



Department
for Education

East and South East London Area Review

Final Report

February 2017

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Background

In July 2015, the government announced a rolling programme of around 40 local area reviews, to be completed by March 2017, covering all general further education and sixth-form colleges in England.

The reviews are designed to ensure that colleges are financially stable into the longer-term, that they are run efficiently, and are well-positioned to meet the present and future needs of individual students and the demands of employers. Students in colleges have high expectations about standards of teaching and learning and the extent to which their learning prepares them to progress further, to higher education or directly into employment.

The Department for Education (DfE) worked closely with the Greater London Authority (GLA), London Councils¹ and London's colleges to plan the London reviews. The London reviews covered a total of 46 colleges, including 30 general further education colleges, 12 sixth-form colleges, 3 specialist designated institutions and a land based provider. Due to the large number of colleges in London, the reviews were carried out through 4 sub-regional areas. The steering group meetings for each of the 4 areas were carried out in line with published guidance. Each of the 4 steering groups was chaired by a borough council leader from one of the London boroughs in the review area, on behalf of all boroughs in the sub-region. The London reviews were overseen by a London area review steering group, a strategic body, tasked with ensuring that the 4 London reviews delivered coherent recommendations, able to secure a resilient base of institutions, and high quality post-16 skills provision, aligned to London's educational, economic and social needs.

The local steering group was chaired by the leader of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The steering group met on 6 occasions between May 2016 and November 2016, and additional informal meetings also took place to consider and develop options in greater detail. Membership of the steering group comprised each college's chair of governors and principal, representatives from the Greater London Authority (GLA), 'Local London'², local authorities; a business representative (Deputy Chair); the Further Education (FE) Commissioner; the Deputy FE Commissioner; the Sixth Form College Commissioner, the Regional Schools Commissioner, and representatives from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), the Education Funding Agency (EFA), and the DfE. The London area review steering group met on 4 occasions between February and November 2016, considering issues and outcomes emerging from the 4 sub-regional reviews, identifying cross-cutting themes and concerns, and providing advice back to inform the local process.

¹ [London Councils](#)

² A partnership body representing the boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Enfield, Greenwich, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest

Visits to colleges and support throughout the process were provided by staff from the FE and Sixth Form College Commissioners' teams. The Joint Area Review Delivery Unit (JARDU) provided the project management, administrative support and developed supporting materials and papers used by the steering group. JARDU also led on consultations with local stakeholders.

In parallel with the London area review, London government conducted a review of Adult Community Learning (ACL). Its aim was to establish the long term strategic direction for post-19 ACL provision in London, to meet Londoners' needs, and to develop a set of recommendations for commissioning and delivery of ACL provision in London, post devolution.

The emerging findings of the ACL review informed all 4 area review steering groups, with final recommendations presented to the final London area review steering group.

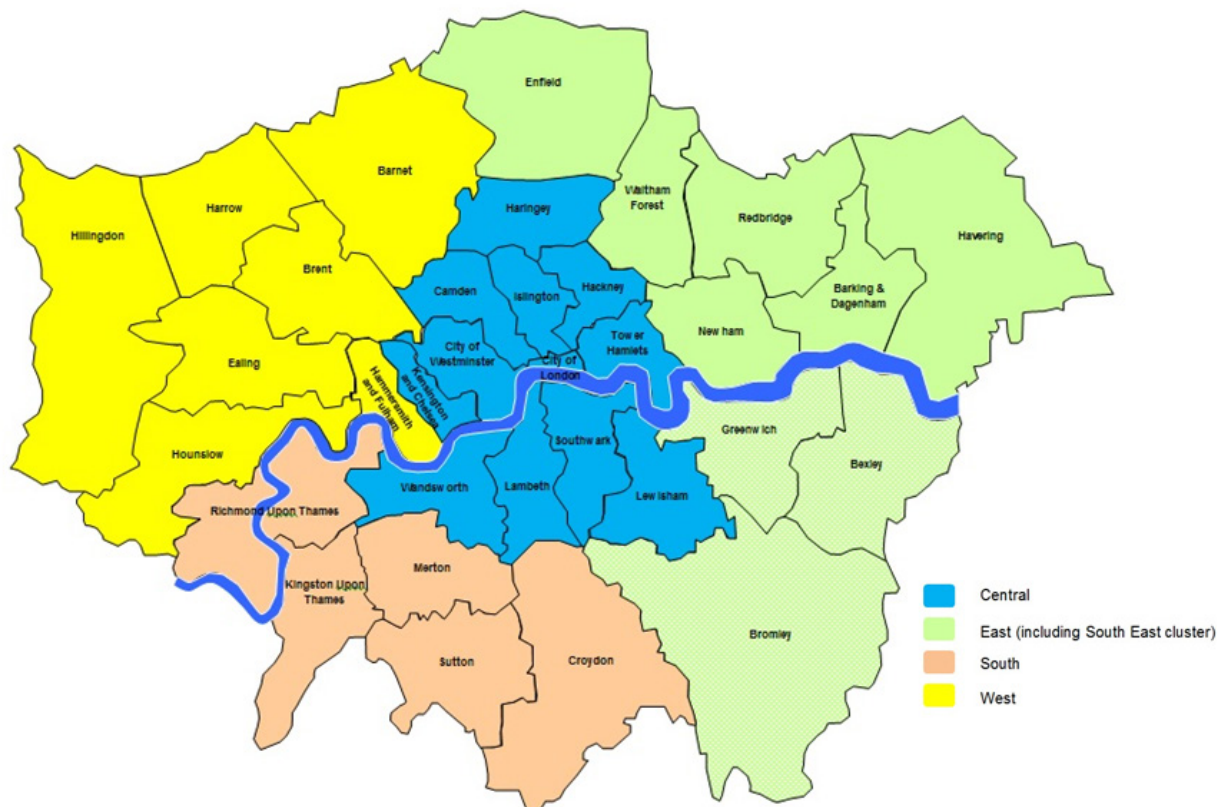
The needs of the East and South East London area

Demographics and the economy

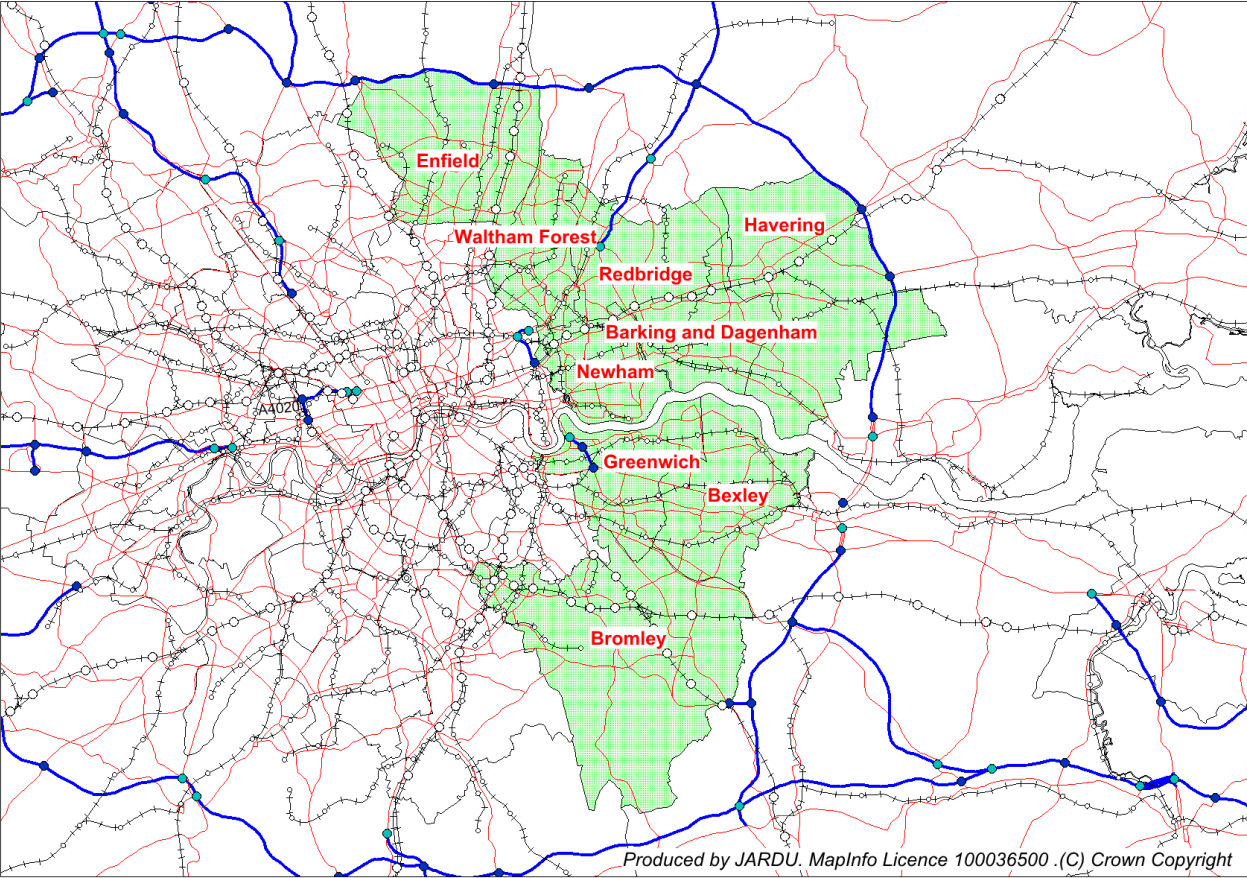
The East and South-East London area review covers the 9 local authority (London Borough) areas of:

- Barking and Dagenham
- Bexley
- Bromley
- Enfield
- Greenwich
- Havering
- Newham
- Redbridge
- Waltham Forest.

The East and South-East London sub-region in scope for the review is marked in green on the map of the wider London area below:



The locations of the 9 boroughs covered by the East and South-East review are shown on the map below:



The table below provides a snapshot of key demographic and economic data³, which has acted as a starting point for this review.

	Barking and Dagenham	Bexley	Bromley	Enfield	Greenwich	Havering	Newham	Redbridge	Waltham Forest	London Overall	Great Britain
Total population (2015)	202,000	242,100	324,900	328,400	274,800	249,100	332,800	296,800	271,200	8,673,700	63,258,400
Population aged 16 to 64	63.1%	62.9%	62.6%	64.4%	67.7%	62.3%	70.2%	65.0%	67.9%	68.1%	63.3%
% with higher education qualifications ⁴	32.4	33.6	47.0	43.6	42.3	26.0	43.3	44.7	42.6	49.80	37.10
Those formally qualified to level 2+	65.2%	71.9%	81.4%	74.5%	69.7%	61.3%	67.5%	74.2%	70.8%	76.10%	73.60%
Gross weekly pay £ of residents	539.2	650.9	715.6	578.9	597.1	622.9	527.2	596.0	578.0	632.4	541.0
Gross weekly pay £ by workplace	579.3	559.6	563.8	550.1	574.4	542.3	560.2	565.9	522.3	670.8	540.2
Out-of-work benefit claimants	2.7%	1.0%	1.1%	2.2%	2.1%	1.6%	2.0%	1.5%	2.3%	1.90%	1.80%
% of main benefit claimants	10.5	6.8	6.0	9.3	9.5	7.0	8.0	6.0	8.1	7.7	8.7
Jobs density ⁵	0.47	0.53	0.63	0.61	0.52	0.59	0.49	0.47	0.46	0.96	0.82
Total workplace units:											

³ ONS Local Authority Profiles – see data annex – Local socio-economic data. Please note that ONS update the data set on a regular basis and that the data included relates to the point at which the report was written.

⁴ Percentages relate to those aged 16 to 64

⁵ Job density relates to the level of jobs per resident aged 16-64. For example, a job density of 1.0 would mean that there is one job for every resident aged 16-64. The job density for London as a whole is 0.96, which is above the national average.

	Barking and Dagenham	Bexley	Bromley	Enfield	Greenwich	Havering	Newham	Redbridge	Waltham Forest	London Overall	Great Britain
Micro ⁶	87.0%	87.1%	88.3%	88.1%	87.4%	86.4%	86.0%	90.3%	89.4%	86.2%	83.6%
Small	10.5%	10.1	9.5%	9.2%	10.2%	10.9%	10.8%	7.8%	8.7%	11.0%	13.3%
Medium	2.3%	2.5%	2.0%	2.4%	2.1%	2.4%	2.9%	1.7%	1.8%	2.4%	2.7%
Large	0.3%	0.3	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%

6 Micro-businesses have a total of 1 to 9 workers; small businesses have 10 to 49 workers; medium have 50 to 249; large have 250+ (2015 data).

The key points to note are:

- London has a greater proportion of its population aged 16-64 than Great Britain
- Newham, Waltham Forest and Greenwich local authorities have the largest 16-19 populations in East and South-East London. The review area is experiencing significant growth in numbers of primary and secondary age pupils, which is expected to create considerable demand for new post-16 places, as pupils move through the education system
- London has 12% more residents with higher education qualifications than the national average as a whole. The East and South-East London review area also has a higher percentage of residents with higher education qualifications than the national average, but a lower percentage than the London average (by around 10%). Bromley has the highest percentage and Havering has the lowest
- the percentage of out-of-work benefit claimants in the review area is broadly comparable with the national average, although lower than the London average Barking and Dagenham has the highest percentage and Bromley the lowest
- gross weekly pay, as recorded by resident and by workplace, is higher in the review area than the national average, but lower than the London average
- the East and South-East review area has significantly lower job density than the national average and the London average. The London average job density is nearly twice that of East and South-East London
- Local London identify transport as a key issue for the review area, because of gaps in travel routes from the north to the south of the sub-region, which they see as severely limiting residents' access to skills provision and job opportunities.

Patterns of employment and future growth⁷

The East and South-East review area accounted for approximately 685,000 employee jobs and 852,000 workforce jobs⁸ in 2014, approximately 15% of the total workforce jobs in London. The 3 industries that had the highest level rate of recent growth from 2009 to 2014 included:

- health and social care
- retail
- accommodation and food services.

These industries were also amongst the largest sectors in the sub-region, with health and social work ranking first, retail ranking third and accommodation and food services ranking

⁷ [GLA Economics: Trends in the demand for labour and skills in London and the East Sub-region](#)

⁸ Workforce jobs includes the total of employee jobs, self employment jobs, HM Forces and government supported trainees

sixth. The other largest industry sectors in the East and South-East sub-region in terms of the number of jobs included:

- administrative and support services
- professional, real estate, scientific and technical activities
- education.

Together, these 6 sectors accounted for 63% of total employee jobs in the East and South-East sub-region and 9% of total employee jobs in London.

In line with the trends in London overall, the number of professional occupations in the East and South-East sub-region increased significantly from 2004 to 2014. In contrast over the same period, there was however a statistically significant decrease in the number of administrative and secretarial occupations.

Total employment in the East and South-East sub-region is projected to increase from 852,000 jobs in 2014 to 929,000 jobs in 2036, equivalent to an average increase of 3,500 jobs per year or 0.39% per year over the period. The growth at the London level is projected to be underpinned by substantial increases in professional, real estate, scientific and technical services, administrative and support services, accommodation and food services, and information and communication. Growth in these sectors is also likely to occur within the East and South-East review area.

In line with the continued shift towards professional service sectors and professional occupations, the number of jobs associated with degree level, and higher level qualifications is projected to increase substantially by 2036. In contrast, the number of jobs associated with GCE, A level or equivalent, GCSE A*-C and no qualifications is projected to decrease.

Overall, at the time of the UKCES Employer Skills Survey in 2013⁹, there were a total of 18,600 vacancies reported in the East and South-East review area, which accounts for 14% of total London vacancies. Unlike London as a whole, the highest levels of total vacancies in the East and South-East review area were in the elementary occupations (29% of total London vacancies in the occupation, 4,000 vacancies). There were also high vacancy rates among sales and customer services staff (20% of total London vacancies, 3,000 vacancies) and caring, leisure and other services staff (20% of total London vacancies in the occupation, 2,700 vacancies). Together these 3 sectors account for 52% of all vacancies in the East and South-East review area.

Further information on patterns of employment and future growth in the East and South East London sub-region and London as a whole can be found in the GLA Economics reports that were shared with the sub-regional steering group: 'Trends in demand for labour and skills in

London and the East Sub-region' and 'Trends in demand for labour and skills across London as a whole'¹⁰.

