

Empowerment Through Literacy

A Charter for Adults with Experience of Homelessness

SEPTEMBER 2023





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Foreword



It was thirty years ago when, as a teacher of primary school children with dyslexia, I sat beside a weeping mother and her husband as he described his humiliation and helplessness because, like his son, he could not read or write. It was a seminal experience, in which the difficulties endured by adults with persistent low literacy became shockingly clear.

Later, as a volunteer tutor at the charity Thames Reach, I pieced together a more detailed picture of the effects of adult low literacy in the context of homelessness. Over the years, my clients have described the ways in which their weak reading and writing skills have amplified their social and economic disadvantages, reduced employment opportunities, and jeopardised housing security. Literacy is always recognised as an imperative. Too often, however, low self-esteem and sometimes overwhelmingly negative memories of childhood schooling have stood in the way of engagement with education.

All adults have the right to literacy. But too many continue to live without it. Literacy100 believes that those with the greatest hurdles to overcome deserve our determined effort to open the doors to learning. Skilled professionals from a range of fields have answered the clarion call to collaborate in producing this Charter and report. You now have the opportunity to respond to their recommendations. Together, we will have a substantive impact on the futures of people who will value and benefit from our support. Thank you.

Julia Olisa

Chair and Co-founder Literacy100



CHARTER

We believe that literacy is a human right. It encompasses the ability to read with understanding, and to write to be understood. Literacy empowers adults affected by homelessness to take control of their own lives; without it their disadvantages are compounded.

Adults experiencing low literacy and homelessness should expect:

1. A range of local options to be available

- to develop their reading and writing skills
- to enrich their experiences of literature through shared reading activities

2. Homelessness and housing organisations

- to recognise and address literacy needs as a core part of their work
- to provide access to the technology that will assist their literacy, communication and engagement with the digital world

3. Learning providers

- to allocate the most skilled teachers and the most flexible provision to learners with the fewest literacy skills
- to offer sustained, specialist support for people with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- to respond to the psychological needs of learners affected by trauma

4. National and local policy-makers

- to make addressing their literacy needs a higher priority
- to allocate resources to achieve these expectations



REPORT

Executive Summary

Context

Poor literacy is recognised throughout the homelessness sector as an adverse influence on people's life chances. But for individuals with multiple and complex needs, opportunities to improve their skills can seem out of reach. This Charter calls for literacy services to be made universally accessible to adults who have been affected by trauma and the significant implications of homelessness. Fifty professionals from a wide range of sectors have collaborated to inform and influence the strategic decision-making of organisations, individuals and policy-makers. The anticipated outcomes for vulnerable adults will be wider literacy learning opportunities and greater resilience on their paths away from homelessness.

Questions addressed by the Report

1. How can the homelessness sector identify and respond to the literacy needs of its clients?
 - Homelessness organisations should have clear policies on literacy as a critical element of all front-line working. This will send a strong message of encouragement to clients that their literacy needs will be recognised and addressed in their resettlement plans.
 - Use of sector-wide, consistent client questions about literacy needs will allow planning to be informed by centrally held data.
 - The identification, recording and response to literacy needs will be integrated into core training for frontline staff and management.

- Professional partnerships between the homelessness sector, educational institutions and charities will create bridges between identification and support for adults with literacy needs.

2. How can education providers promote literacy learning in adults who have experience of homelessness?

- The foundations of sustained participation are built on creative approaches to cementing initial engagement, and early identification of barriers to learning.
- Adults facing the greatest challenges will respond positively when:
 - o additional learning needs such as dyslexia are substantially addressed
 - o teachers and volunteers recognise the psychological needs associated with compound trauma
 - o 'Literacy' is distinguished from 'English' as a subject, and there is a professional pathway into adult literacy education
 - o structured literacy learning programmes become more available.

3. How can digital technology become a standard tool to enhance the literacy competencies of adults?

- Homelessness organisations that recognise the central place of technology and digital skills in society will reflect this in clear policies.
- Training for all frontline staff will equip them to recognise both textual and digital literacy needs, and to identify appropriate supportive technology.

4. How do partnerships within and across sectors increase literacy learning opportunities for adults affected by homelessness?

