

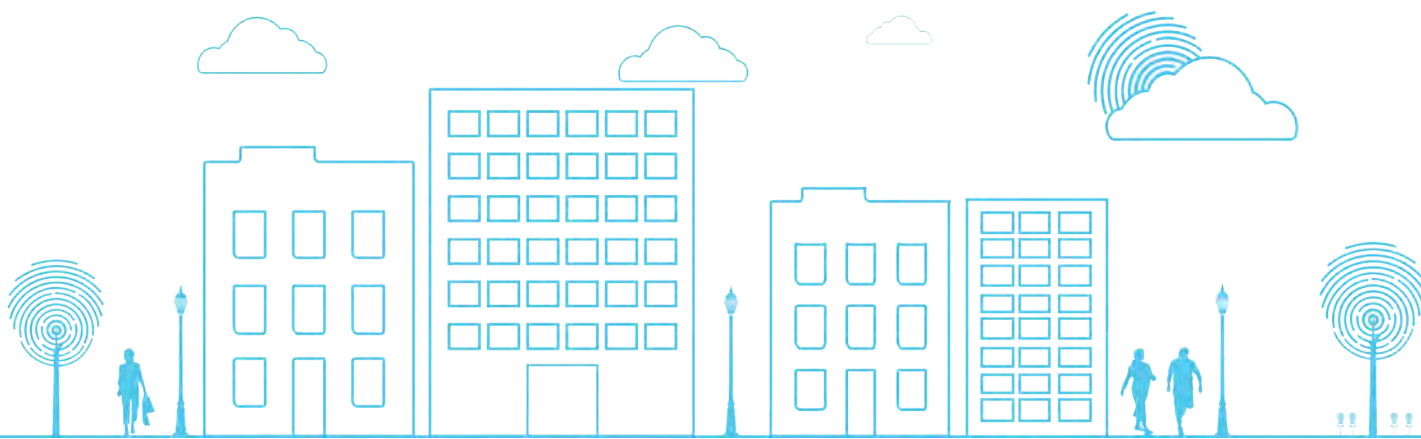


Good Things Foundation



Fuller lives, stronger  
communities:  
English My Way Phase 3  
Evaluation Report

May 2017



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# Executive Summary








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Good Things Foundation began delivering the English My Way programme in November 2013, working with BBC Learning English and the British Council. Funded by The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as part of their English Language competition, the programme aims to support those excluded from the life of their local community by supporting people facing significant language barriers and integration challenges, to improve their English language skills through a fresh approach to Pre-entry ESOL.

Phase 3 of English My Way focussed on:

-  Supporting isolated women to improve their English language skills
-  Supporting community partners in their delivery - through capacity building, identifying best practice, progression routes and programme/product development.

Some of the impacts of Phase 3 of the English My Way programme were:

-  **4,376** learners registered on the English My Way learning platform and **2,789** completed the 24 week course.
-  **66%** of learners who completed their learning reported improved confidence in trying to use their English
-  **63%** of learners reported improved English proficiency
-  **45%** of learners progressed to an Entry Level 1 ESOL course.
-  **72%** progressed to learning digital skills at their Online Centre
-  **41%** progressed to other community learning
-  **21%** progressed to employment and/or volunteering.

**56 training grants of a total of £43,388 given out to centre staff and volunteers.**

Good Things Foundation carried out focussed pieces of development work as part of the Phase 3 programme, including the review and improvement of **English My Way learner resources**, and development of an **English My Way learner App** 'Minimal Viable Product' (a version we could easily test and get feedback on, before embarking on further development).

In addition to this, **5 libraries took part in a 3 month pilot project** to trial the **English My Way resources** and research the feasibility of using the programme in a library setting and **16 Online Centres took part in a pilot to test the [Reading Ahead](#) materials** with English My Way learners.

# Introduction

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## About English My Way

This is the evaluation report for Phase 3 of the English My Way programme which ran between August 2016 and March 2017.

Good Things Foundation began delivering the English My Way programme in November 2013, working with BBC Learning English and the British Council. Funded by The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as part of their English Language competition, the programme aims to support those excluded from the life of their local community by supporting people facing significant language barriers and integration challenges, to improve their English language skills through a fresh approach to Pre-entry ESOL.

English My Way is a blended learning programme, supported by ESOL tutors and/or volunteers working in local community centres. There is content to support 96 hours of learning, which includes; tutor led sessions delivered through the online centres network; expert-created online learning and volunteer group activity, freely available through the English My Way website.

In line with DCLG's original Community Based English Language competition brief, Good Things Foundation aimed to use English My Way to support 3,600 people from September 2016 - March 2017 focussing on:

-  Groups with the lowest levels of English language skills and in particular women within these communities
-  Areas of England with high demand for this type of English language support
-  Designing a project which can be sustained past the point when government funding is available and which has the potential to be scaled up for implementation across a wider geographical area






## About Good Things Foundation

Good Things Foundation is a national charity that supports digitally and socially excluded people to improve their lives through digital. We bring together thousands of community partners to make up the Online Centres Network, reaching deep into disadvantaged communities to help people across the UK gain the support and skills they need to change their lives and overcome social challenges.

