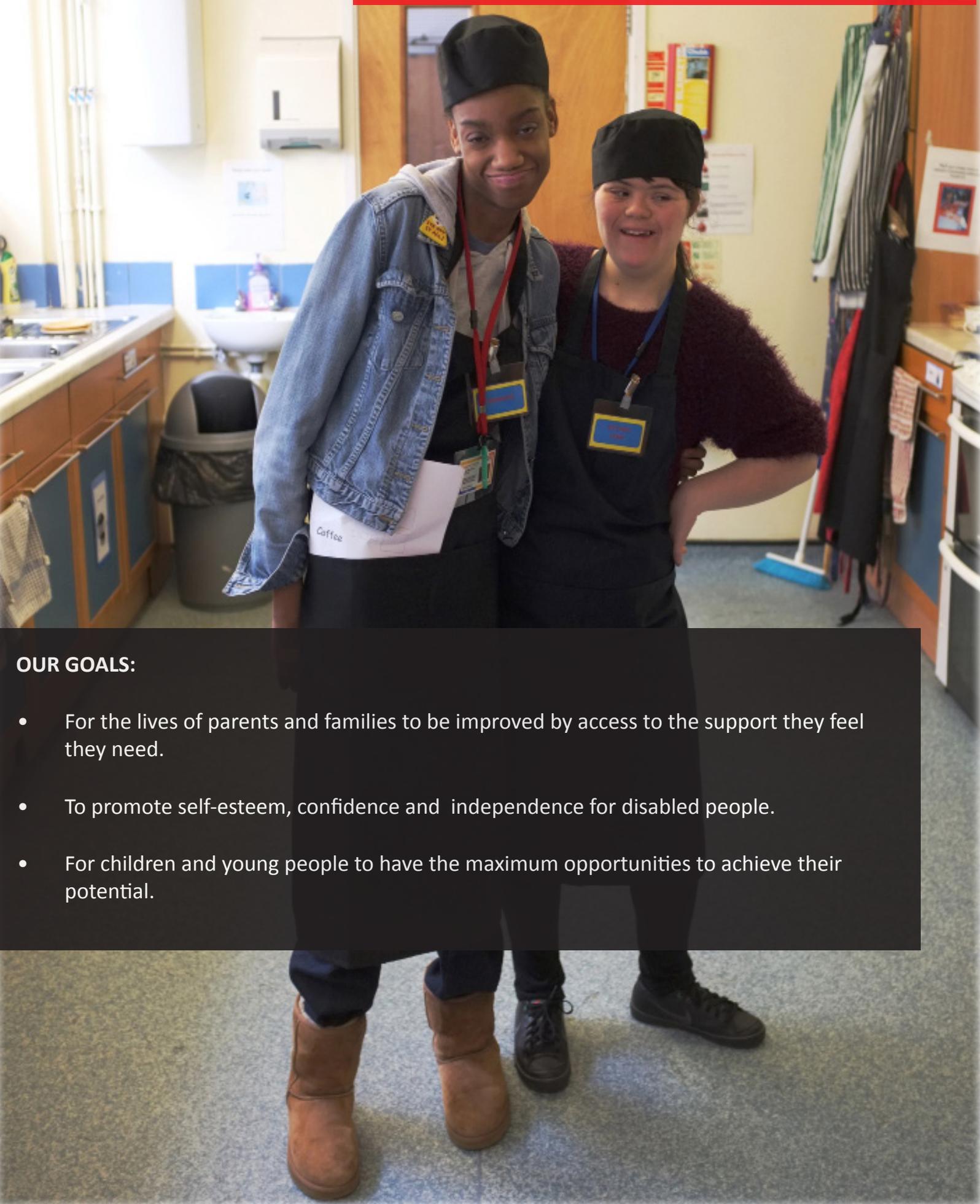




Elfrida Rathbone Camden works to achieve independence, empowerment and personal development for disabled people, children and young people, parents and families.



