIVES

Provide a small number of computers with relevant ESOL software.

Create a local map of Kensington area with bus routes, ESOL venues and information on how to recognise the right bus stop and give information about the fare and how to pay. This could be one of the first topics to discuss in the advice centres or ESOL classes. ESOL teachers can take responsibility for discussing how each of their participants gets to the venue and suggest that if possible some participants could come together. Build this into the teaching.

Initial and on-going support needs to be brought together into a single facility, not necessarily only one place, but a facility that can be hosted by many organisations that provides all the necessary information and support. Perhaps by making a facility that is on a server that any relevant agency can access and pull down any information in a number of languages as the need arises.

There is clearly a need for more ESOL classes and at different times of day.

Those ESOL venues that have childcare facilities should be encouraged to provide the childcare support to ESOL learners and negotiate with those venues that don't have facilities to take their learners who have childcare needs.

For beginner ESOL classes it might be useful to have interpreters on hand to assist the initial getting to know each other amongst the students and between students and teacher.

WORKSHOP 6

Date:	23rd November 06
Location:	Job Bank
Ethnicity:	Chinese
Participants:	2 women and 2 men
Ages:	Young to middle-aged
How long in country:	Some had been in the UK for some years.

THE GROUP

The group were professional and needed higher level ESOL and more intense and focused training.

PROBLEMS

Had to wait a long time for ESOL classes and no information in different language about where to apply.

Not professional teaching, English teacher cannot explain the finer points of grammar, etc. and cannot relate it to Chinese grammar.

Low standard of syllabus, material repeated as participants come and go.

Time of classes clash with work, no flexibility of timing

No opportunity to meet with other cultures and English people.

Only attending ESOL classes doesn't help with confidence in speaking English

OBJECTIVES

Provide much better ways of communicating in different languages about where and how to enrol for ESOL classes.

Improve the rigor and standard of ESOL teaching, not so many tea breaks.

Provide opportunities for conversation with English people

Provide different levels of ESOL, undertake English proficiency assessment and link people together who are at the same level.

Have better structured and planned lessons, more intensive learning.

Have flexibility of class time.

Encourage community involvement, organise social events to have opportunity for conversation.

WORKSHOP 7

Date:	23rd November 06
Location:	Job Bank
Ethnicity:	Polish and Slovakian
Participants:	7 men and 10 women
Ages:	Young
How long in country:	Newly arrived and looking for work

THE GROUP

The group were migrant workers who had come to the UK for short periods of time. Because they could, and were, working their needs were for more flexible timing of ESOL training.

PROBLEMS

Unable to apply for work or NI, tax, etc. without help of translator

Can't find out how to get application for resident status

No classes near where people live

No flexibility in the time of classes, no weekend classes.

Difficulty in finding classes for total beginners

Difficulty with understanding English people speaking

No alternative way of learning English other than to attend ESOL classes during the day

Difficulties in enrolment because no one speaks Polish and can't understand forms, etc.

Had to wait a long time to get on an ESOL course.

OBJECTIVES

Need to know how to get translator support for filing in forms, etc.

More classes and on weekends

Provide basic beginners' classes

More information in Polish and access to Polish translators during classes

More classes in the evening and weekends

Phone interpreting to be made available

Should be more information in Polish newspaper about ESOL classes and where there are places

WORKSHOP 8

Date: 24th November 06
Location: Al Ghazali Centre
Ethnicity: Bahrain
Participants: 1 woman
Ages: Young
How long in country: Newly arrived

THE GROUP

Only one woman turned up who was keen to get involved in learning English but found little opportunity.

PROBLEMS

Not enough women only classes

No Arabic female teachers

Had to wait a long time to find ESOL classes

Don't understand documentation and had no help with filling in forms

No textbooks available or money to buy them

No childcare available for under-ones

No other courses, vocational like cookery, available

OBJECTIVES

More intense ESOL classes

Better planned classes with homework

Course book for progression

Nursery provision for under-ones

Provide vocational training with ESOL, especially in cookery

WORKSHOP 9

Date:	24th November 06
Location:	Asylum Link
Ethnicity:	Turkish, Somali, Polish, Congolese, Sudanese Cameroonian
Participants:	11 men
Ages:	Young
How long in country:	Newly arrived asylum seekers

THE GROUP

The group were young newly arrived asylum seekers who were feeling they are being treated badly by the Home Office and were unable to get work, or in some cases accommodation.

PROBLEMS

People trying to fight with us

Racism

Young British boys do not want to be with us

The standard of ESOL is very low for people who have a University degree

Do not know English customs

No help with learning English

When problems occur there is no help

No money for bus

ESOL classes are too short, not enough time for learning English

Have problems with Home Office always having to sign on

Have problem with reading and writing

Not many classes available

Most of the time we spend with our community and do not have chance to mix with English people

OBJECTIVES

Have British friends to exchange cultural experiences

Better assessment of level of ESOL needs should be undertaken before starting ESOL classes

Provide resources for development of understanding human rights and respect for others

To have opportunity for conversation with English people to learn to understand and speak English

Provide bus pass

Have full time ESOL classes

The Home Office should ask people to sign less often and allow people to work

Make ESOL full time

Have opportunity to meet English people to discuss and converse.

