



YMCA MILTON KEYNES

IMPACT REPORT

2023/24

YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you



YMCA MILTON KEYNES

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At YMCA Milton Keynes young people are at the heart of everything that we do, and we are committed to ensuring that we always put young people first.

Our mission is to provide young people in Milton Keynes with a safe place they can stay, people they can trust, and support to fulfil their potential.

Yet they have been at the sharp end of a perfect storm of crises for some time; austerity, Brexit, the cost-of-living crisis and Covid have all impacted the ability of young people to meet their potential and achieve their goals.

The last 10 years have been tough for charities. The austerity agenda and large cuts to funding for public services filtered through to organisations like ours and has meant that we have had to operate with less resources. Our bold and creative ambition in creating our campus and the success of our fundraising team enabled us to ‘ride the storm’ but the landscape remains challenging as more organisations seek the limited support available.

Young people need the help of organisations like YMCA MK now more than ever. The past decade has seen a steep increase in the number of young adults continuing to live with their parents as accommodation has become increasingly unaffordable. Many young adults don’t have the option to stay in the family home which is often overcrowded and resort to sofa-surfing in Milton Keynes or find themselves homeless. We support 225 young adults at any one time at our Central Milton Keynes campus and estimate that we could accommodate ten times that number based on existing demand.

Despite the challenges we have faced we remain a hugely optimistic and ambitious organisation, determined to do more to meet the needs of local young people. Expanding our work further into the community to provide youth and community services and expanding our accommodation for young people throughout MK will go some way to meet the challenges our city faces.

We know that with the right support, young people who have been let down by the adults and systems around them, can be supported to achieve their goals, thrive and meet future challenges with confidence.

None of this would be possible without our dedicated team. Thank you to all staff, trustees and the leadership team for their continued hard work and support. Last, but by no means least, thank you to YOU, our supporters, without whom, young people would not have a safe place to call home and support services to help them thrive. Welcome to the Impact Report your support creates.

Simon CEO, YMCA MK

About YMCA MK

YMCA MK existed to support young people to belong, contribute and thrive.

Since 1981 we have supported over 10,000 young people to reach their potential and achieve their goals. A lot has changed over the years, a new campus, expansion into the wider community and a significantly increased staff team, but our core values remain the same.

We remain values based. We are:

- Curious
- Kind
- Generous
- Dedicated
- Bold
- Honest

Take the tour of our accommodation:



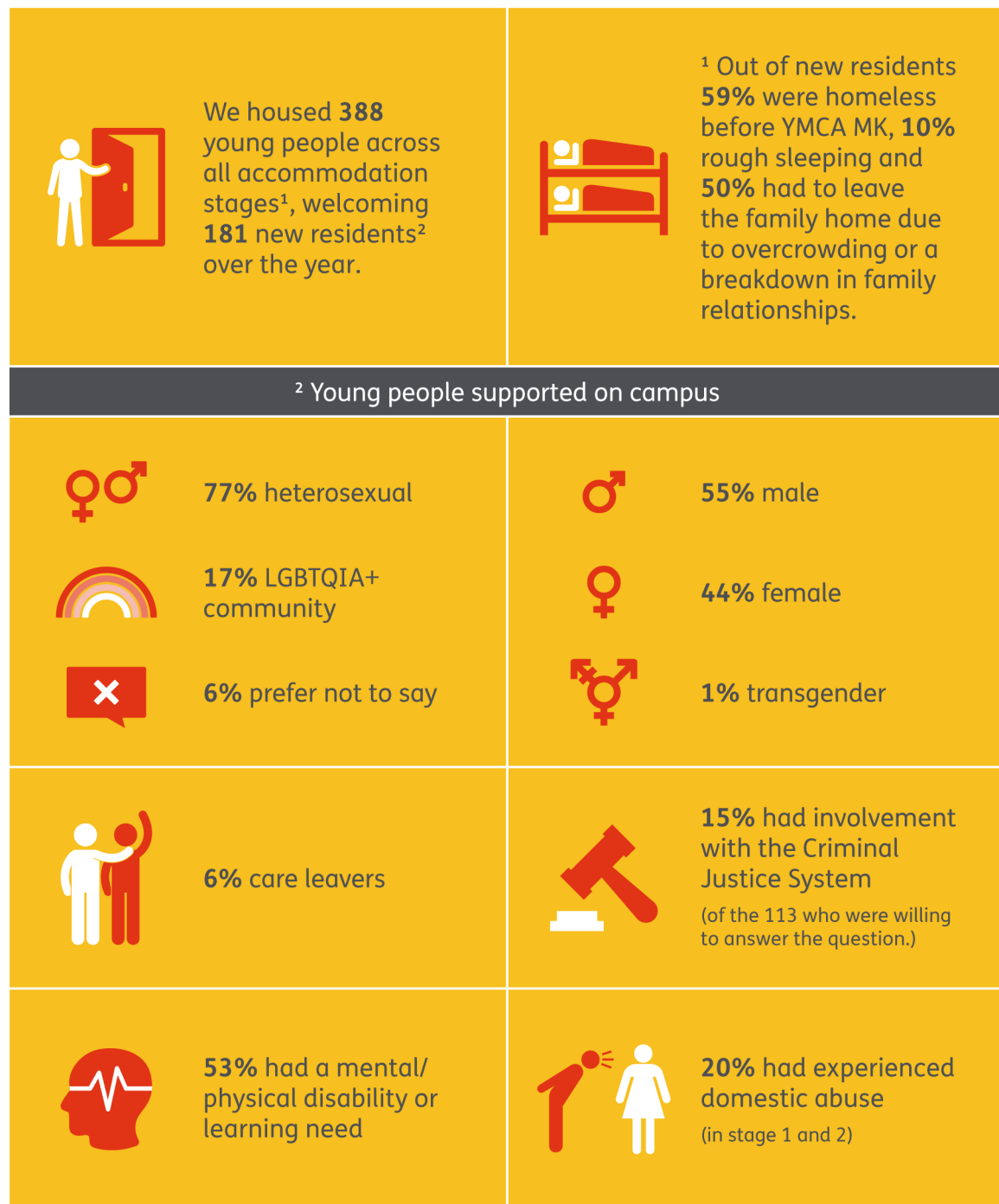
And above all we want to help young people to **Belong**, to **Contribute**, and to **Thrive**.

