

ADULT LITERACY IN GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE REPORT SUMMARY

The size of the problem is difficult to estimate, but 2020 data suggests that approximately 48.6% of the working-age population in Greater Lincolnshire held an NVQ level 2 qualification or below. Indeed, 14% of the population was found to hold an NVQ level 1 only, and 7.1% held no qualification whatsoever.

Barriers to improving adult literacy in Greater Lincolnshire manifest in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:

I. Lack of access to appropriate education and programs

II. Technology deployed in inefficient ways

III. Systemic barriers to learners associated with gender, ethnicity, and learning difficulties

IV. Particular challenges exist for adults for whom English is an additional language

V. Poor levels of trust in services, stigma, and anxiety

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**THERE ARE SEVERAL
CHALLENGES
IDENTIFIED TO THE
PERSONAL AND
PROFESSIONAL
ADVANCEMENT OF
ADULTS WHICH ARE
TIED TO THEIR
LITERACY LEVELS.**



WHERE WE'RE AT TODAY

The impact of the challenges rooted in adult literacy levels in Greater Lincolnshire is far reaching and impacts multiple groups and industries:

For individuals, lack of appropriate support for improving adult literacy has tangible impacts on:

- i. Their ability to effectively engage in public life.
- ii. Their achievements, their personal and professional wellbeing, their aspirations.
- iii. The achievement, aspirations, and civic engagement of their wider peer group.

For employers, lack of appropriate adult literacy training for employees has an impact on:

- i. Their talent pool.
- ii. Their business costs.
- iii. The programs that they engage with and the impact that they have from those programs (for example, apprenticeships are very popular but they are not necessarily having a tangible impact on raising the floor for adult literacy).

For the economy at large, lack of appropriate adult literacy training has an impact on innovation, including the deployment of new technology.

There are spatial aspects to how literacy challenges have manifested throughout Lincolnshire.

I. Engagement in initiatives has historically been higher in urban areas rather than rural or coastal.

II. There are more opportunities in urban areas.

III. Transport links have historically been causing problems with access to training programmes in rural areas.

IV. All training providers find that they have to work a lot harder to build up trust with individuals and businesses in coastal areas in particular in order to get them to engage with programs and services.

V. Areas with high immigrant populations on the coast (like Boston and Skegness, or North Lincolnshire) face additional challenges due to a lack of engagement on behalf of potential learners and a lack of ESOL provision.

WHERE WE'RE GOING

I. In many cases, existing providers have the experience and capability to develop support for adult learners – resources are often the missing step.

II. Development of services that can work in collaboration with existing providers is important if the experience and capability is not available.

III. What is needed: Compassionate, bespoke, 1-to-1 functional skills building to help bridge the gap between apprenticeship requirements for adult learners; Development of more adult-appropriate literacy teaching and learning tools; Additional support for learners in rural areas; evening out provision between urban, rural and coastal areas; Compassionate, bespoke provision for learners in digital poverty; Development and strengthening of course provisions for EAL/ESOL learners at all levels.

IV. It is crucial for providers to build trust with learners and adopt a person-centric approach to the work.