WORKSHOP 10

Date:	27th November 06
Location:	Frontline
Ethnicity:	Chinese, Polish, Pakistani, Libyan, Iraqi, Dutch, Egyptian, and Congolese
Participants:	25 women
Ages:	Young
How long in country:	Most were newly arrived

THE GROUP

The group were all women who had found a good ESOL and childcare facility at Frontline and were generally quite happy with their situation.

PROBLEMS

I live with people from my country and do not have the opportunity to be with English people

I do not have much money and the bus to ESOL classes is costly

I do not know how to speak English and I have no one to speak to or have conversation with

Only ESOL, no other training

There is childcare but no baby care

OBJECTIVES

Provide opportunity to meet English people and have conversation

Provide bus pass

Need to speak more English

Provide activities, educational visits, to be with English people

Have the same teacher all the time and get her to speak more slowly

Provide baby care while attending ESOL

NB There is nursery care but perhaps this learner had not got a place.

WORKSHOP 11

Date:	28th November 06
Location:	Liverpool Community College
Ethnicity:	Hong Kong, Iranian, Somali, Chinese, Russian, Sudanese and Azerbaijani
Participants:	6 women and 9 men
Ages:	Young and middle-aged
How long in country:	Newly arrived asylum seekers mainly

THE GROUP

The group were mainly young and were interested in developing their education and getting their immigration issues sorted out.

PROBLEMS

Speaking and understanding English and the way words are pronounced

Transport costs

No car parking at College

Home Office documentation and not knowing if we have the right to stay in the UK

No childcare facilities

Walking in the street and having teenagers swearing at you, and breaking windows where I live

OBJECTIVES

Opportunity to speak and converse with English people

Provide bus pass

Provide secure parking

Home Office should make the process of immigration quicker and clearer and provide support to college

Free childcare

Strict laws for young people behaving badly

Police should enforce the law

WORKSHOP 12

Date:	28th November 06
Location:	Liverpool Community College
Ethnicity:	Iraqi, Somali, Chinese, Afghani, Czech
Participants:	1 woman and 7 men
Ages:	Very young
How long in country:	Newly arrived asylum seekers mainly

THE GROUP

The group were young, between 16 and 25 and keen to learn and wanted to develop their secondary level subjects and some were interested in going to university. Their concerns were immigration and getting into education.

PROBLEMS

Not enough time spent in college learning English

No opportunity to learn other subjects

No opportunity to speak with English people and English people think we are different from them

Do not know any English people to talk with

Had to wait a long time to get into college and learn English

I do not have any money and cannot afford the cost of bus every day

Too many ESOL students come and go and disrupt the class

OBJECTIVES

To spend more time in college and more time learning English

Opportunity to learn other subjects

Opportunity to use computers

Provide bus pass

Home Office should make the process of immigration quicker and clearer and provide support to college

Have more serious teacher and stricter rules for students

Opportunity to speak and converse with English people

WORKSHOP 13

Date:	2nd December 06
Location:	St Cyprian's Church Hall
Ethnicity:	Congolese
Participants:	1 woman and 5 men
Ages:	Young and older
How long in country:	Newly arrived asylum seekers mainly

THE GROUP

The group consisted of people who are members of three Congolese churches in Kensington. Their concerns were mainly around accessing ESOL and racism.

PROBLEMS

No childcare facilities available to Congolese groups

Many are asylum seekers and are on a very low living allowance, having to pay the bus fare everyday is costing a lot of money

Lack of information and point of contact for Congolese people

No opportunity for the Congolese community to converse with English people

Do not know where to go or how to get assessed to know which level of ESOL they should attend

Racism on the street when walking to ESOL classes

Had to wait many months before getting a place on ESOL

OBJECTIVES

Provide childcare at ESOL classes

Provide bus pass for people attending ESOL classes

Support the three Congolese churches in working together to support ESOL learning

Work more closely with Kensington Regeneration to support ESOL learning and other activities

Provide more ESOL learning opportunity and provide more full-time learning opportunities

ANNEXE THREE: ACRONYMS USED IN THE REPORT

ALS	Adult Learning Service
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EMA	Education Maintenance Allowance
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
EU	European Union
FTE	Full-time equivalent
FE	Further Education
IAG	Information, advice and guidance
ICT	Information and communication technology
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KCLC	Kensington Community Learning Centre
JSA	Jobseekers' Allowance
JCP	Job Centre Plus
LCC	Liverpool Community College
LLLU	London Language and Literacy Unit
LLN	Language Literacy and Numeracy
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NAM	New Asylum Model
NIACE	National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education
OCN	Open College Network
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
SfL	Skills for Life
TESOL	Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages
TUFR	Trade Union for Refugees
UCLES	University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate
WEA	Workers' Education Association

ANNEXE FOUR: CONFERENCE REPORT

Introduction

The Kensington ESOL for Life Conference, held on 2nd March 2007, was the culmination of a year-long research study (Kensington ESOL Area Review) into the provision and delivery of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) in and around the Kensington area of Liverpool. (A map of the Kensington area and the Agenda for the Conference are attached at Annexe 5 and Annexe 6 respectively.)

The Conference:

- presented the findings of the research project, the ESOL for Life Report, in the context of national strategy and policy;
- explored ways of bringing together the relevant stakeholders to take forward the recommendations contained in the ESOL for Life Report;
- identified and discussed solutions to overcoming barriers to acquiring English language skills;
- shared best practice of innovative ESOL provision and delivery.