Through the support and accommodation we provide at our campus, and via the services we deliver on the ground in schools and communities across Milton Keynes we support hundreds of young people alongside their families and communities each year.

"I feel very at home at the Y, everyone is mutually supportive, the staff are great and really helpful... it's the simple stuff that makes me feel at home, just a game of cards and catching up with mates... things that just weren't possible before."

The Year in Review

Core to the support we provide is a commitment to an asset-based approach. In a nutshell it means that we focus on the skills and attributes of a person, not the challenges that have brought them to us. We focus on each young person individually, providing support based on their needs. We recognise that we are all different and that one approach to support young people does not exist.



We are the only local charity dedicated to supporting young people at risk of homelessness.

Settling In



Our supported housing provides emergency accommodation...



for 30 young people...



with 24 hour support...



giving them a safe space to call home...



...and a sense of belonging.

Finding Employment



Our shared housing provides a home to 70 young people...



...organised around communal living.



At this stage we focus on supporting them...



to find a purpose...



...and secure a job.

Gaining Independence



As residents enter employment...



...they will move into one of our 106 self-contained flats and studio apartments.



They will move towards independent living...



preparing to move on from YMCA...



...and thrive in the local community.

Campus

The Housing Team



1,958 one-to-one support sessions were provided.



66 young people engaged with debt management/ financial support advice



58 young people completed the Independent Living Skills programme



114 positive move-ons

The Activities Team



7882 hours of activity were provided for young people.



210 residents participated in activities over the year.



74 activity sessions were provided monthly.
(on average)

The Employment Team



Young people were supported into **119** jobs.
(93 unique individuals)



186 young people engaged with our employment service.

1,165 employment appointments were provided.



9 young people were supported into volunteering/work experience roles.



Young people were supported into **71** educational opportunities.



305 hours of training were provided.



Click or scan to watch

BELONG



Click or scan to watch

CONTRIBUTE

Jordan's Story

Jordan had been sleeping rough in a grit salt bin for shelter. He recalls digging himself into the salt at night to help keep him warm over winter. He was struggling with substance misuse and in his words, “needed a lot of help.”

He arrived at YMCA MK in February 2023 and moved into our Supported Living accommodation.

“I’d not had a bed in so long or a TV I could turn on. I fell asleep at like 2 pm.”

How did YMCA MK support Jordan?



Homelessness – we gave him a safe space to stay and a daily meal.



Poor mental health and substance misuse – we got to know Jordan and worked with him to decide what support he needed. He was also given specialist support where necessary.



Lack of employment direction – we helped him to identify what he wanted to do in life, where his skills were and where we could support him to achieve his goals.



Financial issues – we worked with Jordan to give him the budgeting advice he needed and help him to access the support he was entitled to.

He is now heavily involved in the activities programme and became a YMCA Youth Ambassador, something which he is very proud of.

Jordan is soon to be moving on to his future home with his fiancé whom he met here at the YMCA. They are also expecting their first baby together! Most importantly, he says he’s is now finally happy.

