

# YMCA

## Annual Review

2021



YMCA EAST SURREY

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## What we do

YMCA East Surrey is a vibrant charity that has been changing lives in the local community for over 150 years. We are part of the wider national and international YMCA Federation which supports the development of young people around the world.

Our services are inclusive for people of all ages and abilities, encouraging everyone to enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. We help people to believe in themselves, support them to achieve their goals and inspire them to be the best they can be.

- ▶ Children & Young People
- ▶ Health & Wellbeing
- ▶ Housing

   YMCAEastSurrey



## Our year in numbers

Despite a reduced service in FY2020/21 due to COVID-19, we still engaged with

**5,983** individuals in East Surrey



Nearly **50%** of our beneficiaries had some additional needs, compared

with **24%** in the previous year



**1,053** young people referred for free counselling and other mental health support



**764** people took part in a challenge event



Our gym received at total of **9,605** gym visits



and **7,411** fitness class visits



**274** people in housing need secured private rented accommodation with the help of our NextStep team



We provided **18,250** nights of accommodation to vulnerable young people in 2020



We delivered around **10,600** hours of short break care for **304** children & young people with disabilities



**264** children, young people and families supported through Early Help services



Figures relate to FY 2020/21 unless stated otherwise



# Chief Executive's report

## Ian Burks

Welcome to this year's annual review, which provides insight into the services we offer and the benefits we bring to the local community. I hope you enjoy reading about the inspirational people we have helped and how they have overcome challenges in their lives.

The last year has been tough, with Covid-19 dramatically affecting the way we operate. By April 2020, many of our services were in lockdown. This did not deter the team at Hillbrook who continued to house and support young people at risk of homelessness throughout the pandemic. Other work supporting children, young people and families was also able to continue, thanks to some creative use of technology by our staff teams. Although our gym was closed for many months, our Exercise Referral scheme went online, offering a vital lifeline for many adults who were shielding because of long-term health conditions.

The longer-term impact of Covid is sadly likely to be worse for children and young people. To counter this, we have devised new services to help those recovering from the isolation and loss of education caused by the lockdown. Exciting new programmes include a collaborative youth work offer funded by the National Lottery, a major expansion of our emotional wellbeing and mental health services and the acquisition and development of a new housing scheme in Horley. These initiatives will provide practical support to help build the resilience young people need to get their lives back on track.

As ever, we have benefited from some amazing support from the community with local people of all ages taking part in YMCA Challenges to achieve a personal goal and raise money for the YMCA. This year, teams of supporters climbed seven summits in Snowdonia, cycled around the Isle of Wight and the length of the Pennine Bridleway. These wonderful people have not only contributed vital funds, they have also given us the inspiration and determination to achieve more for those we serve.

We are fortunate to have a strong team of staff and volunteers who continually explore ways to improve and develop our work. They are skilled, passionate and go the extra mile to ensure service users receive the highest standards of support and care. Our dedicated and knowledgeable group of trustees, led by our excellent Chair, Paul Byrne, give their time freely and readily to provide sound governance. I'd like to thank all these people for their immense contributions through what has been a difficult period for our community. I am confident we can build on what we have achieved to offer further opportunities for local people to realise their potential and be the best they can be.



Ian Burks at the London 2021 Marathon

# Chair's report

## Paul Byrne

Such is the esteem in which many hold YMCA East Surrey and its wonderful team, that hardly anyone was surprised at its ability to overcome the continuing challenges of the pandemic. The commitment demonstrated by the Chief Executive and the staff continues to prove exemplary in what can be achieved when faced with unprecedented times.

While expressing our profound gratitude to Ian and the team, I would particularly like to thank three of our trustees who are resigning this year.

Nigel Clifford has been a board member for six years and has chaired both the Youth Services Committee and the Governance Group, leading to the formation of the Governance Committee. The regulation of charities has been under the spotlight and Nigel's work has been instrumental in ensuring that YMCA East Surrey complies with the high standards rightly demanded in today's climate. Nigel is also a very skilled photographer and has captured useful images for our marketing material.

Freda Clark became involved with the YMCA in 1998 as part of the Churches Together initiative which helped fund Nightstop and NextStep. She has been a trustee for over twenty years and also performed essential work in organising and delivering Sleep Easy for the last nine years. She has staffed the water station at our fun run since its inception twenty years ago. We are delighted that Freda is keen to continue to serve as a volunteer.

Penelope Horsfall, whose husband Tim was instrumental in the building of our community centre in 1992, chose the YMCA as her official charity when she served as Mayor of Reigate and Banstead in 1995/1996. Thereafter, she became a trustee, chaired the Programme Committee and



then the Children's Services Committee. She has served as our president for fifteen years and will continue as our honorary president and patron.

The enthusiasm and love for YMCA East Surrey, demonstrated by Nigel, Freda and Penelope is truly inspirational. In expressing our deep gratitude, they can be assured they have all played a considerable part in the transformation and growth of YMCA East Surrey as it strives to fulfil its mission in Children and Young People, Health and Wellbeing and Housing services.