Our online learning platforms Learn My Way and English My Way - used in centres throughout the network - help thousands of people each year to gain basic digital skills, English language skills, and to progress to further learning, volunteering and employment.

## Understanding the ESOL landscape

Reacting to the changing environment in which ESOL operates, Phase 3 of English My Way aimed to support learners against the following criteria:

-  A minimum of 90% of learners must be **women**
-  100% of learners must be **19 years of age or older**
-  100% of learners must have been living in the **UK for over 12 months**
-  100% of learners must be **unemployed/underemployed**
-  100% of learners must have **English language skills below Entry Level 1**

Phase 3 of the programme focussed on the support of isolated women. As one of the key messages from a 2015 report from Public Health England states, 'Anyone can experience social isolation and loneliness. While social isolation is more commonly considered in later life, it can occur at all stages of the life course. Particular individuals or groups may be more vulnerable than others, depending on factors like **physical and mental health, level of education, employment status, wealth, income, ethnicity, gender and age or life-stage.**<sup>1</sup>

Focussing on certain ethnic groups, the same report found that 'among ethnic minority communities, barriers to social inclusion, including those associated with social disadvantage, housing problems, and language barriers, may contribute to increased risk of social isolation.'<sup>234</sup>

## Evaluation objectives

Led by members of Good Things Foundation's Research & Innovation team, the Phase 3 evaluation aimed to build on findings from Phase 1 and 2 with the following objectives:

1. To monitor the English My Way project against performance measures agreed with DCLG.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the English My Way programme in reaching those groups with the lowest levels of English language skills.
3. To evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the English My Way programme in improving the:
  - English language confidence and skills of pre-entry ESOL learners, and realising personal benefits to individuals as a result of improved English.
  - Capacity of volunteers and teachers to teach pre-entry ESOL, as well as personal benefits realised.
  - Centre capacity to deliver pre-entry ESOL; facilitate community integration and the local provision of pre-entry ESOL support, including measuring the impact of the programme on wider communities.
4. To identify innovative and excellent practice in engaging and supporting isolated women
5. To gather feedback for ongoing programme improvement

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health England. Local action on health inequalities: Reducing social isolation across the lifecourse, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> BAWSO. Domestic abuse from a BME perspective, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Dar A, Mirza-Davies J. Unemployment by ethnic background. House of Commons Library 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Bedford M. BME Small Grant Funding, Project Report. 2011:11.

The Evaluation Methodology comprised learner questionnaires administered through the English My Way platform, quarterly centre surveys administered by Good Things Foundation and focus groups and reporting from the 3 Hubs (centres funded to provide feedback to Good Things Foundation and expert advice to other centres).










# Phase 3 of The English My Way Programme

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## Main activities

Over the three years of delivery, Good Things Foundation have worked with 128 Online Centres - grassroots community organisations supporting local people - to develop the English My Way programme to have an even greater impact and reach. Taking a user centred approach and working with three Online Centres as Hubs, Phase 3 concentrated on **continuous improvement, capacity building, identifying best practice, progression routes and programme/product development**. [The Phase 2 Evaluation Report](#) contains a detailed narrative of the first two phases of English My Way.

Building on the successes of Phases 1 and 2, Phase 3 delivered the following:

-  Supporting at least 3,943 learners with pre-entry ESOL through 90 Online Centres - 47 new centres recruited since Phase 2.
-  Centres were given additional grant funding to tailor their delivery to support the hard to reach, such as providing a creche and paying for learner travel costs.
-  Two Briefing/Training Days for 47 new Online Centres were run by Good Things Foundation in August 2016.
-  Training at 12 centres delivered by the Good Things Foundation ESOL consultant and 56 training grants of a total of £43,388 given out to centre staff and volunteers. Training included CELTA, Level 3 Education and Training and Cert ESOL.
-  Focussed pieces of development work, as a result of desk and qualitative research, and in consultation with the 3 English my Way Hubs, including:
  - The review and improvement of English My Way learner resources, and
  - Development of an English My Way learner App 'Minimal Viable Product'.
-  A Library Pilot, funding 5 libraries to try the English My Way resources and research the feasibility of using the programme in a library setting.
-  The Reading Ahead Pilot: 16 centres were funded to test the [Reading Ahead](#) materials with learners.
-  Regular communications from Good Things Foundation
-  Online Centres continued sharing and using the Learning Circles packs developed by the BBC.

