

Learning and Skills Council

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Local Strategic Plan 2002-05

Surrey



Learning+Skills Council
Surrey

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> Our National Mission, Vision and Objectives

Our mission is to raise participation and attainment through high-quality education and training which puts learners first.

Our vision is that, by 2010, young people and adults in England will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world.

Our key objectives for 2004 are to:

1. Extend participation in education, learning and training;
2. Increase engagement of employers in workforce development;
3. Raise achievement of young people;
4. Raise achievement of adults;
5. Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction.

Our Aim and Objectives in Surrey

Within the overall national mission, vision and objectives, our aim is to improve the capacity of people in Surrey to contribute to economic and community development.

We have identified six long term objectives for achieving this:

1. Work with learning providers and other partners to increase substantially the proportion of 16-18 year olds participating in learning on a full or part-time basis.
2. Continually improve Surrey's success rates at level 3 (two A levels, NVQ 3 or equivalent);
3. Increase the proportion of the employed workforce doing good quality and effective training and development;
4. Work with employers, learning providers and others to reduce identified skills gaps;
5. Encourage people who are not currently in employment to improve their knowledge and skills;
6. Improve access and engagement in areas of urban and rural deprivation.

In pursuing this aim and objectives we shall seek to equalise opportunities through better access to learning and its benefits.

Information Sources

The Plan has drawn on a wide range of sources, both qualitative and quantitative. This includes research into specific issues as well as ongoing surveys and access to administrative data. In some cases, information is not available in the form necessary to fully understand the situation and will need to be developed further. However, in doing so, the LSC is very conscious of the need not to impose any unnecessary burdens on providers and others who may need to supply some of this data.

Research Programme

Surrey LSC runs a significant research programme which aims to complement existing sources of data. This includes specific surveys and other analyses which will be targeted at the priorities identified in this Plan, particularly where we need to understand the particular issues in more detail. It will also support our marketing initiatives, where appropriate.

There is an information booklet to accompany the Plan, which identifies key information and explains data sources in more detail. Please contact the Research & Data Section for a copy – telephone 01483 803371 or 803229, email: paul.kardos-stowe@lsc.gov.uk or matthew.crocker@lsc.gov.uk.

> Growth in Learning:

Foreword by Chairman Rob Douglas

Surrey is an affluent county with almost full employment but with pockets of genuine deprivation. It is one where people are used to exercising choice in a great variety of ways. Around a quarter of pre-16 children are at fee-paying independent schools. For young people post-16 there is a wide range of educational, training and job opportunities available to them, including staying on at school, attending one of the colleges in the county and getting a job (with or without a structured training programme). A very high proportion (over 80%) of 16 year olds choose to stay on in full time education, yet the proportion involved drops by more than 20% by age 19.

Career and learning decisions appear to be made later than in other parts of the country. The ready availability of jobs means that people in the workforce are not under pressure to optimise their skills and some employers may actually discourage them from doing so for fear of losing them.

One apparent consequence is that, while Surrey is one of the highest achieving LSC areas in terms of GCSE results, our performance at Level 3 is not as good as the GCSE results would lead one to expect, particularly in relation to vocational qualifications.

Amongst adults in employment, three quarters of people recently surveyed felt they were adequately skilled and had no training needs – and yet this is in an economy which is going through great and continuous change.

Finally a major issue in our County relates to those who do not share in the general prosperity of the area. An estimated 100,000 adults – around one sixth of our workforce – have problems of literacy or numeracy. This means they have difficulties in using the Yellow Pages telephone directory or checking their change in a shop. This is unacceptable.

The Surrey Learning and Skills Council is one of forty-seven local offices of the National Learning and Skills Council. Our main job is to plan and fund education and training for people over the age of 16 in Surrey. Our mission, in common with the rest of the Learning and Skills Council, is to raise participation and attainment in learning and, locally, to deal with the challenges described above.

We are one year old this April and the past year has been spent in setting up our organisation, getting to know our stakeholders, reviewing needs and ensuring a smooth transition from our predecessor bodies. This transition has gone for the most part smoothly and I would like to pay credit here to the commitment and energy of the local team who have worked so hard during the year to achieve that.

It is now time to move forward. The unique structure of the Learning and Skills Council means that the local Councils can, in consultation with all our partners and stakeholders, identify the particular needs of our local areas and develop solutions to meet these needs. I am proud to lead the Surrey local Council as Chairman and to be supported by the range of knowledge and talents provided by my fellow Council members. Details of these members are given in Annex A together with the role which, in addition to that laid down by statute, we see the Council playing.

This three year plan describes the challenges which we face in more detail (Chapter 2), sets out the objectives and targets which the Council is proposing to adopt (Chapter 3) and describes our strategies and a range of actions which we aim to take (Chapters 4 and 5). We are only a part of the learning system and these actions need to be taken in conjunction with our many partners.

Our ability to achieve all our objectives is dependent on three other things: availability of adequate resources; effective development of our staff through our commitment to the Investors in People standard; and the extent of the LSC's new funding flexibilities. Not all these factors are within our direct control and the speed at which we can realise our ambitions will be tempered by resourcing and funding realities. We will set out our short term action commitments in the annual Business Plan which we shall be publishing in June this year.

Our theme is "**Growth in Learning**". We want to increase the number of people in structured learning at all ages, and to increase attainment levels. We want to ensure that everyone realises the learning potential that their individual abilities and energy can support. This is not just a 'nice-to-have' objective but essential if we are to maintain economic and community success in the County and ensure that everyone can share in that success and contribute to it.

We have taken account of the views and comments of a range of stakeholders, including those made on the first draft of this Plan. We have aimed to respond to different perspectives and to express more clearly the broad priorities which will be reflected in our Business Plan for 2002/03 (page 5). We shall also be drawing on more detailed comments in that Business Plan.

We have been encouraged by the mainly very positive responses to our analysis and proposed strategies which we have received from our National Council, our own staff and – particularly – from our local learning providers and other partner organisations. To achieve our aims we need the support of you all to ensure that the right learning opportunities are available and that people are able to make the right learning choices.



Rob Douglas

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> From Strategy to Action

Drawing from the themes in this Plan and from responses to our consultation about it, we have identified **five broad priorities for action** which will be reflected in our Business Plan for 2002/03.

These are:

Young people's achievement at level 3: to ensure that the potential of young people is fully developed to maximise skill levels and provide the platform for further progression.

Young people's participation in structured learning: to tackle the drop in participation after 16 and keep young people in the habit of learning.

Adults with lower level skills: to ensure a level of basic skills which provides a sound basis for participation in the community and to achieve progression to level 2 and beyond and so contribute to meeting skills needs.

Managers' engagement with workforce development: to ensure that managers have both the individual skills and the ability to develop the skills of others to respond to the pace of economic and social change.

Capacity building: to develop means of learning delivery to meet the needs of learners and employers and make the best use of resources available.

We regard the following as key local targets for achievement by 2004:

- increase number of 16-18 year olds participating in structured learning by 4,240 (increase of 14%)
- increase numeracy and literacy skills of 10,000 adults (45% increase on previous projections)
- increase the number of basic skills tutors by 100
- double the number of information, advice and guidance sessions for adults.

Our annual Business Plans will translate these broad priorities and the range of action proposals within this Strategic Plan into specific activities and outputs and link these with the resources available to us in the year in question so as to achieve maximum impact.

> Chapter 1 The Context of the Plan

The role of the LSC

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was established as a non-departmental public body in September 2000 and, from April 2001, took over certain functions previously managed by the former Training and Enterprise Councils and the Further Education Funding Council, as well as some others. It took on responsibility for funding school sixth forms from April 2002.

The LSC is therefore now responsible for planning, funding and commissioning all Government funded post 16 education and training, apart from higher education, delivered through a range of providers. This includes further education and school sixth form provision, work based learning and workforce development, adult and community learning, information, advice and guidance and education/business links. The LSC is accountable to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

In November 2000, the LSC received a “remit letter” from the Secretary of State which explained the Council’s role in post 16 learning as:

encouraging young people to stay on in learning, increasing demand for learning from adults, maximising the contribution of education and training to economic performance and raising standards.

This has since extended to some aspects of planning for 14 and 15 year olds as part of the Government’s agenda for 14-19 year olds. The LSC has also been given specific responsibilities for promoting equality and diversity, special needs provision and health and safety.

Surrey LSC is one of 47 local offices of the National Learning and Skills Council. It is formally a sub-committee of the National Council and is responsible for local learning provision in the context of national policy. The role and membership of the local Council are set out in Annex A.

Planning of provision requires the ability to understand local circumstances in order to match learning opportunities to needs and demands of employers and individuals, in the light of resources available. Thus, the Surrey LSC Strategic Plan takes account of local trends and issues, as well as national priorities. While all are committed to one overall direction, this may mean differences of approach and emphasis across different local LSCs to reflect local circumstances. We in Surrey LSC are also working with other South East LSCs and neighbouring London LSCs to address common regional themes.

The South East LSCs have developed a set of regional priorities on which we intend to work together and with regional organisations. These are set out in Chapter 3.

Mission and vision

The national Corporate Plan, published in July 2001, sets the scene for local action. Our national mission, vision and objectives are set out inside the front of this Plan, together with Surrey LSC's current statement of our long term aim and objectives. Our aim, objectives and targets are discussed in Chapter 3.

We recognise that much good work is already in progress and we intend to build on existing good practice, whilst identifying opportunities to move forward in new ways. This first year of the planning process has attempted to strike a balance between understanding the present position, maintaining continuity and identifying where action is needed.

Working in partnership at the strategic level

Delivery of the Plan will be through a wide range of providers, who have the ultimate responsibility for most action on the ground. Our success also depends on working with a range of other partner organisations, both informally and formally, who can bring added value to the activities of the LSC.

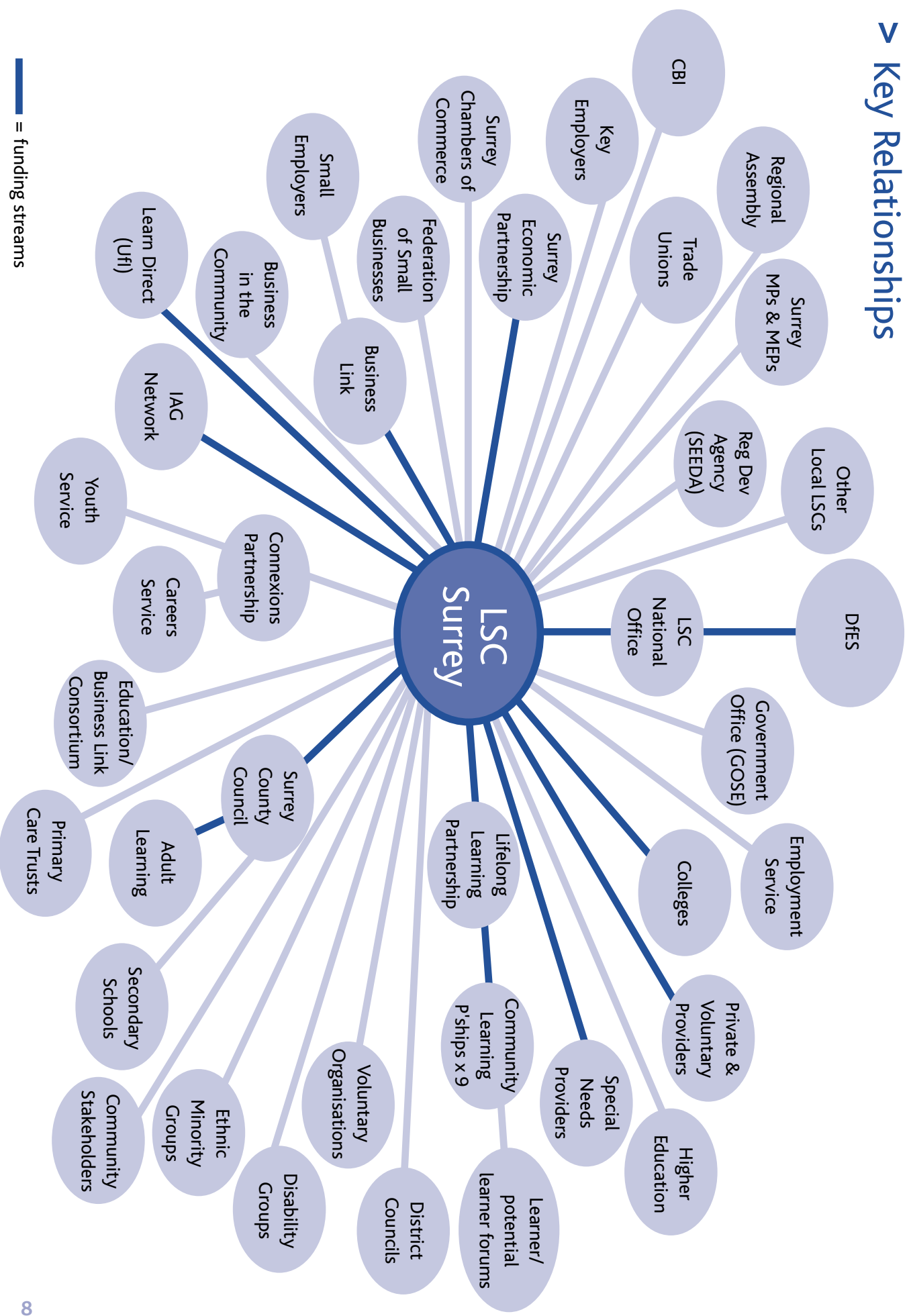
Both direct providers and other partners will contribute to the strategies for action set out in Chapters 4 and 5, where specific contributions are described in more detail. A 'key relationships' diagram overleaf illustrates the complex network of contacts across the public, business and voluntary sectors involved in planning and delivering services. In some cases Surrey LSC provides funding and in others it works with organisations and interest groups to assess needs and identify priorities for action.

Each year the Learning and Skills Council receives a grant letter from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. This sets out the financial resources allocated to the Council, together with the Government's key priorities for the LSC. Each local LSC is responsible for interpreting these priorities for its area and for deciding on additional priorities.

To do this we need to work with a large number of regional and local organisations with a view of learning and skill development needs in Surrey. These organisations include The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), the Government Office for the South East (GOSE), Surrey County Council, Surrey Economic Partnership, Surrey Chambers of Commerce, Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, Business Link Surrey, the Employment Service, the Surrey Connexions partnership and the Surrey Voluntary Services Council.

The Regional Economic Strategy prepared by SEEDA provides an important context. The Surrey economy is interdependent with other parts of the South East and London and there are considerable daily in and out flows for purposes of work and learning. We are working with SEEDA in a number of respects, including contributing to the review of Regional Economic Strategy.

