

NUMERACY  
OPENED  
DOORS  
FOR ME



Alba

Oreleo

I'VE SAVED  
AROUND  
£300 A  
MONTH



USING  
MATHS  
HAS  
TURNED  
MY LIFE  
AROUND



Joseph

Kelly

IT HAS  
HELPED  
ME IN  
MY JOB



## Our Impact in Focus 2021



# Welcome

## From our CEO

In 2021, National Numeracy set out equipped with a new strategic plan to drive social mobility through a crystal-clear focus on supporting people in greatest need with low number confidence and numeracy skills.

The first 12 months of this plan have seen record-breaking impact; with 833,685 engagements with people in 2021, over 100,000 more than the year before. This is an unprecedented level of impact, made possible by our fantastic supporters and partners, to help individuals and communities improve their numeracy, opening

up new opportunities and brighter futures at home, work and school.

Crucially, 2021 saw a genuine step-change in action on numeracy at the national level. From the launch of the National Numeracy Leadership Council, supported by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the announcement of a new £560 million government scheme to improve adult numeracy, our messages are being heard.

As school education continued to be heavily disrupted, we expanded our Parental Engagement programme and made our Family Maths Toolkit entirely free. Meanwhile,

**"2021 saw a genuine step-change in action on numeracy at the national level."**



over 2,800 organisations and our incredible celebrity ambassadors helped make the fourth annual National Numeracy Day the most successful yet. Number Confidence Week almost doubled the number of actions taken towards improving number confidence on 2021.

Throughout 2021 the pandemic continued to disrupt our lives, its effects being keenly felt by many of those most in greatest need, often those with low numeracy skills and confidence. We continued to bolster our Covid response provision by removing barriers to accessing learning resources and

increasing relevant support across our programmes.

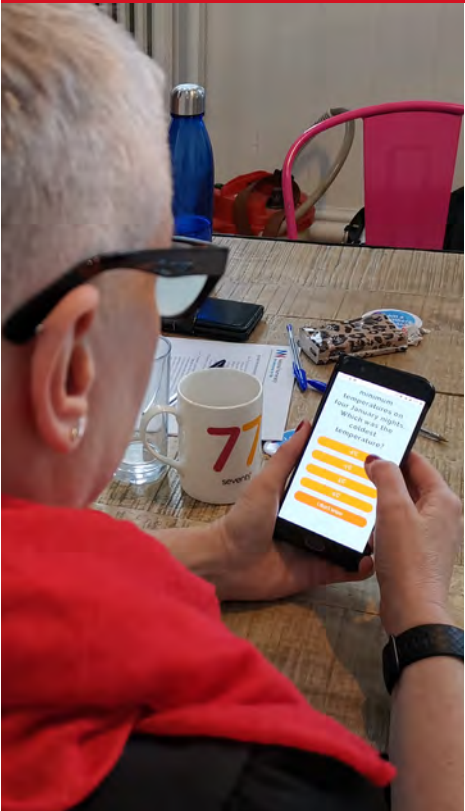
Behind the outstanding impact figures in 2021 lie fascinating, often emotional, stories. I have been deeply moved by many individuals who have shared their experiences of maths anxiety or fear of failure. Hearing them go on to talk about the positive difference our work has made to their lives, livelihoods, and often self-esteem, reveals the multi-faceted value improving numeracy holds. I hope you enjoy discovering some of these stories in this short report.

**Sam Sims**  
CEO, National Numeracy

# Our impact in 2021

## Engaging

**833,685**  
engagements with people in our work, in 2021



## Empowering

<b>69,848</b> National Numeracy Challenge registrations	<b>31,706</b> of people in greatest need of numeracy support engaged with one of our interventions	<b>11,729</b> of those in greatest need of numeracy support demonstrated improvement	<b>217</b> numeracy champions trained, a five-fold increase on 2020	<b>94%</b> of those attending our direct-to-learner sessions said they feel more confident to improve their numeracy
<b>8,723</b> downloads of our free Family Maths Toolkit resource packs for parents and children	<b>82%</b> of people who registered on the National Numeracy Challenge in 2021 competed a check of their skills, compared to 76% in 2020.	<b>86,783</b> actions to improve numeracy during National Numeracy Day 2021, a three-fold increase on the inaugural campaign in 2018	<b>40,602</b> actions towards building confidence with numbers as a result of Number Confidence Week, an 84% increase on 2020	

