

Our Impact in Focus

2020-21



Welcome

From our CEO

The publication of the 2020 impact report marks my first as CEO of National Numeracy and I wanted to use the opportunity to look forward, as well as back. The UK begins 2021 with a challenging year behind us, and uncertainty ahead, but here at National Numeracy our resolve has never been greater.

The past months have seen unprecedented levels of demand for our work supporting those with low confidence and competence with numbers, as adults and children struggle to adapt to the ever-changing world around them.

We had a record-breaking 725,000 engagements with people in 2020, supporting our users to improve their numeracy, having a direct impact on individuals, communities and society as a whole. At work, home and school, or homeschool, the importance of being able to understand and use numbers has come into stark relief. For finding a job or adapting to new ways of working, supporting children with schoolwork, managing a tight household budget, or understanding daily Covid-19 statistics in the news; the need for getting on with numbers became critical to lives and livelihoods in 2020.

Our quick-fire response to the crisis included revising a year's worth of planning for National Numeracy Day within a single month to offer the nation free resources and practical help for using numbers in a radically different landscape.

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We pivoted all our training programmes to be online, offered free resource and support packages and launched a brand-new campaign, Number Confidence Week, to empower people to take the first step towards developing their number skills.

All this was only achieved with the invaluable help of our supporters and partners, for whose commitment we are enormously grateful.

We begin 2021 armed with a new strategy focussed on helping disadvantaged communities where the need is greatest and an ambitious goal to have nearly 3 million engagements with people over the next three years. There has never been such a compelling need to empower children and adults to get on with numbers so they can fulfil their potential. Our work sparks better opportunities, and we are working with passion, commitment and resolve to contribute to brighter, more equitable futures for all.

Sam Sims
CEO, National Numeracy

From Stacey

I had a really bad relationship with maths. Even the thought of it would dry my mouth and make my palms sweaty. I remember the first day of school with everyone reciting their times tables and feeling totally lost, and at secondary school it carried on.

Fifteen years later, when I joined the NHS, I realised that I'd been muddling through, but struggling with maths was always in the back of my mind. Doing reports using numbers would make me anxious. I'm an apprenticeship lead and encourage people to take

"If you could bottle the feeling it gives you, people would buy it. I wouldn't be where I am today without National Numeracy."



Functional Skills courses, but I felt like a fraud and thought: "If I don't do this, how on earth can I expect other people to?"

I heard about the National Numeracy Challenge and how other people struggled with maths and thought: "That's me!" I decided I really needed to give it a go. Initially my score was low, but I expected that, so I went back again, and my score started improving. When I got to my top score it felt amazing!

I just want people to know that it is achievable. I was talking to a deputy director who was scared to do a Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship because of the maths. I said: "If I can do it, you can do it!" and now she is! It gives everyone more confidence to think that if they find maths hard, that's okay, but they can do it.

You might not think maths impacts your life, but it does. Simple things like measurements when you're cooking, you're able to do those conversions. Being

able to do maths makes me feel proud and empowered. If you could bottle the feeling it gives you, people would buy it. I wouldn't be where I am today without National Numeracy. Welcome to this report about the impact of their work.

Stacey Killon
NHS manager

What we do

The Problem

The UK has a problem with numbers, and it is holding us back. As a nation, numeracy levels are significantly below the average for developed countries; and as individuals, nearly half the working-age population has the expected numeracy level of a primary school child.

Not getting on with numbers blights lives and livelihoods, contributing to pervasive problems from unemployment to poor health and debt. And it costs the UK economy a staggering £20 billion a year.

Low numeracy disproportionately affects disadvantaged communities and holds millions of people back from fulfilling their potential and from getting on in life. With anxiety about numbers passing on from one generation to the next, we need to stop this cycle now.

Our Vision

Our vision is for everyone in the UK to get on with numbers so they can get on in life.

Our Mission

Our mission is to empower children and adults in the UK to get on with numbers so they can fulfil their potential at work, home and school. Our work improves how people understand and work with numbers in everyday life, sparking better opportunities and brighter futures.

Who we serve

Poor numeracy is widespread, and everyone is welcome to access our support. Our focus is on helping people with low confidence or competence with numbers in disadvantaged communities, where the need is greatest.



Our work

Our work helps improve numeracy or changes perceptions, leading to better outcomes for individuals. It is scalable, supported by a sustainable funding base and delivered in partnership to leverage our impact. As the UK's 'go-to' numeracy experts, our work helps increase how numeracy is understood, valued and developed.

We support people to improve and use their numeracy by:

- Completing a high-quality numeracy check or programme.
- Engaging with learning to improve their confidence and skills.
- Taking a next step to apply or further develop numeracy for work, supporting children, and/or managing their money.

