

Impact Review

TOYNBEE
HALL



2019

Our year in numbers

Our impact in 2018/19

2

This has been another significant year for Toynbee Hall, and for the people and communities we work with. We moved a step closer to the completion of the redevelopment of our historic halls by opening its doors and moving all of our operations back to our original site. We also reached another milestone as we opened our brand new Advice and Wellbeing Centre.

Reaching this stage of the redevelopment has given us a vital springboard to enable us to meet new challenges and ensure we are best placed to support those who we work with and the people that need us.

Now we are back home we'll be working with the community and together set out how we can ensure we best serve the people of East London and further afield.

While the redevelopment has been ongoing we have worked tirelessly to ensure that we continue to offer a full range of vital, easy to access services, informed and co-designed by the people that use them.

The next few pages will show how our work has made a difference for individuals, communities and beyond.

Milestones this year...



Linkage Plus is a borough-wide partnership that supports people over 50 living in Tower Hamlets to improve their wellbeing and build social networks.



We reopened our historic halls after **4** years of restoration

The Linkage Plus partnership turned **10**

We made our London-wide debt advice partnership more accessible and easier to find

 Debt Free London

Our Free Legal Advice Centre celebrated its **120th** year

Sir Nicolas Bratza, Former President of the European Court of Human Rights and Lord David Neuberger, Former President of the Supreme Court of the UK, joined us for a special event celebrating the 120th anniversary of our Free Legal Advice Centre which continues to provide access to justice to thousands of Londoners.

Direct advice and support

No one should have to tackle their problems alone. We empower people to find their way out of a range of difficult situations through high quality advice services which they help to design. We help thousands of people across London each year with issues such as debt, housing, employment, welfare benefits and navigating the justice system to help them build a better, more secure future.



23,150

people were helped across our London-wide debt advice partnership, which relaunched as **Debt Free London** to be more accessible, making it easier for indebted Londoners to find the high quality, free debt advice they need.

Debt Free London helped:

Debt Free London provided advice on more issues. On average people received advice in more than three areas, helping build longer term financial resilience.



61% with communication and dealing with creditors



58% with drawing up a budget of incomings/outgoings



57% with finding ways of increasing income

65%

of debt clients who responded to our survey after receiving advice say that they are keeping to a budget

67%

of **Free Legal Advice Centre** clients felt empowered to exercise their legal rights

The **Free Legal Advice Centre** provided quality, pro-bono legal support on

1,121

CASES

38

people in the City of London Square Mile were prevented from becoming homeless by **City Advice**

Toynbee Hall Welfare Rights Service on behalf of Macmillan obtained

£3,220,000

worth of unclaimed benefits for cancer patients in East London

77%

of **Macmillan** clients are more aware of their benefit entitlement and welfare rights

“ I was about to be made homeless, now I have benefits and PIP, which I didn't realise would be available to me. This has enabled me to find a flat and start to get my life back on track. I will be forever grateful for the fantastic support that your organisation provides”

Claire

“The moment I spoke to an advisor at Toynbee Hall they believed me and didn't doubt me. One advisor gave me lots of moral support and the other solved all my problems. They took me out of the darkest place in my life”

Imran

Names have been changed to protect identities

Improving community wellbeing

4

We've offered more opportunities for local older people to improve their wellbeing and guide us on what they want from centres like ours. We now have a major focus on physical exercise and health, with yoga, Tai-Chi and – thanks to a partnership with the English National Ballet – regular dance classes. Being active helps physical and mental wellbeing and helps to tackle loneliness and social isolation.

This year we've increased the number of activities in our Wellbeing Centre which has been matched by an increase in attendance. Our regular visitors tell us they are forming strong friendships, becoming more confident and getting more out of life. We also began to bring the community closer together through **Magic Me's** intergenerational workshops bridging the gap between children and older people through creative activities.



We provided a full, flexible programme of activities for older people who made

7714

visits to our Wellbeing Centre

235%

Increase in the number of individuals attending at least one activity

953

new individuals aged over 50 were helped by the Linkage Plus partnership in Tower Hamlets

“Before coming to the Wellbeing Centre I was not in good health and was very low due to living on my own. I was happy to see how welcoming the centre was and the different activities on offer. I met new people and developed friendships. It's helped me to maintain mental and physical health balance. I look forward to coming to Toynbee Hall to socialise with my friends.”

Kazia, Wellbeing Centre visitor

Names have been changed to protect identities

We held

237

social events in our Wellbeing Centre for older people to tackle loneliness and social isolation

75%

say that they made friends at the Wellbeing Centre, and over half see these friends regularly outside our opening hours

24,451

visits to Linkage Plus activities in total across the borough

Uncovering new need and co-designing solutions

Throughout this year, we've significantly enhanced our policy and research work to grow our understanding of the need around us and influence systems change. We are helping the wider community take more of a lead in shaping local priorities, through community-led research and embedding lived experience into our policy work, as well as into the design of financial products and services to ensure they are built on fairness and don't risk further excluding people.