## Influencing

<b>18%</b> increase in social media audience on 2020	<b>74%</b> increase in social media engagement on 2020	<b>103%</b> increase in Facebook engagements on 2020	<b>63%</b> increase in Instagram followers on 2020	<b>61%</b> increase in LinkedIn followers on 2020
<b>2,810</b> champion organisations for National Numeracy Day, including 2,147 schools		<b>5,800</b> children entered our School Number Heroes competition		<b>No1</b> #NationalNumeracyDay trended No1 in the UK on the day



# 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 £25 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.






# Covid response

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to disrupt our lives throughout 2021. The previous year we mounted a fulsome rapid response programme across all areas of our work.

In 2021, as evidence emerged about where and how the pandemic was hitting those in greatest need, we bolstered our provision accordingly, including: increasing our digitally delivered training; removing paid-for barriers to support parents/carers and teachers in the face of a third lockdown and disrupted schooling; and by publishing new research.

## Counting on the recovery: the role of numeracy skills in 'levelling up' the UK

April 2021 we partnered with Pro Bono Economics to produce a report, supported by KPMG, looking at the impact of the pandemic on those in the lowest paid jobs with the lowest numeracy levels. It put the cost of low numeracy skills to the UK at as much as £25 billion per year and revealed that Covid pandemic job losses have hit those with low numeracy hardest. The report made recommendations to government, business and individuals as the nation seeks to recover from the pandemic.

 Counting on the Recovery launch event

## Free Family Maths Toolkit

In January we immediately responded to the third lockdown with a new set of free activity packs for children and parents to use at home. As evidence emerged of the scale of disruption to children's education, we contributed free resources to the Oak National Academy summer programme and in September we made the entire set of Family Maths Toolkit's 230 resources free to access, with the support of our partner TP ICAP. Thousands of people downloaded the resources as a result.



## A record-breaking National Numeracy Day

The fourth National Numeracy Day, 19 May 2021, took full flight, engaging the nation during another challenging period. A three-fold increase in the number of actions to improve numeracy since the inaugural campaign, empowered thousands to improve their confidence and competence with numbers for work, supporting children

and managing money. The star-studded day saw celebrity National Numeracy Ambassadors Strictly Come Dancing star Katya Jones, TV's Rachel Riley and Bobby Seagull, Money Saving Expert Martin Lewis, Bake Off 2020 winner Peter Sawkins and poet/comedian Harry Baker as well as Olympic champion and Santander Ambassador Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill get involved, made possible by Founding Supporter KPMG and 39 supporting organisations.

## Increasing our online training

Our training programmes help people develop positive attitudes towards numeracy. We moved our workshops online in 2020 and scaled up in 2021. We launched two new versions of our 'Becoming a Numeracy Champion' (BaNC) programme to support families with their maths confidence, and mindsets around managing money. And we trained 217 "Numeracy Champions" – five times more than in 2020 – who go on to train others in their workplaces.



**I really enjoyed the course and found it really helpful and has increased my confidence to deliver & support numeracy"**

BaNC training participant

# Real-life impact

Throughout 2021 hundreds of people spoke to us about the positive impact improving their numeracy has had on their lives. Some wanted to get a job or move on in their careers. Others wanted to feel able to help their children with homework. And some wanted to make their money go further at a time when budgets are being stretched.

But beyond these original impacts of improving numeracy, the stories our beneficiaries told us often revealed deeper, more emotional resonance with wide-ranging implications for the choices they make, opportunities they feel able to grasp and often the way they view themselves.

## Tamsin

**She didn't think she was good at maths and avoided it, but to become a Lead Apprentice, Tamsin wanted to tackle her fear of working with numbers.**



Improving my numeracy has helped me become a Lead Apprentice. Doing the National Numeracy Challenge has made me feel more confident as a learner in general. With my apprenticeship I feel more confident in everything I do.

