

**Report of the Trustees, Financial Statements and Annual Report
for the year ended 31 March 2017
for Training Link**

Contents

	Page
Report of the Trustees	1
Independent Examiner's Report	2
Statement of Financial Activities	3
Balance Sheet	4
Notes to the Financial Statements	5 to 7
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	8
Annual Report	9 to 18

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2017

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2017. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

INCORPORATION

The charitable company was incorporated on 21 December 1995.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

This report should be read in conjunction with the Training Link Annual Report, included as an annex to this document.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves policy

It is expected that reserves of at least £10,000 should be held to maintain an appropriate level of working capital and to protect the future operations of Training Link from the effects of any variations in its income or expenditures as identified in the Risk Policy and any unforeseen events.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its memorandum and articles of association, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

03142188 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1051662

Registered office

54-56 Phoenix Road
London
NW1 1ES

Trustees

B Goring-Moore
F Yakup Bedirhan
Dr E Arnold
L Stanislas
M F F Alva

Company Secretary

P D Lush

Independent examiner

John Lambourne
FCA
Latham Lambourne Ltd
18 Woodlands Park
Bexley
Kent
DA5 2EL

Approved by order of the board of trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

.....
B Goring-Moore - Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Training Link

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 set out on pages three to seven.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

John Lambourne
FCA
Latham Lambourne Ltd
18 Woodlands Park
Bexley
Kent
DA5 2EL

Date:

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM				
Donations and legacies		510	-	510
Charitable activities				
Services etc		17,549	19,959	37,508
Investment income	2	246	-	246
Total		18,305	19,959	38,264
EXPENDITURE ON				
Charitable activities				
Services etc		28,446	26,568	55,014
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)				
		(10,141)	(6,609)	(16,750)
Transfers between funds	8	977	(977)	-
Net movement in funds		(9,164)	(7,586)	(16,750)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Total funds brought forward		34,988	13,086	48,074
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		25,824	5,500	31,324

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

Training Link

Balance Sheet

At 31 March 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash at bank		29,752	5,499	35,251
CREDITORS				
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(3,927)	-	(3,927)
NET CURRENT ASSETS				
		<u>25,825</u>	<u>5,499</u>	<u>31,324</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES				
		<u>25,825</u>	<u>5,499</u>	<u>31,324</u>
NET ASSETS				
		<u><u>25,825</u></u>	<u><u>5,499</u></u>	<u><u>31,324</u></u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds	8			25,825
Restricted funds				5,499
TOTAL FUNDS				
				31,324

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2017.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on and were signed on its behalf by:

.....
B Goring-Moore -Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

Deposit account interest

£
246

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2017

3. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

Other operating leases	£ <u>1,023</u>
------------------------	-------------------

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2017.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2017.

5. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

Director	1
Cleaner	1
IT Co-ordinator	1
	<u>3</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017	<u>4,700</u>	<u>8,184</u>	<u>12,884</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017	<u>4,700</u>	<u>8,184</u>	<u>12,884</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2017	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

Trade creditors	£ 1
Tax	2
Accruals and deferred income	3,167
Accrued expenses	757
	<u>3,927</u>

8. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.16 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.17 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	34,988	(10,140)	977	25,825
Restricted funds				
Phoenix Rising Project	977	-	(977)	-
City Bridge Trust	4,625	(1,625)	-	3,000
NatWest	7,484	(4,985)	-	2,499
	<u>13,086</u>	<u>(6,610)</u>	<u>(977)</u>	<u>5,499</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>48,074</u></u>	<u><u>(16,750)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>31,324</u></u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	18,305	(28,445)	(10,140)
Restricted funds			
City Bridge Trust	11,876	(13,501)	(1,625)
NatWest	7,483	(12,468)	(4,985)
Fitzdale Trust	600	(600)	-
	<u>19,959</u>	<u>(26,569)</u>	<u>(6,610)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>38,264</u></u>	<u><u>(55,014)</u></u>	<u><u>(16,750)</u></u>

9. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2017.