> Key Relationships



We will also work with them to develop and implement the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA). This will include contributing to the regional targets when they have been agreed.

It is vital that we work closely with Surrey County Council, given our joint responsibilities for school sixth forms and adult and community learning and to ensure effective 14-19 planning. We have established arrangements to share strategic thinking and to work together on specific tasks, including joint planning and information sharing arrangements.

We are also contributing actively to work being led by Surrey County Council on developing a county wide community strategy, including setting up a county level strategic partnership, to address issues of economic, social and environmental well-being. We are a member of the Executive Group which will lead the implementation process. Key issues identified are affordable housing, traffic congestion, protecting the environment, labour and skills shortages, social inclusion, supporting vulnerable people and community safety, most of which are directly or indirectly relevant to the work of Surrey LSC.

We will contribute to community planning processes being developed at District/Borough level but, as a relatively small county-wide body, we shall need to do this on a selective basis.

The Government sets targets for the South East England Development Agency, the Government Office for the South East, the Connexions Service and the Employment Service, some of which will be relevant to the LSC remit. We will work with these partners to ensure that our objectives and targets complement each other and contribute to the overall Public Service Agreement Targets for the South East. We shall also seek to develop a strong strategic and working relationship with the new Jobcentre Plus agency which will be formed from the Employment Service and the Benefits Agency in April 2002.

The voluntary sector plays an important role in meeting the needs of local people, including the most vulnerable groups in society. We wish to develop our relationship with it to ensure that provision meets the needs of all groups within Surrey's communities. We would also like to work closely with the nine Surrey Community Learning Partnerships in which a wide range of providers and other organisations come together to promote locally focused collaborative action.

> Chapter 2 The Challenges - Trends and Provision in Surrey

This Chapter identifies social, economic and other factors relevant to the demand and need for learning and skills and the supply of provision in Surrey.

Key Trends

Economy and Employment

Surrey, and the South East generally, has a prosperous economy and has enjoyed significant economic growth since the early 1990s. The economic environment has not been so positive over the past year and the world economy in general is likely to see low growth in the year ahead. However, it seems that the UK, and the South East in particular, is still in a relatively strong position compared with our European partners and indeed the United States.

The impact of a faltering world economy will nevertheless act to dampen growth in Surrey. Forecasts produced in September 2001 suggest that 60,000 new jobs will be created in Surrey by 2010 (this is a reduction from a 1999 forecast of 120,000). However it is currently not clear what impact there will be in neighbouring areas (e.g. Central London, Gatwick, Heathrow) which will have an effect on Surrey residents.

This is against a current backdrop of **unemployment of less than 1%** (around 4,000 people) and the highest level in the last decade of 34,000 in 1993.

Around 600,000 residents are economically active – one of the highest activity rates in the country. Surrey has a higher proportion of economically active people in the 50 to retirement age bracket than the rest of the South East, with reliance on a skills base of older workers in some sectors.

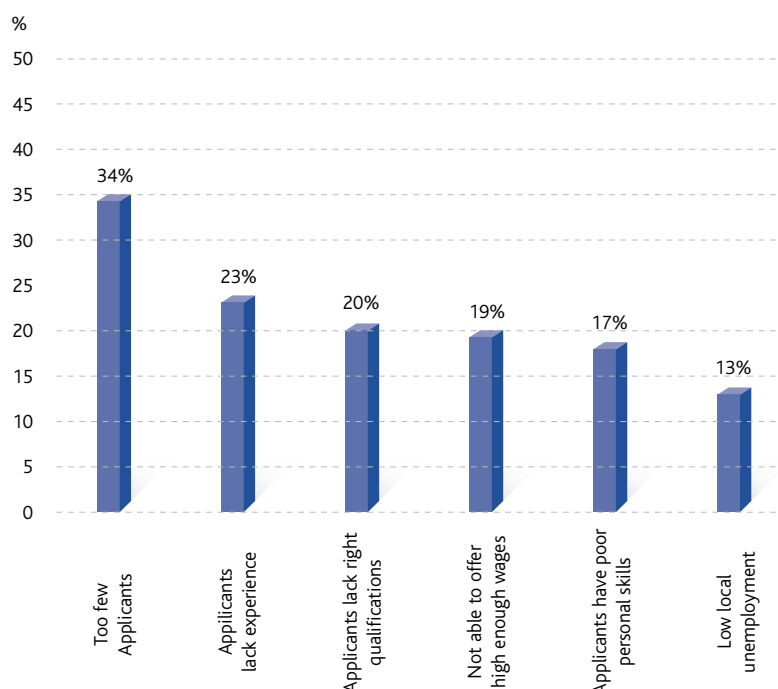
Employer Recruitment and Retention

A clear symptom of the prosperous economy and low unemployment level has been recruitment and retention problems, reflecting both **skill and labour shortages**.

The lack of available people has often resulted in low numbers of potential recruits or even none at all, for jobs where relatively low levels of specific skills are required. These can be described as labour shortages. For some jobs, which have specialist skill content, employers have not been able to attract or retain staff. These are skill shortages. Surrey competes in particular with London for certain skills.

There are also trends within some sectors where **employers are finding it difficult to recruit younger staff**, which is leading to a potential "time bomb" effect for those sectors with a predominantly older workforce - an example is the Engineering sector.

Reason Why Vacancy is Hard to Fill



Base: All organisations selected for drill-down & mentioning a vacancy (226)

Source: South East Competitiveness Survey June 2000

In this tight labour market many organisations have become more flexible in their recruitment practices in order to widen their recruitment pool. However, some groups of people are still finding it difficult to secure the type of employment that they are seeking, e.g. ethnic minorities, disabled people, older workers and carers.

There is a great shortage of people needed for lower paid/lower skilled jobs, particularly in the care sector and public services. The problems in the public sector are affecting the infrastructure of services necessary to support the economy and community. **'Key workers' have been very hard to recruit** e.g. teachers, firefighters and health workers. This is an issue being addressed as part of a Surrey wide approach. A shortage of teachers, lecturers and tutors will, of course, have a direct impact on LSC activities – for example, turnover of secondary teachers is in the region of 25%.

The **cost of housing** in Surrey is having a major effect on recruitment and retention. The average house price in Surrey is nearly double the national average - £225,000 compared to the UK average of £117,000 - and this is a particular problem for workers in lower paying sectors.

Due to the high cost of housing, a significant proportion of Surrey's workforce live in cheaper counties such as Hampshire and Sussex and commute in for the relatively higher salaries available in Surrey. In contrast, around one third of Surrey residents work outside the County, many in Central London. Commuting patterns add to congestion on Surrey roads. This **high level of movement of people into and out of the county** for employment increases complexity when planning provision for the needs of the economy and the community.

Demographic and Social Factors

Surrey has a population of around 1.1 million, which is projected to rise by about 4% by 2010. Surrey has an **older age profile than other parts of the South East** - for example, 48% of Surrey's population is over 40, while in Oxfordshire it is 44% and in Berkshire 41%. There is also increasing growth in the older groups i.e. those nearing retirement and the elderly.

It is estimated that around **3% of people are from ethnic minorities** with greater concentrations in parts of Woking and Epsom & Ewell. Whilst some ethnic communities have high rates of economic activity, others suffer higher levels of unemployment than white residents. Many of the ethnic minority community in Woking live in the ward of Central and Maybury, a ward which has one of the highest levels of deprivation in the County.

The proportion of **people who are disabled** is above the national average and these people suffer significantly higher rates of unemployment than other residents.

Most of Surrey's population lives in the predominantly urban area in the north of the county. The southern half of the county is mainly rural, with people living in villages or scattered dwellings. Public transport to some of these areas is negligible and car ownership is critical to avoid complete isolation. This, along with the general affluence, results in the **highest incidence of car ownership in the UK**.

High economic activity rates mean that there is a very great incidence of working parents. **Childcare costs in Surrey are very high** and the number of available childcare providers is relatively low which tends to keep charges high. Childcare is mentioned consistently by individuals as one of the three main barriers to learning in Surrey – the others are time and cost. There are also care issues arising from the ageing population.

Surrey residents have some of the highest average earnings in the country. However, although generally affluent, Surrey has **areas that suffer from deprivation on a range of indicators**. Although only two wards rank in the lowest quartile nationally, statistics can be masked by the dominance of surrounding areas of affluence. We intend to work with Surrey County Council to support its self reliance strategy which aims to identify and reach those people most in need. Surrey County Council has constructed an index of local deprivation, taking account of national indices such as the DTLR 2000 index and the Jarman index. This identifies eleven priority wards (Sheerwater, Central & Maybury, Preston, Court, Reigate NE, Ruxley, Leatherhead North, Westborough, Old Dean, Stanwell South, Walton North).

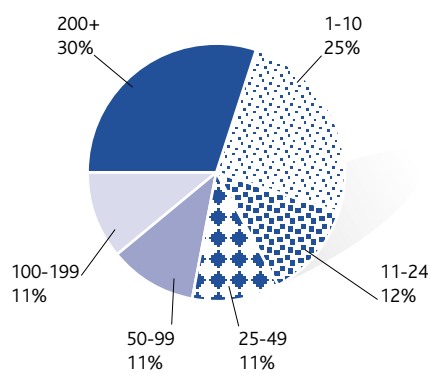
We shall also undertake research jointly with other South East LSCs and the Government Office for the South East on the extent to which there is evidence of any **particular problems of rural deprivation**.

Surrey has an **active voluntary sector**, which assists individuals and communities in need. The voluntary sector is however suffering from a fall in volunteers and the existing volunteer force is ageing so it is possible the sector will have a significant workforce problem in the next few years.

Structure of Business and Employment

Surrey is a **service-based economy** and almost three quarters of the business units in the county are in banking, finance and insurance, distribution, hotels and restaurants or other services. **Almost half the 550,000 workforce is employed in organisations employing less than 50 staff** and a quarter in organisations employing 10 people or less. Less than a third work for companies employing more than 200 staff and there are relatively few of these organisations in Surrey (around 200). There are around 43,000 VAT registered businesses and 56,000 business units in Surrey.

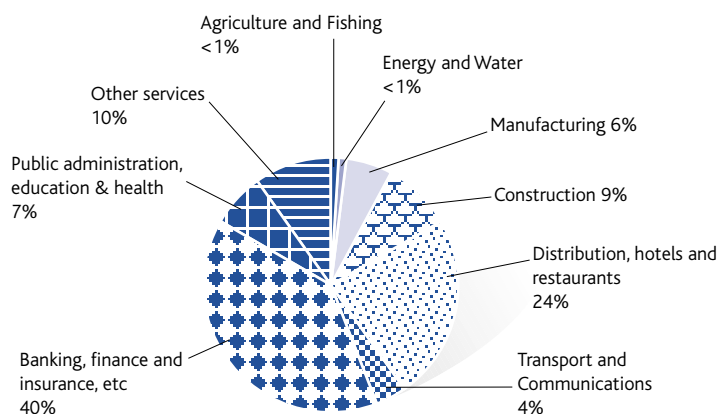
The proportion of the Workforce in Surrey working in Small, Medium and Large Companies



Source: NOMIS December 2001

Surrey's successful economy has been fuelled by the growth of **knowledge-based industries**. These are sectors that rely on the creation of innovation and intellectual capital to give them a competitive edge, for example Information Technology, Software and Consultancy. Some sectors that grew very strongly in the 1990s are, however, now under very significant strain due to changes in the global marketplace - an example is the Telecommunications sector. A feature of these sectors is that they mainly recruit graduates and it is important their employees keep their skills current in order to ensure that the company remains at the leading edge.

Workplace Analysis - Business Units in Surrey 1999



Source: Nomis December 2001

Broadly speaking, it is possible to distinguish between two types of sector in the Surrey economy that have characteristics that could make them a focus for LSC action:

1. Those sectors **most important to the Surrey economy** in terms of the numbers employed, their growth characteristics and the level of GDP generated¹
2. Those sectors suffering from **significant skill or staff issues** due to changes in the external environment

In the first group are:

Financial Services
Construction
ICT
Tourism and Leisure
Business Services
Manufacturing/Engineering
Retailing
Communications
Hotel and Catering
New Media

In the second group are:

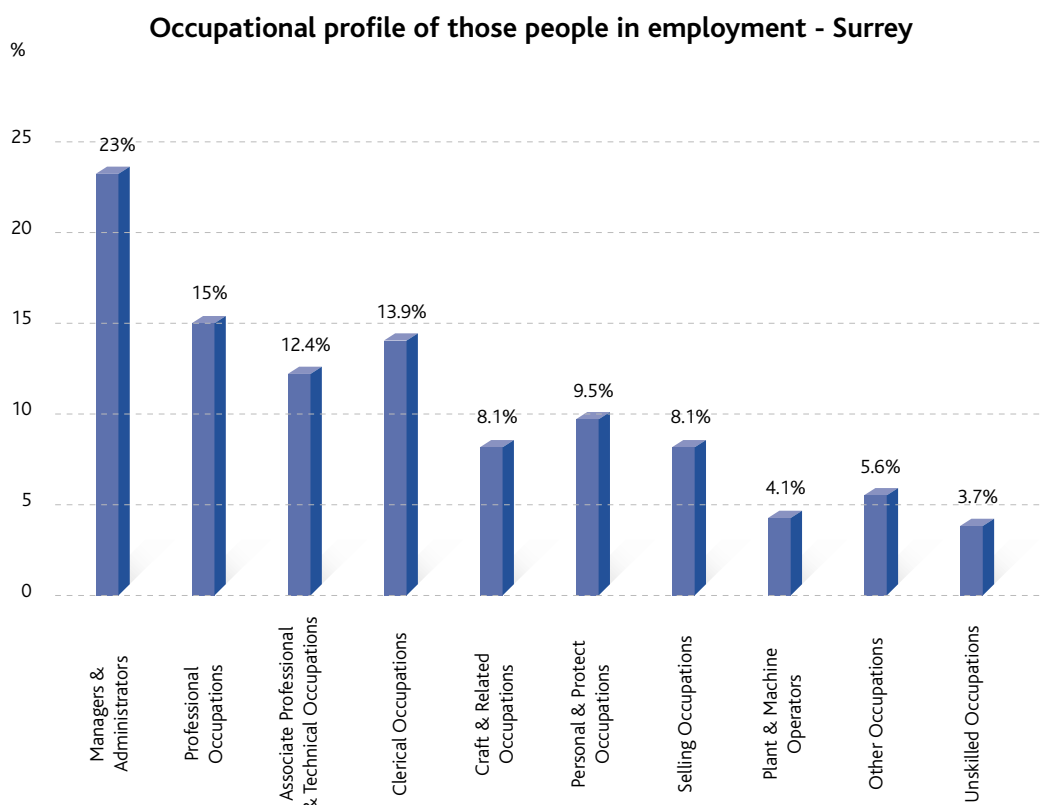
Social Care Sector
Education
Agriculture
Horticulture
Health Services
Other Public Services
Voluntary Sector

Surrey has a very high proportion of **high skill occupations**, with almost half of all jobs being Managers and Administrators, Professionals, and Associate Professionals and Technical, many of whom are qualified to Level 4 (degree level). These occupations are forecast to grow over the coming years.