We change public and government perception of numeracy by:

- Building public understanding of the importance of everyday numeracy, its benefits and the belief that everyone can improve.
- Demonstrating that everyday numeracy is a gateway to further skills development.

Our impact in 2020

Engaging

725,000

engagements with people in our work, in 2020



Empowering

78,603

National Numeracy Challenge registrations, a 14% increase on 2019

60%

increase in National Numeracy Challenge registrations on National Numeracy Day compared to 2019

363,000

video views across our channels for National Numeracy Day

23

percentage point increase in National Numeracy Challenge users visiting learning resources on 2019

8,700

downloads of our free lockdown resource packs for parents and children

91%

of participants on our training said our sessions had improved their confidence with numbers

22,000

actions towards building confidence with numbers, as a result of Number Confidence Week

Influencing

4.14 million

estimated views of our media coverage in 2020, with 10.4k social shares

145%

increase in Instagram followers on 2019

47%

increase in Twitter engagements on 2019

18%

social media audience growth on 2019

#National Numeracy Day

was the top UK Twitter trend on the day

114%

increase in LinkedIn engagements on 2019

Rapid Covid response

The seismic impact of the Covid-19 crisis reinforced the urgent need for our work and demanded plans be ripped up and remade. We adapted quickly, pivoting the whole charity to service the greatest need, digitally. What we have learnt about our beneficiaries and ourselves will inform our work for many years to come.

A record-breaking National Numeracy Day

On 13 May 2020, National Numeracy Day engaged more people than ever before. Our Virtual Festival saw 30 video sessions hosted by influencers, supporters, heroes and ambassadors help meet the needs of a nation at home.

The day provided practical numeracy support for people across three areas: helping children with homework, self-confidence for skills building, and getting to grips with finances.

We saw a 60% increase in on-the-day registrations to the National Numeracy Challenge compared to 2019, made possible by Founding Supporter KPMG and 39 supporting organisations.

 Read the National Numeracy Day Impact Report



Rachel Riley launches the virtual festival



Martin Lewis on Maths and Money




Number Confidence Week

Our new campaign launched on 2 November in response to continuing deep uncertainty in areas crucial to the UK's resilience and wellbeing.

With an urgent need for people to feel more in control and confident to tackle challenges faced due to Covid-19, gaining number confidence offered practical help; it is the first step towards gaining number skills that help in everyday life, for getting into work, managing money, or helping children with their learning.

With the support of Founding Partner TP ICAP and Lead Partners Experian, KPMG and Santander, Number Confidence Week inspired 22,000 actions towards building confidence with numbers.

 Read the Number Confidence Week Impact Report



Santander ambassador Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill

Taking our training online

The pandemic only strengthened our determination to support people to develop positive attitudes towards numeracy and boost their number confidence. Our 'face-to-face' workshops went online, with our "Becoming a Numeracy Champion" programme for workplaces seeing 79% of newly trained champions rating the programme 5/5, and all participants scoring it at least 4. A huge 94% of participants said they will use their learning to make changes in their organisation.

"The course is exceptional, other online programmes I have done have not been so well designed and delivered. The National Numeracy team should be congratulated," said one participant.

Lockdown support for parents, carers and teachers

During the lockdown school closures we supported parents, carers and teachers to help children with maths at home by offering a package of 28 free activities for primary school age alongside advice and resources on how to help children be positive about numbers. In 2020, 8,700 of our lockdown packs were downloaded, equating to £62,000-worth of free materials.

Real-life impact

Low number confidence affects millions of people. When dealing with maths in everyday life – shopping, working out a budget or supporting children in our care – many of us feel a degree of stress, anxiety and even fear. This often-hidden problem is a barrier to getting on in life, stopping people gaining skills and fulfilling their potential. But it can be overcome. In 2020 many of our beneficiaries spoke about why improving their numeracy has had far-reaching and sometimes life-changing effects.

Jason

Improving his number confidence has helped Jason apply for new kinds of jobs and support his children's learning.