Invitations to the Conference were sent to a variety of providers, funding bodies, trade unions, educational policy makers and community groups. A list of the organisations that were represented at the Conference is attached at Annexe 7.

Background

Kensington Regeneration

The New Deal for Communities (NDC) is a government backed initiative for the intensive regeneration of some of the UK's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The programme supports regeneration schemes that tackle such problems as poor job prospects; high levels of crime; educational under achievement and poor health. Its goal is to reduce the gaps, in terms of deprivation and inequality, between some of the poorest neighbourhoods and the rest of the country. Of the eight Super Output Areas (SOAs) which comprise the Kensington ward area, five feature in the bottom 1% nationally. The NDC initiative in Kensington, Kensington Regeneration, is based on partnerships that are firmly rooted in, and representative of, the community. These partnerships bring together residents, voluntary groups, local authorities and other public agencies and business – all those with a contribution to make to the regeneration of the neighbourhood.



Kensington ESOL Area Review

A research project (Kensington ESOL Area Review), in and around the Kensington area of Liverpool, funded by Kensington Regeneration and Community 7 Housing Association (the main Registered Social Landlord in Kensington), has been looking at the provision of ESOL in the local area. ESOL is an important element of the Skills for Life programme in Kensington NDC, as it has been identified as an area of potential high local demand with BME (black and minority ethnic) residents requiring learning support and qualifications to enhance their personal development.

Since the inception of Kensington Regeneration the area has seen a growing ESOL need, having one of Liverpool's fastest-growing BME populations, with one of the highest proportions of non-English speakers. Whilst historical statistical sources and boundaries vary, the Kensington BME census population was 4.7% in 1991, rising to 14.5% in 2001; and research in 2004 showed that it was 18%; and it is estimated to be probably higher now. Over half Kensington's BME population was born abroad.

The National Context

Jan Luff (formerly Head of ESOL at Liverpool Community College and a member of the NIACE National Committee of Inquiry into ESOL) gave an overview of national developments and policies, and described the recommendations from NIACE's (National Institute of Adult and Continuing Learning) Committee of Inquiry into ESOL Report, 'More than a language' (published in October 2006). These recommendations included:

- A cross-departmental review of the current provision of ESOL;
- A national advisory group on ESOL to act as a source of expertise and advice to inform policy developments;
- ESOL learners' distinctive needs to be taken into account in the new LSC (Learning and Skills Council) employability and ESOL programme;
- If the immediate entitlement of free ESOL provision for asylum seekers was withdrawn, then asylum seekers should have the same entitlements as home learners when the target period for decision on their application has expired;
- Spouses, fiancés and family members of permanent UK residents should have immediate access to the same entitlements to ESOL provision as permanent residents;
- The development of a subsidised loan scheme for individuals not entitled to free provision of ESOL, or for higher levels of language learning;
- The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) should make it a condition of granting licences to employment agencies recruiting from EU countries that they should, at their expense, ensure that their workers are enabled to secure adequate English language skills;
- The government should ensure that employers secure ESOL provision for their workers, whether from migrant or settled communities.

Jan went on to report on the reaction to these recommendations, which had been generally supportive, but stated that the recent priority announcements by the LSC had largely ignored these recommendations. The most worryingly change outlined in these priorities was the withdrawal of all free education, including ESOL, to all asylum seekers aged 19+. Jan did, however, report on the lobbying that was taking place against this decision and that she was to meet the Minister, Bill Rammell in the next few days.

Since the Conference, and at the time of writing this report, Bill Rammell, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, has announced some changes to the ESOL proposals. These include:

- the decision to reinstate eligibility to education and ESOL provision after 6 months to those people who remain in the country legally awaiting a decision on their asylum claim or appeal and to those who have been refused asylum in the UK, but who cannot leave because of circumstances beyond their control;
- the setting up of a cross-government review group to look at activities and responsibilities in delivering support for ESOL learners;
- the establishment of a National ESOL group to advise government on ESOL provision and delivery;
- the re-prioritising of funding to help spouses have access to ESOL;
- allowing asylum seekers who go on a ESOL waiting list before their 19th birthday, to still get free access, even if a place is not available until after their 19th birthday;
- more flexibility around evidence for the low paid to determine their eligibility for fee remission;
- closer working with the Trade Unions, the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) and the Sector Skills Councils to review how to best encourage and support employers contributing to the cost of ESOL for their workers.

Presentation of Research Findings

The Kensington ESOL Area Review was carried out in three stages:

1. questionnaires targeted at those people who are not currently attending ESOL classes;
2. a series of Focus Groups for those attending ESOL classes and those who do not;
3. research into current ESOL provision and practice, combined with the findings of 1 and 2 above, to present in a report containing a series of recommendations.

(For detailed findings and analysis, please see the ESOL for Life Report – copies and further information are available from Kensington Regeneration – contact paula.murawski@liverpool.gov.uk, tel no. 0151 233 6152.)