¹ The performance of sectors has been assessed using forecasts produced by PACEC and Business Strategies

Sectors employing the largest number of people with **no qualifications or qualifications below Level 2** (priority groups for LSC action) are distribution, hotels and restaurants and parts of the public sector.

Given the wide range of needs, we will prioritise actions in consultation with employers and other partner organisations.



Source: NOMIS December 2001

Generic skills issues

There is a range of generic skill issues that cut across many sectors:

Management Skills

Set against the large proportion of highly skilled management and professional staff, over two fifths of Surrey managers have not achieved level 3 qualifications (two A levels, NVQ3 or equivalent) and 10% are not qualified to level 2 (five GCSEs, NVQ2 or equivalent). This is of particular concern given the importance of managers in establishing the learning cultures of their organisations (see Skills Strategy in Chapter 5).

ICT Skills

Surrey residents are highly ICT literate with 80% using computers either at home, work or elsewhere. This is one of the highest levels of computer use in the UK. However, despite this high level of computer use, research shows that IT skills are the skills most lacking in the workforce (Advanced Computer/IT skills (37%), Basic Computer/IT Skills (30%)), showing the need for training in specific applications.

Customer Service Skills

As the majority of Surrey companies are in the service sectors, customer service skills are of great importance. There is evidence, however, that these skills are underdeveloped in some parts of the Surrey workforce.

Lower Skilled Jobs in a High Skill Economy

There are jobs which are vital to the economy and well-being of the County which do not need high skills and yet are hard to fill. The challenge for the LSC is to promote progression for all those who are prepared to develop their skills and knowledge and to help employers increase the productivity of their existing workforce by ensuring that all staff have the necessary vocational skills. At the same time employers need to develop creative employment and retention strategies, and public sector organisations need to develop effective links with other areas of provision such as housing and childcare in order to maximise the supply of labour.

Basic Skills

As with all areas of England, Surrey has a proportion of the population who have low levels of numeracy and literacy. In 17 wards in 9 different boroughs 25% of adults have basic skills needs in both numeracy and literacy. Research from the Basic Skills Agency suggests the number of people may be as high as 100,000, and other estimates have been higher. Given that there is very low unemployment in Surrey, the majority of people with low basic skills are in employment.

Participation and Achievement Levels

From April we shall be funding **around 75,000 learners a year** (or around 100,000 if we include participants in adult and community learning), so a key need is to maintain provision for this existing large body of learners.

Surrey has **considerable inflows and outflows of students**, with 36% of Surrey residents studying outside the County and 40% of students at our colleges living outside Surrey and we therefore need to work closely with our neighbouring LSCs in the South East and London regions.

Young people

Young people in Surrey have a **wide range of options** including study in general FE colleges, sixth form colleges or schools, learning in the workplace and a ready availability of jobs which do not involve recognised "structured learning". Surrey has one of the highest levels of attendance at independent schools in the country – around 25% before age 16, reducing to 18% for 16 year olds and 15% for 17 year olds. For all ages this is well above the average for the South East Region as a whole (see table below).

Participation and achievement levels of Surrey young people reflect the range of choice available to them. We have one of the highest staying on rates in full time education at age 16. **Participation** by Surrey 16 year olds in all forms of structured learning is above the national average (84% compared to 83%), but this falls below the national average for 17 year olds (73% compared to 74%) and still further below for 18 year olds. Surrey ranks 17th out of the 47 LSC areas at age 16 but 29th at age 17. The participation level in structured learning for 18 year olds is over 20 percentage points below that for 16 year olds, and the participation rate for young men is significantly lower than for young women (78% compared to 83%).

Of those 16-18 year olds not involved in structured learning, almost all those who want to be are in jobs. Currently Surrey young people's participation in Government supported training (Modern Apprenticeships and other vocational training leading to NVQs) is well below the average for the South East Region. There is a cultural bias towards academic courses of study and a poor perception of the merits of vocational learning.

These factors all have major implications for how we grow levels of participation for 16-18 year olds which we describe in subsequent chapters.

Participation in education and training by 16/17 year olds - 1999/2000

(figures are percentages)

	Full time education							
	Maintained Schools	Independent Schools	Sixth Form College	Other FE	Total	Gov. Supported training	Other part-time education	Total "structured learning"
16 year olds (as at 31st August)								
South East	30	10	12	24	75	5	3	83
Surrey	26	18	18	18	79	3	3	84
England	29	6	9	27	71	8	5	83
17 year olds (as at 31st August)								
South East	23	9	10	20	62	8	5	74
Surrey	19	15	15	16	65	4	3	73
England	22	6	8	22	58	11	6	74

Source: DfES. Totals may not add up due to rounding. Structured learning is learning which takes place at a learning establishment, or is delivered by or in partnership with a learning establishment outside its own environment, to enable a learner to gain accreditation. Detailed breakdown for 18 year olds not available.

There is a similarly complex picture for young people's **achievement rates**.

Surrey is one of the highest achieving LSC areas at GCSE level. Our performance at Level 3 (two A levels, NVQ3 or equivalent) is also good but not as outstanding as our GCSE results would lead one to expect².

At GCSE, performance in state schools is about 13% above the national average. When independent schools are included, this rises to nearly 14%.

At Level 3, the combined performance of state schools and FE colleges at A/AS and Advanced GNVQ (now AVCE) is about 3% above the national average - half of these providers are above the national average. When independent schools are included, A/AS performance rises to 7% above the national average, with 55% of providers being above the national average.

This discrepancy between GCSE and Level 3 performance is one which we are keen to explore with providers. Through a Retention and Achievement Task Group and four geographically based Area Collaboration Groups (see Quality and Performance Standards section in Chapter 4), we will analyse this performance very closely in order to understand the factors which affect performance. For example, providers close to the boundaries of London seem to have lower results at level 3 and this may be due to a migration of students in from boroughs where the GCSE scores at age 16 were lower.

On other vocational programmes such as BTEC national certificates, performance is significantly lower than performance at A/AS levels and Advanced GNVQ. 71% of level 3 qualifications studied at Surrey colleges are at A/AS levels, 12% GNVQ/NVQ provision and 17% other vocational qualifications. The achievement levels of this last category are much lower. This indicates that the quality of provision of vocational qualifications in Surrey needs to be improved and access to such qualifications widened in order to produce the best fit for young people in relation to their preferred learning styles, interests and capabilities.

There is nearly a 20% difference in the level 3 achievement rates of young men as compared to young women (42% for men compared to 63% for women within the whole 18-24 year old age group).

We shall be investigating the factors underlying these and other factors referred to at the end of this Chapter. One major underlying factor appears to be the suitability of the learning choices made by young people and their parents and we see **better learning choices as a key to improving our performance at level 3**.

² In our draft strategic Plan, we stated that Surrey performance was below the national average. This arose from an error in DfES performance tables which compared the average for state-maintained providers locally with all providers (including the independent sector) nationally.

Adults

A Surrey Skills Audit recently showed that 12% of the workforce, or around 70,000 people, were studying for a qualification. And there are, of course, many more learners who are not studying for a qualification, including over 20,000 enrolments annually in Surrey County Council's Adult and Community Learning Programme.

Around 30% of those surveyed were studying at college, 25% at or through work and 25% through home or distance learning.

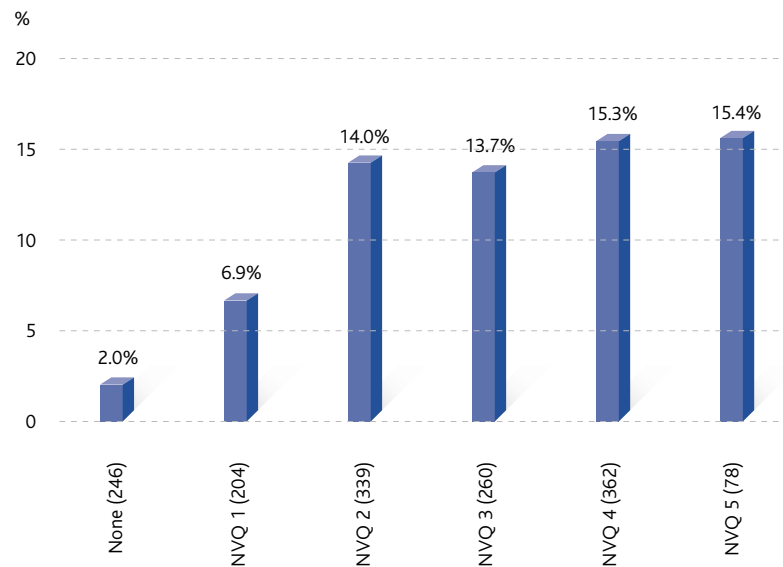
The Skills Audit showed a number of patterns in those studying for qualifications:

- younger people more likely to be studying than older people (a third more likely in the 25-34 age group than in the 35-45 age group)
- women 25% more likely to be studying than men
- part-time employees over 50% more likely to be studying than full-time employees
- self-employed people about half as likely to be studying as (full-time) employed people
- professional and technical employees three times as likely to be studying as low skilled employees
- those already qualified at the lowest level of vocational qualification (level 1) over three times as likely to be studying as those with no qualification
- those with the next two levels of qualification (level 2 or level 3) twice as likely to be studying as those currently with level 1
- those qualified to degree level or above over seven times as likely to be studying as those with no qualifications.

The Skills Audit also showed that, while nearly half of those surveyed had done some form of training in the past year, around **a quarter had not had any training in the past 10 years**. Half of these claimed never to have had any training, while **around three quarters considered that they had no training needs**.

These findings, which are in line with much other research, have considerable significance for our Participation Strategy (see Chapter 5). **In particular they illustrate the importance of encouraging those with no existing qualifications to get involved in structured learning and of encouraging those with level 1 qualifications to aim for level 2.**

Percentage of People studying at different current qualification levels



• Unweighted bases in brackets

Source: Skills Audit 2000

Quality of Provision

As discussed later, in Chapter 4, the LSC is developing national measures of quality and we shall also be working with providers and other partners in Surrey to develop measures which reflect both national and local priorities. In the meantime, we have evidence from inspection reports on colleges and work based providers which shows that:

- out of 279 inspection grades awarded in recent inspection reports, 47% were at grade 1 or grade 2 indicating good or better quality provision,
- there were examples of grade 1 provision in engineering, business, leisure & tourism, childcare & nursery nursing, art & design, English and humanities,
- the remaining 53% of inspection grades were at least satisfactory with only 3 providers receiving any kind of unsatisfactory grades from inspection.

We will be working with Surrey County Council in response to inspections covering school sixth forms, after we take over responsibility for sixth form funding.

We have already referred to the fact that, while Surrey is extremely successful at GCSE level, our performance at level 3 is not as good as our GCSE results would lead one to expect. Measured in terms of level 3 "points scores" achieved per student, **only half of our colleges and schools are achieving points scores above the national average.**

Care needs to be taken in interpreting these figures. For example, while around 49% of our schools achieve scores above the national average in terms of points per student, 59% are above the national average in terms of points per examination entry.

Moreover, there are **encouraging signs of improvement** as the result of the work of schools, Surrey County Council and other partners. In the last two years the number of schools with scores above the national average has increased from 9 to 13 for grades achieved per student and from 12 to 18 for grades per examination entry (out of 29 state-maintained schools).

A key issue for our Learning Strategy (see Chapter 5) is **the wide variations which exist between the performances of different providers** and between learning programmes. While a number of Surrey colleges and schools score over 22 points per level 3 student against the national average of 16.4 points, at the other end of the scale some score less than 12 points.

It is important that, in the pursuit of higher achievement levels, we do not inhibit providers from increasing and widening participation. One of the focuses for the Retention and Achievement Group's work will be to **get the balance right between participation and achievement levels as measures of success.**

Care also needs to be taken in acting upon measures of achievement in relation to individual providers – in particular, because the **present standard measures do not reflect the "value added" by the provider** in relation to students' abilities and levels of attainment when they started their course of study.

This is especially relevant where providers, such as Surrey's four general FE colleges and some of our schools, are heavily involved in widening participation and the development of less advanced students. The measurement of value added performance will be considered by the Retention and Achievement Group to build on the good work which is already being done in this area by Surrey County Council.

We also need to understand the other factors which contribute to the variations in performance which may include:

- proximity to London: there is a correlation between level 3 "scores" and the nearness of providers to London arising from the migration of many level 3 students from neighbouring London boroughs;
- levels of application by students themselves given the wide range of opportunities available to them in Surrey;
- availability of and incentives to do part-time work. (We have evidence to suggest that more than 10 hours work per week of part-time work affects grades achieved);

- suitability for course chosen and, in particular, cultural bias towards academic courses. (Our relatively poor performance on vocational subjects may be because lower proportions of higher or average ability students select these subjects than in other parts of the country);
- range of subjects available to be studied. (In particular, there is a correlation between level 3 scores and size of school sixth form);
- the subject areas chosen for study which seem to result in lower grades (e.g. science subjects) – an area currently under investigation by Surrey County Council.

We intend to work closely with providers, Surrey County Council and others to understand these factors and their relative importance better. In the meantime it is clear that, while one or two of the relevant factors cannot readily be influenced, most would be responsive to the combined effects of providers, their planning and funding bodies (Surrey County Council and ourselves) and other partner organisations such as the Connexions Service.

The information set out in this Chapter provides the background to focus our work as set out in subsequent chapters. Although in many ways Surrey is a highly successful county in terms of learning participation and achievement, it does have challenges which we and our partners need to address if we are to sustain and broaden this success.

> Chapter 3 Our Aims, Objectives and Targets

Aims and Objectives

The LSC's national mission, vision and key objectives, together with Surrey LSC's current statement of our long term aim and key objectives, are set out inside the front of this Plan.

The national mission to **raise participation and attainment** will be the driver for all our activities. Where the LSC has already set targets for the achievement of the national key objectives, we are proposing equivalent targets locally (see below).

