

Impact Report 2023



YMCA EAST SURREY

What we do

YMCA East Surrey is a vibrant charity that has been changing lives in the local community since 1871. 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

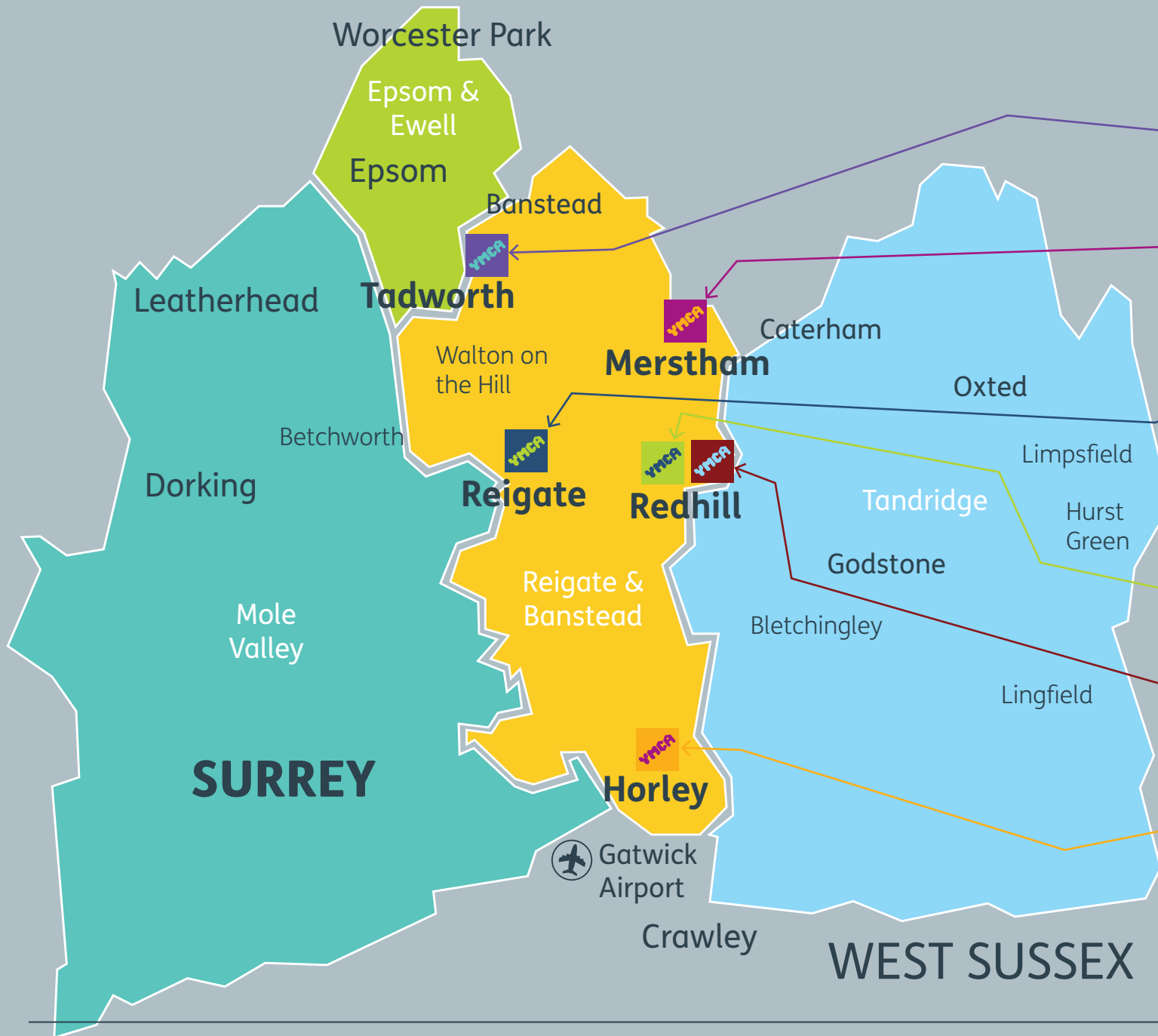
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Interviews by Sophie Hamilton

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YMCA Phoenix Centre
Tadworth



YMCA Merstham Pre-school
Merstham



YMCA Sovereign Centre
Reigate



YMCA Sports & Community Centre
Redhill



YMCA Hillbrook House
Redhill



YMCA Horley Young People & Family Centre
Horley

Chief Executive's report | Ian Burks

Welcome to this review of YMCA East Surrey, where we celebrate the achievements of our service users and highlight the positive impact we have had on our community.

Our charitable work aims to help people realise their potential and spans a diverse range of projects across housing, services for children and young people and health and wellbeing.

Last year has seen lots of development and growth, especially for families where thanks to the Mindworks Partnership we have expanded our emotional wellbeing activity in schools and communities. Exciting new therapeutic programmes offering early intervention bring hope and renewed confidence to young people whose lives were disrupted by gaps in schooling during the Covid lockdowns. New contacts with local authorities in Surrey and Sussex have enhanced our short breaks for families of children with additional needs and disabilities.

We have also made progress with our strategic aim to develop more youth accommodation and have acquired a new property in Redhill to convert into supported housing provision for young people.

YMCA programmes of physical activity are thriving with record numbers of people signing up for gym and classes. This has been mirrored by development in exercise referral where those with long term health conditions benefit from the revitalising power of safe controlled exercise, as well as the social support that the YMCA offers.

One of my own personal highlights from last year was witnessing young residents from our housing schemes joining YMCA Challengers on the Ben Nevis Trek. Many of the young people had a very different background to our fundraisers, having escaped trauma from far off countries, but the group trained together and became one on the mountain with the common aim of reaching the summit whilst raising awareness and funds for the work of the YMCA.

This was a great example of how the YMCA helps promote belonging and inclusion to achieve a common goal. Since the pandemic and during the cost-of-living crisis children, young people and families have been faced with ever growing challenges but it is amazing how, with the backing of the YMCA, individuals and communities can come together and work in unison to overcome adversity and achieve success.

Ian Burks (2nd left) with YMCA housing support staff and residents training for Ben Nevis Trek



Looking ahead, we have ambitious plans to expand and enhance our services, reaching even more young individuals in need of a helping hand. We are determined to broaden our offer across Surrey and to develop more housing to meet the looming crisis of youth homelessness. We will be extending our mental health provision for children in Primary schools and those over 18 who face the cliff edge of reduced support for adults.

None of our charitable work would be possible without the incredible people who make up the YMCA team. Our volunteers, staff and trustees have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to our cause, going above and beyond to enhance the lives of young people in our community.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to all our partner agencies listed later in this report who have provided funding, guidance and support to help achieve positive change across East Surrey.