“The YM is almost like a family. Sometimes I talk to Dean like I’m talking to my dad.”

Youth and Community

167 young people supported across 3 projects

1

106
young people
referred (HNS)



Milton Keynes University Hospital



6 Hospital Navigators



319 sessions



106 signposted to further support

2

16
young people
mentored



Youth mentoring in schools



8 volunteer mentors



300 sessions



16 signposted to further support

3

45
young people
mentored*

*this project only began in OCT 2024



Youth mentoring in the wider MK community



18 volunteer mentors



158 sessions



45 signposted to further support

HNS RE-ATTENDANCE



Of the young people who attended A&E due to an assault or violence related incident, **70%** positively engaged with the Hospital Navigator Scheme.



Of the **70%** that engaged with the Hospital Navigator Scheme following an assault or violence related incident, **52%** did not reattend A&E that year.



49% of young people referred to the Hospital Navigator Scheme did not re-attend A&E that year.



Frankie's Story

Frankie had struggled with his mental health for some time and had been in and out of hospital. Both his parents were struggling with alcohol dependency which left Frankie without a trusted adult to support him. In the past he had received extensive support from the mental health team at the hospital, but it was clear he needed a different approach and was referred to YMCA youth mentoring.

Frankie and his mentor clicked immediately and he opened up about his mental ill health and his struggles with social isolation and a need for support. He also needed somewhere safe to live and his mentor suggested YMCA.

Within a week Frankie had a room to call his own.

At YMCA MK, Frankie found a welcoming community and supportive staff. He engaged with the employment support on offer and is now working full-time in a job he loves.

Frankie described how youth mentoring at YMCA MK transformed his life

“The truth is... if I hadn’t been referred to the HNS by the nurse that day, I would probably be dead by now... but instead I have hope in life again and there’s reason to get up in the mornings, hope for the future!”

Highlight

Mental Wealth

Funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, in November 2023 we launched our new service, Mental Wealth. Mental Wealth is beginning to tackle some of the complex issues faced by our residents and offer significantly increased levels of specialist help to improve their mental health. We expect to grow and develop this service as we seek to address the huge increase in mental ill health among young people in the local community.

JAN – MAR



17 young people had appointments with the psychologist

1. ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐
 2. ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐
 3. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

9 young people were screened for ASD/ADHD



89 young people attended mental health drop-in sessions

“I feel like I understand myself a bit better now.”

“The session was open, calm, not pressured & really friendly.”

As the mental health challenges of young people continue to grow we will continue to meet their needs on campus and in the wider MK community.

Thank you to our funders and partners in the project!





What Next?

1. Growing our youth and community offer, working with the Youth Offending Team, schools and on the ground in local communities to provide early intervention youth services to support children, young people and their families.
2. Expanding our affordable accommodation offer throughout MK for young people who are ready to move on from YMCA MK.
3. Re-launching YMCA Northamptonshire, which will provide supported housing for 13 young people leaving care. This is the first step in a wider ambition to re-establish YMCA Northamptonshire as a leading youth organisation in the county.
4. Developing our social enterprises, HomeGround and Conferencing, to provide sustainable income for YMCA MK.

During the year we continued to benefit from support from a wide range of statutory sources and charitable trusts and continued to see success in developing support from corporates and individuals.

We are enormously grateful to each and every one of you. To view our income, expenditure and full financial information please visit the Charity Commission website.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES



Thank You to All Our Supporters

Trusts and Foundation

- #IWillClarion
- Bletchley and Fenncy Parish Council
- BLMK Community Grant Scheme
- Bradwell Parish Council
- Cadent
- Children in Need
- Milton Keynes Community Foundation
- Networks Community Action MK
- One Stop Foundation
- The Albert Hunt Trust
- The Anson Charitable Trust
- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The Million Hours Fund
- The National Grid
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Places for People
- Shenley Brook End and Tattenhoe Parish Council
- Wolverton and Greenleys Parish Council

Corporate Supporters

- Aiimi
- BI Worldwide
- Brioche Pasquier
- BSH
- Cranswick Foods
- EMW Law
- Frosts Garden Centre
- John Lewis Partnership
- Mercedes-Benz
- Plumbing and Gas Solutions

Partners

- Milton Keynes Council
- Healthwatch Milton Keynes
- Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit
- HM Prison and Probation Service
- The Foyer Federation

Huge thank you to all the individuals who continue to support us all year round – we could not support YP without you.

How to Support Us



Get a coffee, have a delicious lunch or meet a colleague at HomeGround.



Book one of our purpose-built, affordable and flexible spaces for meetings or large conferences.



Visit our website or follow us on social media to never miss an update.





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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.