



Adult Community Learning



**Theory of Change
April 2019**

1. Background

This Theory of Change Model has been developed to describe the activities that SBC will deliver through ACL, and the expected changes in people's knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviours that we want to happen as a result.

In preparing this Theory of Change we aim to ensure that all involved in ACL:

- Have a clear understanding of the aims of the curriculum and its impact on learners skills and knowledge development and application
- Understand how we think the activities the ACL programme contains will help bring about change.
- Consider what evidence already exists that links activities to changes, and where there are gaps in our evaluation activity that we need to address to ensure this change happens.
- Are able to clearly identify the outputs and outcomes to include in our evaluation.

2. The context in which ACL is delivered in Swindon: Why it does what it does

The people ACL aims to reach:

1. The overarching aim of ACL in Swindon is to target the following priority groups including those adults who are known to SBC internal partners and stakeholders:
 - Adults, regardless of age, who are unemployed, economically inactive or in low paid employment, including those who may not be currently job seeking but are at risk of social exclusion, and where learning will enable adults to develop new skills including literacy and numeracy and build learner confidence.
 - Residents with multiple support needs: including those recovering from mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, single parents, ex-offenders
 - Adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
 - Those where a lack of digital skills could result in isolation and limit entry to the labour market
 - Those eligible learners who are unemployed where English is a barrier

Our SBC internal partners and stakeholders include: Education Team and School Improvement Managers, Adult Social Care (ASC), ASC Transitions team, ASC Supported Housing, SBC Housing, Early Help, Children in Care and Care Leaver team, Supported Employment, Public Health, the Health Ambassador Team, Voluntary Sector commissioners, Libraries, Customer Service and Digital Hub teams, Family Services, Family Nurse Partnership, Health Visitor and Benefits team.

External partners and stakeholders include but is not limited to Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Primary and Secondary schools, New College and Swindon College, training providers, Jobcentre Plus, DWP Providers, Great Western Hospital, voluntary sector, the Swindon Skills and Employment Board and its subgroup members.

These partnerships contribute to the context of our provision, enabling a more specific curriculum that will address specific needs and skills development.

For example:

- In 2018-19 we have worked with Great Western Hospital Dietician team to develop and run a cookery course aimed at developing improved attitudes towards food and food preparation skills.
- Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service deliver Salamander. This specialist course has a high level of coaching set in a Fire and Rescue environment.
- Work is in progress to develop a 'Roof Over My Head' course with our Social Housing team aimed at improving successful tenancy. This has involved learning from Bristol ACL and Bristol County Council and aims to coordinate a multi-agency approach.

Where they are now and how we will engage our priority learners (and keep them engaged)

By fostering close working with partners and stakeholders we will:

- Identify and reach our priority groups and meet local needs through delivery in the community, for example, Walcott, Parkes, Central.
- Create holistic approaches that support learners to progress and to inform the development of a curriculum based on evidence of need.
- Create joined up routes into work, volunteering and further learning by, for example, working with a housing contractor offering training and routes into paid employment in the construction sector and their supply chain.
- Work with New College and Swindon College to ensure that a universal adult education curriculum is available for everyone. This will include highly effective progression routes for all learners to ensure they can make informed choices about their future and use impartial advice and guidance to ensure they take the right steps to achieving their aspirations.

The need for ACL

Based upon a review of local and regional data the learning/curriculum offered will be a mixture of short courses designed to engage learners in community settings to develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:

- improve individuals' health and well-being, including mental health, social cohesion and confidence to fully engage in the community
- develop stronger communities and promote social inclusion and improve the economic capital for our learners
- progress towards formal learning, employment or volunteering, and support learners to lead full and productive lives that bring them a sense of stability, belonging and satisfaction

Our understanding of learner needs and therefore our revised curriculum model is set out in our ACL Plan, which is based on local and regional demographic evidence taken from 2018 – 2021 which demonstrates the following trends and needs:

- Rising skills shortages, unemployment and economic inactivity
- Worklessness, social exclusion and the need to improve the home learning environment
- An ageing population facing digital exclusion

- A need to work very cohesively with internal to SBC and external partners and stakeholders to engage those priority adults with multiple support needs/learners with learning difficulties or disabilities
- Rising numbers of people with ESOL needs
- The need for a targeted approach within the Swindon geographic area.

The above information about learners and their needs have influenced the design of our curriculum and through close working with strategic partners and stakeholders we have been able to identify where ACL can add value to the wider vision for Swindon. Our priorities for 2018-2021 complement those detailed in other council and partner policies and strategies, so that our outcomes will bring about individual change as well as having a wider positive impact.

3. Our intent: The change we want to see

Our vision for ACL is: **“To provide high quality learning to support learners to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve outstanding outcomes to enable them to progress in life, work and well-being regardless of their starting points.”**

Socially vulnerable adults face multiple barriers in relation to confidence and self-esteem, health, poverty, social inclusion and the ability to live independently, among other factors. Research by a number of agencies such as NIACE, the Learning and Work Institute and WEA shows that adult community learning can be effective in reaching people who are not engaged in more traditional ways of learning. This learning almost always leads to an increase in self-esteem, confidence and autonomy. Greater responsibility for personal lifestyles and choices, problem solving and the ability to set and achieve realistic goals are all linked to better health and well-being delivered through ACL.

In turn the positive outcome of people in the community learning to develop a broad individual skill set can then have wider impacts on people’s involvement in community life, improved home learning environments, employment prospects and social and cultural capital.

