

Warwickshire County Council

# Adult and Community Learning Accountability Agreement 2023/24

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5)



Education & Skills  
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# Statement of Purpose

Warwickshire County Council's Adult and Community Learning Service (WACL) provides learning opportunities for adults across Warwickshire, supporting residents to improve their lives and outcomes, enabling them to engage in their local communities and contribute to the economy of the county.

The Service actively supports objectives set in Warwickshire County Council's (WCC) strategic plan and the 'Warwickshire Education Strategy' and also objectives set in the West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan.

In addition, as WCC is a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), the Service takes account of WMCA's Regional Skills Plan.

**The Service supports all of these plans by:**

-  **improving educational outcomes**
-  **improving health and wellbeing and maintenance of health**
-  **combating social isolation and improving social cohesion**
-  **supporting people towards further learning and, where relevant, work**

# Service Vision

We are highly responsive to the needs of our residents, their communities, employers and the local economy, through the delivery of high-quality learning opportunities in accessible locations across the county.

# Service Strategic Aims and Objectives

**We will:**

-  **1 Support a strong local economy**
-  **2 Support better opportunities and outcomes for adults living in Warwickshire and their families**
-  **3 Enable residents to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives**
-  **4 Support local communities to be inclusive and engage those with highest needs**
-  **5 Support the development of a greener and more sustainable future.**



## Context Setting: Local, National Priorities and Needs Analysis



Warwickshire is a growing County with an **estimated population of 596,778** residents living and working in a diverse range of towns, villages and rural areas. Overall Warwickshire is considered affluent, and the quality of life is generally good, but there is variation both across and within the five Districts and Boroughs. Six Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) rank in the **top 10% of most deprived LSOAs nationally**, all of which are in the north of the county.

Warwickshire has a strong economy with good growth and high levels of employment. **The employment rate between October 2021 and September 2022 was 83.5% compared to 78.4% nationally in the same period.**

Educational attainment in Warwickshire is high and the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training is lower than the national and regional average, but longstanding disparities remain within the County.

For the period **January 2021 to December 2021, 5.3% of Warwickshire's population aged 16-65 had no formal qualifications compared to 6.6% nationally.** Furthermore, **45% of the population are qualified to at least Level 4 or higher, compared to 43% nationally.**

One of the challenges in Warwickshire is to increase the number of adults with a **least a level 3 qualification.** Currently some areas, such as North Warwickshire Borough and Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough, have comparatively **high levels of adults without any qualifications, and large numbers of the workforce have little more than level 2** (e.g. GCSE grades 9-4 or A\*-C; level 2 NVQ, intermediate apprenticeship)

*(Source: State of Warwickshire 2022).*

## Service Data

In 2021/22 the service had **3170 enrolments from 1806 learners. 80% of learners were female and 20% male.**

Learners living in each of the five most deprived deciles of the IMD participate at rates higher than the Warwickshire population average (**in total, 32% of the Warwickshire population and 40% of learners**). The learners aged below 65 declaring their highest level of qualification, **42% were below Level 2 and 58% below Level 3 (14% and 31% of the Warwickshire population respectively).**


# Context Setting: Warwickshire

Estimated  
**POPULATION**  
**596,778**



6 LSOAs  
**RANK IN THE TOP 10%**  
of **most deprived** LSOAs nationally

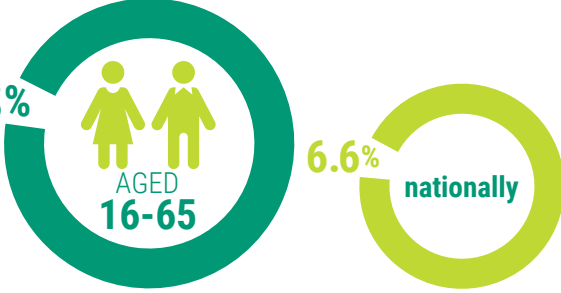
**WARWICKSHIRE**  
employment rate **83.5%**



compared to **78.4% nationally**

**HIGH**  
educational attainment

**5.3%**



AGED  
**16-65**

**6.6%** nationally

with **no formal qualification**

Qualified to at least **LEVEL 4**

**45%** Warwickshire

**43%** Nationally

**INCREASE**  
# of adults  
with a **least a**  
**level 3**  
qualification



**NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH** and  
**NUNEATON & BEDWORTH BOROUGH**  
have **HIGH LEVELS** of adults  
without **any qualifications**

large numbers of the workforce have **LITTLE MORE THAN LEVEL 2**  
(e.g. GCSE grades 9-4 or A\*-C; level 2 NVQ, intermediate apprenticeship)

(Source: State of Warwickshire 2022).