OUR GOALS:

- For the lives of parents and families to be improved by access to the support they feel they need.
- To promote self-esteem, confidence and independence for disabled people.
- For children and young people to have the maximum opportunities to achieve their potential.

Message from Sade Alade, Chair of Trustees



I am very proud to mark another successful year of service delivery for Elfrida Rathbone Camden. I would like to thank ERC's staff, service users and my fellow trustees for working so hard to uphold the vision and values of the organisation. Although the funding climate is extremely poor for public sector services, ERC has managed to maintain both the diversity and quality of our services. Despite our relatively small size we have continued to play a significant role in meeting the needs of Camden children, young people, families and adults.

The legacy of Elfrida Rathbone which started in 1916, and which we celebrate the centenary of next year, has carried on so long because she and the organisations she inspired have never stopped trying to achieve change and inclusion. That includes ERC looking at our own services and skills and how we could increase the effectiveness of these. Throughout the year Alexis and his staff look at ways to improve how we do things, partnering with organisations like the Operational Research Society to make

sure we are supporting our beneficiaries to make the progress in their lives that is most important to them. I am really grateful for the input of the parents and young disabled people who work with us and give us their feedback. It is only by maintaining the quality of our activities and making sure that they are relevant that we can continue to make sure that the people we work with get a real chance to participate and contribute.

We need to look at our own practice and approaches and not just hold other organisations to account. For example it is important that as well as trying to find volunteering opportunities we provide them ourselves and ERC activities really benefit from the support of volunteers old and new. We value all our volunteers and have named as many as possible at the end of this review but I would like to pick out and commend Samantha Nethsinghe who has come to the office to help with administration every Friday for six years. It has also been fantastic that Young People for Inclusion member Catherine Capaldi has become one of ERC's trustees.

We are also extremely proud of the progress of one of our ex-students Chris Cooper who over 2013 collaborated in an artistic residency with Lisa Muten at the James Wigg Practice. Since leaving Leighton, Chris has also gone on to produce many written articles working with the youth magazine Exposure. Chris' success is based on his own skills but I'm glad that ERC projects like Leighton Education and YPFI helped him to develop his voice and to find ways to share his talent. That pretty much sums up what ERC's values continue to be: not taking over but seeing the potential and helping people to use it and release it.

Sade Alade

Our Trustees

Sade Alade (Chair)
Hazel Saunders (Vice Chair)
Ruth Jenkins (Treasurer)
Angela Bell

Debbie Ladds
Rosie Smith
Catherine Capaldi
Natasha Friend

Overview from Alexis Keir, ERC's Director



Partnership and collaboration remain essential for ERC and we have continued to work effectively with the Camden local authority departments and other local organisations including Coram, Camden CAB, Family Action, People First, Voluntary Action Camden and Haverstock Healthcare. It is very much part of the culture and approach of ERC to willingly and continuously share our ideas and skills to help services improve. Anyone visiting the office at Dowdney Close on any particular day over the last year was very likely to find working there happily with ERC staff a colleague from Coram or Family Action or Connexions. We also continued to work very successfully with the University of Connecticut and the Foundation for International Education to provide short-term internships for American students throughout the year. Our interns have massively helped our direct work with young disabled people and also marketing and publicity for ERC.

ERC continued a range of activities to uphold our mission of working “to achieve independence, empowerment and personal development for disabled people, children and young people, parents and families”. In this review we set out some of the ways in which we achieved this during 2013-14 and how our services have continued developing right up to now.

There are some impressive figures showing

how needed and popular our activities have been but numbers don't tell the whole story of course: they are just a reflection. Skill Up for Volunteering for example works only with a small number of people at any one time but the life-changing difference that their placements make for them and the support that our worker Jo provides are both immense. On any day of the week I can walk into a room at Dowdney Close and be surprised by meeting a group of parents of disabled children having a laugh and sharing experiences over lunch or find some young disabled people planning enthusiastically their next event or conference. I may get to see the Leighton students going out to make a film or hard at work creating new artistic pieces with our colleague Lisa from Action Space. Or just find my own staff from different projects engaged in a vibrant discussion which will mean that our services are better and more joined up. I can confidently say that even as we battle to find funding to keep our services going their ability to address unmet needs has never been greater.