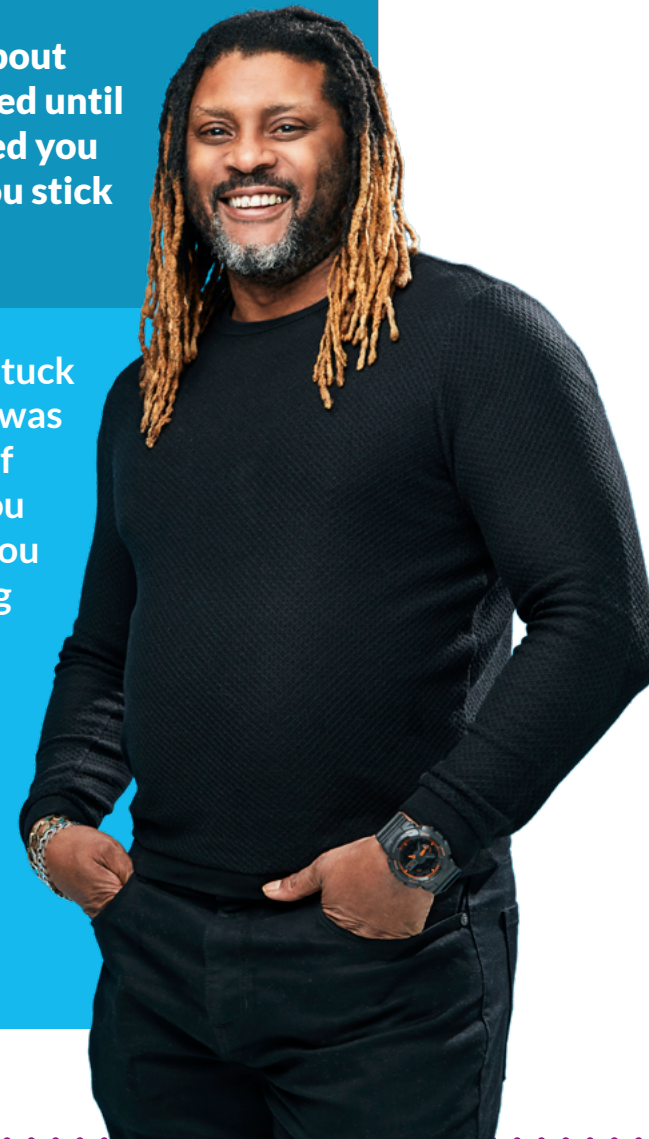
"Without number confidence I wouldn't have had the courage to take on a new role, and I wouldn't now be applying for the jobs that I am."



Oreleo

His anxiety about maths persisted until Oreleo realised you can learn if you stick at it.

"The anxiety stuck around until I was nearly thirty. If you believe you can improve you can keep going until you get there."



Maryam

She used to be terrified of maths, but now it is helping Maryam achieve her dream of opening a bakery business.

"Numeracy should not stop you from progressing or taking opportunities ... it has opened so many doors for me, and it's exciting. I can't wait for other doors to open."