£

INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS

Donations and legacies

Donations 510

Investment income

Deposit account interest 246

Charitable activities

Service programme income 12,874

Grants 24,634

37,508

Total incoming resources

38,264

EXPENDITURE

Charitable activities

Staff costs 26,568

Pensions 151

Rent 1,023

Water Rates 249

Insurance 488

Light and heat 1,920

Telephone 444

Postage and stationery 1,490

Advertising 1,764

Sundries 407

Computer expenses 433

Exam fees 4,319

Teaching 9,828

Volunteers costs 68

Subscriptions 24

Repairs 2,161

Rates 1,416

Bank charges 87

52,840

Support costs

Governance costs

Accountancy and legal fees 844

Consultancy 1,330

2,174

Total resources expended

55,014

Net expenditure

(16,750)

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements



Annual Report 2016–17

Contents

Chair’s Report	10
Director’s Report	11 to 13
Projects and courses	14 to 15
Partnerships	16
Course statistics and Financial Information	17

Company Information

Training Link
54-56 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1ES

Charity Registration Number: 1051662
Limited Company: 3142188

Telephone: 020-7383-5405
Email: admin@traininglink.org.uk
Website: www.traininglink.org.uk

Auditors: Latham Lambourne, 18, Woodlands Park, Bexley Kent DA5 2EL.

Adolfo Gaspar award

We are pleased to announce that the joint winners of this award for 2016–17 are Serap Topaktas, Shah Rupna Begum and Kim Douse. The award is given, in memory of Adolfo, who was a management committee member and trustee of Training Link until he died in November 2008, to the learner who the tutors consider has made the most progress during the past year.

Funders

We would like to thank the following organisations who funded us during 2016–17: NatWest Skills & Opportunities Fund, The Corporation of London’s charity – City Bridge Trust, London Borough of Camden Voluntary Sector team and the Fitzdale Trust. We would also like to thank Camden Adult Community Learning for their support.

Management Committee & Trustees

Trustees: Brenda Goring Moore, Maya Alva, Elaine Arnold, Faize Yakup Bedirhan, Louisa Emillien Felix Stanislas.

Management Committee: Brenda Goring-Moore (chair), Maya Alva (vice-chair), Kathleen Hayes (treasurer), Elizabeth Ajith, Colin Flower and Monica Wilson.

Chair's Report

A warm welcome to our learners, their families and friends, to our neighbours and partners, and our funders to our Annual Report.

We salute and thank you all for the part you have played over this last year in helping Training Link continue to its work here in Somers Town.

It has been another year of change but great and small, positives and negatives but in the middle of it all you have helped us to sustain our core strengths and mission. Even as largescale developments in the area bring new people, new ideas and services to the area, our work helping to ensure that local residents are not left behind, especially working with our Consortium Partners in Somers Town, becomes even more vital. A country, a region, a borough is only as strong as its weakest; a leading edge no more resilient and sustainable than its supports and inclusions. (A summary of some key developments in our local area is on page 11)

We are proud to have held onto ESOL training in the face of declining support for this nationally. For many of our learners, access to language opens access to a child's school report, work, better food choices, new friendships and a guard against social isolation.

For many adults who missed out at school our English and Maths classes have been a revelation not only helping them to bon with younger members of their families over fractions, but coupled with our suite of vocational courses opening new avenues for work.

And for our communities, the benefits of our diverse groups of adult learners developing their computer skills together, supporting and encouraging each other is inestimable. Too often such examples of cohesiveness and mutual support is only "noticed" at times of tragedy and emergencies.

In the course of the year many of our learners have succeeded in gaining awards. We congratulate them. But even those who have not yet reached their goals, we recognise and applaud their progress, knowing something of their difficult journey so far.

I would like also to acknowledge our funders and thank you on behalf of Training Link, for the huge difference your support, not only monetary, but also your visible commitment has made to our learners, their families and the local community.

Especial thanks are due to our Director, staff and volunteers who have been front of line in responding to the needs of our learners, whose success and progress does you all credit. Indeed I cannot speak highly enough of our volunteers who, unpaid, give selflessly in time and expertise to the organisation. I am delighted to congratulate Nana Amma, on receiving an award for volunteering in Camden. This year too we are pleased to grant a lifetime award on her retirement, to Faize Yakup-Bedirhan, one of our Trustees for her long and valued services to Training Link.

Finally, my thanks to other members of our Management Committee and Trustees for their direction, challenge and support over the year.

