

AKER PARK CAFE

YMCA NEWCASTLE

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C/O Robson Laidler  
Fernwood Road  
Jesmond  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE2 1TJ

Phone: 0191 2634915  
Email: [enquiries@ymcanewcastle.com](mailto:enquiries@ymcanewcastle.com)

Registered Company No: 3582739  
Charity No: 1070578

**IMPACT REVIEW**  
**2021-2022**



## Our values

### Equity

We treat everyone as equals, however we work to reduce inequalities and allocate our resources depending on individual need and circumstances.

### Respect

We respect individuals for who they are regardless of their circumstances.

### Tolerance

Our culture is non-judgemental and tolerant of different lifestyles, value and beliefs.

### Integrity

By acting in accordance with our organisational beliefs and values to do the right things, in the right way and at the right time.

### Openness

Our culture is transparent so that all our stakeholders can see the work we do.

### Unconditional

Our support to our community and its young people is unconditional regardless of their actions, beliefs and attitudes.

### Sustainability

We strive for long term sustainability by governing the organisation to ensure its long term ability to meet the future needs of the young people and communities of Newcastle.

## Our mission

Our mission is to provide the opportunities, resources and support so that our community and its young people can belong, contribute and thrive.

## Our work areas

### Family & youth work

Creating positive outcomes with children and young people in their communities, and support for families with holiday and year-round programmes.

### Health & wellbeing

Sport and recreation for fitness, and community hubs for classes, social connection and collaborations.

### Support & advice

A safe place to talk and get help through guided groups, mentoring, counselling, and mental health services.

### Training & education

Opportunities to gain qualifications, skills and employment.

### Social enterprise

Growing innovative solutions to tackle youth unemployment and generate income to fund our charitable work.



# Welcome from our Chair and CEO

“ This year has been another turbulent year for us. We were significantly disrupted by an arson attack on our community centre and cafe in Walker Park which put it out of action from November for the rest of the year. Our Trustees, volunteers, staff team and the local community were magnificent and we quickly reorganised our services and delivery venues enabling us to deliver support to a similar number of people to previous years despite being without our community centre.

As always, we have remained agile and flexible to adapt ourselves to the emerging post Covid world but have continued to deliver a wide range of high-quality support services to help the community and its young people adapt and overcome a range of challenges and issues they faced in their everyday lives.

This has been my last full year as a Trustee of the charity having been on the Board for 9 years and serving as Chair for the last 4 years. I handover to a new Chair in Sep 2022. Over the last 9 years I have been proud to see the impact that our team has made in our communities. Without a doubt the last 18 months have been the most challenging during my time here as the charity has faced unprecedented challenges.

I would like to thank our Trustees, volunteers and staff team for their hard work and dedication that has ensured that the charity rose to these challenges and deployed its resources effectively in support of those who need it most. This report shows you a small snapshot of our work, it would not be possible to tell you about everything we have done. None of this would have been possible without the significant generosity and support we have had from donors and funders for which we are extremely grateful.

It looks like next year will be full of different challenges; the predicted cost of living crisis, rising inflation and energy costs. We are already planning how to deploy our existing resources and create new ones to support the local community and its young people to overcome these challenges and enable them to discover who they are and what they can become. With the continued support of our funders we are confident that we will once again rise to the new challenges and support those who need it most.

*- Stephen Kerry, Chair of the Board of Trustees*

I would like to thank the people who have shared their story with you in this review which provides a small snapshot of our work. I would also like to thank all of our donors, funders and volunteers for their continued support to us without which our vital work in the community would not be possible. Lastly, thanks to our Chair for his contribution, guidance, support and commitment to the charity over the last 9 years.

I expect next year we will need to be as agile as we have been over the last two years and to respond to the quickly changing needs of the local community and its young people. We have a lot to look forward to and are well placed to deliver our services to an increased number of people next year.”

*- Jeff Hurst, Chief Executive Officer*



# Our work areas

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## Young people

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Our youth work team primarily supports young people aged 11-25. Our range of programmes enable our young people to become independent, free-thinking individuals that can lead fulfilling lives. Through outreach, detached, centre-based and digital methods of youth work we provide mental, physical and sexual health and wellbeing support, employability workshops and Job Club, training and education projects and 1-2-1 crisis support.



## Community

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Throughout the pandemic YMCA Newcastle began to work increasingly more with the wider community. We made the strategic decision to become a youth and community charity as we believe that young people will never be able to thrive if their community is struggling to survive. Our community team work with isolated parents, young families and older residents. Our Help Hub provides intense 1-2-1 support and signposting to specialist help.