1. QUESTIONNAIRE EXERCISE - AIME CLAUDE NDONGOZI, REFUGEE FOCUS

1.1 METHODOLOGY

A total of 209 respondents took part in the questionnaire exercise. The questionnaires were distributed during July and August 2006 by several bilingual volunteers who visited a variety of places – learning centres, libraries, shops, hair salons, community groups, churches and people in their own homes. This was not a randomly drawn up sample and is therefore not strictly representative of the whole Kensington BME residents. However, if compared to the most recent estimates of BME residents in Kensington, the sample would represent almost 10 per cent of the total. It has to be kept in mind that the BME residents constitute a very transient population, whose actual number may be lower or higher than the estimates. In any case, the study sample size provides a good indication of the Kensington BME population's views on ESOL needs and provision.

1.2 FINDINGS

Profile of respondents

- highly diverse in terms of country of origin (37 different countries), languages spoken (47 identified), and languages used to fill in the questionnaire (9 in total);
- most were single and between 16 and 34 years of age;
- the majority had no dependents and there were slightly more male than female respondents.

Qualifications and employment

- respondents were overwhelmingly in the UK for work, study or reasons other than asylum;
- most were well qualified with over 60% having GCSE equivalent qualifications and/or above;
- most were employed in their countries; the tendency was reversed once in Kensington as the questionnaire revealed a higher incidence of unemployment;
- those employed were in lower scale jobs, a reverse tendency to the situation in their countries of origin.

Waiting times for ESOL course

- the highest number had waited between 1 and 4 weeks to start on an ESOL course;
- however, the number waiting between 1 to 16 weeks (82.2%) reveals that there is still a waiting time issue that needs to be addressed with the length of actual waiting time varying from one provider to another.

Centres contacted and attended

- Liverpool Community College together with Kensington Community Learning Centre, Merseyside Chinese Community Development Association (MCCDA) and Al-Ghazali appear to be the most popular.

Duration of classes

- ESOL hours per week seemed to be an area of concern with most respondents doing only 1 to 4 hours per week and less than a quarter accessing more than 12 hours per week;
- as a consequence, most respondents had attended more than one centre to supplement the few hours offered by the main centre;
- a few hours of ESOL per week per person emerges as a strategy from providers to meet the local high ESOL demand.

Reasons for dropping out of ESOL classes

- not enough hours;
- wanted a vocational course with ESOL support;
- candidates, who are mostly qualified and were working in the upper scales of the job market in their countries of origin, want shorter more intensive courses with vocational input;
- virtually all respondents who had dropped out of their ESOL course said they still needed ESOL courses and that they would restart if their difficulties were addressed;
- other reasons - problems with travel expenses and the need to study at times that fit in with work patterns.

Reasons for not enrolling or attempting to enrol for ESOL

- lack of multilingual support at ESOL centres;
- lack of follow-up contact from the centre after the inquiry;
- too long waiting times;
- they were satisfied with their level of English;
- they had just arrived and did not know from where to get information;
- they were too busy working;
- up to date information about ESOL courses needs to be readily available to referring agencies and to potential learners in other languages;
- given that a large number of learners are working in a wide range of sectors there needs to be more creative timetabling of courses with more evening and weekend provision.

2. FOCUS GROUPS

2.1 METHODOLOGY – FREER SPRECKLEY, LOCAL LIVELIHOODS

There were 13 focus group exercises over the period June to December 2006, using Meta planning problems and objectives trees. This approach is open sourced where participants are not prompted by sets of questions but start with blank sheets on which they can say whatever they perceive or know to be true.

In all 154 people attended the focus groups, 70 women and 84 men, originating from 23 countries. Most were newly arrived in the UK, although a small number of participants had been in the UK for some time. Most of the 13 focus groups took place in different locations in the area of Kensington, with a small number taking place outside the area, but including Kensington residents. The approach adopted was to take the focus group exercise to the people rather than expecting them to come to another venue, in this way capturing data at source.

In every workshop participants were eager to tell their stories and share their feelings and concerns about living in the UK. Their willingness was clear in writing how they perceived the problems to be, and what type of solutions they felt were appropriate to overcome the problems. All were pleased to be in the UK and were keen to work and contribute to society.

Workshops participants were invited to attend using a number of methods: from Local Livelihoods attending at the end of an ESOL class and inviting those there to stay for an extra hour or so, to sending out invitations by post and by word of mouth. All participants voluntarily attended and there were no incentives other than sandwiches and soft drinks on a few occasions. Therefore the fact that the workshops attracted 154 people is relatively significant and shows the level of interest in learning ESOL.

2.2 FINDINGS

What has been most striking about the responses has been the consistency of problem statements amongst a wide range of people from different countries and different backgrounds and ethnicity. The countries of origin of the participants were Iran, Turkey, Somalia, China, Afghanistan,

Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Russia, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Poland, Pakistan, Libya, Iraq, Holland, Egypt, Congo DRC, Cameroon, Bahrain, Slovakia, Eritrea, Albania and Sri Lanka.

