



# YMCA LEICESTERSHIRE

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## IMPACT REPORT 2021-22

Everyone should  
have a fair chance  
to discover who  
they are and what  
they can become

**YMCA**

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Here for young people  
Here for communities  
Here for you

# Welcome

It would be remiss of me not to start this report by thanking my staff team for the amazing work that they continued to deliver during challenging and difficult times.

Although challenging, there were a number of really exciting developments during 2021/22. We successfully tendered and won a significant element of the supported housing contract for young people and we were also chosen to lead on a new serious violence on-road project called Chance to Change. We upgraded lighting systems in our theatre and accommodation, greatly improving our energy efficiency.

As the initial funding for Shine, our regional complex needs project, came to an end we made the decision to integrate Complex Needs Workers into our Housing Team, embedding trauma informed principles and practice into our core service. Currently we are exploring options to scale up the Shine model nationally and create more opportunities for co-production with young people.

Working alongside YMCAs across the region and YMCA England & Wales we invested heavily in the equality agenda and commissioned a regional equality survey, safe space conversation and training for over 100 staff, ensuring issues of equality, specifically around race, were discussed and understanding developed.

Looking forward, our new strategic business plan sets out significant investment in both our buildings, our people and expanding our services into the county. Our name has changed to YMCA Leicestershire and we are proud to share our new branding which connects us to YMCAs across the country, alongside a new brand for The Y Theatre.

– Paul Brown, Chief Executive

## Vision

*Our vision is for every young person to have a safe place to call home and the support they need to create lasting change in their lives.*

## Mission

*Our mission is to create supportive and inspiring places where young people and communities can belong, contribute and thrive. We do this through housing, care, support, advice, skills for life, theatre and cultural activities.*

## Values

- We welcome** We work with kindness and integrity so that everyone can feel secure, respected and heard.
- We support** We build trusting relationships and nurture personal strengths to help people find their path to independence.
- We empower** We work alongside people to grow their skills and self-belief to enable them to thrive.
- We enrich** We create inspiring activities that give people a sense of connection and wellbeing.
- We seek out** We look for opportunities to collaborate and make an impact in the communities we serve.

The project will bring together a team of On Road Youth Mentors to work across three target areas of Leicester and Charnwood. Working in partnership with local community groups and leaders, the project will take referrals for young people aged 16-25 who are at risk of and embedded in serious youth violence. Mentors will work with them in identifying positive personal attributes and relationship networks that will support them in engaging in constructive opportunities that will make positive changes to their lifestyle and behaviours, enabling them to reduce their engagement in serious violent crime.



## CHANCE 2 CHANGE

A partnership project to reduce Serious Youth Violence in Leicester & Leicestershire

Following our report on Developing a Community Approach to Serious Youth Violence, YMCA Leicestershire was commissioned to deliver a pilot version of this project approach beginning in Spring 2022 by the Violence Reduction Network, Leicestershire Police, Leicester City Council and Charnwood Safety Partnership.





208

Young people were accommodated

# Housing

This last year has been another challenging one for supported housing organisations, which continued to experience the impact of the pandemic as services returned to normal. It has also been identified that Leicester has a housing crisis which has caused significant barriers for our young people who are ready to move on to independence.

The tremendous success of our organisation throughout these times is due to our commitment to put young people at the heart of our work to help them to improve their lives. In 2022 we re-tendered and secured our contract with Leicester City Council to provide supported housing for 16–25s and we're proud to be delivering this for the ninth year. We will be working to achieve new Ofsted standards by March 2023, following a consultation and decision by The Department for Education to extend mandatory regulation to accommodation for 16–18 year olds.

Transition Coaches build positive relationships with young people to help them grow their self-confidence, develop their skills and increase opportunities to make positive contributions. Working alongside our Skills Coach, we have been able to support more of our young people into educational opportunities and employment. Whilst all staff have an understanding of trauma, our specialist Complex Needs Workers offer intensive therapeutic support to residents experiencing poor mental health combined with other needs.

Our three move on houses are suited to young people who are working or in education and still need some support. An additional house is tailored to the specific support needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) aged 16-18, who are then able to move through our internal pathway to our other accommodation when they are ready.



