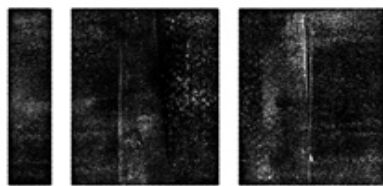


ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023






literacy100

ADDRESS

18 Glamorgan Road
Kingston upon Thames
KT1 4HP

ONLINE

 www.literacy100.org
 [@Literacy_100](https://twitter.com/Literacy_100)
 helloliteracy100@gmail.com

OFFICIAL

Registered Charity
number: 1198309

Literacy100 is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation ('Foundation' Model)
Date of Constitution: 1st March 2022

OUR MISSION



Literacy100 campaigns for literacy services in England and Wales that are accessible to adults with a history of complex needs, including homelessness.

We believe that all citizens should have the chance to participate in the reading and writing activities the rest of us take for granted.

BACKGROUND



Independence in adult life is founded on numerous skills, abilities and favourable circumstances. At its most mundane, we take for granted our capacity to shop for groceries, navigate transport systems, understand our medical notes, write emails and send birthday cards. For men and women who are unable to read or write, any of these might present an anxiety-provoking challenge.

Studies of adults being supported in the homelessness sector have found that over 50% struggle to cope with the literacy demands of daily life.^{1 2} Some go on to improve their skills, but stories of those who do not are depressingly common. In 2006, The London Skills Commission identified homeless people, particularly those with additional learning needs, to be amongst the group least well served by the national Skills for Life programme.³ It is unlikely that the situation has improved since 2012. By 2021, there were nine million adults in England with low basic skills, and participation in English courses had decreased by 63%.⁴

We have identified two key barriers to successful, sustained engagement with education for adults affected by homelessness.

BACKGROUND.....

First is the complex trauma that commonly blights lives and often goes back to childhood..⁵ Consequences include poor mental and physical health, substance abuse, and chaotic lifestyles.

Low self-esteem, apprehension and fear of failure are their companions.

Even to cross the threshold of an educational establishment can be daunting. Once in the classroom, memories are revived of past failures, humiliations and unhappiness. These challenges need to be recognised and understood by providers, with appropriate adjustments made to the delivery of their services.

Second, flexibility to respond to the challenges of individual learners is reduced by pressures on funding. The halving of the adult education budget in the last ten years has been accompanied by an emphasis on accreditation. Courses are time-limited, and outcomes are measured through formalised testing. Equally importantly, the central focus on higher level attainments (Level 2 and above) has not been matched by a strategy to address the numbers needing to acquire the foundations of reading and writing. The nearly ten percent of recently homeless adults who are functionally illiterate have been left with few places to go.

We know that the outcome of failing to address these issues is significant, affecting the individual, society and the economy:

BACKGROUND.....

impoverished employment and housing opportunities; lower social and political participation; poorer mental and physical health; and greater support needs.^{6 7} A man or woman affected by homelessness should not find it so difficult to access educational environments that can meet their learning and psychological needs. At a minimum, we advocate for greater availability of unaccredited and community-based services, plus wider provision of individual or small-group lessons.

Those of us who take our literacy for granted should endeavour to understand the opportunities that these measures will open up for adults who have not been so fortunate.

IVAN'S STORY

“How were things for you when you were growing up?”

“It wasn't easy. My dad was angry with me a lot of the time, especially about my reading and writing. He used to hit me. Then I lived in quite a few foster homes over the years. I didn't feel I belonged anywhere, really.”

“How about school?”

“Well, every time I changed foster home I had to go to another school. The teachers didn't know what to do with me in any of them. I found out years later I'm dyslexic. Of course, back in the seventies and eighties there was no support for my kind of difficulties. On top of that, I used to get a lot of name-calling from the other kids. Everyone told me I was a dunce. In the end, I left school to look for work. But I still couldn't read or spell anything.”

Did you find a job?

“I had a few jobs. What happened every time was I had to deal with some sort of reading or writing. Because I couldn't do it, I thought of reasons to ask for help. I broke more than one pair of glasses, until I couldn't afford it any more. Then I tried punching a wall so I didn't have to write. It was so shameful. I still remember it.”

What other work did you have?

“I did bar work for a bit. But, because of my dyslexia, I couldn't remember the customers' orders. In the end, I drank more than I sold. I lost that job, of course, and I think that's when I started having a drink problem.”

Were you in a relationship then?

“Yes, I was married, and actually my wife helped me get started on my reading. After a while though, she didn't like the drinking and she left me. That was hard.”



IVAN'S STORY....

How did you manage?

"I did a bit of scrap metal work, but then I did something I shouldn't and ended up in prison for a year. When I came out, I was on the streets – and I that's where I stayed for the next ten years."

That must have been really difficult.

"It was. But you get used to it and I had a few friends. In the end, an outreach team came and found me. They sorted me out with somewhere to live and got me into AA for my drinking. It was them who told me I ought to do something about my reading too. They helped me get a place at college, and the teachers there had me tested for dyslexia. I was so relieved, I remember saying, "So I'm not lazy then!"

How did you get on with your learning?