- Homelessness and educational institutions with strong working relationships share expertise and develop understandings about effective services for less resilient learners. The voice of the learner is also heard.
- The library service works with reading charities to offer adults initial literacy-learning opportunities and reading enrichment activities. The Reading Agency contributes to initiatives that support library users affected by homelessness and develop healthy library programmes nationally.
- Literacy charities partner with housing associations and homelessness charities to deliver learning and reading enrichment services, and with colleges to provide additional support for adults struggling to learn.
- One university has extended cross-curricular training in dyslexia to all teaching students, and has included adult literacy issues in courses for students of social work, pharmacy and midwifery.
- A dyslexia charity has offered free diagnostic assessments to literacy learners with experience of homelessness when this will facilitate their access to work.

5. How will future academic and action research inform professional practice across sectors supporting the literacy of adults who have experienced homelessness?

- Research will identify the current extent of low literacy amongst people affected by homelessness, with their perspective of its personal impact.
- It will provide evidence for 'what works' in adult literacy provision, underpinning practice - most essentially for professionals whose learners have the weakest skills and/or additional learning needs.

- By describing the digital skills and activities of adults in the sector, it will inform planning at all levels - national, organisational and front-line.

6. What is the role of local and national policy makers?

- To develop a national strategy and core curriculum for adult literacy, alongside a distinct professional qualification in adult literacy education.
- To maintain unaccredited, time-flexible literacy courses, for the benefit of learners with the lowest skills and the greatest support needs.
- To fund in-service teacher-training in the psychological effects of trauma and the creation of responsive learning environments.
- To fund initial and ongoing core training for teachers in specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and attentional disorders, and to ensure that learners have access to specialist support.
- To promote multi-disciplinary networks focused on low adult literacy, including the education, homelessness, mental health and criminal justice systems.

The Charter asks for:

1. Your endorsement of its aims.
2. Your commitment to implement the report's recommendations, and thereby improve the literacy-learning opportunities of adults with experience of homelessness.

Introduction

This Charter is a call to action. It shines a spotlight on men and women affected by homelessness who want to improve their literacy skills. Many face significant barriers to accessing the literacy learning they need to secure housing and work. By raising awareness of the issues and fostering determination amongst supporting individuals and institutions, the Charter aims to end this social injustice.

Nine million adults in the United Kingdom have low literacy or numeracy, and five million have both.¹ The percentage is far higher amongst adults with experience of homelessness, one in two of whom are estimated to have inadequate reading and writing skills (not including second language needs).²

The implications of weak literacy in the adult population are devastating. It impacts not only on housing security and job opportunities, but also on education, health, family relationships and social participation. Economic costs to the country arise from lower employment and a greater number of low-wage earners, beside increased demands on benefits and welfare systems.³

People who leave school without secure reading and writing skills have been let down by our education system. As adults, they experience frustrations, fears and shame, and are reminded daily of the fundamental importance of basic skills.

¹ The Centenary Commission, 2019

² Dumoulin & Jones (2014); Olisa, Patterson & Wright (2010)

³ Kuczera, Field & Windisch (2016)

Men and women affected by homelessness face particular barriers to renewed engagement with learning arising from multiple vulnerabilities, sometimes including learning difficulties such as dyslexia. They commonly live with the effects of trauma and poor mental health which, as an indicator, affects up to 80% of street homeless people in England.⁴ Personal resilience can consequently be fragile, creating powerful apprehensions about crossing the threshold of a formal education provider and sitting in a classroom.⁵

