

Idea Store Learning supports the council's strategic aims by working in partnership with other LBTH services:



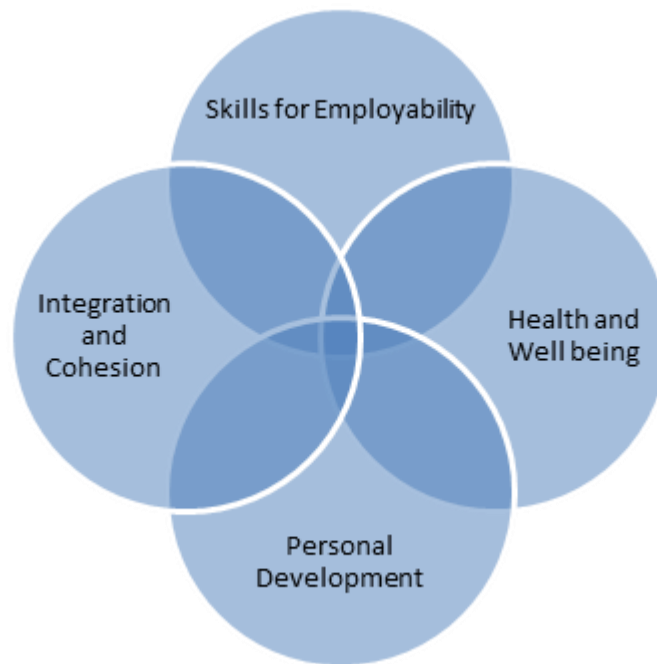
Idea Store Learning provides a universal service delivering high quality learning opportunities for adults in the borough that will:

- Provide programmes to develop pre- employability skills, in partnership with other council services and external partners
- Provide a universal community learning programme which promotes learning, physical and mental health and wellbeing, creativity, confidence and aspiration
- Promote social cohesion by empowering learners to take responsibility for their future, understand the shared values of the community they live in and by tackling extremism and intolerance
- Ensure that the programmes are sustainable by efficient resource utilisation, developing new ways of working and securing funding for the future.

Intention and Mission

LBTH recognises Adult and Community Learning as having the ability to add value to many programmes. The particular skills of engagement and the learning outcomes contribute to programmes impacting on many residents. Idea Store Learning programmes are focussed on four priorities each representing current LBTH priorities and take into account regional and sub-regional priorities within the devolved GLA authority as well as national priorities.

Programmes are planned to meet four overall priority areas:



Partnership with Idea Store Service

Idea Store Learning operates within the Idea Store service which provides learning, library and information services to those living, working and studying in the borough.

- 1,017,896 books, CDs and DVDs were loaned last year to Idea Store members. The excellent choice of books and bookshop presentation is a contributor to the high levels of customer satisfaction with our library services. Library members are also able to borrow from 18 other councils in the London Libraries Consortium and collect books they have ordered online in any library or Idea Store free of charge.
- More recently, the library offer has expanded to include e-books, free downloads and music streaming services. In addition to reading newspapers and magazines in stores, members can also download current editions of a range of magazines to their smartphones or tablets. Outside of stores, the 24 hour library allows members to access all standard reference works using their personal devices whenever they want.

Idea Store learners are informed and encouraged to make use of this enriched offer and environment.

Support for reading

An important part of the library service is the support given for reading in the community. Reading is the most accessible form of culture available and literacy is a vital tool for promoting employability and to improved health and wellbeing.

- For children aged between 0-15 years, there is a full programme of activities on offer every day of the week, throughout the year. These are explicitly designed to promote enjoyment of reading (in libraries and at home) which is fundamental to children's future success in life. The programme recognises that children do not go to libraries unless their family does. A lot of work is therefore done to maintain connect with parents. Each year Idea Store runs the Summer Reading Challenge to maintain and embed reading skills throughout the summer among primary school age children

- For adults there are a variety of different reading groups to choose from at all stores, including pioneering therapeutic ‘Book Break’ groups that support good mental health. For emerging readers, including ESOL students, we run the 6 Book Challenge in partnership with The Reading Agency, a national charity that aims to support reading.
- Idea Stores have a programme of author visits throughout the year, culminating in the annual Write Idea Festival every November. This incorporates the Write Idea Short Story competition which also includes an ESOL Short Story competition for Idea Store ESOL learners at all levels.