## Social enterprise

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Our social enterprises serve two purposes; to provide training, education and employment opportunities to young people, and to generate income that can be reinvested into our charitable services. YMCA Urban Mushrooms employs young people who are furthest from the labour market and provides them with training and access to qualifications to make them more employable and enable them to access the world of work.





# Returning to a new normal post-pandemic

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic YMCA Newcastle continued to support our community and its young people. We ensured to follow Government guidance around social distancing and remote working. As with any challenge we saw this as an opportunity to overcome and improve. We provided our youth and community work digitally, via walk-and-talks or through support and activity packs.

Now, due to the pandemic young people and our wider community are at an even greater disadvantage. Many young people and local residents had their incomes reduced or lost work and are now struggling to make ends meet, especially considering the cost of living crisis we are now facing. There has been an increase in people experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing due to additional strain and anxiety and demand on mental health services. There are also lasting impacts of loneliness and social anxiety which is at an all time high.

Our centres fully reopened to the public in September 2021. In response to this much of our work has been tailored to address these issues. Our Help Hub provides signposting for local residents to access specialist support around employability and job hunting, finances, wellbeing and crisis support. In addition to this, our team has embedded the 'Small Talks' mental wellbeing campaign in all our youth and community to support our communities mental health and wellbeing.



# Designing Where We Live



## Project background

For many young people, buying their first house seems increasingly out of reach. There is a clear link between accommodation, work and health. We aim to codesign high-quality innovative housing solutions for young people. Furthermore, the project will create training and employment opportunities for young people.

## Research

Young people and service users have been consulted to gather insights into the housing problem they face. Site visits to other YMCA accommodation projects have taken place to gain an understanding of how they are addressing the problem. Discussions with Newcastle City Council are ongoing to better understand the housing problem locally and how they can support the initiative.

YMCA, in partnership with Northumbria University and Ryder Architecture, are codesigning where young people live in Newcastle.



## Defining the housing problem

- ▶ National housing shortage and limited housing stock for young people who are pushed into private rental properties.
- ▶ Just 11% of people born in 1996 are home owners.
- ▶ Housing benefit regulations restrict private rented housing benefits to £97.81 per week.
- ▶ National Living Wage for under 20s is £246 and over 24s is £334 per week.
- ▶ 15% of households live in fuel poverty.
- ▶ Rents and bonds are high in proportion to salaries.
- ▶ Despite high cost of private rented housing, the lack of social housing has pushed many who should benefit from social housing into the private rental sector.
- ▶ Private sector rented properties for young people is limited.
- ▶ Young people are driven into inappropriate, over crowded and temporary accommodation (hostels or bed and breakfasts) or into inappropriate relationships for somewhere to live.
- ▶ Unplanned exit from family homes is the largest cause of youth homelessness.
- ▶ Many young people experiencing homelessness are hidden homeless, sofa surfing between friends.

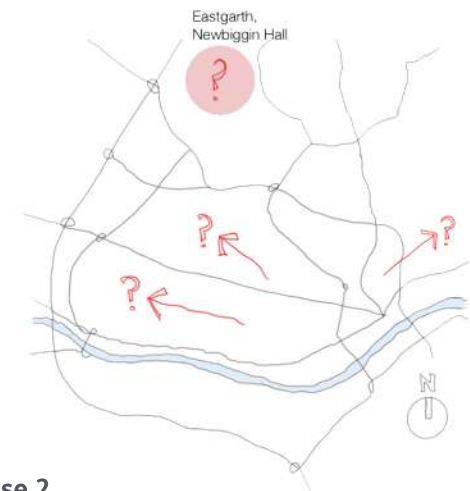
15% in fuel poverty + Cost of Housing benefit £97.81 + Living wage £246

## Proposed solution

Our Community Development Plan envisions The 20 Minute Mile. This plan identifies the ideal location for people to lead independent, happy and fulfilling lives. To achieve this they require the following within a 20 minute walking radius; affordable supermarkets, green space, health care, exercise, libraries, places of learning and public transport.

## Phase 1

The partnership has been gifted empty social housing stock from Newcastle City Council and has secured funding to retrofit these properties using modern methods of construction to create appropriate, sustainable housing solutions for young people.



## Phase 2

There is future potential to construct a 50 bed new build development on brownfield land in Newcastle, possibly using Green New Deal funding. The development would support high and medium need service users.