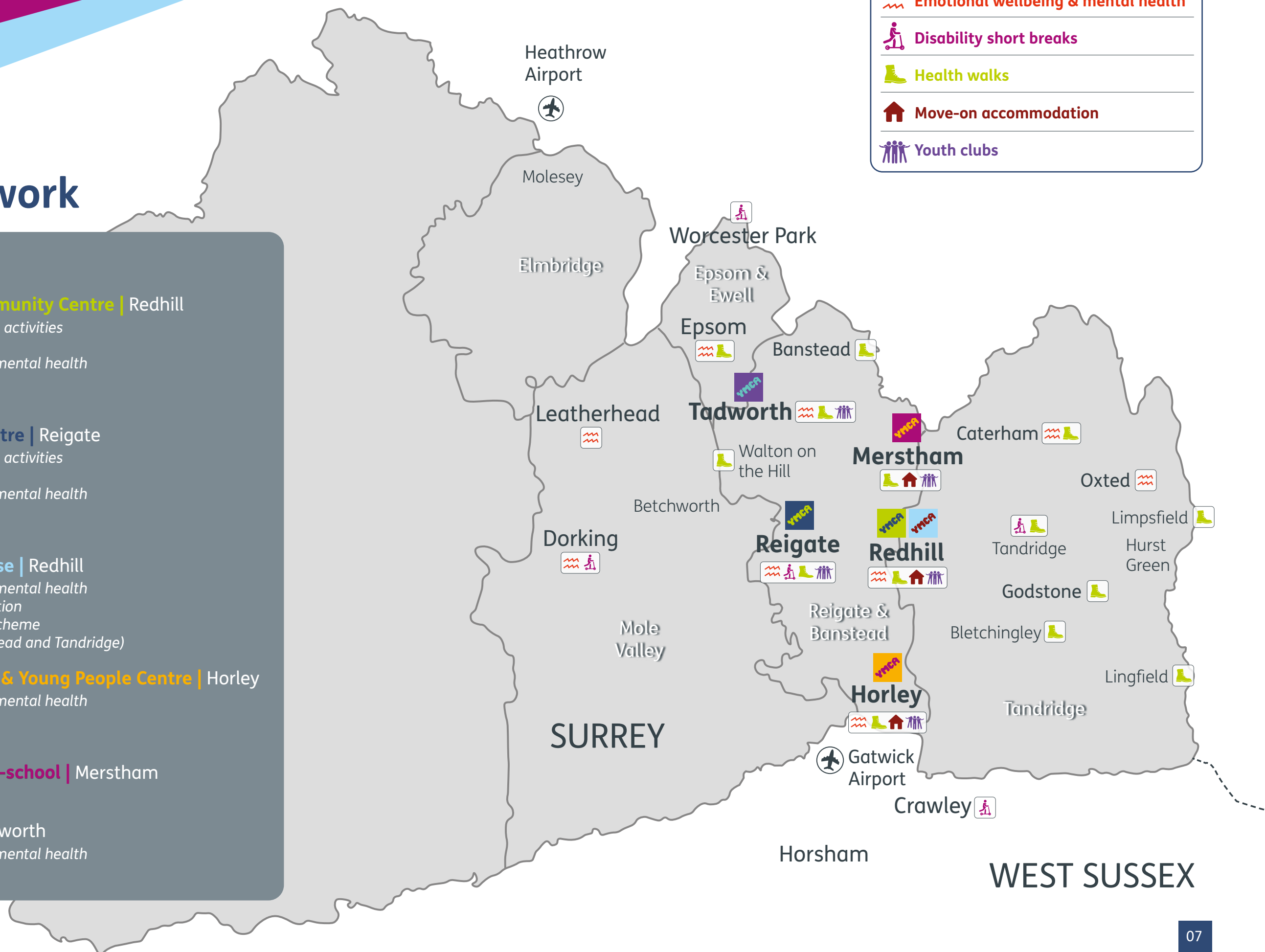
# Where we work

## Our centres

- YMCA Sports & Community Centre | Redhill**
  - Childcare & recreational activities
  - Disability services
  - Emotional wellbeing & mental health
  - Health & wellbeing
  - Sports & fitness
- YMCA Sovereign Centre | Reigate**
  - Childcare & recreational activities
  - Disability services
  - Emotional wellbeing & mental health
  - Pre-school
  - Youth work
- YMCA Hillbrook House | Redhill**
  - Emotional wellbeing & mental health
  - Supported accommodation
  - NextStep rent deposit scheme (covers Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge)
- YMCA Horley Family & Young People Centre | Horley**
  - Emotional wellbeing & mental health
  - Family services
  - Youth work
- YMCA Merstham Pre-school | Merstham**
  - Pre-school
- Phoenix Centre | Tadworth**
  - Emotional wellbeing & mental health
  - Youth work

## Other services

-  Emotional wellbeing & mental health
-  Disability short breaks
-  Health walks
-  Move-on accommodation
-  Youth clubs





## Ralph's story Early Years

Our pre-school settings in Reigate and Merstham continue to offer high quality and affordable childcare for children aged 2-5, including free Early Years entitlement places, and have welcomed new families where some private providers have closed their doors.

"Finding a suitable pre-school place for Ralph was a daunting experience," says Redhill mother-of-two Sophie. "At 3 years old, he had specific sensory issues and was easily overwhelmed by his environment."

When Ralph was diagnosed with moderate autism spectrum disorder in 2020, Sophie was told by a couple of Early Years providers that they didn't have the staff available or funding in place to give Ralph the care he needed. Then Ralph's local key worker suggested that Sophie contact the recently opened YMCA Merstham Hub Pre-School and, from that moment, they haven't looked back.

"Ralph is making amazing progress," says Sophie. "One and a half years ago, he was non-verbal but, since starting at the YMCA Pre-School, his language has really picked up. He now likes a cuddle if he's feeling overwhelmed and I've seen a massive improvement in his social skills. Ralph has always loved adult company but the staff have been helping him to work in small groups and he is slowly beginning to interact with the other children. It's all I ever wanted."

Recent studies by YMCA England and Wales have found that there is a 20% shortfall in government funding of Early Years childcare across the country compared to the cost of provision.

Judith Brooks is Head of Children and Young People at YMCA East Surrey. She says, "The first 1,000 days of a child's life are the most critical in

shaping their development. Providing appropriate support and development opportunities during that time gives children the greatest chance of reaching their potential than at any other stage of their life. We particularly work in low-income communities where families face multiple challenges and often need the most support. "The recent pandemic significantly impacted the learning and development of children in Early Years and offering suitable support to families is as important as ever. The 'developmental gaps' were mostly seen in Personal, Social and Emotional development.

