

YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

Annual Review 2024



FAMILY & YOUTH WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

HOUSING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

SUPPORT & ADVICE

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Throughout this review, some names have been changed and some photos show models to protect identities

Our Mission

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in **body, mind and spirit**. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive and energising communities that are open to all, where young people can truly **belong, contribute and thrive**.

We deliver a range of programmes and services that tackle the issues facing local people and ensure that

there are opportunities for young people throughout our work, from apprenticeships to work experience and childcare to youth work.

We work with all ages, faiths and backgrounds, as part of an international movement rooted in more than 120,000 communities around the world.

We have served local communities for over 130 years and we reach thousands of people every day.

A word from Guy, our CEO

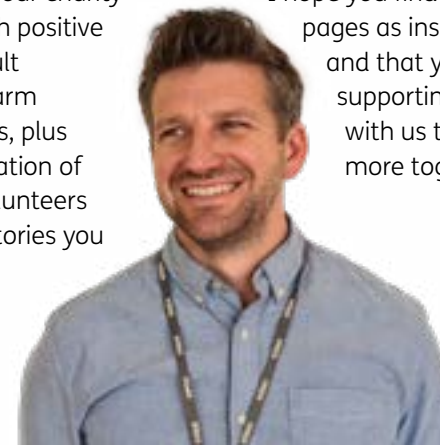
The past year has been an incredible journey of success for so many of our service users. You are about to read how they have discovered who they really are, worked to turn their lives around and taken courageous steps forward in new directions.

What makes these achievements even more significant is that they occurred despite the challenges we all faced - and still face - including the cost of living crisis and the broader societal issues dominating the news.

This clearly showcases the impressive support and guidance our charity provides, enabling such positive changes in such difficult circumstances. The warm support of our partners, plus the passion and dedication of our colleagues and volunteers make the wonderful stories you are about to hear possible.

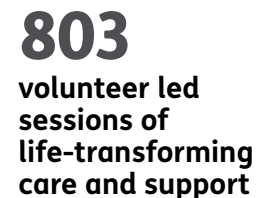
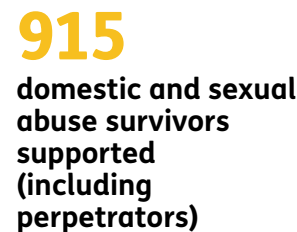
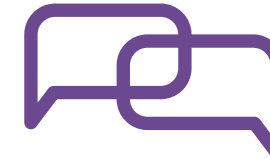
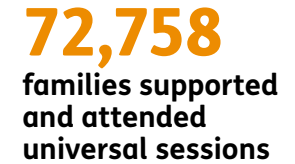
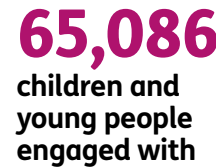
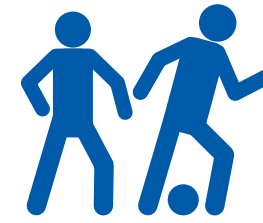
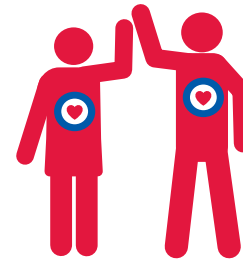
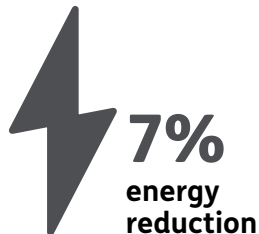
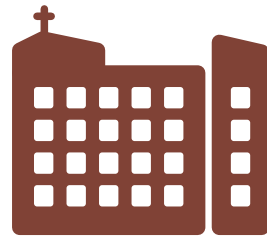
Beyond this, our community impact has also been recognised by funders, making it a record-breaking year for our charity’s growth. This means that next year, we will be able to help even more people belong, contribute, and thrive, no matter what they are going through.

I hope you find the following pages as inspiring as I do... and that you consider supporting and partnering with us to achieve even more together!










Guy Foxell
CEO

We helped over **115,000** local people **Belong, Contribute and Thrive** in 2023/24