Issues raised by participants

- no central point of contact, information or co-ordination for ESOL learners, ESOL providers and referring agencies; data could be gathered and translated into the main languages identified during the research projects;
- inability of participants to engage with and converse with local English people due to:
 - racism, especially from young white males, and expressed by participants who were themselves young,
 - great majority of participants spend most, if not all, of their time alone or with people from their own community and have no opportunity or experience of being with English people, which naturally affects their ability to understand and communicate in English.
- lack of childcare was cited amongst half of the groups from the workshops;
- little provision for under-ones or for babies, so that some mothers may have to abandon courses they have already started, and find themselves isolated at home again after having a child;
- timing of the ESOL provision was mentioned many times - many participants are working or looking for work so a more flexible approach to timetabling is needed;
- transport to and from ESOL learning venues was cited often as a problem;
- many participants explained that they had to wait a long time, between 2 and 5 months, to be enrolled on ESOL courses;
- the levels of ESOL learning were not clear, nor were appropriate levels actually available in practice;
- the structure of ESOL courses seems to be unclear and a number of participants complained that the classes would repeat what they had done the week before;
- poor quality of teaching and lack of classroom discipline were also mentioned;
- there was no evidence of the ESOL providers working together to co-ordinate ESOL and promotion activities;
- if computers were available they would be happy to use English language programmes to help them learn English;
- participants would like to have access to other training subjects, both vocational and academic, as well as

learning English. Everything from sewing to maths was mentioned and there is a need for more embedded learning.

3. FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS – DIANE LARKIN, CABLE LANGUAGE

It was noted that although the three consultants had worked independently of each other to compile the Report, they had all come to similar conclusions and recommendations, and had highlighted similar issues and areas for improvement.

3.1 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Establish a stakeholders' forum to strategically plan, co-ordinate and extend sustainable ESOL provision; continue the work of the Kensington Regeneration ESOL Steering group; and form a training and employability forum in Kensington.**
- 2. Increase collaboration and strengthen links between statutory, community and voluntary sectors involved in ESOL.**
- 3. Seek partnership funding to develop and maintain a centralised directory of courses, available in print and on-line, for information and the management of referrals and waiting lists.**
- 4. Research funding a translation project to produce written, audio and on-line information to be accessed in key venues in eight languages: Polish, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish and Somali.**
- 5. Promote ESOL information via community associations, publications and local radio; and via posters and leaflets in key venues in the community.**
- 6. Identify providers with the facilities and tutors to resource additional courses in the daytime, evening and at weekends; and research incentives and funding needed to enhance delivery in community settings while demand in mainstream centres continues to exceed places available.**
- 7. Programme a more balanced provision in terms of levels and types of courses with more full-time intensive, vocational and IT courses, and courses linked to knowledge of the community and local services.**
- 8. Based on a skills audit of Kensington learners to identify training and employment needs, explore new projects with relevant employment sectors, which could build on the experience of successful Pathfinder projects.**
- 9. Investigate the potential for employers and Trade Unions to assist with funding for workplace learning with language support.**
- 10. Allocate time and payment for tutors for on-going initial assessment to take place for all new learners in ESOL teaching centres.**
- 11. Organise joint CPD events through the network of providers to share resources and expertise in curriculum planning and creative course design, assessment and accreditation, and appropriate ways of supporting learners and sign-posting.**
- 12. Collate and distribute information to all providers on developments in ESOL qualifications and courses in the region, and investigate funding subsidies for tutors, including volunteers.**
- 13. Seek to appoint ESOL-trained learner support workers to specialise in Information Advice and Guidance work (IAG) who would have an outreach role linked to statutory and voluntary agencies.**
- 14. Explore the possibility of shared funding for additional childcare and of centres with childcare facilities negotiating with other venues to offer places for learners.**
- 15. Map the geographical locations of ESOL centres and relevant travel routes and research sources of educational grants for study and travel costs via advice and guidance services.**

16. **Combat racism and promote opportunities for bilingual adults to play a full role in community life through current and additional awareness-raising and mentoring initiatives.**
17. **Train and offer work experience and accreditation to volunteers including bilingual adults who would engage in projects involving advocacy, interpreting and ESOL teaching in the community.**
18. **Carry out an in-depth evaluation of the potential impact on ESOL demand of the proposed removal of free state-funded courses for certain groups.**
19. **Explore the possibility of people already on courses, those enrolling on summer courses in 2007, and those already on waiting lists, being able to qualify for fee remission in September.**
20. **Seek enhanced sources of funding for the voluntary sector if vulnerable groups are denied access to mainstream ESOL from September 2007, for example to support asylum seekers under the NAM (new Asylum Model) via a welcome and orientation course with intensive survival English.**

Workshops

The afternoon session of the Conference featured three workshops and all attendees were able to take part in at least two of these workshops. The workshops looked at different aspects of ESOL:

1. **Developing and implementing models of accessible ESOL provision: A Dynamic Delivery Model presented by Rob Beaumont, Walsall College.**
2. **Community Based Projects: Diversity Projects in Kensington and the Time Together Project at Asylum Link Merseyside, facilitated by Claire Bullen, Kensington Regeneration and Margaret McAdam, Asylum Link Merseyside.**
3. **Planning future provision: Practical approaches to overcoming obstacles to accessing ESOL provision, facilitated by Paula Murawski, Kensington Regeneration.**



1. A DYNAMIC DELIVERY MODEL FOR ESOL

Rob Beaumont is Head of Skills for Life at Walsall Further Education College, where ESOL forms a large element of the Skill for Life programme with around 800-900 learners per year attending approximately 100 classes per week. Rob gave a snapshot of Walsall: an ethnic minority population of 13.6%; 13 out of 20 wards are defined as “deprived”; 42.7% of the population have no qualifications.