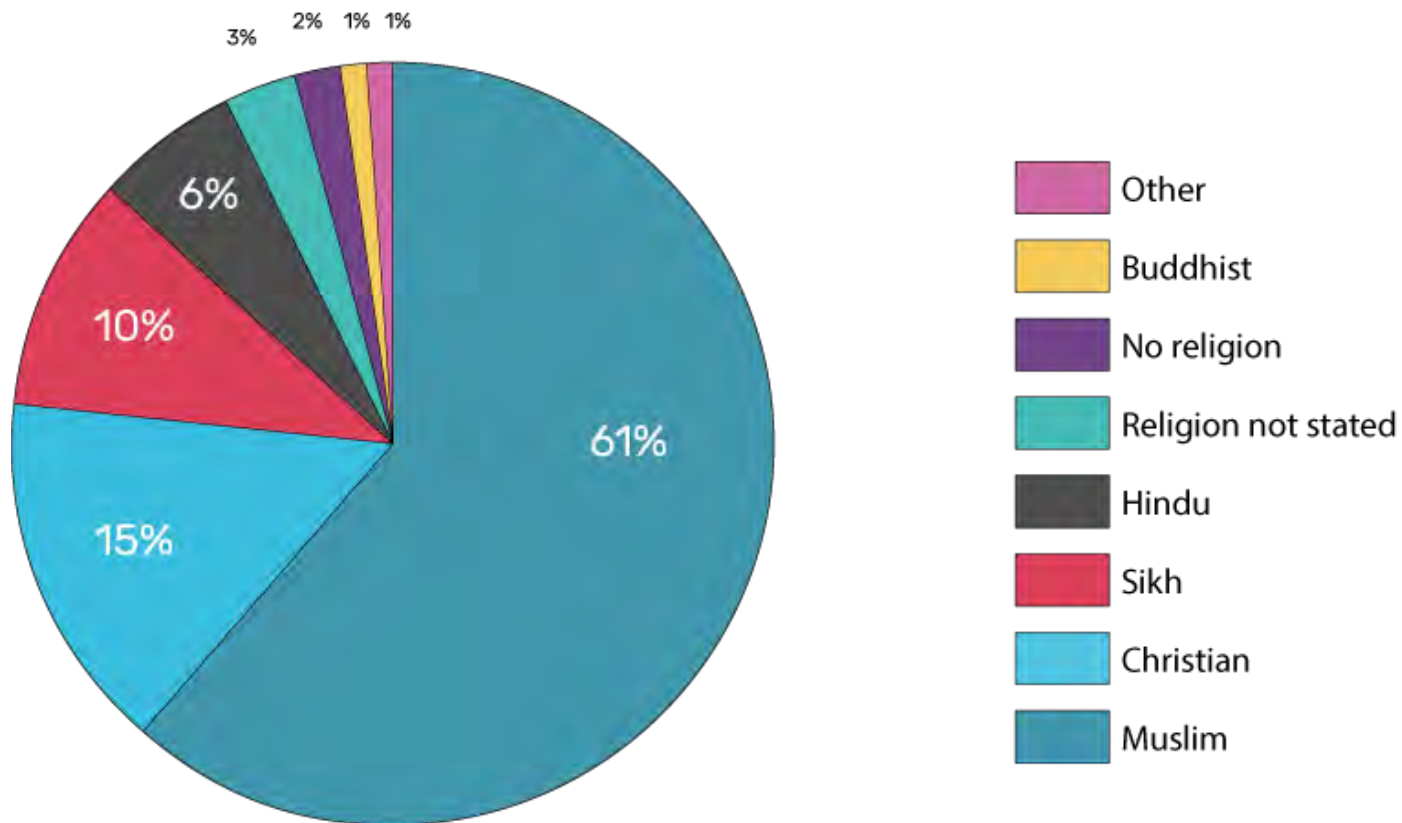
## Reach of Phase 3 English My Way




Over 3 years more than **13,500** learners have been registered on the English My Way programme across **128** Online Centres.

In Phase 3 of the programme and in line with the engagement criteria, **4,376** learners were registered on English My Way and 2789 completed the 24 week course. Of the registered learners that declared demographic information, 88% were women.

Part of the programme involved understanding the demographic profiles of learners taking part in English My Way, with a particular focus on women. Learner questionnaire data from over 2,300 female learners were collected, giving us the following profile(s)

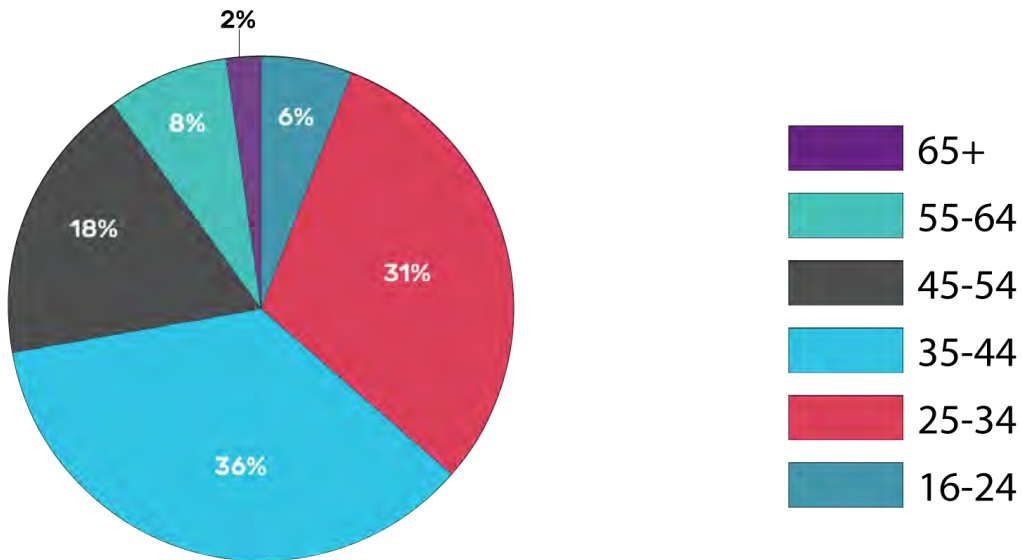
### Religion



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**Education level:** 39% of female learners had no formal education and 26% were educated to primary school level before starting English My Way. 22% were educated to secondary school level and 3% were educated to university level.
- 
**Economic status:** 45% were not working and looking after children and 35% were not working and looking for work.
- 
**Length of time in UK:** Female learners originated from over 100 different countries and 32% had been in the country for over 10 years at the time when they began their learning. 49% had been in the country 3-10 years and 19% for 2 years and under.