Sub-regional priorities

Local London identified the following priority areas for the review area:

- a core offer in each local area which included supporting learners with special educational needs and disabilities and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- a level 3 plus offer
- identifying and developing specialisms
- development of a stronger information, advice and guidance function
- pursuing more partnerships with higher education institutions to deliver high quality level 3 and level 4 apprenticeships and strengthen links between the FE and higher education (HE) sectors
- an apprenticeship levy pilot.

Feedback from LEPs, employers, local authorities, students and staff

Feedback from the LEP¹¹, sub-regional partnership (Local London), local authority representatives, employers and other stakeholders consulted during the area review process drew attention to the need to:

- put in place and guarantee a local entitlement to a broad offer for all learners at level 2, with comprehensive and high quality progression pathways to level 3, and where possible align entry criteria between providers develop sector specialisms across the review area, including construction, motor vehicle, engineering, aeronautical engineering and aviation (with a suggestion that an Institute of Technology may be developed), health and social care, creative and digital, business and financial services, and advanced manufacturing (e.g. cable technology)
- build capacity to meet the needs of high needs learners, considering how to draw on and build from the existing centres of expertise within the review area (such as exists within London East and South-East colleges)
- improve the offer of careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) across the review area, with any IAG offer being delivered consistently between schools and

¹⁰ [GLA Economics: Trends in the demand for labour and skills in London and the East Sub-region](#)

¹¹ Reference to engagement with the LEP relates to London's former Local Enterprise Partnership as the London LEP has recently been reconstituted.

colleges, involving where possible key partners such as higher education institutions (HEIs), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and borough services. This should align with London Ambitions¹² and could be linked to Career Clusters projects already in place

- expand the curriculum in priority skills areas, in particular construction, engineering and creative and digital
- develop the offer at and above level 4 and secure the East London Colleges' Alliance degree awarding powers within the review area
- improve outcomes for those young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and reduce rates
- assess and meet the needs of the projected increase in demand from adults requiring re-training, as they move between careers
- develop further arrangements to ensure coherence of the curriculum offer across all providers, including the colleges in the review area, as well as academy and maintained schools.

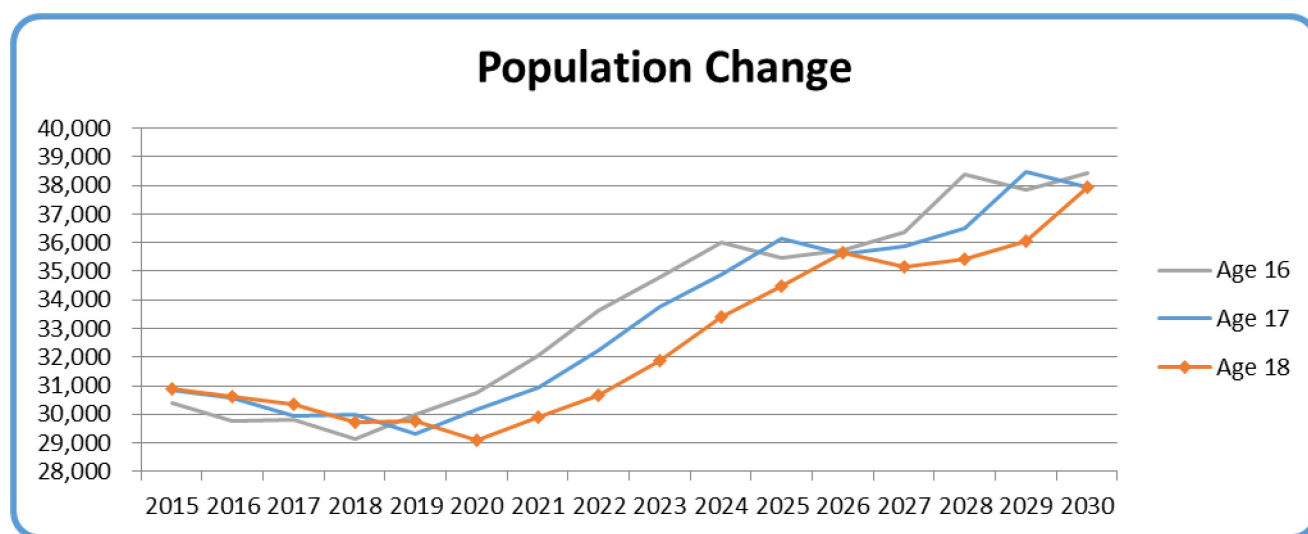
For each area review the National Union of Students submitted a report on the views of students which was considered by the steering group. Where the NUS submitted a report these are available on [NUS connect](#).

The colleges that took part in the review took primary responsibility for ensuring that their staff and union representatives had an opportunity to provide input throughout the review, which the steering group took into account. The Deputy Further Education Commissioner held meetings with staff union representatives prior to some of the steering group meetings to enable them to feed their views into the review.

The quality and quantity of current provision

The steering group considered information provided by each local authority about population projections, focusing on the changes in the number and needs of young people aged 16+.

In the East and South-East review, the number of young people aged 16-19 is declining until 2020 when numbers are projected to increase again, with a further marked upturn towards the end of that decade after a brief dip, as shown in the chart below. This is the same for all other review areas in London¹³.



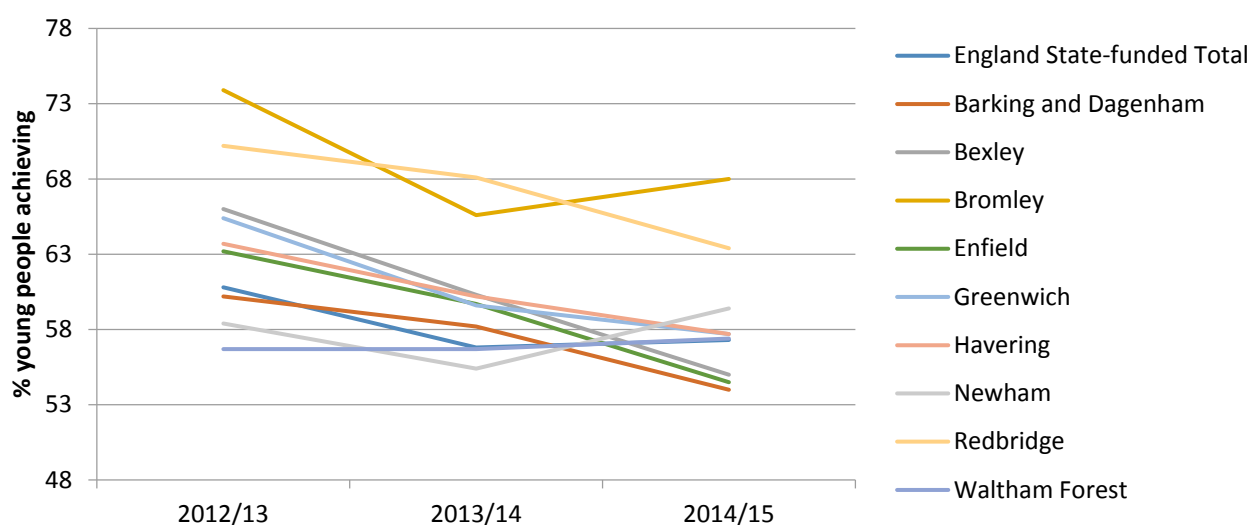
Performance of schools at Key Stage 4

The recent trend in GCSE pass rates for 16 year old school pupils completing year 11 across the East and South-East London sub-region local authorities is illustrated overleaf¹⁴.

¹³ ONS sub-national population projections – see data annex: Population projections

¹⁴ School Key Stage 4 results – see data annex. Local authority and total (state-funded sector) figures covering achievements in state-funded schools only.

Five GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths



Performance at key stage 4 is variable across the region with Barking and Dagenham, Bexley and Enfield below the national average. Performance at key stage 4 in Bexley has declined most notably from a peak of 66% in 2012 to 2013 to 55% in 2014 to 2015. There has been a drop in performance for most boroughs since 2012 to 2013, in line with national trends. Only the boroughs of Bromley and Newham have seen increases in performance since 2013 to 2014. Bromley has been the highest performing borough within the review area over the 3 year period.¹⁵

Schools with sixth-forms

Area reviews of post-16 education and training institutions are predominantly focused on general and further education and sixth-form colleges in order to ensure there is a high quality and financially resilient set of colleges in each area of England. Schools with sixth-forms have the opportunity to seek to opt in to a review if the local steering group agrees.