## Mohamed's Story

*I was an asylum seeker and was going to be out of the asylum seeker house in 30 days. I went to the council and they said they'd contact me. It was the 30th day and I woke up early and rang them and they said they were really sorry they couldn't find me a place. I was a bit scared, because I didn't know where to go... I had no friends, no family. Three hours later they rang me back and said you have a room.*

*When I came to YMCA, they showed me around and gave me my keys – it felt good. I'm enjoying staying here and I've got a couple of friends. It's kind of like a second home. My Transition Coach helped me out a lot. She helped with college, weekly sessions, phone calls and appointments – helping me work out what to do. She asked me how I felt and helped with my finances. We have good conversations and always end up talking about Africa and stuff. The YMCA is a nice place, come here... and you're gonna be good, you'll be alright.*

76

Residents moved on positively

29

Young people received mental health support from our Complex Needs Workers

9

Young people supported in our UASC Project



y-heritage.co.uk

Our new website launched to showcase all the amazing projects of the last three years.

# Y Heritage

In its last year our ground-breaking Y Heritage project created exciting engagement opportunities for both young people and heritage sector organisations. Four projects were commissioned by young people in our sixth and final dragon's den event, with each providing work experience for young people; Enter Edem: Lost Legends of Leicester, 2 Funky: Hip Hop Heritage, Engage (Melton Mowbray): Paint the Town Red and MSDS Marine: Make a Splash!

Due to underspend caused by lockdown restrictions, we were able to commission the Documentary Media Centre to deliver some alternative engagement work including the Y Heritage Podcast and Y Heritage Newspaper, which was designed and edited with the participation of three young people as a legacy document showcasing the best of three years of Y Heritage. We also worked with Leicester University to programme archaeology talks, training and visits to digs for young people including a day at the new Archaeology Resource Centre for the East Midlands.

September 2021 saw The Y Theatre play host to its second Heritage Open Days with over 200 people visiting the Theatre for our Victorian games days, created by young people who were our barkers and games callers. There were prizes for everyone as they played the authentic and original parlour games.

Thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund and lottery players, we have been granted a funding extension to pilot a new programme of work called Y Heritage Legacy from January 2022. This has created paid employment for young people within heritage-based projects and organisations across the city and county. It includes training and support for the employers, supporting policy change and development within their organisations. We are sharing learning and best practice through the introduction of the Youth Heritage Charter and we also formed our Heritage Youth Forum, bringing together residents from across YMCAs in the central region.

£258,805

Invested in local heritage projects over 3 years

123

Young people engaged over 3 years

200

Visitors to our Heritage Open Days



## Jimmy's Story

*My childhood wasn't the greatest. It started off pretty good, until my parents started to squabble and fight over things. I'd get home from school and they'd be throwing food and cutlery around so I'd just sit in my room. I think that's when my anxiety and depression started. My parents divorced when I was about eight years old and I was passed from pillar to post. Then the worst thing happened when I was only 20 - my Dad was murdered. My life just kind of crumbled after that.*

*I was homeless for nearly four months. Eventually, I came to YMCA. It's wicked. I couldn't have asked for a better place. While here, I was introduced to the Make A Splash project and there was an opportunity to go on a boat for two weeks with MSDS. They saw something in me that I didn't see in myself. So later when they got funding for someone to do the dive qualification, they wanted me. The qualification included my rescue course, open water, dry suit and Dive Master, so I am now able to teach. I'm also working in the dive shop and I'm so happy, I'm buzzing. I'm absolutely buzzing.*





# Children's Home

This year we have cared for a total of five young people aged 14–16. We said goodbye to two young people as they moved on into post-16 supported accommodation and created a warm welcome for those moving into our home.

Three young people graduated from secondary school following their GCSEs and successfully moved on to new opportunities; an apprenticeship, a performing arts course and The Princes Trust. The team have supported our young people with gender identity, cultural observance and religious celebrations and worked with local authorities, virtual schools and The Princes Trust to support each child in their educational aspirations.

One of the highlights for the year was the young people's summer holiday in Skegness where they were able to participate in a range of activities that not only gave them new experiences but also built better relationships between each other and staff. There were difficult periods when staff and young people had to navigate lock downs and Covid cases, however there has been no further adverse impact.

Our positive relationship with placement authorities continues to flourish and over the year we have worked with Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. We were successful in our submission to be placed on the D2N2 framework which will enable us to receive referrals from across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

Looking forward, working alongside our placement authorities, our aim is to support those young people exiting care where appropriate to progress through our internal pathway into semi-independent supported housing. This will enable the young person to live within an environment that gives them consistency whilst meeting their changing needs and helping them to progress on their life journey.