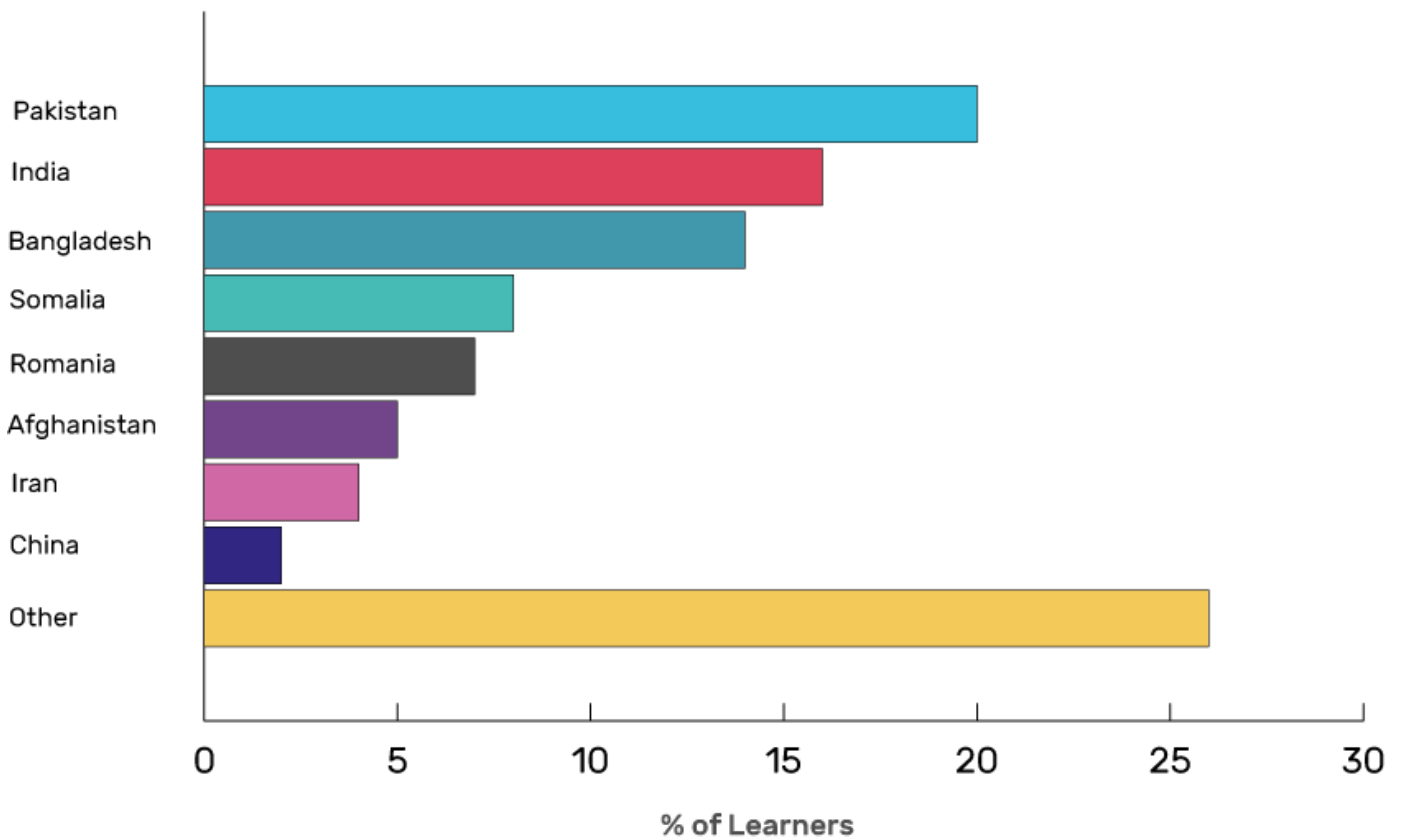


## Age Profiles



**Age:** Female learners' ages ranged from 19 to 86 years. The largest proportion were aged between 35 and 44 (36%) and 66% had dependent children.

## Nationalities



# Successful delivery models

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Centres have thought creatively to engage and support learners who most need it with pre-entry level ESOL. In many cases overcoming barriers, such as:

## 1. Learners being too engaged in their immediate needs to think about learning, so centres are using the support of those needs as a route to learning.

**FEE cafe** are a not-for-profit organisation started by local community activists including refugees to support the local disadvantaged groups in Derby. They aim to help their diverse community by responding to their basic needs (food, clothing, furniture) and also by offering accredited courses to offer them new skills and build confidence to create employment opportunities. They are a social enterprise, providing spaces for other groups/organisations based on affordable rental costs.