Chair's report | Paul Byrne

YMCA East Surrey continues to grow and it is important for us to understand why and how. First though, some facts – in the decade from 2012 our turnover has more than doubled and our projected revenue for the current financial year is more than a million pounds higher than the 2022/23 figure. It is essential to stress that we are not a corporate entity trying to satisfy investors and we do not seek growth for its own sake. As society looks increasingly to the charity sector to provide the services needed, YMCA East Surrey continues to respond and the expectation is that we will soon have more than ten locations.

For many we are the first-choice service provider, whether in Health and Wellbeing, Housing or Children and Young People's Services. I am stressing this exponential increase in the scale of our operations because of the demands placed on our wonderful staff and volunteers. Management and staff should be rightly proud of their efforts and accomplishments – they really do make a difference – thank you team!

YMCA East Surrey has nearly two hundred volunteers engaging in a wide variety of activities, without whom we could not function. From grass-cutting and property maintenance, to organising and leading physical challenges, to being members of our Advisory Groups and much more, our volunteers are absolutely essential. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude. Management and the Board are to consider how to offer more support to those who give so much of their free time to ensuring YMCA East Surrey can meet its objectives in all three areas of operation.

Last year I outlined several changes to the Board of Trustees and I am happy to report that the Board is well balanced and functioning efficiently. There is much for it to contemplate, as management is currently working on some exciting projects. YMCA East Surrey could not deliver and make a difference without the help of all our stakeholders. Thank you.



Paul Byrne (right) with YMCA Challenger Stewart McIntyre who walked 150 miles for our 150th year anniversary (delayed from 2020)



Elliott's story | Children & Young People | **Childcare & Recreation**

Three-year-old Elliott uses non-verbal communication and has a range of complex needs including autism, global development delay and the rare condition, metopic craniosynostosis.

"Finding a pre-school when the time came was a huge challenge," says Elliott's mother, Sarah. "Elliott had undergone major cranial surgery and was insular, showing no engagement with others and not responding to his name. At the same time, he was a competent climber with no sense of danger, needing constant attention, and his safety was a major issue."

Surrey County Council had put Sarah and her husband in touch with Rachel, an Early Support Key Worker who provided invaluable help and advice. Crucially, Rachel was also the parent of a daughter with complex needs and familiar with many YMCA East Surrey services. She suggested Sarah contact our Pre-school at the YMCA Sovereign Centre.

"I loved the physical layout of the Sovereign Pre-school, with the sensory and soft play rooms adjoining the main area," says Sarah. "This gives Elliott a choice as to where he wants to go and the outside space is also wonderful."

"From our first meeting, nothing has ever been too much for the Pre-school staff. They are so reassuring. I knew immediately that Elliott was going to be safe there and thrive."

Pre-school Manager, Stacey Lawrence, has been instrumental in securing a pioneering 'In Reach Programme' for Elliott with Surrey County Council. He now has two days per week at the Sovereign Pre-school and three at Brooklands School for children with severe or profound learning difficulties, accompanied by a YMCA staff member who has received additional SEN training.

"We are over the moon," says Sarah. "This will give Elliott the very best start to his school experience possible."

YMCA's Face2Face parent befriending service has also been a source of information and reassurance.

"Sandhya, the Face2Face Coordinator, is an incredible person to have in the background. She is a voice of reason whenever I need her and her experienced and knowledgeable support provides the perfect sounding board when I think I might be going insane!"

"Being a parent to a SEN child is scary and isolating. Face2Face lets us air our frustrations with other people who have been through the same experiences and share practical, helpful advice. It's inspired me to set up a Facebook group supporting other parents of SEN children where I live."

Sarah has volunteered both with the YMCA LifeWorks project and a local Rainbow group, based at the YMCA Horley Young People and Family Centre, which provides support for parents and carers looking after under 5's with complex needs. Elliott's older sister, Sadie, also attends a young carers group at the centre.

"YMCA East Surrey is a big community, offering continued support to 18 years and beyond for people with incredibly complex lives. Being able to find this kind of stability as a parent or carer is amazing and we hope it will be a part of our lives for years to come," says Sarah.

"Knowing that I can help to make the tiniest bit of difference to other families by volunteering, in the way that the YMCA has helped us on our journey, means everything to me. I want to be part of Team YMCA as so much good comes out of it."

Our childcare team provided

34,974

hours of after school
care and



35,091

hours of holiday club
in FY 2022/23



In FY 2022/23,

575

children took part in
our recreational gymnastics,
trampolining and football activities



Getting creative at Y-Kids Holiday Club

St Joseph's Out of School Childcare

In April 2023, we opened our first out of school childcare provision outside of our YMCA centres at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Redhill. Offering breakfast, after school and holiday clubs, the initial feedback from children, parents and teachers has been overwhelmingly positive.

We believe that out of school childcare can make a real difference to children's wellbeing and their readiness to learn - helping to increase concentration and behaviour. One teacher said, "after attending the Breakfast Club, the children have been coming into class calm and ready for school." By opening at St Joseph's, we are excited to provide more HAF* spaces for children on free school meals, providing over 640 children with healthy meals and fun activities this summer alone.



The clubs have been a huge success and we hope to expand our offer into more local schools in the future.

* Holiday activities and food programme



Girls' Football

Our girls' football programme has continued to grow over the past year. The competitive girls' team (U13s) has completed their first league season. The team has progressed each week with the last day of the season culminating in two wins - capping it all off with a trip to the Women's FA Cup final. We have now formed an U10s team for the new season, entering two teams into the Surrey County Womens & Girls League.

To encourage even more girls to try football, we've introduced new FA Wildcats sessions for girls aged 5-11 years, and we've expanded our weekly girls' football sessions.

Lottie, 12, said, "I've made so many new friends outside of school. I used to be shy but over the years I've become more confident. The coaches are so encouraging and supportive during training and matches. I have learnt so much from them. Football is an inclusive game and I love it!"



Setting sail on a wild adventure at
YMCA Merstham Pre-school.

“ We could not be more grateful for the nurturing support at YMCA Merstham Pre-school. My daughter goes to pre-school every day and doesn't look back, which tells us that she feels safe, happy and understood. The preschool is a little gem in the heart of a community. ”

YMCA Merstham Pre-School parent

New Surrey Short Breaks

In April 2023, we were successful in securing a new contract with Surrey County Council for delivery of Short Breaks in East Surrey. This supports children and young people aged 5-17 with a range of disabilities and includes specific funding for those with complex needs and Autism.