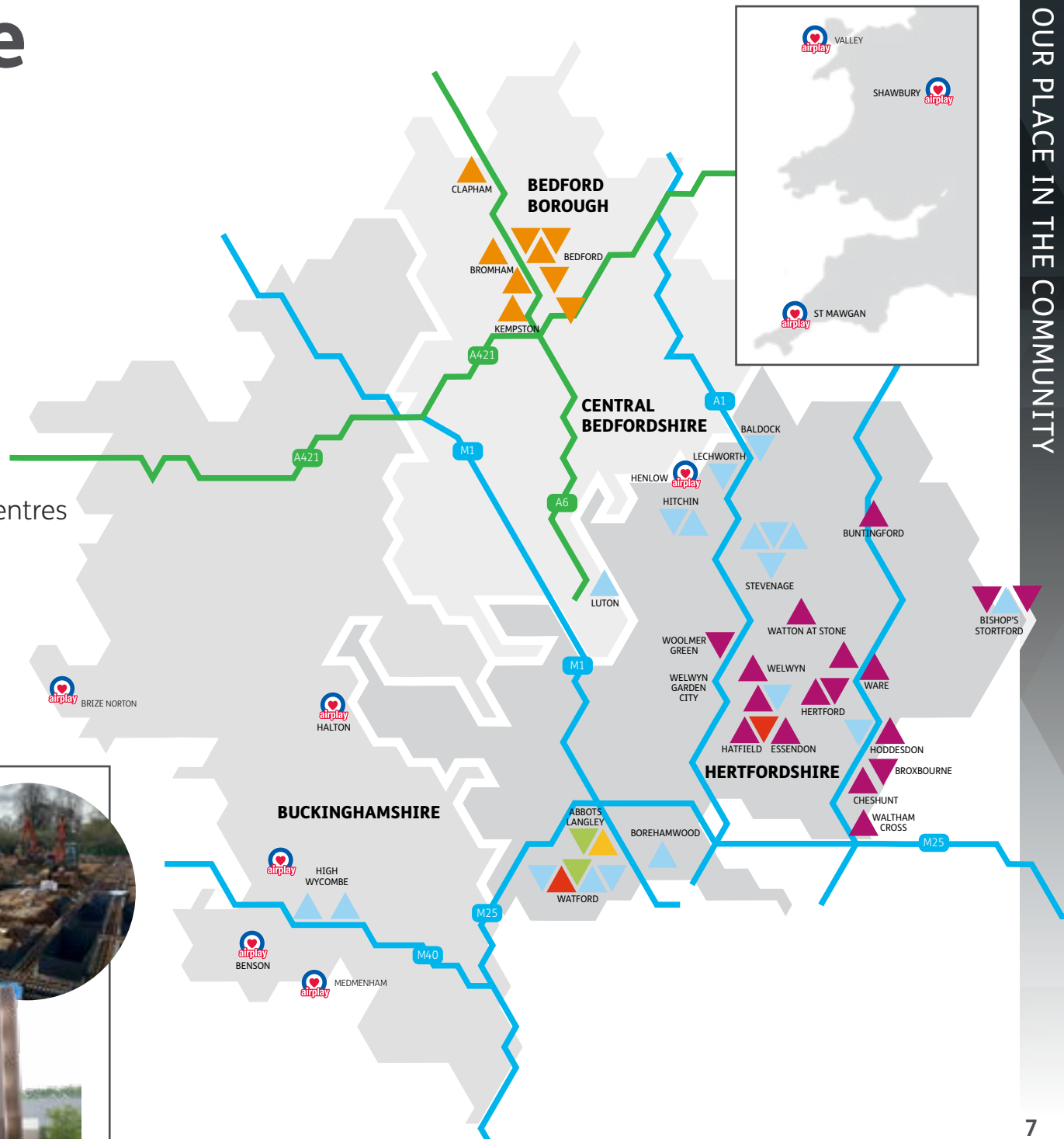
Our Place in the Community

-  Housing
-  Nursery
-  Youth services
-  Community Centre
-  One YMCA Family Support Centres
-  Bedford Borough Family Hubs & Children Centres
-  Airplay

For up-to-date contact details for our different services and locations, please visit oneymca.org/contact-us

Growing and achieving

Our impact in local communities continues to grow through projects such as the rebuilding of our Peartree Hostel in Welwyn Garden City that will enable us to provide 100 units of purpose built supported housing in which to deliver our innovative five-stage Homeless Prevention Pathway.



What we do

We offer a diverse range of services, programmes and initiatives in order to support our local communities to belong, contribute and thrive.

Family & Youth Work

Creating positive outcomes for young people, children and their families from conception to adulthood through parenting programmes, activity sessions and our day care nursery.



Health & Wellbeing

Sport and recreation to promote overall health and wellbeing for our residents through Project Resilience and in the community via our Community Hubs.



YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you



Housing

Providing personalised supported accommodation for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



Training & Education

Education, training and work experience for our residents through Project Futures, apprenticeships, and the Get On Board young trustee training programme.



Support & Advice

Therapeutic support for those experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence, and mental health counselling services for young people.



Nadia's Story

Our Children's Centres offer support for families facing a wide range of challenges in their lives. We are increasingly drawing on the experiences of other services across our charity to develop programmes to help support families.

Nadia was experiencing domestic abuse from her husband when she was referred to our Children's Centre service. She had split from her husband and moved back in with her parents taking their young daughter with her.

Nadia had found herself heavily in debt due to her husband financially abusing her and her family. Her husband started stalking her, following her and her daughter and sitting outside the house they were living in.

Nadia was supported by one of our Family Support team and

completed our domestic abuse *My Choice* course. Initially, she didn't engage much or share her experiences with the other women in the group. Over time, Nadia began to talk about how the abuse she was experiencing was affecting her and she grew in confidence. We have supported

Nadia to move on with other areas of her life, helping her to find a childcare setting, and she has regularly attended our stay and play sessions



with her daughter, providing opportunities to meet other families.

Unfortunately, Nadia's husband continued to harass her and she reported him to the police. Our Support Worker

completed a DASH checklist to help identify the risks that Nadia was experiencing with regard to Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour based abuse which resulted in a referral for a Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). These meetings bring together the relevant agencies to share information on the highest risk domestic abuse cases.

As a result, Nadia was allocated an Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) who helped her to put some safety measures in place; such as non-molestation orders and support with the courts as the father was seeking contact with his daughter.



Jade and Shaun's Story

Having identified that there were a number of young parents, aged 21 and under, in one of our districts, we set up a Young Parent Welcome to the World Plus group. It was noticed during one to one and group discussions that one couple, Jade and Shaun, were having regular arguments which were not being resolved.

Jade had a history of poor mental health and had previously had a child removed from her care. One of our Perinatal and Under Ones Workers had built a good relationship with the parents and on her recommendation, they agreed to attend our Me, You and Baby Too Parental Conflict programme.

The programme provided weekly support through five home visits and, although



Shaun was unable to be there due to work commitments, information was relayed to him via telephone and during check ins when he attended group sessions. Both parents began to work through 'Arguing Better' at home.

Jade and Shaun's wellbeing improved and they were arguing less frequently. They now had the tools to work things out and understood how to be kinder to each other.



Sarah's Story

Sarah, had been referred to the Family Centre Service after her and her 18-month-old son had been intermittently living with her parents. Relationships in the family home were strained, with frequent periods of conflict, and Sarah would often leave to stay with friends or her sister. Her son, Toby, regularly stayed with Sarah's grandmother during these times. Sarah wasn't receiving any income and so was unable to progress her housing application.