*“One first thing we had already identified through our community training and development work was that unemployed people with low income and low skills/confidence are too engaged with their daily problems, issues and basic needs. Therefore they cannot be fully focussed on learning and hardly absorb English, IT or digital materials. We therefore provide our support to them through our food/clothing/furniture bank services in order to respond to their basic daily needs. This provided the opportunity for our learners to get more focussed on their current learning and also their future capacity building processes.”*

Ali Neghipooran, Centre Manager

Many centres have held **celebration events** and parties to get more learners engaged in learning. Giving learners the opportunity to understand other people’s customs and food, having photos taken of them and their new friends, cooking, sewing and getting involved in arts workshops have all proved successful in helping to engage learners.

## 2. Learners not being aware of their local area:

Centres told us that learners can lack confidence and awareness of local services which can limit their integration and independence. To help learners feel more connected to their local community, many centres **organised visits** to places like the library, train station (including making a journey by train), markets and restaurants. Some centres gave learners homework to practice their learning in a shop. Others provided **volunteering opportunities** to learners to expand awareness of their local areas, for example in the Online Centre itself or in local businesses like care homes.

As a result, **98%** of centres feel English My Way has helped them support community integration in their area.

**Benn Partnership Centre** serves multi-ethnic communities in the centre of Rugby. They provide a range of services including ESOL, adult literacy and Numeracy skills, an Asian healthy meals lunch club and online learning. People attending the centre receive an initial assessment so that their current skills can be identified, after which they can receive support including employability, and support with matters such as access to Universal Credit, debt, family issues, mental health issues and managing life on a limited budget.



As part of their English My Way programme, Benn Partnership Centre organised community get togethers with other community members and previous centre users. Under the theme 'Your Life - Your Say' the learners attended a session which allowed them to have their say on issues that confronted them for which they sought further information or support. Topics such as employment rights, benefits, pensions, definition of and support available for issues such as domestic violence, debt and schooling for their children were discussed.

They also worked with local Social Housing Associations to create the conditions for learners to take part in their estate celebrations and local regional and ward level celebrations.

### 3. Learners with additional needs:

Online Centres recognise that some learners can struggle to engage with and maintain learning because they have other things they need support with first or at the same time. To help with this, they give time to **identifying and supporting learner needs** such as domestic violence, mental health issues, immigration issues, debt and financial hardship.

Some Online Centres delivering English My Way have other specialisms like [City and Hackney MIND](#) who offer mental health support:



*"Our monthly Service User Committee meetings and local consultation identified language and literacy as key causes of sustained isolation for BME groups. Mental health needs are key factors in prolonging exclusion from learning opportunities and wider services in Hackney. Given our expertise and resources in this area and our first hand experience of the impact of increased literacy on wellbeing, City and Hackney Mind is well placed to address both language and health needs simultaneously."*

**Sarah Oakleyhill, City and Hackney MIND**

#### 4. Learners lacking basic digital skills holding back progression:

Further learning can often involve the need to be digitally literate - both because some exams are on the computer, and that the internet can assist in research and learning itself. At [Aaina Community Hub](#) in Walsall, their delivery model aims to upskill in basic English and basic digital literacy skills so that learners can successfully complete exams and are able to progress on to further ESOL provision facilitated by their Adult Education partner agencies.

#### Best practice: supporting isolated, marginalised women

93% of centres feel English My Way has allowed them to reach more isolated women in their community. Through the evaluation of Phase 3 we have learnt what works well to engage and support isolated women.

**Working in partnership:** Centres reported working in partnership with Women's Centres, Children's Centres and Primary Schools as key to reaching women in most need of help to improve their English, such as victims of trafficking and mums with a lack of family support. Centres like [Bright Learning Centre](#) in Leicester got round the fact that a lot of women couldn't read the promotional leaflets by getting partner organisations to approach them at home.



*"We have found that working with the local children's centre was a hugely beneficial partnership that enabled us to enrol new learners and by providing a crèche facility helped learners who otherwise wouldn't have come to join the course."*

**Rob Netherway, [Birmingham Settlement](#)**




**Sustained holistic support:** English My Way looks after an individual learner for a long time - in many cases for 24 weeks plus initial assessment, social lunches and celebration events.

Centres like Benn Partnership deliver outreach work, often involving engagement and negotiation with male members of the woman's family, Children's Centres and schools to arrange for child care. Far more hours than were allocated were required to achieve the desirable outcomes. Fortunately Benn Partnership Centre had access to resources and volunteers that would enable the programme to be completed in time.

**Flexible delivery:** Women-only classes were hosted by centres for vulnerable women and women with additional needs. Centres hosted weekly social sessions and like in the case of [Chatting Chimers](#) in Blackburn, structured their course intensity based on the demographics of the groups they were working with. Centres found that putting on sessions during term-time and to fit in with school pick up times was often the best approach.

**Starting with learner need:** By understanding learner motivations, centres found it easier to sell the benefits of learning English. For example showing learners how to access local services like dentists and hospitals, how to use Google to find a map and location and how to make enquiries over the phone. A learner at Bright Learning Centre wanted to attend a women's sewing class so the tutor showed her two leaflets from local centres, showed her the contact number and supported her to understand what questions she would need to ask. The learner then successfully called the centre with the assistance of the tutor.

