



# Community Learning Strategy 2022-2025

**MISSION STATEMENT:** “To inspire people and transform lives by offering first class learning opportunities for all.”

SUTTON COLLEGE ADULT EDUCATION | LONDON BOROUGH OF  
SUTTON

## Background

Sutton College was established in 1972 when the local council decided to unite adult learning provision in the Borough under one umbrella. The result was the specialist college building in St Nicholas Way with its excellent facilities, together with other venues around the Borough.

Originally named Sutton College of Liberal Arts, the College changed its name to Sutton College of Learning for Adults in 2001 and is one of very few Adult and Community Learning services in the country to have its own purpose-built centre. Now 'Sutton College' since June 2015, the College continues to provide approximately 1000 courses each year as well as apprenticeships and Business Training.

Community learning provision is funded through the Education and Skills funding agency (ESFA) for learners outside London and the Greater London Authority (GLA) for those learners who have a London postcode.

The college operates out of two main sites – Sutton Centre which is part of the Civic Offices complex and Wallington Town Hall and works out of many community venues.

### Our vision is to be:

- A prestigious college of choice and provide opportunity for all
- A business and community facing provider
- A provider of innovative and flexible curriculum which is responsive and demand led
- A provider of courses that enriches lives and offers life-changing opportunities.

**London Borough of Sutton** has a total population<sup>1</sup> for 207,700 of whom 131,300 are aged between 16-64.



6.7% of the Sutton population are working age and claiming benefits.

In 2020, the sectors with the highest employment were Administrative and support services, Human health and Social work activities, Education and Wholesale and retail trade.

## Community Learning

Adult and community learning provides a wide range of educational opportunities for adults of all ages, which impacts not only the lives of the individuals, but also their families and communities. Community learning is part time, the learning majority of which is non-accredited and in a wide range of subjects. Community learning also encompasses Family learning which is split into Family English, maths and language and wider family learning.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157277/report.aspx?pc=SM1%201EA#tabrespop>

The Greater London Authority Adult Education budget 2019-23 sets out the following objectives for Community Learning:

- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas and people on low incomes with low skills.
- Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.
- Widen participation and transform people's destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances
- Develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected and pro-active citizens

## Priorities for Sutton

Widening participation in learning through targeted community learning provision in community venues to provide a means of access for learners who do not currently participate in formal learning

Enhancing the learning experience by providing a range of learning contributing to employability skills, health and well-being, community cohesion, social integration and stronger family relationships

Increasing the capacity of voluntary and community groups by making some bids available for them to deliver their provision in the community, particularly work with community groups that addresses the key needs of the borough

Working with libraries, children's centres, schools and parent support groups, to deliver multigenerational learning through Family English, maths and language and wider family learning programmes.

Provide the first step engagement, which will then enable learners to progress on to accredited courses

## Delivering the priorities

Maintaining a universal service is part of our delivery. However, in order to maximise access to community learning, available funding is focused on those who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate. Subsidised provision will have an emphasis on targeting and recruitment of identified priority groups with evidence of impact on social and economic wellbeing. In particular the priority groups are:

- Families, particularly where parents have basic English or Maths needs or who have not reached Level 2, where there is a single parent or families with complex needs
- Unemployed residents, with provision targeted for those before they reach the Work programme or those that have left without a job, and those who are employed in low waged jobs
- Adults and children with learning difficulties/disabilities
- Mental Health service users or ex-users and adults with mild to moderate mental health problems
- Black and ethnic minority individuals, particularly with below Level 2 qualifications

The Service remains committed to a broad programme of adult and community learning that promotes the wider benefits of learning. However, the intention is to focus funding on people

or groups who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate due to a variety of obstacles and increase fee income from those who can afford to pay more.

## Curriculum Offer

Sutton College has made available a proportion of the community learning grant to community groups, voluntary and charitable organisation to widen the participation and reach out to members of the community who are disengaged in learning or have a barrier to undertake formal learning. Apart from this partnership, the bulk of the community learning offer is non-accredited provision aimed to support the priorities and meet the local needs.