One parent told us:

"My daughter is still very clingy to us as she has not had much interaction outside family members since the pandemic. I am very thankful that the staff at the YMCA have been very patient with my daughter, acclimatising her into the environment. I can see growth in her behaviour as she has become less shy towards strangers and I am very happy about that."

Sophie, 28, says:

"Childcare in this area is so expensive, but fortunately for us the YMCA Pre-School is very affordable. The staff have helped me enormously with information and support and they organised the funding which was needed to provide Ralph with the one-to-one care he needs. They are absolutely brilliant."

**"Ralph comes out of every pre-school session with a big smile. It's become a vital part of his weekly routine, providing the perfect preparation for when he starts school in September."**



Children enjoying cricket at holiday club

## Summer Holidays

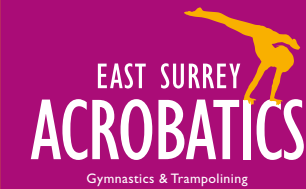
Y-Kids holiday club in Redhill welcomed an average of 67 children each day of the summer holidays. As well as children whose parents paid for them to attend, we had many children on bursary funded spaces. Each week had a different theme and sports to engage the children with plenty of new experiences.

Thanks to funding from Active Surrey, we also ran a free holiday club at Earlswood School for two weeks for children eligible for free school meals. Around 30 children attended each day and enjoyed sports, crafts, baking and outside play. The funding also allowed us to provide each child with a healthy lunch every day.

## Pre-schools

Our pre-schools in Merstham and Reigate offer a fun, stimulating and safe environment, allowing children to gain all the benefits of an Early Years education in a setting that places their child's abilities, needs and interests as the starting point for learning and exploration.

Both pre-schools remained open during the early 2021 lockdown, providing vital support and socialisation to young children and their families. As one Merstham pre-school parent says, **"My son loves it here. The staff are great, patient and caring. Lots of different activities to try. He never wants to leave."**



In February 2021, young leaders Emily and Holly won the 'Young Community Champion of the Year' award at the Reigate & Banstead Sports Awards which were held virtually.

This award recognises the impact that individuals have made to their club and to the community. Sisters, Emily and Holly have gone above and beyond for East Surrey Acrobatics, producing great lockdown videos to really inspire young gymnasts to keep active and helping to lead sessions once they returned in person. All our young leaders play a big part in the team and seeing them flourish into fine young adults is an absolute privilege.

**106** pre-schoolers  
had fun whilst

learning at

**YMCA Sovereign  
& YMCA Merstham  
Pre-schools**



Pre-schoolers learning about minibeasts





YMCA Horley Family & Young People Centre

## Family Support Work

Our Family Support team is trained and experienced in helping families work through a wide variety of challenges, such as separation and divorce, domestic abuse, financial hardship, problems engaging with education, behavioural issues, communication breakdowns and parenting skills. The team has worked with 84 children and continues to support up to 12 families across Horley, using strength-based approaches which empower them to build new skills and have the confidence to go forward in life. Other Family Support services are beginning to resume in person such as Baby Café, parenting programmes, youth clubs, visits from the Health Visitor team and midwife clinics at the centre.

## Youth Work

In February 2021, we were awarded a grant of £435,737 from the National Lottery Community Fund to deliver sessions of universal youth work. Thanks to this, we are now running youth clubs in Horley, Merstham, Redhill, Reigate and Tadworth.

“This grant couldn’t have come at a more vital time,” says YMCA Family Services and Youth Work Manager, Stuart Kingsley. “With recent cuts to universal youth services and the COVID-19 crisis affecting their emotional wellbeing, young people need access to support more than ever before.”

We have also secured a five-year lease to manage the Phoenix Youth Centre in Tadworth. This will allow us to expand our youth offer to reach local young people who need it most, through activities at the centre and our detached youth programme, Street Talk.

## Early Help

We deliver Early Help services in partnership with Welcare on behalf of Surrey County Council to families with children aged 0-19 in Reigate and Banstead. Early Help services seek to support a child or young person when a need or issue in their wellbeing first emerges.

We are currently supporting 20 young people and 10 families at any one time across the Reigate and Banstead area. Our team builds a trusting relationship with young people to help them explore issues such as positive relationships, coping with school and building resilience. Early intervention work at the right time can make all the difference to the children and young people that engage with us.

 **698** young people accessed support from YMCA Youth Workers through Street Talk



Cooking at the YMCA Horley Youth Club

Theo

## Theo's story Youth Work

Theo, 12, spends much of his time in the role of a young carer to his five-year-old brother Toby, who has autism.

“Toby idolises Theo,” explains mum, Nicole, “and he wants to be with him all the time. When he isn’t having to watch his brother, many of Theo’s interests are solitary ones and he is happy in his own company, playing Minecraft in his bedroom.”

For these reasons, when Nicole heard about the YMCA East Surrey youth club sessions in Merstham through social media, she was keen for Theo to give them a try, get out of the house and interact more with others.

Theo also has autism, like his brother, and struggled with sensory issues as a younger child. He enjoys his lessons at school, is eloquent, musical, interested in reading and finds it easier to communicate with adults than with his peers.

“We live in a stressful household and Theo has a lot on his plate for a boy of his age,” says Nicole. “Out of necessity, much of my time is taken up with looking after his brother and so I can’t give Theo as much attention as I would like.”

“There’s not a lot else to do in this area for children of Theo’s age, so my hope was that the youth club sessions would give him the chance to mingle and make some local friends.”

YMCA East Surrey runs 12 free youth club sessions at five venues across East Surrey, aiming to provide a friendly, relaxed space for young people in school years 6 to 11 to hang out.

