



Making an **impact**

2022 - 2023



Chair's Introduction

Welcome to the review of our work covering the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Like everybody, every family and every organisation we have faced many challenges as we navigated our way through the post pandemic world, the impact of the spiralling cost of everything and wage inflation.

The impact from these challenges meant the Board had to take some very difficult decisions including closing our social enterprise and trading subsidiaries that had become loss making, with the costs of closure putting us in deficit. An arson attack on our Walker Park Community Hub led to a decision to relocate our services to an alternative facility.

Whilst these actions have reduced the number of people we were able to support we have not allowed this to impact the difference our support makes to those in greatest need, as you will see from the case studies highlighted in this report.

We have much to look forward to in 2024, as YMCA Newcastle celebrates 175 years of supporting the local community. We will be opening our new supported housing scheme for young people thanks to investment from the People's Postcode Lottery Innovation Fund and a new youth centre thanks to investment for the Youth Investment Fund.

Without the help and support from our volunteers, donors and funders none of this would be possible and we owe them a huge thank you.

Neil Jackson

Chair

This document brings together the work of YMCA Newcastle in 2022/23, and highlights the impact we have made on their communities.

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Overview

Charitable Activities

During this reporting period we have supported 1,637 members of the local community. Once again we have received substantial financial support from individual donors, supporters, grant making trust, and foundations and local Government. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

This reporting period has been another one of continued change and uncertainty and this continued support has enabled us to adapt our ways of working and we have maintained our focus on delivering our mission and provide the opportunities, resources and support to the local community and young people.



We worked with **1,637** members of our community, providing them with the resources, opportunities and support to discover who they are and what they can become.



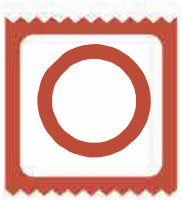
We supported **89** older isolated members of our community with weekly activities and support groups.



203 individuals accessed our school holiday services.



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



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



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



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



8 Trustees volunteered **324** hours attending Board and Sub-Committee meetings governing the charity.



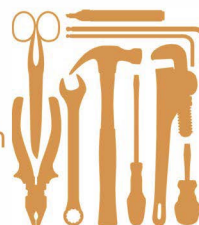
39 young people and local residents received intense 1-2-1 support to overcome a crisis.



Our Youth Work Team

supported **604** young people through centre based and detached youth work.

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



164 individuals took part in sports sessions.

Our "Community Fridge" supplied food boxes to



local families

We provided **960** hot meals through our Winter Wellbeing project.



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



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



We reestablished our face to face toddler group with **105** young families receiving support.



14 trained volunteers contributed over **5,208** hours to YMCA Newcastle which equates to a contribution of over **£54,267**.

Our year in numbers

Eden's Story

In June 2022 Eden approached us to enquire about volunteer opportunities working with the central office team as she wanted to pursue a career in business administration. Eden had completed a supported internship with the NHS Trust after leaving school and volunteered at a local hospital but was unable to secure further paid employment. Eden became disillusioned when she was offered work placements in the hospitality industry as she was clear that her interests were in business administration.

Eden was supported by her mum to identify organisations who could support her to develop her skills and move closer to employment. At times Eden and her family felt that no one was listening to her and that Eden's differences were seen as a barrier and nobody was seeing Eden as an individual with many strengths and talents.

The family engaged with a local training provider who took an interest in Eden and developed an action plan with the family to support Eden to build a CV which would showcase her skills and help to engage potential employers. Eden was offered work placements where she thrived and received positive feedback from line managers and colleagues. Eden and her family started to see hope that there was a future for Eden in a business administration role. As things were looking positive for Eden a new challenge was about to present itself, a global pandemic.

COVID19 lockdowns came into force and Eden was unable to continue with her placement. This was a devastating time for Eden and her family as one of the things that is so important for Eden is routine. Like the rest of the country Eden was unable to work or communicate face to face with the outside world. This was not a positive time for Eden and the family once again began to lose hope.

Post pandemic when the world opened its doors once again Eden's mum was desperate to find an organisation that would support Eden with a regular work placement in a supportive environment. Eden started volunteering with the central office team at YMCA Newcastle and it became clear that Eden's skills could help the organisation whilst we were able to support her to develop new competencies, learn new skills and build positive relationships with colleagues. We worked with Eden and her family to look at how we can work with individuals who are neurodivergent to enable us to create an environment where anyone can thrive.