The main curriculum areas are:

- Wider Family Learning
- Family English, Maths and Language
- Physical Health and Wellbeing
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Employability
- Digital inclusion
- Social Cohesion
- First Steps Engagement

The Service also supports a range of programmes for personal development, cultural enrichment and/or intellectual and creative stimulation with fee income from learners intended to support some or all of the delivery costs and subsidise the learning for those who cannot afford to pay.

## Outcomes

The Service aims to achieve the following outcomes for learners:

*Enhanced skills and personal effectiveness for further training, employment or self-employment* - focuses on improving outcomes for disadvantaged individuals or groups facing barriers to progression, responding to individual need and having high impact.

*Improved confidence and social skills* - Learning can include independent living support for those with additional learning needs, confidence and self-esteem building for those who have experienced domestic violence, developing coping strategies for those with mental health needs or finance literacy development for those moving from homelessness to independent or supported living

*Improved or maintained physical and/or mental health and well-being* - The ranges of programmes are designed to engage and stimulate groups of learners through using interactive activities. These activities could include creative arts, crafts, music or movement

*Improved skills and confidence for parents to support their children's learning* – the College will increase the commitment to family centred learning and work closely with Children's Centres and other hubs to deliver opportunities in the heart of local communities.

*Improved digital, financial and English, Maths and language skills* - on improving an individual's skills to progress them into further studies into qualifications, units and other learning aims. Skills learning targets both the unemployed and those in employment with low

skills levels that restrict their progression. Skills learning can include English, maths and wider literacy qualifications, employability qualifications.

## Measuring delivery and success

Delivery is underpinned by a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by which quality and contract compliance are monitored.

### Value for money

Delivery costs per learner and course hour

Number of enrolments and hours delivered against targets

### Retention and Success rates

Analysis of retention rate against target set and national benchmark

Analysis of achievement against RARPA<sup>2</sup>

### Learner recruitment

Recruitment against priority target groups Equality and Diversity

Profile of enrolments against borough profile

Closing the achievement gap between different groups of learners

### Progression and destination of learners

Analysis of intended destinations of learners

Analysis of actual progression of learners

### Learner feedback

Analysis of learner satisfaction surveys

Analysis of learner voice– end of course evaluation form

### Partner feedback

Analysis of partner feedback and partner satisfaction surveys

## Financial and income strategy

Adult, Community & Family Learning aims to provide an accessible and affordable service to all members of the community and has a fee strategy to support enrolment of target learners. There are concessionary fees across all provision and many targeted Community Learning programmes have a low or waived fee. Please refer to the College's Fee & Refund Policy for eligibility information. However it is also recognised that fee income should be raised wherever possible as part of delivery costs and provision falling into the Universal Access category has a variable fee rate depending on the curriculum. Income raised in this

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<sup>2</sup> Recognising and recording progress and achievement – is the process to measure the progress and achievement of learners on non-accredited programmes

way is retained by the provider to help offset their delivery costs and minimise the need for subsidised funding

Sutton College Adult Education's community learning strategy is to provide a universal community learning offer, with public funding targeted at those who need it most. Income generated is used where possible to extend provision to those who cannot afford to pay, and to provide equipment and resources. Citizens who meet the eligibility criteria and are in receipt of benefits or on a low income will continue to benefit from free or low cost training and education. Funding Rules are set by the ESFA and GLA are updated annually. Sutton College Adult Education review the financial strategy and fees policy annually to ensure we continue to meet ESFA and GLA requirements. Sutton College Adult Education aims to maximise funding generated through Pound Plus initiatives.

This includes:

- maintaining an up to date and relevant Fees Policy across the partnership;
- identifying and bidding for additional funding to support the curriculum provision;
- maximising resources in kind;
- Identifying alternative sources of funding and income generation.
- Making available small pots of money to local community groups to deliver to the hardest to reach and groups that are a priority for the local authority.
- Recognising funding in kind where partners make available premises or provide resources for the delivery of the provision.

This Adult Community Learning Strategy sets out the strategic direction of Sutton College Adult Education for the next three years. It includes a summary of our vision as a learning partnership which engages and supports the most disadvantaged citizens in the borough, while remaining open to all. The strategy also outlines our priorities, objectives and key performance indicators. We will consult widely with learners, residents, managers and staff, community organisations and other interested stakeholders over the life of this strategy to ensure that the priorities are the right ones and meet citizens' needs.