Stuart Kingsley, Family Services and Youth Work Manager and Deputy Head of Children and Young People at YMCA East Surrey, says:

“Being given the opportunity by Surrey County Council this year to take on the leases for the Horley Family & Young People Centre and the Phoenix in Tadworth has allowed us to offer a wider programme of universal youth work. We want to offer targeted support projects so we can listen and respond to local need.”

Between 1 April and 31 July 2021, YMCA East Surrey held 89 youth club sessions at which there was a total of 569 attendances.

Marlon Williams is YMCA East Surrey’s Lead Youth Worker and Mentor. He says:

“When Theo first attended the Youth Club, following lockdown, he was quiet and reserved and preferred to take part in activities, like chess, that he’d tried before. He was quick to say ‘I’m not very good at this’ if he was encouraged to join in with something new.”

“Theo’s become a lot more confident over the recent months. His social skills are improving and he communicates very well with the other young people who attend, is considerate of their feelings and happy to participate in activities with them, not just with the other adults. He’ll give something a go if he hasn’t tried it before and recently received a YMCA Youth Accreditation Award for the development he has made in table tennis.”

Theo is particularly delighted that the youth club sessions have improved his pool skills - an interest he now shares with a local young friend.

**“I wouldn’t have nearly as much to do without the YMCA Youth Club,” he says. “The Youth Workers are fun and I think that anyone who hasn’t given the sessions a try is really missing out!”**





## Lewis's story Yippee

From the time he learned to roll, it was evident to Lewis's mother, Jane, that his behaviour was very different to that of other babies.

"He began to roll and he didn't stop," she explains. "He rolled continuously around our flat, over and over."

Although official diagnosis was frustratingly slow, Lewis has since been found to have autism, ADHD, speech and language difficulties, epilepsy, brain damage, OCD, PDA, high sensory needs and challenging behaviour.

Now 11, he has been attending our Yippee playscheme in Epsom for the past three years.

"At home, I live in a state of hyper-vigilance," says single parent Jane. "Lewis's sister Ivy is five years old and currently undergoing a diagnosis for ADHD. At every minute of the day, I need to know where each of them is and what they are doing."

Yippee is YMCA East Surrey's warm and welcoming playscheme for children aged 5-11 with a wide range of disabilities and complex needs. Our experienced team have special training in behaviour management and communication methods. The high staff to child ratio allows each child the support they need, from those at the milder end of the spectrum to those with high level needs and physical disabilities.

When Lewis first began attending Yippee, he struggled to socialise or interact with other children and found it difficult to vocalise his needs.

Harriet Stoffell, Disability Services Coordinator for YMCA East Surrey, says:

"Lewis's behaviour was really challenging and he would often lash out in frustration at staff or other children. Since then, we have worked closely with

Lewis, his family and his school, and have seen a massive improvement."

"Lewis is now able to join in with group activities, express himself to staff and is safe whilst out in the community. Yippee is Lewis's chance to have fun and enjoy the activities and outings which his mum isn't able to provide."

Jane is honest about what the Yippee sessions that Lewis attends mean to her.

"I need the breaks," she says. "The recent lockdown periods were brutal. Lewis missed the interaction with other children hugely. Not only did I not get a break, but I also didn't even have the relief of knowing that a break was coming. Lewis's anxiety increased, his sleeping pattern was all over the place and I was extremely sleep deprived. There were a lot of tears!"

"When Lewis is at Yippee, I can finally get a few hours to myself or some time to devote to Ivy. For a short while, there is peace in the house. I can completely switch off, knowing that his needs are being fully met."

Lewis tells staff how much he loves Yippee and cannot wait to come back each week.

**"Lewis is smart, cheeky, funny, energetic – like most boys – but he has really huge needs," says Jane. "Before Yippee, he constantly missed out on experiences because we couldn't do them together in a safe way. Now, he is able to try new things and visit different locations like the beach and adventure parks."**

"Harriet is a saint and the staff are amazing. I owe my sanity levels to YMCA East Surrey and Yippee."



Getting active at High Ashurst Outdoor Learning Centre

## ASD Club

Our Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) club was set up to accommodate the large number of children and young people with ASD that attend our regular Yippee and Yip4Youth Short Breaks. In Surrey, the number of children and young people identified with ASD has increased by around 50% since 2009.

The club runs with fewer spaces than our typical Short Break days which helps to create a calmer environment for children and young people alike. We have been able to offer 600 hours of ASD support for children and young people. This was of particular importance over the last year as the uncertainties that came as a result of the pandemic made this an extremely challenging time for families.

## Behaviour Support at Short Breaks

Thanks to BBC Children in Need funding, we have been able to recruit a behavioural specialist as part of our Disability Short Breaks team. This funding has allowed us to work closely with families to develop positive support plans that help children and young people to navigate day to day challenges by putting strategies and coping mechanisms in place to support the best outcome.

We have also been able to upskill more of our staff through intensive interactions, training and implementation of Antecedent Behaviour Consequence (ABC) charts to help ensure that everyone is making the most out of their Short Break club.

Over the 2021 summer holidays we provided **8,286** hours of Short Break holiday clubs



## LifeWorks

The transition from Children's to Adults' Services is often very challenging for young people with disabilities and their families. Our LifeWorks project provides a vital continuation of disability activities for young adults who have attended our Short Breaks clubs.

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating environment for young adults to grow in confidence and gain semi-independence through social and educational skills. Activities are based on developing social skills or structured sessions such as gardening, art, sports, job club and cooking. Some young people with disabilities lost their confidence during the pandemic and we are now seeing that confidence return through taking part in these activities again.







## Emotional Wellbeing

In April 2021, we started working with 12 other charities together as the Surrey Wellbeing Partnership to deliver a new emotional wellbeing and mental health services contract under a joint NHS/Surrey County Council commission. This funding allows us to increase our existing counselling services and introduce a new Community Wellbeing team, schools-based offer and evidence-based therapies including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and guided self-help.