# YMCA opens charity shop in Gateshead Town Centre

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YMCA opened a brand new retail unit in Gateshead's Trinity Square in April 2022. The shop is based in a large unit and sells a huge variety of childrens, mens and womens clothes, home and furniture and other seasonal goods. Funds raised in the shop will be invested in YMCA's work with young people and in our local communities.



We are always on the look out for donations, so please keep us in mind when you're next having a clear out or a spring clean! We are also recruiting for volunteers to support the shop, if you are interested please contact us using the details below.

## Opening hours:

Monday-Saturday: 9:00-5:30  
Sunday: 10:00-4:00

## Contact details:

0191 477 1305  
115-117 Trinity Square,  
Gateshead,  
NE8 1BU



# Walker Park Cafe & Centre repairs and reopening

Unfortunately, our community centre and cafe in Walker Park was victim to an arson attack in November 2021. Some parts of the building were badly damaged by the fire resulting in the building having to be closed. Walker Park Cafe & Centre is our community hub in Walker and houses our youth and community teams, with many of our services being delivered from the centre. The closure of the building meant that our services were temporarily greatly disrupted.

Our teams quickly worked to find alternative accommodation to deliver our community and youth work services from. Since the closure our youth and community teams have been delivering sessions in community centres and church halls around Newcastle's East End, or outside in Walker Park. We would like to thank all of the organisations that have supported us with continuing to support our young people and community members.

Luckily, no one was in the building at the time and no one was injured. The cost of the damage is estimated to be in excess of £175,000

The centre is currently undergoing repair work and we hope to reopen YMCA Walker Park Cafe & Centre during late summer. We very much look forward to welcoming you all back when the centre reopens.





We worked with  
**2,650** members  
of our community,  
providing them with the  
resources, opportunities  
and support to discover  
who they are and what  
they can become.



**13** local residents  
with disabilities or  
learning difficulties  
attended our weekly  
support and activity  
session.



We served up  
**159**  
free community meals to  
members of our community  
who were struggling to get by.

# Our year in numbers



We supported **83**  
older isolated members  
of our community with  
weekly activities and  
support groups.



**455** local residents  
accessed our Help Hub,  
receiving intense 1-2-1  
information, advice and  
signposting to specialist  
support.

**120** young people  
and local residents  
engaged in arts, crafts  
and creative programmes.



**188** young people and local  
residents received intense 1-2-1  
support to overcome a crisis.



**230** members of our  
community accessed  
programmes to  
improve their  
health and  
wellbeing.



Our Youth Work Team worked with **940**  
young people through centre based and  
detached youth work.



**11** Trustees volunteered **528**  
hours attending Board and Sub-  
Committee meetings governing  
the charity.



**24** young people  
attended cooking  
sessions to gain  
independent living  
skills.

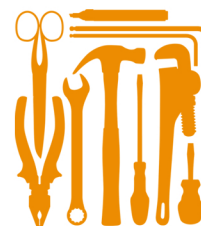


**114** babies and toddlers  
attended our Little Walkers  
group which provides support  
to isolated young parents.



**302** local residents were  
supported by our Community  
Work Team with upskilling  
programmes, overcoming  
isolation and more.

**243** young people  
and local residents  
received employability  
support such as CV  
writing workshops  
and mock interviews.



**56** young people  
and local residents  
accessed our mental  
health and wellbeing  
support.



**97** young people  
participated in our  
cycling and bike ramp  
activities.



**14** trained volunteers contributed over  
**5,208** hours to YMCA Newcastle which equates  
to a contribution of over **£40,000**.



**46** young people accessed  
our sexual health and  
wellbeing services including  
the C-Card scheme.



# Sally's story

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Sally is 16 years old and identifies as LGBTQI+. She struggles with depression and has an eating disorder. Sally didn't have many friends, and often relied on her twin sister for company and support. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Sally missed out on a lot of school which had a big impact negatively on her confidence and grades. She has attended our youth group for a number of years. Our Youth Work Team have recently been supporting her to transition from Secondary School to College, which is something she has been worrying about.

Our team provided a safe space after school for Sally to come and revise. The team worked with Sally to complete the VARK learning styles questionnaire, so she could better understand how she can revise and learn. Our youth workers guided Sally to discover her options for after school; college options, courses, and potential apprenticeships. This was a great opportunity for Sally to build her confidence without her sister and meet new young people.

Sally has been accepted onto a bricklaying course at Newcastle College, a practical course she knows she will enjoy. This was a difficult decision for Sally because her twin sister will be studying on a different course, and being apart is something Sally is not used to. However, she is excited as it is a wonderful step into more independence, confidence and demonstrates increased self esteem. Sally has also been offered an apprenticeship, part time alongside her studies which she is really excited about.