In 2017-18 our learners were asked at the end of their course about the impact the course. The summary results show that:

- ✓ 100% of learners improved their confidence to engage in learning and meet new people
- ✓ 95% improved their skills to progress into work or volunteering
- ✓ 98% where relevant improved their ability to support their child’s or grandchild’s learning
- ✓ 92% improved their Maths skills
- ✓ 98% improved their English skills
- ✓ 84% improved their IT skills

Our own learner satisfaction data from 2017/18, collected at the end of the course, shows that:

- ✓ 99% of learners have had the support they needed to progress
- ✓ 94% of learners had been given information on what they could do next
- ✓ 99% of learners had been given feedback to help them improve

“.....this course [cookery] is excellent, it is changing our lives; the herbs and spices are hiding the taste of vegetables and salads that I don't like but today I had celery (which I don't like) and tried dips which I would not have dreamed of eating; my partner and I have integrated soup into our diet routine [and our son's] and now we are making our own salsa and coleslaw to add variety to our

bland diet; as a side issue the enjoyment of the course is helping my depression.” Ref: learner on the GWH/SBC cookery course 2018-19

4. Impact: How we will know if we have succeeded?

Our monitor and plan corrective action against our three strategic priorities as follows:

TARGET	ASPIRE	PROGRESSION
Target Swindon’s most disadvantaged learners and communities	Aspire for our learners to achieve outstanding outcomes	Progression opportunities through effective partnerships
Measures		
Postcodes, age, gender, skill level, employment status, ethnicity and SEND status	Achievement, attendance and retention rates, other outcome measures, e.g. improved confidence and wellbeing, developing the independence to access local services and jobs, parents developing the skills and knowledge to work effectively with their children to improve their literacy, maths and ICT	Move to progressive learning either internal or external, progression to other positive destinations including employment or volunteering.

A theory of change model is an approach for representing the way a programme’s various components are expected to fit together to achieve its outcomes. It can help shape how we evaluate impact and creates a diagrammatic representation of the key components of the programme and the way that actions are intended to lead to outcomes and our goal for ACL.



Critical to making the case for investment in ACL will be showing how it contributes to delivering strategic priority outcomes across different policy sectors within Swindon. Unlike other publicly funded further education, ACL has not historically included any requirement that learners progress to further learning or achieve a regulated qualification, therefore information on a broader range of outcomes needs to be evidenced. At the same time, there needs to be a balanced approach to evaluation so that it is not too onerous.

Currently in Swindon, evaluation is undertaken through:

- Key performance data
- Our RARPA and accreditation processes
- Impact assessment on last page of ILP.
- End of course learner feedback (satisfaction survey)

- Follow up destination survey (2 months after course ends)

In the Theory of Change model which follows we list what we will measure. Data will be monitored, appraised and inform our continuous improvement. This will be primarily through the Quality Assurance Performance and Improvement Board, the ACL Management Team and our tutor team. Tutors, as the primary change agents, have been involved in the development of this Theory for Change.

Group	Meeting arrangement
Quality Assurance Performance and Improvement Board (SLT)	4-6 weekly
Management team	Monthly
Tutor meetings	Monthly
Subcontractor performance review	3 times a year
Community Learning Partnership	3 times a year

We will monitor the broader skills that learners acquire whilst ensuring quality of delivery:

Theory of Change - Summary

Improvements to health and well-being	Positive change in lifestyles and social inclusion	Improvements in knowledge and skills for progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased confidence to engage in learning and meet new people • Improved resilience (completion of course) • Better able to support child's/grandchild's learning • More able to find solutions to problems • More ambitious for themselves and /or their family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved confidence to join a club or a group • Improved confidence to be involved in community activities • A better understanding of other cultures • Improved English, Maths • Improvement in digital skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved English and maths • Improved digital skills • Improvements in skills for employment • Learners attend well and are punctual • Learners progress to higher level qualifications in a college setting

Excellence in delivery

- Application of a quality improvement cycle embedded in all activities from procurement through to impact on our learners.
- Development of an annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and active monitoring of the Quality Improvement Plan, which is routinely monitored for impact on improving provision and learning.
- Creates a culture where tutors and learners can excel and that aims towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment that. This will be delivered through specific CPD and sharing of good practice for example
- The application of an English, Mathematics and Digital Literacy policy that aims to ensure all tutors have access to current information and best practice guidelines in delivering and embedding English, maths and digital literacy skills to learners.
- Managers and leaders know the impact of their courses on learners and can use the information to inform future curriculum.
- Celebrate the success of learners, tutors and managers.
- Develop the skills of tutors in wider contexts such as understanding mental health and developing positive mindsets and then applying their skills and knowledge to ensure a consistent approach to all learners across the provision.

Design of relevant curriculum

Work with partners to keep up to date a Curriculum Framework that will meet local needs, attract and engage learners, and support our priority groups to progress regardless of their starting point.

Targeted interventions

Close work with partners and stakeholders to identify and reach priority groups.

Creation of a flexible curriculum and course offer that is able to engage and respond to learners whatever their starting point (pre-entry to Level 1).

Creation of improved progression routes including progression to qualifications.

Working in partnership with local colleges to ensure that a universal adult education offer is available for everyone.

Inputs

Staff development / CPD

Tutor Resource development

Staff resources (organisational structure)

National and local priorities, funding rules