

Statement to the Southwark Education and Children's Services scrutiny committee from the Southwark Save Adult Learning campaign

The Adult Learning service has already seen significant class closures since the introduction of the new pricing and 'unique learner' recruitment targets this academic year. Our campaign warned management and the council of this effect when the new structure was introduced - and our predictions turned out to be true - much to our dismay.

We do not accept the draconian economic logic of those explanations and we believe they are not acceptable on a social level. Our responses and comments (and indeed our entire campaign) arise from a commitment to the survival of accessible and affordable arts, crafts, dance, movement and other 'non-basic skills' courses within Southwark's Adult Learning service.

We believe that the service under the new rules is not viable and will wither. Given the thriving arts community in Southwark, this is a significant withdrawal of a much-needed service within the borough. We have at every juncture offered our services as volunteers to promote the service on stalls at festivals and local events, and taster days, and we reiterate that commitment now. We believe that positive action is required to ensure that these courses are available, accessible and affordable to the people of Southwark.

*Southwark Save Adult Learning campaign 3/3/11*