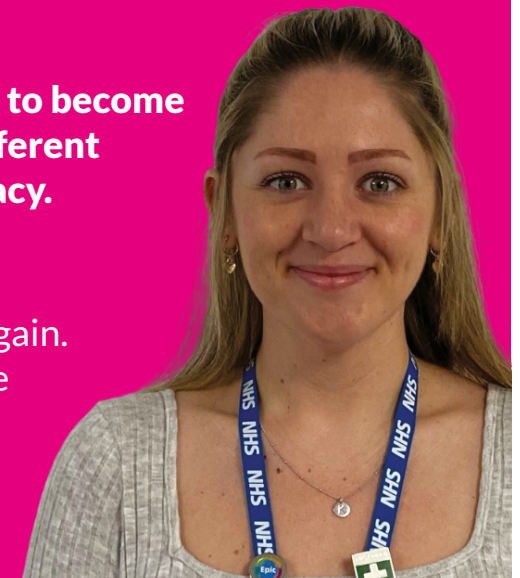


## Kelly

**She got a D grade GCSE three times, but to become an apprentice, Kelly decided to try a different approach to maths via National Numeracy.**



Sixteen years on, I decided to try maths again. What made the difference was finding the value in why I was doing it; the end goal was improving my numeracy so I could complete my apprenticeship.



## Alba

**She didn't like maths at school and couldn't see the point of it. But to gain her Care Certificate in the NHS, she reassessed her relationship with numbers.**



We do maths all the time at all points in our lives ... we just need to build that confidence back.



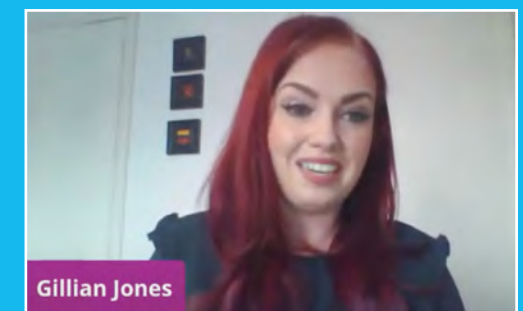
Number Confidence  
Week National  
Numeracy

## Gillian

**She felt lost in maths lessons and subsequently developed maths anxiety. When she became a teacher, she had to address the issue.**



I still don't say I'm the best at maths, but I know what I need to do to get better, and I have.



Hated homeschool  
maths? How to help  
children love numbers  
(even if you don't)



# Influencing national action

## National Numeracy Leadership Council

National Numeracy, HM Treasury, the Department for Work and Pensions and a pioneering group of organisations joined forces in the autumn to tackle the UK's numeracy crisis, by forming the National Numeracy Leadership Council (NNLC), backed by Chancellor Rishi Sunak. The Council is chaired by Andy Haldane, Permanent Secretary for Levelling Up at the Cabinet Office, on secondment from the RSA where he is Chief Executive.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said: "Having the right numeracy skills is really important in every aspect of people's lives, from getting on in a career, to balancing a family budget...That's why I'm delighted that HM Treasury is joining the National Numeracy Leadership Council, and look forward to us working together to raise awareness of this important issue."



## The Multiply numeracy scheme

In October, the Chancellor announced 'Multiply', a new £560 million numeracy scheme to support up to 500,000 adults with low numeracy.

This is good news for the country, economy, employers and – most importantly – the millions of adults held back in life through low numeracy. National Numeracy's work was quoted in the government's announcement of the scheme.

Sam Sims, our CEO, welcomed the scheme, saying: "At National Numeracy, we are both encouraged and excited by the 'Multiply' scheme – it could be exactly what we have been calling for, and we look forward to working with government and partners across the sector to ensure it has the biggest possible impact and a truly lasting legacy."

## Levelling Up

The cost of low numeracy skills to the UK was pegged at as much as £25 billion per year by the **Counting on the recovery: the role for numeracy skills in 'levelling up' the UK** report published in April 2021 by charity Pro Bono Economics and commissioned by KPMG for National Numeracy.

According to the report, Covid pandemic job losses have hit those with low numeracy hardest – with 59% of people who had lost their jobs at that point in the pandemic likely to have low numeracy skills. The North East, West Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber have most to gain from numeracy improvement, according to the research.