This service brings a collaborative approach to providing essential early support to young people who are struggling with their mental health. The scale of need is unfortunately growing, particularly with additional challenges around COVID-19, so it's crucial that there is a bigger focus on early intervention within our communities to ensure that no young person is left without support.

## WAVES

WAVES (Wellbeing, Awareness & Voice for East Surrey) is a YMCA youth group which aims to provide a positive space for young people aged 13-19 to be able to talk about mental health and wellbeing, create supportive friendships and engage in fun and thought-provoking activities and campaigns.

The group continued virtually throughout all lockdowns providing vital support to teenagers with their emotional wellbeing. Sessions now run both online and in-person in Horley, Redhill and Reigate. The project has been recognised as a finalist in the 2021 Youth Matters awards as Health & Wellbeing Project of the Year and one of the attendees is also a finalist for the Young Achiever of the Year award.

## Y's Girls

We have been successful in securing a place along with around 15 other YMCAs to deliver a nationwide mentoring project, Y's Girls, coordinated by YMCA England & Wales, for girls aged 9-14. The project aims to support young women and girls at risk of developing mental health issues by connecting them with volunteer mentors to offer support and positively influence their lives.

After recruiting and training volunteers, mentoring sessions started in September 2021 and we look forward to progressing with this project. Mentors will regularly meet up with their mentee over a 12-month period offering an informal environment with the opportunity to discuss anything that might be worrying them, from family and personal relationships to lifestyle and education.

From Mar-Jul 2021, we delivered over

**2,000** hours of  
**counselling & therapy**  
to **555** children and young people



## Sinead's story Heads Together Counselling

"Two years ago, my life was a mess and I was living each day under a dark, dark cloud," says Sinead.

"My head was full of thoughts and emotions that I didn't know how to deal with and I had no idea where to begin with helping myself."

Newly married and holding 7-month-old Lucas on her hip, Sinead is now 22 and immensely grateful for the support she has received from YMCA East Surrey's Heads Together counselling service.

"I had never opened up to anyone before," she says, "but I was desperate to make a change. Unresolved issues from my childhood had left me in despair and out of control, making unwise and dangerous decisions. I couldn't see a future ahead of me if I continued on the same path – I was depressed and suicidal."

The Heads Together counselling sessions proved to be the turning point that Sinead needed.

**"It was such a weight off my shoulders to tell someone everything that was inside me," she explains. "My counsellor listened to me, believed what I was saying and gave me comfort without judging."**

Sinead was offered 12 sessions, completing the first six face to face before COVID-19 and lockdown forced the remainder to be carried out online.

"Zoom made no difference to how valuable the sessions were to me," says Sinead. "It was still a huge relief to have an hour once a week where I could talk about my feelings and the support remained just as vital."

YMCA Counsellor and CBT Practitioner, Hannah Shepherd, says:

"Sinead engaged really well in sessions, using them to process some difficult experiences from her past and to work on how these experiences impacted her current relationships."

Sinead says, "Hannah helped me to understand my feelings and emotions and to work out what the triggers are to those emotions spinning out of control. With her support, I have put coping mechanisms in place for the times when I feel overwhelmed."

During 2020/21, Heads Together delivered almost 5,000 hours of support in the form of taking and processing referrals and counselling and therapy sessions, mostly with under 18's. YMCA East Surrey recognises the value of receiving the right support as early as possible and has over 300 children and young people currently waiting for support.

After her counselling experience, Sinead feels happier and more confident. She met and built a positive relationship with the man who is now her husband and who offered understanding and support from day one.

"There are still difficult days," she says, "but now I know how to deal with them. I hope that my story inspires anyone who is struggling with their mental health to seek help like I did – I only wish I'd done so sooner."

"Without the YMCA Heads Together counselling, I wouldn't know where I belonged in the world and I am certain that I wouldn't have a husband or a child."

"Nothing will change what happened to me, but I have accepted it and I'm ready to move forwards with my life."





Indy

## Indy's story Housing

At the age of 16, Indy's life was following a path that was littered with drugs and violence.

Struggling to focus at school and under the influence of his older brother who was already battling substance abuse, Indy was dragged into mixing with the wrong crowd and his behaviour took on a downward spiral.

"I began to buy and sell drugs," he explains. "It brought me into contact with some very dangerous people and I was living on a knife edge. Anyone pushed me, I pushed back harder. I had no positive role models and my temper was out of control."

After one family dispute too many, Indy walked out of his home and was directed towards YMCA Hillbrook House in Redhill by his Youth Support Services key worker.

YMCA East Surrey's Housing Services provide opportunities for people aged 16 to 30 who are facing homelessness within the local community, helping them to access housing and offering support that meets their individual needs. Our younger residents are especially vulnerable and between July 2020 and July 2021, we supported 58 16-to-18-year-olds.

"I found living alongside other people incredibly difficult as I wasn't used to respecting others or listening to their views," says Indy. "I rejected the help I was offered because I didn't know how to reach out for it."

Eventually, Indy reached a crossroads where he realised he had to open up and make changes.

"I had nothing else to lose," he remembers. "The YMCA staff at Hillbrook House offered me unconditional support. They were tough but they did not stop pushing me to improve myself. They genuinely wanted me to do better and to feel better."

During 2020, 7,391 hours of support were provided to residents throughout the year. We work closely with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, Tandridge District Council and Surrey County Council to deliver our services.

Indy became one of the first residents on the pilot Y Focus programme, which offers regular activity workshops to residents, ranging from employability, money management and life skills, through to gym sessions, team building and mental wellbeing.