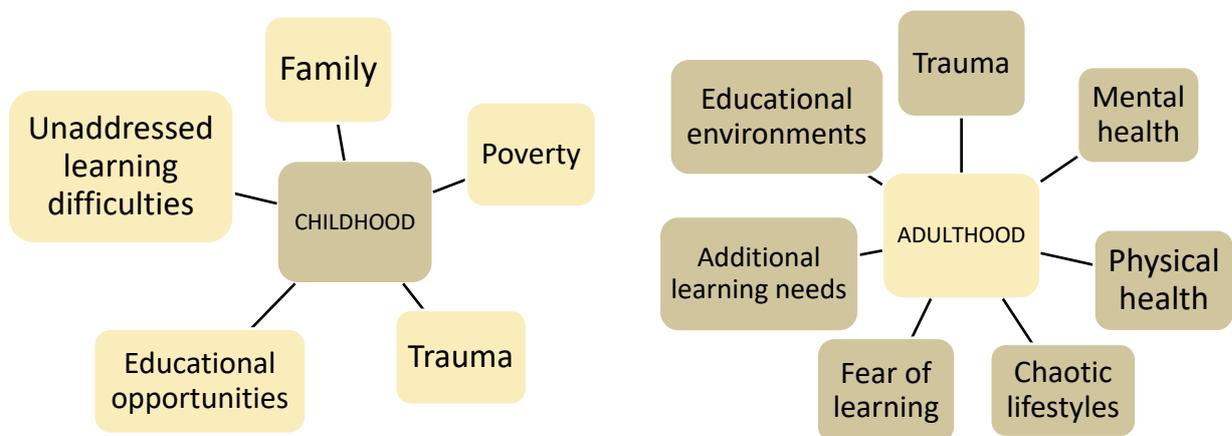


Figure 1: Childhood low literacy into adulthood: people with experience of homelessness

It is no wonder that, in 2006, the London Skills Commission identified people affected by homelessness, particularly those with additional learning needs, to be amongst the group least well served by the national Skills for Life strategy.⁶ Long-term evaluation of this government initiative showed that its greatest achievement in the context of literacy lay in helping a large cohort of adults gain the key target of a 'Level 2' (GCSE-equivalent) qualification. Unfortunately, it was less successful in improving the skills of adults with the lowest levels of proficiency. Their journey would inevitably be the hardest and longest.

⁴ The Centre for Homelessness Impact (2023)

⁵ Irving & Harding (2022)

⁶ London Development Agency (2006)

During the ten years following the end of Skills for Life in 2010, participation in English courses declined by 63%.⁷ The Adult Learning Budget was halved during this period, forcing colleges to cut back on provision and reducing opportunities for those with the lowest levels of education.⁸ Learners with the least literacy continued to be disadvantaged the most.⁹

In 2023, the blight of low literacy amongst adults affected by homelessness is ongoing and does not have a trivial solution. With financial resources stretched, mainstream basic skills providers have reduced scope either to reduce class sizes or to arrange additional staff training in the complex learning and mental health needs of vulnerable adults. Trauma-informed, individualised literacy lessons are provided by some community-based and homelessness organisations or independent charities. But availability is scarce, often piecemeal, and certainly falls well short of demand.¹⁰ The status quo, therefore, is not adequate.

Our Charter asks organisations across sectors to examine whether, at all structural levels, literacy difficulties are accommodated and opportunities to learn facilitated for clients who have experienced homelessness. To achieve the most successful outcomes, organisations are encouraged to recognise individual client strengths as well as their challenges. Policy makers are urged to address the factors that block constructive change. There are three important issues to be tackled:

1. The paucity of research into:
 - a. the ongoing extent of the literacy need in the homelessness sector
 - b. the cognitive development of literacy in adults
 - c. what works in terms of approaches and materials, including technology
 - d. the implications of those understandings for professional practice.

⁷ The Learning and Work Institute (2021)

⁸ The Centenary Commission on Adult Education (2019); Kerr (2019)

⁹ Luchinskaya & Dickinson (2019)

¹⁰ Jones (2021)

2. The poor availability of published research-informed classroom literacy programmes and materials.
3. Effective training about the impacts of trauma and homelessness on literacy learning is not readily available to literacy providers. Nor is training for front-line workers in understandings about tackling low literacy.

These concerns are addressed more fully in the following report. Its guiding recommendations and examples of good practice provide reference points for development and change. They are a catalyst for greater enrichment in the lives of adults who have suffered multiple disadvantages, one of which must not and will not be persistent low literacy.

TIME TO TAKE ACTION!

Literacy and Homelessness

How can the homelessness sector identify and respond to the literacy needs of its clients?

The primary focus of homelessness organisations is to provide accommodation and non-residential support services for single adults aged 16 and above. Poor literacy is recognised as a significant issue across the sector, contributing to homelessness and to subsequent difficulties in recovery and moving towards independence.