Our Yippee (5-11) and Yip4Youth (12-17) sessions provide parent carers with a well-deserved break, making a significant difference to their wellbeing. Children and young people who attend our sessions have the opportunity to meet new friends and engage with fun and stimulating activities that meet their individual needs. During the school holidays, we also provide trips out. Our skilled team allows us to support those who require a high level of attention, including one-to-one, medical assistance or mobility needs.

We offer over 360 sessions of Short Breaks per year in Reigate, Epsom and Tadworth, with specialist Autism groups and sessions for those who need one-to-one support in Reigate.



LifeWorks disability group at our community allotment.



In FY 2022/23, **382** children and young people with disabilities attended our Short Breaks in Surrey and West Sussex, receiving **32,000** hours of support



Our Short Breaks 2023 summer holiday clubs saw



1,310

attendances across 5 sites in Surrey and West Sussex



New West Sussex Short Breaks

We are pleased to extend our Short Breaks delivery into West Sussex, with a contract commenced in May 2023. As with Surrey Short Breaks, the outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and their parent carers are the same, with a great need for breaks across this area.

We have linked with two schools to deliver our sessions, Manor Green School in Crawley and Queen Elizabeth II School in Horsham both for our Yippee (5-11) and our Yip4Youth (12-17) groups. We also run a Y Impact group (14-18) in Horsham. These venues both have ideal facilities for our Short Breaks as they already support children and young people with disabilities.

We are looking to establish a further venue in the Mid Sussex area soon, bringing our delivery to over 115 sessions in West Sussex.



Celebrating King Charles III's coronation at West Sussex Short Breaks.

“ Yippee Club is a lifeline for us as parents, especially in the long 6-week summer holidays - it gives us some much-needed respite and makes the whole work/childcare juggle that little bit easier. ”
Yippee Parent

Jacob's story | Children & Young People | Disability Services

Finding respite care for Jacob's specific needs was never going to be an easy task for his parents.

"Jacob was born special," explains his mother, Sophie. "He has a rare genetic disorder, resulting in specific learning disabilities which include global developmental delay, sensory processing issues, behavioural issues and speech, language and communication needs."

Since we first realised that Jacob was developing differently to other babies, he has been under the care of an array of medical professionals. At home, I've put every effort into looking after him, finding ways to stimulate him and encouraging him to react. It took me a very long time to be OK with the idea of other people taking care of Jacob. I wasn't willing to risk him being upset or frustrated without the ability to express himself."

Yippee is YMCA East Surrey's warm and welcoming playscheme for children aged 5-11 with a wide range of disabilities and complex needs. Sophie heard about the service from another parent and came to visit our West Sussex setting.

"It felt like a huge decision and, to start with, I took Jacob to Yippee with a huge folder of information for the staff and instructions to call me if they had any problems at all. I was still nervous and on edge, but every time I collected him he was so happy. The staff were amazing. They remembered everything I told them and quickly picked up on all his ways."

Yippee has been good for Jacob. He's been coming for almost two years now and has had to adapt to other people looking after him. His communication is improving. He loves the 100% attention he gets! I know he's safe, so I can relax while he's there."

YMCA Senior Disability Coordinator, Rob Felgate, says: "I am always mindful that one of the biggest barriers we face is asking a parent to trust us and have faith in a group of strangers to look after their child with extremely complicated needs. We hope, over time, that they will value the service we offer. Sophie may have found it difficult at first but now she can see that Yippee is an enjoyable experience for Jacob."

The respite gives Sophie and her husband time to spend with Jacob's four-year-old sister, Millie.

"When Jacob is at home, my day has to revolve around him," says Sophie, who is involved with a local charity called Super Siblings, which offers support to children who have siblings with disabilities. "He can't self-play and he needs my focus all of the time. It's so full on. He's the king of our house and Millie's needs have to come second."

If we go out, it's almost impossible to find something they both enjoy. Millie is incredibly patient and caring towards Jacob, but she also deserves to have our full attention and do things that other children her age love to do, like go to the park.

Without Jacob's time at Yippee, I would never get any time to myself. I can go for a run or just enjoy the peace and quiet. It's the difference between feeling exhausted, irritable, on the edge of exploding and having the chance to recharge - it's absolutely vital. My mission is to give Jacob the best possible life I can and I can't do that if I am burnt out.

I've recommended Yippee to many other families. There's not a bad word I could say about the playscheme. It's brilliant."





Bella's* story | Children & Young People | Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health

"Being bullied at school had led to social anxiety which grew to a level where I was struggling with leaving the house," says 18-year-old Bella*.

"I felt lost. It got to a point where everything made me feel nervous – every single thing – and it was absolutely exhausting. Fortunately, keeping on top of my schoolwork was something which came naturally to me. It could have been so easy to overlook how much my anxiety was affecting my life but I realised I needed to take care of myself and not just my grades."

Referred by Mindworks Surrey to YMCA East Surrey's Heads Together counselling service which provides free support to young people aged 11-24 in the local area, Bella opted for online sessions and felt reassured even before her first appointment.

"Throughout the time I was on the waiting list, my counsellor kept in touch, checking in with me on a regular basis. Once the sessions began, she slowly helped me piece together the reasons behind my anxiety, leading me towards discovering for myself why I felt the way I did. It felt so much more friendly than I had thought it might, sitting opposite a professional."

"We looked at general tools to help tackle my issues and I was free to give feedback on what did or didn't work for me. I never felt nervous about saying the wrong thing. Among other coping techniques, I've learned to utilise an 'Anxiety Window' of ten minutes in the evening when I allow myself to think about the things which have caused me anxiety during the day. This works like magic and gives me the control of dealing with my feelings when I have the time to do so."

"After a lot of bad experiences with people, talking to the counsellor also reminded me that there are

so many other lovely human beings. It had been a long time since I'd made any friends, but I realised that I could talk to people and I can build relationships. I have since made three close friends which have made a big difference to my life."

Counselling has also helped Bella to decide on her future career path and she has enrolled in an Open University degree course which is due to begin in September 2023.

"I realised that living among other students was not for me but I did want to study for a degree. I am taking an Arts & Humanities course and would like to teach in a sixth form after I graduate," she says.

During FY 2022/23, 1,127 children and young people were given 1:1 support through counselling sessions.

"It did feel a little sad to come to the end of my counselling journey, but I was beaming when I finished. I felt as though I'd hit all of the milestones I'd aimed for and that confidence has remained with me. Now, every day I wake up and I have a more positive way of looking at life."

"There is nothing wrong with admitting that you need a little extra help when you are struggling. The initial step is the scariest and reaching out to make contact is the hardest part. It only gets better from there. I definitely wouldn't be where I am now without Heads Together."

"Counselling has provided me with a whole different outlook and I can't see it leaving me."

* Real name and photo have not been used to protect anonymity.