Sarah's Support Worker was concerned for Toby's wellbeing, making two referrals to Children's Services, as his needs were not being prioritised or consistently met and there were concerns about the stability of Sarah's mental health. The referrals led to Toby being placed on a Child in Need Plan.

We responded by providing a Response package of support for Sarah, this bespoke approach enables our team to look at the specific needs of a family, pulling together relevant aspects from our other support packages. Our support helped Sarah to improve her capacity to care for her child and

delivery of our Toddler Brain course increased her understanding of her child's needs and her role in caring for him.

Collaboration across our services

We were able to work with our supported housing colleagues to successfully secure a place in temporary housing for Sarah within just three days. This provided her with a safe and secure place to live with additional staffing support which helped her to access benefits and the housing register.



Imogen's Story

Imogen began attending Charters Nursery at around a year old. She had a few minor health complications but was a happy baby and, with the help of a dietician, the nursery team were able to support her needs. Over time, assessment highlighted that Imogen was not meeting age-related development expectations.

Imogen's Keyworker and the setting's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) worked closely

with her parents to identify areas of need and create a support plan. Although Imogen made some progress, a referral was made to a paediatrician where a DDXSX diagnosis was made, a rare genetic disorder.

Imogen had very limited language skills, causing her to become frustrated. Using strategies such

as Objects of Reference to aid communication, such as using an actual cup to mean drink for instance, the staff team helped Imogen to communicate her needs. The nursery worked in partnership

with Imogen's parents and the Council's SEND Team to create an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for her.

Imogen had a lot of sensory needs and needed a calming space to go for breaks, this was initially created in another room. Once Imogen received EHCP funding a purpose-built space was created.

When a place in specialist provision was not immediately available, Charters agreed for Imogen to remain in the nursery for an additional year. Once a place became available, we worked closely with the school to help her settle in.

“ Little did we know how important choosing the right nursery was. You have such an amazing and unique culture at Charters - so welcoming, kind, inclusive, supportive and encouraging.

”

Imogen's mum



YOUTH WORK

The Youth Team had a busy year delivering universal and targeted youth work. Working in partnership with other organisations has enabled us to increase our reach and have a greater impact with better outcomes for the communities we serve.

The universal groups have supported young people through youth-led activities and sports as well as partnering with Barnardo's, targeted youth services and local councils to support young people through informal education and to have their voices heard within their communities. This has included supporting young people seeking asylum with their families to have opportunities to socialise with other young people and to speak about their experiences.

Through our links with Watford Palace Theatre, the Young Watford and Hatfield drama group enabled free access to the creative arts, empowering young people to express themselves through performance.

Time has been spent rebuilding the universal



youth programme, with a restructure in the team. The youth team have engaged with 3,965 young people over the year through a variety of programmes including Youth Wellbeing and Girls Move.

The team have opened a new youth club provision in North Watford, and this is having a positive impact on young people's lives, giving them a space to talk about the things that matter to them most. A visit from the Watford Mayor was encouraging for the young people and enabled them to have their voices heard within the local council.



Alex's Story

Alex has been a regular at one of our youth groups for around four years, after getting in trouble with the police and being excluded at the age of 13, now at 16, he has achieved a great deal.

Alex shows his growing maturity by being helpful and asking the Youth Workers for help and advice, although he can struggle to find the language to express himself. The younger children in the group feel comfortable in his presence and during a Cake & Conversations session, Toby showed his respect for others when speaking about relationships; saying that when a girl says no, it means no and when she says maybe it still means no.

Alex loves motorbikes, which had got him into trouble in the past, and he spends a lot of his time fixing and restoring them. Motorbikes are his motivation and he wants to become a mechanic. Our Youth Workers have been impressed by his drive to make this dream a

reality, asking for help with his CV and finding himself a job even though he hasn't sat any GCSEs yet.

Alex is now working as a heavy goods vehicle mechanic and is applying to a college to do his GCSE Maths and English and a course to become a qualified mechanic.

“ We are incredibly proud of the wonderful young man that Alex has become. ”

Youth Worker





One YMCA leads a consortium of 10 YMCAs to deliver the RAF Benevolent Fund's youth support programme, Airplay, across 24 RAF stations in England, Wales and Scotland. Airplay aims to improve outcomes for young people from RAF families, who face a unique set of challenges as military children.

In 2023, Airplay delivered nearly 7,500 hours of youth activities to its 2,100 members. Young people have taken part in universal youth club

activity sessions, themed projects, trips and residential. They have also designed and led on social action projects through our Special Projects fund, which invites Airplay members to make a difference in their local community. Alongside this, we had 761 attendances at 195 youth forums, which enabled members to set the agenda and discuss the things that matter to them. Airplay Connect, our digital platform, has brought nearly 200 young people together from across the country to enjoy Minecraft Madness, Sketchathon Social, Trivia Time and many other exciting online sessions.

One YMCA's Youth Team delivered sessions at eight of the 24 RAF Stations, seeing over 10,700 attendances from children and young people. Airplay under One YMCA was rated 4.6 out of 5 by members and 4.5 out of 5 by parents.



Brize Norton's Youth Café

Airplay Brize Norton successfully launched a Youth Café in the local community Families Club, led by Airplay members.

Nine members completed food hygiene and first aid training as preparation for running the Café. As their first job, they were asked to coordinate the food for Carterton's Coronation Party. They organised the party, preparing over 100 meals for children and young people in the Youth Café, as well as delivering a range of activities.

One parent enthused, "The Café project helped my daughter's confidence grow as she was asked to provide homemade cakes for the café. On day one, they all sold out and she came home beaming and excited to bake her next batch. The project has opened many opportunities for her



and without the project I don't think she would have had confidence to branch out and bake for others."