## Local Priorities

Warwickshire County Council recognises the key role that adult learning has in supporting its residents. The Council's Plan has three strategic priorities, and the Service works to support all three:

- 1 We want Warwickshire to have a thriving economy and places that have the right jobs, skills, education and infrastructure.**

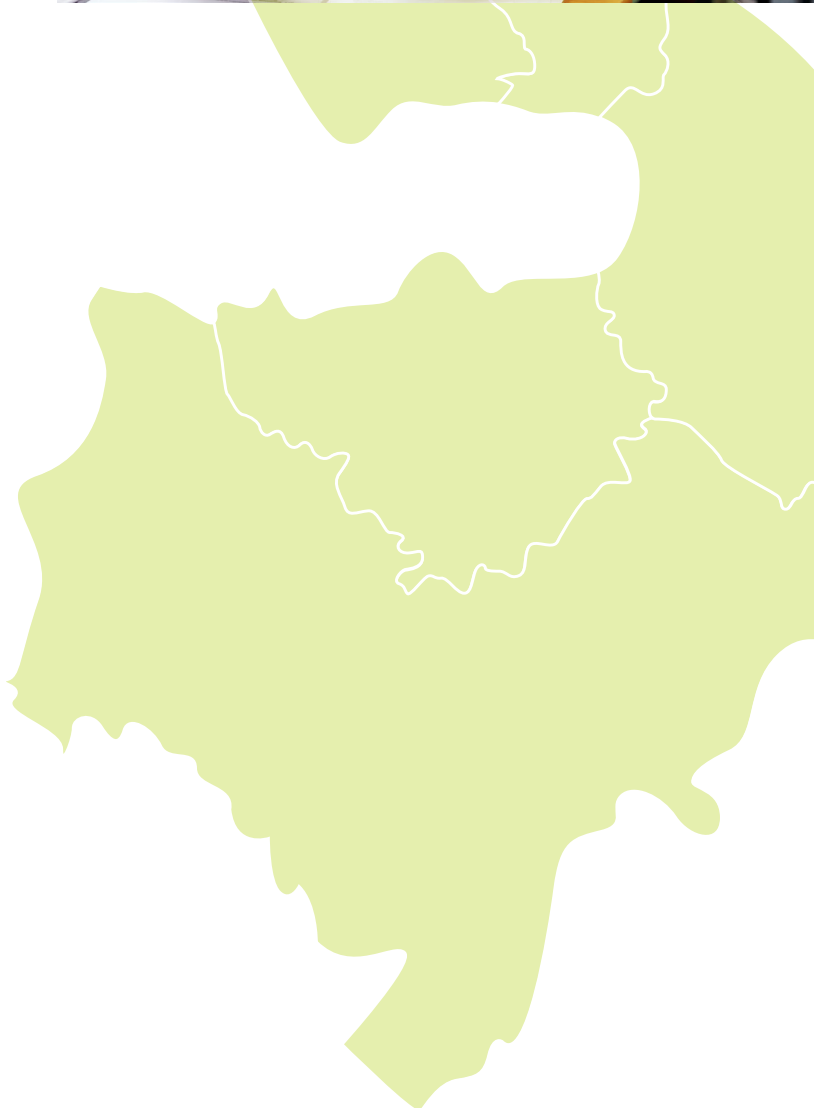
WACL provides support to individuals who want to acquire skills that support their working lives. This can include those in need of new skills, people who are economically inactive or individuals new to Warwickshire who need help and support to work.

- 2 We want to be a County where all people can live their best lives; where communities and individuals are supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently.**

Community learning offers many opportunities for families and individuals to learn skills and behaviours which can support family cohesion and individuals to live healthier lives. Crucially, community learning provides mechanisms to reduce isolation, support recovery of mental health and support interaction. This approach will support a wider Community Power approach as well as the health and independence of our communities.