The underpinning analysis for the review included current post-16 provision in the area made by schools with sixth-forms. Regional Schools Commissioners and local authorities have had the opportunity to identify any issues with school sixth-form provision, and feed these into the review. Regional Schools Commissioners take account of the analysis from area reviews in any decisions they make about future provision.

¹⁵ In 2013 to 2014, a change in how the GCSE performance of schools was defined led to a drop in the overall numbers of young people achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C including maths and English.

There are currently 106 funded schools with sixth-forms in the review area, including 42 local authority maintained, 60 academies, 2 free schools and 2 university technical colleges¹⁶. Most school pupils in the age range 16 to 18 are enrolled on A level courses.

Overall funded student numbers in mainstream school sixth-forms increased by 903 in the 3 years 2013 to 2014 to 2015 to 2016 with a total of 30,147 young people funded in a mainstream sixth-form setting in 2015 to 2016¹⁷. School sixth-forms in the area vary in size but, using as a guide, for illustration purposes only, the application threshold of 200 for new school sixth-forms in academies, there are 31 school sixth-forms (including local authority maintained and academies but excluding special schools) that were funded below that figure in 2015 to 2016. The majority of schools with sixth-forms were graded by Ofsted as good or better.

The further education and sixth-form colleges

Twelve colleges (4 sixth-form colleges and 8 general further education colleges) participated in this review:

- Barking & Dagenham College
- Bexley College
- Bromley College of Further Education
- Greenwich Community College
- Havering College of Further and Higher Education
- Havering Sixth Form College
- Leyton Sixth Form College
- Newham College of Further Education
- Newham Sixth Form College
- Redbridge College
- Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College
- Waltham Forest College.

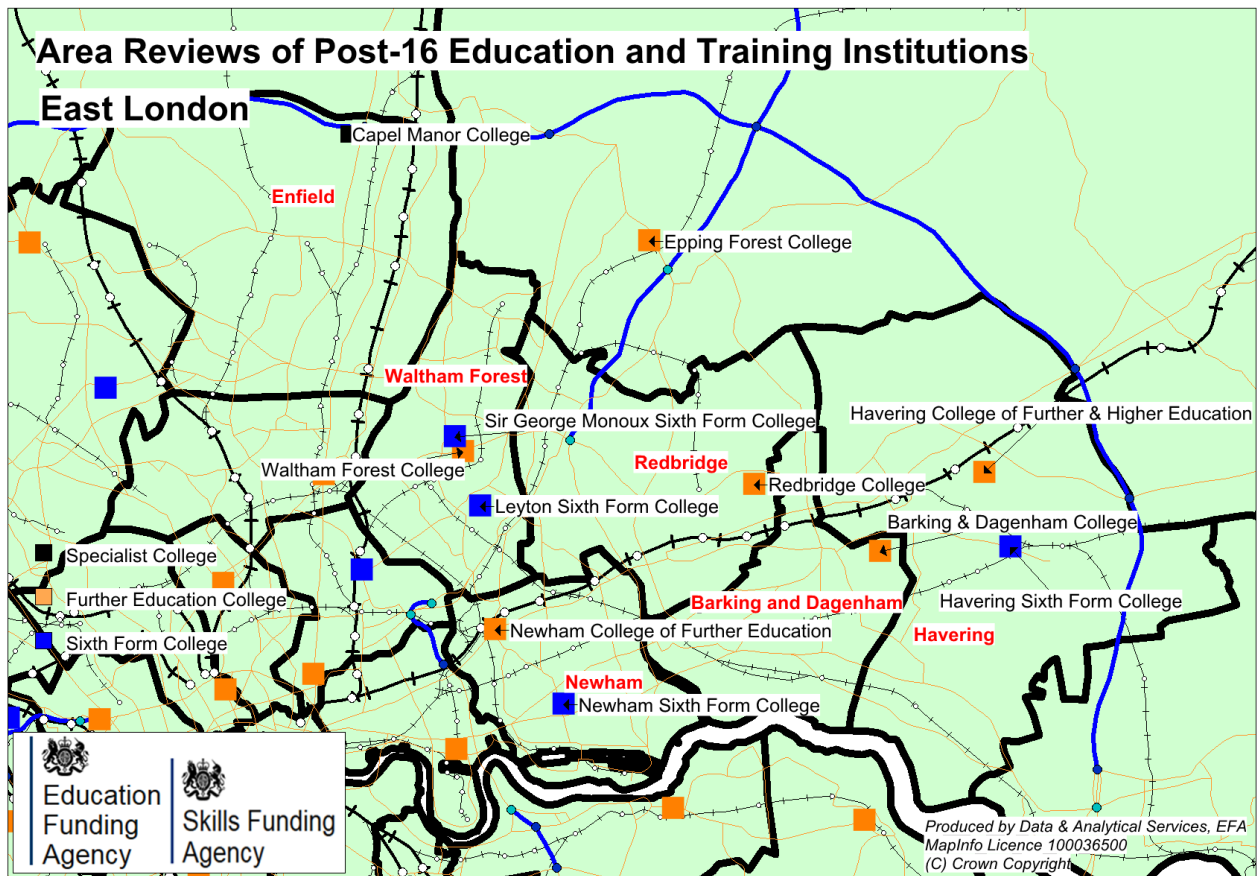
On 1 August 2016, the 3 South East London colleges: Bexley, Bromley, and Greenwich merged, to form London South East Colleges¹⁸.

The locations of the colleges participating in this area review are shown on the map below¹⁹:

¹⁶ EFA Allocations – see data annex: 16 to 19 funding. Where part of a local authority is in the review area, that local authority has been included in the school sixth-form data.

¹⁷ EFA allocations – see data annex: 16 to 19 funding.

¹⁸ Bromley College of Further and Higher Education remains the corporation name for contractual and legal purposes, following the dissolution of Bexley College and Greenwich Community College on 31 July 2016. The college has not yet applied formally to the DfE to change its legal name but intends to consult formally on a name change now that the mergers are complete.



Part of the area review process involved a visit to each college by specialist further education and sixth-form college advisers who report to the respective commissioners. The advisers met with governors, senior managers and staff, and reviewed a wide range of documents and data relating to each college’s current range and quality of provision, their track record in attracting students, and their overall financial health. Through a data sharing protocol between members of the steering group, the information from each of these visits was shared with colleges and informed the evidence base to the steering group for this review.

The current offer in the colleges

The colleges offer a variety of academic and technical learning, including apprenticeships, to 16 to 18 learners and adults.

All the general further education colleges offer apprenticeships. The most popular subjects are business administration and law and health, public services and social care. There is limited apprenticeships delivery in construction, planning and the built environment,

19 Bromley College of Further and Higher Education, Bexley College and Greenwich Community College merged to form the London South East Colleges during the review.

information and communication technology, leisure, travel and tourism, agriculture, horticulture and animal care and education and training. There is also a very limited offer for higher apprenticeships from general further education colleges in the East and South-East London review area.

Out of the FE colleges, only South East Colleges and Redbridge College offer A level provision, the latter only provides a small number of subjects. All the sixth-form colleges deliver A level provision. The most popular subjects at A level and AS level are art and design, history, sociology, psychology and mathematics.

All the colleges in the review area also deliver technical provision. Of the further education colleges, Newham College of Further Education delivers the most technical provision. Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College delivers the least technical provision from all of the colleges within scope of the area review. A wide range of technical provision is offered by the colleges with most of the provision being at level 2 and below, particularly as the most popular provision is for functional skills and ESOL. However, there is still a widespread offer of provision at level 3 and above including access to higher education. All the FE colleges offers some provision at level 4+.