So impressed were the community that the Youth Café was asked to serve and prepare food for the new Mayor of Carterton's Meet and Greet event. Working to a strict budget they planned and prepared a range of canapes and dressed up in their smart clothes to serve the Mayor and local dignitaries.

“I was overwhelmed by the responsible and professional attitudes of the young people. Their manners and general respect for others while they served was impeccable.”

Mayor of Carterton



Housing Services

Our Housing service supports over a thousand people facing homelessness each year, many struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues. A key challenge is gaining their trust, as many are understandably guarded due to past hardships.

Recognising that traditional housing pathways often fail, One YMCA developed the Dynamic Pathway to Independence (DPI). This flexible model allows residents to progress through five support levels, moving up or down as needed without resetting entirely after setbacks.

Our intensive service employs mental health, substance misuse, and offending specialists to offer trauma-informed, individualised



support. Unlike other services, our approach does not penalise residents for setbacks, allowing them to continue receiving assistance.

Intensive support includes frequent welfare checks, access to counsellors, and engagement activities from our Project Resilience Coordinator who facilitates sports such as badminton, football and basketball.



With our Support Worker's offices on the same corridor as residents' rooms, the clients in our intensive service, have more frequent opportunities to build a rapport with staff. Historically, evictions from hostels have occurred where the client is reported not to have engaged with the service but our staff feel it is their responsibility to engage with the client knowing that as a rough sleeper they will be used to being ignored or receiving unwanted attention such as verbal and physical abuse.

Paul, a long-time alcohol-dependent service user, faced a relapse recently due to fears of eviction if he resumed drinking. Understanding his concerns enables us to provide the right support to help him move forward.



Over time, we aim to reduce our residents' needs and move them to a less intense level of support, ultimately helping them to integrate back into society again. Like Jess, who as a transgender female, faced high levels of abuse on the streets. Initially, she wouldn't engage with staff but after a year or so she was then reluctant to move out of our care.

Jess had been supported within our intensive service before moving to the step-down stage and then moving on to her own one-bedroom accommodation with us continuing to provide support.

Our service supports those who many have given up on, addressing the trauma that has disrupted their lives and helping them to re-enter society.

Grace's story

Our Support Workers struggled to gain Grace's trust when she first came to stay in our supported housing. She had a history of mental health issues, including a psychotic breakdown, although she did not acknowledge her mental health issues. She also had a suspicion of support services.

She became homeless in 2019 when her ex-partner asked her to leave the family home that she shared with him and their two children, followed by an injunction when she started sleeping on the doorstep. Grace spent some time in prison after she breached the injunction and she went on to switch between sleeping rough and staying in hostels for a while.

Finally, she came to live at our Templars hostel. Grace was reluctant to engage with her Support Worker but he and the staff team persevered. She had previously felt let down by support services, but when Grace's father sadly passed away, it surprisingly, resulted in her becoming more open with staff. Her Support Worker made the most of this, engaging in some really good conversations, and so enabling him to better understand her position on things, helping to build

trust and respect. It turned out that Grace was a very independent woman but now at least she was beginning to accept help.

In time, Grace was offered a one-bedroom flat that we oversee to move in to. As a result of

“Thank you very much for your care, patience and help. It is much appreciated.”

Grace



her engagement, things are looking more promising for her getting back on the housing register and finding permanent secure accommodation. She sees her children every Saturday and is excited for the future.

In her final meeting with her support worker, Grace thanked him for his support, commenting that Templars was the best hostel that she had stayed in and that the team cared for residents. In a farewell card Grace wrote:

“I am getting moved as another hop, for hope.

Thank you very much for your care, patience and help.

It is much appreciated.”

Volunteering

Volunteering is a powerful force that has the ability to create positive change in both individual lives and communities at large. Our volunteers are invaluable to One YMCA, offering their time, skills and expertise to make a positive impact in the communities that we serve. In 2023/2024 our volunteers gave over 8000 hours of their time and delivered over 800 sessions of support! This is not only vital for our service users, but also our colleagues who wouldn't be able to do their jobs without the support from their volunteer teams.

Volunteering provides a unique platform to connect with people from diverse backgrounds who share a common goal: to make a positive impact. At One YMCA we want to focus on these connections and ensure that we recognise the meaningful collaborations and hard work that our volunteers have given us over the year. We ensure that we celebrate their achievements during National Volunteer's Week – in 2024 we awarded bronze, silver and gold badges for those volunteers who had provided anywhere from 25 hours to 500+ hours of their time over the course of their journey with us. We want to ensure we recognise our volunteer's contributions – however big or small it may be, the impact is huge!

One of our longstanding volunteers at our accommodation site in Hoddesdon, Catherine, has been bringing joy to our residents through her

cooking skills for over four years. Our Hoddesdon site supports young asylum seekers who have often been through extremely difficult situations and traumatic events. They look forward to Catherine's weekly cooking sessions as a way to unwind, connect and learn new skills to make yummy dishes!



Catherine's story

“ I had previously volunteered with refugees from Bosnia when living in Canada. Back in England, and during the early days of Covid, a friend told me that YMCA were looking for volunteers. Following training, I began volunteering with the young people one day a week and found it very fulfilling.

Together we grow flowers and vegetables, cook meals and bake, and do arts and crafts; as I had when I volunteered with the Bosnian families. I hope to help the young people to feel at home, as they have had to leave their own families far behind them. I help them to enjoy and learn new skills and work together. As well as me offering the young people different activities, they have taught me a lot, especially where food is concerned - they appear to waste nothing.



I enjoy the interactions between the young people and the amazing support staff. It has been heartwarming seeing how the One YMCA team encourage the young people - nothing is too much trouble. It has been wonderful seeing the young people, who at first speak very little English, pick up the language very quickly, partly through attending college.