**“YMCA are understanding and let me be myself more. It's been a good space to think, revise and learn about myself.”**



# Max's story

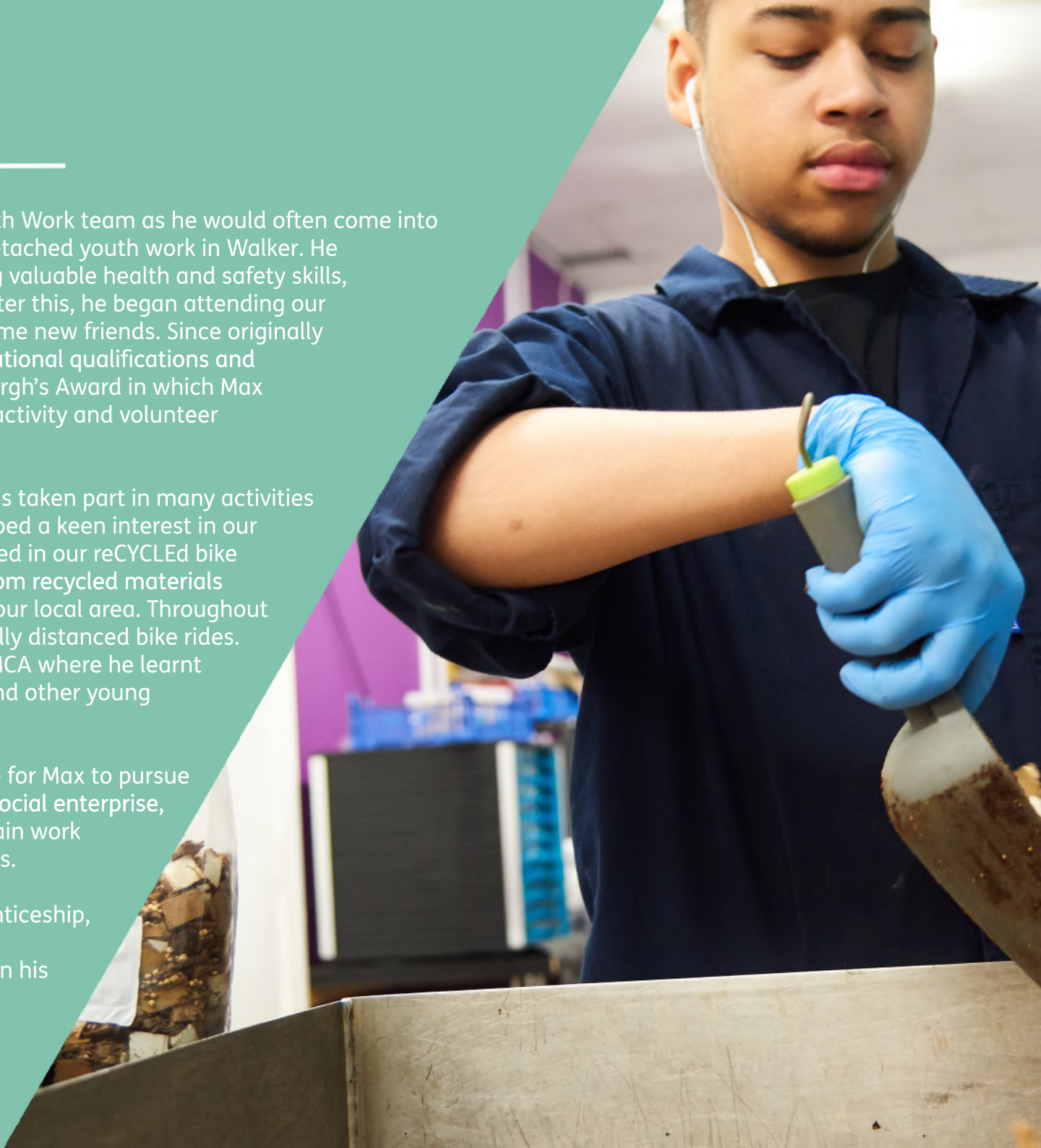
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Max is local to Walker and was known to our Youth Work team as he would often come into contact with the team whilst they were out on detached youth work in Walker. He participated in our Street Doctors project learning valuable health and safety skills, like helping someone who has collapsed. Soon after this, he began attending our project in Walker with the intention of making some new friends. Since originally coming along, he has completed a variety of vocational qualifications and courses. An example of this is The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in which Max had to learn a new skill, participate in a physical activity and volunteer within his local community.