Organisational responses

While there are examples of excellent practice and much good will, there is little consistency of approach, and responses to literacy challenges are not embedded in the work. The recommendations made here are first steps towards developing a sector response. If followed, they will promote better understanding of the size of the problem and what might work to address it.

Recommendation: Organisational policy

Homelessness organisations will signal their commitment to addressing literacy skills by having a visible policy. Importantly, a strong message of encouragement will be sent to clients that literacy is recognised as critical to their resettlement and will be supported.

Case Study: Evolve Housing

In 2023, Evolve Housing has decided to include literacy in its organisational business plan. Their aim is to create a co-ordinated approach in which the identification of literacy needs and appropriate responses will be embedded throughout its services. A new Economic Social Prescribing project will include referrals into education, including basic skills. Customers who struggle to progress will be offered one-to-one mentoring.

The prevalence of low literacy

Quantifying the size of the challenge is complicated by a lack of consistency in the way that information about literacy is collected by different organisations. Not all routinely ask their clients about their reading and writing skills. Others fail to distinguish between low literacy and the needs associated with English as a second language or poor digital skills.

Recommendation: Data

Literacy should be recorded consistently across homelessness organisations, allowing data to be collected nationally. Two questions are proposed, to be included in an empathetic conversation:

<u>Question</u>	<u>Answer</u>
A. Is English your first language?	Yes/No/Refused
B. I have the reading and writing skills I need for my daily activities	1 = Not at all 2 = My reading and writing make daily activities difficult 3 = I can read and write, but I'm not confident 4 = I am confident in my skills

Staff training

The onus for identifying literacy issues is often on the specialist staff who deliver skills development programmes, generally within employment-directed services. Non-specialist staff do not always have the confidence to ask clients about literacy. Consequently, if skills development services are unavailable or clients do not engage with them, it is more likely that this information will go unrecorded and that needs will remain unaddressed.

Recommendation: Staff training

Training should be available across the homelessness sector to enable staff to address clients' literacy needs.

- The issues of identification, recording and initial response should be integrated into core training, including care and support planning, as a universal expectation.
- More advanced training should be offered to specialist staff and to local 'literacy champions'.
- For organisations without the capacity to incorporate this into their internally commissioned training, umbrella bodies representing the homelessness sector would be well-placed to provide this expertise.

Bridging the gap into mainstream literacy support

Some homelessness organisations provide in-house literacy classes. These tend to be part of a range of services aimed at building life-management and employment skills. They might also be run in partnership with Further Education (FE) and Adult Education (AE) colleges, literacy being offered alongside numeracy and digital skills. Mainstream literacy provision located in FE and AE colleges is likely to continue as the main route to accessing support.

There is no data to compare the success rates for each of these options, but choices should always be informed by individual circumstances. It is clear to professionals working in the sector that the range of support needs accompanying homelessness

create barriers to learning. Adults with negative, even traumatic childhood memories of school are wary of repeating their experiences, particularly when they have learned 'to get by' on a day-to-day basis. Ever-present shame and fear of humiliation make crossing a college threshold too great a step. For those who do, attendance in class may be sporadic if they are in poor health, have chaotic organisational skills, or are unable to prioritise education over competing demands from other support and welfare services.

Therefore, the gap between identification of literacy need and access to learning has to be bridged. Skilled key workers are central, first to delivering 'early wins' in building confidence that change is achievable, then to developing a positive, sustained relationship with education. While much good practice in this area exists, it is inconsistent across organisations and areas, and even within organisations. There is scope for FE and AE education colleges to work with the homelessness sector to deliver this as an outreach function.

Recommendation: Bridging the gap

- Professional partnerships between the homelessness and FE/AE sectors should build bridges between the identification of literacy needs and engagement with educational support.

Literacy Provision

How can education providers promote literacy learning in adults who have experienced homelessness?

Engagement

For a person living with weak literacy, the decision to tackle this is potentially life-changing. However, bad experiences of education as a child, and any previous endeavours as an adult, can provide significant psychological barriers to engagement. Coupled with fragile resilience so often characteristic of adults affected by homelessness, this can cause reticence about re-entering education. In addition, poor mental health, including the effects of compound trauma, can adversely influence an individual's ability to build relationships, establish trust and engage with others.¹¹ Once inside the classroom, negative memories of education, often going back to childhood, may be responsible for feelings of unease and doubts about the capacity to learn.