- 3 We want to be a County with a sustainable future which means adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting net zero commitment, so that our generation ensures future generations can live well and reap benefits of a sustainable and thriving Warwickshire.**

As Warwickshire adapts to a Net Zero future and deals with the effects of Climate Change, WACL can provide courses which can help individuals and families to navigate the changes and challenges which will impact on the world of work as well as our communities.



# National Priorities

Nationally, Post-16 Education and Skills policy, in conjunction with wider post-18 skills approaches are a critical element of the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda with many references made to the importance of skills through key Government policy documents such as the 'Plan for Growth'.

The Skills for Jobs White Paper established distinct missions in support of the wider Levelling Up objectives around education and skills, with the specific aim for skills stating:

*By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.*

The wider set of missions within Levelling Up will enable the recognised benefits of acquiring skills and education to be broadened to include other missions, such as improving healthy life expectancy, pride in place and wellbeing.

This wider recognition of the benefits of learning will reinforce the value of 'First Step' community learning, bringing it closer to social prescribing models and contributing to the wider 'Health in All Policies' approach being developed within WCC.

There is also a renewed emphasis on the importance of increasing the overall number of workers within the economy with a minimum of a level 3 qualification. Taken together, these national approaches indicate that Warwickshire's Adult and Community Learning service will need to further develop its focus on building accessible learning pathways that raise aspiration and enable the acquisition of life changing skills, qualifications and/or wider benefits such as improved health and wellbeing. Learning pathways will clearly identify learners' starting points and support progression to positive destinations. In order to increase its contribution to the national skills priorities, the service will actively increase its understanding of the skills needs/demands within the local economy and how those needs can be met.



## Approach to developing the Annual Accountability Statement

In March 2022, the Adult and Community Learning service undertook an extensive review of county wide skills, employment and health data with the support of other council departments such as the Business Intelligence Team and the Economy and Skills Team that has excellent relationships with employers across the county. In addition, the government's Skills White Paper also informed the strategic direction of the service.

This activity resulted in the production of the service's 'Statement of Intent', a key document that was reviewed and endorsed by the service's Advisory Board in Summer 2022.

Membership of the service's Advisory Board includes representation from the National Careers Service, Department for Work and Pensions, the University of Warwick, Warwickshire CAVA (representative organisation for the voluntary sector), Hill Street Community Centre in Rugby, Warwickshire Library Service and Warwickshire County Council's Economy and Skills Team. The Advisory Board is chaired by the Council's Portfolio Holder for Education.

In July 2022, the Statement of Intent was also reviewed and endorsed by the Council's Communities Overview and Scrutiny committee. The service has further developed its strategic plans in response to the Levelling Up agenda, the DfE Skills for Jobs consultation in Summer 2022 and the emerging regional priorities from the West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The Council has excellent links with local colleges and private training providers and there is a clear understanding of each other's priorities and target groups, enabling a collaborative approach across the county with clear progression routes.



## Strategic Links and Partnerships

Advisory Board members represent Department for Work and Pensions, National Careers Service, University of Warwick, Chamber of Commerce (LSIP), Council departments Libraries and Economy & Skills.

Community organisations and venues.

Voluntary sector organisations, Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA)

Other Council departments e.g. Warwickshire Supported Employment Service; Flexible Learning Team; Children and Family Centres

Primary and secondary schools across the county, particularly in areas of highest needs.

## Our contribution to national, regional and local priorities

Service strategic aims and objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills	Priorities impacted and reason for objective
<p><b>Support a strong local economy</b></p>	<p>We will embed employability skills, progression routes and increase Careers Advice &amp; Guidance throughout all curriculum pathways. This will support individuals to up-skill and re-skill, in order to gain and improve employment opportunities, with a particular focus on those in deprived neighbourhoods (IMD lowest 30%), and economically inactive residents aged 19-24 years old and over 50s.</p>	<p>Supports the national, regional (LSIP) priorities to increase the number of residents in work, reducing dependency on public services.</p>
	<p>We will grow provision that supports the local economy by developing routes into vocational courses, with pilots developed and delivered in 2023/24 in readiness for a wider roll out of these courses in 2024/25.</p> <p>We will do this by working closely with the National Careers Service, promoting local Jobs Fairs, increasing our links with the council's Economy and Skills team and with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to increase our awareness and understanding of the local economy and skills shortages in order to match provision to local demand.</p> <p>Overall, we will increase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learner numbers from 1806 in 2021/22 to 2400 in 2023/24</li> <li>• ESFA funding earned from 92.6% in 2021/22 to 97% in 2023/24</li> <li>• learner outcomes from 90.5% in 2021/22 to 92% in 2023/24</li> <li>• positive destinations from 57.7% in 2021/22 to 75% in 2023/24.</li> </ul>	<p>Supports the national, regional (LSIP) priorities to increase the number of residents in work, reducing dependency on public services.</p>
	<p>We will further develop links and joint initiatives with Warwickshire Supported Employment Service (WSES) to provide qualifications and progression routes to meaningful employment for adults with disabilities and /or learning difficulties. We will provide opportunities for 30 learners to access this new provision in 2023/24.</p>	<p>These courses support national and regional priorities to improve life opportunities for individuals.</p>