The college was part of the West Midlands Pathfinder project and is recognised as an innovative and successful provider with continuing growth. Rob discussed objectives for change and their implementation in the culture of the college and its infrastructure. Changes in ESOL have been based on innovation/best practice; making learning more accessible; supporting partnership learning; and addressing student support issues.

Staff retention is high and they are “empowered” by tutor-driven ideas and innovation being supported, and by a system of team members and team leaders. Most interestingly, there are NO agency staff employed by the college in ESOL! Students are supported by a personal tutor who is paid a number of hours to be used as required, and this has helped to increase student retention rates to 95%.

Capacity issues are dealt with between members of the Skills for Life theme group of a Lifelong Learning Alliance (LLA) and there are minimal waiting lists in an area of high demand for ESOL. Rob estimates learners only wait up to a maximum period of 3 weeks to enter an ESOL programme.

Certificates in Adult Literacy were used several years ago but since 2004-5 provision has been accredited using the Skills for Life qualifications which gives a coherent progression from Entry Level 1 to Level 2, (there are 5 levels in Skills for Life: Entry Levels 1, 2, 3, Level 1, 2) which also simplifies administration and QA procedures and meets funding targets. 94% of provision is accredited as compared to 27% nationally. 67% of provision is currently delivered at levels Entry 3 - Level 2, which contrasts with the national picture of mostly lower level delivery at E1 and E2. The college use Edexcel as it is considered cheaper and more flexible than other examination boards.

The range of modes of delivery and the modularisation of courses were particularly impressive. Modules range from 3-15 hours per week and from 10-30 weeks in length and there are part-time, evening, intensive, weekend, community-based and workplace language courses. The intensive model (15 hours per week for 10 weeks with 3 assessments windows to achieve) is the most popular with learners who benefit from being in college each day, practicing English and being able to socialise with learners from other programmes. There is a degree of differentiation in the classes but the "spiky profile" issue is largely dealt with by learners attending classes appropriate for their level in each individual skill e.g. E3 for speaking and listening and Entry 2 for writing.

Workplace ESOL has been developed since 2001-2 and a Service Level Agreement is put in place after time, resources and student numbers have been negotiated with employers. Rob finds the best model involves a commitment from the employer to give time off work and to pay for an hour or half of the lesson time. Case studies of workplace learning and partnership learning were also presented. Rob's presentation and the question and answer session which followed were inspiring, extremely informative, and relevant to many of the problems and objectives raised by the Kensington ESOL for Life Report and its recommendations.

2. COMMUNITY BASED PROJECTS

FORMAT OF SESSION

The sessions were facilitated by Claire Bullen, Kensington Regeneration. The session started with an overview of projects that had been developed in Kensington which provide opportunities for people to meet and practice conversational English in the community. These included:

- Global Diversity in Kensington project (with links with family learning, training for people from different backgrounds to deliver sessions in schools);
- United Colours of Kensington – multicultural face painting group, which trains up local people to paint to a professional standard and actively recruits members from different backgrounds;
- Kensington United Community Football – community group with provision of multicultural football activities and training for members;
- Community development type projects, such as the community cultural events.

Margaret McAdam followed by introducing the Time Together Refugee Mentoring project, as an example of a project to bring the refugee and host communities together on a one-to-one basis, and can help with English language learning as well as general orientation.

The session was then opened out so that participants could share information, ideas and network as appropriate. It was structured around two questions:

- What projects are going on locally that enable people to practice conversational English?
- What problems or barriers exist that hinder the establishment or successful running of community-based ESOL provision?

People were given 'Post-It' notes to write down suggestions. These suggestions are listed as follows:

What projects are going on locally that enable people to practice conversational English?

Session 1

- Family Learning ESOL through play – Children Centres do have free sessions, but there is lack of information
- Cooking and sewing at Asylum Link
- Asylum Link, allotments, gardening, bicycle recycling, reading Refugee Boy
- Escape to Safety Project, 5-17th March 2007
- Liverpool Supplementary School at Toxteth Library
- How to engage parents in schools? – Parent Partnership School, Smithdown Primary School
- Parent Partnerships
- Literacy and maths
- After-school club for kids and parents
- Evening ESOL classes
- Child care arrangements for ESOL students
- Travel expenses for ESOL students
- Weekend ESOL and IT training
- Internet Café
- Enrichment Programme Liverpool College
- Issues of communication and reluctance to go to college
- Windows Project at Edge Hill Libraries on Saturdays
- JET difficult to access, Job Centre doesn't sign post – need to improve communication and access

Session 2

- Refugee Week, ALM
- Refugee Boy, reading group, Asylum Link Merseyside
- Garden project, ALM
- Friday drop in, ALM
- ALM, Sewing and cookery
- Refugee Boy, WEA, Family Reading Provision, at Toxteth Town Hall
- Refugee Artists Collective, SOLA Arts
- National accreditation on volunteering
- Islamophobia workshops
- WhatWasHere.com (SOLA Arts and Libraries agreed to link up after workshop)
- JMU Community Volunteer Project
- Free ESOL training at Teacher Training Colleges
- LWC training for BME communities
- Time Together project
- National Volunteers Week, 1-9th June, to celebrate diversity

- Lived Experience project, Wales
- Refugee Boy in schools
- Quick Reads, abridged books in libraries.

What problems or barriers exist that hinder the establishment or successful running of community-based ESOL provision?