5  
Children have been cared for in our home

2  
Children moved on positively

3  
Local authority areas served



## Resident's Story

*At Park House, we do a range of activities that are fun for everyone to enjoy. I am satisfied with my room and there is nothing I would like to change and I feel that the house rules are fair. There is a good variety of food which I like. It's a nice house, I like the layout, it's a lovely place to be and I like that it's close to town.*

*I feel listened to by the Park House Team and the Managers. My Key Workers are kind and understanding and so they're best to help my needs. A previous young man visited the home last week and he is now living in a different home and he said 'Park House is the best place and I miss it and the lovely team.'*



[shineproject.co.uk](http://shineproject.co.uk)

Visit our website to see our model and best practice.

# Shine

Shine is a project led by YMCA Leicestershire which provides training, operational support and a change management framework to support YMCAs to improve access to services and accommodation for young people experiencing complex needs. This is defined by having three or more co-occurring needs and being estranged from support services. Needs are often related to homelessness, relational difficulties and maladaptive coping mechanisms.

This year saw the end of a three-year lottery funded programme in which Shine supported six YMCAs to undertake a journey of organisational culture change, embedding trauma informed principles and practice. Collectively they provided intensive wraparound support to 177 young people with complex needs.

YMCA Heart of England commented: *“Certainly our organisation has benefitted from all the discussion, models, awareness and training Shine has offered us. We can hear the change in the language we use, which tells me we have gained more of an understanding of young people’s complexity and why some behaviours present themselves, and to how to deal with those behaviours better.”*

This year we have had a particular focus on developing co-production opportunities for staff and residents including training, embedding residents meetings and facilitating a range of communities of practice where everyone has a seat at the table and titles are left at the door. We’ve taken an action learning approach to refine and embed our model and have developed clinical psychology input, a staff learning and development platform and an amazing toolkit for YMCAs eager to become more trauma informed.

Following the success of the first pilot we worked with the Scale Accelerator programme to design a strategy intended to widen our reach and impact. We will be looking towards rolling out our Shine model to even more YMCAs and continuing to improve experiences for vulnerable young people accessing services.

6

YMCAs embedded trauma informed practices

177

Young people engaged with a Shine Worker over the 3 year project

100%

Of young people reported to have made a positive change in at least one area of their life



## Resident’s Story

*Before living at the YMCA my family life was awful. My privacy wasn’t respected and if I didn’t do exactly what they said, it would lead to massive punishments and sometimes violence. I didn’t feel safe. I don’t know how to explain how this made me feel. I wanted to shrivel and die. I got kicked out when I was fifteen. I’ve had several abusive relationships. In the worst case my pets were murdered to torture me. If I didn’t do things exactly as he wanted, he would smash things and spit in my face. He would lock me in the flat. Sometimes he wouldn’t allow me in any rooms.*

*My Complex Needs Worker supported me with my mental health; she listened and understood me, so I felt comfortable being honest. It gave me more awareness of what abuse looks like and now I’m feeling much more capable to recognise these things. I now feel happier in myself, have my freedom back and I’m considering what I want to do in the future, such as a creative course or finding a part-time job.*

\*not pictured



**SHINE**

Part of YMCA LEICESTERSHIRE



As of April 2022, we are now located at 165 Granby Street



# YASC

The Y Advice and Support Centre (YASC) is our direct access drop-in service which continued to prioritise those rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. Offering respite, care, breakfast and initial assessments, we also supported a significant number of people in temporary accommodation in need of assistance, basic essentials, food provision and help to connect with their support network and/or partner agencies.

After 14 months of positive co-delivery with Inclusion Healthcare at No 5, we relocated again to The Y Theatre and bar spaces at East Street. The team and service users adapted very well to the change and quickly settled into a different working environment. Safe working practices remained in place, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all those accessing the service. We were able to welcome back partner agencies to deliver surgeries, drop-ins and pre-booked appointments. The return of the Homeless Mental Health Service enabled many of those using the service to see specialist practitioners face to face on a daily basis. We were also able to facilitate weekly sessions delivered by St Mungo's Recovery College and the Hepatitis C Trust.

During the pandemic there was a massive shift in applications, appointments and access to information transferring on-line or being conducted via the telephone. As a result, provision of computers, telephones and technology has become evermore important. A large proportion of our service user group have needed guidance and regular support to navigate and understand on-line processes, forms, journals and applications.

The role of the Mental Health Access Worker continues to be a central part of our team. The flexibility to see people both as 'drop-in' and with 'planned appointments' is key to providing accessibility and consistency to those struggling with their mental well-being. The Mental Health Access Worker conducted 890 appointments throughout the year.