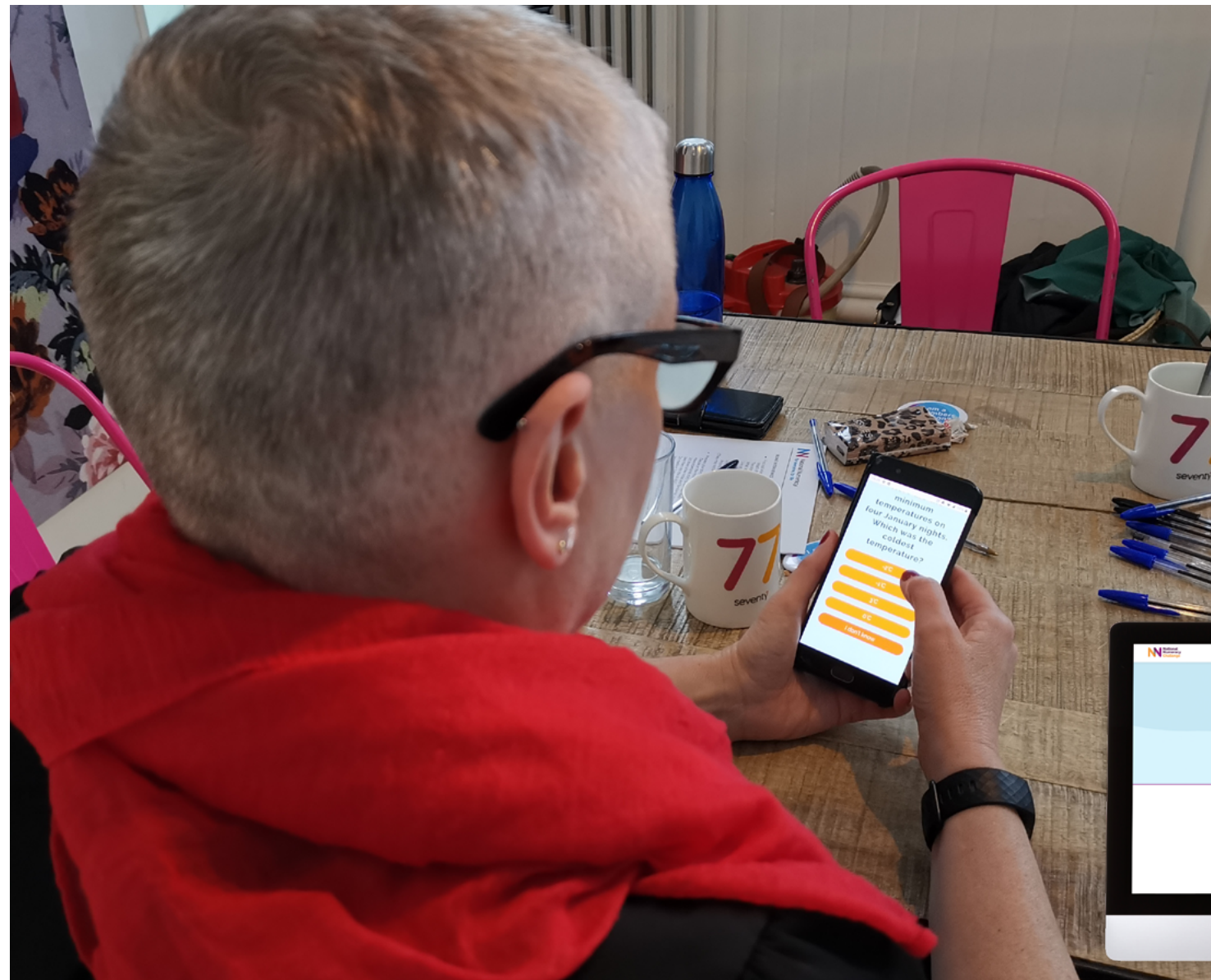


Looking forward

In 2021 we are launching a transformational three-year strategy to support people with low confidence or competence with numbers, where the need is greatest.

We will reach and engage adults with low numeracy, break down confidence barriers and empower them to improve, in order to help with work, supporting children and managing money. In turn, this will help unlock crucial next steps into training, education and skills-building.

By the end of 2023, we have set ourselves the ambitious goal of having nearly 3 million engagements with people, and supported tens of thousands of adults with low numeracy to improve their confidence and/or skills and take their next steps with work, children and/or money.



The all-new National Numeracy Challenge

We launched two major updates to our online learning tool in 2020 and are strengthening support for our users in 2021 thanks to support from TP ICAP and Ufi Voctech Trust.

To help people who feel anxiety, fear or panic about maths, we wanted to show they are not alone. So, we put confidence and attitude at the heart of the Challenge, asking people how they feel about maths and serving

them content and videos from people who feel the same. One learner said: "I loved that it asked about how I feel about maths, it showed me that the Challenge is to help people like me, not there to trip me up!" In 2021 we are creating new content based around attitudes and confidence as the feedback on this unique aspect of the Challenge has been universally positive.

Our second update is a game-changer: the Challenge now shows you how to solve the questions it poses. No more searching for answers or wondering where you went 'wrong'. Users are shown animations of how to arrive at the correct answer. Everything you need to learn and improve your numeracy is now at your fingertips, on mobile, tablet or computer.

Supporting children's numeracy

Confidence and attitudes to numbers and maths develop from a young age and have a crucial impact on attainment progression and the ability to use numbers in everyday life. The strongest determinate of a child's number confidence and attitudes towards maths is those of the adults that support them.

Yet, we know that millions of adults in the UK suffer from low confidence with numbers. This creates a vicious, intergenerational cycle that entrenches negative attitudes and passes down the myth that you are just 'not a numbers person'.

We support children's numeracy by working with non-maths specialist teachers, teaching support workers, parents, carers and families, as experts in helping to build confidence, competence and positive attitudes to numbers and maths.

Parental engagement project in Glasgow, with Garfield Weston Foundation

In February 2020 we launched a brand-new workshop for parents, aiming to help them address their own feelings about maths and to feel more confident to support their children's learning. As part of our "Parental Engagement in Scotland" project the trial workshops reached 88 parents from three schools. The feedback showed parents really benefitted from the session: 96% said they would feel more able to support their child with maths learning.

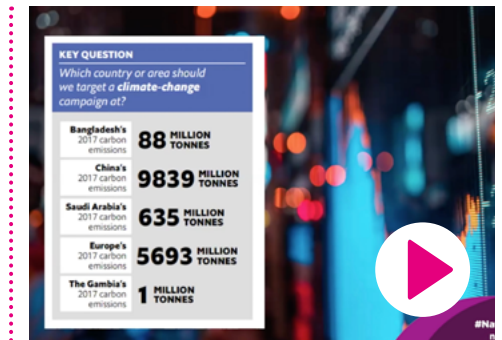
"There were kids where I could see their maths anxiety lifting throughout the project, because we took the time to celebrate their work each week... It's win-win, because the resources and support are there from National Numeracy. I couldn't fault any part of the project."

