

## **Swindon Adult Community Learning Plan**

**2013 - 2014**

### **1. Introduction/purpose**

**1.1** The Adult Community Learning (ACL) Plan sets out Swindon Borough Council's plans for adult and family learning in Swindon for the period 2013 – 2014. Adult Community Learning is funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and in 2012/13 a £468,300 grant was available to plan, manage and deliver learning. It has been confirmed, that for 2013/14, £466,283 will be available to fund ACL.

**1.2** The SFA requires the allocation to be used to:

- Maximise access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances.
- Promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement.
- Maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.

**1.3** The aim of the Swindon Adult Learning plan is to deploy the SFA funding to ensure that local people have access to a range of appropriate and flexible learning opportunities that will contribute to their personal, social, educational and economic development and hence contribute to Swindon Borough's strategic priorities outlined in One Swindon, The Corporate Strategy and the Economic Strategy.

**1.4** The ACL service contracts out most of its delivery to a variety of providers within the Borough and retains some funding to provide the necessary contract monitoring, quality assurance and management of the service.

**1.5** This Adult Community Learning Plan:

- Outlines our strategic aims and objectives for adult community learning
- Provides a local update on how ACL contributes to the Council's overarching priorities
- Reports on achievement of targets and outcomes against the Council's stated adult community learning objectives for academic year 2011/12 and provides an overview of priorities and targets for 2012/13
- Summarises key points from the Ofsted Self-Assessment Review
- Recommends future approaches to working in partnership across Swindon to ensure maximum use of funding available and outcomes for learners.

### **2. Strategic Aims & Objectives**

#### **2.1 Aim**

To ensure that local people have access to an appropriate range of flexible learning opportunities that contribute to their personal, social, educational and economic development.

## **2.2 Objectives**

- Deliver a programme of learning which clearly contributes to the priorities outlined in the Economic Strategy and the emerging Employment & Skills Strategy to enable residents to compete for jobs. The focus is on a higher skilled higher earning population with the right skills for the right jobs and ensuring Swindon is a place of opportunity for young people.
- Focus ACL public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in learning, including people on low incomes, those with low skills and those furthest away from the labour market.
- Widen participation in learning through locally delivered informal and accredited programmes, serving the needs of the diverse communities in the borough.
- Provide learning opportunities in a wide variety of community venues, focused on deprived areas where learning can make a difference to the life-chances of adults and their families.
- Provide Family Learning in partnership with schools in deprived areas where attainment levels are low.
- Continue to increase the number of learners achieving successful outcomes, increase the numbers of people gaining first accreditation in community-settings and increase the numbers progressing to further learning and work. Ensure there are clear pathways for residents into further learning or into work.
- Continue to deliver a universal ACL programme with access for all and develop a fees strategy to ensure fees are paid where learners are able to do so.
- Ensure learners have access to high quality information advice and guidance, delivered by tutors with appropriate sign-posting to the National Careers Service.

## **2.3 Delivering the Objectives**

In order to achieve the above objectives, we will:

- Commission a Curriculum which will give priority to:
  - Improving skills to level 1 and level 2 (to improve people's access to the labour market, residents ability to compete for jobs and vulnerability to unemployment)
  - Literacy, numeracy and digital skills (key skills for successful entry to the labour market)
  - Meeting the needs of those who are unemployed and who have been redundant to support their routes to employment, particularly those in the 19-25 year age groups.
  - Meeting the needs of vulnerable adults, particularly those with learning difficulties/disabilities, those recovering from mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, single parents and those on low incomes
  - Family learning in deprived areas to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of both children and adults and to provide better outcomes for families.
- Develop a Curriculum plan, outlining how the identified target groups will be attracted to learning by the courses, times, locations and modes of delivery on offer to meet the priorities outlined above.

- Continue to improve the planning and commissioning of ACL so that we develop an improved analysis of needs, are able to improve further the quality of teaching and learning, outcomes for learners and value for money.
- Ensure we are on target to achieve an Ofsted outcome of grade 2, as outlined in the Self-Assessment Review (SAR).
- Build capacity in communities to raise awareness of ACL, enable communities to contribute to identifying needs and to increase the potential number of volunteers.
- Ensure the work of Learning Ambassadors contributes to the priorities and that the impact of their work is captured effectively. Commission this aspect of delivery from 2013/14.
- Work with partners to develop a 'Community Learning Trust' model with one coherent strategy and learning offer across the Trust, with arrangements to maximise the use of all resources available and to deliver an ACL offer. The Trust will report to the Employment and Skills Board to ensure that the ACL service continues to contribute effectively to the identified skills needs of the Borough's population.