Information services

- Idea Stores have the largest collections of books in Tower Hamlets on health and on getting a job as well as more traditional reference materials. An increasing proportion of this material is now online as well as in print and the trend is for more information to be available digitally
- Idea Store is the leading provider of assured Community Information which can be accessed from the Idea Store’s own website <http://www.ideastore.co.uk/community-information>. This service ensures that people can find up to date information about health services, local groups, clubs and organisations in Tower Hamlets. A listing on the directory is free, making it an invaluable asset to any organisation locally trying to promote their services and reach a wider audience.

The Idea Store service focuses on three main areas: Health, Employability and Digital inclusion supported by a fourth portfolio on volunteering which has created a number of volunteer roles that support co-production of services.

Health

The Idea Store health offer provides:

- A trusted community space
- Assisted digital access
- Outreach to vulnerable groups
- Health information and signposting for e.g. those affected by common mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, sleep problems to dementia
- National reading programmes
- Social reading and recreational activities
- Volunteering and engagement
- Stop Smoking Service

Our “Medicine for the Soul” programme demonstrates how all aspects of Idea Store services, including: reading, learning, information and the provision of social activities contribute to public health in general, promoting improved health and wellbeing and supporting good mental health. Since the offer was developed, strong partnerships have been formed with the Borough’s Public Health Team

Employability

Employability is an important strand of work in Idea Store Learning, which is supported by the provision of information, and in more informal initiatives like job clubs and

employment workshops across the stores. Numerous engagement strategies are used that exploit the diverse needs and demographic makeup of the borough to better target courses. For example to coincide with International Women's day in March, a women's job fair and practical employability workshops have been organised covering interviews, CV writing and perfect pitching. These are all promoted to learners.

Digital Inclusion

The Idea Stores provide the largest and most accessible *FREE* internet network in the borough. About a third of Idea Store's membership of 72,009 uses their card to access internet services via Idea Store digital devices such as laptops and tablets. This figure excludes those who routinely use personal WIFI enabled devices e.g. laptops, tablets and mobiles within stores and in surrounding areas to access the internet.

The expansion of digital resources in the form of E-books including reference materials, online magazines and music streaming services is also a significant pull factor in encouraging further engagement with online digital resources.

We therefore not only make a vital contribution in widening Internet access but also in developing digital skills and capabilities to realise the benefits of the internet and digital technologies.

Volunteering

Volunteering is an important offer for Idea Store learners and a total of 3,327 hours were provided by volunteers in the classroom in 2018/19.

Many of our learners have embraced the opportunity to work alongside our qualified tutors to support other adult learners in the classroom. This is a great progression pathway for those learners seeking to develop their employability skills and social skills. It has also proven to support learners in increasing their confidence and self-esteem. Some learners volunteer with us because they really value the service they received from Idea Store Learning and are keen to be more involved and share their learning with other learners. Others simply wish to keep busy or give back to their community through volunteering.

Various courses are supported each term, across a wide range of curriculum areas, as outlined in the tables below. Additionally, some volunteers have also assisted at Idea Store events and with administrative tasks at our Head Office. This has resulted in a further 500+ volunteer hours in 2018/19. Many volunteers have gone on to secure paid employment and higher education whilst many continue to volunteer with us, term after term.

Feedback on the volunteering programme is extremely positive, from both volunteers and tutors involved. Here are just a few examples of direct feedback received from Classroom Volunteers in 2018/19, taken from supervision forms:

I've found the experience stimulating and interesting for me and the learners. My skills have improved during this volunteering!

I think it is very important for learners with multiple needs to have an opportunity to be involved in different courses and have support because they will improve a lot, not only in the specific subject but also in their life.

This was a useful experience volunteering; it helped me to interact with a group in a professional capacity.

The tutor has given me advice and been very supportive.

I enjoyed a great experience as classroom volunteer, because I could support the learners and I got nice feedback from everyone too. Thank you!

Without working as a volunteer with this class, I would not have applied for the CELTA, so it has been a very valuable experience for me!

Partnership with WorkPath

WorkPath is the LBTH employment and skills service and delivers three key functions: IAG; employer and client engagement and recruitment support; and Supported Employment programmes for specific groups.