Alexis Keir

Leighton Education Project

Over 2013-14 the Leighton project for students with learning difficulties has continued its successful service development. An entirely new activity took place when 10 of the 12 students were supported by staff to attend a weekend residential at the Stubbers activity centre in Essex. The students had a fantastic time having the opportunity to take part in raft building, climbing, archery and cooking on campfires. This was a very successful new venture and one that we will definitely repeat each year.

Work and volunteering skills are developed through our work with partner agencies to enable students to progress. During the year young people developed work skills at John Lewis Oxford Street, Boma Garden Centre, Mailout, London Canal Museum and fundraised for Oxfam.



choices. From the academic year 14/15 The Leighton Education Project has become an Ascentis Accredited Centre and all students are working towards the Ascentis Award in Personal Development or the Ascentis Award in Employability.



Interns on their time with the Leighton Education Project

Leighton students raft building on residential

In 2013 the Leighton students worked over several months with staff from ActionSpace and London Transport Museum to take part in a London wide project celebrating 150 years of the Underground. This culminated in two exhibitions of their work and a packed and vibrant community preview in December 2013 attended by over 50 people including parents, the press and Camden’s Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Lead for Young People.

From September 2015 and under a new management team of Jennifer Ellis (Learning and Participation Programme Manager) and Lynne Hamer (Learning Co-ordinator) the Leighton Project has expanded and now also offers a one year Employability Programme. Students on the Employability Programme are supported to gain skills and confidence for work. The course also supports young people to develop their independent living skills through travel training and making healthy

‘The students of the Leighton Project are incredibly loving, caring, empathetic individuals who find happiness in every situation and always manage to laugh. They wear their hearts on their sleeves and demonstrate honesty by never holding back what they are thinking and feeling. I find this to be one of the most important things that I will take home with me because it is so uncommon to find in people nowadays. Often, people are too worried about gaining approval from their peers. These students have the approval of one another while also sharing what they want and need to say, proving that honesty is important and if something is ever bothering someone, it is important to be vocal and share those feelings. I will miss everyone from my placement and am very thankful for the lessons I have learned throughout my time in Kentish Town.’



- Courtney Savage- Spring 2014

‘The students have reminded me how much I am thankful for the relationships I have in my life. I have learned so much from them and I hope I have had a positive impact on their lives as well.’

- Elizabeth Mynarski- Autumn 2014



'YPFI made a difference to my organisation because I realised that inclusion needs to be ensured in ordinary ways and it can't be assumed it already happens in established public service.'
Saul Letourneau – Senior Officer, London Borough of Camden

Young People for Inclusion (YPFI) has been operating for five years supported by a grant from the Big Lottery. They are a group of young disabled people campaigning for the full rights and inclusion of disabled people in all areas of society.

29 young people attended a YPFI event or activity in 2013-2014 and of these, 25 reported that they felt more confident and aware of their rights as a result. ERC has also employed young disabled people in sessional roles to help YPFI deliver its PACT (Physical Access, Communication and Training) programme in the community and disability awareness training sessions. YPFI members have also worked alongside the Reactive Forum to deliver disability awareness training to Camden youth workers.

In December 2014 YPFI threw a successful 'Christmas Cracker' party to celebrate their achievements.

'Too often people get caught up in complaining about what is not working rather than trying to find a solution. YPFI are able to see the shortfalls and do something about them, which is refreshing! I worked alongside them in different projects and always found them a very useful and powerful voice. They would not only tell it like it is but they would also take matters in their own hands and effect change. The PACT project is just one of those examples.'