### NEW RESEARCH

"Numeracy crisis" could be costing the UK up to £25 billion a year

## National Numeracy in the news

Throughout the year we saw keen media interest in National Numeracy's work, bolstered by a raft of new celebrity ambassadors joining the team including Strictly Come Dancing star Katya Jones, Bake Off 2020 winner Peter Sawkins, poet and comedian Harry Baker and podcaster Timi Merriman-Johnson, aka Mr MoneyJar.

National Numeracy Day provided a huge media moment, with three primetime TV slots, national radio, broadsheet, tabloid and local press coverage ensuring

that numeracy was seen and heard everywhere you looked or listened during May with celebrity ambassador Bobby Seagull and other stars on TV, radio and in the press.

In the autumn, Number Confidence Week saw us on primetime TV and national radio again with our ambassador Martin Lewis - as well as national broadsheet, tabloid and local press coverage ensuring the issue of number confidence was widely seen and heard this year. Meanwhile media outlets sought our opinion for issues from new numeracy research to the government's Multiply programme during 2021.



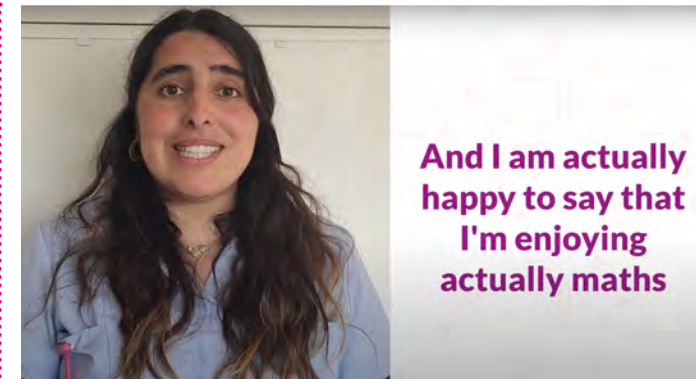
# Number Confidence

## Our unique attitudinal approach

Feeling confident to use and work with numbers is the foundation of numeracy. We want to empower adults and children to build their number confidence because we know it is the first vital step to improving numeracy skills. This attitudinal approach to improving numeracy runs throughout all of our work.

Those who are experiencing the greatest challenges due to Covid are often those who are lowest in numeracy confidence and skills. So, addressing number confidence in 2021 was vital. Our focus on number confidence aimed to help open up life opportunities for people held back by low numeracy and tackle the nation's skills deficit.

Many people have low number confidence and experience stress, anxiety or fear when working with numbers. It's understandable, but it can be overcome. Our new resources, research and Number Confidence Week campaign were tailored for those who have low number confidence, inspiring action to help people feel better about understanding and working with numbers.




## Feeling Good About Maths with the National Numeracy Challenge

We developed a new suite of videos, quizzes and resources to help our users improve their relationship with numbers. Our new tools are based on years of talking to, and supporting, adults with low number confidence; people who experience negative feelings when working with numbers, many of whom experience maths anxiety.

Our new Feeling Good About Maths zone on the National Numeracy Challenge, supported by Ufi VocTech Trust, is designed to help users think about the way they feel about maths, with tips to make maths feel less worrying. There are videos of people with similar experiences to the user, quizzes to help pick up tips, and other resources designed to help boost your confidence.

There are also zones for Money, Work and Helping Children, also with dedicated videos, quizzes and interactive resources to help make numbers relevant to each user's needs.

 One of the video resources to support numeracy confidence

## Number Confidence Week

The second Number Confidence Week campaign in November was supported by the campaign's Founding Partner TP ICAP and Lead Partners Experian and Santander. It aimed to empower adults and children to build their number confidence because we know it is the first vital

step to improving numeracy skills. This campaign's Covid-relevant themes - money management, numeracy for work, and supporting children - highlighted how improved number confidence can offer practical help with life's challenges at home, work and school. Our aim was to help everyone feel better equipped to navigate this extraordinary time.



Read the Number  
Confidence Week  
Impact Report





# Supporting children's numeracy

## Helping children develop a positive mindset

Whether as a parent, carer, teacher or support worker, we all want the children in our lives to feel confident with numbers, even if we struggle with maths ourselves. 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.



## Parental Engagement

We significantly scaled up our Parental Engagement programme, from 3 schools in 2020-21 to 19 schools in 2021-22, providing Family Maths Toolkit resources, training for teachers, and parent workshops for participating schools.