Session 1 & 2

- Little provision in schools
- Parents of school children in school – need to discuss progress in schools and parents evenings
- No introduction between ESOL learners and English speakers
- Encouraging people to access the projects
- Need ambassadors
- Getting engagement with the “indigenous” residents
- Projects working in isolation – need to link more projects together
- Lack of information exchange between different types of organisation: grassroots – community – voluntary – statutory – private
- Better advertising of where and when any ESOL is available: classes, mentors, centres etc
- Publicising what is going on, especially in relevant languages
- Concept of time – some people find it difficult to attend meetings and classes
- Cultural awareness/Citizenship
- Travel expenses
- Scouse accent
- Need smaller group numbers (4-5), needs to be accepted by providers
- Where can people go to find out what level ESOL they need?
- More provision of childcare in all community centres
- Child care – the eternal question
- Lack of arrival/orientation English as funding is outcome driven and there are few available courses if any
- Fear of courses, what level they need
- IELTS
- Confidence to use English
- Need practical courses, like training on how to use a phone
- Destitute women, Section 4, huge problem, can't access ESOL, need refugee

3. Planning future provision

Paula Murawski is the Skills for Life Manager with Kensington Regeneration and as such works in a small team that, with the relevant partners and community groups, strives to improve opportunities around education, employment and enterprise in the Kensington NDC area.

The workshop aimed to look at some of the issues that had been raised during the research and explore and identify ways of dealing with and overcoming these issues.

Issue	Solutions/Ideas
<p>1. Non access to English people where we can practice and have conversation classes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop 'scouse' cards (local slang dictionaries/guides); • Use community centres; • More conversation classes; • Book clubs (short stories) where people can read and talk; • Fun activities, e.g. face painting; • Mentoring schemes, e.g. Time Together project; • Match up ESOL students with older people (maybe in sheltered accommodation or care homes); • Go out of the classroom – organise trips; • Invite people/organisations into class to talk to learners; • Go to where people meet; • Supper clubs where people can meet and practice English; • Public libraries could host conversation classes; • Devise a map that looks at an area from the an ESOL point of view; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith-based places with support from libraries; • Create social community groups, with a recreational focus, where cultures can be shared; • Develop a themed programme for activities to get people together; • Liaise with student volunteering projects (HE Students) for conversational English; • Need support groups for ESOL learners who have other problems, i.e. mental health issues.

Issue	Solutions/Ideas
2. No childcare or baby facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more childcare to support ESOL 'outside' of children's centres – work to the strengths of the childcare providers; • Link with the Every Child Matters agenda; • After school classes aimed at parents to overcome childcare issues; • Survey a group of mothers to check out the feasibility of having self help childcare groups; • Make ESOL classes more child friendly.
3. Difficulty getting to ESOL classes, no transport or hard to find.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding from Merseytravel (Mersey Link) for Saveaway tickets and other travel concessions; • Work with communities so people feel safer walking around the area; • Make more use of local schools as ESOL venues; • Dial a bus – door to door service; • Deliver provision close to where people live.
4. ESOL classes are not at the right time, i.e. not enough evening and weekend provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and training targeting tutors who want to work out of hours/learn new skills; • Need incentives to get tutors to work weekends/evenings; • Have other weekend activities to which ESOL could be linked, e.g. churches; • Link up with PTAs, schools and community venues which may be free at weekends or in the evenings; • Use a partnership approach with other agencies organisations and volunteers; • Link up with library service for weekend/evening classes; • Design short ESOL classes that give access to community information; • Embedded ESOL workplace learning in partnership with employers and unions.
5. No single place to get advice and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class representatives; • NW Migrant Workers website; • Electronic booklet; • May not be ideal to have only one place, but one source of information that is widely distributed; • Use local agencies, e.g. HEAT; • Learning mentor, personal tutors; • Have a central directory; • Seek partnership funding.