In April 2023 we offered Eden a part time contract and we have worked hard to ensure she has the right equipment and support in place to do her job. Eden is mentored by Nick, YMCA Administrator who has trained her on our systems and supports her in her role. Eden has demonstrated great skill in data entry and working with spreadsheets.

Eden has developed excellent relationships with the YMCA Newcastle family and has her own workload which she manages with support from her team. Eden also organises themed team quizzes where she is quizmaster and this is a great opportunity for us all to come together for a cup of tea and a cake - organised by Eden. They are great fun and it stirs up some friendly competition between teams and individuals.

Since joining YMCA Newcastle Eden's confidence has grown, she is developing skills and knowledge as well as expanding her network and social groups. Without the support from our donors we would be unable to offer Eden the opportunity to work with us in an environment which promotes individuality and embraces our differences so that we can all learn from each other.

Eden told us 'I feel I have a sense of worth and purpose since starting work at YMCA Newcastle and I am the happiest person on a Tuesday morning on my way to work'.

Eden's mum told us that the difference is Eden is immeasurable and she is the happiest she has been. She said 'I cannot thank YMCA Newcastle team enough for what you have done for Eden. You have looked at her as an individual and given her a sense of worth'.



The W Brothers Story

CW and TW, are two young people who prior to engaging with the YMCA were involved in antisocial behaviour in the area. Both brothers were known to the police having set fires in the park, destroyed a bus stop - and been caught in the act by Northumbria police. They made phone calls misdirecting local police to scenarios they had created- again they were located by the police. They were the cause of antisocial behaviour in a local park and their behaviours made local residents anxious when out alone in the area.

The W brothers were engaged with our project through our summer programme HAF (Holiday Activity Fund) engaging young people in sports, arts and crafts and food to combat holiday hunger. In a short space of time our team built a strong, positive relationship, and they began to attend our activity sessions. They were the driving force to set up our 'Grizzly Gamers' lads group, setting up a leaderboard with monthly prizes for the number 1 player. We built up activity sessions to deter antisocial behaviour and channel the young men and friends into constructive activities. Through the activities the brothers were given the opportunity to be involved in social action projects applying for grants, to improve their space.

The brothers participated in our summer residential in 2022 the celebrate with the young people we supported through our sessions. This residential activity saw great personal development for both young men where around the campfire everyone was encouraged to write down their biggest regrets and put the paper in the fire as a symbol of catharsis. Both young men opened up to staff about their past behaviour and how they regret causing problems and in particular the fake phone calls. Reflecting on this they realise now that while they thought it was a joke, it actually meant the police were somewhere they didn't need to be when they could have been helping other people. This was a meaningful experience for both young men and inspired them to set up their lads group so other young men don't repeat their mistakes due to being bored. They have also participated in our project to help the community recover from the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, designing recipes, recipe cards and creating food packs to distribute to families struggling families with the cost of heating the home, clothing their children and feeding the family.

The W brothers mother has also fed back to the YMCA the impact she has witnessed the project had on her sons. She said 'the project over the summer gave them structure, routine, and the motivation to get up on a daily basis to participate in activities. The project encouraged them to make improvements to their health. They have become fitter from YMCA Newcastle sport sessions. Due to their competitive nature and wanting to win the football, dodgeball and other sport they played they became focused. They began counting their steps to reach their daily goal of 10,000.

The W brothers supported us to secure funding for a social action project #iwillstaysafe and were involved in designing the project.



Older People Groups Story

At YMCA we have established regular activity groups for disadvantaged community groups in Walker including older people who are at risk of social isolation, exacerbated by the global pandemic. We have volunteers who work with these community groups to help us provide donated food boxes and distribute essential items through our Community Fridge to support with food poverty and the cost of living crisis. Latest statistics show 21.8% of older people living in Newcastle in poverty (11,998).

We consulted with the groups to identify additional services they thought would benefit the local community. Food distribution, safe places where they could come to socialise and have a hot meal, and digital inclusion were the top 3 things the groups wanted to access.