"It wasn't too bad at first, but I found it hard to keep up with the others in the class. I did do a test towards the end, but I didn't pass it, so I left."

But you're reading and writing much better now, aren't you?

"Yes, well, the charity told me to give it a go with their dyslexia teacher. It was just me in the lessons, which was better. But it still wasn't easy. She wasn't going to give up, though and I think she really understood my problems. After a couple of years I was doing much better, and that helped me a lot with the volunteer work I was doing for the charity. Then my teacher talked to my manager, and they got me a laptop and computer program that recognises my voice. So it was easier to write my reports."

How are things going now?

"I've had a job now for five years, helping other people who've had a bit of a hard life – like me!"

What would your message to them be?

"Definitely don't give up. If I can do it, so can anyone!"

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



For men and women made vulnerable by homelessness, the path to finding a safe place to live and to building fulfilling futures can be rocky. Not uncommonly, challenges arise when basic skills are inadequate to cope independently with the demands of day-to-day life. The solution is not always obvious: for people with a history of trauma, chaos and complex needs, engagement with mainstream educational opportunities can understandably be problematic. Professionals at Literacy100 have witnessed the frustration of enormously apprehensive adults who have looked in vain for a safe place to improve their reading and writing. But models of provision do exist in which engagement by vulnerable learners is successfully supported and lives transformed. Crucially, these services focus not on the system but on the individual.

Sadly, their availability is too scarce.

Central government initiatives such as the existing Multiply numeracy programme and planned compulsory mathematics to eighteen have not been mirrored in programmes for literacy and English. Of additional concern is the government's current focus on employment as the central target for adult education. Should this be applied to basic skills, it risks a greater emphasis on accreditation, which will inevitably reduce flexibility in teaching.

To add weight to our campaign during the last year, Literacy100 has built further active partnerships with organisations and individuals from a range of fields.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR....

We are pleased to be working with colleagues from sectors including homelessness, technology research, adult, further and higher education, and the promotion of adult literacy.

The breadth and depth of their expertise is helping us to identify key principles for accessible provision, as well as pragmatic proposals for change. We plan to distil our recommendations into a Charter of Good Practice. Its publication later in 2023 will be a significant milestone in our mission to make literacy learning accessible to all adults, whatever their vulnerabilities.

FROM 2022 TO 2023

2022 has seen necessary changes and some significant progress in the development of Literacy100 as a charity.

A landmark was achieved in March, when Literacy100 was registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. By formalising of our status there are clear benefits in terms of accountability and public confidence.

We were advised by the Commission to focus our purpose and objects more on campaigning and less on educational activities. We were sorry, therefore, to end our seminar series, and note the ongoing need for good quality training opportunities focusing on literacy and homelessness. Our final two seminars were delivered by Julia Olisa in January and by Doctor Anne Margaret Smith of ELT Well in April. Julia's session explored ways in which frontline workers in the homelessness sector can support clients with literacy needs. Anne Margaret provided a valuable overview of theoretical principles underpinning practical strategies to develop literacy in people who are also English language learners.

Literacy100's key strategic event of 2022 was a forum hosted in July by City Lit College, London. Fifty professionals attended, many in strategic positions within their organisations and all interested in the quality of adult literacy provision. There was consensus that a considerable gap exists in current services, particularly for individuals with the most complex needs.

We were delighted that the majority attending the forum agreed to contribute their time and considerable expertise to work towards a Charter of good practice, to be published towards the end of 2023.

FROM 2022 TO 2023.....

Working groups were formed, to focus on the issues of learning, homelessness, technology, research and advocacy. The Charter aims to achieve greater access to adult literacy services and higher quality learning programmes. Where possible, these will leverage existing resources, but we acknowledge that increased funding is also likely to be needed.

To be impactful, our recommendations will require endorsement from key bodies: central and local government; adult and further education providers; the homelessness sector; charities promoting literacy; and library services.

In 2023 to 2024, we will consider how pilot projects might be funded to provide evidence for the efficacy of principles established in the Charter.

LOIS'S STORY

"I came to England from the Caribbean when I was eight. I didn't have much schooling when I came, and I couldn't read or write. My mum and dad moved us around London quite a bit for the next few years, and all the time I was changing schools. I didn't learn like the other kids could. When I left school, I still couldn't read or write much. So I got a cleaning job.

The next few years were hard. I had my two daughters, but their dad left me. By the time I was thirty something – I can't remember exactly – I didn't have a job any more, so it was hard to keep things going. My health started to go downhill, and I had mental health problems.

Thank goodness I was put in touch with this charity. They helped me get a new place to live and I was so grateful.

I couldn't get work for a long time. What I really wanted was to be a carer. I still do. I knew they have to write reports and that sort of thing, so I had to try to do some studying somehow. All the time I kept thinking about school. It had a real effect on me because it made me think I was stupid and just couldn't learn. So I didn't like the idea of sitting in a classroom again. Then one day my support worker said, "Why don't you try our one-to-one literacy service?" I was scared about it, I can tell you.

But I met the teacher, and he told me not to worry. He'd see what I needed to learn and wouldn't try to rush me.