However, we have also thought it important to express our own long term aim and objectives in ways which reflect Surrey's particular challenges, as set out in Chapter 2. Our purpose in focusing on developing the **capacity** of people in Surrey is to recognise the wealth of opportunities which exist in Surrey for both paid and unpaid employment. It is also to reflect the needs of Surrey in terms of its serious labour and skills shortages: we need people to develop their potential whatever their current level of attainment. This relates not only to **economic development** but also to **community development**. We aim to help employers in industry and commerce meet their labour and skills needs, but the County also depends heavily on the public services provided by its local authorities, Primary Care Trusts and other public sector organisations, and on its network of voluntary and community organisations.

Education and training are vital to economic success and the provision of high quality public services, and meeting vocational development needs is central to our task. **However, the acquisition of skills and knowledge also has benefits in improving the quality of life generally for both individuals and communities.** Learning new skills can enhance leisure and personal development by opening up new interests or scope for new activities e.g. in sport or the arts, as well as enabling people to contribute more actively to their local communities. Also, learning linked initially to personal interests may itself stimulate the interest and confidence to participate in vocational learning.

Our first local objective is to **increase participation in learning by 16-18 year olds**. Chapter 2 has pointed to the fact that the proportion of our young people involved in "structured learning" falls by over 20 percentage points between the ages of 16 and 19. It is good that almost all of those not in full time learning are in jobs and some who are not in structured learning of any kind will later decide to return to it, sometimes by going into higher education. However, we are concerned that so many 16-18 year olds may be losing the habit of learning and we see a need to develop a larger and wider range of opportunities for them to **participate in structured learning on a part-time basis**. We are also very conscious that an increase in participation levels will contribute to the achievement of our demanding targets for increasing the number of young people achieving level 2 and level 3 qualifications by the age of 19 (see below).

The second of our local objectives relates to the fact that, while Surrey is one of the highest performing LSC areas in terms of GCSE results, our performance at level 3 is not as outstanding as our GCSE results would lead one to expect.

The next three objectives reflect the fact that almost all Surrey adults who want to be are in employment; that we need to work closely with employers and others to help fill specific skills gaps; and that there are many adults who are not currently in employment who could contribute more to Surrey's economic and community development - and often improve their personal circumstances - if they were supported to develop their knowledge and skills.

The sixth objective reflects our strongly held view that we should make particular efforts to help people in Surrey who do not share in the general prosperity of the County.

Regional Priorities

The Learning and Skills Councils in the South East have identified six common areas that will be taken forward as key regional priorities. The LSCs will work closely with the South East England Development Agency and other regional partners to progress these priorities and also to ensure that there is cohesion and synergy to planning and delivery.

In taking these priorities forward the LSCs are committed to ensuring that equality and diversity will underpin every aspect of the LSCs work, and that **e-learning will form a key component in developing solutions that are responsive to the needs of the learner and employer.**

The Regional priorities are:

1. Research and intelligence

- using a coherent, partnership approach to research encompassing LSC sub regional and regional partnerships exploiting both top-down and bottom-up approaches.
- using a consistent regional approach to definitions and measurements including common additional targets.

2. Marketing of learning and skills to individuals and employers

- using a regional marketing strategy, aimed at both learners and employers, that is agreed and shared by key regional partners including IAG, Connexions and SEEDA.
- using a regional group of key partners to develop the strategy, agree roles and take forward the implementation

3. Basic skills

- using a regional strategy for the delivery of Basic Skills working closely with key regional partners
- applying local area best practice across the region

4. Retention and achievement of young people

- developing an entitlement for all young people 14-19 in the South East

5. Adult development for the workplace

- using joint regional approaches to workforce development exploiting the added value that partnership working will bring
- developing a South East Workforce Development Project that will identify the key trigger points for engaging with employers

6. Provider capacity

- developing provider excellence through working closely with regional partners in the development of specialist provision, including CoVEs, Specialist Schools and NTIs.
- raising provider quality through co-ordinated regional action and sharing of best practice.

Targets

The LSC nationally has set a range of targets to underpin the key national objectives. As part of a national organisation we have been asked to set targets at a minimum level. Some of the current targets set out below are ambitious and may be difficult to achieve because the current methodology does not take account of local circumstances including diminishing returns where achievement levels are already high. This is particularly the case with Target 5 below - the number of adults achieving level 3 qualifications. We will however work with our partners to make as much progress as possible. The targets should be regarded as subject to revision because the local target-setting methodology and the data will be reviewed during 2002 and are likely to be revised before the 2003/06 planning period.

We have decided to express the Surrey equivalents of the national targets in terms of numbers to be achieved. This is to facilitate the next critical step in the process, which is to work with provider organisations to set equivalent local targets in their strategic and business plans. We have also expressed them in percentage terms to illustrate the extent of the challenges that they represent.

We regard the targets relating to the participation of 16-18 year olds in structured learning and to the achievement of acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy in the workforce (basic skills) as being most critical to meeting Surrey's needs and we shall be focusing particular effort on their achievement.

During our consultation about this Plan several providers commented that their contribution to the growth will be dependent upon resource availability. It is our intention to focus any additional funding on the targets and to work with providers to find ways of refocusing existing funding on areas of priority.

Our National Office has not yet agreed the measures for employer engagement in workforce development. This will be one of the targets that will be developed in time for the next national Plan. In the meantime we will continue to use the number of Investors in People recognitions as a proxy for measuring employer engagement, accepting that this is only a partial – albeit important – measure of engagement.

We have not attempted to set Surrey equivalents of the other national targets which have yet to be set – for adult participation, adult achievement of level 2 qualifications, and quality and learner satisfaction. We will be working with our National Office to develop appropriate methodologies and will therefore not be developing measures in parallel at a local level. We will, however, be able to measure what training has been undertaken by adults, and to study attitudes and motivation towards learning, through the annual household surveys which we shall be continuing to conduct.

In addition to the local equivalent of the national targets, we propose to set local targets to reflect two key areas in which we wish to make substantial progress:

- Participation and achievement levels by young males: one of the two immediate priorities in our Equal Opportunities Strategy (discussed later in Chapter 4).
- Reduction in dropout rates amongst 16 to 18 year olds: this will be critical to the achievement of our 16 to 18 participation target (see below).

On this basis, our current proposed targets for achievement by 2004 are to:

1. Increase number of 16 to 18 year olds participating in structured learning by 4,240 to give a participation rate of 83% (currently 73%). (National target 80%).
2. Increase number of 19 year olds who have achieved level 2 by 950, to give an achievement rate of 86% (currently 79%) – a one third increase on current post-compulsory education achievement at level 2. (National target 85%)
3. Increase number of 19 year olds who have achieved level 3 by 800 to give an achievement rate of 61% (currently 55%). (National target 55%)
4. Raise literacy and numeracy skills of 10,000 adults, a 45% increase on previous projections. (National target 750,000 adults)
5. Increase the number of adults who have achieved level 3 by 43,000 to give an achievement rate of 65% (currently 58%). (National target 52%)

Local Targets

6. Pending development of a national measure of engagement in workforce development, we have set interim targets to December 2002. The cumulative targets for organisations recognised as Investors in People are:

300 recognitions of organisations with over 50 staff, and

250 recognitions of organisations with 10-49 staff

Definitions:

Structured learning: learning which takes place at a learning establishment, or is delivered by or in partnership with a learning establishment outside its own environment, to enable a learner to gain accreditation.

Level 2: 5 GCSEs (A*-C) or Level 2 NVQ (or equivalent).

Level 3: 2 A levels (A-E) or Level 3 NVQ (or equivalent).

Literacy and Numeracy Skills: the new qualifications that have been accredited by the QCA, the key skills qualifications in communication and application of number up to level 2, and GCSE Maths and GCSE English (Grade A*-C).

Major capacity growth areas

Some of our objectives and targets will be achieved through relatively fine tuning of the enormous volume of learning activity which is currently provided in Surrey and we shall want to work closely with providers and other partners on this. In other cases, additional capacity is already being developed - for example, the additional resources which will accompany the setting up of the Surrey Connexions Partnership.

There are, however, a number of areas in which we see the need for a **quantum shift in effort and resources both within our own organisation and by providers and other partners**. We see these key areas for change and increased effort as:

- growing part-time structured learning opportunities for young people
- increasing level 2 achievement amongst 16 to 19 year olds
- basic skills tuition capacity
- adult information, advice and guidance capacity
- activity to promote management development (particularly for managers in smaller organisations).

> Chapter 4 Underpinning Strategies

Chapter 5 describes our three main strategies, and specific actions we intend to take to respond to our national objectives and targets and to meet Surrey's needs. This chapter describes the strategies which will support all our programmes and actions.

Equal Opportunities

Underpinning our programmes of activity is our commitment that **in pursuing our aims and objectives we shall seek to equalise opportunities through better access to learning and its benefits**. This commitment runs through our strategy on participation in particular, but it will also be reflected in our work with partners such as the Connexions Service, with employers and with provider organisations.

We shall be completing our draft equal opportunities strategy by April 2002 and will be consulting on it in the late Spring. This will be used to further inform our action as part of the update of the Strategic Plan. In the meantime, we have identified two immediate priorities which are reflected in our Participation Strategy in Chapter 5:

- **improving participation and achievement levels of young males;**
- **improving the support available to people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.**

Our focus will be on disadvantaged groups and communities not currently benefiting from learning. We will work with our partners including Surrey County Council and the Connexions Partnership to agree areas for joint working – for example focussing efforts on the most needy communities in Surrey identified in the Surrey self-reliance policy and groups highlighted in the Education Development Plan e.g. ethnic minorities or children in public care. We will respond to general barriers to participation, for example through our work to increase the supply of childcare workers and work with our partners to focus on the needs of the older workforce.

Working with partners

As emphasised in Chapter 1, **the key to the success of our programmes will be close and effective working with partner organisations**. These include other planning and funding bodies, business and community support organisations and, most critically, the learning provider organisations whose job it is to deliver education and training in Surrey.

In delivering services, we shall give high priority to joint strategic planning and to working with partner organisations on joint programmes of action. We are aiming to play a constructive role on **Surrey's School Organisation Committee** and we are working closely with Surrey County Council to get a good fit between the County's **Education Development Plan** and our Strategic Plan. We have had initial discussions with the Connexions Partners about the joint planning which we will need to do during 2002 and we and Surrey County Council intend to agree a Memorandum of Understanding with the Connexions Service.

In the course of the year we will work with Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership to draw up an analysis of all the key planning and funding organisations' strategies to ensure that there are no gaps in planned provision. This will develop the work of a recently set up **Planning Group** of the key organisations concerned with learning and skills and related issues to facilitate a more co-ordinated approach to priority issues.

The Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership carried out its **first annual review of learning needs** in 2001 to advise the various partners involved in planning and funding provision. Work is at an early stage, but relevant ideas have been incorporated in the LSC planning process for this year. The Partnership is also starting to work on employer needs. Community Learning Plans based on nine Community Learning Partnerships which cover the County are being developed, which will enable specific local needs to be reflected where appropriate.

Meeting learners' and employers' information needs

Another key ingredient for success will be **the availability and accessibility of information about learning options. People can only make learning choices effectively if they can do so in well informed ways.**

We intend to work with the new young people's Connexions Service and the Adult Information, Advice and Guidance network to ensure that people receive informed and impartial advice. We will also work with Surrey Business Link, Surrey Chambers of Commerce and the wider network of organisations which advise and support businesses to achieve effective arrangements for 'signposting' employers to sources of help to develop their workforces.

Underpinning this activity, there needs to be an effective source of information about providers, courses and other kinds of learning. We have agreed with other members of the Lifelong Learning Partnership to develop our existing 'Access to Opportunities' database to ensure that such information exists at the necessary level of detail to meet the needs of learners and employers and their advisers. We will do this in conjunction with developments in **the national Learndirect information service** and in neighbouring local LSCs.

Information and Communications Technology

A rising percentage of employees use ICT for their work and, increasingly, user skills are essential for business competitiveness and for individuals' employability. At present, insufficient ICT user skills are limiting uptake and effective use of ICT within many businesses. The employability of older workers, returners to the labour market and the unemployed is affected by lack of user skills.

The Internet has provided new opportunities to deliver information and learning opportunities to individuals, businesses and communities and to receive feedback from them. It also enables learning to be delivered in new ways, including assisting providers to work together in ways that were not previously possible. ICT also provides opportunities for improved management information and therefore planning.

We will work with our partners and providers to make best use of ICT to improve quality and participation in learning. In order to improve access to learning we will support the development of learning centres in the community, resources permitting. ICT will also be a key element within training and learning programmes that we support.

Marketing Programme

The availability of information and advice will not in itself be sufficient to achieve the changes in learning behaviour and employer involvement and demand to which we are committed. **We need to have a well focused marketing programme within the resources available to us and aligned to the marketing activities of our partners, locally and regionally.** Our marketing programme will be focused on:

- the young people who are currently dropping out of structured learning in large numbers after the age of 16;
- adult members of the workforce who do not appear to recognise the importance of continued personal development in a world of change;
- adults with basic skills needs;
- employers who do not fully appreciate the business benefits of management and employee development;
- the benefits of achieving qualifications.

Our marketing will build on national initiatives such as the relaunch of Modern Apprenticeships and the national and regional strategies on basic skills and the Bitesize Learning Campaign. We will aim to work closely with the marketing and communications strategies of local provider and employer organisations and, at a regional level, with other local LSCs, SEEDA and other strategic bodies.

Marketing will include contact with individual learners. This will draw upon our recent research into 17 year olds not currently participating in learning which showed a high proportion of young people who, when contacted, expressed an interest in returning to structured learning. We shall need to apply this approach both to potential learners and to employers and we want to work with provider and business support organisations to ensure the necessary scale of activity.

Funding Strategy

Other than in exceptional cases, we shall aim to ensure that existing provision is maintained and that no sudden destabilising shifts of resources from particular provider organisations takes place which might undermine their capacity to achieve this.

We shall, however, use our new funding flexibilities to ensure that people can undertake the learning that meets their needs. This means, in particular, that we would want all good quality learning providers to have the opportunity to contribute to the achievement of our growth target for 16-18 year olds participating in structured learning.

We are keen to promote forms of delivery that meets learners' needs and we will work with partners to ensure that Surrey is at the leading edge in terms of learning delivery. We see this as a key focus for the cross-sectoral Providers' Forum, which is being developed by the Learning Partnership, and it will also be a key feature of the development of 14-19 provision. We shall also work with the County Council and other providers to review the network of learning centres used for adult provision.

We will explore with providers whether specific funding barriers stand in the way of achieving particular targets and will aim to overcome any barriers that exist. We shall use alternative sources of funding such as the European Social Fund to complement activity that is funded by mainstream LSC budgets. We shall use our small (£1 million) Local Initiative Fund to meet key local priorities which cannot be funded from other sources. And we shall work with the other South East LSCs and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) to ensure that use of LSC and SEEDA budgets complement each other.