Quality of provision and financial sustainability of colleges

The following table provides a summary of the size and quality in each of the colleges:

College	Most recent overall Ofsted grade ²⁰	EFA allocations (2015 to 16) ²¹	SFA allocations (2015 to 16) ²²	Total college income (2014 to 2015) 000s ²³
Barking & Dagenham College	Good (April 2013)	£17,498,007	£8160,987	£37,288
Bexley College ²⁴	Good (June 2014)	£4,724,159	£2,161,792	£9,885
Bromley College of Further and Higher Education	Good (January 2013)	£14,806,958	£5,963,975	£29,686

20 Ofsted – see data annex: College inspection reports

21 EFA allocations – see data annex: 16 to 19 funding

22 SFA allocations – see data annex: Adult funding

23 College accounts academic year 2014 to 2015 data – see data annex: College accounts. Figures in 1000s

24 Bexley College, Bromley College of Further Education and Higher Education and Greenwich Community College merged on 1 August 2016 to form London South East Colleges. The data in this table reflects the position before the merger

Greenwich Community College	Inadequate (January 2016)	£2,800,738	£3,226,572	£11,940
Havering College of Further and Higher Education	Good (January 2016)	£15,064,772	£4,704,278	£30,518
Havering Sixth Form College	Good (April 2014)	£13,263,628	£0	£12,855
Leyton Sixth Form College	Good (February 2016)	£11,850,877	£22,406	£12,322
Newham College of Further Education	Good (April 2016)	£9,753,461	£14,954,016	£52,283
Newham Sixth Form College	Good (October 2015)	£15,899,816	£82,974	£17,270
Redbridge College	Good (December 2015)	£6,469,901	£4,581,196	£15,030
Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College	Requires Improvement (February 2016)	£11,261,564	£0	£10,630
Waltham Forest College	Requires Improvement (November 16)	£8,170,731	£6,541,912	£21,349
Capel Manor College ²⁵	Good (February 2013)	£4,595,019	£2,832,249	£11,262

The condition of college buildings varies. Some colleges have higher average space per student than others, but this does not necessarily indicate being over-spaced. Each college has unique circumstances and constraints regarding estates. The area review has highlighted some instances where rationalisation or further investment might be considered further during implementation.

Through the Further Education Capital Investment Fund delivered by the GLA, London's Local Enterprise Partnership is investing in 16 colleges that are involved in the London Area

²⁵ Figures for Capel Manor represent all activity (across all London boroughs and beyond) and are replicated in all 4 London area review reports.

Review, 4 of which are in the East and South-East London sub-region. The London LEP will be monitoring all the projects involved in the FE Capital Investment Fund and GLA officers will be having early discussions with the colleges should there be any impact on the investment resulting from the implementation of the area review recommendations.

Higher education in further education²⁶

Progression of young people to higher education across London is the highest of all regions in England (greater than 38.1%) compared to a national progress rate of 35.4%²⁷ for the United Kingdom. Barking and Dagenham has a progression rate of 27.8%, and Havering has a progression rate of 30.0%. Bexley and Greenwich boroughs have a progression rate of young people to higher education of between 31.8% and 31.6% respectively. Bromley, Redbridge and Enfield boroughs in the East and South-East London review area have in excess of 40% progression rate of young people progressing into higher education.

There is a wide range of partnerships and forms of collaboration between London higher education institutions (HEIs), colleges and specialist designated institutions (SDIs) (as well as between non-London HEIs and London colleges or between London HEIs and non-London colleges). These include:

- progression / articulation agreements
- joint work on widening participation
- quality assurance / validation by HEIs of HE delivery in FE colleges
- co-design of courses such as foundation degrees
- some sharing of tutors
- some continuing professional development support to FE teachers
- access for colleges to HE electronic resources
- senior HEI staff sitting on college governing bodies.

Provision for students with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and high needs²⁸

In 2015 to 2016, the EFA funded 1,884 post-16 places across the 9 local authorities in colleges, special schools and specialist post 16 institutions. Colleges delivered 715 funded places between them. The colleges delivering the highest numbers of funded places are Havering College of Further and Higher Education, Barking & Dagenham College, Newham College and Bromley College.

26 HEFCE POLAR 3 – see data annex: Higher education progression

27 Derived from HEFCE POLAR 3 – see data annex: Higher education progression

28 EFA Allocations – see data annex: 16 to 19 funding: High needs

During the review, colleges commented that the number of students with special education needs and disability was projected to grow and that there was insufficient capability to meet this need, and a lack of clear progression pathways.

The steering group acknowledged that structural changes taking place as a result of the review should not disadvantage post-16 students with SEND or high needs.

During the London reviews, representatives nominated by each of the 4 sub-regional steering groups came together to discuss SEND and high needs provision. Group members agreed that examples of good practice in planning, commissioning and delivery of services to SEND and high needs learners exist across London, but that there was potential to improve efficiency and quality through a wider, collegiate approach, including schools, private and community services and, ideally, health and employment services.

Apprenticeships and apprenticeship providers

In 2014 to 2015, there were 16,870 apprenticeships delivered in the review area.²⁹ The most popular sector subject areas were business, administration and law, health, public services and care and retail and commercial enterprise.

The colleges in the review area delivered 7,750 apprenticeships in 2014 to 2015. Of these, 54% were at intermediate level and 44% at advanced level. In total, the colleges delivered 310 higher level apprenticeships in the same period. Barking & Dagenham College delivered the most higher level apprenticeships, followed by: Waltham Forest College, Newham College of Further Education and Bromley College.

Twenty two independent training providers were funded to deliver apprenticeships within the 9 local authority boroughs in the review area. These providers delivered a total of 10,350 apprenticeships in 2014 to 2015.

This pattern may change in 2017, with the introduction of the apprenticeship levy³⁰.

Land based provision

Landex, the sector organisation that represents a significant number of colleges which deliver land based provision, has prepared a report for steering groups on the mix and balance of land based provision across the country, the key deliverers of this and the importance of that provision to the sector and the economic development of the country.

²⁹ Numbers of apprenticeships by provider and LA – see data annex: Apprenticeships

³⁰ [Apprenticeship funding: how it will work](#)

The national strategic importance of the industry environmentally to food and water security in the future is set out. The land based industries have an ageing workforce and an increasing need for workers who can apply craft, scientific and technological skills in a land based environment. Nationally, apprenticeships in the land based sector have been slow to grow and there is a low rate of progression to level 4.

Information considered through the area review shows that the land based sector in London (which includes horticulture, landscaping, animal care, floristry, arboriculture and environmental conservation) has additional skills needs reflecting its urban focus. Although nationally apprenticeships in the land based sector have been slow to grow, in London the introduction of a Pan London Regional Apprenticeship Scheme by Capel Manor College, supported by the land based sector, has led to an increase in the number of apprentices at level 2 and 3 in 2014 to 2015 to 250³¹. Current recruitment trends coupled with planned initiatives and partnerships suggests that this growth will be sustained.

In London and nationally, there is a low rate of progression to level 4 and above among apprentices who go into employment in the sector after completing a level 2 or level 3 programme.

³¹ Number of apprenticeships by provider – see data annex: Apprenticeships

Capel Manor College

Capel Manor College continues to deliver the significant majority of London's land based provision through its 4 main delivery centres spread across all 4 review areas. The college offers a wide range of land based education and training to pre and post-19 learners, and at all levels up to and including higher level study.

London colleges and stakeholders recognise Capel Manor College as a regional specialist provider and the college data was made available to inform each steering group discussion. The college's provision was also considered by the London area review steering group as part of the review process.

The need for change

Area reviews are intended to ensure that the further education sector has a strong and sustainable future – in terms of efficiency of operation, quality of provision, and the responsiveness of courses to the needs of individuals and employers.

At the start of the reviews London government set out its aims for the London area reviews, as a whole, which were to: undertake robust analysis of future economic and demographic demand, to inform how the education and skills system in London needs to develop in scope, quality and specialisms to meet that demand; to produce a set of deliverable recommendations for general further education colleges, sixth-form colleges and other institutions that participate in the review, which set them on a path towards sustainability and increasing responsiveness to demands in London; and to begin establishing the infrastructure needed in London to commission skills under a future devolved system.

London government and Local London also set out their priorities for the review area, that provision in the area should deliver a lifelong learning and training offer, allowing people to develop the skills they need to get work, to help them individually and support economic growth across the sub-region

The steering group advised that this would require:

- local authorities, employers, schools, colleges and other learning providers to work together, to help local people develop both the soft and formal skills essential to success in the modern labour market
- residents to have the chance to earn a fair wage through skills support for in-work progression
- learner access to the education, skills and qualifications they need to benefit from the thousands of job opportunities that are being created in the East and South-East London boroughs over the coming decades
- a skills system that is flexible enough to meet the demand of the fastest growing population in London and the needs of existing and future employers
- unified and devolved funding for skills, which will increase value for money, allow the review area to vary incentives, meet the needs of learners and growth sectors, and support a culture of aspiration.

