

Impact Review 2015



For a future without poverty

TOYNBEE
HALL





How we work

We work on the frontline in the struggle against poverty. Based in the East End of London we give some of the UK's most deprived communities a voice, providing access to free advice and support and working together to tackle social injustice.

We are

A place where our local community can come for help, but also join with social innovators and policymakers to create practical solutions to tackle poverty and inequality.

A pioneer, developing new ways to tackle poverty in all its forms. We are ambitious in our plans to pioneer new solutions to old problems and creative in how we develop these ideas.

A voice for all those who use our services. We gather evidence that informs our research and service development. We use this as a basis to give people opportunities to learn, develop skills and have a stronger voice.

A source of help in a crisis, we provide advice and support to help people through difficult times. We also work with them to build their resilience, skills and wellbeing for a better future.

Who we help

The community in which we work is one of the poorest in the UK, with 49% of children in Tower Hamlets living in poverty. Last year our services provided vital support for 13,016 people. Our community support work, youth and older people's projects, advice services and financial inclusion work are all geared towards supporting those who live in some of the most deprived conditions in the UK.

2014 – 15

How we made a difference



13,016
We helped
13,016 people



6854
people came to us
for advice



2126
people visited our Free
Legal Advice Centre



644
people sought help through our
Macmillan advice service



2384
Our Older People's Wellbeing
Centre had 2384 visits



422
participants took part in our
younger peoples projects



170
women received language support
through our Deesha project



814
Our community organisers
met 814 people



132
people participated in our
Money Mentors project



How we helped

Older people

In our community older people face many challenges. Often isolated and suffering from poor health, their days can be long and empty. Our older people's services work to enhance their quality of life, to bring them into contact with others and to improve their health and wellbeing. We work with them to ensure their voices are heard and they receive the support they need.

This year our Wellbeing Centre had 2384 visits from older people. We provided them with a warm place to meet, a chance to socialise and something to eat. We ran 486 fitness activities and provided a range of health information sessions on topics including healthy hearts, diabetes, dementia and food and nutrition.