Emotional Wellbeing Support in Schools

As more children are experiencing anxieties, friendship issues and difficulties in coping with academic pressure, the emotional wellbeing support we offer in schools has proved to be extremely valuable. Our two early intervention practitioners work in secondary schools in Reigate & Banstead and Epsom & Ewell and provide one-to-one and small group support which complements the school's own provision such as school counsellors and learning support assistants. Our school projects practitioner runs assemblies and information sessions to help pupils develop an understanding of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.



Building on this success, we are now recruiting for early intervention practitioners to work in primary schools. More children under 11 are struggling, which in part is a result of missing out on important developmental experiences during the pandemic. We hope that with our support, school children can move on from that uniquely challenging period in their lives and develop a healthy resilience for the future.

Pizza making with Monte Forte as part of the emotional wellbeing summer holiday activity programme.



“ My daughter learnt so much from the YMCA Community Wellbeing Team; breathing techniques, how to communicate with me and others, how to control stress and anxiety. Most importantly, she doesn't feel the need to hurt herself which was my main concern. Ever grateful, thank you! ”

Parent

We delivered **4,236**

counselling & evidence-based therapies in FY22/23 and processed just over

1,000 referrals



In FY22/23, we delivered

14,395 sessions of counselling,

one-to-one support and group activities to children and young people



WAVES wellbeing youth group hike up Box Hill.



Step Forward

Our Step Forward project for young people aged 17-24 supports mental health needs through the transition to adulthood. With three sessions each week across Surrey, Step Forward focuses on improving mental and emotional wellbeing through interaction, self-expression and skill-building activities like cooking, art, and problem-solving.

At 17, young people face a cliff edge; the transition from child to adult mental health services often leaves them without support at a time when they need it most. Step Forward supports the emotional wellbeing needs of young people at this crucial time.

Young people have enjoyed sessions by guest attendees, such as Surrey Hills Arts who taught the group to make cocoons out of bamboo for a walk-through art installation at Box Hill, as well as many trips out. One attendee said, “It's a good place for feeling confident and building self-esteem. I feel so much happier in myself. Before I was really shy. I'm a different person now.”



Youth club scales heights on Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa

In June 2023, YMCA Youth Workers took ten young people from YMCA Youth Clubs on a memorable trip to climb Mount Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa in North Wales. Thanks to funding from the National Lottery, the young climbers were able to challenge themselves and enjoy the stunning scenery.

The aim of the trip was to encourage personal development, resilience and friendships. The group successfully tackled the 8-mile route and were rewarded with breathtaking views from the summit. Cooling off with a paddle in one of the picturesque tarns was a particular highlight of the day.



The young people supported each other throughout the climb which also raised money for YMCA Youth Clubs. The trip provided them with valuable life lessons, coping mechanisms for mental health and a deeper appreciation for the natural world.

Fourteen-year-old Bonnie from YMCA Horley Youth Club said, "It was fun – more challenging than I thought but the views were amazing."

“ I’ve had lots of support with school, referrals, speech and language therapy plans and securing suitable accommodation. We’re now stable living in a new house with a clear plan with school. ”

YMCA Horley Family Centre
single mother in
emergency accommodation



Paddleboarding was just one of many activities at the YMCA Youth summer residential at YMCA Fairthorne Manor.

Horley Playtime

YMCA Horley Young People & Family Centre provides a regular timetable of activities for local families. Playtime, run in partnership with Home Start East Surrey, provides play opportunities for children under five, promoting overall development, along with advice and support to parents/carers who may benefit from a little extra support.



Families can either self-refer or are referred from partner agencies such as health teams and education settings to support parents who may have social anxiety, low confidence, lack of support networks, language barriers, and emotional or mental health difficulties. Feedback from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive, with one parent saying, "Thank you all for making such a difference to our lives."

Thanks to funding from St Faith's Trust, we are able to provide a playworker for three years to offer this vital Early Help session as part of the Surrey Family resilience model.



Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, Ellie Vesey-Thompson, visited our Beatz youth music project.



100%

of parents were happy with the one-to-one family support received at YMCA Horley Young People & Family Centre



692

 young people attended YMCA youth clubs in FY 2022/23

Calvin's story | Children & Young People | Youth & Family Work

As with many children, the end of Calvin's junior school experience was marred by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. He began secondary school low in confidence after a long period of home learning and, knowing only one other person in his year group, found the enormous change overwhelming.

"Everything was new – my school, getting the bus, having no friends," explains Calvin, 15. "I remember feeling so worried, isolated and unhappy in those first months."

Calvin's mother, Stephanie, says: "Both my husband and I have long term health conditions and sometimes it isn't possible for us to do with Calvin everything that other parents do with their children. I struggled to find ways to help as, like many boys, he often didn't want to talk to me. We were close to changing schools for him at one point."

Things changed for the better two years ago, when Calvin heard about the YMCA Youth Club in Merstham from someone in his class.

"I was nervous before the first session. I thought they might not like me, but instead I felt so comfortable," says Calvin. "There was a great range of activities and everyone was friendly. I used to spend my time sitting at home, feeling anxious, but now my friend circle is massive. I go out more and I've had so many new experiences through the youth club."

YMCA East Surrey delivers 12 sessions of youth clubs a week funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and Geoff Herrington Foundation, providing a safe environment where young people can develop, learn and have fun.

Calvin has particularly enjoyed the residential trips offered by our youth workers, taking part in

outdoor activities at Lodge Hill Centre in West Sussex, sleeping rough in freezing temperatures for our YMCA Sleep Easy in March 2023 and climbing Snowdon in June.

"The Snowdon trip was incredible," says Calvin. "Getting to the top took determination and courage. It was a completely new physical challenge for me, but I found it so inspiring."

He has also joined YMCA East Surrey's Youth Forum, where young people can have their say about the issues affecting them and make a positive impact on what happens within our youth club settings. While doing his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award, Calvin chose to volunteer at junior youth work sessions to help support staff and plan activities.

YMCA Youth Worker, Marlon Williams, says: "I see a huge difference between the young man who first walked into the youth club and who Calvin is now. He's much more confident and talkative. He's polite, mature, wants to get involved and he's encouraged numerous friends to come along too. He should be very proud of himself."

Stephanie, says: "Over the summer holidays, Calvin attends the free YMCA holiday programme. This helps give me peace of mind that he is being active and social, and not hanging around on the streets. I suffer with anxiety but knowing that Calvin is in a safe place with trustworthy people puts me at ease."

"He's become so social and he isn't worried what other people think about him anymore. I believe Calvin sees the Youth Workers as friends and, if he had any worries, he would feel confident in talking to any one of them."

"The youth club has helped shape Calvin into the teenager that he is today and I am forever grateful for this."





