

Celebrating Adult Learning

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This short note celebrates the Outstanding Achievement for the Adult Learning Award of Muirhouse Women's Group. It also serves to legitimise the important work with adults and community based adult learning carried out by community education and Community Learning and Development workers in the face of pressure over the past few years to work with children and families. This award shows that adult education is firmly back on the agenda. Editor

Muirhouse Women's Group recently won the 'Outstanding Achievement' award for Adult Learning in a ceremony at the City Chambers. The group had identified *health* as an issue they wanted to learn about. Members of the group soon linked health to *poverty*, which the NHS can't solve. They began to research this issue and became very angry when they realised the impact of the proposed welfare reforms would have on their families and their community. This led them to write a report on the issue which was formally launched, along with North Edinburgh Fights Back's 'Poverty Charter', on 18th June 2012 in North Edinburgh Arts Centre.

The group looked at definitions of poverty and described what poverty meant to them, concluding:

'It is sad that over one hundred years has passed since Lloyd George predicted that poverty would be eradicated. It is outrageous that poverty is still with us today. It is tragic that suicide continues to be a way out for many people who can't handle the pressure of poverty and low incomes. Too many lives are destroyed because of poverty and this has terrible consequences for our children.

It is important to remember that the NHS and welfare state were established just after the Second World War, when the country was in an even worse financial situation than it is today.

The Government could eradicate poverty if it wanted to. Unfortunately, many of our politicians don't appear to have the same priorities as us. They have chosen to spend public money on bailing out the banks, giving themselves bonuses, financing wars and giving the go-ahead to useless projects like the trams. They have also decided not to chase their millionaire friends who for some reason pay no tax'.

Now named 'North Edinburgh Women's Group', it's a diverse, supportive group of women who care deeply about their community and are motivated to learn about the big issues. If you'd like a copy of the report on Poverty, please contact Lynn McCabe or Sarah Low on 552 5700.