Based on work undertaken to assess the local economy and the needs of local learners the steering group developed a set of recommendations covering curriculum, partnerships and apprenticeships, as well as a series of 'asks'. The view of the steering group was that responding effectively to these would allow the review area to realise its vision of a responsive and flexible skills system, focused on progression into and through employment. It was acknowledged that not all of these recommendations and asks could be met through the area review, but should be considered during the implementation phase.

The skills vision and key asks for the East and South-East London steering group³² included the following:

Curriculum

A core offer in each local area, including:

- supporting learners with special educational needs and disability by improving planning and accessing LEP capital funding to improve provision
- a “passport to work” to support learners to achieve the softer skills employers are looking for
- high quality maths and English provision for learners who have not achieved A* to C grades at GCSE
- consistent and accessible ESOL courses, based on local need and with flexible access for learners
- a lifelong learning offer supporting people to remain and progress in employment, targeting those in work who are most at risk in a changing labour market.

At level 3 and above:

- a hub and spoke model for priority technical routes (as identified through the review) with colleges working more closely together to deliver whole pathways, to meet local economic need and deliver better job outcomes
- production of an East and South-East London curriculum prospectus for level 3 and above, which will support better quality advice and guidance
- a commitment to work with partners, including in the higher education sector to increase provision and quality at level 4 and above.

Specialisms:

- a need to identify centres of excellence and remove provision that does not contribute to meet the desired outcomes as defined by the sub-region’s vision.

Information, advice and guidance:

- development of a stronger advice and guidance function, which works with employers to engage school-age children and supports choice across technical education and academic pathways and onto employment.

Partnerships

- a formal sub-regional working group of local authority, college, and employer representatives which meets regularly to inform planning

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- a business-led advisory forum with sub-groups representing each of the priority sectors for the region, to enhance intelligence on skills gaps and understand employer demands
- pursuing more partnerships with higher educational institutions to deliver high quality level 3 and level 4 apprenticeships and strengthen links between the FE and HE sectors.

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship levy pilot offering:

- a 9 borough programme, combining the 9 levy contributions from the boroughs, to offer apprenticeships across a range of career pathways at different levels, within the boroughs and their public sector partners
- an apprenticeship brokerage service for employers, linking up with local education providers and matching opportunities with candidates.

The key areas for change

The key issues in relation to this review, and deliberated during steering group meetings were:

- ensuring the review identifies a solution, or is otherwise assured about the viability of all colleges, including the financial position at Newham College of Further Education and ensuring outcomes that enable the necessary improvements to quality at Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College
- developing sixth-form colleges' capacity to improve and find efficiencies, in order to sustain the quality of their offer in an increasingly competitive post-16 provider market
- assessing and building capacity to meet projected increases in demand for high needs provision in the East and South-East London review area, building on centres of expertise and good practice already evident across the colleges in the review area
- considering potential for boroughs' apprenticeship levy contributions to drive the offer of apprenticeships from colleges and other providers, where this meets employer and learner need
- meeting specific curriculum gaps identified through the review, at all levels, for adult and 16 to 18-year-old learners, and apprenticeships.

Initial options raised during visits to colleges

During their visits, which took place before the first area review steering group, advisers reported that all colleges had given considerable thought to potential strategic options in advance of the review. In some cases, this meant informal discussions with neighbouring

colleges and stakeholders to canvas views and to assess the potential level of support for change.

The types of options discussed were:

- formal structural change (including mergers and federations) which were considered to have the potential to improve financial viability, address quality issues and retain a good choice of subjects and options for students. Options raised included the possibility of a 3 to 4 college merger between Barnet and Southgate College with Waltham Forest College (part of the East sub-region), College of North East London (part the of Central sub-region) and potentially Hertford Regional College and Tower Hamlets and Hackney College merging with Redbridge College
- remaining as a stand-alone college where colleges could demonstrate long term financial viability
- creating a shared service and apprenticeship company. Newham College of Further Education explored this option with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Redbridge colleges
- conversion to an academy. This option is available primarily but not exclusively to sixth-form colleges. By becoming an academy, a college is able to develop partnerships more easily with other schools in the area. In order to be approved, academisation proposals must be able to demonstrate how they will lead to strong links with schools, whether through joining or establishing a multi-academy trust (with other academies) or as a single academy trust collaborating with other schools in the area. Like other academies, sixth-form colleges which become academies would be eligible to receive reimbursement of their non-business VAT and would be classified as public sector bodies. Havering Sixth Form College and Newham Sixth Form College considered the possibility of becoming an academy.

Criteria for evaluating options and use of sector benchmarks

Assessment criteria

In each area review, 4 nationally-agreed criteria are used for the process of assessment. These are:

- meets the needs of current and future students and employers
- is feasible and generates financial sustainability
- raises quality and relevance of provision, including better outcomes
- achieves appropriate specialisation.

FE sector benchmarks

To support rigorous assessment of proposals, particularly options leading to major structural change, DfE have developed a series of sector 'quality and financial indicators and related criteria'.

Financial benchmarks relate to delivering operating surpluses of 3% to 5%, ensuring borrowings stay below 40% of annual income (the maximum threshold set for affordability), staff costs of no more than 65% of total income (FE sector average) and a current ratio greater than 1. Financial plans were assessed for each option, including colleges seeking to stand-alone, prior to consideration by the local steering group.

A number of other indicators are also taken into account by the steering group. These relate to the impact of proposed changes on quality of provision, on teaching efficiency, and how they actively support growth in apprenticeships and work at levels 4 and 5. Within proposals, overall levels of provision for high needs students should be maintained. New strategic plans need to be supported by LEPs and local authorities. Colleges may also need to review their senior staffing and their governance to ensure that they have the required skills, and the capacity to implement rapid change.

The assessment of options indicated that, based on the information available to the area review steering group, the colleges would move towards the benchmarks and indicators through successful implementation of options, and that the protected characteristics groups, including high needs students, would retain at least equal access to learning.

More detail about these benchmarks is contained in area review guidance Annex F³³ (revised March 2016).

³³ [Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions: updated guidance on area reviews Annex F, Pages 49-53](#)

Recommendations agreed by the steering group

Fourteen recommendations, including 3 pan-London recommendations were agreed by the steering group in November 2016. These were:

- Barking & Dagenham College to merge with Havering College of Further and Higher Education, with a target date of 1 August 2017
- Havering Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college
- Leyton Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college
- London South East Colleges to stand-alone following merger in August 2016
- Newham Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college
- Newham College of Further Education to remain as a stand-alone general further education college
- Newham College of Further Education to create a shared service and apprenticeship company with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Redbridge colleges
- Tower Hamlets and Hackney College to merge with Redbridge College, with a target date of 1 April 2017. As part of the Tower Hamlets and Hackney group, Redbridge College to create a shared services and apprenticeship company with Newham College of Further Education
- Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college
- Barnet and Southgate College to merge with Waltham Forest College, with a target completion date of 31 July 2017
- the creation of a London Sixth Form Partnership, a new collaborative venture to share best practices and services
- London government and providers of Adult Community Learning (ACL), including colleges, to explore recommendations arising from the London Review of ACL in the review area, including the potential development of a sub-regional community education hub
- Representatives from the East and South-East London area review to work with colleagues from other sub-regions to support the proposed pan-London review of SEND and high needs provision
- The East and South-East sub-region to continue work to develop a sub-regional Skills and Employment Board, to take forward the partnership working developed during the area review. Pan-London implementation arrangements to be put in place to support delivery of the outcomes of the London area reviews.

Each of these options is now outlined in more detail:

Barking & Dagenham College and Havering College of Further and Higher Education

Barking and Dagenham College to merge with Havering College of Further and Higher Education, with a target date of 1 August 2017.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the merged college's combined offer will reflect GLA priorities and pathways from entry to degree level. The 2 colleges have a complementary curriculum offer with some overlap in travel to learn patterns, although less so for SEND learners and those working up to level 2. The merger is expected to enable the colleges to improve progression routes for learners in key curriculum areas (including to higher education) as well as create benefits from sharing of good practice between the colleges. Some rationalisation of curriculum is likely, where duplication exists. There is a commitment to sustain provision currently offered by both colleges, for high needs learners
- with regard to financial sustainability, initial financial assessment has indicated that the majority of benchmarks are achieved, however the merged college will need to continue to take steps to address operating performance in order to move towards the published benchmark
- in respect of quality of provision, both colleges are graded good by Ofsted and will build on their strong reputation with high levels of learners progressing to further education and training. The merger will also enable the sharing of good practice in areas such as STEM, apprenticeships, higher education and English and maths
- the merged college will provide a broad offer at level 3 and above in engineering, construction, creative digital and health science and care (GLA priorities). There is a commitment to developing centres of excellence in identified specialist hub areas across the north-east part of the sub-region, including SEND. The combined apprenticeship offer covers level 2 and above, with developments underway to enhance progression to degree apprenticeships in leadership and management, construction, digital, IT and engineering. The colleges intend to establish a new employer training company providing apprenticeship and bespoke training solutions for employers and learners in the north-east of the sub-region.