Philip's story | Health & Wellbeing | Disability Sports

Philip gets a huge kick out of staying active. A YMCA East Surrey member since 2015, he attends our disability multi-sport sessions, as well as a weekly dance class and our Y-Mania nightclub experience.

Although Philip, who has Downs Syndrome, particularly enjoys badminton, he's tried most activities, even using the sports wheelchairs to join in with seated sports. Not only has he lost weight and become more flexible but, as he enjoys mixing with others, it has proved to be a great way for him to build on his social skills while getting the most out of the sessions physically.

Philip, 37, says: "I'm a big music fan – I love Status Quo and George Ezra. Dancing gets me moving and trying different sports is fun. I look forward to the multi-sport sessions because I like to stay fit and healthy. I'd miss it a lot if I couldn't come to the YMCA."

Our disability multi-sport sessions are fully inclusive and led by qualified coaches or instructors. Sessions take place at the YMCA Sports & Community centre in Redhill and locally at day centres and residential homes within the borough of Reigate and Banstead. Activities include badminton, boccia, football and wheelchair basketball, plus sessions with musical instruments, parachutes and dancing which are aimed especially towards people with more profound physical and learning issues.

Staff from Peak 15, the adult social care organisation which provides a supported living service for Philip, say that he loves to come home and chat about the sessions afterwards.

"He thoroughly enjoys the interaction," says Sharon Davies, Peak 15 Service Manager at Philip's

house. "He sometimes supports other people at the sessions, building friendships and improving his caring skills alongside his coordination."

There are many benefits to encouraging activity and fitness for people with physical and learning difficulties. Thanks to funding from the Peter Harrison Foundation, we have a dedicated Inclusive & Disability Sports Coordinator, Russ Bewley.

Russ says: "Our sessions improve both physical and psychological wellbeing, with benefits such as reduced anxiety, increased self-esteem and improved mood. There's an association between higher reported levels of physical activity and increased quality of life, as indicated by levels of participation at sessions like ours at the YMCA."

The YMCA East Surrey Boccia team plays in League matches within the Boccia England Southern region and is growing in numbers and skill. In 2023, we hosted both a National Boccia Leaders Award and a Refereeing/Officiating course Level 1.

Russ says: "Despite the significant health benefits, both adults and children with learning disabilities have lower levels of physical activity than their typically developing peers, hence our continued push to get more people involved in sports. Funding and awareness are key, especially with the need for recruiting inclusive sports coaches, assistants and volunteers."

The atmosphere at our disability sports sessions is so positive! It's a break for the carers who join in alongside all the participants and everyone has a chance to let off steam and enjoy each other's company."

Exercise Referral Development



Thanks to funding from Surrey Heartlands ICB, we've created an exciting new role of Exercise Referral Development Officer to review the current Exercise Referral service delivery across East Surrey Place and to develop a three year plan for future funding and development of the programme.

The project has already had success in promoting partnership working with YMCA, GLL and Freedom Leisure and the teams are working collaboratively to make the individual Exercise Referral services more cohesive. We are also developing links with GP surgeries and other healthcare professionals to gather feedback on how to improve the referral process to maximise the impact and the reach of Exercise Referral. We are passionate about promoting the health benefits of regular physical activity for all, especially for those living with long-term health conditions and are taking every opportunity to raise awareness of this valuable project.



Halloween fun on the Lingfield Wellbeing Walk.

In FY 2022/23, our gym received a total of

 **47,034**
gym visits and
33,549 
fitness class visits

Gym members enjoyed a special mash-up class for fitness week.



438

people took part in a Wellbeing Walk during FY 2022/23



“ The wellbeing walks have changed my life. I've become a very passionate walker since joining, have developed lots of friendships and the health benefits are enormous. The best decision of my life was when I took that first step. ”

Walker, Ramblers Wellbeing Walks
YMCA East Surrey

Health checks

Our Health Promotion team has grown over the past year and now carries out over 90 health checks a month (three times above the target figure), thanks to a collaboration with two local GP surgeries. The NHS Health Check is a free check-up for adults aged 40-74 and can help spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia.



We have also been involved in an NHS community diabetes prevention project offering health checks to members of the community at a higher risk of developing diabetes, specifically carers, those with family history of diabetes, high BMI and people of South Asian and Black ethnicity.

Our Healthy Measures weight management courses have improved the health of over 100 people this year through education, support and gentle exercise.

NextStep team

Our NextStep private sector housing project supports both landlords and tenants to establish lasting tenancies. We offer a professional, free service to landlords and support and advice to households facing homelessness.

In FY 2022/23, NextStep prevented 113 households from becoming homeless, secured accommodation for 101 households and sustained a further 12 tenancies which may have been lost without support and intervention.

NextStep also supported a further 285 families and individuals by giving tailored advice and assistance on issues such as budgeting, housing options and support finding their own accommodation.


One landlord said, “Your team is just brilliant in looking after tenants and landlords equally with fairness. You do a brilliant job and thank you all your help over many years.”

We are always looking for properties for tenants, so if you would like to find out more about how you can help support people out of homelessness, please get in touch.



Celebrating residents' success on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course

We provided
24,671
nights of
accommodation to
vulnerable young people
in FY 2022/23

92% 
of residents helped
back into education,
employment or training

Ben Nevis Challenge



In June 2023, nine housing residents joined our YMCA Challenge group to travel to Scotland and climb Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the UK.

Many of the young people had never flown before, so even the journey was an adventure. The residents were looking to tackle new opportunities and test themselves, not just mentally but also physically.

The conditions for the climb were far from ideal, with strong winds and rain, but the impressive group made it to the summit and completed their challenge.

Thanks to the Rebecca Cannon Vitality Fund for donating £4,160 towards purchasing equipment, clothing, flights and accommodation and to our Patron, Chris Brewer, who donated £1,000.

One resident said, “The trip was a lovely experience and it was such a supportive group. It was the most difficult thing I’ve done but that feeling afterwards was so worth it! It’s really given me my motivation back. I am so grateful for this amazing opportunity.”

Residents training for Ben Nevis trek at Box Hill Stepping Stones.



“ Since being at the YMCA, I’ve learnt a lot about relationships. Where I’ve moved around a lot, I’ve never stayed in touch with people. I’ve made strong bonds with fellow residents and I plan to maintain them when I leave. Staff will always tell me if they aren’t happy with my behaviour but they tell me because they care. ”

17-year-old resident

Rebaz's story | Housing | **Hillbrook House**

When Rebaz arrived in the UK from Iran as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC), he didn't speak a word of English, owned only the unsuitable clothing he was wearing, his glasses were broken and he had optical health issues. Exhausted and traumatised, he was enduring PTSD-type flashbacks from being badly beaten and persecuted.