Brenda Goring Moore

Director's Report

"May you live in interesting times" is an English expression commonly believed to be a translation of a traditional Chinese curse. Despite being commonly known as 'the Chinese curse', the saying is apocryphal, and no actual Chinese source has ever been produced.

Whatever the origins of the expression, for the voluntary and community sector, the period since the world financial crisis in 2008 has indeed been 'interesting'. More is demanded of the sector, with inevitably less resources to deliver the programmes and services that are so important for local communities.

Training Link has not been immune from this, although we are fortunate to be situated in Camden, a borough where the local Council is traditionally supportive of the voluntary and community sectors. We have also been supported by funders who believe in our work and continue to back us.

Inevitably, after the end of our Big Lottery funding in March 2016, we have had to streamline our services. However, the funding from the NatWest Skills & Opportunities Fund meant that we could offer some new courses, including Maths, Functional English at Level 2 and Employability, as well as a wider mixture of online courses.

The feedback we receive from learners is positive, with an overwhelming majority feeling more confident after doing our courses, and in a better position to look for work.

Our aims and objectives are summarised in our mission statement:

"To relieve poverty, advance education and advance employment opportunities for black & ethnicity minority and socially excluded people, by facilitating access to training to enhance employment opportunities"

Objectives

In 2016–17, our objectives were to provide the taught and online vocational courses for the programme funded by NatWest, to continue our ESOL programme funded by City Bridge Trust, and to provide online vocational courses funded by the Fitzdale Trust.

With the prospect of having to pay rent to Camden for our building from January 2017, we took the decision to offer work space to small local groups, using our back room, and to hire out the training room to a care provider who wanted to train their staff who work in Camden. This has been successful, and the income raised, combined with that from hosting an O2 Microcell unit, has helped make us more sustainable in the long term.

Achievements

In 2016–17, we ran the following courses:

Classes:

English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) Entry 2

ESOL Entry 3

Functional English Level 2

Maths Entry 2

Maths Entry 3

Maths Level 1

Employability Entry 3 (two classes)

Online vocational courses:

Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2

Customer Care

First Aid

Manual Handling

Handling Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

Health & Safety for Care Workers

Management courses

Camden Adult Community Learning

(Classes hosted by Training Link):

Introduction courses: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Mobiles & Tablets, I-Pads & I-Phones

Next Steps courses: Word, Excel

Workshop: MS Office programmes

Web design: Create your own Website with Wix

Although we were not funded to run an adult literacy project, Colin Flower did see a couple of learners one-to-one and we also offered support to some others.

We also ran a drop-in session each week. This was managed by Nelly Pineda, and included some people (often sent to us by the local Job Centres) who wanted to improve their computer skills. Other learners use this facility for doing job search, and we give them informal advice and support.

A more detailed analysis of the above courses is provided in the Projects and Courses part of this report. I would like to thank all the staff, in particular Chris Carr, Tracey Hamilton and Nelly Pineda, for all their work in continuing to provide high quality classes at Training Link. Having completed my Level 3 teaching qualification, I did more teaching than in previous years, mainly in Maths and Employability. The second Employability class was run at the Living Centre, part of our commitment to them, and went well.

I would also like to thank Tom Benson for his very thorough work as our Internal Verifier on the NOCN courses that we run.

I also continued to provide training for Camden Tenants and Residents Associations, on behalf of Camden Council's Resident Participation team. This activity brings in some income for Training Link, and also helps us contact people living on different estates and helps raise our profile.

Publicity

The main focus of our publicity remains our Open Days at the start of each term. We deliver our newsletter in the local area (usually around 2,000 properties), put an advert in the Camden New Journal, and send copies of the newsletter to around 60 to 80 local community groups, employment advisers and key workers in hostels. We also send out some information by email, and use social media – Twitter and Facebook.

The biggest attendance is usually at the September Open Day, which is the start of the academic year. As well as the staff team, we have volunteers present as well, and Tracey Hamilton to enrol learners for the Camden Adult Community Learning courses.

We also attend various events in our area to help publicise our work. These have included the community day at Regent High School, an Employment Fair at St Pancras Hospital, a couple of events at the St Pancras & Somers Town Living Centre and a Mother Tongue event organised by Camden Council at the Town Hall. I would like to thank everyone who helped with these events, including Millicent Christian, Kerry Webb, Nana Amma and Abijah Conquest. As well as meeting potential learners, they are also useful for networking.