102

New clients this year accessing services for first time

253

Days of direct access service delivery

5,713

Total visits throughout the year

## Justin's Story

*I was unemployed during lockdown, so I got a couple of agency jobs. I got offered a job in Nottingham and sofa-surfed with a friend, but it didn't work out so I walked here. It took 10½ hours... I got here with massive blisters on my feet. There's a building site where I squeezed through the metal fencing and that provided a roof over my head. For two months I've been getting up at 5.15am just to get out before they come up to site and cleaning up just to be respectful.*

*Y Support is a lovely place to go and the one to ones with staff have been absolutely phenomenal. The nourishment they provide is fantastic and let me focus on the correct things; getting a roof over my head and engaging with people. If you're hungry, your mental health goes rapidly downhill. I also work with the mental health team here as I got diagnosed with mild autism in my mid-twenties. It's the first time I've reached out. The supported accommodation I'm in now has all come about through these guys.*



YASC

Part of YMCA LEICESTERSHIRE

# Y Skills Matter

This year we have seen an increase in the number of young people engaging with a range of activities that provide opportunities to learn new skills, gain confidence and meet new people. The team has successfully supported young people with CV writing, job search and interview preparation to help them access training and meaningful employment, with additional sessions delivered by St Mungos.

We collaborated with major employers within the area, contributing to the development of their recruitment process, with the overall aim of improving the likelihood of success for young people, most of them seeking employment for the very first time. Impact Air went above and beyond to create the World of Work programme, which gave young people real experience and skills in their workplace and a sense of achievement. We then began working with Hays by organising meet and greets as an informal way to get to know them as an employer, whilst coaching young people to apply for part time roles that Hays identified to suit their needs and skills.

Y Events Lab was launched this year, which invited our residents to drop in to the theatre and help out our Teaching Theatre Technician. Young people got involved with electrical work, lighting, sound, colour research and event planning ready for real theatre shows and one young person went on to shadow events staff at a live show.

Cook and eat sessions proved popular and some of our young people gained food hygiene certificates and led the way in planning a BBQ event. These sessions helped to improve budgeting and cooking skills as well as encouraging residents to interact positively with one another.

**76**  
Young people  
gained new skills

**302**  
Attendances  
at sessions

**366**  
Engagements with  
Skills Coaches



## Denzel's Story

*I never really had a parent. My mum left me when I was 2 years old and I had to live with guardians; my grandparents, maybe her sister, boarding schools mostly. I came to the UK when I was 18 and I put on my visa that I wanted to join my mum. I needed my parents. Then when I got here I discovered I didn't get along with my step dad. Basically, I just took myself away from that equation. I was doing normal stuff like paying rent and working, but I was put in a mental hospital which was against my will. They didn't diagnose me with anything. But I lost my previous house that I was paying rent on.*

*I came to YMCA and thought, I like this place. You're close to nature, you can calm down and it's good for thinking. YMCA has been like a family I can come back to. I'm an entertainer and one day at YMCA, I was told about an opportunity at 2Funky. I went along and told them about myself. Before I left the building, the guys called me and asked if I wanted to work with them. I now do social media, promotion, record and edit videos and more for them.*

\*not pictured



ADMIT ONE

14,395

people came to a show

# The Y Theatre

We've had an incredibly successful year, working with new community groups and welcoming so many visitors back to the theatre. We reopened in May 2021 after 14 months of enforced closure during the pandemic, running six socially distanced shows including Leicester Mercury Comedian of the Year, music from Belshazzar's Feast and a rare intimate show from Daniel Sloss. In July we were able to reopen at full capacity which was marked by a double sell out show for local favourites Easy Life and their debut album launch party.

Our first full season in two years was opened by Jenny Eclair in September and we also saw many other familiar names across our stage with the likes of Shaun Ryder, Sindhu Vee, Gary Delaney, Tez Ilyas, Joe Talbot, Thunder's Danny & Luke, Rosie Jones, Richard Herring & Nigel Ng. There was also plenty of support for emerging artists and new work from Sainté, Sukh Ojla, Guz Khan, Suspiciously Cheap Comedy and regular new work night Rough Draft. We took part in Leicester Comedy Festival, Spark Arts for Children Festival, hosted UK New Artists and even found time to host two wedding receptions, multiple conferences and award nights.

We were absolutely thrilled to round off our year with the news that we had won Best Large Venue in this year's Leicester Comedy Festival Awards as voted for by our audiences.

This was all set against the backdrop of our biggest capital works project in recent years with a refit of our bar space and new technical infrastructure to replace outdated lighting systems, improving efficiency and reducing maintenance costs. This also helped to create the right environment for Y Events Lab, giving young people living at YMCA the opportunity to understand and gain skills in a working theatre guided by our Teaching Theatre Technician.