Quality and Performance Standards

At the national level the LSC will be developing quality baselines and targets for next year's Corporate Plan and we shall in future assess the quality of provision in Surrey against these measures. Currently the picture varies according to the measures used. For example, our achievement levels are very good in terms of numbers of students achieving level 3 qualifications but less so in terms of numbers and grades of qualifications achieved per student.

It is important that we develop a consensus within the County on what constitutes successful and high quality provision. Our strategy will be evidence based and will be developed at a number of different levels:

- at the County level a Retention and Achievement Group – involving representatives of colleges, schools, Surrey County Council and Surrey Connexions Service - will develop success criteria which are relevant to the national targets, the needs of Surrey and the context within which Surrey providers have to operate;

- we have set up four Area Collaboration Groups – with participation from all colleges and 11-19 schools in the area – which will use these success criteria, amongst other things, to review what is being achieved by the providers within those areas and agree actions which would improve the overall quality of provision and its relevance to the needs of learners;
- we will support the development of Centres of Vocational Excellence (COVEs) in ways which both meet the needs of employers locally, regionally and nationally and spread good practice beyond the particular COVE;
- we will encourage and support individual providers continually to improve their own provision based on self-assessment and internal review procedures. We will also draw lessons from individual OfSTED and ALI inspection reports;
- we will encourage all post-16 providers to commit to the Investors in People Standard to help ensure that their staff develop the necessary skills to deliver high quality provision. We will also consider whether we need to provide any additional support, over and above support currently available via the Standards Fund, to assist providers in developing the professional skills of their staff.

Our strategy on quality and standards will be underpinned by **an improved provider Performance Review process**. The LSC is conducting a national review of this process in the first half of 2002 and we will implement the recommendations from this review by next Autumn. Our aim will be to ensure effective, on-going interaction with provider organisations on areas where the quality of provision could most usefully be improved. We will also work with providers to agree action plans following any external inspection.

Health and Safety

We are committed to achieving high standards of health and safety across all our programmes. Our objective is to ensure that risks to learners and others participating in our programmes are reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable as required by law. **We shall continue to work in partnership with all our learning providers to ensure that they have effective systems in place to manage health and safety across all LSC funded programmes.**

Where learning is delivered in the workplace, we shall encourage Providers to influence employers' health and safety practices. Any accidents to learners that are reportable under the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995* will be thoroughly investigated and we will ensure that any necessary remedial action is taken.

The precise future role of local LSCs in relation to health and safety within mainstream college provision is currently being defined at national level but our initial approach to colleges has aimed to be of a supportive and advisory kind and we would want to continue to work on this basis. The equivalent health and safety responsibility for schools will remain with Surrey County Council.

A variety of indicators will be used to monitor health and safety performance. One key monitoring tool will be an annual review of the health and safety performance of each learning provider by a qualified health and safety expert. The findings of these health and safety reviews will be used nationally by the LSC to drive forward improvements at national level.

The health and safety performance reviews will be supported (where applicable) by a programme of visits to work placements. The objective in visiting work placements is to ensure that learning providers are effective, in practice, at achieving good standards of health and safety on their programmes. Other indicators will include "eyes and ears monitoring" by other LSC staff and surveys of learners.

> Chapter 5 Key Strategies

We are developing three broad strategies which reflect the different perspectives of learners' **participation**, employers' **skills** needs and **learning** provision. A programme of action will be identified arising from each strategy within our annual Business Plans taking account of views expressed in response to the consultation about this Plan.

Participation Strategy

Our participation strategy will be focused mainly on bringing more people into learning (especially those who are underrepresented), making better use of the opportunities currently available and identifying where extra capacity is needed. It will be supported by our equal opportunities strategy (see Chapter 4), part of which will focus on barriers facing particular groups and how to overcome them.

Young People

As discussed in Chapter 2, participation in structured learning by Surrey's young people drops from being above the national average for 16 year olds to below the national average for 17 and 18 year olds. This means that, while Surrey ranks 17th out of the 47 LSC areas at age 16, we drop to 29th at age 17.

We will be undertaking further research so that we better understand why this reduction occurs. The issues are likely to include:

- the ready availability of work, irrespective of qualification level;
- difficulties of some young people in adapting from compulsory to post-compulsory learning environments;
- the role of guidance in course choice and improved retention.

For some young people we may need to generate a positive interest in learning. Increasing participation and achievement will require work with partners, particularly Surrey County Council, colleges, schools and the Connexions Service, to address the underlying reasons for lower achievement or lower levels of progress post-16 as early as possible within education. This may mean introducing innovative approaches and outreach work, which are likely to be resource intensive. We have recently secured funding for 8 projects focussed on introducing vocational options for young people in the 14-16 age group. We intend to build on this and work with Surrey County Council with a view to becoming a 'Pathfinder area' in order to take forward the ideas introduced in the recent Green Paper and deliver an improved 14-19 curriculum that better meets the needs of young people.

Level 2 Achievement

During our first year of operation we supported 15 projects focussed on young people who had not yet achieved level 2 qualifications. We aim to continue with this approach (subject to receipt of the necessary funding). We will also work with Surrey County

Council to encourage schools to develop additional level 2 provision for the 16-18 cohort and to accredit learning delivered via non-traditional routes in order to extend the ladder of learning to those not currently on it. We will also work with the County Council, colleges and private providers to tackle the basic skills needs of young people who need further help with literacy and numeracy in order to progress.

Surrey sixth form schools deliver Level 2 programmes in Years 12 and 13 and Surrey County Council has developed an innovative approach to recognising achievement using a "Graduation Certificate". This has been used by a number of schools across the county and provides students with a coherent programme of post 16 learning at both levels 2 and 3 by covering academic/vocational achievements, applied skills and citizenship. Other LEAs are starting to introduce the Surrey model and we will work with the County Council to build upon this innovative work and encourage its wider use across the county.

Modern Apprenticeship re-launch

The national re-launch of the Modern Apprenticeship programme in Spring 2002 provides an opportunity for Modern Apprenticeships to be repositioned in the eyes of learners, employers, parents and many providers as a high quality programme on a par with 'A' level and 'AS' level qualifications. Recent changes to Modern Apprenticeships include a clear progression route into Higher Education via new Foundation degrees that relate closely to MA coverage, and the introduction of new technical certificates which will require Modern Apprentices to pass tests that demonstrate their knowledge. We understand that employers are particularly supportive of this change.

The re-launch in Surrey will build on a national advertising campaign to gain maximum impact. A Modern Apprenticeship Task Group including employer representation will devise a marketing strategy that will emphasise the benefits of the Modern Apprenticeship framework to both learners and businesses, and devise the most effective channels for communication and delivery, making best use of existing employer networks and resources of the Surrey LSC Workforce Development Team. The Task Group will consider whether contracting directly with employers rather than using a third party provider, as is the universal practice in Surrey at present, would make Modern Apprenticeships more attractive to specific employers or sectors.

A wider "Earn & Learn" programme

Modern Apprenticeships will be one of the means of achieving our target for increased participation among 16-18 year olds. The 25% target increase in Modern Apprenticeships to which the LSC will be working nationally would imply an increase in MA participation of around 400 young people by 2003/04, whereas our participation target implies an increase of ten times this figure.

We intend to work with provider organisations to **develop a broader range of part-time learning opportunities for young people who are in employment**, in what we are calling our “earn and learn” programme. This will encompass Modern Apprenticeships and traditional day-release opportunities, but we see a need to develop and market a wider and innovative range of opportunities to meet the needs and aspirations of young people themselves and, as most are in jobs, the wishes of their employers.

We see the key characteristics of this programme as follows:

- tailoring to meet needs and wishes of young people and employers,
- finding a way of enabling young people to work part-time with a good employer while still being able to “go to college”,
- providing options which overcome an apparent “cultural” lack of interest in work-based learning, Modern Apprenticeships etc.,
- offering the option of small but regular amounts of learning activity over a sustained period,
- providing routes to achieving worthwhile qualifications,
- encouraging collaboration between different kinds of learning provider to improve the rates of staying on in learning,
- in some cases offering a way of achieving a virtuous spiral whereby the recruitment of a part-time youngster enables an employer to release another member of the workforce for training.

We are currently exploring different ways of helping providers, employers and young people to create **three sided “compacts” which will suit the needs of both the young people themselves and their employer**. For example, we are working with colleges to determine what happens to those students who become disenchanted and ‘drop out’, so that we can devise ‘earn and learn’ opportunities suited to their circumstances. Other research is focusing on working with employers, to ensure that ‘earn and learn’ approaches are equally suited to them. This research is helping us achieve a deeper understanding of employer perspectives, while simultaneously affording the opportunity to help employers gain a clearer picture of the wide range of learning options colleges and other providers can offer.

The challenge will be to build on these early steps to develop a programme which will involve **a significant number of additional young people in structured learning during 2002/03**, building up to an additional 4,200 in 2003/04. We shall need the strong interest and support of providers to achieve this. The colleges are likely to be the main source of extra provision but we also see a role for training organisations and schools, as we develop joint planning and collaboration.

Information, Advice and Guidance to Young People

We believe that effective information, advice and guidance is critical to the good learning choices which will help grow both participation and achievement levels. Together with

Surrey County Council, we will agree a **Memorandum of Understanding with the new Connexions Service and LEA** to ensure that all students under 19 have access to impartial information, advice and guidance. We will also ask all LSC providers to ensure that the information and advice they provide for students meets the standards laid down by the Guidance Council (the matrix standards).

We will want to look to providers to include specific proposals in their Strategic Plans for developing existing arrangements for personal tuition/pastoral care with participation and achievement levels as a key focus.

Improved information and advice will help achieve the Government's target for higher education and meet Surrey's higher skills needs. This means that students should be encouraged to complete level 3 (two A levels, NVQ3 or equivalent) where, under the new Curriculum 2000 arrangements, it may be possible for them to enter higher education without doing so.

Male achievement

As explained in Chapter 2, in common with other parts of the country there is a particular problem with the involvement of young males and a widening gap at all levels in the achievement of males in comparison to females. Our broad aim is to equalise achievement levels by 2010. We have some early ideas for addressing this issue, which we will implement from 2002 whilst we are developing a longer-term strategy. For example it will be important to promote **parity of esteem between vocational and academic learning** and to ensure that work experience is available that emphasises the wide range of career options available and changing patterns of employment.

Our longer term strategy will, however, need to be underpinned by research into attitudes and motivation, assessment methods and more effective information and advice. We will draw upon the successful work which Surrey County Council has done with schools and will also work with other LSCs in the region, the Connexions Service and Surrey providers in developing this research programme.

Increasing curriculum choice for 14-16 year olds

Another key element of the participation strategy will be to increase curriculum choice for 14-16 year olds as a way of maintaining the learning culture post-16.

We will work with Surrey County Council to encourage, fund and support partnerships of colleges, schools and other providers to offer a **wide range of vocational and academic curriculum choice** which may see a mix of vocational and academic qualifications becoming a normal choice for learners aged 14 and above.

The main benefits of this will be higher achievement rates at Level 2 for 16 year olds, and improved retention and achievement rates on level 3 programmes in due course as more

learners build on their level 2 experience. It is likely that boys will benefit particularly from this wider choice which will include the option of college or work placements from age 14. This new approach was encouraged by the White Paper Schools - achieving success and will build on the recent partnership working by Surrey providers to contribute to the Government's target of 40,000 opportunities for 14-16 year olds to broaden their learning experience.

Easing the transition between pre- and post-16 education

During our first year we have funded a number of projects aimed at easing the transition from pre- to post-16 education. A number of these have been focused on groups of **young people at greatest risk of not continuing in education beyond the age of 16**. Examples include a project aimed at young carers in the Spelthorne and Runnymede area providing them with additional support, including respite care, and a project in one of our areas of deprivation which provides an alternative curriculum and a crèche for young mothers. We will continue to support these projects and to work with the Connexions partnership to ensure that appropriate provision is available for groups most likely not to continue with structured learning.

Higher Education

The Government target is that, by 2010, half of all 18-30 year olds should experience higher education, against the current level of around 30%. This is of particular significance in Surrey because of **the need for even more people with higher level skills in our largely knowledge-based workforce**.

Participation rates in higher education range from 72% among children of professional classes to just 13% of children of unskilled workers. In order to widen participation from under-represented groups, practical support will be needed.

The new two-year Foundation degrees are delivered largely by further education colleges. Individuals can progress at their own pace, using credit accumulation and they allow students to progress to a 3-year honours degree programme. The new degrees should widen participation by attracting many more people who do not currently enter higher education.

In Surrey an Access and Participation Together (APT) Widening Participation Project is jointly funded by the Higher Education Funding Council and the LSC, led by the University of Surrey. This involves higher education institutions (HEIs) and partner FE Colleges. Activities include managing the Surrey Regional Higher Education Compact, which involves many schools and colleges, and ensures that where a school or college recommends a student as a Compact applicant, the Higher Education admissions tutors will guarantee an interview and ensure that the personal circumstances surrounding a local student's application are carefully considered.

We have recently met with the Higher Education Funding Council for England and representatives of the Surrey higher education participation networks and agreed to work with them to produce **a joint response to the current consultation about widening participation** in higher education and to **develop an action plan for Surrey**.

We see the following as important elements in increasing higher education participation levels:

- our work to increase the number of learners progressing from level 2 to level 3 programmes;
- our re-launch of Modern Apprenticeships;
- launching the 'Earn-and-Learn' initiative and encouraging employers to release employees so they can follow routes such as foundation degrees or feeder programmes such as Access to HE programmes;
- working with Surrey colleges and other partners to promote the development of foundation degrees and flexible progression routes to higher education.

Adults

The LSC nationally proposes to set a target later this year for adult participation in learning. Surrey will undertake research in 2002 so as to be able to set a local target to reflect local circumstances and the national target. Drawing on the findings of our Surrey Skills Audit (see Chapter 2) and reflecting national and local priorities, we have so far identified the following main focuses for activity:

Information, advice and guidance

In order to encourage more adults to participate in learning, it is important that adults can easily access impartial information, advice and guidance to help them make decisions about the choices that they have and make them aware of the options open to them.

We fund the Surrey Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership (IAG) to provide this service and in 2001/02 it will provide around 3000 advice sessions. We aim to **agree stretching targets with the IAG Partnership with a view to doubling the annual number of advice sessions by 2004**, and encouraging those who are less likely to seek advice to do so.

To achieve this we will work with the partnership to **drive up the demand for advice and guidance**. This will mean reviewing the ways in which IAG providers market their products and assessing the effectiveness of their approaches to ensure that all sections of the community are reached. It will also mean **developing additional provision located within communities** and we see the voluntary sector as having a key role to play in this.