Local activity and partnerships

Somers Town continues to have a vibrant voluntary sector, and we do our best to be involved with it. The opening of the St Pancras & Somers Town Living Centre, after around seven years work, was a big achievement. A tremendous amount of work was done to bring this about, ably led by Somers Town Community Association and their Executive Director, Sarah Elie. Training Link was involved from the beginning, and over the last year, Brenda Goring Moore has represented us at the Living Centre Partnership board meetings.

Somers Town Big Local made progress this year, employing staff (through Voluntary Action Camden) and giving out some funding to local people to run projects. I have represented Training Link at the Big Local partner meetings. Also, the staff were based at our office for a few months, which helped establish a good relationship with the project. The community newspaper, *Between the Tracks*, funded by Big Local, has also given us some good coverage.

The Somers Town Business, Education, Employment and Training (BEET) group has continued to meet. Its main work has centred on developing and supporting the Somers Town Job Hub. This has been a valuable resource for local people, with the manager, Julia Marcus, and her staff providing a sympathetic and supportive approach to helping local people find work. Julia worked with me to help develop our Employability course, and most of the people in the second class were her clients.

A full list of our partnerships is provided elsewhere in this report.

Funding and fundraising

Our main funding has been through the NatWest Skills and Opportunities Fund. We are grateful to the grants officers who supported us who allowed some flexibility so that we could provide a wider range of courses than originally envisaged. City Bridge Trust continued to fund our ESOL programme, and the Fitzdale Trust funded a programme of online vocational courses.

The London Borough of Camden Voluntary Sector team gave us a grant of £3,000 – to which we added match funding of £500 – to pay for Daniele Lamarche to work with us as a fund-raiser. We also received a three-year subsidy towards the rent, so we will only have to pay the full rent in January 2020. The aim of the fundraising was to make us sustainable, and that has been achieved through our work in letting out desk space to other groups, and in Daniele's work successfully bringing in over £20,000 at the time of writing. This includes a grant of £5,750 from Lloyds Bank foundation for development work.

We also receive a small number of regular donations, and this form of income is also important for our future development.

I would also like to thank John Lambourne of Latham Lambourne for his work on our accounts.

Management Committee and Trustees

The Management Committee and Trustees met regularly. Two members, Sally Holroyd and Heidi Blakey, resigned from the Committee during the year, and I would like to thank them both for their contribution to Training Link. They both volunteered for us before coming onto the Management Committee.

We have identified three new prospective Management Committee members, two of whom are current or former Training Link learners, and one who works for a local housing association. They have attended meetings as visitors, and we expect them to join the management Committee at the AGM in July. They will bring new blood onto the Committee, which is always welcome.

Staff and volunteers

After two people leaving at the end of the 2015–16 year, I am pleased to report that the staff team has been stable for the past year. We have had support from various volunteers on the administrative side of the organisation. Nana Amma has worked consistently on keeping the database and learner records up to date, and on doing the finance book-keeping each month. She was given an award for volunteering from the London Borough of Camden.

Kerry Webb and Abijah Conquest both helped out in the office, and Millicent Christian ran stalls for us at various events. Naomi Rudoe volunteered with us in the autumn, when she was on a sabbatical from her job. She did the demanding work of chasing learners who had not completed their courses, and did some very valuable work in developing and updating some policies. This can be time-consuming, and it was also valuable to have someone doing this from outside the organisation who can look at issues afresh. This work will also help us in working towards achieving the PQASSO quality charter mark later in 2017.

Facilities

We had to replace the electric shutters in the office, because the motor had worn out. This was quite expensive, but it was the first time we had spent anything on the shutters for 10 years. We also had new tiling put down in both toilets, and fitted new cisterns. We have tried to keep the building in good condition as far as a limited budget allows. We were given four chairs free by the British Library, which was much appreciated.