Max has been an active member of YMCA and has taken part in many activities and projects with us. In particular, he has developed a keen interest in our cycling programmes and has loved getting involved in our reCYCLED bike ramps, helping to construct mobile bike ramps from recycled materials that are then used at local community events in our local area. Throughout the pandemic he would regularly join us for socially distanced bike rides. Max has also completed a Velotec course with YMCA where he learnt bike maintenance skills to repair his own bikes and other young people's in his area.

Taking part in the Velotec course sparked a desire for Max to pursue a career in mechanics. He began working at our social enterprise, YMCA Urban Mushrooms which enabled him to gain work experience and develop valuable mechanical skills.

Max has recently applied for a Mechanical Apprenticeship, supported by our team to write a cover letter and conducted mock interviews. Max was successful in his application and is about to embark on this new, exciting stage of his life.





# Riley's story

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Riley began attending YMCA over the Summer of 2021. He has experienced a chaotic home life, having been removed from his family home after experiencing domestic abuse. Riley is diagnosed with depression and dyslexia. During the pandemic, Riley often felt isolated and has found himself with a poor social life, with only his younger sister for company.

Through coming to YMCA Riley has been able to meet new young people, and grown in confidence because of this. He joined our lads group enabling him to make friends his own age and feels less lonely because of this. Riley has enjoyed taking part in horse riding sessions at Stepney Bank Stables and has received certificates for skill milestones accredited by the Association of British Riding Schools.

Riley has accessed 1-2-1 mental health first aid support from our youth work team, and has been referred into counselling. Staff have noticed that Riley is much more confident and has taken part in many activities, recently contributing to our intergenerational loneliness project, learning new skills in filming and interviewing, and has met other people who have experienced loneliness including older people attending our Friday Young at Heart activity group.

**“I love coming to the YMCA and having somewhere to be and something to do where my Grand-parents know I'm safe with the youth workers and can get help when I need it.”**



# Lorraine's story

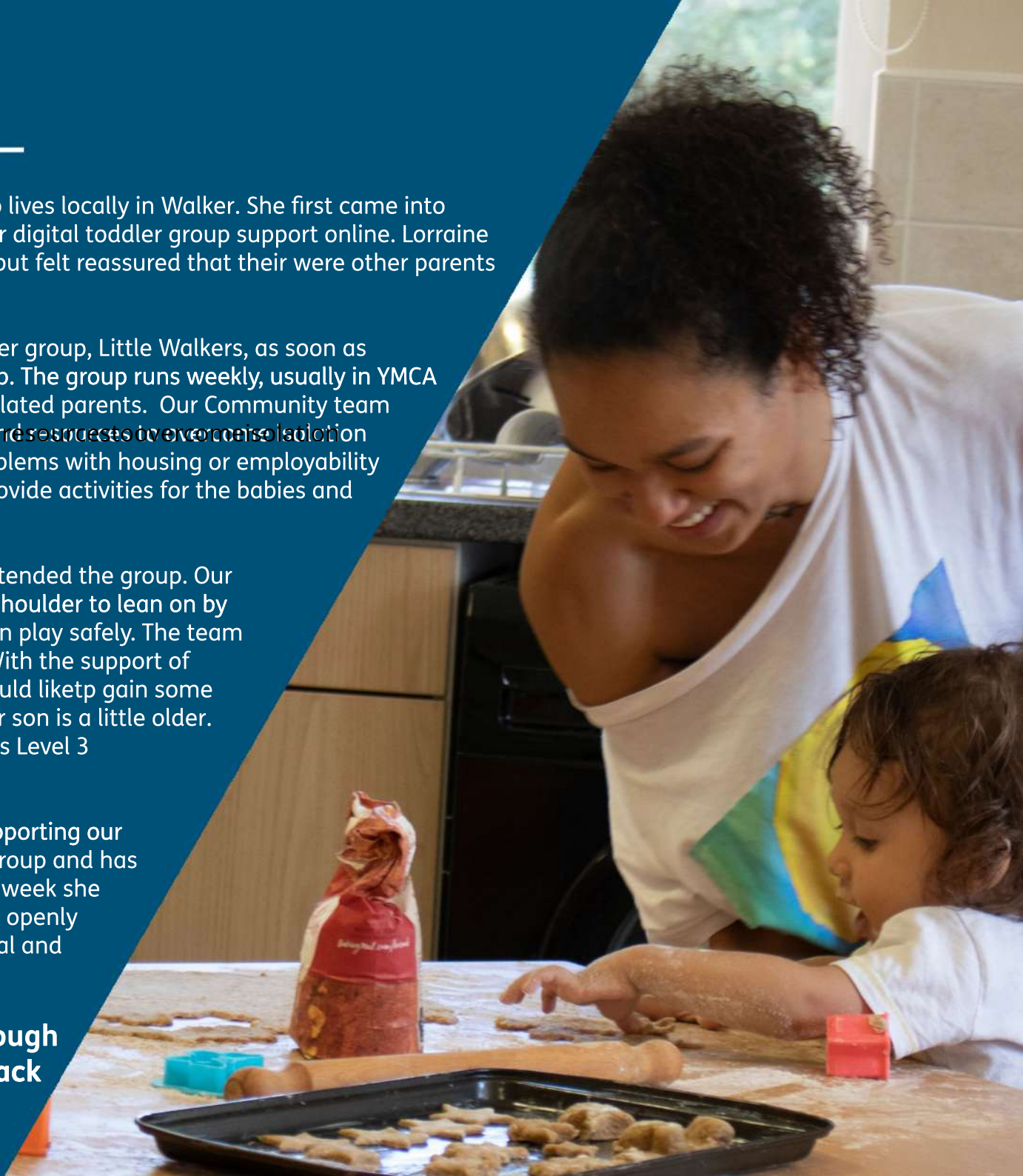
Lorraine is a single parent of a three year old son who lives locally in Walker. She first came into contact YMCA during the pandemic when she saw our digital toddler group support online. Lorraine felt severely isolated due to the lockdown restrictions but felt reassured that there were other parents in our online group facing similar struggles.