We extended our older people's activity groups to include a hot meal to support the 8 care homes that we work with. We carried out consultations with older people, young volunteers and staff, as well as partner organisations and this created a lot of discussion around the cost of living crisis. Over the last twelve months 89 older people regularly engaged with the activities which include quiz, bingo, crafts, sing-a-long, birthday parties, events and outings.

As we unexpectedly had to move out of Walker Park Community Centre due to an arson attack we found an alternative place to deliver the activities to our community groups. We discussed available space with the groups and agreed that we would move our service delivery to a local church hall. This location was agreed as it was accessible for the groups and we also had the resources on site to cook hot meals for participants. We secured some funding to provide hot meals for the older people through Virgin Community Anchors and Newcastle City Council's Winter Wellbeing Fund across the colder months. The groups were able to have an activity with the additional time to socialise whilst enjoying a nutritious hot meal.

We secured funding to deliver a digital inclusion skills course and offered this to the older people and our groups with learning difficulties and disabilities to help them navigate the digital world. Our volunteers supported this project and were able to work in very small groups and 1:1. We provided devices for the groups to use and we were able to provide data through the National Databank where these were barriers to learning. Many of our older people live alone and to be able to communicate with family, friends and services is essential to their wellbeing and mental health. Without funding from our generous donors we would be unable to deliver these services to keep the community connected.

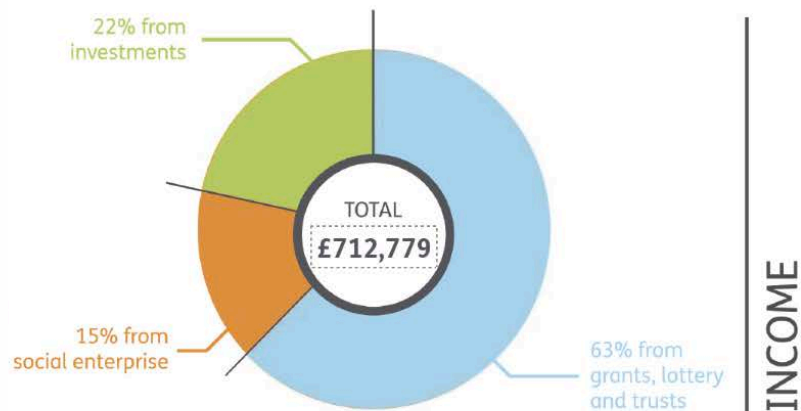
Our beneficiaries tell us that without our services and the support they get from the groups they would feel more isolated, less connected to others and unable to get the help they need. 100% of people attending the groups reported a positive impact on mental wellbeing.



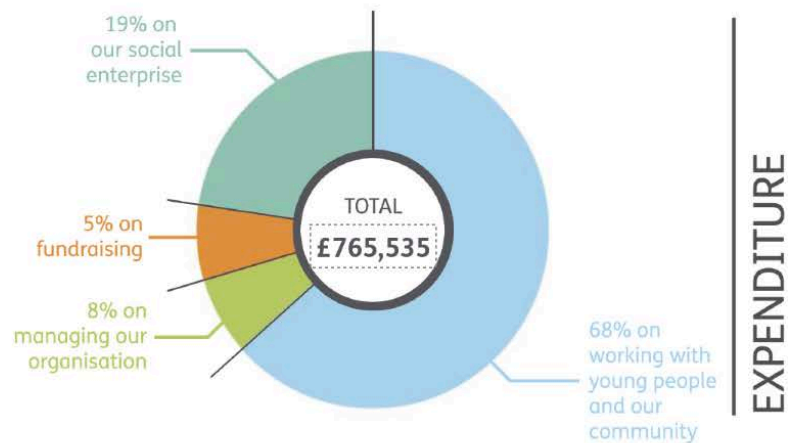
Our Finances

This year we have been faced with a number of challenges that have been very different from previous years, the cumulative effect of them has caused a significant deficit. The rising costs of utilities, goods and services coupled to wage inflation and very challenging trading conditions led us to close out trading subsidiaries and social enterprises. The cost of these closures led to a one off exceptional cost of £76,172 which included writing off the investment costs and the inter-company debts from trading deficits. The costs of repaying our portion of the pension fund deficit continues to increase with this year's repayment of £68,461 of which £39,515 is included in the operating deficit. Early in the year our fundraiser moved on and it took the best part of the year to recruit a replacement, during that time we relied on consultants to support us. This led to increased costs and a reduction in grant income. We are confident that the steps we have taken and the new opportunities we are taking next year will ensure our financial stability and sustainability.