It's a privilege to be part of the team, giving back, and sharing my skills. I feel like I am making a difference and contributing to the community, and the staff make me feel so valued and appreciated. By volunteering, you really do get more back than you give, it is a great feeling. ”

Aimee's story

Aimee was supported by one of our Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) for over four years on her journey to recovery; the support beginning when she was just 13, having experienced multiple sexual assaults at the hands of a close family friend.

As a result of the trauma she experienced, Aimee's mental health was severely affected, with her regularly self-harming, having suicidal thoughts, experiencing flashbacks, suffering sleep problems and harbouring deep-rooted feelings of blame and shame.

Our ISVA helped Aimee to navigate the criminal justice process during a lengthy investigation and wait for trial, delaying her recovery.

All of this had a massive impact on Aimee's education - she found it challenging to focus on lessons or even attend school - eventually affecting both her GCSEs and A-Levels.

Explaining how the police and court processes worked, Aimee's ISVA advocated for her, giving her a voice and expressing her wishes. She was supported to share the extent of her trauma to enable her to get the support she needed from



police, mental health professionals, legal representatives, Social Workers and her school - helping her to feel more in control.

When the time came, Aimee was able to give evidence and be cross examined as part of the trial. The perpetrator was found guilty of four out of six charges against him and sentenced to eight years in prison. At sentencing Aimee read aloud her Victim Impact Statement with sheer determination to have her voice heard. The judge thanked her for all of her efforts in bringing the case to court.

As a young adult, Aimee, is unrecognisable from the anxious withdrawn young person that originally came to our service. With support, she has been able to move forward and use her experience to shape a better future - planning to going to university and hoping to become a prosecution barrister!



The Bridge Project facilitates a domestic abuse perpetrator programme for people who have been abusive towards their partners or ex-partners to help them change their behaviour and develop respectful, non-abusive relationships.

Claire was referred to the Bridge Project by Bedfordshire Children's Services due to on-going concerns regarding coercive control in the family home. Following completion of 14 sessions of 1-1 work, Claire was asked if she felt there had been any changes to her behaviour and attitude since starting the programme: "I don't demand things or give orders anymore. I don't name

call or make threats anymore. I speak with more respect, knowledge and awareness of others, of how people should be treated as people - not as objects or servants like I used to do."



Erin was referred to us after experiencing domestic abuse in two relationships one after the other. She was struggling with her mental health as a result of the abuse and didn't understand how it was affecting her and her daughter. Erin struggled to get her daughter into school; the child was wetting the bed and her clothes smelt because they didn't have a washing machine which made her a target for bullies.

Erin was supported to manage the parts of her life that had become overwhelming for her. A support plan was put in place and shared with other professionals in Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings so a holistic approach could be used, supporting Erin and her daughter around housing, de-cluttering and generally helping to make their lives easier. She was provided with a new washing machine



and was able to clear her kitchen ready for its arrival.

Erin took part in our Liberty programme, helping her to spot the signs of unhealthy relationships going forward and feel stronger within herself whilst her daughter was offered a summer holiday programme of therapeutic stories and play before beginning play therapy.

Signpost

We're here for **young people**

Signpost provides counselling, coaching and other support to help young people living in Hertfordshire to overcome their mental health challenges.

“When I started my journey with Signpost, never in a million years did I think I would get to the point I am at today. My counsellor, Gemma, has become a huge part of my life over the last year and I will never be able to thank her enough. Throughout my sessions, Gemma and the team never made me feel less than I am, I felt seen and heard. My journey became our journey, they will always hold a special place in my heart. Signpost really did save my life and, again, I will never be able to thank them enough.”

Bethany

“Signpost helped my son immensely. I cannot recommend them highly enough. His counsellor, Nancy, was kind, respectful and very professional. I would highly recommend this service to other parents and young people. Very grateful for my counsellor, she was lovely, very warm and supportive.”

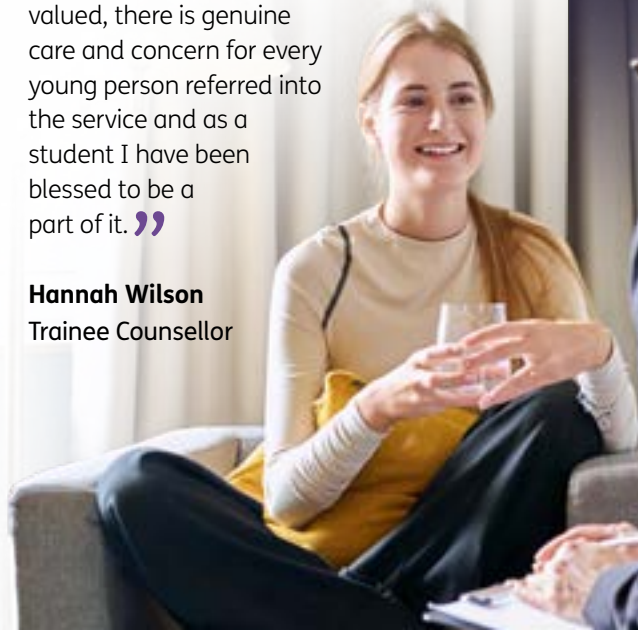
Parent of Jack



“Working on placement as a trainee counsellor was such a positive experience for me. The team are supportive, and I found that I learnt so much from the clients, counsellors and staff. I have loved seeing first-hand the impact that counselling has on a young person's life, it is a real privilege for me to be involved in a way that allowed me to be a part of that process with them. Helping them to put their own life into perspective and become happier over time.

Each client is unique and valued, there is genuine care and concern for every young person referred into the service and as a student I have been blessed to be a part of it.”

Hannah Wilson
Trainee Counsellor



No longer afraid of “what might be in the dark”.

At 15, Hayley wanted help to build up her confidence and self-esteem; her goal was to manage her need to shred paper when she was feeling angry or sad. Through her counselling sessions, Hayley developed a trust in the counsellor that enabled her to become confident enough to express how she was feeling to her parents.

