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Chan, L. et al 2002. *Budapest Open Access Initiative.* New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml [Retrieved 22 January 2007].

The Welsh Information Literacy Project: Developing an information literate nation

Information Literacy in rural Ceredigion

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1. Welsh Information Literacy Project origins

> Librarians in Wales have come together to focus on information literacy and would welcome working with other partners to achieve this goal. This statement is the first step towards an information literacy framework for Wales, and ultimately, an information literate nation.
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> (Welsh Information Literacy Project, 2010)

The Welsh Information Literacy Project was initially conceived at a meeting at Gregynog Hall in December 2009 which set out a vision of holistic, cross societal information literacy and committed to a new project that would promote its understanding and development in education, the workplace, and the wider community in Wales.

Gregynog Hall, University of Wales

Funding was received from CyMAL (the museums, archives and libraries division of the Welsh Assembly Government) for an Information Literacy Development Officer post for an initial phase from July 2010 to March 2011. The project, based at Cardiff University, was officially launched on the 8th September 2010 in line with UNESCO's international literacy day.

2. Cross sector engagement

The steering group includes representatives from across the library sector: public, school, FE , HE, health promotion and the National Library of Wales as well as library organisations such as WHELF, CILIP Cymru and the JISC Regional Support Centre Wales. Crucially it has also sought support from the Welsh Assembly Government though CyMAL and the mainstream education sector via the Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS). The project has also developed other external links such as with BBC First Click and the Welsh Media Literacy Group, chaired by OfCOM. These external links are vital to raise the profile of what information literacy is and what it has to offer.

3. Phase One Outputs

3.1 Current practice report

One of the key objectives in the first few months of the project was to gather case studies of information literacy across all sectors and geographical areas in Wales. In order to identify these subjects, appeals were made to the library and educational communities and the response was broad and enthusiastic. Joy Head the development officer researched potential subjects and, with the aid of Cathie Jackson, the project manager, a collection was selected and developed that spanned the primary school sector through secondary education, FE colleges, universities and lifelong learning. The lifelong learning sector alone included ten case studies which investigate the impact of information literacy on health literacy, digital inclusion, access to information in rural areas, information literacy in prisons, employability, work-based learning and many other aspects of modern life.

Powys Schools Library Service

To give a wider overview of information literacy provision in Wales, the project has also prepared a current practice report. In this report educational, social, political and economic benefits of information literacy were made explicit in relation to analysis of key political and educational policy in Wales. Benefits identified included supporting digital inclusion, e-safety, basic skills, independent learning, health literacy, employability and many other political and social aims. Examples of information literacy good practice in each sector were incorporated from the wider case study collection to show how information literacy delivers these wider political and aims in practice.

Both the case studies and the report are available on the project website and the URL is available at the end of this article. A limited number of the report were also printed in hard copy and sent to key decision makers including politicians and directors of education in Wales.

Information Literacy at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC)

3.2 Information Literacy Framework for Wales

Phase one of the project also delivered an internally reviewed working draft of the *Information Literacy Framework for Wales*. Using the SCONUL Seven Pillars for structure, the framework illustrates progression in information literacy through each level of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW), from entry level right through to doctoral study. The CQFW is a national educational framework in Wales which provides accreditation to all forms of learning at progressive levels in schools, the community, university or the work place. The project's information literacy framework integrates information literacy learning objectives into a framework widely used and respected in the education sectors.

At each CQFW level we developed learning objectives which were informed by information literacy best practice and existing work, such as the Scottish Information Literacy Framework (Irving & Crawford 2008) and the Open University's information literacy levels (Open University 2010). We also emphasised the overlap with the skills curriculum for 3 to 19 year olds in Wales underlining the support that information literacy can provide to mainstream learning.

Throughout the month of April the Information Literacy Framework for Wales draft will be available from our project website for public consultation. Feedback from the consultation will inform the final version of the framework.

4. Welsh Assembly Government strategy

As phase one of the project drew to a close at the end of March 2011 a good measure of its success was the prominence that information literacy has obtained in CyMAL's new *Libraries Inspire* draft strategic development framework for Welsh libraries 2012-15. The document states that:

> It is increasingly important that people have the right skills to access and use information to assist them with their everyday lives. The levels of information literacy within the population can impact on the economy of a country, the educational attainment of its learners and the social inclusion of its citizens. (Welsh Assembly Government 2011)

5. Phase two

Phase two of the project commenced in April 2011 and will run through till March 2012. The objectives agreed for this second phase include:

- Obtaining external approval for the information literacy framework for Wales (working with DCELLS and accrediting bodies);
- Creating and getting approval for accredited units of learning in information literacy;
- Supporting advocacy for strategic engagement with information literacy in schools;
- Conducting a benefits analysis of information literacy in the workplace and developing information literacy through the digital inclusion agenda.

During phase one we have taken the first steps towards an information literate Wales and we are confident that by achieving the above objectives for phase two we will have made significant progress towards this aim.

For further information or for access to project documentation please see our website which is available in English and in Welsh:

English: www.library.wales.org/informationliteracy/

Welsh: www.llyfrgell.cymru.org/llythrenneddgwybodaeth/

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