It is important that the advice available to people is customer focused, high quality and impartial, and we will be working to support the recruitment, training and development of people engaged in IAG activity at all levels. IAG providers will need to meet current national standards. Seven providers are already accredited and a further eight are aiming to achieve accreditation in 2002.

As described in Chapter 4 we will be developing our “Access to Opportunities” database and website and ensuring that it has links to other websites locally and nationally. This site currently has information about training and learning opportunities, job seeking including self-assessment tools, childcare and information about funding learning and is accessed by around 20,000 people a month. We will be developing this site so that learning providers are able to update their information on-line and advisers are able to access the information that they require easily.

Adult Basic Skills

This is a key national priority and also of great significance in the Surrey context. It is a complex area to measure, with varying definitions of need. We are currently leading a group of partners under the umbrella of the Lifelong Learning Partnership to develop a programme of action to meet the massive challenge of our basic skills target.

Our target is that by 2004 10,000 people will have achieved the new range of qualifications for adult literacy (including second language speakers) and numeracy. We need to increase the range and diversity of basic skills provision available and to increase volumes participating.

Experience suggests that we need to encourage and enable around 16,000 people to participate in basic skills learning to reach our target of 10,000 achieving basic skills qualifications.

We will also be tackling basic skills in the context of progressing as many adults as possible to level 2 to open up new skills to meet local demand.

We intend to support this expansion by building capacity substantially to meet the increased need. This will include training approximately 100 additional tutors and increasing provision in the workplace and in the community.

Employers also have an important role to play as the majority of people with low basic skills are in employment. We intend to develop ways to help employers to identify the problem and to provide information about provision. We also see an important role for Trade Unions in this area of provision.

Adults below level 2

The recent report on workforce development produced by the Cabinet Office (see Skills Strategy later in this Chapter) signalled that the Government’s long term aim is that all adults should have the opportunity to achieve a level 2 qualification. Skills at this level are transferable rather than specific to individual firms, which can make employers reluctant to invest in developing the skills of the lower skilled members of their workforce. A disproportionate number of those without a level 2 qualification work for small firms, who are also less likely to invest in skill development of their staff, often for reasons of cost, time and because of constraints on their cash flow.

There is a strong correlation between earnings and qualification levels and low pay is also an important indicator of exclusion often linked to poor housing and health. We therefore feel that it is important to focus our efforts on adults not yet qualified to level 2. We will do this by working in sectors with a high proportion of people not qualified to level 2 (e.g. in the care sector, as described later in this Chapter). We will therefore focus any growth funding for adults at provision up to and including level 2. We will also encourage colleges to focus their existing budgets on this group and to develop methods of delivery in the community or in the workplace.

Adult and Community Learning

This programme is administered by Surrey County Council with the support of almost £3 million funding from the LSC. Enrolments are currently running at over 20,000 a year. The great majority of the learning activities involved are recreational but they also have a special part to play in engaging or re-engaging adults in learning. In developing the Adult and Community Learning strategy with Surrey County Council, we will aim to create stronger and clearer **progression from this type of learning to more vocational learning opportunities** so that any adult who wishes to increase their learning and career potential may do so.

2003/04 will mark a step change in the provision of Adult and Community Learning nationally as this form of provision is integrated with other LSC funded provision in colleges and schools. It is planned that a new national formula funding methodology will be introduced similar to that operated in colleges and schools. There will be increased emphasis on finding ways in which Adult and Community Learning can widen participation by engaging a wider range of adults.

In the light of these challenges, Surrey LSC has agreed with Surrey County Council jointly to commission a strategic review of the provision of Adult and Community Learning, and other adult learning in the county to be completed by the end of 2002. The scope of the review will be wide including consideration of different models of future provision.

Under represented groups

As described in Chapter 2, there are a number of pockets of deprivation in the county as well as groups of individuals who experience difficulties in accessing learning. We will be working with local authorities and other partners to **support the County's self reliance strategy** (which focuses on areas of social deprivation). We will continue to support projects in the areas identified in the Surrey Community profile as having the greatest need. During our first year we have supported projects in North Walton, Sandy Hill (Farnham), Merstham (Reigate), St Anne's (Chertsey), Court (Epsom) and Stanwell (Staines). These projects are generally led by community and voluntary groups and provide support to adults, many of whom are from groups who are under represented in learning and who have no or low qualifications.

Learndirect, which provides on-line learning opportunities via learning centres, and is funded by the LSC, has had an important potential role to play in widening access to opportunities. We intend to **work with the local Learndirect hub** to develop this potential.

We also intend to work with the group involved in delivering the Welfare to Work joint investment plan for disabled people. This group has the aim of assisting people back to or closer to the world of work. Feedback from this group will be used to inform the planning of provision and support for disabled people.

An example of work with a group which may face particular difficulties is an innovative and potentially ground-breaking project aimed at **equipping prisoners without level 2 qualifications**. HMP Coldingley, a local Category C prison, has extensive workshop facilities, used to give prisoners gainful employment. A feasibility study is expected to demonstrate the possibility of structuring the workshops in such a way that they become a 'learning environment' in which the prisoners' day-to-day work leads them to achievement of level 2 qualifications. The feasibility study is also looking at ways of creating a network of employers who will employ the newly qualified prisoners immediately on their release. As far as we are aware, this project's approach to developing prisoners' skills, and matching them to identified local vacancies, is new, and we will be seeking national funding for this as a pilot initiative. Keen interest is being shown at national level and we believe this could become a model for other prisons to develop.

Childcare

Surrey research shows that 8% of people surveyed identify childcare difficulties as preventing them from undertaking learning activities. This view has been strongly supported in discussions with partners such as the Employment Service and colleges. The cost of private provision is, in many cases, prohibitive in Surrey even for those with reasonable incomes and there is a shortage of publicly provided places.

Our strategy on this will have three strands:

- to work with colleges to encourage them to expand crèche/nursery provision;
- to discuss with the executive committee of Surrey County Council's Early Years and Childcare Development Partnership the possibilities for developing and extending this initiative;
- providing funding to substantially increase the number of childcare early years education and playwork sector workers trained by 2004.

We see provision as needing to be delivered flexibly to allow maximum participation by all workers in the sector and those individuals who may be unemployed wishing to work in the sector. **We shall need to work closely with the Employment Service and the new Jobcentre Plus agency to develop our strategy**, and we also want to explore with the other South East LSCs and the South East England Development Agency the scope for a regional initiative in this area.

People with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

The Learning and Skills Act, 2000, requires the LSC in the discharge of its main duties to consider the needs of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some people have particular difficulties which means that they are not able to use mainstream provision. The Council also has responsibility to secure the provision of boarding accommodation, where facilities provided would otherwise not be proper or reasonable. This may apply where learning needs are more complex or specialised, or where an element of care is also required.

We shall ensure that people with these needs are able to access learning opportunities and in some cases this will mean that we need to fund specific or specialist programmes, many of which are based in specialist residential colleges. In 2001/02 we spent around £1.5 million on this type of provision. There are three specialist colleges located in the county. Two of these are funded by the LSC and the other by the Residential Training Unit.

We see two priorities in this area:

- to encourage colleges in Surrey to improve provision and facilities to enable more learners to be accommodated, achieve success and progress to other programmes, and
- to plan strategies for improving practice in Surrey colleges to cater for larger numbers of learners with more complex needs.

As part of our programme we will **continue to support the Surrey Widening Participation Project**, which is led from East Surrey College. This project was established in January 1999 with a cross-Surrey remit to enhance participation, achievement and progression opportunities for young people and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The project has raised the profile of post-16 provision for those people and is supporting colleges to develop and deliver new and revised policies, and also helping to harmonise approaches in relation to our broader aims for widening participation across Surrey. Its purpose is to assist general FE and sixth form colleges to improve their capacity to cope with and continuously improve the provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is also supported by a representative of the three specialist colleges.

As part of our strategy to enhance the ability of Surrey providers to support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, we will **review our ability to evaluate the quality of current provision, taking account of the relative infrequency of external inspections**. One focus for this reason will be progression data and we shall want to draw on the work which has already been undertaken by the Surrey Widening Participation Project.

More generally, we shall support colleges in implementing the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act for 2001 and to draw upon the Government's £31 million disability access fund.

Skills Strategy

The **Government's Performance and Innovation Unit** published a report in November 2001, *Adult Skills in the 21st Century* which investigated the extent, nature and main causes of under-investment in workforce development. It recommended that four types of action should be taken to ensure that the UK becomes a society where Government, employers and individuals actively engage in skills development:

- stimulation of demand by employers and individuals
- increasing the quality and responsiveness of supply
- strong focus on encouraging the development of people with low level skills
- development of a national framework which is supported by the four main Government departments with responsibilities in this area.

This report is currently subject to consultation and a second report will be produced in July 2002 setting out how the Government intends to take forward policy in this area. In the meantime **the LSC will be publishing a consultation draft of its national workforce development strategy in Spring 2002**. We shall aim to build on national programmes arising from these documents to identify better ways of developing long term relationships with local employers, and of engaging them in defining skill needs and developing their workforce.

At the Surrey level our current view of priorities is as follows.

Management development

We see improving the skills of managers as a priority contributing to various aspects of our skills strategy. This is because Managing Directors and other Senior Managers hold the key to change within an organisation - yet, as discussed in Chapter 2, many are themselves not highly qualified and may not be supportive of skills development within their workforce. For many managers of small enterprises seeking to move their businesses forward, the most fundamental need is to gain a solid grounding in good management practice. This will often lie outside their specialist areas of business expertise.

We will support a range of approaches aimed at identifying skill development needs and providing information that will enable managers to identify ways of meeting their development needs. This will mean ensuring that diagnostic tools and advice are readily available. Our focus will be on developing the skills of management teams, rather than individuals, in order to ensure that support will lead to a sustainable change linked to organisational development. We will also work with other LSCs and SEEDA to raise awareness of management development generally.

We will also build upon the successful management development programmes that have been run during our first year of operation, including the **Managing Directors Programme** being run by Surrey Business Link and the coaching and mentoring programme run by the voluntary sector. The scale of activity will depend upon available resources including support from the European Social Fund.

Management development is one of those areas which we have identified as calling for a **growth in providers' capacity** (see Chapter 2). Recent experience shows that for a significant number of these managers' existing modes of training provision are either inappropriate or not sufficiently flexible to meet their needs. We shall therefore encourage providers to consider how the benefits of traditional courses – in management development and more generally - can be translated into new shapes, structures and patterns, which fit more closely the pace and working methods of small businesses in Surrey today.

Investors in People

Investors in People will be a key activity area within our skills strategy. Using the Investors in People (IiP) framework it is possible to demonstrate tangible business benefits to employers who develop the skills of their workforce. We are working closely with Surrey Business Link which is contracted to work with smaller organisations and assist them to achieve the standard. We have had continuing success in increasing the number of IiP commitments and we will continue to promote IiP and assist both large and small employers to achieve the standard.

We also aim to make it easier for small employers to participate through the **development of "bite size" approaches** to aspects of the Investors in People framework. This will involve providing seminars on aspects of workforce development (for example recruitment and retention of staff) followed up by workshops for managers. This approach has already been piloted and has proven to be attractive to firms who are not able or ready to commit to full implementation of Investors in People.

We shall be encouraging some organisations who have achieved the Investors in People standard to **act as exemplars or "beacons" for other organisations**. We see this as both adding impetus to the Investors in People programme and offering an encouragement to existing Investors organisations to remain committed to the Standard.

Sectoral initiatives

As described in Chapter 2, many employers in Surrey are currently facing significant skill and labour shortages. Our skills strategy has a focus on the sectors facing particular challenges and difficulties. Our approach is to develop our understanding of their skills needs and then to develop better ways of responding to these. This is a complex matter given the range of sectors and occupations in Surrey, and work so far has concentrated on drawing together existing information and working with our partners to develop new approaches to workforce development in a few sectors.

We shall also work with **the new national level Sector Skills Councils** on initiatives which meet particular needs in Surrey or which are part of a national programme.

Building on those sectors identified in Chapter 2, we will concentrate on working with a few sectors at a time in order to maximise impact, in particular sectors which have a high percentage of people not qualified to level 2 or where there are significant skill shortages.

The **care sector** is one to which we intend to give priority. Demographic changes including increasing numbers of older people mean that the social care sector has a key role to play both in terms of economic and community development in Surrey. **The social care sector in Surrey is experiencing a crisis in terms of recruiting and retaining staff.** Generally, qualification levels are low and employers are finding it difficult to make progress towards qualification and training targets. In addition to the low level of qualification amongst the workforce, there are also basic skills issues, including the need for training in English as a second language.

Currently 80% of the social care workforce is unqualified and TOPSS, (the National Training Organisation for social care), has set a challenging target for social care providers across all sectors for 50% of their workforces to be qualified to NVQ level 2 or 3 by 2005. We will work with social services, the NTO, providers, employers and other LSCs to ensure that the infrastructure is available to support this massive demand and to support the delivery of training in the workplace. We hope to secure funding for this initiative from national funding for pilot projects.

We have already supported work focused on **financial services**, and we will continue to support a Local Initiative Fund project initially centred on creating a network of human resources practitioners. There has also been some consideration of whether a financial services Centre of Vocational Excellence might be established. A report produced in 2001 highlighted that financial service is an important growth sector of the Surrey economy facing recruitment and retention problems. Apart from technical/professional skills shortage, there are also problems relating to the softer skills of communication and flexibility and scope for more creative personnel practice e.g. current over reliance on full-time workers only. We will therefore continue to support this sector.

One way in which we propose to focus our efforts is by developing new approaches to address the needs of sectors which have a high percentage of people not qualified to level 2 or where there are significant skill shortages.

National initiatives

Some skills issues have a national dimension and we will work with other local LSCs to respond to these. For example, there is a projected shortage of **heating engineers in the gas supply industry**. There are now very few younger people employed as qualified engineers and nearly a third of the current staff may retire in the next five years. This has major implications nationally and Surrey LSC will contribute to a pilot programme which will be run across the South East to address this skills shortage.

Engaging with employers

Increasing demand for learning is an important part of our strategy. We will therefore work with Surrey Learning Partnership, Surrey Economic Partnership and other partners to promote the benefits of workforce development to employer networks and through marketing and case studies.

Other key approaches will be:

- To give high priority to basic skills development in the workplace. This will include providing assistance to employers to help them identify and meet basic skill development needs of their workforce (see earlier section on basic skills).
- To develop an excellent information base to enable employers to make informed decisions about training provision and **provide information which will enable advisers to "signpost" them to appropriate provision**
- To produce labour market information to enable employers, individuals and providers to make informed decisions. We aim to work on this with other local LSCs, Skills Insight and Surrey Economic Partnership.
- To work with the Surrey Bridges consortium and others to develop specific projects to increase the links between colleges, schools, employers and Sector Skills Councils.