Through talking, drawing, writing and performing therapeutic visualisations in counselling sessions, Hayley was able to express a sense of safety in her foster home and reflected on feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and fear. When discussing these

difficult feelings, she began to use metaphors as a healing technique, choosing images as an aid in the process.

Hayley began talking more about her feelings, finding a way to express these in a way that was comfortable to her. She found a way to establish a sense of safety within herself, through visualisation using all of her senses.

Hayley stopped needing to shred paper to help her cope.

From this new place of safety, Hayley could observe, recall and reflect on her life, and her choices. By the final session, she was able to talk comfortably to her foster parents about her feelings and had found ways to understand and manage her emotions; she was no longer afraid of “what might be in the dark.”

More than 600 children and young people aged 10-25 years requested therapeutic support.

3,778 Counselling sessions were held.



Find out more

Christian Mission

When George Williams and his friends founded YMCA in 1844 their vision was about seeing people live life to the full. It was about sharing Christian love and hope in a way that impacted others as whole people: body, mind and spirit.

This vision continues to inspire us at One YMCA, and specifically the Christian Mission team, as we offer life-transforming pastoral care to people of all faiths and none. We do this primarily through resourcing and coordinating a wonderful team of volunteer chaplains working across the charity.

Alongside an established pattern of 'Journey' sessions and retreats, prayer initiatives, and specialist chaplaincy support to our ISVA teams and clients, one of the highlights of this year has been the advancement of training to support people who have experienced trauma.



In partnership with the Guild of Health and St Raphael, over the last two years we facilitated a pilot training programme for chaplains called 'Shalom'. Drawing together ancient biblical wisdom and the latest neurological science, delegates from YMCAs across England and Wales explored how an informed, holistic approach to chaplaincy can bring transformative support to residents and service users.



SHALOM

The Gift of Chaplaincy -
flourishing in mind, body and spirit



“For many years I have been passionate about the power of storytelling, without really understanding why it is powerful. Before the training I passively listened as (hostel) residents told their stories, this listening seemed to be helpful, but I was not sure why. The training focussed my understanding. It is in the telling of the story and having someone listen carefully that healing can be found.”

Roger, Volunteer Chaplain

Coming alongside colleagues and beneficiaries is at the core of our work as a team and in this last year we have provided 4,267 volunteer hours of chaplaincy support, 485 sessions of group work helping 501 unique individuals navigate life in the context of complex needs, addictions and relationship breakdown.

The number of 'meaningful interactions' between chaplaincy staff and colleagues, volunteers, and service users more than doubled this year to 5,811. These interactions offer a lifeline in a crisis, a moment to be listened to without being judged, be prayed for, or a helpful signpost to further support.



An important aspect of the Christian Mission team's work is investing in our organisational culture; we play a key role in warmly welcoming new starters, hosting the annual 'Together' conference for staff and volunteers, training in the area of Authentic Human Connection, and coordinating our 'Mission 25' strategy.

As we continually expand as a charity, the Christian Mission team remains positioned to serve; internally supporting colleagues alongside our central services teams, and shoulder to shoulder with other frontline workers to bring holistic help to thousands in the wider community.

YMCA mission 25

As we progressed with Mission 25, our five-year organisational wide strategy to do more and better together, we continued to re-evaluate how best to move our charity forwards.

We met or exceeded 25 out of 30 of our KPIs in 2023-24 – in some we more than doubled our target! Here are some of the highlights:



#TeamUs

New EDIB group championing inclusion, and over 900 Mission 25 Hours contributed



#TeamGoingGreen

7% reduction in energy use on like-for-like sites compared to 2022-3



#TeamGoingDigital

Migrated 200 staff onto Microsoft 365, and staff satisfaction up to 71%



#TeamVolunteers

Over 8,000 volunteer hours across One YMCA, and achieved IIV Status



#TeamThrive:5-11s

Almost 300 5-11-year-olds engaging with children's voice activities



#BetterPlaces

Staff survey showed 78% satisfaction with buildings, up from 66% last year



#TeamMakingHomes

Over 200 Residents engaged in Project Resilience, and 250 in Project Voice



#TeamYouthVoice

Over 1,700 young people engaged in youth voice activities



#TeamDeveloping People&Potential

Over 8,700 hours of training accessed by our colleagues, up 30% from last year



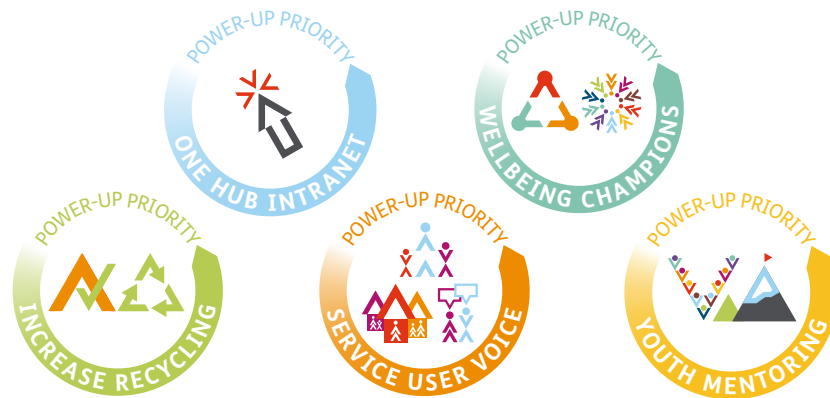
#TeamProjectConnect

Internal connectivity grown through three AHC courses and Connect Groups which engaged 120 staff

Power-up Priorities.

As One YMCA has continued to grow, and with our services and colleagues spread across Herts, Beds, Bucks, and beyond, we decided to host a series of roadshows at a number of our

sites to enable more accessible engagement of Mission 25. These roadshows also provided an opportunity to launch a more focussed approach to our strategy with five Power-up Priorities.