"I came here from hell," says 18-year-old Rebaz. "It was very dangerous in Iran and I was so scared. My two brothers raised me but now I don't know where they are or if they are OK."

Rebaz was given a room at YMCA Hillbrook House, our safe, secure and affordable accommodation for young homeless people, in September 2022. With the support of our housing team and the vital assistance of the interpreter service, he has received counselling, medical, dental and optical care, financial training and guided social interaction to help build his confidence.

"First of all, everything was difficult. I lived in a tiny, quiet village in Iran where there was no school, so it was hard to get used to all the people and all the cars. I felt very small," Rebaz remembers. "But everyone is wonderful here, very kind. I have found a new family. They tell me 'I believe in you, you are strong, you're doing so well.'"

Successfully enrolled at East Surrey College, his English is much improved and he can communicate without the need for an interpreter. He has already moved up a class and is showing great progress. The housing staff have encouraged him to meet and befriend fellow UASC's who speak his language and attend the same ESOL course at college.

In the past year, YMCA East Surrey has become Surrey County Council's UASC preferred provider.

SCC liaised with the YMCA housing team to ensure that Rebaz had the official documentation he needed for his new life.

Nicola Francis is YMCA East Surrey's Senior Housing Support Officer and Rebaz credits her with being like a mother to him. Nicola says: "The placement at Hillbrook House and the support provided has had an immeasurably positive impact on Rebaz. He is safe from persecution, learning one of the most frequently spoken languages in the world, settled into western culture where democracy rules, has free access to one of the best healthcare providers in the world, has made life-long friends with fellow residents, has the opportunity to be who and what he wants to be and he will get support as a Care Leaver until he is 25 years old."

YMCA Y-Focus Coordinator, Carmella Immouche, says: "It has been such a pleasure to see Rebaz grow in confidence. He is enthusiastic, kind and helpful. He smiles more now, gives full eye contact and socialises confidently. He's let his guard down and trusts us fully. It's great to see how excited he is to come home and show us what he has learned in college. When he first wrote his name in English, he was elated!"

Now officially a British citizen, Rebaz is extremely grateful for the help he has received.

"I have plans for the future. I have seen many, many difficulties in my life but I want to help all the children who see difficulties like me, just as the staff here have helped me. I want to be there for my own children too."

"I am now free and happy. I love the YMCA. I love my new life."





Evie's story | Housing | Move-on

Evie was just seventeen years old when she was made homeless by a closure order, obtained by Surrey Police, on her family home in 2020. She began a cycle of sofa surfing at the houses of friends and family.

"I felt worthless and helpless to do anything about the situation," Evie explains. "I lost my possessions and even our family dog had to be re-homed. I struggled with the thought that I might never live with my mum again."

A social worker put her in touch with the YMCA Housing team at Hillbrook House in Redhill.

"I was so nervous when I went for my interview," says Evie, "but I got loads of reassurance from my Key Worker, Will Andrews, who was a legend. Being given a place made me feel both happy and scared. Interacting wasn't easy for me. I had my guard right up, but having one-to-one support made all the difference. Will kept checking in with me to make sure I was OK. He helped to make me feel like me again. Over time, I learned to open up a little and I've made friends with other residents."

By 2022, Evie had progressed through our Resident Journey successfully enough to be offered a place in one of the YMCA Move-On houses, giving her a new-found independence.

YMCA Head of Housing, Lee Fabry, says: "The need for more supported and affordable housing is huge, not only locally but UK wide. Young people are referred to us for many reasons, including family breakup, mental health, substance misuse, leaving care, offending history or seeking asylum. Our vision remains to provide opportunities for young people to develop to their full potential with a focus on those who are vulnerable or face disadvantage."

This year, by adding the new property in Redhill to our portfolio, we've increased our capacity to provide accommodation and support to 75 young people. And we are still actively looking to develop more housing in East Surrey.

Evie gained employment as a part-time cleaner with YMCA East Surrey and, one year on, is nearing the top of the local housing register. In March 2023, she took part in the YMCA West Dorset Three Peaks Challenge, successfully tackling a ten mile trek and climbing three of Dorset's most prominent landmarks en route. She says: "It was challenging but so rewarding. I felt like I really achieved something. After walking so many miles across beautiful seaside cliff tops, we stayed in an amazing castle - something I've never experienced before!"

Lola Registe, Move-On Housing Support Officer for YMCA East Surrey, says: "Evie has grown as a person. She works extremely hard in her job, which motivates and inspires the other residents. She's more confident, sociable and positive, pays her rent on time and exhibits self-care. When Evie moves on, we will support her with help and advice, from assisting with getting a white goods grant to physically moving her into a new place. We're so proud of everything she has achieved."

Evie says: "The YMCA staff are good people. They helped me believe I can make something of my life. I used to be angry but now I try to forgive and forget. Moving on to independence feels like a new beginning. I've come a long way and God knows where I'd be if it wasn't for the YMCA - almost certainly still sofa surfing."

Instead, I feel like a different person and I know what life's about. It's scary, but I'm ready for it."

New Redhill move-on property

In August 2023, thanks to funding from Homes England, LandAid, Netherby Trust, Beatrice Laing Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation and George Goodsir Trust, we completed the purchase of a property in Redhill to add to our housing offer to local young people.



The property will be our fourth move-on accommodation alongside our existing properties in Horley, Merstham and Redhill and will be home to 6 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 in spring 2024.

Without safe, affordable accommodation young people can't begin to deal with all the other challenges they may face in their lives. With our 'Registered Provider' status, we are determined to develop new housing projects across Surrey to give young people the opportunity and support they need to build independence and succeed in life.

YMCA housing resident sleeping out to raise funds at the YMCA SleepEasy challenge event.



12,429

hours of support were provided to residents during FY 2022/23, that's an

average of 1,036 hours a month

120

homeless young people provided with a safe home in FY 2022/23



West Dorset Three Peaks Challenge

Six young housing residents took on the West Dorset Three Peaks Challenge in March 2023, successfully tackling a ten-mile trek and climbing three of Dorset's most prominent landmarks en route.

Three nights of free accommodation at Woodsford Castle was provided through the Landmark Trust's '50 for Free' programme. The group had the time of their lives, not only staying in a fantastic historic building and trekking along a section of the most beautiful English coastline, but learning valuable life skills, such as teamwork and communication, and improving their health and fitness at the same time.

Sabir Hammad, originally from Sudan, was one of two unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who took part in the challenge. "I had such fun on the trip and was so happy to be invited," he says. "It is something I will always remember. I loved the challenge to trek across three peaks – it was wicked!"



Residents graduate from the Big Leaf Foundation's Young Leaders programme.