She was keen to attend our in-person baby and toddler group, Little Walkers, as soon as Government guidance enabled us to reopen the group. The group runs weekly, usually in YMCA Walker Park Cafe & Centre, and is tailored towards isolated parents. Our Community team engage with the parents and provide them support and resources to overcome isolation and any other issues they may be facing, such as problems with housing or employability support. Our Youth Work team are also on hand to provide activities for the babies and toddlers.

Since restrictions have lifted Lorraine has regularly attended the group. Our Community Team offered Lorraine a compassionate shoulder to lean on by providing a safe space for her to talk while her son can play safely. The team have noticed how Lorraine's confidence has grown. With the support of our Community Team, Lorraine identified that she would like to gain some skills and qualifications so she is work ready when her son is a little older. She has since gained a range of qualifications such as Level 3 Safeguarding Children certificate.

Lorraine has since become an amazing volunteer, supporting our Community Team. She helps with our Little Walkers group and has also taken a lead role in our Walk and Talk event. Each week she hosts walks in Walker Park for isolated parents to talk openly about how they're doing to improve both their physical and mental wellbeing.

**“YMCA really helped me to get through tough times and it's so nice to give something back to the community as a volunteer.”**



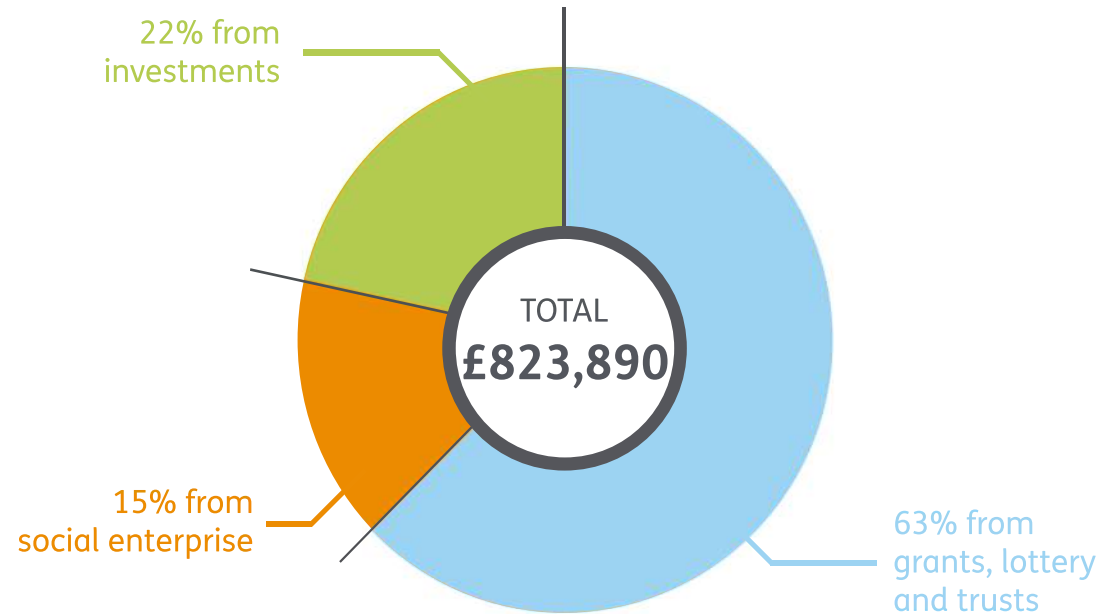


# Our finances

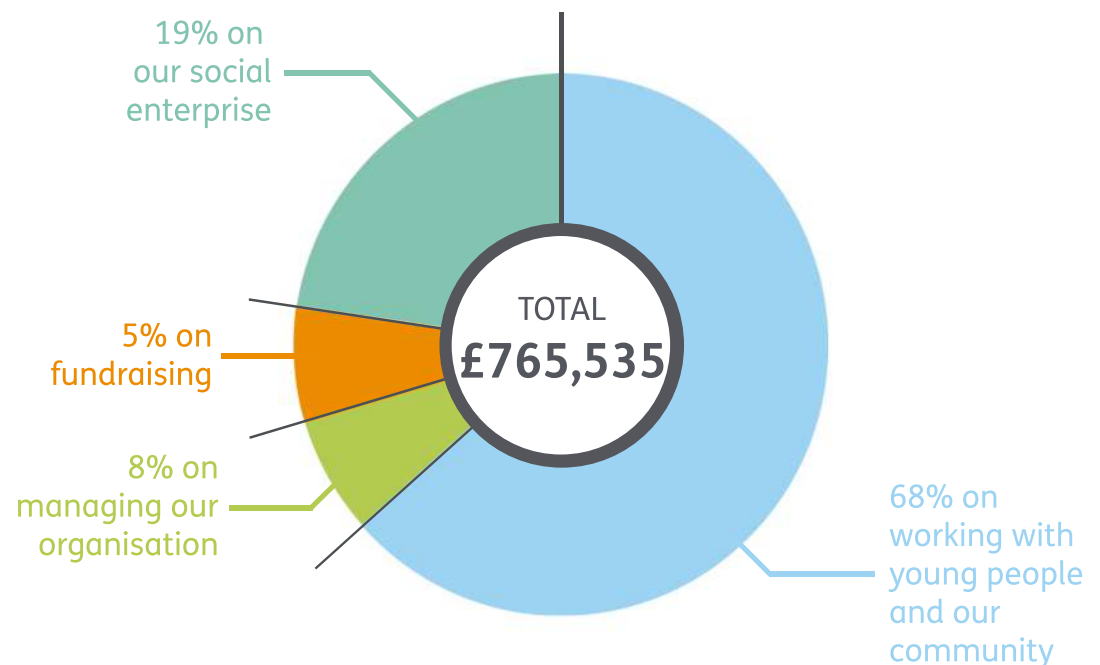
As we currently face a cost-of-living crisis and soaring energy bills, the only certainty in the next 5 years is that it will be a period of change and economic uncertainty. To enable our organisation to remain focused and to achieve our charitable mission our 5-year strategy outlines clear goals and objectives, this is available to view on our website.

Our income generation is made up from our own income earning assets as well as charitable funding from trusts, grants and Government.

This year, YMCA Newcastle earned 37% of its income from its own assets and trading, and 63% from charitable trusts, grants and Government funding.



INCOME



EXPENDITURE

# Our supporters

YMCA Newcastle would like to thank all of the kind individuals and organisations that have donated to our work with young people and our communities over the last year. Without you, we could not do the good work we do. Last year, your donations and financial support enabled us to work with 2,650 members of our community, providing them with the resources, opportunities and support to discover who they are and what they can become.