Our work in London in 2021, funded by John Lyon's Charity, had a positive impact on parental engagement in participating classes: 80% of parents engaged with their child in doing the Family Maths activities. And 100% of parents who attended workshops said they felt more able to support their child with maths as a result of the session.

For the 2021-22 school year, we are working with 19 primary schools across areas of need including London, the West Midlands, and East Ayrshire. In the autumn of 2021, over 5,000 Family Maths scrapbooks were provided to schools and 25 teachers attended training for the programme.

“The maths scrapbooks bring enjoyment to learning maths”  
A London teacher

“Parents who are less confident with maths are able to get involved”  
A London teacher



## Becoming a Numeracy Champion: Children, Families and Feeling Good About Maths

We worked in partnership with Scottish charity SSERC on a new project to deliver our 'Becoming a Numeracy Champion: Children, families and feeling good about maths' programme for Community Learning Development practitioners and STEM ambassadors. The aim was to improve confidence within these groups to support families and children who access community-based learning opportunities.







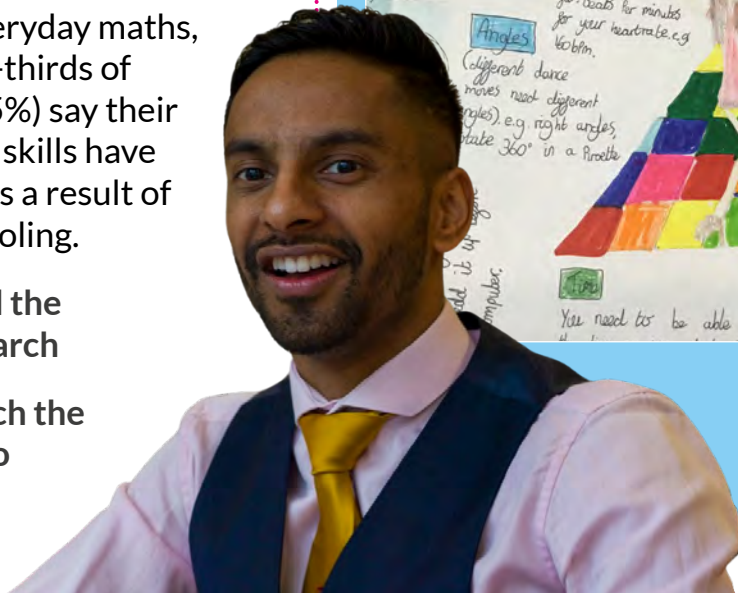
# Supporting children's numeracy continued

## NEW RESEARCH

### Parents struggle with maths

New research commissioned for us by KPMG for National Numeracy Day revealed that over half of parents who home-schooled in lockdown (59%) considered maths the hardest lesson to help their kids with. The same proportion (59%) admit that home-schooling has highlighted their own lack of confidence with numbers. Proving that it's never too late to brush up your everyday maths, nearly two-thirds of parents (65%) say their own maths skills have improved as a result of home-schooling.

-  Read the research
-  Watch the video



### School Number Heroes with KPMG

We invited young school pupils across the country to take part in our School Number Heroes competition to win a fantastic prize for themselves and a numeracy prize pack worth £1,500 for their school, provided

by National Numeracy and National Numeracy Day Founding Supporter KPMG, as well as a school assembly with Bobby Seagull!

An incredible 5,800 children entered with pictures about using numbers for jobs or hobbies when they grow up.



### National Numeracy Day Champion Schools

2,810 organisations signed up to champion National Numeracy Day this year, double the 2020 number. Among them were 2,147 schools and colleges who promoted the day with a huge variety of activities, sharing their fun and

learning on social media. Education Scotland, the Scottish Government and the Department for Education, Explore Learning, National Literacy Trust, Oxford University Press, Times Table Rock Stars, White Rose Maths and STEM Learning all threw their weight behind the campaign, encouraging schools to get involved.

### Inspiring maths-positive futures

In November we bought together a group of 90 teachers, teaching assistants and other people working in education to discuss maths anxiety, confidence with numbers and how it impacts children and adults. The online symposium, Educators & Maths Anxiety: Inspiring maths-positive futures, was organised in partnership with the Maths Anxiety Trust.