“ The role can be challenging working with young people from a range of traumatic backgrounds. I get a sense of pride, and job satisfaction when I help residents address their behaviour and work with them to reach their goals and achievements. ”

YMCA Housing
Support Officer

Challenge Events

Thank you to all our Challengers who biked, trekked or ran many miles to raise money for YMCA East Surrey. If you want to get fit, have fun and raise funds, check out our challenge events at www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk



Santa Run | 4 December 2022



Paris 3-2-1 Cycle Challenge
8-11 June 2023



Sleep Easy | 10 March 2023



Ben Nevis Trek
30 June - 2 July 2023



Y2Y North Downs Challenge
26 March 2023



Stevlio Cycle Challenge
9 - 14 July 2023



Fun Run | 30 April 2023



Kim's Walk | 10 September 2023



YMCA Challenge Events 2024

SleepEasy
Friday 8 March

Y2Y North Downs Trek/Run
Sunday 24 March

Fun Run
Sunday 5 May

The Island Cycle Challenge
Friday 7 – Sunday 9 June

Scafell Summits Trek
Friday 21 - Sunday 23 June

**Amsterdam 500
Cycle Challenge**
Thursday 11 - Sunday 14 July

Skydive
Saturday 17 August

Kim's Walk
Sunday 8 September

Santa Run
Sunday 15 December

Final details and dates subject to change.

Liz's story | Challenge Events

This year's Paris 3-day cycling event was the third YMCA challenge which Liz has undertaken.

"I did the Coast to Coast cycle ride from Whitehaven to Newcastle a long time ago in 2008 and, more recently, I tackled the YMCA South Downs Marathon Trek from Lewes to Eastbourne," recounts Liz.

"This time around, I was looking to take on another fitness-oriented challenge. I had some knowledge of YMCA East Surrey prior to signing up for the Paris event, but as I became affiliated with the charity through the training sessions and then the challenge itself I heard more and more about their services. I was very happy to know that I would be fundraising for such a good cause and it was truly amazing to witness the dedication that staff apply to each event and to their work. It turned the Paris Challenge into a very positive endeavour."

Training for the event began in January 2023 and Liz thoroughly committed to the frequent sessions in order to improve her fitness.

"The trees were bare and it was cold. With hindsight, the training was often more gruelling than the actual event. It took mental dedication and commitment to put in the hours, but the help, support and words of encouragement I received from everyone involved was amazing.

By the time the event came around, I felt fitter and more confident. I enjoyed every single moment of the trip, spent all three days fuelled by endorphins and I never stopped smiling! We were spoiled with fabulous weather throughout and it's hard to choose a standout moment from the whole journey because the entire experience was fantastic. The people, the pit stops, the wonderful

technical support team and their amazing lunches – it was all incredible.

The overall logistical organisation was superb. To have the 1-day, 2-day and 3-day cycling teams all meet up at our final destination, the Arc de Triomphe, was quite a feat. We had a beer (should have been champagne really!), exchanged stories and relaxed. The camaraderie was lovely.

I felt very safe throughout the event. I was part of a well-organised team and the physical and mental support I received was invaluable. The staff and volunteers give up their spare time to ensure the success of both the training and the final challenge event and they do it with friendly smiles on their faces from start to finish. It's so impressive."

To date, Liz has raised over £700 in sponsorship from the YMCA Paris 3-day Cycling Challenge. Her employers, Legal & General, have matched the donations she received.

Liz says: "I am delighted to have raised this money and to consider myself a representative of YMCA East Surrey. The challenge may have started off about me and my plans, but I now have a more expansive view of the vital projects which every YMCA fundraiser helps to support and I am really proud to have been involved.

I'm still cycling and will definitely be keeping an eye on future challenges. I'd encourage anyone who is thinking of signing up for an event to go for it. With the right training and the support of these wonderful people, it's amazing what you can achieve."



Thanks

It would not be possible for us to help local people through our many life-changing projects shown in this Impact Report 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.

The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
Active Surrey
Alliance for Better Care
Austin and Hope Pilkington
Baily Thomas Charitable Fund
BBC Children in Need
Beatrice Laing Trust
Better Care Fund
The Big Give
Bruce Wake Charitable Trust
Catch 22
Clockwise Marketing
Clockwork Charitable Trust
Community Foundation for Surrey
Connick Tree Care
C P Charitable Trust
East Surrey College
East Surrey Carers Support Association
East Surrey Domestic Abuse Services (ESDAS)
East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership
England Football
Federation of Earlswood Schools
First Community Health and Care
Foodbank at St Matthew's Redhill
Garfield Weston Foundation
Gatwick Airport Community Trust
Geoff Herrington Foundation
George Goodsir Charitable Trust
Happy Hire Redhill
Health Education England
Hedley Foundation
High Sheriff Youth Awards
The Hobson Charity
Home Instead Reigate

Homes England
Horley Bowls Association
Horley Town Council
The Hygiene Bank
LandAid
The Landmark Trust
Linden Bridge School
The LTA
Manor Green Primary School
Manor House School
Marks & Spencer
Mary Frances Trust
Merstham Community Trust Facility
Merstham Millennium Trust
MindWorks Surrey
Mole Valley District Council
Morr & Co LLP
National Lottery Community Fund
Nationwide Community Grants
Nescot
Netherby Trust
No Wrong Door
OpenView Education
Oxted United Reformed Church
Peter Harrison Foundation
Police & Crime Commissioner for Surrey
Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School
Raven Housing Trust
The Rebecca Cannon Vitality Fund
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Reigate Parish Playgroup
Reigate Rotary Club
RETHINK Print & Marketing
Richmond Fellowship

S E Franklin Charitable Trust
St Faiths Trust
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
St Matthew's Church, Redhill
Shanly Foundation
Sport England
Stocksigns Ltd
Stripey Stork
Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Surrey County Council
Surrey Football Association
Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board
Surrey Playing Fields
Surrey Wellbeing Partnership
Tandridge District Council
Tandridge Together Community Fund
Tandridge Wellbeing Prescription
Tesco Community Grants
Three Guineas Trust
University of Surrey
Vestey Holdings Limited
Voluntary Action Reigate and Banstead
Waitrose Horley Community Matters
Welcare
West Sussex County Council
William Allen Young Charitable Trust
William Wates Memorial Trust
Woldingham School
YMCA East Surrey Challenge Fundraisers
YMCA East Surrey Committee Members, Trustees and Volunteers
YMCA England & Wales

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.