"No-one has been able to teach me. I was always a dunce."

Poor organisational skills and the inability to prioritise sometimes cause further disruption to learning. If education providers are not equipped to respond to these challenges, the long-term engagement of vulnerable students can be lost at very early stages.

¹¹ Cockersell, D. P. (2018).

Recommendations: Engagement

- New ways to encourage potential learners to come forward should be explored. Building engagement and confidence are crucial, and re-entry into the education system can be initially through other areas of study. In one example, courses in the creative arts have transformed aspirations and built bridges to more formal literacy learning.¹²
- Key workers and peer mentors in the homelessness sector should provide crucial support to clients who are motivated but apprehensive about re-engagement with education.
- Induction sessions should provide reassurance to new learners, and an opportunity to identify potential barriers to learning.
- Options for literacy learning should be accessible in a central, easily accessible resource at a regional level¹³.
- Adult learning providers should ensure that all staff and volunteers are trained to:
 - o understand the psychological effects of trauma and to learn trauma-informed methods of interaction from enrolment onwards
 - o support the practical as well as the learning vulnerabilities of students, including their organisational skills.

¹² <http://www.populart.eu/THE-PROJECT>

¹³ See for example Appendix 4: Supporting Literacy via Referrals and Partnerships

Excellence in adult literacy provision

Quality is critical to the successful outcomes of a learning programme. Personalised provision is the ideal to help vulnerable adults overcome past failures. However, the guiding maxim that 'the learner should be at the centre of education' can risk being lost amongst the pressures of assessment, funding, timetables and staffing.

Currently, expertise in the area of adult literacy is fragmented. Without a specific and distinctive definition of 'literacy skills', learning programmes can tend to combine 'literacy' with 'English' more broadly. Although there are pockets of good practice, there is no unifying framework in England to support the development of adult literacy educators, and few qualification pathways to recognise specialists in the field.

Recommendations: Professional Training

- A clear professional qualification pathway in adult literacy education is essential. It would codify levels of expertise, define key skills and knowledge, and offer flexible qualification options.
- Teachers and teaching volunteers will benefit from training in:
 - o literacy development and the fundamental building blocks of reading and writing
 - o recognition and support for specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and attention deficits (ADD, ADHD)
 - o the understanding of cognitive processes and techniques to improve, for example, working memory, concentration or visual processing.
- Published and on-line professional training materials should be more readily available to develop the skills and knowledge of practitioners.

Research and evidence

Best practice in literacy teaching for adults is neither fully evidence-based nor well-defined. Current approaches to teaching early literacy to children in England has a solid basis in international research, and the outcomes have been positive.¹⁴

Research into adult literacy development and the efficacy of teaching methods is sparse by comparison.¹⁵

Recommendations: Evidence

- Research into adult literacy development is urgently needed, as is a review of best practice in adult literacy education. Without these we cannot have fully informed discussions about teaching methods.
- The expertise of adult literacy educators is potentially pivotal in developing the evidential base for teaching, particularly for early literacy learners.¹⁶ By identifying what works,¹⁷ professional knowledge will be increased and effective approaches developed and disseminated.
- Where there is evidence to inform best practice in the classroom, it should be built upon and shared to guide and inspire practitioners. A rich body of existing knowledge is available to promote effective work with vulnerable learners.
Dyslexia research, for example, confirms that:
 - o A strength-based approach is effective in overcoming deficits. Therefore, the planning of a learning programme and its supporting materials should take account of prior knowledge and competencies.

¹⁴ [England moves to fourth in international rankings for reading - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

¹⁵ Moss, Brooks, Brown, Burton, Collins, Convery et al., 2019

¹⁶ Moss, Duncan, Harmey & Munoz Chereau, 2018

¹⁷ Mace, J. (1992); Mace, J. (1979); and Hughes, N. & Schwab, I. (Eds) (2010).

Resources

Teachers of English as a second or additional language have access to a wide selection of well-designed, fine-grained learning programmes. There are few similar resources for adult literacy teaching. Tutors are obliged to create their own cohesive courses using a range of materials supplemented by their own work. They deserve better.