Valeria Collie - Adult Social Care, London Borough of Camden



Skill Up For Volunteering (SUV)



SUV Participants celebrate at an Awards Ceremony in July 2014

ERC's SUV project funded by LB Camden has continued to support young people with a disability to volunteer in a wide range of settings. The project funded by LB Camden provides a fantastic opportunity for young disabled people to gain tailored training to prepare them for a voluntary role in the community. Young people have found that it's a great way to improve confidence, self-esteem and preparation for work, and to help them feel useful and a part of the community.

During 2013-2014, 12 young people took part in training to prepare them for volunteering. 7 of these also became Mencap Youth Ambassadors.

A Snapshot of our Volunteers

Chelsea: Young Ambassador at MENCAP and Volunteer at JW3 Community Centre

Chelsea took part in a big Mencap event. She helped out on the stands, collected money and gave out information. Chelsea also baked "Challah for Hunger" in JW3 which was sold to raise money to help people.



Jasmine and Jenny : Volunteers at Oxfam Charity Shop



Jasmine and Jenny volunteer at the Camden Oxfam Shop. They sort out jewellery, organise books, steam and arrange clothes and design the window displays.

Mohib: Volunteer as a Chef Assistant at OneKX Café



Mohib's role as Chef Assistant includes preparation of food, using the till to process sales, doing the washing up and looking after the customers in the cafe.

Volunteers on their SUV Experience

'I like it so much because it's calm. I am proud of my confidence getting bigger. I feel strong and work hard. The Café makes me confident. I am in a good mood because I enjoy it.' - **Mohib volunteered at OneKX Cafe**

'Volunteering made me feel skilled, adventurous, reliable. I feel like 'level up' and I like it. I feel confident and busy.' - **Volunteer at Mencap and as a Sports Coach Assistant at Talacre Sports Centre**

'Volunteering makes people more confident. I feel nervous, successful and confused sometimes because you can't know everything. I feel like 'we can do it, we can work as a team!' - **Shelena completed work experience at John Lewis and mentored other SUV members, which led to paid work for YPFI as a forum leader.**

ERC continued as lead agency for the Camden Futures (CF) family support consortium (comprising, ERC, Camden CAB, Coram and Haverstock Healthcare). 80 new families with complex and multiple problems were referred to CF in Year 2 of its service delivery and in total the service worked with 136 families. Through CF children and parents were able to access direct support from family development workers, parent support advisors and creative therapists. CF also had a significant impact in the area of financial inclusion with the worker from CAB helping families to manage £86,000 worth of priority debts (e.g. rent and council tax arrears): an average of £1230 per family. A total of £338,000 of non-priority debts (benefit overpayments, parking penalties etc.) were managed – an average of £4833 of debt per family.

As well as direct work with families CF has helped to improve and disseminate good practice in the borough by creating a Wider Referral Network of local agencies and practitioners. One of our great successes has been the WRN quarterly meetings which bring together a lively and creative group of local workers to share ideas and information. In 2013-14, 68 different agencies were linked with the WRN.

Since its start in April 2012, CF has supported over 200 families and our team of ERC Family Development Workers has worked with over 150 of them. Through one to one appointments, they explored a range of strategies to empower parents and children to bring change into their lives and promote positive behaviours within the home as well as outside. They have also helped them link up with other services and projects running within their local community to break down social barriers and encourage local involvement.

So far over 60 children have been able to

access the support of a Music or Art Therapist within a primary school and have benefitted enormously from having dedicated time on a weekly basis to express their emotions through art. This was also appreciated by parents who were encouraged to understand and use this creative approach with their children.

The CAB Financial Inclusion worker has supported over 120 families since 2012 and the outcomes of this work have been hugely significant for our families:

99 parents were supported to manage priority debts totalling £220,655

114 parents were supported to manage non-priority debts totalling £742,872

Through applications for benefits which they were eligible for 55 parents had a financial gain of a total of £144,243 (approx. £2,253 per parent)

'Thank you so much. This has been a very positive experience and the only one where organisations use a holistic approach and families are involved in the decision making.'