Service strategic aims and objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills	Priorities impacted and reason for objective
<b>Support better opportunities and outcomes for adults living in Warwickshire and their families.</b>	We will further develop our Independent Living Skills and Active Learning programmes for adults with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, delivering the skills needed to support personal development, increased independence and employability.	These courses support Council priorities and develop core transferable skills that support independence and reduce dependency on other public services.
<b>Enable residents to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives.</b>	<p>We will extend the reach and impact of our English and maths courses, building on the successful innovative approaches developed through the Multiply project.</p> <p>We will increase learner numbers on these courses from 209 in 2021/22 to 420 in 2023/24 and reinforce progression routes through a wide curriculum offer, Functional Skills and GCSE</p>	English and maths provision underpins all national, regional and local priorities and gives residents the skills and qualifications they need to secure jobs, progress at work and lead independent lives.
<b>Support local communities to be inclusive and engage those with highest needs.</b>	We will actively focus on ensuring learners are engaged and enjoying their learning, leading to increased attendance from 84.3% in 2021/22 to 90% in 2023/24.	Supports council engagement priorities, 'Warwickshire is a great place to live and work'
	<p>We will continue to develop our community based First Steps provision, supporting residents to overcome barriers to learning and enabling them to progress by ensuring classes are at times and locations (such as community centres, libraries and Family Centres) that meet their needs.</p> <p>We will support progression from First Steps provision by further developing qualification-based pathways that enable residents to progress into further learning and gain the skills and qualifications that will improve their life chances.</p>	Supports Levelling Up and council priorities
	We will further develop our Family Learning provision, targeting children and their families in lowest 30% IMD areas.	Supports the council's priority to improve attainment in Warwickshire schools.

Service strategic aims and objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills	Priorities impacted and reason for objective
<p><b>Support local communities to be inclusive and engage those with highest needs.</b></p>	<p>We will improve digital inclusion by targeting digitally excluded residents and also by working with DWP's local Over 50s Champion to develop short IT courses that support increased digital confidence to enable over 50s to return to the workforce.</p> <p>We will increase the number of learners on digital courses from 162 in 2021/22 to 240 in 2023/24.</p>	<p>Supports Levelling Up and the national priority Digital &amp; Technology.</p>
	<p>We will further support the integration of people from minority heritage backgrounds (including those from Afghanistan, Hong Kong, Syria and Ukraine) through the delivery of a comprehensive language and life skills programme that responds to local needs within the county.</p>	<p>Underpins national, regional and local priorities by upskilling people from minority heritage communities, enabling them to integrate into their local communities across the county.</p>
<p><b>Support the development of a greener and more sustainable future</b></p>	<p>We will increase our focus on sustainability, embedding relevant topics across all provision, including place-based approaches and initiatives.</p> <p>We will build pathways to greener qualifications and raise awareness of 'green' careers.</p>	<p>This contributes to Levelling Up; the Skills White Paper's key objective – "Restore a Sense of Community, Local Pride and Belonging"; and national priorities in construction, technology and green technologies.</p>

## Council Statement:

*On behalf of Warwickshire County Council, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects the agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Council's Cabinet at their meeting on 11th May 2023.*

*The Warwickshire County Council Adult and Community Learning Accountability Agreement will be published on the Council's website within three months of the start of the new academic year.*

## Links to supporting documentation:

[Warwickshire County Council, Council Plan 2022-2027](#)

[Warwickshire's Public Health annual report](#)

[State of Warwickshire Report 2022](#)

Warwickshire County Council Adult and Community

Learning latest Ofsted report

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50198591>

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