Gillian, teacher, St Aidan's Primary School, Scotland



Number confidence for children, with Santander

Santander ambassador Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill and National Numeracy Ambassador Bobby Seagull helped launch Number Confidence Week in November. With Santander we produced a range of video guides and free resources starring the pair to help families boost their number confidence and feel better about maths, including advice on how to boost confidence and looking at numbers in super sports and cool careers.



Numbers in the News, with KPMG

National Numeracy Day Founding Partner KPMG and The Economist Education Foundation created a Numbers in the News online workshop for 11-13-year-olds for the day. Supporting children to understand and interpret the numbers they are hearing in the media has never been more valuable than during this era of constant Covid counting.

Managing money

Having confidence and competence with numbers is an essential part of managing money and household finances. Financial confidence is a key enabler of a person's current financial and longer-term financial security, whilst financial numeracy is a key enabler of longer-term financial security. So, we work to equip people with both, in order to enable them to better manage their money.

We focus on reaching and engaging people directly, through partners and within various community settings in order to help improve their numeracy and take the next steps towards better money management and improved financial health.

Managing your Money Video Guide, with Experian

For Number Confidence Week in November 2020 we created a Managing Money video with Experian. Presented by National Numeracy Ambassador Bobby Seagull, the guide covered five areas to help people make the most of their money at this challenging time, including budgeting and shopping around.



National Numeracy ambassador Bobby Seagull



Budget-building basics, with Monzo

For National Numeracy Day in May, our work with Monzo focussed on supporting people to build workable household budgets with practical tip sheets and a short video.



"I left home when I was still quite young and had no idea how to budget, I was living on benefits and would spend money as soon as I got it and then end up borrowing for the rest of the month. It quickly spiralled out of control ... When I first tried the Challenge, I got a low score and I felt a bit disheartened, but I did go back to do a bit of learning and when I tried the skills check again, I got a much better score. I was really proud of that and I'm determined to get up to the Essentials of Numeracy!"

Cathy Prior, National Numeracy user and Social Impact Programme Manager for National Numeracy Day supporter Provident Financial Group



Numeracy for work

Number skills, coupled with the confidence to use them, are essential in whatever job you do. We provide a stepping-stone to get started with learning, before unlocking progression to gaining formal qualifications. We help people with low number skills and confidence to improve their numeracy and take the next step into work, within their job or toward a formal qualification in order to improve their career prospects.



“Maths was holding me back from the career that I’d chosen for myself. I wanted to move from being a nursing assistant to take the Trainee Nursing Associate course but needed maths Functional Skills to get into university. I worked on the Challenge at home and have now achieved my level 2 Functional Skills in maths and joined the Training Nursing Associate apprenticeship programme. I used to be terrified of doing anything with maths, but now I am much more confident.”

Mel, NHS worker

Championing numeracy at work

National Numeracy works with employers to create bespoke numeracy campaigns to engage staff with improving their confidence and skills in numeracy. With years of experience and research we have developed a communications toolkit, with digital training, online learning tools, attitudinal surveys, focus groups and data feedback on both the levels of numeracy and attitudes amongst staff.

Women and Number Confidence, with TP ICAP

With Number Confidence Week Founding Partner TP ICAP we sought to empower young women to boost their number confidence in the workplace. Our new report investigated why low number confidence affects women’s career prospects; our social video series told real stories to inspire; and our webinar heard from women in financial services and journalism on how they improved their own number confidence.

 Read the Women and Number Confidence Report



Work with us

We are enormously proud of our work with partners in 2020 and grateful for their commitment to improving numeracy in the UK. Reaching and supporting more people than ever before in such testing times is testament to their leadership in addressing this crucial issue, the strength and depth of our partner relationships and their belief in National Numeracy's work as a vehicle for positive change in a time of need. A heartfelt thank you to our supporters.

Working with us brings a host of strategic business benefits and we would be delighted to discuss how you can get involved.

Please get in touch with Partnerships Manager Cassia Weaver cassia@nationalnumeracy.org.uk



Contact Us

For more information please get in touch:

Telephone: +44 (0) 1273 915044

Email: enquiries@nationalnumeracy.org.uk

Twitter: @Nat_Numeracy

LinkedIn: @national-numeracy
www.nationalnumeracy.org.uk

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