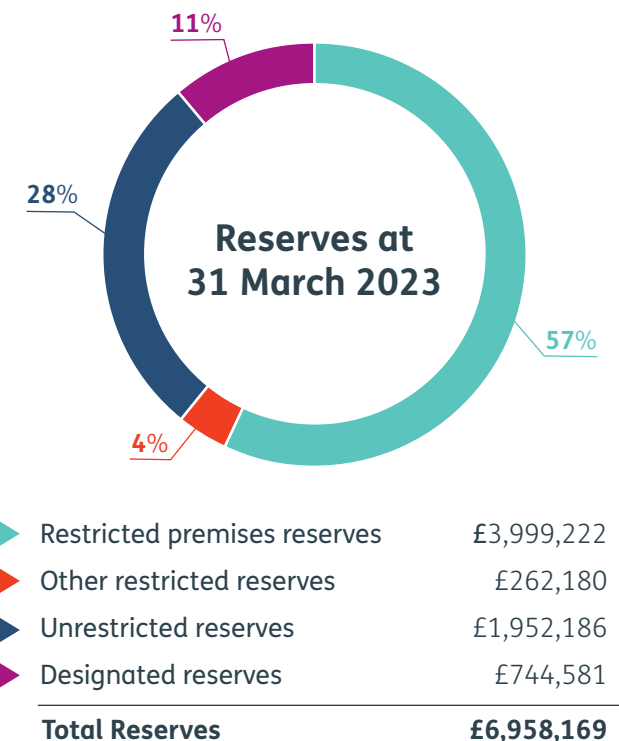
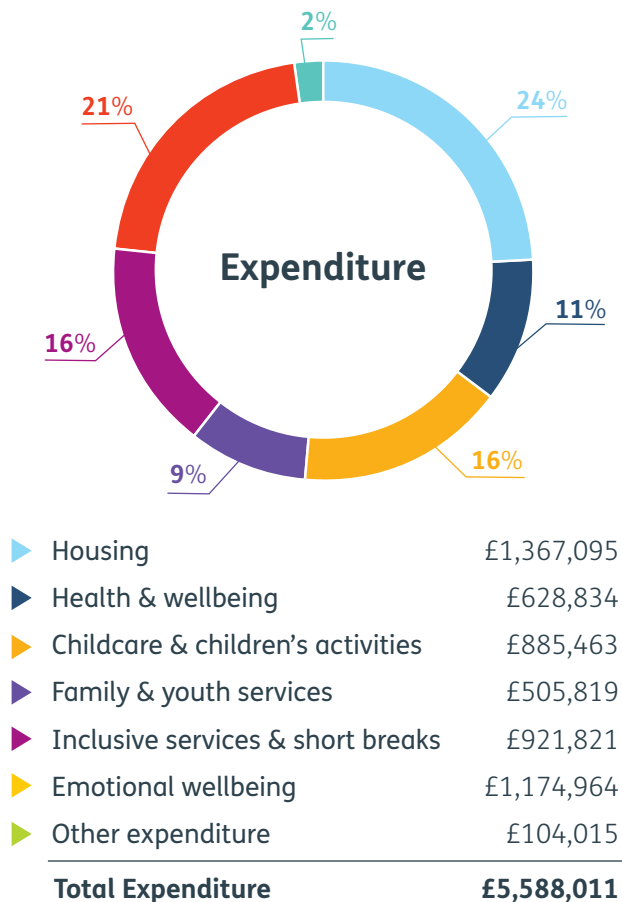
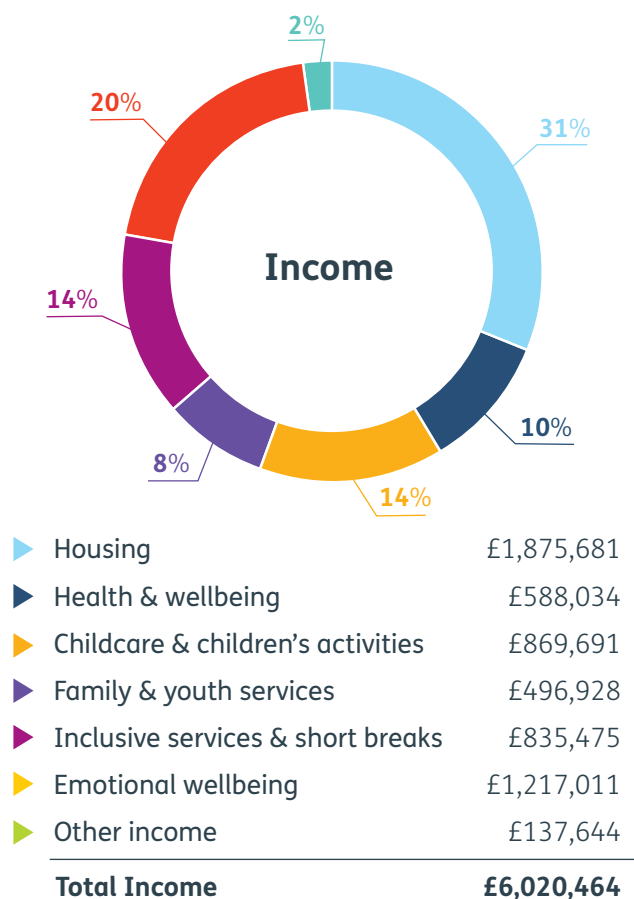
A Corporate Partnership

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.



Find out more at
www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk



Summary of accounts

The following is a summary of our financial information for the year ended 31 March 2023. Total income for the year was £6.03 million and total expenditure including interest payable was £5.65 million.

Staffing costs accounted for 67% of the total expenditure.

Total reserves at the end of the year were £6.96 million, of which 57% was attributable to the restricted premises funds. Other restricted funds were £0.26 million, designated funds were £0.74 million while unrestricted funds amounted to £1.95 million.

The above information was extracted from the full annual financial statements prepared in accordance with the Housing Statement of Recommended Practice 2018, the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing (issued by the Regulator of Social Housing in 2022), the Housing Regeneration Act 2008, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and the 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

Get in Touch

YMCA Sports & Community Centre
Princes Road, Redhill, RH1 6JJ
T 01737 779979

YMCA Sovereign Centre
Slipshatch Road, Reigate, RH2 8HA
T 01737 222859

YMCA Hillbrook House
68 Brighton Road, Redhill, RH1 6QT
T 01737 773089

YMCA Horley Young People & Family Centre
The Old Fire Station, Albert Road,
Horley, RH6 7JA
T 01293 775777

YMCA Merstham Hub Pre-school
2a-2b, Portland Drive,
Merstham, RH1 3HY
T 01737 643108

Phoenix Youth Centre
Preston Manor Road, Epsom, Tadworth, KT20 5LG
E phoenixcentre@ymcaeast Surrey.org.uk
(contact by email only)

www.ymcaeast Surrey.org.uk

f X @ YMCAEastSurrey

Registered charity no. 1075028

YMCA

**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