Learning in the Workplace

Many smaller organisations face difficulties in releasing staff from the workplace in order to undertake training and development. We will work with colleges and other providers to develop new approaches to overcome these difficulties. In our first year we supported a project of this kind with EMTA (one of the National Training Organisations in the manufacturing sector). We will continue to support this project and will support similar projects if we are able to secure sufficient support from the European Social Fund. We will also provide funding to **increase the number of workplace trainers**, again dependent on the scale of support available from the European Social Fund.

Geographically focused Initiatives

We will work with partners to develop geographically focused approaches. We have already supported two projects run by Surrey Chambers of Commerce **focused on the needs of groups of employers based in a similar location**. One group is based in Woking and the other is focused on the retail sector in Camberley. If these approaches are successful we will seek to replicate them, resources permitting. We will also consider the need for other geographical initiatives. For example the Surrey Economic Partnership is currently undertaking research into the specific needs of the East Surrey / Gatwick / Brighton corridor and the Blackwater valley (in the west of the county) and will be looking at the needs arising from the further development of Heathrow airport.

Working with trade unions

We will continue to **develop our relationship with Trade Unions**. During our first year we supported a project with UNISON focused on skill development in the workplace for the care sector. We have had early discussions with the GMB about the scope for Trade Unions to increase adult basic skills provision. More broadly we wish to work with Trade Unions in Surrey to maximise the influence of Trade Union Learning Representatives.

Learning Strategy

The purpose of our Learning Strategy is to ensure that Surrey has the range of post-16 education and training provision which will meet the needs of learners, employers and the community. Essentially it is about **learning providers** and other key partners, particularly Surrey County Council and Surrey Connexions Services, to ensure that the needs identified earlier in this Plan are met. It is also about **how we involve employers**.

Learning providers – colleges, schools, training organisations and others – are of course the key to meeting these needs. We shall be looking to them to help us **translate our Surrey targets into targets and/or action commitments for each provider**. College Strategic Plans will be a key vehicle for this, as will relevant strategic and delivery plans of other providers. We shall also set up Task Groups and create County wide action plans drawing on our experience of the Level 2 Action Plan which we have already developed with the help of partners. We aim to build on Surrey's strong history of partnership working and to explore ways within the developing funding system in which creative and effective solutions can be achieved.

We will be contributing fully to the **development of the 14-19 strategy** in response to the recently published Government Green Paper and consultation process. Choices made, and attitudes formed, before the age of 16 are important for later progression and we welcome the emphasis on increased flexibility of provision, including breaking down conventional distinctions between 'academic' and 'vocational' courses.

We see our Learning Strategy as having three key foundations:

1. Sustaining existing provision

Surrey providers currently deliver to around 100,000 learners a year. We take as our starting point the need to sustain this provision and to work with providers to overcome barriers to doing so. This has been reflected in the priority given in our first year to building relationships with colleges and other providers and, in particular, in our work with Surrey County Council and schools to achieve as smooth as possible a transition for schools to the new funding system. It will in future be reflected in the LSC's national commitment to reduce the burden of bureaucracy on providers by 25% which we shall act upon at local level.

2. Growing capacity

In Chapter 3 we described our targets and, in particular, the substantial growth in provision which we need to achieve. We suggested that, while some of this might be achieved through relatively fine tuning of current provision, there were a number of areas which would require a quantum shift in effort and resources. These were:

- growing part-time structured learning opportunities for young people
- increasing level 2 achievement amongst 16-18 year olds
- basic skills tuition capacity
- adult information, advice and guidance capacity
- activity to promote management development.

We see building this capacity as a major priority in the coming months. We want to explore with providers of all kinds the contribution they can make. We shall be discussing with our National Office the growth funding which will be needed. Where there are barriers to growth which cannot be overcome by mainstream funding we shall consider applying for national pilot funding, or the use of our modest levels of discretionary funding to help overcome barriers. (An example of this could be development work relating to our "earn and learn" programme of part-time learning opportunities for 16-18 year olds).

3. Quality and performance standards

We have described in Chapter 4 our approach to achieving continuous improvements in quality and performance standards. We wish this to be evidence-based and one of our tasks, supported by the Retention and Achievement group, will be to **develop measures of success that reflect both the national quality baselines and targets and Surrey priorities.** It will be important that these at the same time measure and incentivise both increased participation and increased achievement levels, and encourage collaboration between providers to achieve what is best for individual learners. But we see them also as underpinning our (or, in the case of schools, Surrey County Council's) normal performance monitoring activities with individual providers. We shall re-examine our approach to these activities in the light of the national review of the provider Performance Review process due to be implemented in Autumn 2002.

Within the Retention and Achievement Group we shall be **paying close regard to the issue of "value added" by providers** in relation to individual learners' abilities and levels of attainment when they started their course of study. We and the other members of the Group are keen to make early progress in developing "value added" measures but we shall need to take account of national developments in this area to avoid taking Surrey down a blind alley.

We have worked with Surrey County Council to establish four **Area Collaboration groups**. At present they involve schools and colleges but we hope that their membership will be extended to include other providers who deliver learning for young people and the Connexions service. We have been particularly impressed by the responses to our Strategic Plan that illustrate the potential of non-traditional approaches to reach groups who would otherwise not continue with structured learning beyond 16.

We see the Area Collaboration Groups as considering evidence from the Retention and Achievement Group and elsewhere about participation and achievement levels for 14 to 19 year olds in their areas and agreeing priorities for action. They could then take these actions forward on a collaborative basis seeking to involve other partner organisations, Community Learning Partnerships, etc as appropriate. They will also have an important role to play in ensuring that the needs of vulnerable groups are met in a seamless way and that all students have access to impartial advice and guidance. They could also have a key role in enabling a wider range of young learners to pursue more vocationally orientated programmes of study, in line with the Government's Green Paper.

Roles of different providers

We do not take a "one size fits all" approach to different kinds of providers. Obviously we want all providers to stretch themselves and to develop their capacity. But we recognise that providers occupy different positions in the "learning market". **We need to develop a more strategic view of provision and capacity for delivery across the County** and we will work with the cross-sectoral Providers' Forum (to be set up under the Lifelong Learning Partnership umbrella) to assist us to develop this strategy during 2002. Our emphasis will be on collaboration rather than competition in order to deliver provision which will be of benefit to the learner but we recognise that individual providers will need to consider their own viability and financial health.

We are keen to **promote groupings or consortia** of large, small and specialist providers to focus on particular priorities or target groups. We have recently received a proposal for a consortium to focus on basic skills in the South West of the County and we would welcome other proposals to focus particularly on the priorities identified in this plan – for example management development and the needs of the care sector.

In line with the view of a number of respondents to our consultation about the Strategic Plan, we propose to undertake **mapping of provision across the County** by two different means. In relation to provision for 14 to 19 year olds we propose to do this through the four Area Collaboration Groups. For adults we propose to do it through a Strategic Review undertaken jointly with Surrey County Council. This will cover the adult and community learning programme and vocational provision provided by colleges and other LSC funded bodies

Colleges account for two-thirds of our budget and are our biggest providers and we shall naturally be looking to them to make a major contribution to the growth in provision which we need to achieve. Immediate priorities will be growth in 16-18 year old participation (including Modern Apprenticeships and other “earn and learn” part-time options) and levels 2 and 3 achievement. A particular focus will be reducing “drop-outs” drawing on the recent report from the Learning and Skills Development Agency, *Improving Student Retention and Achievement*.

Colleges will have a major role to play in building Surrey’s adult basic skills capacity and in delivering larger volumes of activity. We shall also want to involve appropriate colleges in building provision for management development and in planning to meet the LSC’s adult participation targets which are due to be set nationally in the course of this year.

From April 2002, **schools** will account for one fifth of our budget and they are responsible for a substantial portion of 16-19 provision. We shall have a continuing priority to ensure that they are able to assimilate as seamlessly as possible to the LSC’s new funding system. We shall draw further on the valuable work performed by our Schools Task Group, which includes a former Head Teacher and a former College Principal who have strong experience of funding systems, and we shall further develop our relations with the Surrey Secondary Heads Council and with individual schools.

Looking further ahead, we shall want to explore the role which individual schools can play in increasing participation and achievement levels. An important aspect of this will be the opportunities for broadening the curriculum for 14-16 year olds arising from the Schools-Achieving Success White Paper. This will involve close working with schools which do not have sixth forms as well as those which do.

Achievement levels of existing sixth forms will obviously be an important focus, but we would also like to know what schools can offer in terms of post-16 participation including, possibly, “earn and learn” part-time opportunities and the engagement of young people with particular needs such as teenage mothers.

While our current work based learning programme accounts for less than 5% of our budget, we see **training organisations** as playing a key role in supporting our participation and achievement objectives. They will be the major force in relaunching and expanding the Modern Apprenticeships programme, and we shall want to work closely with them on marketing the benefits of Modern Apprenticeships to employers and young people. We also see a potentially important role for them in creating a wider range of "earn and learn" part-time opportunities, and we shall be discussing with our National Office the extent to which future funding flexibilities can facilitate this.

Training organisations also have a potentially significant role to play in other priority areas such as management development, adult basic skills and training more carers.

We see a key role for **employers** in the three-sided "compacts" for young employees and learning providers which we aim to develop as part of our programme of "earn and learn" part-time opportunities (outlined in the Participation Strategy section of this Chapter).

In the context of the relaunch of the Modern Apprenticeship programme, we shall be reviewing the benefits of contracting directly with some employers which we do not currently do. There may be some who have the capacity and motivation to operate the whole Modern Apprenticeship framework without relying on external training organisations.

Employers with substantial in-house training facilities might also be interested in delivering other learning opportunities within our programmes

More broadly the national and local Skills Strategy is dependent on a **partnership approach between employers, learning providers and other organisations**. We shall aim to clarify and communicate the relative funding responsibilities of employers, individual learners and the Government in relation to adult learning.

Over time we shall build on our existing relationships with employer organisations such as **Surrey Chambers of Commerce** to establish more links with individual employers. Our aim will be to engage their support and energies in developing their own workforces and in supporting the Skills Strategy more generally in whatever ways they think they can best contribute. Engaging with employers will be a key element of our marketing strategy (see Chapter 4)

We shall develop further our already strong relationship with **Surrey Business Link** as a means of meeting the needs of employers. With around 56,000 business units and 43,000 VAT registered businesses in Surrey, we shall clearly need to prioritise our efforts in conjunction with the Business Link.

Specific programmes of activity with the Business Link will include their existing Investors in People programme for small and medium sized enterprises; developing "bite size" alternatives to the full Investors in People framework; "signposting" employers to appropriate learning provision and building up a substantial management development programme in the County.

We shall also work closely with **Surrey Economic Partnership** on the Skills Strategy and to involve other partners who provide services to employers including Surrey's **universities** and colleges and Surrey Chambers of Commerce.

In relation to young people, a key partner organisation will be the **Surrey Connexions Service**. This service is in the process of development and will be a partnership of Surrey Careers Service, Surrey County Council's Youth Service and other agencies giving support to young people. It will play the pivotal role in ensuring that young people have the right information, advice and guidance and other support to enable them to make good learning and career choices. We shall work closely with the Connexions Service and learning providers to achieve this. We will also work with the Connexions Service and IAG Partnership to ensure that there is no discontinuity of service at 19 for vulnerable groups, for example young people leaving care.

We shall also look to the education/business liaison services which make up the **Surrey Bridges** consortium of organisations to develop the links which they provide between schools and businesses for young people and teaching staff. We shall want to work through with them the implications of the Government's developing 14-19 policies for their areas of activities and the scope to enhance their roles. We also see them as having a part to play in demonstrating the benefits of vocational learning programmes to the provider and business communities.

We have said in Chapter 4 that we see a need for a substantial increase in activity within the adult **Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)** network. We shall want to consider the resource implications of this with the network coordinator.

We shall consider with Surrey County Council ways in which **Adult and Community Learning** providers can contribute by building a stronger bridge between informal "recreational" learning and learning which is vocationally focused.

We also see potential for increased roles for "specialised" providers of various kinds. **Voluntary organisations** can provide learning environments and opportunities which best meet the needs of some learners. We would like to build on our existing relationship with Surrey Voluntary Services Council and also on initiatives by individual voluntary organisations and partnerships we are funding through the European Social Fund and/or our Local Initiative Fund. We shall also need to explore with the voluntary sector the contribution voluntary organisations can make to substantially increasing basic skills development (see Participation Strategy above).

Similarly, we shall explore with **Trade Unions** in Surrey what role they can play in the basic skills strategy and, more generally, the opportunities presented by the introduction of Learning Representatives in the workplace.

As described in the Participation Strategy section of this Chapter we shall want to work with both specialist and non-specialist providers for learners with **learning difficulties and/or disabilities** to develop the range and quality of provision within the boundaries of Surrey.

We understand that **smaller or more specialist providers may have greater difficulty in interacting with ourselves and with other players within the system**, including employers and larger providers. We shall seek through a variety of means, including possibly Community Learning Partnerships, to find ways of more closely engaging such providers and of facilitating their contribution to our Learning Strategy. We see the developing Community Learning Plans as a useful source of information for next year's Plan in terms both of needs analysis and local action strategies, going beyond the 14 to 19 age group, which we would want to support both non-financially and financially so far as our resources allow.

We are conscious that we have not mentioned all of the great range of contributors to the learning system in this summary, and that we may not have fully explored the potential roles of those we have mentioned. We will continue to welcome approaches from providers who believe they may have a role to play in taking forward this strategy.

> Chapter 6 Consultation Strategy

Before Surrey LSC came into existence the Government Office for the South East established a Surrey Task Group whose role was to identify key learning and skills issues for Surrey. This task group held two consultation events and produced a detailed report for us.

Shortly before our launch, in March of last year, we held our own major **"Stakeholder Conference"** in which we played back our view of the key priorities for Surrey and sought ideas for action priorities. Since this event we have held a **large number of smaller meetings** with most of the groups represented in our Key Relationships diagram reproduced in Chapter 1. We have also drawn on the work of the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, and of individual partners such as Surrey Careers Service, in drawing together messages about **learners' own assessment of their needs**. Sources of information have included:

- young learners who attended our own Stakeholders Conference;
- a young people's forum which was held in Woking around the same time;
- information obtained by Surrey's nine Community Learning Partnerships;
- feedback from individual young people gained as part of developing our Level 2 Action Plan.

Under the umbrella of Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, we will be drawing upon a **Surrey Youth Forum** which is being set up by the Surrey Connexions Partners.