Havering Sixth Form College

Havering Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, Havering Sixth Form College, will continue to offer a broad and high quality offer of A levels and BTECs to local residents with very high progression to university and employment. The college will continue working with Havering College of Further and Higher Education to maintain

the guarantee of a college place to all 16 to 18-year-old learners in the borough, and with local sixth-forms, to ensure coherence of the offer

- with regard to financial sustainability, initial financial assessment has indicated that the college has a strong financial position with the majority of benchmarks achieved, however the college will need to take steps to address operating performance in order to move towards the published benchmark
- in respect of quality of provision, the college is rated good by Ofsted. The college's membership of the new London Sixth Form Partnership is expected to offer opportunities for further improvement to quality, through sharing of best practice
- the college has expressed an interest in academisation, but does not see it as a preferred option. Should the college's board re-consider this, they will be able to pursue academisation within the standard 6 month time frame for applications, from the end of the London area review.

Leyton Sixth Form College

Leyton Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the college will continue delivering high quality level 3 programmes, keeping under review and where possible, responding to any increase in local need for level 1 and 2 learning
- with regard to financial sustainability the college's accounts reflect a strong financial position with further work planned for achievement of the financial benchmarks on improving efficiency and reducing costs, for example, through shared services
- in respect of quality of provision, the college is rated good by Ofsted. The college's membership of the new London Sixth Form Partnership is expected to offer opportunities for improvement to quality, through sharing of best practice
- the college will continue to offer specialisms in GLA priorities including ESOL, ICT and health and social care.

London South East Colleges

London South East Colleges to stand-alone following merger in August 2016.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the merger has allowed the new college to use its collective resources to expand the curriculum offer to meet emerging and predicted skills demands, with resources such as the Career College for hospitality, food and enterprise; the 14-16 technical academy at Bromley; and the 'Nido Volans Centre' for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities providing access to centres of excellence. The London South East Colleges Apprenticeship Company will provide over 1500 apprentices a year and the colleges anticipate a 100% increase on apprenticeships by 2019, particularly in higher levels and in those sectors most closely aligned to the labour market: advanced engineering, creative,

digital and ICT, financial and business services, food, healthcare and medical technology and the visitor economy

- at the request of Biggin Hill airport, the colleges are working on the delivery of a new aeronautical and engineering college in the south of the Bromley Borough which is expected to provide a foundation for London South East Colleges to explore potential for an Institute of Technology, for the aviation industry
- with regard to financial sustainability, the college has already realised savings from the merger and expect to secure further efficiencies and growth, including through changes to the way learning is delivered and rationalising the estate. The initial financial assessment of the merger has shown that it would improve financial resilience, with the merged college achieving the majority of benchmarks. Operating performance falls short of the benchmark, however this is expected to improve with the further efficiencies and growth
- with respect to the quality of provision, Bexley and Greenwich Colleges merged into Bromley College in August 2016, which was rated as good with outstanding features, by Ofsted. The new college is delivering its plans for improvement of quality overall
- the college is developing plans for additional specialist centres including the 'pan-London Construction Careers College' and an advanced manufacturing centre of excellence in Greenwich. The college's new 'Creative and Cultural Skills Stakeholder Board' will help to ensure that the offer remains responsive to emerging demand from the new cultural quarter being developed in Woolwich.

Newham Sixth Form College

Newham Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the college will continue to offer a broad range of academic and technical qualifications, to a predominantly local learner cohort (around 85% are Newham residents) working at entry through to level 4
- with regard to financial sustainability, historically strong finances are forecast to be maintained following restructuring work already completed, together with ongoing plans for the college's estate and further restructuring programmes which will improve efficiency and enable the college to progress towards achieving the benchmarks not already achieved
- with respect to the quality of provision, the college is currently rated good overall by Ofsted. Its membership of the new London Sixth Form Partnership is expected to offer opportunities for further improvement to quality, through sharing of best practice. Similarly, its membership of the Elmhurst Teaching Schools Alliance will ensure quality improvement
- the college will continue to offer specialisms that are GLA priorities, for example, engineering.

Newham College of Further Education

Newham College of Further Education to remain as a stand-alone general further education college.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the college will continue to offer its predominantly local learners a curriculum that builds on a strong record of technical and professional learning and a record of quality delivery in local priority skills areas including: health and social care, fashion and tailoring, engineering and construction digital and creative skills, catering and hospitality. Like all colleges in the review area, Newham has committed to safeguard provision for SEND learners, and will be better able to meet increasing demand for high needs provision, through its new specialist facilities
- with regard to financial sustainability, the college has a number of plans in place to improve its financial position through a new shared services venture with the University of East London, opportunities to increase the use of online learning, and potential to rationalise the college's estate. A strategy is in place to review further options to expand shared services to include IT reprographic, HR and marketing services. It is currently forecast to achieve all benchmarks by 2017 to 2018
- with respect to the quality of provision, the college is rated good by Ofsted and has introduced advanced practitioners across the college, to drive further improvements in quality
- the college will continue to offer existing specialisms in GLA priorities, including ESOL, health and social care, digital and creative skills and construction and a large number of apprenticeships.

Shared services and apprenticeship company

Newham College of Further Education to create a shared service and apprenticeship company with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Redbridge colleges.

Newham College's planned shared service and apprenticeship company, with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Redbridge colleges is expected to improve breadth of, and progression through, the curriculum for learners within the colleges' shared travel to learn area. The college is planning to extend its already strong apprenticeship provision and grow its offer of higher level learning.

Redbridge College

Tower Hamlets and Hackney College to merge with Redbridge College, with a target date of 1 April 2017. The steering group endorsed the merger of Tower Hamlets College and Hackney College which became effective in August 2016.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs the 3 colleges in the group will continue to serve their local markets under a borough based model. Cross group curriculum improvement will ensure that standards for all learners are raised to that of the best provision. Standards for apprentices will improve through the development of a separate, coordinated employer responsive unit across the college group
- with regard to financial sustainability, initial financial modelling has indicated that the merger has scope to create efficiencies and improve financial resilience. Operating performance falls short of the benchmark, however this is expected to improve as the savings and efficiencies are generated
- with respect to quality of provision, the colleges was rated good by Ofsted at their last inspections which provides a strong foundation for further improvement in the merged college
- existing specialism in business and ESOL (Tower Hamlets), construction, sport and digital (Hackney) and catering and graphics (Redbridge) will be developed through targeted investment. Emerging specialisms in healthcare and SEND will be further developed on a multi-borough level.

Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College

Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College to remain as a stand-alone sixth-form college.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the college will continue to support a predominantly local cohort of 16 to 19-year-old learners from Waltham Forest, offering level 3 learning, as well as providing a pathway from level 2 to level 3 for students who need it
- with regard to financial sustainability the college's accounts reflect a strong financial position and under its new leadership team long-term sustainability will be a key component of its financial planning to enable the college to progress towards achieving those benchmarks not already achieved
- with respect to quality of provision, the college was rated as requires improvement by Ofsted, and will need to address the improvement priorities identified, working with the EFA as required. The college has appointed a new principal and other senior managers and is developing its improvement plan
- the college's offer is aligned to GLA priorities, in particular through pathways into business, scientific activities, health and social work, and education.

Waltham Forest College

Barnet and Southgate College to merge with Waltham Forest College, with a target completion date of 31 July 2017.

