



**Caroline Russell AM**  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
LONDON SE1 2AA

Our ref: CR-0332

**Katherine Chapman, Director**  
Living Wage Foundation  
Citizens UK Head Office  
112 Cavell Street  
London E1 2JA

8 November 2017

Dear Katherine,

### **Living Wage Week and apprentices**

**Congratulations on the continuing growth of your campaign and another successful Living Wage Week.**

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I am writing because I have some concerns over one particular aspect of your requirements for being a London Living Wage employer - the rates expected to be paid to apprentices.

In City Hall we have a good apprenticeship scheme and I am very happy that my team is applying this year to host a GLA apprentice. I was also glad to find that any apprentice in our office – like all those in the GLA – will be paid the London Living Wage.[1]

However I was surprised to find that not all accredited Living Wage employers have interpreted these principles the same way, and that many do not follow the same policy, including some councils. Recently, for example, Camden Council has said it will pay its new apprentices as little as £6.95 per hour and only up to a maximum of the London Living Wage.[2]

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I consulted your FAQs and found that you don't ask that adult apprentices are paid a Living Wage by your accredited employers, giving as the reason that the lower wages are a "contribution to the cost of training".

I'm sorry to say that I don't agree with this policy. Surely the Living Wage is calculated on the basis of the minimum needed to live a decent life, and should not be subject to any deductions of this sort?



City Hall Green — Caroline Russell AM

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An adult apprentice who is also training would I think have even less ability to supplement their income with other work than the average employee, and some Londoners would potentially not be able to sustain their apprenticeships if they were underpaid in this way.

I am concerned, therefore, about whether the Foundation is really sticking to the principles behind the Living Wage if it continues to accredit employers who pay this group of workers at rates below what they need to live.

As Greens in City Hall have been for many years, I am a strong supporter of your work, so I would like to be constructive and begin a dialogue with you about this policy, and to start by asking for more information on the reasons behind this stance.

I would be happy to receive a reply to my question by letter or to meet with you in person to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Russell  
Green Party Member of the London Assembly

Notes:

1. GLA 2017 Apprenticeships scheme details (the 2018 scheme page is offline but the terms are the same except that applicants who have a degree can also apply):

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/jobs-and-working-city-hall/become-apprentice-city-hall>

2. Camden Council report on its updated apprenticeships scheme, October 2017

<http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/documents/s62747/Apprenticeships%20Scrutiny%20Report%204.10.17.pdf>

3. From Living Wage Foundation FAQs

<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/faqs>

Apprentices

Statutory apprentice wages are lower than the minimum wage as a contribution to the cost of training, particularly in the earlier stages where apprentices may spend more time training than working. For the same reason we do not require apprentices to be paid the Living Wage. However, it is good practice to ensure pay rises over the course of the apprenticeship, and many accredited employers have chosen to extend the full Living Wage to apprentices.

<https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide>