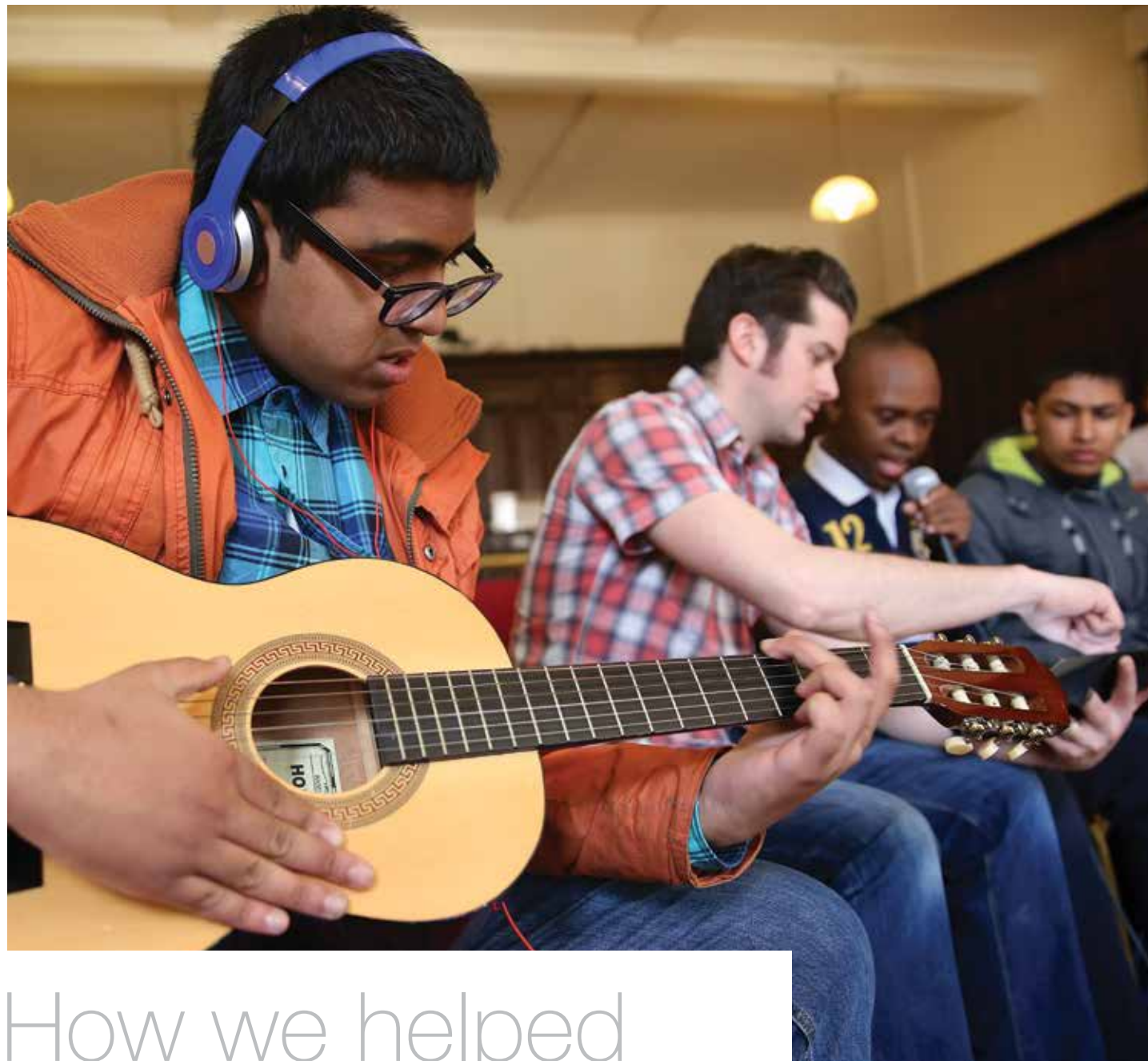
Our outreach services are a life line for older people who find it harder to leave the house. Our outreach workers provided specialist advice and support to over 650 people. They give advice on issues including housing, benefits and pension credits.

Our local community

A strong and resilient community helps families thrive. Our community engagement projects focus on building skills and confidence and putting people in control of their lives and surroundings. This year our community organisers met 814 people, their work extends the reach and impact of our services, engaging harder to reach groups and ensuring we are providing support to the whole community.

Our Deesha project works with local women to improve their English language skills and employability. The project gives them the confidence to communicate more effectively, allowing them to integrate more successfully into the community. Classes deal with real life situations, such as internet safety, bullying and filling in benefit forms. This year over 170 women participated in the project.

Asma, a mother of six, has an abusive husband who threw her out of her home. Following intervention by her social worker, she returned home. Her husband tried preventing her from attending Deesha classes, but again her social worker intervened. Asma brought a Universal Credit form to class and explained the benefit is paid to her husband, who spends it on drinking and gambling. Thanks to her newfound literacy and awareness of her rights Asma has applied for the benefit to be paid to her, thereby safeguarding herself and her children.



How we helped

Younger people

Young people face many pressures, we believe that supporting them early is crucial to give them the confidence they need to reach their potential. It is only by raising their aspirations and wellbeing that they can be lifted out of poverty.

Last year we worked with 422 young people. Our flagship youth programme Make it! is a mentoring programme working with young people to increase their skills, confidence and wellbeing so that they can better engage with school and build positive relationships.