- in terms of meeting current and future needs, the merged college will deliver high quality skills training in most of the wider GLA key growth sectors identified as critical

for London's economy, including accountancy, finance, construction, digital skills, media, health sciences and engineering. The launch of the London Apprenticeship Training Group (comprising the colleges involved in the merger, the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London and Hertford Regional College) will respond to the review area's priority to increase the number of apprenticeships. In addition, there will be opportunities to rationalise specialist technical skills provision, for example in hospitality and catering, engineering, construction and digital skills, providing centres of excellence which are accessible to all across North and East London. The merged college will also support GLA's priority of providing more pre-level 2 provision and will continue to deliver a broad local community offer for young people and adults

- with regard to financial sustainability, initial financial assessment has demonstrated that the merger would release significant cost savings in curriculum, management and support functions, leading to enhanced financial sustainability and enable the college to progress towards achieving the benchmarks not already achieved on merger
- in respect of quality of provision, Waltham Forest College is currently rated as satisfactory by Ofsted and Barnet and Southgate College rated good. With the great majority of course areas judged good or outstanding by Ofsted, the combined college will be well placed to spread good practice to all areas
- the merger would continue to support and strengthen the specialisms of the 2 colleges which have been identified by GLA as priorities for the review including construction, engineering, health and social care, business and digital skills, ESOL and learning for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities.

London Sixth Form Partnership

The creation of a London Sixth Form Partnership, a new collaborative venture to share best practices and services.

Sixth-form colleges in the East and South-East London sub-region have set up this partnership to increase collaborative working, co-operation and sharing of expertise. The partnership, comprised of Brooke House Sixth Form, Havering, Leyton, Newham and St Francis Xavier sixth-form colleges, will run a series of activities, regular meetings of key staff and will spearhead various teaching and learning improvement projects. Each of the member colleges has committed funds to cover the cost of the role of a Partnership Director. It is intended that the benefits of collaborative working will encourage other institutions to join the partnership in the future.

Adult Community Learning Services

London government and providers of Adult Community Learning (ACL), including colleges, to explore recommendations arising from the London Review of ACL in the review area, including the potential development of a sub-regional community education hub.

In parallel with the London area reviews, London government conducted a review of ACL, which aimed to establish the long term strategic direction for post-19 ACL provision in London, to meet Londoners' needs, and to develop a set of recommendations for commissioning and delivery of ACL provision in London, post devolution. The ACL review recommended that London government should support the development of sub-regional community education hubs either through a single LA, college or Institute for Adult Learning (the new name for the SDIs); and that a task and finish group should be established to determine SEND need and how best to meet it. These recommendations will be taken forward as part of the implementation of London area reviews.

Pan-London review of SEND and high needs provision

Representatives from the East and South-East London area review to work with colleagues from other sub-regions to support the proposed pan-London review of SEND and high needs provision.

During the London area reviews, representatives nominated by each of the 4 sub-regional steering groups came together to discuss SEND and high needs provision. The group's view was that London providers and London government should consider the potential for a consistent commitment to all SEND and high needs learners, with respect to access and quality of provision. The group agreed though, that data on SEND and high needs provision in London was incomplete and out of date, and that priority should be given to reviewing the current provider map, considering how well services meet existing learner needs, and their capacity to meet projected demand. The group's view was that a review would need to take a wide enough scope to enable recommendations to be made for improvements across planning, commissioning and delivery of SEND and high needs services.

A pan-London SEND and high needs working group will be developed that builds on the SEND group established during the London area reviews. The group will take a strategic overview of SEND and high needs issues across London to ensure equality of access to education and training. It will also monitor the implementation of area review recommendations with respect to SEND issues. The group will consist of representatives from London government (including the sub-regions), national government, colleges and providers and other stakeholders.

Implementation arrangements

The East and South-East London sub-region to continue work to develop a sub-regional Skills and Employment Board, to take forward the partnership working developed during the area review. Pan-London implementation arrangements to be put in place to support delivery of the outcomes of the London area reviews.

A London Area Review Implementation Group will be established by the GLA, to support and monitor implementation of the review's recommendations. This will comprise of representatives from: DfE's funding agencies; GLA; London Councils; the 4 sub-regional partnerships (Central London Forward, Local London, the South London Partnership and the West London Alliance); the Association of Colleges; the Sixth Form Colleges Association; and a representative of the new SEND pan-London working group. The group will operate from January 2017 through to April 2018 as required, and will report and provide regular updates to the FE Commissioner, the Mayor's Skills for Londoners taskforce, sub-regional Skills and Employment Boards and the London Regional Committees of the Association of Colleges and Sixth Form College Associations.

Each of London's 4 sub-regions will continue work to develop a sub-regional Skills and Employment Board, to take forward the partnership working developed during the area review.

Capel Manor

There was no specific recommendation concerning Capel Manor College from the London area reviews but as a result of the area reviews, the college has undertaken to:

- continue to work with the land based sector, other London colleges and providers to develop further innovative solutions to ensure all learners across London who seek employment in this sector can cost effectively access the high quality and sustainable land based education and training they need to progress their careers, establish a business or gain permanent employment in the sector in London
- offer new level 4 and level 5 programmes in urban green space management, arboriculture, animal management and zoology and floristry, the latter including new apprenticeship programmes in association with New Covent Garden Market
- set up a sports turf academy, offering apprenticeships in sports turf and green keeping.

Conclusions from this review

The purpose of area reviews is to put colleges on a stronger financial footing whilst also enabling them to better meet the economic and educational needs of students and employers for the long term.

Throughout the review, colleges have worked closely with their GLA, local authorities and the review team, sharing detailed information about their performance and processes. Each local steering group member has been in a position to offer ideas for change, and make comments and assessments about others' proposals and plans for their area. The review team is grateful for the positive approach taken by all the local stakeholders involved in the review.

The issues arising from the area review, summarised in 'The need for change', will be addressed through:

- significant bolstering of colleges' financial and educational strengths through mergers achieved during the review (London South East Colleges) and through the merger of Barking & Dagenham and Havering College of Further and Higher Education, as well as Waltham Forest College and Barnet and Southgate College. Plans for improvement have also been agreed between colleges and the EFA and SFA, where performance and quality were identified as a concern
- a formal collaboration between sixth-form colleges across and beyond the review area, providing opportunities for savings as well as sharing and development of effective practice, to help the sixth-form colleges maintain their reputation for academic excellence in an increasingly competitive environment. The partnership will be open to all sixth-form providers (sixth-form colleges and schools) and may well expand within and beyond the review area
- apprenticeship companies to stimulate colleges' growth in their share of an increasingly important offer to learners and employers
- commitments to preserve, grow and ensure the coherence of the offer to SEND and high needs learners, including work to build on acknowledged expertise of some providers in this area
- arrangements to maintain the dialogue between London government, boroughs and colleges, and to bring in employers, so that the offer remains relevant and can flex as demand changes
- the establishment of a pan-London implementation group and the sub-regional skills and employment board which will broaden the area review partnership of boroughs and colleges, to include employers and other learning providers, allowing a joined up approach to curriculum planning in response to the skills needs identified through this review.

Next steps

The agreed recommendations will now be taken forward through recognised structural change processes, including due diligence and consultation.

Proposals for merger, sixth-form college conversion to academies, or ministerial approval, for example of a change in name, will now need intensive work by all parties involved to realise the benefits identified. Colleges will want to give consideration to making timely applications for support from the [Restructuring Facility](#), where they can demonstrate that the changes cannot be funded through other sources. Colleges exploring academy conversion will be subject to the application process and agreement by the Sixth Form College Commissioner and the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Primary responsibility for implementation of recommendations relating to individual colleges rests with those institutions. However, it will be important to understand how progress is going in the round in each area and each set of area review recommendations will be formally monitored at both national and local levels. As the [guidance](#) produced for LEPs and local authorities sets out all those involved in the local steering group will be expected to play their full part in ensuring that changes happen within the timescale agreed. In this context, LEPs and local authorities are expected to retain their focus on driving changes, and assessing how implementation of recommendations is contributing to local economic performance. The EFA and SFA, with oversight from the FE Commissioner and Sixth-Form College Commissioner, will also be monitoring progress across all areas.

A national evaluation of the area review process will be undertaken to assess the benefits brought about through implementation of options. It will include quantitative measures relating to the economy, to educational performance, to progression, to other measures of quality, and to financial sustainability. This analysis will also take account of the views of colleges, local authorities, LEPs, students and employers about how well colleges are responding to the challenges of helping address local skills gaps and shortages, and the education and training needs of individuals.



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