**Other information and support:** All English My Way centres provide support other than ESOL, including **69% providing health and wellbeing support** and **92% offering basic digital skills support**. This means that learners have been able to access other services at their local Online Centre like aerobics, circuit training, computer classes, advice and advocacy and health awareness programmes. Learners have been able to get involved in other projects carried out by their centre. For example 'Let's Talk' at [Goal\\_Saltley](#) in Birmingham, has helped women and their children improve their speaking skills, allowing them to contribute their voice to local issues. Other examples include:

-  **Chatting Chimers** who have delivered cancer screening awareness sessions to make learners more aware of what is available to them.
-  **ZQM Online Ltd** in Birmingham have worked in partnership with local schools to hold parent days to discuss their learners' children's progress and how they could get more involved in making a difference.
-  The majority of [Neighbours in Poplar's](#) English My Way students have joined their gardening club and have their own gardening box where they can grow vegetables and have fun with like minded women in their London based community.



# Impact of English My Way Phase 3 on Online Centres

90 centres received funding, training and network management from Good Things Foundation during Phase 3 of English My Way. Centres have benefitted from having access to a blended learning programme, with digital bringing learner management and expert created teaching resources together in one place, against the backdrop of a strong curriculum and structure.



*"I have really enjoyed using the website for learner materials - it is very easy to download, print and use within class. I can adapt the resources to suit my class needs and pick and choose what is required. This has saved a lot of my time, planning, and I can use this time supporting learning instead. The website is user friendly and I have been able to track learner progress easily. There is also a wealth of useful information for volunteers and tutors to develop their teaching."*

**Shamim Ali, [IMWS Al Hikmah Centre](#)**

Capacity building for English My Way centres was a big focus for Phase 3. For funded Online Centres, involvement in the English My Way programme has had the following impact:

**1. Provided more structured pre-entry level ESOL support: 90%** of centres say English My Way has helped them deliver pre-entry ESOL in a more structured way.



*"[We have benefitted from] new and improved teaching methods thanks to the structure set out by English my Way."*

**Madina Sattar, Bright Learning Centre**

**2. Allowed them to support more lower level learners: 95%** of centres feel English My Way has allowed them to engage with learners not suited to other forms of support. Centres have attracted more learners to engage with learning as English My Way is at the right level, providing an entry point into learning.



*"English My Way has helped us target a specific group who often struggle in our usual pre-entry courses. Staff found the focus on low levels worked well, reducing the split-level classes we typically encounter at pre-entry level."*

**Robert Devney, [Bilston Resource Centre](#).**

**3. Improved the capacity of volunteers and teachers to teach pre-entry ESOL, and helped expand their teams:** Training at 12 Online Centres delivered by our ESOL consultant and **56 training grants** of a total of £43,388 were given out to centre staff and volunteers during Phase 3. Training included CELTA, Level 3 Education and Training and Cert ESOL. **94%** of centres say English My Way has allowed them to develop the skills of staff and volunteers. In total, **988 volunteers** were used in Phase 3 of English My Way. In some cases, volunteers from previous years have gone on to teaching English My Way - showing the programme provides a framework that allows people who are learning/operating at a higher level to support those at a lower level. At [Amber Training in Hounslow](#)- one of the volunteers who received a training grant from Good Things Foundation in Phase 2 was part of the team delivering English My Way in Phase 3.



Our staff enjoyed using the English My Way syllabus. It's straightforward and easily accessible. Our staff have greatly benefited from the training grants and are enthused to make a change in people's lives. They receive a great deal of satisfaction bettering people's lives."

**Aurelie Ramgoolam, [Eco Communities](#)**

**4. Across the three years, centres have gained recognition and promotion in their local community.** 95% of centres feel English My Way has allowed them to develop partnerships - establishing themselves as an ESOL provider in their local community and working with partners to extend their reach. Many centres have delivered in outreach locations and received referrals from a number of local partners including children's centres, schools, Social Housing Providers, libraries, faith venues, Jobcentre Plus, colleges, community centres, women's shelters and cafes. 82% of centres worked in partnership with their local Jobcentre Plus, 75% worked with another community centre, 52% worked with a school and 46% with a faith venue - either as a venue in which to deliver English My Way, or via a referral system.



At the beginning of the project (Phase 1) we delivered ESOL classes solely at our learning centre, however we soon found out that there are learners who are unable to access our centre for a variety of reasons. We presently deliver all our ESOL activities in the community. We run the English My Way Learning Programme in schools, children's centres and community centres."

**Virk Virdee, ACDA Training**

**5. Benefited from shared best practice:** Now in their third year of delivery, GOAL\_Saltley have previously visited other centres to observe their delivery and share ideas. Centre manager Yasmin Akhtar recognised there are a number of organisations delivering the programme in the Birmingham area who could benefit from meeting each other, particularly those who are just starting their English My Way journey, so organised [Birmingham centres coming together](#).



We wanted to give other centres an opportunity to reflect on what has been useful so far, discuss concerns with others, exchange ideas, and seek help and support locally."