As part of the WorkPath service, every client is asked to undertake a BKSB assessment. This provides the service with core information on a client's functional skills levels and can identify a potential learning difficulty which makes it easier to refer clients to the correct training. The majority of training delivered to clients is commissioned from outside the service, either delivered by our key partners, such as Poplar Harca, local VCS providers or other learning providers commissioned and under contract. Delivery includes a mix of sector specific, functional skills and employability training. Following a recent restructure the service is currently setting up a Dynamic Purchasing System (an open tendering framework) to better facilitate future commissioning which will include sector training with modules on employability skills, and stand-alone contracts to deliver employability skills.

Idea Store Learning directly delivers courses of ESOL and functional skills for the intense Supported Employment programmes which support around 180 clients per year. The inclusion of this training for clients applying for and then undertaking training for the Women in Health & Social Care programme and the Childcare Apprenticeship programme has improved initial assessment scores and completion rates, and feedback from clients has highlighted other benefits such as being able to support their children with school work and feeling more confident in everyday life. The two services plan to expand this delivery and further develop the digital skills offer.

WorkPath recruited a Community Training Hub co-ordinator in 2017. Under this remit, the Hub Co-ordinator has been working alongside Idea Store Learning's Skills for Life Programme Manager to develop an ESOL Hub. This has included an online map and directory to improve access to ESOL for LBTH residents and a monthly Newsletter for practitioners to share upcoming opportunities.

Partnership with Public Health

Community Navigators are on-site at Idea Stores Chrisp Street, Watney Market and Whitechapel to provide support and information on health and wellbeing as well as finances, employment, education, housing and social activities. They can help to identify needs, set goals and find the right service to make the changes the resident want using our online tool, the Wellbeing Wheel.

External Partnerships

Idea Store Learning is a member of the London Central Lifelong Learning partnership whose aims are to:

1. Collaborate at a strategic level to maximise the potential to positively influence local decision making in the funding and development/provision of adult community learning in Central London.
2. Develop the tools, mechanisms and networks to effectively promote the purpose, value and benefits of adult community learning in central London.
3. Establish governance arrangements to support the collaboration.
4. Develop partnerships and cross organisational working to enhance ongoing quality support and improvement.
5. Provide shared training and development activities and events that will benefit the organisational and professional development of Central London providers.
6. Develop an adult community learning curriculum for Central London that meets local need, eliminates unnecessary duplication, facilitates learner progression and effectively prepares our learners/residents for the future.
7. Develop collaborative arrangements to maximise funding, improve efficiencies, reduce costs and support provider financial sustainability.
8. Work in partnership to access new funding opportunities and diversify the funding base.
9. Develop organisational and institutional capacities.

This organisation is relatively new so the impact is yet to be developed, but workshops organised for stakeholders across the sub region, have contributed to further development. Meetings are also progressing with regards to curriculum review and the new Ofsted Framework.

Idea Store Learning is also part of a Tri-Borough project with Haringey and Lewisham which has been set up as a flexible peer lead project. The range of discussion has covered:

- Shared classroom visits
- RARPA
- ILP templates
- Attendance & Punctuality
- Employability

This project has been running for 6 months and outcomes are still to be measured, however staff and managers have benefited from shared practice.

At curriculum level, Idea Store Learning managers sit on a range of groups including the LBTH ESOL Steering Group (facilitated by Idea Store Learning), the ESOL Co-ordination in London forum (facilitated by the GLA) and peer lead networks including the London ACL ESOL Managers forum and the London ACL English and Maths Network. They also engage in Nationally facilitated forums including Natecla and the ETF's English and Maths practitioners group.

Who benefits from Idea Store Learning?

75% of learners come from within the borough and 22% come from immediate surrounding boroughs. 85% of in-borough learners come from post codes identified as economically disadvantaged.

BAME enrolments	3811	47%
White Non British	1665	21%
White British	1931	24%
Not Declared	623	8%

54% of Idea Store learners receive fee waivers.

Learners have varying motivations for enrolling on courses. The LBTH Learner Satisfaction Survey 2019 showed that 33% of learners wanted to help their children and 60% wanted to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

The 2016 OFSTED inspection judged that:

- Many learners are able to play a more active part in their communities by using English, communication and other skills developed on courses.
- Learners engaged in family learning programmes are able to assist their children more effectively with schoolwork and communicate more confidently and productively with their children's schools.
- A good proportion of learners develop employment skills that allow them to gain jobs or to begin earning an income from craft or other practical activities.