# Managing money

Numeracy can help us take control of how we spend, save and plan for the future. Having confidence and competence with numbers is an essential part of managing money and household finances. In fact, numeracy is the strongest predictor of a person's financial literacy\*. We work to equip people with

both the skills and confidence 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.

## Becoming a Numeracy Champion: Maths, mindset & money

A lack of number confidence can get in the way of managing money. Lots of people avoid getting to grips with their credit cards, tax, salaries, pensions and bills because they feel anxious about maths. We sought to increase financial inclusion by launching a new version of our Becoming a Numeracy Champion training, called Maths, mindset and money, particularly aimed at frontline staff supporting people with money issues and generously supported by PFG.

## Money and Maths Matters

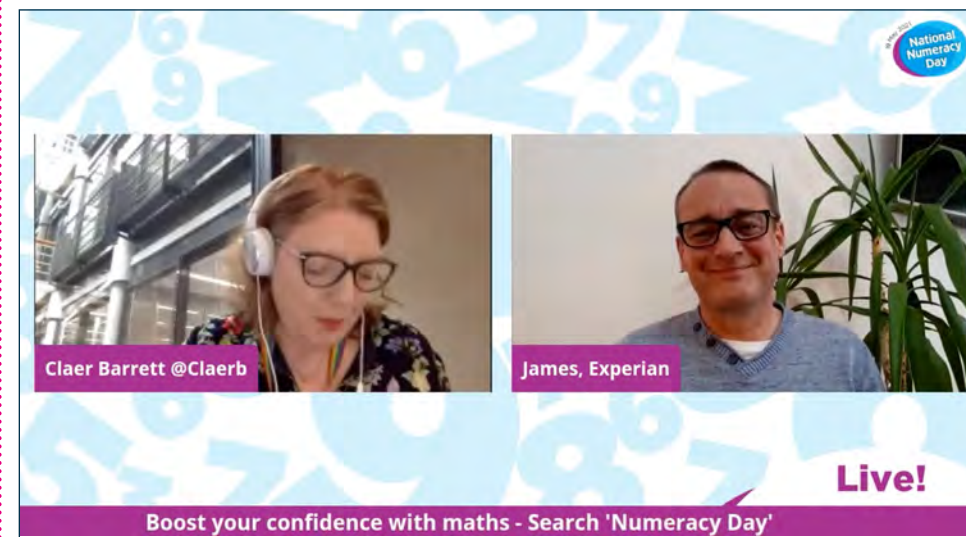
We supported Usdaw Union with a new course, Maths and Money Matters, with tips to help people boost their confidence with managing money.

## Money and Confidence

Claer Barrett, consumer editor of the Financial Times, chaired our National Numeracy Day live event, talking to guests

about how building number confidence can help you get on top of your finances, change the way you spend and plan for the future.

[Watch the video](#)



## Inspiring customers with Experian

Lead Supporter Experian engaged thousands of their customers by including campaign promotion in

customer emails and on the home screen of their app. As a result, thousands of customers took action to improve their number confidence and skills on the National Numeracy Challenge.

## Santander geo-targeted advertising

With Santander's generous support we piloted a bespoke geo-targeted digital marketing campaign to inspire adults with low number confidence and skills in particular cities to take action towards improving numeracy.

The campaign ran across video and link-click ads on Facebook channels in Santander's priority areas of Belfast, Blackpool and Glasgow to inspire engagement with the National Numeracy Challenge - our unique tool for empowering people to improve their numeracy.

It was tremendously effective, with 56% of registrants possessing low number confidence and/or skills - beneficiaries that are notoriously hard-to-reach.

\*MAS (2018) and Skagerlund et al (2018)



# 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.

## NHS Numeracy Champions

We worked with staff across the NHS throughout 2021 to help Learning and Development Teams support numeracy in their workplaces. Over 50 employers from Health and Social Care took part in our Numeracy Champions programme, training over 150 professionals to have the confidence and skills to support staff who are struggling with numeracy. Trained champions in Frimley NHS Trust are now confidently delivering

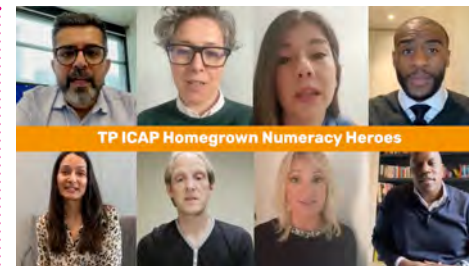
We help people with low number skills and confidence to improve their numeracy and take the next step into work, within their job or toward a formal qualification in order to improve their career prospects.

our attitudinal workshops as part of the Healthcare Support Worker induction programmes.