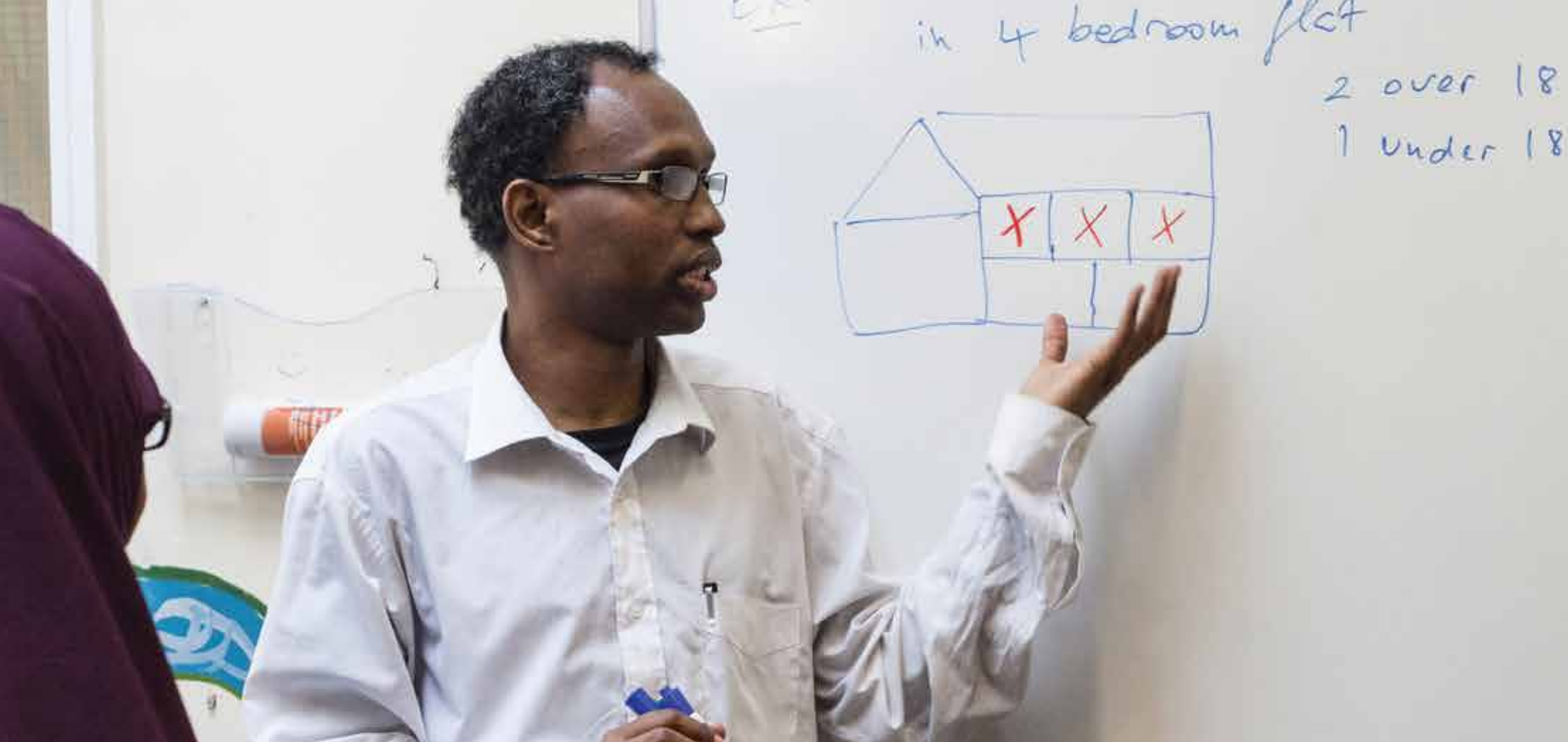
Stephen rarely attended school. Quiet and withdrawn, he struggled to build relationships and didn't have a positive role model. He disliked attention and felt nervous and vulnerable when his peers and teachers made 'a big deal' about him coming into school. On the Make it! project he received intensive mentoring and support, he went from strength to strength, becoming a leader amongst his peers. Make it! helped Stephen to recognise his potential and build a strong group of friends. He is more engaged in school, rarely misses any classes and is confident when speaking to others.

"Stephen's attendance at school is a direct result of Make it!"

Head of Year 8, Oakland's School



This year 92% of Make it! students reported an increase in confidence.



How we helped

People to become more financially included

In our local community 47% of people owe money. Our work on financial inclusion provides access to information and advice to help households mitigate the worst effects of poverty. We do this not only through innovative projects to help people manage their money but also by working to influence the financial environment that causes many of their problems.