As regards consulting on **employers' needs**, we have been conscious of a strong message given by senior business people during a meeting with Surrey County Council, Surrey Economic Partnership and the South East England Development Agency. This was on the lines of: "Stop consulting us all the time. Tell us what you want to do and we'll tell you whether we think that's right and whether we'll support you in doing it". In other words, they were looking for effective leadership. This is a message we have also received from other sources.

We have also been conscious that the LSC will be publishing our draft **national Workforce Development Strategy** this April and that, until this is finalised in July, we will not have a full prospectus to offer employers.

In the meantime, we have **developed strong links with bodies which represent the views of employers**, including Surrey Chambers of Commerce, Surrey Business Link and Surrey Economic Partnership **to establish a network of employers** whom we can all consult or communicate with as the need arises, without tripping over each other and contributing unnecessarily to "consultationitis". Direct links with individual employers will be developed in relation to ongoing work (such as liP) or through specific projects.

The production of this Strategic Plan is obviously a key stage in the development of our targets and priorities for the next three years as we are effectively relying on support for those priorities we have identified. In addition to sending the Plan to our main stakeholder contacts, we are placing it on our website and publicising it in our own external newsletter. As well as general consultation, we discussed the draft Plan with key partners including the South East England Development Agency, the Government Office for the South East, Surrey County Council, Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, Surrey Economic Partnership, Surrey Connexions Service, Surrey Chambers of Commerce, Surrey Business Link, the Surrey Colleges Forum, the Surrey Secondary Heads Council and others. This dialogue will continue as we develop the Plan and roll it forward for future three-year planning periods.

We will hold a further Conference in June 2002 jointly with Surrey Learning Partnership and Surrey County Council. This will also effectively start the consultation process for the next year's revised Strategic Plan which will cover the years 2003/06.

Looking ahead, Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership has decided to set up **standing arrangements for collecting learners' and employers' views, and also to set up a cross-sectoral "provider panel"**. We shall draw upon the views of all of these networks.

We shall be building on our existing programme of research and the national LSC's surveys of learners, employers and providers. We shall also set up **focus groups** to assist progress towards our key targets. Our own Council members have agreed to contribute to the work of these groups.

We are conscious of the need to reach out to those groups of people who may be **under-represented in learning**, to understand and respond to barriers. This will be done both through research and through involvement in community networks, including identifying staff as 'community representatives' to liaise with each of the Community Learning Partnerships.

> Chapter 7 Resources and Evaluation

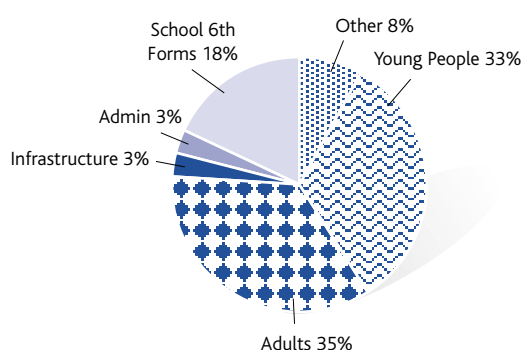
The delivery of our Strategic Plan depends ultimately on the resources available, both financial and staffing, within the LSC and its partners. These will be targeted through our Business Plan at activities that reflect priorities identified in the Plan, although in some cases particular initiatives will depend on adequate additional funding being available. There also need to be systematic arrangements for evaluating progress in carrying out the Plan.

Budget

In 2001/02 the local budget for Surrey LSC was around £80 million which will rise to over £100 million in 2002/03 with the inclusion of school sixth form funding from April 2002. In addition, the national LSC has accountability for a separate national fund for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) - currently around of £1.5 million in Surrey and a Standards Fund for College improvements (around £3 million in Surrey). During 2001 we secured £2.5 million ESF funding (to cover the period to December 2003) and we have a £1 million Local Initiative Fund.

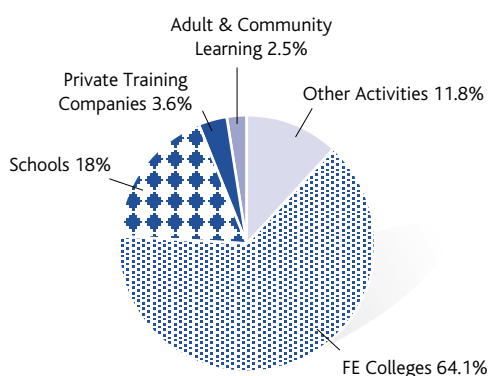
Over the lifetime of this plan we intend to identify additional sources of funding to support the delivery of our objectives. This will include working in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

Budgets are currently divided into four blocks (Young People, Adults, Infrastructure and Administration) and sub divisions determined by the DfES. There is almost no flexibility to move money between the main blocks and limited ability to move within the subdivisions. This is being reviewed nationally to increase the scope for local response to local needs.



Source: LSC Admin sources

Over £70 million of our budget will be allocated to FE colleges with a further £20 million to school sixth forms. Work based learning, delivered by training organisations, will have a budget of around £4 million. Adult and community learning, delivered via Surrey County Council, will have a budget of just under £3 million. We anticipate that the budget for the remaining activities will be around £13 million.



Source: LSC Admin sources

We currently have access to three sources of **discretionary funding**: Local Initiative Fund, European Social Fund and funding provided following the liquidation of Surrey Training & Enterprise Council (TEC legacy funding). We will use these sources of funding and any other identified over the course of this Plan to support activities which will assist in the achievement of our targets and local priorities.

European Social Fund

We expect to conduct an annual competitive bidding exercise for European Social Fund provision based on a prospectus inviting proposals. We have worked with SEEDA to develop a single prospectus and in time will consider whether this approach can be extended to other co-financing partners in the County, for example Surrey County Council.

Surrey LSC became a co-financing organisation for purposes of applications to the European Social Fund (ESF) in 2001. Co-financing is a new approach to ESF which brings together ESF and mainstream funding in order to reduce the bureaucracy for delivery organisations. One of the benefits is that organisations bidding for funding receive 100% from the co-financing organisations and do not have to secure additional "matched funding". The co-financing organisation is responsible for securing funding from the regional Government Office by means of a bid at measure level which takes account of local needs. Co-financing will allow us to integrate ESF closely with our overall funding priorities.

The Government Office now require the ESF Co-financing Plan to be submitted in advance of a specific invitation to bid for funding being issued to individual provider organisations. The Co-financing plan will reflect the priorities of this Strategic Plan and, in effect, will be a subset of it. We consulted on priorities for the ESF plan during January/February 2002 and new projects to start from late July 2002. We will work with other co-financing and potential co-financing organisations (for example the South East England Development Agency, Employment Service, Surrey Business Link) when developing this plan to ensure that there is no overlap and that the needs of Surrey are adequately reflected.

Financial Assurance

We have responsibility for ensuring that funding made available to our providers is used for the purposes for which it was intended and that systems and procedures exist within providers that can be relied upon. For schools and Adult and Community Learning we rely upon the work of the Surrey County Council's internal audit team and the Audit Commission. In colleges we use the colleges' Internal and External Auditors although we do contract directly with audit firms to review the colleges' Individual Student Records (ISRs).

To this end we maintain a Provider Financial Assurance Team, whose core remit is to perform systems and financial audits of those providers with whom we contract and to provide audit assurance to the Executive Director. In addition this team is responsible for providing a range of support to the inspectorates (OfSTED and ALI) when they are carrying out inspections in colleges.

We also need to ensure that any provider with whom we contract is likely to remain financially viable for the period of the contract. Our financial control team therefore assesses individual organisations' accounts on a regular basis using normal financial appraisal methodologies.

Three times a year we review the most up-to-date financial position and projections of our providers as part of the provider Performance Review process. This allows us the opportunity to review formally these organisations as part of a more holistic process.

Our internal accounts are reviewed by a national internal audit function, with the emphasis on systems and processes. In addition the National Audit Office externally audits the Council. We work on a risk managed basis. That is to say we identify and quantify the key risks that face us in terms of our ability to deliver the targets and objectives set for us by our Council and the National Office, as well as any financial and other operational risks, and we prioritise our internal control and management time on those areas that are most vulnerable.

The local Council maintains an Audit Committee that meets four times a year to ensure that financial processes and practices are properly in place and to guide the Executive Director and Council on matters of corporate governance.

This entire process is designed to ensure that the Executive Director can, on an annual basis, provide a statement of assurance to the national Chief Executive who, as Accounting Officer for the Council is required to report to the Public Accounts Committee that the funding granted to the Council has been used properly and that the accounts represent a true and fair view of expenditure incurred on our activities.

Our people

Surrey LSC employs some 80 people, of whom nearly half are new to their current role. The Learning and Skills Council is a complex and evolving organisation with a broad remit and challenging targets. To ensure that the Surrey office is able to perform effectively, it is critical that people within it at all levels are competent and capable of carrying out their own particular roles. In addition the complex inter-relationships that are needed to deliver our objectives require a calibre of people that can perform at a high level across a wide range of activities. We need to ensure that we recruit and retain the best that are available and that they are constantly updated and trained to perform to their maximum potential through commitment to individual learning and development.

We are committed to ensuring that our people are motivated, valued and equipped fully to perform their roles and to this end we have committed to attain recognition as an Investor in People during the course of this year. We are also embarking upon an ambitious management development programme and are holding organisational development workshops to help ensure that we are able to provide a level of service to our customers that continues to meet and exceed their expectations.

We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer and this will be pursued as part of our overall commitment to promotion of equal opportunities. Current staffing is predominantly female (65%), which is well above the proportion in the population. The current proportion of ethnic minority staff is around 4%, which reflects the make up of the Surrey population as a whole.

Delivery and Evaluation

The Strategic Plan will be monitored regularly to ensure that identified action is being carried out and what the effect is. This will lead on to evaluation of impact against needs and value for money. This is also being considered nationally and we will need to ensure our arrangements dovetail with these national developments.

The evaluation process will recognise that success has to be judged at different levels – whether we have done what we set out to and whether this has led to real improvements, which will then feed back into an annual review and updating. Distinctions will need to be made between inputs (resources used), outputs (what has been delivered) and outcomes (effect on needs).

Some of the detail will be monitored at the Business Plan level, but the key targets and high priority actions will be reviewed on a regular basis by our Council and Directors Management Team.

Evaluation will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators – the latter including views and opinions of various customers and stakeholders through consultation and research.

> Annex A Surrey Learning and Skills Council

The Council Members

Chairman: Rob Douglas, Business Consultant; former Shell Senior Executive; SEEDA Board member

Executive Director: Nick Wilson

- Alex Burnip, Commercial Director of SHL UK Ltd.
- Sue Croft, Head Teacher of Cleves School, Weybridge
- Councillor Bernard Foulkes, Managing Director, Jarzon Plastics Ltd
- Paul Gray, Director of Education, Surrey County Council
- Colin Harris, Chairman, Mortgage Code Compliance Board
- Stephen McNair, Head of School of Education, University of Surrey
- Graham Medcroft, Director of Human Resources, Edmund Nuttall Ltd
- Celia Pillay, Chief Executive of WayAhead Training, and Head of South East Region for Prospect trade union
- Lynne Sedgmore, Principal and Chief Executive, Guildford College of Further and Higher Education
- Barbara Spittle, Director of Community Services, Elmbridge Borough Council
- Gillian Wills, Principal, Westgate College for Deaf People.

We are currently in the process of filling three vacancies on the Council.

Roles which the Council has agreed it can most usefully play, in addition to its statutory responsibilities

- Agree Surrey strategy and priorities
- Review the post-16 learning provider network
- Influence the content of mainstream programmes
- Decide the basis for allocating Local Initiative Fund
- Ensure a real and increasing impact is made on Surrey learning provision
- Ensure that Surrey LSC works in partnership with other organisations
- Ensure that Surrey LSC works in an open and transparent way
- Bring a wide range of experience from public, private and voluntary sectors
- Represent the interests of all stakeholders
- Act as ambassadors of the LSC
- Promote creativity and innovation.

Glossary of Terms

A Level	Advanced Level qualification
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate, responsible for inspecting provision in Further Education Colleges, Work-based Learning Providers and Adult and Community Learning.
AS Level	Advanced Supplementary - this is best described as a 'half A level' which enables learners to follow a wider range of subjects post 16 than the traditional 3 A-Level approach. Learners are able to combine 'AS' with 'A Level' subjects.
Basic Skills	The ability to read, write and speak in English and to use mathematics at a level to function at work and in society in general
Connexions	A new partnership being established in Surrey in 2002 to provide more comprehensive and coherent information, advice and guidance on learning and personal issues for all 13-19 year olds.
COVE	Centres of Vocational Excellence
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EBL	Education Business Links. In Surrey these are run through an organisation called Surrey Bridges
ESF	European Social Fund
FE	Further Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution (University)
HND/C	Higher National Diplomas/Certificates
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IiP	Investors in People
LEA	Local Education Authority
Learndirect	The delivery arm of the University for Industry, offering a range of on-line learning programmes through a number of local partnerships (hubs) and using a network of local learning centres.
Level 2 qualification	5 GCSEs (A*-C) or Level 2 NVQ (or equivalent)

Level 3 qualification	2 A Levels (A-E) or Level 3 NVQ (or equivalent)
Level 4 qualification	First degree or level 4 NVQ (or equivalent)
MA	The Modern Apprenticeship – a LSC funded vocational qualification for 16-24 year olds in work or unemployed leading to achievement of a NVQ and Key Skills.
NTO	National Training Organisation. Their remit is to analyse the skills and learning needs of clusters of industrial sectors and to develop qualifications such as the Modern Apprenticeship to meet those needs, and promote such learning opportunities to employers.
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OfSTED	The Office for standards in Education – responsible for inspecting provision for 16-19 year olds.
Sector Skills Council	Sector Skills Councils are replacing NTOs from April 2002.
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency – established by the Government in 1999 to take the strategic lead in promoting the sustainable economic development of the region.
Skills Insight	A Regional Skills Research Unit, supported by SEEDA and other partners, and responsible for managing and disseminating skills information.
SME	Small and Medium sized enterprises – employing under 250 staff
Structured Learning	Learning which takes place at a learning establishment, or is delivered by or in partnership with a learning establishment outside its own environment, to enable a learner to gain accreditation.
Surrey Bridges	A consortium of organisations aiming to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to participate in relevant business-focused activities.
Surrey Economic Partnership	A public, private and voluntary sector forum which provides a provides a strategic voice for the Surrey economy.
Ufi	University for Industry – established by the Government to promote and deliver “lifelong learning” to adults, particularly those who have traditionally not engaged in learning. Carried out principally on-line via the internet (see learndirect).

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