Peter Lush
June 2017

Projects and courses

NatWest Skills and Opportunities Fund

- Maths Entry 2 and 3
- Employability Entry 3 (2 classes)
- Vocational courses
- Functional English Level 2

The NatWest Skills and Opportunities Fund was our main funder for courses this year. It involved a lot of new work for us. Teaching Maths at Entry 2 and 3 was largely aimed at people who had completed other courses successfully, but lacked confidence in Maths. This was often after bad experiences in school classes. We ran the courses flexibly, with some class teaching, but also a lot of 1-1 sessions. Learners could learn at their own pace, and do extra work in a particular topic (fractions and percentages were always popular) if required. Most of the learners who completed Entry 2 also went on to Entry 3. Some have also started work on Level 1.

Employability was also a new subject for us. We ran two groups, one at Training Link in the autumn term, and one at the St Pancras and Somers Town Living Centre in the spring. This was part of our commitment to the Centre as a Living Centre Partner. Both groups ran well, and the learners enjoyed the class discussions.

The funders allowed us a lot of flexibility in the online vocational courses we offered. The main ones were Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2, which is always in demand; various courses for care workers and single courses such as First Aid and Safeguarding. One learner also did a management skills course.

Overall, the project had quite demanding targets, but the flexibility worked well for our learners.

City Bridge Trust

- ESOL Entry 1 (To July 2016)
- ESOL Entry 2
- ESOL Entry 3
- ESOL Level 1 (To July 2016)

The three year funding for ESOL we received from City Bridge Trust has allowed some of our learners to follow a progression route with us to develop their English further. The ESOL course consists of three modules: Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening. The teaching relates to everyday topics, such as food and shopping, which helps the learners become more confident to use English from day to day.

We experienced some problems this year with learners dropping out of the course for a variety of reasons – pregnancy, finding a job or having to go back to their ‘home’ country for family reasons – sadly often because of a bereavement.

Our ESOL classes are noticeable for the wide variety of people from different backgrounds who are involved. This leads to a healthy exchange of experiences, ideas and different cultures. We would like to thank City Bridge Trust for their support and hope to work with them again in the future.

Fitzdale Trust

- Vocational courses: Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2 and Customer Care

The Fitzdale Trust is a long-term supporter of Training Link. The funding was for online vocational courses from Virtual College. Most of the learners were women from BAME backgrounds, and were using the courses wither to help them look for work, or to support them volunteering in community cafes to gain experience to return to work. The courses can be done at the learners own pace.

Camden Adult Community Learning

- Introduction to Excel
- Introduction to PowerPoint
- Introduction to Word
- Excel Next Steps
- Word Next Steps

- Create your own website using Wix
- Introduction to iPhones & iPads
- Introduction to Mobiles & Tablets

Training Link has worked with Camden Adult Community Learning for many years, and our partnership with them remains a key feature of our activities. The classes are taught by Tracey Hamilton, who is an excellent teacher and has worked with Training Link for 14 years. She also uses volunteer learning assistants, and this year two Training Link learners volunteered for this role.

While most of the courses are run to help people find work, the ones on iPhone & iPads and Mobiles & Tablets are aimed at older people. We find that often people have been given these devices by their children to help them cope with communication in the 21st century, but they need support in how to use them. Many of the learners bring their own devices to the classes. They are very well attended and enthusiastic.

Free Internet Café / Drop In

We continue to run our weekly Free Internet Café / Drop in on Tuesday afternoons, supervised by Nelly Pineda, our IT Co-ordinator. People attend for a variety of reasons – some just to use the internet, others to do job search. We also invite beginners to using computers to attend, as we no longer run classes in Introduction to Computers. Some learners also do online courses, others do work from their Camden ACL or other classes.

Learners' feedback

“The course has increased my confidence in order to allow me to undertake further training and applying for jobs” (Millicent – maths learner)

“I am very confident and enjoy doing maths now” (Nana – Maths learner, who volunteers with us as an admin assistant)

“My mental maths was not very good before doing this course ... I feel more confident in this area.” (Salima – Maths learner)

“My confidence and knowledge has increased by doing this course by the class discussions and the course exercises I have completed”. (Salima – Employability learner)

“It is helping me be able to move forward to look for work confidently... Training Link has helped me improve by doing the maths course.” (Kerry – Maths and Employability learner)

“This course has taught me things I never knew before. It will help me in the future to find a job in cooking”. (Ben – currently volunteers in a café)

English Level 2 learners: “Training Link gave me more confidence... I have done volunteer work and this place (Training Link) has helped me a lot to know how to communicate with people in English.” “When I speak English I feel confident.”