It's been a year now, and my reading and writing have come on a lot. I'm amazed really. So, I'm going to try college. If things go well, I'll pass some exams and then I can train for a carer's job. I never thought I'd say that before, but I do think things are going to get better for me.

I hope my girls will be proud."



FINANCE REPORT

	£	£
Bank balance at 1 February 2022		2,150
Incoming resources		
<i>Donations</i>		
FP R Hoyle R. Hoyle	250	
Michael Hall	960	
Teddington Rotary Club	500	
Gallantry Medallists League	235	
BBC – Sir K Olisa Fee	500	
ITV – Sir K Olisa Fee	485	
		2,930
<i>Interest</i>		
CAF Bank 27/06/2022	0	
CAF Bank 26/09/2022	1	
CAF Bank 25/12/2022	2	
		3
Resources expended		
Bank Charges Feb 22 to Jul 22 @ £8 per month	(48)	
Bank Charges Jul 22 to Feb 23 @£5 per month	(35)	
Wix website Hosting costs Jun22	(66)	
Wix website Hosting costs Jan23	(137)	
Homeless Link subscription	(54)	
Google Domains (Jul 22 +Nov 22)	(20)	
Zoom Subscription	(144)	
City LIT Forum fee	(960)	
Travel reimbursement	(106)	
		(1,570)
Bank balance at 15 February 2023		3,512

THE TEAM



Julia Olisa	Chair Dyslexia specialist Literacy & Homelessness	Trustee
Hilary Stevens	Finance Officer Business & Development	Trustee
Alessy Beaver	Communications Homelessness, education and sustainable employment	Trustee
Linda Constable	Libraries consultant	
Kat Goodacre	Research consultant	
Tasa Hendrix	Website consultant	
Audrey Mitchell	Homelessness consultant	

FRIENDS & PARTNERS



Kelly Baker

Sue Ball

Born Barikor

David Barzilay

Nahid Behzardi

Gavin Benn

John Casey

Gary Chambers

Atif Choudhury

Gill Cochrane

Andy Cook

John Deakin

Sam Duncan

Lara Farah

Simon Fuller

Diane Gardner

Robert Glick

Simon Goodier

Chloe Gregg

Tasa Hendrix

Tom Henry

Michael Hall

Greg Hurst

Keith Hancox

Michael Jones

Jen Kiernan

Usha Kong

Jon Kuhrt

Liz Loly

Hugh Look

Daryl Maisey

Mark Malcomson

Foysol Miah

Paul Mitchell

Laurie Oliva

Kenneth Olisa

Rebecca Perry

Carla Priddon

Geetha Rabindrakumar

Alex Stevenson

Jeremy Swain

Bill Tidnum

Aleksandra Trepka

Ian Wollington

REFERENCES

ENDNOTES

- 1** Dumoulin, D. & Jones, K. (2014). Reading counts: Why English and Maths skills matter in tackling homelessness. London: St Mungo's Broadway/The Work Foundation
- 2** Olisa, J, Patterson, J & Wright, F (2010) Turning the Key: Portraits of low literacy amongst people with experience of homelessness. London. Thames Reach.
<https://tinyurl.com/ypaupauc>
- 3** London Development Agency (2006). The London Skills for Life Strategy.
<https://tinyurl.com/5bu75c6y>
- 4** Learning and Work Institute (2021). Getting the basics right: The case for action on adult basic skills.
<https://tinyurl.com/yc3xwf29>
- 5** <https://tinyurl.com/bdd889zj>
- 6** Bynner, J. & Parsons, S. (2006). New Light on Literacy and Numeracy. London: NRDC. <https://tinyurl.com/mebf3me5>
- 7** Dugdale, G. & Clark, C. (2008). <https://tinyurl.com/yc6z4asv>.

Bank balance at 01 February 2022	2150.12
---	---------

Incoming resources

Donations

FP R Hoyle R. Hoyle	250.00
Michael Hall	960.00
Teddington Rotary Club	500.00
Gallantry Medallists Leag	235.00
BBC - Sir K Olisa Fee	500.00
ITV - Sir K Olisa Fee	485.00
Miss Emma Dawson - ITV Sir K Olisa Fee	242.50

3172.50

Interest

CAF Bank 27/06/2022	0.16
CAF Bank 26/09/2022	0.70
CAF Bank 25/12/2022	1.65
CAF Bank 27/03/2023	1.77
CAF Bank 26/06/2023	1.75

6.03

Resources expended

Bank Charges Feb 22 to Jul 22 @ £8 per mo	(48.00)
Bank Charges Jul 22 to Jun 23 @£5 per mon	(55.00)
Wix website Hosting costs Jun22	(66.24)
Wix website Hosting costs Jan23	(136.80)
Wix website Hosting costs May23	(132.48)
Homeless.Org.UK subscription	(54.00)
Google Domains (Jul 22 +Nov 22)	(20.00)
Zoom Subscription (2022)	(143.88)
Zoom Subscription (2023)	(143.88)
City LIT Forum fee	(960.00)
Travel reimbursement J Casey	(106.45)

-1866.73

Bank balance at 26 June 2023	3461.92
-------------------------------------	---------

3,178.53