### 3. The National Context

**3.1 'New Challenges, New Chances: Building a World Class Skills System'** published by BIS in 2011, gave the government's clear aims and objectives for the Community Learning budget in England. Revised objectives were set in August 2012. These require Community Learning providers to:

- Focus public funding on helping disadvantaged people get into learning and progress;
- Involve local people and organisations involved in decision-making;
- Maximise value for money, increase income generation and use fees to support people who can't afford to pay.

**3.2** In February 2013 it was confirmed that the achievement of the above objectives is expected to be via a locally-based 'Community Learning Trust' model. These partnerships have been piloted during 2012/13 to channel a variety of funding and to lead the planning of local provision in areas. The Community Learning Trust Prospectus outlines the key purpose of the partnerships as follows:

- Develop a clear mechanism for the community to shape and contribute to the delivery of the learning offer, be part of the commissioning process and give feedback on learning.
- Develop a clear 'Learning offer' which is developed in partnership with communities.
- Increase the community learning resources available to support community learning through fee income and attracting other funding sources.
- Focus public funding on people who are most disadvantaged and least likely to participate and collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use fees to extend provision
- Involve volunteers and the voluntary and community sector groups, shifting long term 'blocked' classes into learning clubs, growing self-organised learning groups and encourage employers to support informal learning in the workplace.

**3.3** A Swindon Community Learning Trust was set up in February 2013 and includes the two local colleges, Learning Curve, Jobcentre Plus and Voluntary Action Swindon. This partnership will seek to improve curriculum planning, targeting and effective use of joint resources.

#### 4. The Local Context/current contribution to local strategic priorities

4.1 The table below outlines the contribution that Adult Community Learning is already making to our One Swindon and Corporate Strategy priorities.

Priority	Contribution of Adult Community Learning
<b>Right Skills, Right Job, Right Place</b>	<p>ACL targets those without a level 2 qualification and/or who live in areas of disadvantage and provides pathways and progression routes through which skills can be improved. There is a particular focus on literacy, numeracy and digital skills.</p> <p>The service also targets those who are unemployed and/or have been made redundant in order to engage them in learning. The ACL Service supports the above, through targeting those who are furthest away from employment by providing opportunities and programmes for them to develop the skills they need to become economically active and to compete for jobs or to become active within their community through volunteering. The learning offer enables adults to return to learn and to gain the skills and confidence to prepare to enter or re-enter employment. Family learning gives parents the skills to support their children's learning, thereby contributing to the raising of achievement levels. It also helps adults to improve their own skills and therefore to compete more effectively in the labour market. An adult who is learning provides a good role model for children and young people and supports the development of a learning culture, and the acquisition of skills which can improve people's life chances.</p>
<b>Find new ways to reduce vulnerabilities</b>	<p>ACL learning is targeted at vulnerable groups including those with Learning Disabilities/Difficulties (LDD), those with health inequalities and those with low skills, low income levels and those who are unemployed. It equips those who have dropped out for a variety of reasons e.g through ill health or lone parenthood to gain the confidence to learn and progress. Engaging in community learning helps people to reduce their vulnerabilities, improves their self-confidence and increases their ability to operate independently and to progress.</p>
<b>Make use of all resources and focus them on what matters most.</b>	<p>ACL carefully targets specific groups and communities in order to meet identified priorities and uses learning opportunities to grow the capacity of both individuals and communities to achieve relevant goals. It also develops volunteers and enables them to acquire new skills and to contribute to community capacity building. The Community Learning Trust will ensure that we increase collaboration, reduce duplication and develop a funding strategy to add value to public funding.</p>

## 5. Needs Analysis

Refer Appendix 2 for summary of employment, skills and deprivation information linked to the priorities.

## 6. What have we delivered to date, what are the outcomes?

### 6.1 Delivery and outcomes in 2011/12

**6.1.1** Our target, set by the SFA, for 2011/12 was 2820 learners. We achieved 2694 individual learners with 3485 enrolments (some learners enrolling on more than one course). We slightly under-achieved in our universal offer and on our First Steps provision and we over-achieved on our provision for targeted groups in deprived communities and on Family Learning. We delivered 240 courses in 63 venues across the Borough.

