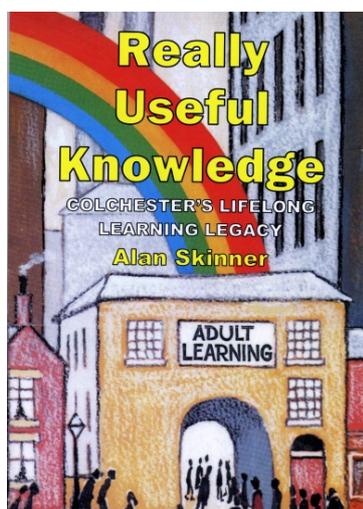


Colchester's adult education charity "Learning Never Stops" is putting its weight behind a national campaign.

Started when Grey Friars was the town's adult community college, the charity is all that remains of community involvement in local adult learning. The college was sold by Essex County Council in 2007 and is now a luxury hotel.

It is now supporting this years "Adult Education 100" movement, which commemorates the centenary of the Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction which in 1919, following WW1, encouraged prime minister Lloyd George to establish adult education as "a permanent national necessity" which "should be both universal and lifelong -spread uniformly and systematically over the whole community".

To celebrate Colchester's own legacy of community-based learning, the charity have published "Really Useful Knowledge" by former Grey Friars principal Alan Skinner, which tells the 200-year story of local people's love of learning. Copies have been sent to the Centenary Commission of eminent educationists leading the campaign - and they have responded enthusiastically to Colchester's initiative.



The new book



Grey Friars Governors in happier times

(See below for quotes from responses – our highlighting)

The charity already runs this website www.ColchesterLearningTown.org and has presented a Festival of Lifelong Learning for the last two years. The trustees, comprising 6 former Grey Friars staff and governors, will be arranging a local event to support the national campaign later in the year.

In the meantime, the book is available from Red Lion Books in the High Street <http://www.redlionbooks.co.uk> and local people's views on adult learning can be seen in the video www.Bit.ly/GreyFriars

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From Sir Alan Tuckett:

Dear Alan and Colleagues,

What an impressive initiative! **The social history of adult education in Colchester captures well the importance of adult education to the life of the town**, and the establishment of an independent centre is inspiring. There are now more and more that I have heard about – Vaughan College in Leicester (closed by Leicester University after

150 years) and newly established; Cleveland in the South west has the most inspiring range of courses, too. Going back the student run Pecket Well literacy centre in Yorkshire, Castleford Women's centres, and back again the Friends Centre in Brighton,, which still thrives, Bristol's Folk House, Swarthmore in Leeds – all demonstrate that **adult education is too important to people's lives to be closed on a whim** by government,.

Of course the commission will see the work.

All power to your elbow

Alan

Sir Alan Tuckett is professor of Education at the University of Wolverhampton, Honorary Fellow of UNESCO's Institute of Lifelong Learning, and Past President of the International Council for Adult Education.

From Lord Bilimoria:

Dear Alan,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 15th December and for the book Really Useful Knowledge. This was music to my ears and **it is amazing to see how much Colchester has engaged in lifelong learning and adult education over the years – an example to the whole country.** I am sure that the Centenary Commission of Adult Education will take full note of your excellent book.

I am delighted to see that you are a Birmingham alumnus. I am sure you will be happy to hear that our University of Birmingham, is going from strength to strength and flourishing on all fronts.

With many thanks and warm regards and best wishes,

Lord Karan Bilimoria CBE DL

Chairman, Cobra Beer Partnership

From Dr Cilla Ross:

Dear Mr Skinner,

I am writing to thank you so much for two things. First for your Trustees pledging support to the above Campaign and secondly, for sending a copy of **your magnificent publication** to each member of the Commission. I have had a good look at it and what it **shows is the incredible richness of adult education in all of its forms. What a wonderful history Grey Friars has.**

I am so sorry that you have had local closures but it **it is exemplary that you run a Festival of Learning** and are able to keep local provision running. I very much like your idea of area rather than local provision. Co-operation is certainly what is needed!

We aim to contact all of those who pledged their support or who have contacted us with a news update in the near future.

Thank you so much again. Your communication is very much valued and good wishes to all in Colchester!

Sincerely,

Cilla

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Dr Cilla Ross, SFHEA

Vice Principal Co-operative College