Recommendations: Resources

- Publishers, researchers and literacy professionals should be supported to address the dearth of well-structured adult literacy-teaching programmes.
- Adult learners who cannot make progress, require finely-structured learning programmes to develop their understanding of the alphabetic code.
- Websites and other sources of textual information such as apps should be further developed to enrich, support and consolidate learning.

Policy

The development of literacy education for people who have experienced homelessness calls for a multi-faceted, multi-levelled approach. Educators on the front line work hard to help people build a successful, positive future, but they cannot achieve this alone. First-class adult literacy provision requires policy-makers, both locally and nationally, to create an environment in which organisations and practitioners are empowered and supported to deliver the best possible services.

Recommendations: Policy

- A new national strategy for adult literacy is needed to define a core curriculum that will meet the needs of all learners.
- Learning centres should have at least one trained literacy teacher, or access to a literacy consultant to advise staff without this expertise.
- Specialist support should be available to all students with additional learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
- The creation of regional networks for literacy providers would open up dialogues to reflect on good practice, share resources, and deliver formal and informal training.
- For a multidisciplinary approach to supporting learners with complex needs, educators should be given access to a wider network of services, including expertise in homelessness, mental health, criminal justice, trauma and abuse.

Technology and Literacy

How can digital technology be used to enhance the literacy competencies of adults?

Information technology has increasingly become an essential tool to participate fully in today's world. It gives us access to online services and sources of information such as medical appointments, banking, social benefits, jobs, accommodation, and travel or shopping opportunities. Technology helps to unlock potential in education and employment, keeps us in touch with family and friends, and opens up social and civic participation. People without digital literacy are effectively marginalised.

Little is known about the digital skills, habits, and activities of people affected by homelessness. There is an equal evidence gap for what works in terms of resources and training. We do know that funding and programmes to train frontline staff in the use of technology as a tool for clients can be hard to access. The provision of technology and interventions for clients themselves is similarly under-resourced.

The development of digital literacies to support reading and writing amongst people with experience of homelessness therefore lies at the intersection of some complex factors. To achieve substantial improvements in the way they are addressed, action begins at organisational level.

Recommendations: Organisational Considerations

- Homelessness organisations should have a central technology and digital skills policy, shared with all staff.
- They should have an 'accessibility' lead for technology and digital skills.
- Frontline staff should understand the role that technology can play in supporting clients' literacy, and have the skills to evaluate literacy and digital needs.
- Essential skills gaps should be recorded at the earliest opportunity.
- There should be a clear path for frontline staff to action the literacy and digital needs of their clients, either in-house or through a third party.
- Staff should have the knowledge to help clients access free assistive technology on mobile telephones and tablets.

Frontline workers have opportunities during initial assessments and early meetings to discuss clients' digital skills and technology needs. Devices and software are bridges to increased independence. Therefore, selection should be guided by immediate, practical benefits.¹⁸

¹⁸ Appendices 1 and 2

Discussion Tool: Technology for Adults with Literacy Needs

Topics to be considered:

- Literacy skills and literacy needs
- Physical disabilities that might affect use of technology, and the modifications or adaptations required
- Additional factors such as dyslexia and how these might affect use of technology
- Existing digital skills and skills gaps
- Existing ownership of a device: mobile phone, tablet or laptop
- Ways in which a device is currently being used as a support tool (e.g. calendar, voice notes, camera)
- Access to the internet – where and how it is used
- Whether the phone or tablet supports apps
- Ways in which a device might support daily reading and writing activities and learning.

More widely, individual staff and organisations can act to promote professional skills, set up professional networks, and influence policy-makers.

Policy Recommendations

- The development of training, through cross- or intra-sector partnerships for example, to provide staff expertise in technology as a support tool for clients' day-to-day literacy requirements.
- Advice and lists of resources that are accessible on the web and openly licensed, to include:
 - o how to source technology platforms
 - o how to provide power and internet access to those platforms
 - o good practice in developing digital literacy and in using technology to support reading and writing.
 - o information about free software to support these activities.
- An open forum to allow professionals to share information and good practice.
- A website designed specifically to run on mobile phones to benefit the many people whose main digital access is through these devices.
- Funding for academic research into the issues surrounding technology, digital skills and homelessness to inform policy and developments on the ground.