Funding Stream	Target 2011/12	Performance 2011/12
<b>FLLN</b> (Family Learning Literacy and Numeracy)	120	<b>127</b>
<b>NLDC</b> (Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities)	500	<b>628</b>
<b>PCDL</b> (Personal Development Community Learning)	1650	<b>1613</b>
<b>WFL</b> (Wider Family Learning)	300	<b>326</b>
<b>First Steps</b>	250	<b>165</b>

**Table 1, Performance – learner numbers.**

**6.1.2** Learners' achievements (those who have successfully completed their ILP learning aims) are good – 90% of those enrolled fully achieved. This was an increase of 11% from 2010-11. This compares favourably with the national achievement rate of 87%. We have an overall success rate (achievement divided by the number starting their course) of 91%. This was an increase of 10.85% from the 2010-11 figures and is in line with the benchmarking average.

Learner Outcomes	2010 – 11	2011 – 12
Achieved	2799 (79%)	3128 (90%)
Partial Achievement	414 (11.6%)	187 (5.37%)
No Achievement	343 (9.6%)	170 (4.88%)
Total enrolments	3556	3485

**Table 2, Performance, Learner Outcomes**

**6.1.3** Overall, our success rate (the number that achieved their learning goals set within their chosen course, was 91% in 2011-12, compared to 80.15% in 2010-11. Our retention rate (the number completing their chosen course) was 97% in 2011-12, compared to 94% in the previous year. Our success rate is above the national benchmarking average, as is our retention rate.

**6.1.4** As well as learner numerical targets set by the SFA, ACL sets itself specific targets to improve participation of specific groups of learners. The table shows the position at the end of the academic year 2011-12. We overachieved on our male enrolments and on our ethnic minority enrolments, reflecting the success of our strategy to improve participation by these groups. We also overachieved on our numbers of enrolments which achieved an accredited qualification and our success rates, retention and attendance figures all improved significantly. Our proportion of LDD Learners reduced and is being addressed this year through some targeted provision.

<b>Target for 2011- 12</b>	<b>Target Set 2011/12 % of total</b>	<b>Final position 2011/12</b>
Male Enrolments target	<b>25%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Ethnic Minority Enrolments	<b>18%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Ethnic Minority take up non targeted courses	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
Accredited Enrolments	<b>500</b>	<b>684</b>
LDD Learners	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Success rate target (Success rate: number of those achieving all learning goals / starters x100)	<b>85%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Retention target	<b>95%</b>	<b>97%</b>
Attendance	<b>85%</b>	<b>86%</b>
NLDC success rate	<b>75%</b>	<b>90%</b>
Accredited learning success rate	<b>95%</b>	<b>98%</b>
LDD learners success rate	<b>85%</b>	<b>86.5%</b>
Family Learning success rate (Wider Family Learning and FLLN)	<b>90%</b>	<b>95%</b>

**Table 3, Performance against targets**

**6.1.3** A number of the courses run are accredited to external exam bodies such as CIEH for Food Safety and OCR for Literacy and Numeracy. 684 learners (20% of all enrolments) gained a qualification in 2011-12 (compared to 322 learners (9%) the previous year).

#### **6.1.5 Learning Ambassadors**

We currently have a team of 12 Learning Ambassadors who work for three paid hours per week and in some cases additional hours on a voluntary basis. They are recruited from community groups across Swindon and have a particular remit to engage with 'hard to reach' or vulnerable adults. They provide Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) on education and training and sign-post people to learning, work or volunteering placements. They help adults to identify routes into learning and into employment and work with learners to meet their identified needs.

Each Learning Ambassadors is linked to a provider. The Learning Ambassadors work with the providers and also offer IAG within the classroom and signpost learners to further learning opportunities. They also provide additional support for learners within the classroom e.g. in a similar way to teaching assistants in schools, during 2011/12, Learning Ambassadors worked with 74 individuals.

#### **6.2 Delivery for the current year 2012/13**

Our current priorities and targets for 2012/13 are given below and the following table details the providers we currently contract with, the value of their contracts and the learner numbers they are asked to deliver.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Value of Contract</b>	<b>Target Set (Learner Nos.)</b>
Improving Employability and Work Skills (work based skills)	Elite Progression	£1,800	60
	New College	£8,000	200
	Safe and Silent Security	£19,000	90
Independent Living (working with vulnerable adults, eg. Homeless, those with mental health issues)	New College	£20,000	200
	Fitzpatrick's Gym	£19,200	40
	Swindon Advocacy Movement (SAMS)	£6,000	12
Improving Literacy and Numeracy (Targets unemployed adults to improve basic skills to enable routes to employment)	North Wessex Training	£20,000	200