Lee Fabry, YMCA Head of Housing, says, "Within a month of arriving at Hillbrook House, we aim to support new residents into either volunteering, education, employment or training. If they are not ready due to personal barriers, they are enrolled instead onto one of our bespoke programmes - such as Y Focus - with the paramount objective of giving these young people the opportunity to thrive and achieve their goals."

Indy, 20, has now secured a full-time job with a local company and moved into a YMCA supported move-on house in Redhill.

"It feels like I'm beginning to build my own life," he says. "I'm doing so much better, I'm clean and I have an improved relationship with my father. The YMCA housing team taught me that it doesn't matter where I've come from. The life I live now will define me."

**"I've found happiness and freedom. For as long as I can remember, people have been telling me that I won't make it. And I have."**

YMCA Housing Support Manager, Nicole Tootill, says, "Indy is friendly, articulate and has a heart of gold. He came to Hillbrook House as a boy and, when he moves on to independent living soon, he will be leaving as a man."

## Housing & Accommodation



### Horley Move-On


In April 2021, thanks to funding from Homes England, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and LandAid, we completed the purchase of a property in Horley. This extends our housing offer to local young people and adds to our existing move-on properties in Redhill and Merstham.

The detached Edwardian property will be home to 12 young people who need less intensive housing support, helping to bridge the gap between supported accommodation and independent living. The property is being completely refurbished before opening towards the end of 2021.

### NextStep

NextStep is a free service that supports households referred by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council or Tandridge District Council to secure affordable private rented accommodation. This year, NextStep secured tenancies for 77 households at risk of homelessness and prevented a further 13 households from becoming homeless in Reigate & Banstead and found accommodation for 21 non-priority individuals in Tandridge. The team worked throughout the pandemic, in fact the need for housing increased with the team receiving requests from people sleeping rough and being evicted from their homes with little or no notice.

As one tenant says, "I am so unbelievably grateful for all of your hard work. This is finally happening for my family. I'm overwhelmed with the help and support from you. I would be in such a bad place without NextStep."

 **7,391** hours of support were delivered to residents during 2020, that's an average of **616** hours per month

### Y Focus

All young people living in our accommodation get bespoke support based on their needs through a key worker. Together they draw up personal objectives, signposting them to relevant services both within YMCA East Surrey and externally. Y Focus is one of the projects we offer that aims to help young people gain employability and life skills to equip them for independent living.

The impact of this tailored employability and educational support has been very positive for the young people that took part in the first half of 2021. All 23 participants gained 110 AQA qualifications between them, four young people gained employment and 17 were enrolled into education.



Y Focus at Go Ape





### Gym Refurbishment

In April 2021, we welcomed members back to a newly refurbished gym. Thanks to funding from the Clothworkers' Foundation, Beatrice Laing Trust, Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation and Gatwick Airport Community Trust, we added new flooring to the existing gym, expanded into a new gym area in the old sports hall and added several new pieces of fitness equipment.

We are constantly seeking ways to improve our fitness facilities. We are hopeful that, subject to future funding, we will be able to make structural improvements to make this change more permanent with easier access to both areas of the gym and an improved fitness studio space.

### Virtual Success

Thank you to several gym members who generously donated their membership fees whilst the gym was closed during lockdowns. These contributions enabled us to continue to run free online fitness classes to allow people to stay active at home.

Our Exercise Referral sessions also moved online thanks to funding from Community Foundation for Surrey and Surrey Heartlands CCG, enabling those with chronic health conditions and disabilities to continue to exercise under the guided supervision of experienced instructors. The team were able to reach a much wider audience, receiving 6,849 virtual attendances from April 2020 to March 2021, and even set up a special online Christmas Day session in 2020 that four people, who would not have otherwise seen anyone, attended.

### Exercise Referral classes received

7,979 visits in FY20/21



### Disability Sport

New research from Activity Alliance shows twice as many disabled people felt that the pandemic greatly reduced their ability to do sport or physical activity compared to non-disabled people.

We believe that the benefits of being active are clear and should be accessible to all. It has been wonderful to welcome back attendees to our varied disability sports sessions including Boccia, Dance, Multi-Sport, Badminton as well as new Inclusive Cricket sessions in partnership with Lord's Taverners and Surrey Cricket Foundation and we hope to offer more of these sessions in the future.



Having fun at inclusive dance

## Andrew's story Exercise Referral

When Andrew came home from work feeling exhausted one weekend in April 2020, he thought he'd overdone it.

"I'd been working long hours and felt like I had a dose of the flu," he explains. "But by Monday morning I was struggling to breathe and my wife called an ambulance."

Andrew, now 58, was taken straight to the ICU at East Surrey Hospital and diagnosed with COVID-19. With family instructed to stay away, doctors decided after two days to put Andrew into an induced coma to give his body its best chance to fight the infection.

"I spoke to my wife on the phone and told her that I'd see her in a week," says Andrew. "96 days later, I finally woke up."

Three times during that horrendous period, his family and friends were told that Andrew wouldn't live through the night, but he kept on battling. It was five months before Andrew saw his wife again.

"Following the coma, I was reliant on breathing apparatus for three months and couldn't talk at all. Unable to eat, my weight dropped from over 16 stone to just 8 and a half stone."

Depressed and frightened, he began his long road to recovery, moving to St Helier Hospital in Sutton for specialist renal treatment and then to Headley Court, near Epsom, for further rehabilitation.

In March 2021, Andrew was signposted to our Exercise Referral programme, following six weeks of physio treatment through First Community.

YMCA East Surrey's Exercise Referral Coordinator, Wayne Askin, says:

"We have been receiving referrals from the First Community Long COVID rehab team since April 2021, highlighting the current need for ongoing targeted support."

"Andrew had lost a significant amount of muscle mass from his time in hospital so we set an initial goal to build some strength and aerobic capacity without undoing any of the work he had completed with the COVID rehab team."

