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## Anita's Story

Lifelong learning is a bit of a passion in Anita's family – her 86-year-old mother learns a poem a month to keep her brain active – and even though Anita herself left school at 15 without any qualifications, she recently graduated with a Diploma in Administration Management at the age of 51.

Anita is the bursar at Vale of Berkeley College, but her love of learning came quite a few years after leaving school. She was a school cook in her 20s when she was told she would have to study for a City and Guilds catering certificate: "I was so inspired by the fact that I could pass an exam, that I went on to do my English GCSE and that was the start of it."

Anita recently graduated with a Diploma in Administration Management as part of a Government-funded project linked to the management of schools. But she's also learning to ride a horse – just because she has never tried it before. "I think it's in my blood – my mother's still riding her motorbike at 86 and learning a poem a month!"

She recalls: "I was the only one in my family who didn't get into grammar school, but in the end, I have done more learning since I left school than they did! That's one of the reasons I agreed to become a Learning Champion, because I know that for many people, their school years aren't the best time for them – I left as soon as I could because I couldn't stand it! People need a second chance to learn as an adult and that's what the Learning Community is all about.

"I can't get over what is now available in Cam and Dursley – it's wonderful for local people."

In her spare time, Anita organises the 'Wednesday Walk' each week from the GL11 Community Project in Cam. She says: "I know lots of people who didn't feel safe walking in the evening, so I decided to set up a walking group. We meet at 7.30 every week which means people know there will always be someone to walk with. Everyone is welcome - we can have as few as two and as many as 20, so it's a good way to make friends as well as learning something about the local history because we talk about what we see as we go along."