Where our
money comes
from



Where our money
was spent



The Need in Newcastle

Half of Newcastle is ranked in the top **2%** most deprived areas of the country.

20% of Newcastle population, about **60,000** are aged 15-24.

28% of children live in families in poverty.

683 children are in foster care or children's homes.

60% are either overweight or obese.

18% of secondary school pupils are persistently absent from school.

All the following are higher than the national average:

- Teenage pregnancy
- Self harming
- Suicide
- Drug related death
- Deliberate injuries to children

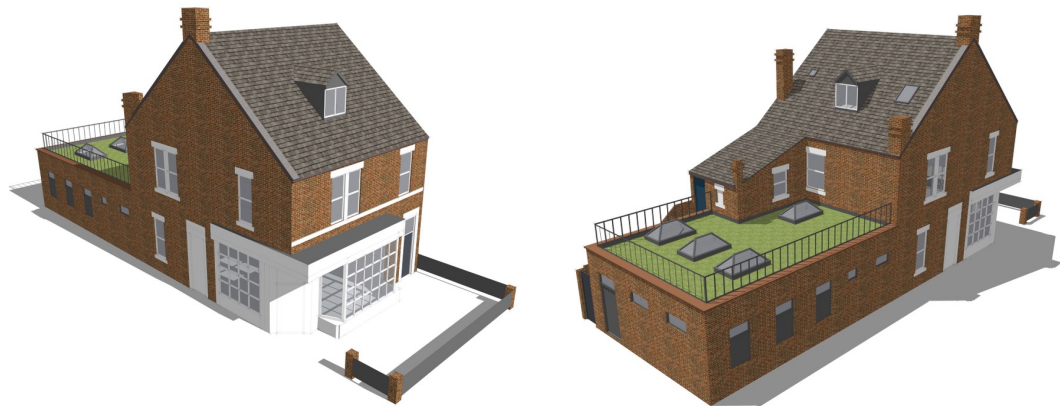


Thank you to our Funders

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 make the impact we do. Last year, your donations and financial support enabled us to work with 1,637 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 individual donors, charitable trusts, grant making organisations and lottery funding, including the following.





Looking Forward

Next year we intend to maintain our reach and impact with our Youth and Community services whilst we build our capacity and open a new supported housing service and create a new state of the art youth centre.

Supported Housing

With funding from the People's Postcode Lottery and working with 19Architects we have codesigned a 'suitable' place to live for young people who are moving on from high needs supported accommodation. We will be refurbishing unused social housing and converting 3 bedroom properties into two separate studio flats.

Youth Centre

Funding from the Government's Youth Investment Fund means that we are able to extend and refurbish our youth centre in Walker and upgrade the facilities to create a music studio, e-sports room, a performing arts area and a creative arts area. We will be working with young people to finalise designs to provide the facilities for support and activities they want and need.

We take our responsibility for sustainability seriously and are committed to complete our retrofit projects installing sustainable technologies and bring them up to net zero standards. We will employ local companies to support the local economy and create employment opportunities for local people.

How you can support us without giving us anything!!

When you're shopping online you can generate a donation for us from retailers by using <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk> It takes a couple of minutes to set up and then every time you shop you can link your purchase to easyfundraising and the retailer makes a donation.

We will use all the money raised to support families struggling to put food on their tables, clothe their children and heat their homes.

How else you can help us

2024 is our 175th anniversary and this year we will be planning a year of celebrations running from Founders day on 6th June 2024 for 12 months. If you would like to support us with our celebrations please contact us.

Jeff Hurst
Chief Executive

Get in touch

For any questions or support,
please get in touch with the team
at YMCA Newcastle via email at
enquiries@ymcanewcastle.com
or by calling **0191 275 9855**

ymcanewcastle.com



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.

SUPPORT & ADVICE

ACCOMMODATION

FAMILY WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

TRAINING & EDUCATION