YMCA 25 mission SUMMIT

66 Staff, trustees and volunteers came together for a Mission 25 Summit where we sought to reimagine how to double our

impact. Since the launch of Mission 25 at the beginning of 2020, and in the aftermath of the pandemic, much had changed for our beneficiaries, our colleagues and those that support our work; we wanted our strategy to reflect that.



Get on Board

YOUNG TRUSTEE PROGRAMME

Get On Board is a project funded by the Central and Anglia Trust Fund and delivered by a partnership led by One YMCA that seeks to support young people on their journey to becoming full board members at their YMCA.

Although YMCAs have always delivered activities that benefit young people, over time, there has been a shift towards these programmes being designed by young people. Valuing and actively seeking young people's voices at every stage of planning, delivery and evaluation.

The next natural extension to youth-led programmes is to bring young people's viewpoints, and ideas to the boardrooms of YMCAs by becoming a trustee, creating even greater tangible benefits to the young people we serve.

Being a trustee is a challenging and important role as they hold complex regulatory, legal, and fiduciary responsibilities. Get On Board recognises that becoming a trustee, particularly without significant work and life experience, requires a period of training and upskilling. We support young board members to grow in both confidence and knowledge so they

can truly belong and contribute to all matters of YMCA governance – from safeguarding through to long-term financial plans.

Get On Board seeks to:

- ▶ Attract and support young people (aged 18-30) to become effective YMCA Trustees
- ▶ Resource and prepare YMCAs to be welcoming, accessible recipients of younger Trustees
- ▶ Provide young Trustee training mapped with evidenced learning outcomes and a suite of micro-credentials
- ▶ Create supportive peer networks both for participating young people and YMCA Trustee mentors
- ▶ Create a financially self-sufficient legacy model of young Trustee training beyond the project



The #Projects

Running alongside our day-to-day service we have launched three schemes, in line with the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach, helping us to be the best that we can be!



Our residents often come to us with a range of complex needs which have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing. Taking part in Project Resilience has seen many of our residents taking up new activities in the last year with them making significant improvements to both their physical and mental health.



Project Voice has given our residents renewed confidence and self-esteem through having more opportunities to share their views and be heard. The results of surveys have paved the way for changes in how we operate on a daily basis. Through our Tenant Satisfaction Survey, many of our residents said how they valued the support and listening ear of our Project Voice Coordinator.



Project Futures has seen progress in its infrastructure, with a coordinator now in post and plans to grow our partnership with the King's Trust to offer more work experience opportunities.


**PROJECT
RESILIENCE**

Jake's Story

One of our hostel residents, Jake, was initially reluctant to take part in Project Resilience, often saying he would attend and then not turning up to sessions. After a while, he started becoming a regular at one of the weekly Project Resilience football sessions which he found had a positive impact on his mental health, reducing his depression and anxiety. His enjoyment of the group even led Jake to begin encouraging other residents to join in.

Jake began taking part in football tournaments organised by Project Resilience which further boosted his confidence and motivation. After six months of participation in Project Resilience, Jake joined 'Man On!', a football-based mental wellbeing programme run by Watford FC's Community Sports & Education Trust.

Engaging in Project Resilience has led to increased structure in Jake's week

and an expanded social network and links in the local community. Jake has been supported to engage with a wider community outside of the hostel that he can continue benefiting from once he has left One YMCA's housing and moved on into more permanent independent accommodation.



Emily's Story

Dan, our Project Resilience Coordinator is very popular with our hostel residents. People who have experienced homelessness can struggle to motivate themselves and often have very low self-esteem. The activities that Dan organises across our housing sites help residents to improve their overall wellbeing and provides opportunities for them to socialise with others.

One resident, Emily, has been enjoying taking part in gym sessions, boxercise, health walks and ten-pin bowling. She completed an initial assessment with Dan and is working towards goals to get fit



Daniel Monaghan
Project Resilience Coordinator

and lose weight. Emily finds that the activities calm her mental health, helping her to de-stress and improving her ability to sleep.

Emily now feels better about herself, spending less time alone in her room overthinking things and dwelling on the past, and is looking forward to continuing using the gym and going bowling when she moves out of our supported accommodation.

Over 200 unique residents engaged in Project Resilience

75 residents in 1:1 training, 97 in group exercise, and 71 in team sports

Over 900 interactions between residents and the Project Resilience team

“Dan is the life and soul of the hostel. He has a lot of time for people.”

Emily Hatfield Resident

Corporate Connect Club

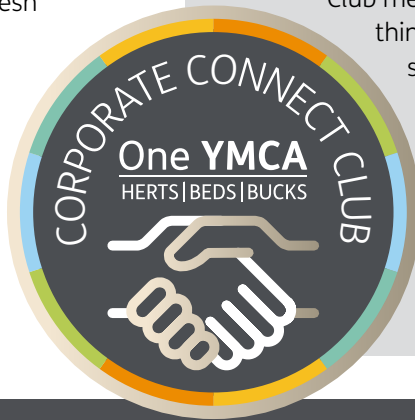
Following its launch in February 2023 our Corporate Connect Club (CCC) has grown steadily to now having 30 members. As our initiative to enable businesses to give back to their communities whilst flying the flag of their own company and that of One YMCA, CCC supports our community critical services to change and save lives.

More recently, we met with our founding members, Richard Behan (CAE), Debbie Chadwick (Heart Radio Hertfordshire), Rakesh Dua (DUA Accountancy), David Hewitt (Langley Planning & Design) and William Poole-Wilson (Will+Partners), to revisit the commitments and benefits of each of the levels of membership.