**I really enjoyed the programme from the content to the networking with other organisations. It was very helpful to work with people who had similar work philosophies. I will feel confident to ask for support during my journey of promoting numeracy within my Trust.**

NHS participant



## Homegrown Heroes, with TP ICAP

Strategic partner and National Numeracy Day Lead Supporter TP ICAP mounted an innovative staff engagement programme to help promote National Numeracy Day.

Staff from across the financial services business were encouraged to talk about their own journeys to improving numeracy and why numeracy is important in their own careers.



Watch the video



## NEW RESEARCH Putting Number Confidence to Work

Our Putting Number Confidence to Work report showed confidence with numbers plays a stronger role than number skills in making people feel better able to get a qualification, find a job or get

on at work. The data reflects what National Numeracy has found on the ground – employers and employees reporting problems with number confidence and maths anxiety blocking the pipelines to key progression routes, such as apprenticeships.



Read the report

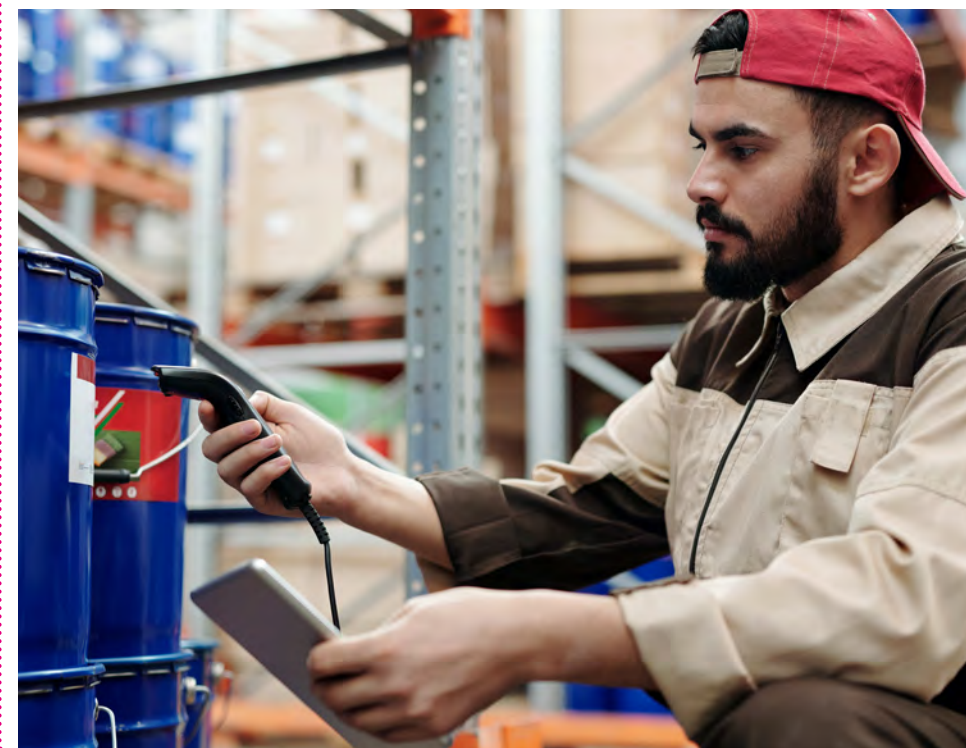


## Work it! How to use numeracy to supercharge your career

For National Numeracy Day we staged a live streamed event across all social media and our website focused on improving numeracy for work. Our fantastic celebrity ambassador, poet and mathematician Harry Baker, chaired a panel of guests talking how boosting number confidence can help you get into work or get on at work.



Watch the video





# Partner employee engagement

Many of our partners have used their work with us to spark innovative employee engagement activities among their own workforces.

From spreading awareness and offering support about numeracy and building understanding and appreciation of their own business priorities to generating excitement and participation; the benefits and impact of partnering with National Numeracy in 2021 extended throughout our partners workplaces.