156

Unique events

12

Sold out shows

12

Young people worked with our technician



*"Just want to say thanks to @TheYTheatre for being really helpful around booking accessible tickets, great advice regarding accessible parking and even providing a recommendation for some places to eat, really fantastic to talk to someone who understands as well. You guys rock."*

- PIPPA BRAMLEY

*"When my mental health kicks in, if I know the theatre technician is here, I'll ask if she needs a spare pair of hands. I've been helping her paint the stage and rewire the plugs. It's nice because it's a distraction and I've always wanted to work in the theatre. There's opportunities out there for young people if they want to get involved, so it's nice to work alongside our theatre technician, as I can learn and hopefully get a future in that."*

- YOUNG PERSON

The Y Theatre

# Fundraising & Thanks



Pictured:  
Impact Air

As a member of the YMCA family we began the transition to the national brand and the adoption of our new name YMCA Leicestershire. This helps us share resources and have a stronger voice on young people's issues, but we're the same independent local charity. We are indebted to design agency Stocks Taylor Benson who have worked pro-bono to create a separate but synergistic brand for The Y Theatre, reflecting both our Victorian heritage and our place in the vibrant arts scene of Leicester.

At the Trustees Development Day we had the opportunity to review our approach to working with vulnerable people and rewrite our values in a way that weave throughout all our services and truly reflect the skills of our staff. Recognising that working in a front-line charity can be really tough, we have introduced Mental Health First Aiders and other opportunities for staff to share opinions and collaborate.

We would like to thank every staff member, trustee and supporter who help us provide life-changing care and support to our young people and homeless communities. Much of our fundraising, particularly from our Big Give Christmas Campaign, is vital to keep our skills programme running. We were delighted to develop partnerships with Impact Air, Hays and a number of heritage sector organisations to create work experience and real job roles for our young people, who have thrived as a result.

– Kathryn Hamylton, Chair

Two new websites launched!  
[www.ymcaleics.org.uk](http://www.ymcaleics.org.uk)  
[www.ytheatre.co.uk](http://www.ytheatre.co.uk)

**£9,570**

Cost to run the charity per day

**£56,612**

Raised and donated by our generous supporters and businesses

**£22,472**

The value of gifts in kind

## Key Funders

Leicester City Council  
 Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust  
 Arts Council England  
 The National Lottery Heritage Fund  
 Paul Hamlyn Foundation

## Special thanks to our donors

Pukka Pies, Rock Kitchen Harris, Stocks Taylor Benson, Weightmans, Highcross, Asda Oadby, NCS Teams, LEBC, HSP, Theddingworth Congregational Chapel, Vision plc, Co-op, Arnold Clark Community Fund, rg+p, VF Northern Europe, Moat College, Judgemeadow College, Monday Trust and many more individuals and businesses.

## Gifts in kind

Impact Air, Hays, T W Kempton, Full Support Healthcare, Fareshare, NMBS Ltd, British Red Cross, Sweet Cherry Publishing, Leicester Grammar School, Cedars Academy, St Leonards Church, Prince's Trust, Sporting Markfield Under 8 Foxes, Hunger Foods, BAPS Charities Leicester, Giving Hope.

*We are extremely proud of the small part we've played over the last four years towards the incredible work of The Y and thoroughly enjoy working with the whole team. It's an amazing charity and we've been grateful to be able to support them through donations, pro-bono design projects, helping the charity get their important messages out and the recent rebrand of The Y Theatre. We look forward to continuing our special working relationship in the future.*

– **Lois Blackhurst, MD & Executive Creative Director at Stocks Taylor Benson**

YMCA Leicestershire's financial statements to 31st March 2022 are available at Companies House, company number 00159933. Registered charity number 213513.

Pictured: STB



Pictured:  
YMCA Shop  
Coalville

## New YMCA Shop opened 2021

Address: 5-7 Belvoir Shopping Centre, Coalville, LE67 3XE  
 FB: @YMCACoalvilleCharityShop







# YMCA

## SLEEP EASY

# BE A HERO IN A SLEEPING BAG!

Sleep Rough so others don't have to. One night can make a lifetime of difference to local homeless people in Leicester.

Will you join us in March 2023 and make that difference?

Register your interest at [fundraising@ymcaleics.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@ymcaleics.org.uk)

## YMCA LEICESTERSHIRE

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[www.ymcaleics.org.uk](http://www.ymcaleics.org.uk)



Follow us on social media: [@ymcaleics](https://www.instagram.com/ymcaleics)