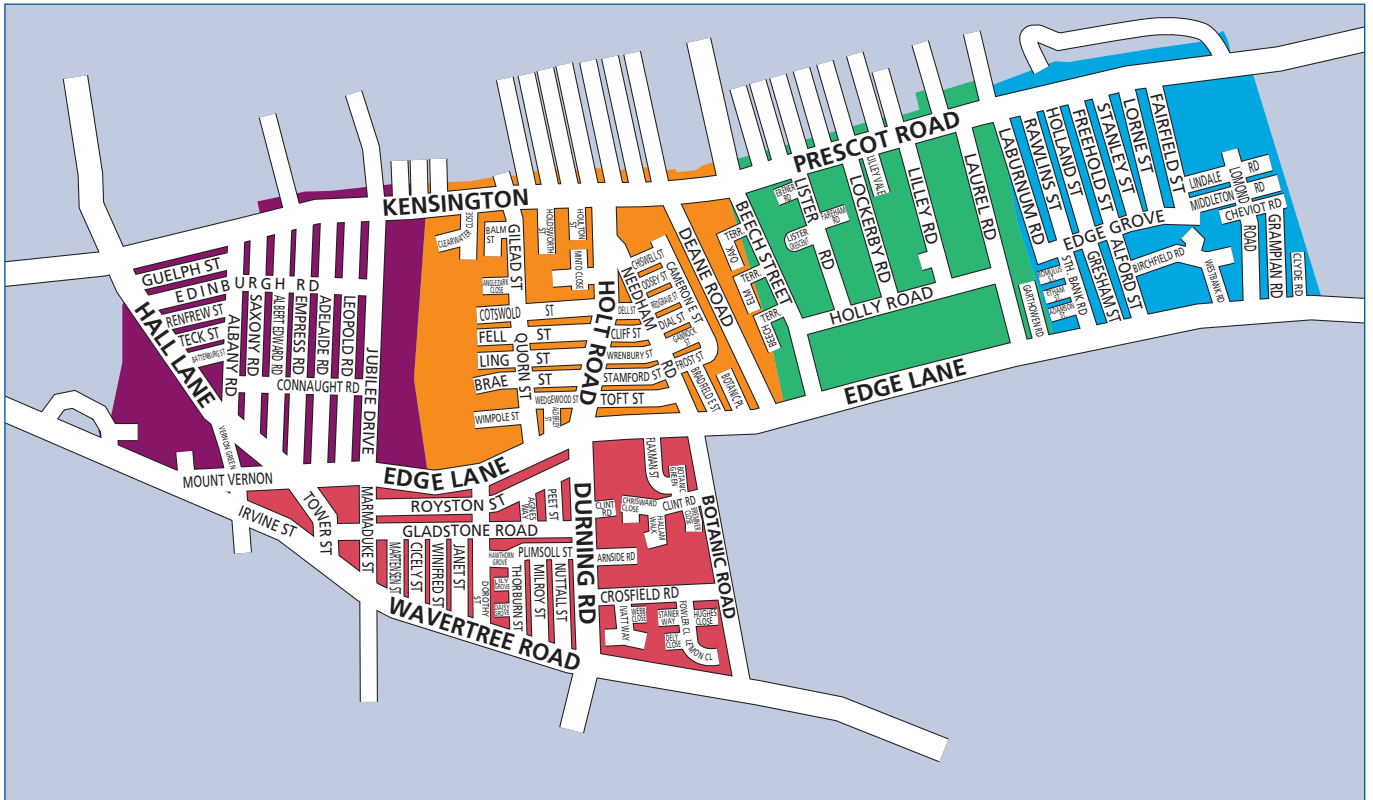
Future Steps

The aim of the ESOL for Life Conference was to present the report to a wide audience of people and organisations who are stakeholders in the provision and delivery of ESOL in and around Kensington. It acknowledged the valuable work already happening in the area and sought to use the

experience of those present, together with the findings of the report to inform and support future ESOL provision.

The next steps for Kensington Regeneration will be the convening of a wide ranging Kensington ESOL Working Group to take forward the recommendations of the ESOL for Life report.

ANNEXE FIVE: MAP OF KENSINGTON NEW DEAL AREA



ANNEXE SIX: CONFERENCE AGENDA

- 9:30** **Arrival and Registration (Tea/Coffee available)**
- 10:00** **Welcome and Introduction to the day**
Lyn Spencer, Chief Executive, Kensington Regeneration
- 10:15** **Overview of the NIACE Committee of Inquiry on ESOL report, “More than a language”**
Jan Luff: Committee of Inquiry member and former Head of ESOL at Liverpool Community College
- 10:45** **“Kensington ESOL Area Review” research**
Aime Claude Ndongezi: Refugee Focus (Research team - Questionnaire exercise)
Freer Spreckley: Local Livelihoods (Research team - Focus Groups exercise)
- 11:15** **Break (Tea/coffee available)**
- 11:30** **“Kensington ESOL Area Review” Final Report**
Diane Larkin: Cable Language (Research team – ESOL Consultant)
- 12:00** **The benefits of working together**
Freer Spreckley: Local Livelihoods
- 12:30** **Break (Lunch will be provided)**
- 13:30** **Workshops**
Sessions A
- 14:30** **Workshops**
Sessions B
- 15:30** **Close of conference**

ANNEXE SEVEN: ATTENDANCE LIST OF ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED

Asylum Link Merseyside
Asylum Link Merseyside - Time Together Project
Cable Languages
Chinese Pagoda Centre
Congoese Association of Merseyside
Frontline Trust
Garden of Hope Church
Granby Children's Centre SEN & Disability Link Worker
Greenbank College
HEAT (Health Energy Advice Team)
Hugh Baird College
Kensington Community Learning Centre
Kensington Regeneration
Liverpool City Council Adult Learning Services – ESOL
Department
Liverpool City Council Adult Learning Service - Ethnic Minority
Employability Project
Liverpool City Council - Bilingual Families Project
Liverpool City Council - Community Safety
Liverpool City Council - Family Learning
Liverpool Community College – ESOL Department
Liverpool John Moores University
Liverpool Libraries Service – Lifelong Learning Service
Liverpool Libraries Service - Toxteth Library
Local Livelihoods
Local Solutions
Merseyside Refugee Support Network Development
Merseyside Regional Chinese Association (MRCA)
Merseyside Social Inclusion Observatory
Novas Ouvertures
Refugee Action
Refugee Focus Ltd
Liverpool Lighthouse
St Francis of Assisi Academy
Sola Arts
Sure Start Kensington
Toxteth Community College
TUC Union Learn NW
University of Liverpool, Aim Higher
Workers' Educational Association (WEA)



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Local Livelihoods



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