**In the last year 63% of our income came from charitable trusts, grant making organisations and lottery funding.**

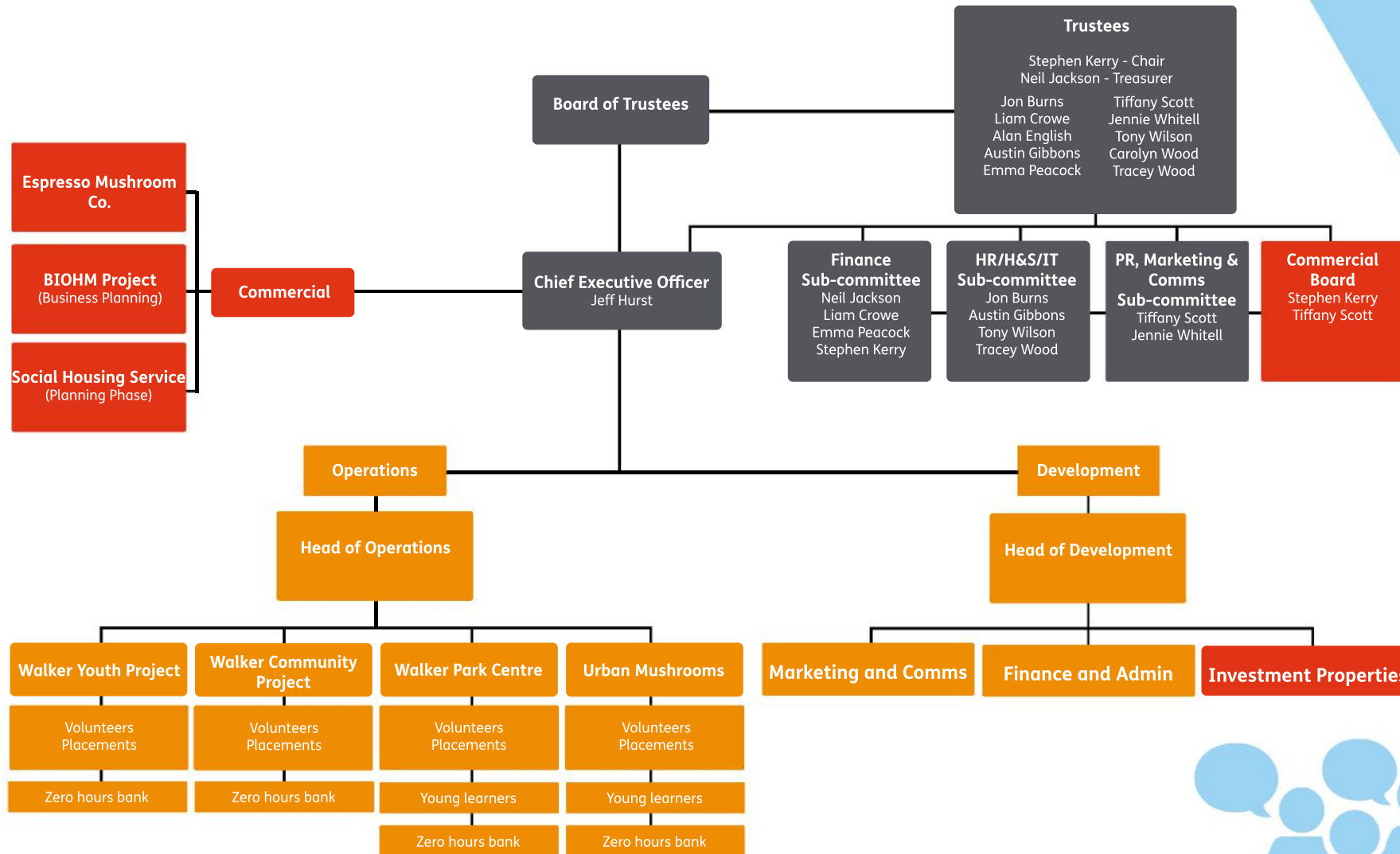


Dr. Brand Trust



WA Handley Charitable Trust

# Our team structure



## Key

Governance

Commercial

Charitable

We would like to thank our volunteers, trustees and staff team for their commitment and hard work throughout the last year.





## YMCA Walker Park Cafe & Centre reopening

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We are looking forward to reopening our community centre and cafe in Walker Park and welcoming our community back with a range of fun events to celebrate the reopening. The centre was closed in late 2021 due to an arson attack and work is currently underway to repair the damage and redecorate to create an inviting space to house our community and youth work teams. We hope to reopen the centre in late summer and very much look forward to welcoming you all back.

## Best Summer Ever

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YMCA Newcastle will once again be participating in Newcastle's Best Summer Ever this year, providing local families with fun activities, nutritious meals and opportunities to learn skills. Best Summer Ever is funded by the Department of Education and is a partnership between the local authority, StreetGames, and over 60 organisations, such as YMCA, working together to provide for children and young people in the city. The project is primarily for families with children eligible for free school meals and lasts throughout the summer holidays offering children and young people the chance to socialise and gain new experiences.



# Looking forward

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