## Amazon

Our strategic partner Amazon was a Lead Supporter of National Numeracy Day 2021 and promoted the day to its staff with an article and via its weekly newsletter which goes to thousands of corporate employees in the UK. It was a sure-fire way of getting everyone in the know and involved.




## Experian

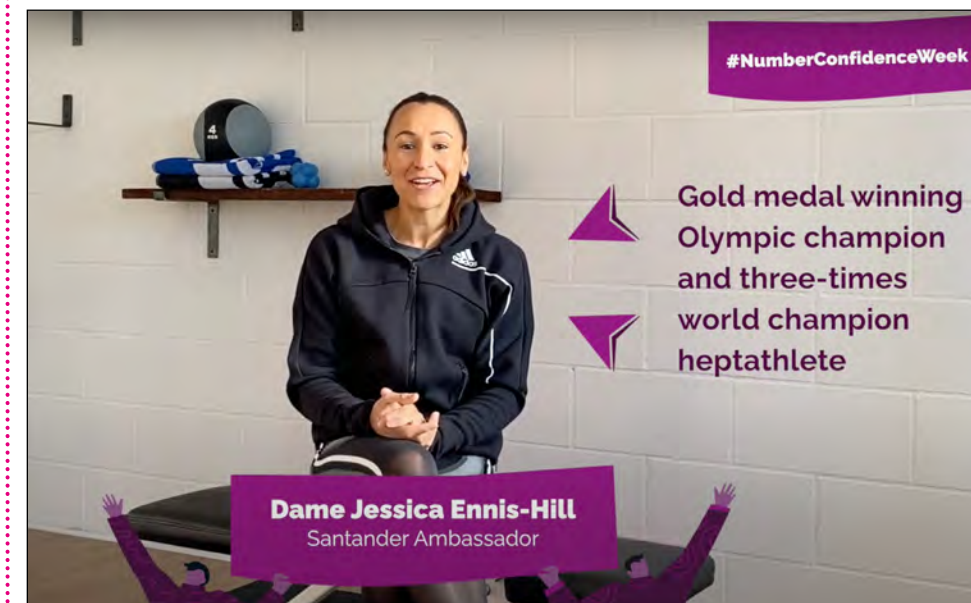
Our strategic partner Experian was a Lead Partner for Number Confidence Week 2021 and engaged its staff through the weekly Horizon newsletter, sent to all UK and Ireland colleagues, as well as via LinkedIn posts and shared videos. Staff also engaged with the campaign as part of Experian's consumer communications, which included targeted emails and content on the popular financial-health Experian app.




## Santander

Our strategic partner Santander promoted its work with us across campaigns and activities by making good use of its intranet, posting articles throughout the year to engage and inform staff across the UK business.

We were thrilled that Santander Ambassador and Olympic gold champion Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill supported our campaigns in 2021, using her social media channels to encourage parents and carers in the UK to feel more confident with numbers.




## PFG

Strategic partner Provident Financial Group communicated with its staff on a regular basis throughout the year, keeping interest high by using different channels and types of media, from blogs to videos and including a post from a colleague (Cathy, pictured below) who struggled with numbers to encourage others in the company to take steps to improve their numeracy.



## Work with us

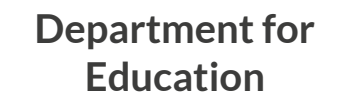
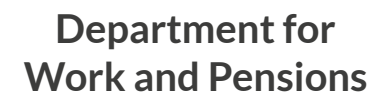
We are enormously proud of our work with partners in 2021 and grateful for their commitment to improving numeracy in the UK.

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 social mobility and positive change in a time of need.

Working with us brings a host of benefits to employees and employers alike 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](mailto:cassia@nationalnumeracy.org.uk)



















### Contact Us

For more information please get in touch:

Telephone: +44 (0) 1273 915044

Email: [enquiries@nationalnumeracy.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nationalnumeracy.org.uk)

Twitter: @Nat\_Numeracy

LinkedIn: @national-numeracy  
[www.nationalnumeracy.org.uk](http://www.nationalnumeracy.org.uk)

Charity registered in England

Charity No: 1145669

Company No: 7886294