Partnerships

How do partnerships within and across sectors increase literacy learning opportunities for adults affected by homelessness?

Partnerships broaden the opportunities for adults with experience of homelessness to acquire and develop literacy.¹⁹ The following examples of innovative cross-sector collaborations are models for future initiatives.

Reading for pleasure in the homelessness sector

- *The Reader charity partners with St Mungo's Recovery College to bring access to literature and reading for pleasure to adults with experience of homelessness. These activities unlock greater engagement with literacy-learning programmes through the promotion of well-being, social connection and confidence.*

Literacy charities and housing associations

- *The charity Read Easy partners with housing associations in four areas of the country, pairing their volunteers with members of staff to support clients with literacy needs.*

¹⁹ Appendix 3: Effective partnership-working

Homelessness charities and mainstream adult education providers

- *Thames Reach, a homelessness organisation, invites further and adult education colleges to bring literacy services to their clients 'in-house'. Tutors' experiences inform provision for learners affected by homelessness when they attend college.*

Learners and service providers build an understanding of needs.

- *At City Lit college in London, the voices of people with lived experience of low literacy and homelessness are amplified when they contribute to special events and staff training days.*

Charity support for learning at college

- *The Adult Literacy Trust complements mainstream adult literacy services by providing trained, volunteer literacy coaches for individuals from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and with the poorest skills.*

Literacy charities work in unison to create pathways to literacy.

- *A partnership between Read Easy and the National Literacy Trust has created opportunities for early literacy learning alongside reading enrichment activities for adults.*

Libraries and Reading Charities

- *Individual public library services partner with organisations such as The Reading Agency and Read Easy to support literacy in their communities.*
- *Libraries Connected and The Reading Agency work together on a number of strategies and initiatives to build partnerships that will contribute to healthy library programmes nationally. Their research review, 'Library and sector support of people experiencing or threatened by homelessness'²⁰ is accompanied by a toolkit, 'Reading Well'.²¹*

Training for front-line professionals across sectors

- *Kingston University equips students of midwifery, social work and pharmacy to engage with adults who have poor literacy, and to signpost them to learning services. Student teachers are trained to support reading and writing difficulties across the whole curriculum, helping to ensure that pupils leave school with competent literacy skills.*

Formal identification of dyslexia

- *A dyslexia charity has offered free diagnostic assessments to literacy learners with experience of homelessness to facilitate their access to work.*

²⁰ [Review_Libraries_work_to_support_people_experiencing_homelessness.pdf \(tra-resources.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

²¹ <https://reading-well.org.uk/resources/6532>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Benefits and limitations of digital devices

	Benefits	Limitations
Laptops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate for digital skills training • Word processing • Accessibility features, e.g. read aloud; dictionary, spelling, punctuation and grammar support; predictive text; choices of font size, style and colour (text and background) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less portable • Expensive • Capacity for upgrades essential - check this when devices have been donated
Tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable • Access to apps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No word processing
Smartphones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly portable • Familiar to the user • Access to apps • Supportive features e.g., voice recording; voice notes (WhatsApp); read aloud; speech to text; calendar; reminders; camera 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No word processing

Appendix 2: Examples of free assistive technology

- Spell check and dictionary
- Speech recognition e.g. Windows voice recognition (needs a headset and microphone)
- Text-to-speech
- Predictive text
- Coloured filters and backgrounds
- Immersive Reader from Microsoft Word Online (found in the View tab of documents opened online). It functions include:
 - Reading text aloud
 - Highlighting single lines or paragraphs using text windows
- Calendar reminders

A useful list and review of (mostly) free online services can be found at:

<https://diversityandability.com/resources/>

Appendix 3: Effective partnership-working

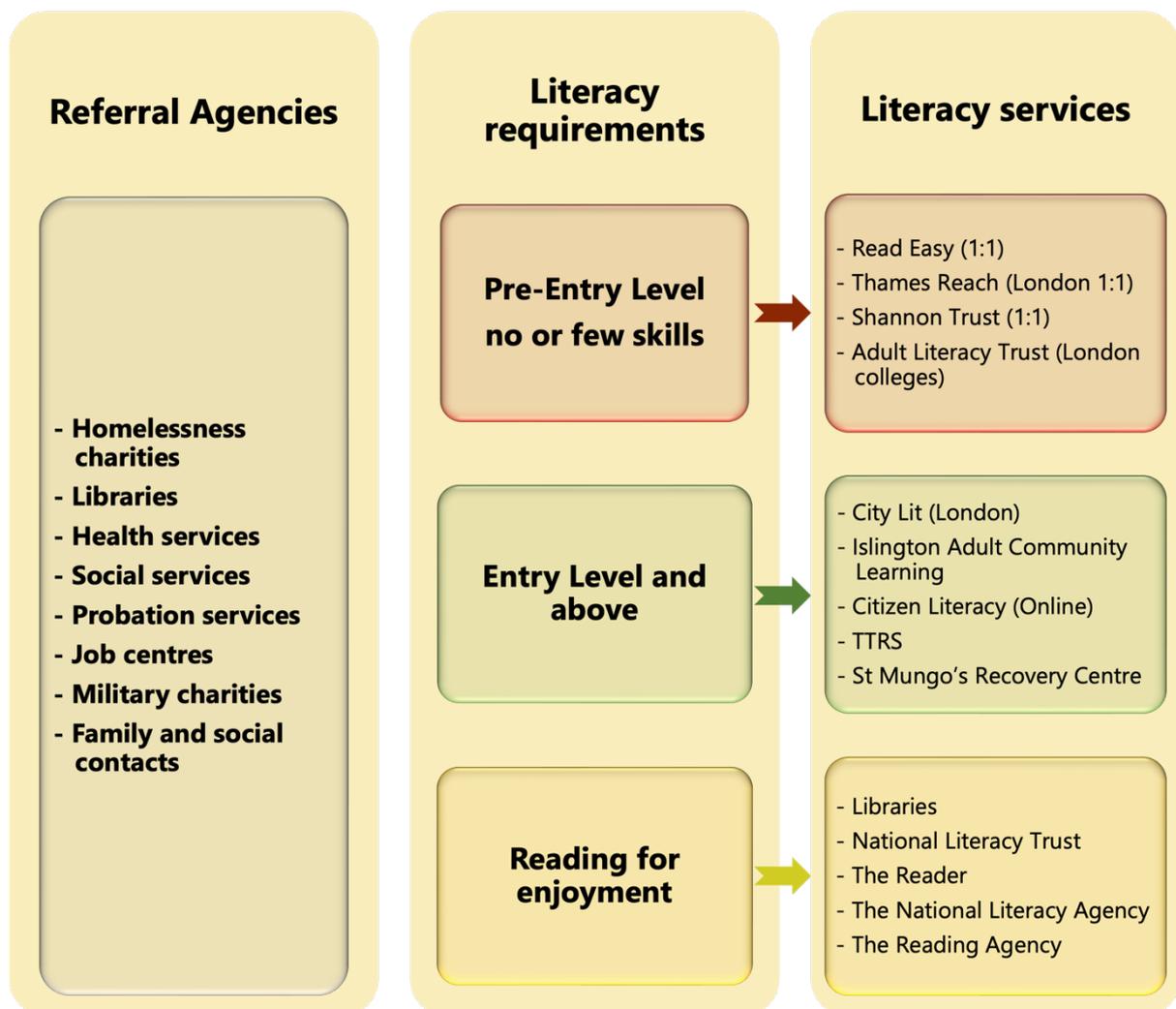
Successful partnership working

1. The strengths of each organisation have been explicitly recognised to identify the benefits of working in partnership.
2. A comprehensive plan of timings and expectations has been drawn up.
3. Funding mechanisms have been agreed and understood.
4. Responsibility for management of client-support has been agreed.
5. Training in effective client-working has been provided when relevant.
6. Pilot projects have confirmed the benefits of the partnership model.
7. The means by which success is monitored and evaluated have been established.

Appendix 4: Mapping literacy services

This template map is a response to the need for clarity around existing provision, partnerships and referral pathways. It can be adapted for use in different locations around the country.

SUPPORTING LITERACY VIA REFERRALS AND PARTNERSHIPS



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