We see firsthand the life changing effect that building financial inclusion has on individuals, families and the wider community. Our National Services team uses these experiences to help other organisations improve the financial

inclusivity of their practices, providing strategic consulting and capacity building support. This year 80% of the organisations we worked with reported that with our help they were able to have a positive impact on the financial health of their clients.

Our Money Mentors project works with local people to give them the skills to manage their money, improve their financial health and then to share their knowledge in the community and help others to do the same. This year we worked with 132 Money Mentors.

For every £1 invested into the Money Mentors project there is a social return of more than £3

Before Money Mentors, Sara had lots of different bank accounts and would take out loans and overdrafts from the bank. She was generally not on good terms with the bank. Since Money Mentors she has managed to close these accounts and open a new account which doesn't charge interest. She feels her awareness of banking services has grown and now she tries to spend just what she has. If she cannot afford something she will either not get it or save for it instead.

Those in need of advice

Our advice services give the local community somewhere to go when they need it most. We help people to understand their rights, access support and receive tailored advice. From our Free Legal Advice Centre to our debt and Macmillan advice services, this year 6854 people accessed our advice services.

Capitalise is the pan-London debt advice partnership led by Toynbee Hall and delivered by partner organisations. This year the service provided face to face debt advice to 19,519 people across London. The Capitalise project uses the Toynbee Hall MAP tool to assess clients at different stages of their financial inclusion journey. This digital tool was developed with the aim of understanding more about the causes of debt and how to more effectively help people who are in debt.

"The Toynbee Hall Free Legal Advice Centre has been my only hope...an oasis in the desert" Rahim

Moving pictures - a mental health project

Managed by our Community team, the Moving Pictures project brought together a group of volunteers, all with lived experience of mental illness, to write scripts exploring the stigma and discrimination which still surrounds the words 'mental health'. The group made four short films which were shown at Toynbee Hall and across the East End.

It's been inspiring to be a part of making these films, their stories came from personal experiences which makes them both unique and powerful.

Kate Lovell, Moving Pictures Project Coordinator



"Toynbee Hall is a prime example of London's living heritage where a combination of over a century of tangible and intangible heritage continues to serve the needs of Londoners today"

Blondel Cluff, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund London Committee.

Celebrating our past

In December 2014 we entered our 130th year. On Christmas Eve 1884, Samuel and Henrietta Barnett opened the doors of Toynbee Hall for the first time. A radical social experiment, they believed that the rich should not just work with the poor but live amongst them and that education, equality and access to justice could transform lives.

We marked the year with a celebration of our history, celebrating not only the architecture and heritage of our Halls but also the pioneering social reform work introduced by the Barnett's. Inspired by their legacy of discussion and debate and their skill in bringing groups together we held our first Smoking Room Debate for over 100 years.

Smoking Room Debates were an essential part of Toynbee Hall life for over 22 years, every Thursday from 1888-1910, 250 people gathered together to debate the key issues of the day. Our contemporary Smoking Room Debate, chaired by Jon Snow, brought over 100 people together in to the halls to debate:
Inequality: 1884 – 2014 How much has changed?

While planning for our future

Over the next two years Toynbee Hall will be undertaking a significant regeneration of our East End site. We will be working both to conserve and restore the 1884 Grade II halls as well as to create a new building that will house our frontline services and advice centre.

The regeneration will allow us to create the right physical setting to deliver enhanced services. This will allow us to help more people, give us financial security, strengthen our community ties and mean that we can preserve and share our heritage with the public to inspire the next generation of social reformers.

This year was really important in the life of the project and we bought our vision closer to reality in October when we secured a £1.7 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Thank you to all our supporters.

We believe in a future without poverty. Luckily there are many people that share our belief.

From walking the London Legal Walk, to volunteering at our Free Legal Advice Centre, from running marathons and climbing mountains to dressing up as Father Christmas we would like to thank all of those who volunteered, donated and supported us in 2014-15.



“The real work of Toynbee Hall can indeed be never recorded upon paper; it’s only record is in the lives of men”

Mr T.E. Harvey (Warden 1906 – 1912)

Help us create a future
without poverty

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