**Yasmin Akhtar, GOAL\_Saltley**

# Impact of English My Way Phase 3 on learners

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The impacts on individuals we've recorded through the project include:

**Improved English proficiency:** For Phase 3, English proficiency was broken down into three areas. After completing English My Way, **64%** of learners had improved their proficiency in speaking and listening, **63%** had improved proficiency in **reading** and **62%** had improved proficiency in **writing**.

**Improved confidence:** As a result of the English My Way programme, **65%** of learners had improved their confidence to use their English in **shops or on public transport**; **67%** had improved their confidence to use their English with **neighbours and acquaintances**, and **66%** had improved their confidence to use their **English with teachers, doctors and other professionals**



*"Learners are empowered to better their lives by gaining skills, opportunities and information, engage with other diverse communities in the area, break from isolation, support their children better, gain self-worth."*

**Gita Natarajan, Benn Partnership Centre**



*"We have found that the women's groups have become quite a useful support network and social group for the learners where they have made friends and open up about all sorts of issues from bereavement to mental health."*

**Rob Netherway, Birmingham Settlement**

**48%** of learners were motivated to join a local English My Way class to get work; **38%** to help support their children; **76%** to improve their confidence to talk to people and 25% for further study.

**Further learning:** After registering on English My Way, **45%** of learners progressed to an Entry Level 1 ESOL course. Of those engaged in the programme, **95%** became more confident and independent internet users and **72%** progressed to learning digital skills at the centre where they were learning English. **41%** of learners progressed to other community learning including sewing classes, a Life In The UK course, employability sessions (**88%** of funded centres offer employability support alongside English My Way) and health and wellbeing courses including confidence building. **29%** progressed to a numeracy course, **21%** progressed to employment and **21%** to volunteering.



## Learning English helps Nageswary into work

Nageswary Seevaratnam is 60 years and is from Jaffna, Sri Lanka. She has lived in Rugby, Warwickshire, for 12 years, with her son. Nageswary struggled financially for many years, but after the death of her husband, she finally decided it was time to get into work to support herself and her son. However due to her limited English skills, she kept hitting a brick wall. Her son, who she supported through school, now works full-time in a warehouse, supporting them both, and speaks fluent English.



Nageswary had been attending Benn Partnership for a while - they helped her to engage with her son's school and with going about her everyday life. One day, Nageswary finally told Centre Manager Gita how much she wanted to secure work.

"I told her that I really wanted to speak English so that I could get a job," explains Nageswary. "She told me about the classes. She brought me to them."

When she first started attending English My Way classes, Nageswary didn't speak any English at all, so Gita made sure the learning had the right focus for her, so she could address her particular needs.

"We learnt about jobs," says Nageswary. "We learnt about speaking to other people. We learnt about asking questions in the library and other places. I liked learning about jobs because that's what I was there to learn."

Both the atmosphere and course content were ideal for Nageswary: "I like going to the centre. It's very friendly. I find English My Way very good. It's easy for me to use."

Although her English is not yet fluent, Nageswary was delighted when she used her new skills to apply for a job as a cleaner at a local secondary school - and was successful.

"Now I can work," she says. "I enjoy going to work and I enjoy that I get a salary. When we did our employment classes that's one of the words we learnt - 'salary'. I clean everything at the school, even the carpets and I do mopping. It's good. I don't feel bored."

"This job is my first job. I wanted to earn money to pay bills and now I can. Learning English helped me to get work and I'm going to keep learning more. My son is very proud of me. People shouldn't be afraid to learn English - they should give it a go."

# Phase 3 capacity building






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## Libraries and English My Way pilot

We know from our [Library Digital Inclusion Action Research Project 2015-2016](#) that lots of libraries are supporting library users for whom English is a second language, yet only 3 libraries have been funded to deliver English My Way since the programme started in 2013.

To find out why this is, and to test the feasibility of using English My Way in a library setting, Good Things Foundation ran a research pilot between January and March 2017, with five libraries in areas of highest ESOL need<sup>5</sup>. The libraries who took part in the Pilot are Derbyshire Libraries, Leeds Libraries, Blackburn and Darwen Library and Information Service, Kensington and Chelsea Libraries, and Vision Redbridge Libraries. The research informed the [Delivering Pre-entry English language: Community ESOL in Libraries Handbook](#) - a practical guide for libraries to use to support library users with English as a second language.

As a result of taking part in the English My Way research pilot:

-  **Leeds Libraries** is going to start using English My Way with a Romanian women's group at one of their libraries in mid-April 2017.
-  **Derbyshire Libraries** have started new and revisited previous partnerships with a local college, Chesterfield Derby University and The Virtual School which provides learning for children in care, including post-16 students with ESOL needs. They hope to work with an Online Centre to deliver English My Way in the future, to benefit from their experience and use the library as a learning venue.
-  By finding out what other assistance is available for non-English speakers in their local area, **Blackburn Library** has re-established a partnership with a local council team who have decided to use the library to deliver learning activities, some of which will be basic ESOL supported by the English My Way resources. It has also led to them inviting partners in to see how they can work more in collaboration.
-  **Redbridge Libraries** have used the English My Way pilot to plan a trial combining the Learning Circles with Reading Ahead, to support members of an existing ESOL group to become leaders of the Learning Circles themselves. Redbridge have also used the English My Way resources to train existing volunteer tutors in the Library's New Readers Reading Group.
-  **Kensington and Chelsea Libraries** used English My Way with a group of 15 learners at one of their libraries in Westminster. Their involvement in the pilot helped to bring new people into the library, enabling participation and helping library users to develop their English. They are going to continue to refer and signpost learners and volunteers to English My Way.