- Family accessing service

The feedback received from parents about the impact of CF work is extremely positive.

- 35% reported improved health and 44% improved emotional well-being for children
- 40% reported improved links with the community
- 40% reported better understanding of how to improve family economic and living conditions
- 88% reported being more confident in their parenting skills
- 79% reported an improvement in their well-being as parents
- 81% reported improved family relationships

CF was granted additional funding from The Big Lottery in January 2015 to develop the strengths shown in the first three years and build on them to secure a sustainable future. Thanks to this extension the CF delivery model will be including group based work with parents to help them share their experiences and knowledge and encourage a peer-support

approach. The service will run until October 2015.

Advocacy

Young Carers

The Young Carers Advocacy Project is a partnership working with Family Action Islington and CASA Islington. The project offers support to people 18 years old and under living in Camden or Islington who are acting as carers to someone with a disability. ERC worked with 12 young carers and their families in 2013-14 to enable them to access other community services and to try to alleviate and provide support for the pressures of their role.

CANParent Trial

Camden was one of 3 local authority areas chosen nationally to pilot the provision of free workshops for parents of under 5s. Under the management of ERC Advocacy Manager Lorraine Creagh ERC provided baby massage classes within a consortium led by City Lit. These were extremely popular – 185 parents accessed ERC classes which was actually just over 9% of the national total.

Social Care Advocacy

Camden Learning Disability Service continue to commission ERC to provide individual social care advocacy to adults with a learning disability on a case by case basis. In 2013-14 we worked with 8 adults with a learning disability who needed support to express wishes and choices around major processes (e.g. parenting, child custody or criminal justice proceedings) or life decisions.

OURspace

With funding from Camden LINK ERC provided a drop-in community advocacy service called OURspace for parents of disabled children (34) and also drop-in advocacy support for

adults with a learning disability and disabled young people.

OURspace is a peer support advocacy service for parents of children with SEN and disabilities. The focus is on accessing appropriate education, health and social care services but in addition the project offers information and support in relation to practical support needs.

My experience of OURspace By Antoinette Cole

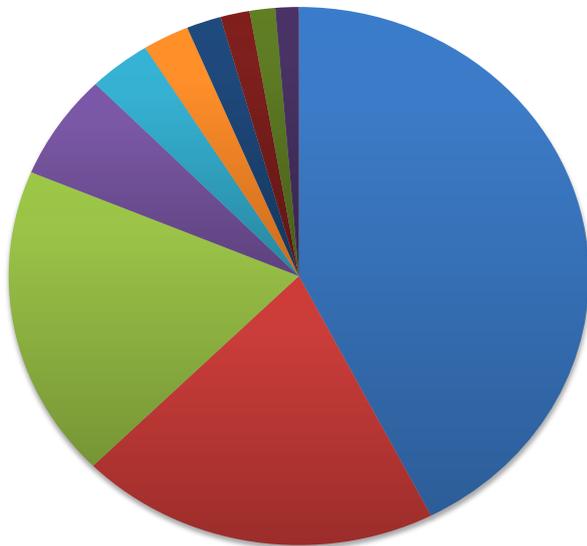


I've been a volunteer advocate now for 5 years with OURspace. It's a support group for parents with disabled children. We meet once a week during Friday term times just to chat over tea and biscuits. We also put on a special lunch once a month for everyone.

I decided to become a volunteer because I knew my knowledge and experience would benefit other families. We are able to be supportive by offering a sympathetic ear, a space to sound off frustration and also share joys. We are available for advice and will accompany parents to Annual Reviews and school meetings etc.

On a personal level, OURspace enabled me to support my autistic son through transition from primary to secondary school and beyond. It is often so wonderful to realise you're not alone and that others are going through similar challenges.