In 2020/2021, YMCA East Surrey had 7,979 participant visits to Exercise Referral fitness classes and 1,283 visits to Exercise Referral gym sessions.

This year, we have received funding to launch a new Long COVID pathway in partnership with Active Surrey.

**"The support I've received from the Exercise Referral team is immense," says Andrew. "Wayne keeps an eye on me, knows exactly what I need to do and tells me off if I rush. Slowly, slowly he tells me! It's not a race – it's about getting fit."**

"YMCA's Exercise Referral sessions have given me increased mental and physical confidence to go out and do my own thing. I can walk further than I could before and I don't get so out of breath. When I struggle, I've learned to stop, sit down and start again when I feel up to it."

"2020 was the worst year of my life, but I feel very lucky to have survived it and I'm positive about the future. I'm not one to ask for help, but in this case I've had to and I've benefitted so much as a result."



## Emma's story

### Challenge Events

Emma is the main carer for her 21-year-old son, Tom, who has global developmental delay and complex needs. With two younger children as well and a career in Speech and Language Therapy, life can be both physically and emotionally tiring.

"Tom needs constant care," says Emma. "He is non-verbal and so I have to be his voice, making judgements for him throughout each day and doing my very best to make sure that I get these right."

Six years ago, a flyer for YMCA East Surrey's Redhill to Paris cycling challenge caught Emma's attention.

"Life was so complicated at the time," she explains. "I was looking for a temporary escape – something to do on my own."

Completely new to cycling, she signed up to take on the challenge with her dad and was so overwhelmed by the positives that came out of the experience, that she has now gone on to tackle three further YMCA events – cycling to La Rochelle, Bruges and, this summer, around the Isle of Wight.

"I have met some of the nicest, kindest people," says Emma. "For the duration of the challenges, I become just 'Emma' for a while. I feel so free, I have fun and I reconnect to myself. At the end of each event, I feel refreshed and invigorated. It's the biggest buzz imaginable."

So far, Emma has raised over £5,000 in sponsorship money from her challenge events.

"The services that YMCA East Surrey provides are utterly invaluable, not just to us as a family, but across the wider local community too," says Emma.

"Age-appropriate activities suitable for Tom are few and far between, meaning that his choices are so much more limited than those of his siblings. Through the YMCA, he has been able to experience a normal social life with his peers in a safe

environment, giving him the exercise and interaction that he needs so much."

"When Tom is with the YMCA staff, who understand him and know his individual needs, I don't need to worry."

COVID-19 and the resulting periods of lockdown, during which YMCA services were suspended, placed additional pressure on Emma's family.

"Tom is already reliant on me," she explains. "He is a young adult now and to spend so much concentrated time with his mum is unnatural. Although it felt like a privilege in many ways to have those weeks together, our relationship during lockdown bordered on unhealthy. Like every other mum, I am only human and, when YMCA East Surrey reopened its facilities, it saved the sanity of us both!"

There is another reason why Emma feels especially proud of her YMCA Challenge achievements.

"I think it's so important to set a positive example to my children, and particularly to my 12-year-old daughter. I want to show her that I can do this. I can take on a mentally and physically demanding challenge and conquer it. And if I can dig deep and achieve something difficult, then so can she."

"To take on a YMCA Challenge, you don't need to be part of a cycling club, or even have all the gear. I completed my rides without a cleet in sight!"

**"Don't be intimidated by the distance. Each overall Challenge experience is so much more than just 100 or 200 miles on a bike. Time is hard to find, but we all deserve to take a break for ourselves. It's a chance to remember exactly who we are."**



Cyclists returning from 'The Island' Isle of Wight cycling challenge

## Life Change Fund

It has been great to welcome our supporters back to taking part in our challenge events in person rather than virtually.

All money raised goes towards our new Life Change Fund. This fund supports children and young people as they recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic allowing them to access new opportunities and grow as individuals through our supported housing, youth work, counselling and disability projects plus much more. Check out our 2022 events calendar on our website and sign up to transform a life for a child/young person in East Surrey!

## Mayor's Charity

We're thrilled to be chosen as one of the Mayor of Reigate and Banstead's chosen charities along with Age Concern Banstead for the municipal year of 2021/22.

We will be working together to put on a series of events to raise money for our Life Change Fund. Councillor Jill Bray, the Mayor of Reigate and Banstead, has been a supporter of YMCA East Surrey for many years having cycled to Paris and walked the South Downs Way with us as well as supporting many of our fundraising appeals. We look forward to an exciting year ahead of events celebrating this partnership.



## YMCA Challengers

trekked, cycled or ran

**10,152 miles**  
**in**  
**2020**



## Snowdon Climb

In August 2021, a group of 12 young residents from YMCA Hillbrook House travelled to Wales to climb Snowdon, the highest mountain in England and Wales, thanks to funding from the High Sheriff Youth Awards.

All residents, led by the YMCA Housing team, climbed 1,085 metres to the summit to raise money for our Employment Support Fund which helps young people into employment. The aim was to build memories and to support residents in an achievement they can be proud of. One resident said, "These are memories I will keep forever. I have had such a difficult year and I am so grateful to be given this opportunity."



Residents celebrate summiting Snowdon



# Thanks

It would not be possible for us to help local people through our many life changing projects shown in this Annual Review without support. On behalf of everyone who benefits from our services, we would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to all our partners, funders and volunteers.