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<sup>5</sup> Identified by DCLG from 2011 census data as places with the greatest population of non-English speakers.

## Further Research into Progression Routes

**73%** of Online Centres funded to deliver English My Way in Phase 3 offer more advanced ESOL classes than pre-entry level. Thinking about gaps between pre-entry ESOL and Entry level 1, we asked centres whether learners are generally ready to progress onto an Entry Level 1 ESOL course after English My Way. Unsurprisingly, the feedback we received was that it varies between learners. For those who aren't ready, or for whom life gets in the way of their ability to attend classes and practice, many centres support them to complete English My Way again, so that they can recap what they have learned. As part of Phase 3 of English My Way, Good Things Foundation also tested two other progression routes for learners: **Reading Ahead** and the **Learner App**, to explore ways to help more learners progress to Entry Level 1 ESOL.



### Reading Ahead

16 Phase 3 centres were funded to test the **Reading Ahead** materials with English My Way learners. Reading Ahead invites participants to pick six reads and record, rate and review them in a diary in order to get a certificate. Some of the activity is delivered through facilitated sessions, some through independent reading. Those centres that took part, found the materials useful with one centre describing the scheme as providing “a stepping stone for learners progressing from Pre-Entry to Entry 1”. **87% of the Online Centres involved in the pilot said they are likely to use the resources again in the future.**

### Learner App

Three Design Sprints involving members of Good Things Foundation's Digital, Learning and Research and Innovation teams, took place between January and the end of March 2017 to develop ideas for an App for learners based on feedback from Phases One and Two that centres would like to give learners more options for homework - to stretch those that are doing well with English My Way content, and to give opportunities for practice for those who are a bit further behind.

The development process took into account what we know about learners including their motivations and barriers to learning. We know that a large proportion of English My Way learners have dependent children, have never been to school, and are not literate in their own language. Many are motivated to be “like everyone else” and to look after their children. Their lives can feel busy so they don't necessarily have much time to concentrate on learning at home. Our centres told us many are used to using mobiles for communicating through Apps like Whatsapp. Through focus groups with Hubs and user testing with Online Centres, a Minimal Viable Product for a 'Learner App' was developed, to be used after the first 4 weeks of English My Way learning, based around practicing shopping vocabulary. Initial feedback from centres was good and we will be developing a full version of the App in the next Phase of English My Way.

# Programme reflections

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During Phase 3 of English My Way, centres reported an increase in demand from people with English as a second language, with increased levels of immigration seen in certain areas of the country, some councils offering asylum to refugees, and in some cases changes in the benefits system where women are now being encouraged to upskill and are being more driven to work.

There was additional **unfunded support** to meet demand on the ground, for example men and learners who have been in the country less than 12 months, showing that the Online Centres Network is responsive, with the capacity to add value.

## What next?

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Good Things Foundation is delighted to have secured funding to deliver English My Way for another year through the Online Centres Network, to reach 4,700 learners.

Deliverables for Phase 4 of English My Way include:

### 1. Extending the reach of English My Way to support an additional 1,100 learners






**2. Extending the learner journey to include digital skills:** For the same cost per head, 20% of learners (total 940) will be supported to gain 4 basic digital skills through Learn My Way on completion of English My Way.

- Bridging materials will be developed by the Good Things Foundation Learning team, in consultation with our regional Hubs, key delivery partners and ESOL specialists, to ensure a seamless learner journey from English My Way to Learn My Way.
- Training will also be provided, specifically for those centres relatively new to digital skills delivery.

**3. Engagement:** Good Things Foundation will design and deliver a national campaign in February 2018 with the primary focus to raise awareness of English My Way and develop the recognition and reach of the programme. This will include local community events, targeted local marketing and PR activity.

**4. Content development:** Working with the regional Hubs, key delivery partners and our ESOL Associate, we will prototype a condensed version or “taster” of the English My Way programme. We will work with the wider unfunded Online Centres Network who already engage isolated women with very low English skills, who want to learn about the internet. We will explore the impact of this taster on the beneficiaries, and test demand from a larger group of local partners. If successful this could be rolled out more widely in a future project.

**Good Things Foundation plan to use the next Phase of delivery to focus the research and evaluation on the following:**

-  User research and evaluation of the 6 week taster course and Learner App.
-  More deep dive research on learner progression - if and how learners are progressing; whether any learners aren't ready to progress after English My Way and if so why and what can be done to help them.
-  Evaluating the journey between English My Way and Learn My Way and taking a user centred approach to develop learning content that meets learner needs. This could potentially include a longitudinal learner study following and comparing the progression of learners after the full programme and after the taster course.
-  Understanding in more detail what works to reach isolated women and sharing best practice amongst delivery centres. Identifying those who are still not being reached to learn English by English My Way, and understanding what else could be done to engage the hardest to reach.
-  Following up with the libraries from the pilot.