	Swindon Libraries	£9,055	250
Improving English at pre entry level (Target adults where English is not their first language)	New College	£10,000	100
	Mussaret Tanweer	£11,424	96
Wider Family Learning (Families learning together through schools and community venues)	Healthy Options	£10,916	240
	Elite Progression	£14,650	256
	Smiley Cats	£19,000	90
First Steps (Back to work courses with progression to learning or work)	Swindon College	£19,950	250
FLLN (Family Language, Literacy and Numeracy) run through schools to target families to improve literacy and numeracy together	Swindon College	£43,200	108
Community Learning (Universal Life-Long Learning offer to support health and wellbeing)	New College	£24,240	1000
Progression Courses offering learners the chance to progress to further learning	New College	£20,000	200
Community Volunteering (to encourage those who have been long-term unemployed to take up volunteering opportunities)	Voluntary Action Swindon	£6000	40

**Table 4, delivery of ACL in 2012/13**

7. We will be reviewing our priorities in the context of local objectives for employment and skills (see 4.1) and this will inform our commissioning process for 2013/14. We will also develop better ways of capturing the impact of ACL and its contribution to Borough priorities.

7.1 We will be reviewing the curriculum offer in the context of the identified priorities and our needs analysis and as part of our contract negotiations. The review of the curriculum will include the time, place and mode of delivery as well as a review of the subject areas we currently cover, described below.



Art, Craft & Design	Horticulture
Beauty & Hairdressing	Maths & Science
Community Interest	Performing Arts
Computing and digital technology	Professional and Vocational Development
English	Skills for Life (Literacy, Numeracy, IT)
Fitness & Sport	Therapies and Health
Food & Drink	
Foreign Languages	

## 8. Swindon Self-Assessment Report 2011/12 – Summary

**8.1** Following our last Ofsted inspection in January 2011 we were assessed as Grade 3 'Satisfactory'. The Ofsted inspection in 2011 highlighted the need to improve collation of performance data to demonstrate the impact of teaching and learning and of our quality assurance process. There is now a robust system in place to collate performance data and a well-developed quality process, led by the Quality Manager. Our success rates are improving year on year. We still need to do more to further improve our needs analysis, performance management, curriculum planning and commissioning processes. We are aiming for an overall grade of 2 'Good' at our next Ofsted Inspection. A Quality Improvement Plan is in place to address our identified areas for improvement. Ofsted has confirmed that we will be inspected by September 2014.

## 9. Partnerships & 'Community Learning Trust'

**9.1** As referenced in 3.3 above, we are developing a 'Community Learning Trust' model which will be called the '**Swindon Adult Community Learning Trust**'. The, main purpose of the partnership is to develop a strategic approach to the shaping of the learning offer across Swindon and to ensure we use ACL funding effectively in order to have the greatest impact. Through the Partnership, we aim to develop a joint funding strategy, reduce areas of duplication and improve mechanisms to ensure that communities are able to shape and deliver elements of the learning offer. This will be a major focus for the work of the ACL co-ordinator in 2013/14.

**9.2** Membership consists of the three partners receiving SFA Safeguarding or Skills Funding, Job Centre Plus, Voluntary Sector, Public Health, National Careers Service, and Skills Funding Agency.

## 10. The Management of Adult Community Learning

**10.1** Adult Community learning is managed in SBC through Commissioning, Economy and Attainment and sits within the Routes to Employment Team. This arrangement clearly links Adult Community Learning into the priority to support residents to be able to compete for jobs. Leadership for this area of work is provided by the Strategic Commissioner, Routes to Employment.

**10.2** The following functions are in place to plan and manage ACL:

- Co-ordinator, Adult Community Learning
- Data and Performance Officer
- Quality Manager (P/T contract)
- Learning Ambassador Co-ordinator (temporary and P/T) and 12 Learning Ambassadors.
- Finance Support is provided by the Finance Team.

**10.3** From September 2013, all Adult Community Learning provision will be secured and managed through the commissioning process. Learning Ambassadors are currently managed in house, and it is proposed that the role of Learning Ambassadors are reviewed and commissioned as with other elements of delivery.

**10.4** Through the commissioning process, we have a broad range of delivery partners in place including colleges, training providers, and small businesses. We aim to explore further the opportunities for voluntary sector delivery of ACL, through our commissioning role of market shaping. Managers, as well as working closely with delivery partners to ensure high quality teaching and learning and outcomes for learners, are also building capacity, particularly with new providers.