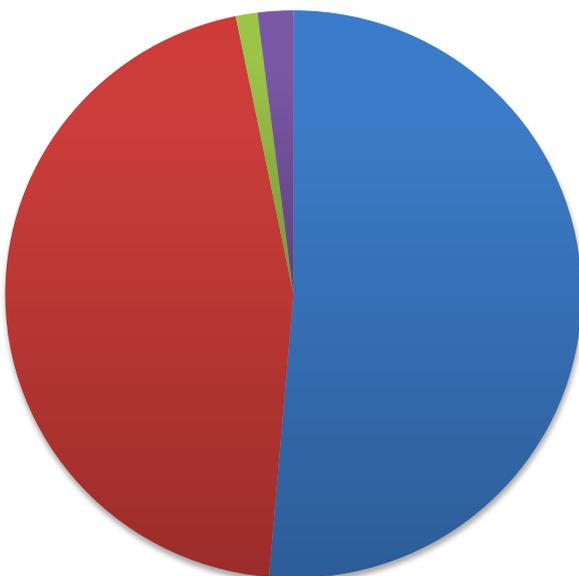
Income



Where our money comes from (£)

Big Lottery Fund	£366,862
London Borough of Camden	£173,358
Education Funding Agency	£162,042
Trusts and Grants	£54,735
The Clothworkers' Foundation	£30,000
London Borough of Barnet	£22,463
London Borough of Islington	£16,619
Sundries	£14,118
Other London Boroughs	£12,301
Room and Desk Hire	£11,217
Total	£863, 715

Expenditure



Where the money goes (£)

Family Services and Advocacy	£425,008
Leighton Project	£375,939
Generating Funds	£10,152
Governance	£16,483
Total	£827,582

For detailed financial information please see our Audited Accounts 2013/2014.
Accounts available from Chris McAuley 020 7424 1621 chris@elfridacamden.org.uk

Thank you

Elfrida Rathbone Camden would like to extend thanks to all of the following organisations and individuals for their support.

Our funders (2013 - 2014)

Big Lottery Fund
Education Funding Agency
London Borough of Camden
London Borough of Barnet
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of
Haringey
Family Action
The Clothworkers'
Foundation
City Lit
Crossroads Care
Wednesday's Child
The Fitzdale Trust

Our Volunteers

Antoinette Cole
Helen Putera
Hannah Donelon
Jackie Murin
Esther Alade
Zuhra Ahmed
Samantha Nethsinghe
Pegha Hughes
Lauren Bishopp
Karen Warden
Miriam Rodriguez
Nina Wallis
Zuhra Ali
And all other volunteers

Corporate Supporters

John Lewis Oxford Street
Camden Lock Market
ARUP



Students and Interns who have supported our work

Abby Bridge
Alexa Julich
Ilana Levine
Abigail Shafer
Rebecca Femat
Elizabeth Mynarski
Samantha Ash
Anne Connelly
Matherly Gainer
Jennifer Smith
Courtney Savage

Photographers featured:

Marian Mlyarnczyk and other ERC staff

Contact Us

Director

Alexis Keir
alexis@elfridacamden.org.uk

Finance and Administration Manager

Chris McAuley
chris@elfridacamden.org.uk

Learning and Participation Programme Manager

Jennifer Ellis
jennifer@elfridacamden.org.uk

Camden Futures Co-ordinator

Francesca Cappelli
francesca@elfridacamden.org.uk

Advocacy Manager

Lorraine Creagh
lorraine@elfridacamden.org.uk



Elfrida Rathbone Camden
7 Dowdney Close
London NW5 2BP

Tel: 0207 424 1601

E-mail: info@elfridacamden.org.uk

www.elfridacamden.org.uk

Support us:
Easyfundraising, The Big Give,
Virgin Giving

Follow us:

 **[Facebook](#)**

 **[Twitter](#)**

Elfrida Rathbone (Camden)
Registered Charity 291214