Our One Business Community level underpins all levels of membership:

One Business Community: £10-100 pcm +VAT

All we ask is that you listen, share and promote all the amazing work our teams do across all of our areas. As well as supporting us more generally, with examples from our other Corporate Connect Club members with things like direct sponsorship, provision of free meeting space and pro-bono advice.



To find out more about Corporate Connect Club and its levels of membership, please head to our website: oneymca.org/ccc



As a minimum, we ask all of our Corporate Connect Club members to commit to:

- Organising and promoting at least one fundraising event per year
- Introducing us to three potential Corporate Connect Club members
- Highlighting and celebrating your involvement with Corporate Connect Club across all of your media platforms, e.g website, internal comms and social media
- Supporting your team to get involved by participating in volunteering days

In return, all of our Corporate Connect Club members will:

- Receive a branded toolkit to promote your partnership with One YMCA
- Be presented with a framed certificate and welcome pack
- Be highlighted and promoted on our website, social media platforms and newsletters for the life-changing (and life-saving) work you are supporting
- Receive ongoing communication and updates about those you are now supporting, via our supporter's newsletter
- Be invited to bi-monthly networking events
- Be allocated a dedicated account manager
- Be given the opportunity for a One YMCA Corporate Partnership Account Manager to sit on your CSR panel
- Get pro-active understanding and contribution to your organisation's sustainability strategy
- Be given priority access to Corporate Connect Club social and team challenge events throughout the year
- Be recognised with a name plaque or logo on a donor board if you sponsor a designated room/area

CORPORATE CONNECT CLUB MEMBERS AND FOUNDERS

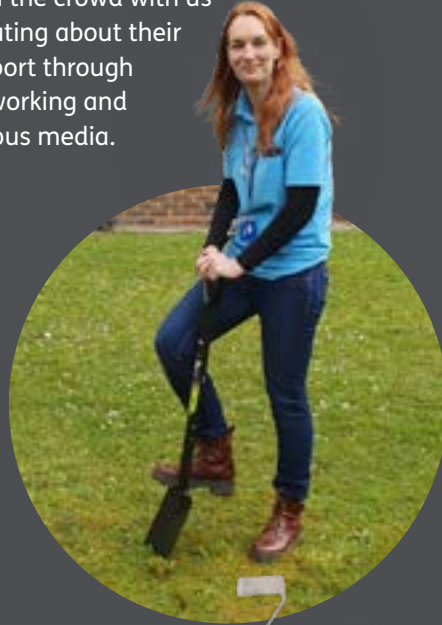


Corporate Volunteering.

One area that we have progressed with over the past year is Corporate Volunteering. Many companies are seeking to give back to their communities, and one way for them to do this is to have volunteering days where their employees help us in various tasks, such as painting and decorating or gardening.

Recent Corporate Volunteering events have also seen small businesses taking part by joining with larger company groups. This is a great team bonding opportunity and fits perfectly with the principles of

our Corporate Connect Club where businesses commit to giving back to their local community by supporting us, which helps them to stand out from the crowd with us shouting about their support through networking and various media.



CAE
TECHNOLOGY ON POINT

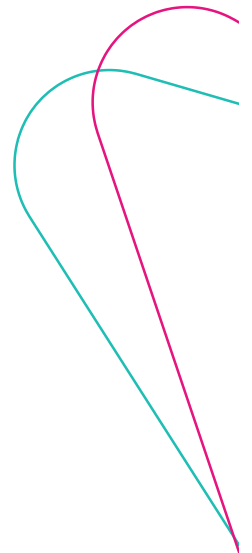
FOUNDATION

CAE are proud supporters of One YMCA

The CAE Foundation was created to match the longevity of our business with the long-term outlook for our Just Cause, to eliminate digital exclusion by bringing solutions to people and places experiencing digital poverty.

Our Foundation works with One YMCA to reduce digital exclusion and to support its many community initiatives. From founding the Corporate Connect Club, to the donation of IT equipment and our colleagues using their charity day to paint the walls of One YMCA's residential block in Watford, we're proud to be able to support this fantastic organisation.

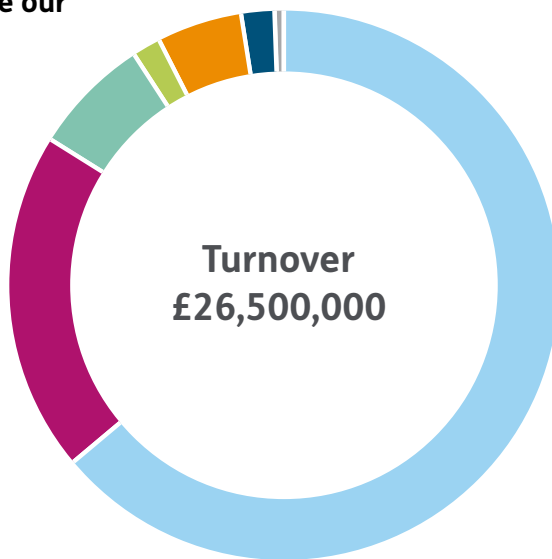
thisiscae.com



Our Finances

Where we have invested in the community

YMCA is committed to using its resources to maximise our positive impact on the community. All our spending is scrutinised by our Trustees at Board level, as well as the Audit & Risk and Resource Committees.



- 64.1% Accommodation & Support
- 19.8% Children & Family Support
- 7.1% Daycare Nursery
- 1.6% Health & Wellbeing
- 5.0% Youth
- 1.9% Community HUBs
- 0.4% Other

With thanks to our funders, commissioners, partners and volunteers:





Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

Contact Us

0300 323 1111

www.oneymca.org

Follow us



@oneymca

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ONE YMCA

Reg Office: Charter House, Charter Place, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2RT

Reg Charity: 1102301 Reg. Company: 4430743

Reg. Social Housing Provider: H4418 VAT number: 190 3566 03



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

FAMILY & YOUTH WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

HOUSING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

SUPPORT & ADVICE