“I can express myself better and now I understand all what people are saying. Its really helpful...”

“I’ve improved my English. Now I can read books and speak without any fear.”

Employability learners: “The course is well structured”

“I gained knowledge on skills required for work. I feel more confident about applying for jobs.”

“The course made me more confident and I will find other ways to look for a job.”

Food Safety & Hygiene: “One stage closer to starting my Chilli business.”

ESOL courses: “The learning centre is very helpful.”

“This course is very good.”

“The tutor is nice and perfect... Thanks a lot.”

“My knowledge improved.”

Partnerships

Partnerships are very important to Training Link. We work with a wide range of organisations both local and national, from very small to very large. The spirit of genuine collaboration can benefit everyone involved, and we look forward to developing more partnerships in the future.

Local partnerships

African Health Watch
Age UK Camden
Alleyne Alumni UK And friends
Arlington House (One Housing Group)
Broadway St Mungo's
Camden Adult Community Learning
Change, Grow, Live (CGL)
Fitzdale Trust
Hopscotch Asian Women's Centre
Laamiga
London Borough of Camden (Resident Participation Team)
London Borough of Camden (Voluntary & Community Sector)
New Horizon Youth Centre
Oasis Care & Training Agency
Origin Housing Group
Our Camden
Regent High School
St Pancras and Somers Town Living Centre Partnership
Sante Refugee Mental Health Access Project
Sapphire Independent Housing (Conway House)
Single Homeless Project
Somers Town Community Association & Somers Town Community Centre
Somers Town Big Local
Somers Town Job Hub
Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum Business, Education, Employment & Training (BEET) Group
South Sudan Women's Skills Development
Surma Centre
The Recovery College
University College London Union – Volunteering Services Unit
Voluntary Action Camden
Volunteer Centre Camden
West Euston Partnership
Working Men's College

National partnerships

British Library (Community Engagement Team)
British Museum
City Bridge Trust
Lloyds Bank Foundation
National Open College Network
NatWest Skills and Opportunities Fund
Small Charities Coalition
Supporting Relationships and Families (SRF)
St Giles Trust
UK Online (Good Things Foundation)
Virtual College

Course statistics

NatWest Skills for Employment courses

COSHH: 17 learners

Employability: 10 learners (2 courses)

English Level 2: 6 learners

First Aid: 7 learners

Food Safety & Hygiene Level 1: 2 learners

Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2: 17 learners

Health & Safety Care workers: 13 learners

Manual Handling: 12 learners

Maths Entry 2: 11 learners

Maths Entry 3: 6 learners

Role of Manager: 1 learner

Safeguarding: 1 learners

At the time of writing 83 learners have participated in the project.

City Bridge Trust ESOL class

ESOL Entry 2: 14 learners

ESOL Entry 3: 11 learners

Some learners dropped out during the year because they got jobs, or became pregnant.

Camden Adult Community Learning courses

Sixty one learners attended the courses at Training Link, with 97 enrolments. A third of the learners were men, and almost half were attending their first Camden Adult Community Learning course. The retention rate was 96 percent, which was very high. (See Projects and Courses for a list of the courses)

Free Internet cafe and Drop-in

These sessions were held each week on Tuesday afternoons. Between five and 10 learners attend, and are supported by Nelly Pineda and IT Learning Assistant volunteers.

Financial Information

Our main funders for 2016–17 were the City Bridge Trust, NatWest Skills and Opportunities Fund and Fitzdale Trust.

The biggest item of expenditure was staff costs at £26,568, 48 per cent of our spending. This was a major reduction from the previous year, reflecting changes in our funding. Other large items were tutors, exam fees, rent, advertising, postage & stationery and light & heat.

Training Link was founded in 1985 as Women's Training Link. Over 30 years on, we are still working to fulfil our mission statement:

“To relieve poverty, advance education and advance employment opportunities for black and ethnic minority and socially excluded people, by facilitating access to training to enhance employment opportunities.”

You can support our work by:

- Becoming a volunteer on one of our projects – contact us via our website.
- Making a donation – see our website for access to the MyDonate facility, or email director@traininglink.org.uk for information about setting up a monthly donation.
- Supporting us when you shop on line, by registering to support Training Link with www.easyfundraising.org.uk

www.traininglink.org.uk