- Active Surrey

Albert Hunt Trust

Badminton England

BBC Children in Need

Baily Thomas Charitable Fund

Barnado's

Beatrice Laing Trust

Bernard Sunley Foundation

Big Leaf Foundation

Boccia England

Charles Hayward Foundation

Christ Central

Clockwise Marketing

Clothworkers' Foundation

Coleman Trust

Comic Relief

Community Foundation for Surrey

Connick Tree Care

Dept for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Dunhill Medical Trust

European Social Fund

Federation of Earlswood Schools

First Community Health and Care

Garfield Weston Foundation

GASP Motoring Project

Gatwick Airport Community Trust

Geoff Herrington Foundation

George Goodsir Charitable Trust

Health Education England

Hedley Foundation

High Sheriff Youth Awards

Homes England

Horley Town Council

Infinity – Space to grow

LandAid

Lord's Taverners

Merstham Community Facility Trust

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Mindsight (CAMHS)

Mole Valley District Council
- Morrison's Foundation

The Myti Club

National Garden Scheme - Elspeth Thompson Bursary

National Lottery Community Fund

Nationwide Building Society

Netherby Trust

New Music Nights

Oxted United Reformed Church

Peter Harrison Foundation

Police & Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Raven Housing Trust

Redhill Methodist Church

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

Reigate Rotary Club

Richmond Fellowship

S E Franklin Charitable Trust

Shanly Foundation

Sport England

St Faith's Trust

St Matthew's Church, Redhill

Stripey Stork

Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Surrey County Council

Surrey Cricket Foundation

Surrey Heartlands Clinical Commissioning Group

Surrey Football Association

Surrey Playing Fields

Tandridge District Council

Tandridge Together Lottery

Three Guineas Trust

Tobbell Fund

West Sussex County Council

William Allen Young Charitable Trust

William Wates Memorial Trust

YMCA East Surrey Challenge Fundraisers

YMCA East Surrey Committee Members, Trustees and Volunteers

YMCA England & Wales

Youth Futures Foundation

Find out more at [www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk](http://www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk)

# How you can help



**Donate** to support our work. Whether you can make a regular or one-off donation, your support helps our projects to continue running.



Take part in a **YMCA Challenge Event**. Cycling, running, trekking or something less strenuous – there are lots of ways you can help to raise funds for our vital charitable work.



**Volunteer** with us. We work with some amazing people and have opportunities for anyone who is interested in helping out.



A **Corporate Partnership** with YMCA East Surrey brings benefits to your business and employees, as well as helping the local community.



Leave a legacy and give the gift of hope with a **Charity Gift in your Will**.

# Summary of accounts

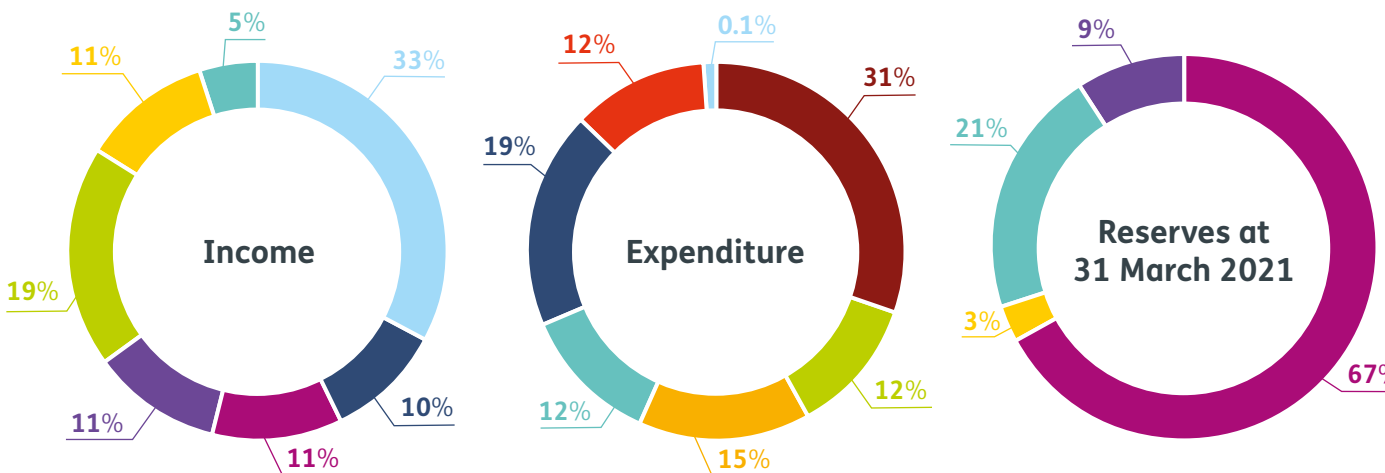
The following is a summary of our financial information for the year ended 31 March 2021. Total income for the year was £4.23 million and total expenditure including interest payable was £3.81 million.

Staffing costs accounted for 70% of the total expenditure.

Total reserves at the end of the year were £6.11 million, of which 67% was attributable to the restricted premises funds. Other restricted funds were £0.19 million, designated funds were £0.56 million while unrestricted funds amounted to £1.28 million.

The above information was extracted from the full annual financial statements prepared in accordance with the Housing Statement of Recommended Practice 2014, the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing (issued by the Homes and Community agency in September 2015), the Housing Regeneration Act 2008, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the requirements of Companies Act 2006. For further information, the full financial statements together with the Trustees' and Auditor's reports should be consulted.

Copies are available from The Charity Commission, Companies House or [www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk](http://www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk)



- ▶ Housing

▶ Health & wellbeing

▶ Childcare & children's activities

▶ Family & youth services

▶ Inclusive services

▶ Emotional wellbeing

▶ Other income
- ▶ Housing

▶ Health & wellbeing

▶ Childcare & children's activities

▶ Family & youth services

▶ Inclusive services

▶ Emotional wellbeing

▶ Other expenditure
- ▶ Restricted premises reserves

▶ Other restricted reserves

▶ Unrestricted reserves

▶ Designated reserves

Total Income

£4,232,822

Total Expenditure

£3,797,991

Total Reserves

£6,106,665