“I find this project to be very powerful. It allows me to question my communities, about my safety.... It makes me very empowered, makes me feel very listened to”
Research Survey respondent

We launched a research report from a ground-breaking project led and shaped by the older people within our community. The report, ***'You don't really know people until you talk to them'***, revealed the findings from a year long Participatory Action Research project on the needs of older people in Tower Hamlets. After hearing the recommendations, the local authority is looking at adapting its welfare advice services and changing their transport strategy, but arguably the greatest impact has been has been creating the platform for people to be heard and bridge the gap between people and power.

At the end of 2018 we submitted evidence to the Treasury Select Committee enquiry into access to financial services. The Committee's report, published in May 2019, drew significantly on our evidence, and as a result we are engaged in more detailed work to take forward some of its recommendations. We've also shared people's experiences in the Access to Cash Review and the Scams Steering Group, addressing key issues of financial inclusion and vulnerability.

In light of the success of the older people's research project and its findings we have launched two more research projects this year. Community members will lead projects on:

**Making
Tower
Hamlets
Safer**

**Making renting
better and fairer
for young people
in East London**

Building financial health through community learning

6

Our financial training programme, Community Money Mentors, continues to help people who have experienced financial hardship build their own financial knowledge and share their learning with others. This is helping communities become more financially resilient and individuals better able to cope with unexpected costs through budgeting and savings techniques. This year we trained and employed graduates from the course to become teachers and run their own courses to new groups across London, expanding the networks of money-saving experts even further.

The number of Money Mentors who say they're 'okay' to 'very good' at managing their money more than doubled from 43% to

94%

46

graduates have been employed to teach the course to new groups since start of 2018/19

323

people graduated from the Community Money Mentors course

The number of participants budgeting increased from 47% before the course, to

90%

6 months after completing the course

90%

of learners delivered sessions in their communities



Community Money Mentors share their own personal experiences with Mark Carney (Governor of the Bank of England) in February 2019.

“Community Money Mentors is the best course I have attended as it's taught me how to budget better. I feel more in control of my finances and less stressed regarding money, debts and my bills.”

Sarah, Community Money Mentor

Names have been changed to protect identities

Renewing our space for the whole community

This year we were delighted to reopen our historic halls, and return all of our operations back to our original home. Our space now offers new education facilities and a permanent exhibition reflecting our heritage and the contribution of many people in the local area who have made us a powerhouse of social change throughout our history. We've also opened our new Advice and Wellbeing Centre that will enable us to help more people, and a new community garden space is set to open in spring 2020.



Inspiring the community through our heritage

With the renovation of our halls complete, we started a new programme of heritage activities for local people to inspire positive social change. This was led by a cohort of Residential Voluntary Workers. They have run

storytelling sessions, workshops on black history and housing activism, human rights workshops with older people; and worked with local primary schools, sixth-form colleges and youth groups. Pupils from nearby primary schools learned about children's rights, our history and the struggle of young workers in the Matchgirls Strike of 1888.

300

primary school children from our community took part in the our heritage schools project

18

workshops in three partner schools exploring the history of social change in East London

'Pillar' by Zakariya, 17

As part of a new heritage project that aims to inspire local people through our history, a group of students from Newham Sixth Form College created highly original creative responses to our historical records held at the London Metropolitan Archives. Here is Zakariya's poem and what inspired him write it.



“I was inspired to write this poem by the importance of Toynbee Hall in the 19th and 20th century. It was unique, in that it was a 'political playground' for the ideas that would dominate politics in the future, such as the welfare state. It seems a centre of rationality in the midst of a chaotic era, and that is what this piece is focusing on.”

***Born out of optimism
Formed by a criticism
Of a modern dream***

***An Industrial Revolution
That promised a solution
Building this nation's esteem***

***The poor laid discarded
The rich had departed
United Kingdom ripped down the seam***

***One hall stands in the chaos
In the back of a weathered lane
Toynbee is an anchor***

Registered Charity No. 211850. A company limited by guarantee.
Registered Office: 28 Commercial Street, London, E1 6LS.
Registered Number. 20080 England.

Copyright © Toynbee Hall 2019. All rights reserved.

Toynbee Hall
28 Commercial Street
London, E1 6LS

Email: info@toynbeehall.org.uk
Website: www.toynbeehall.org.uk

TOYNBEE
HALL



Find us on Facebook



Follow @ToynbeeHall on Twitter



Sign up to our e-newsletter online