

# YMCA

**Creating  
transformational  
communities**

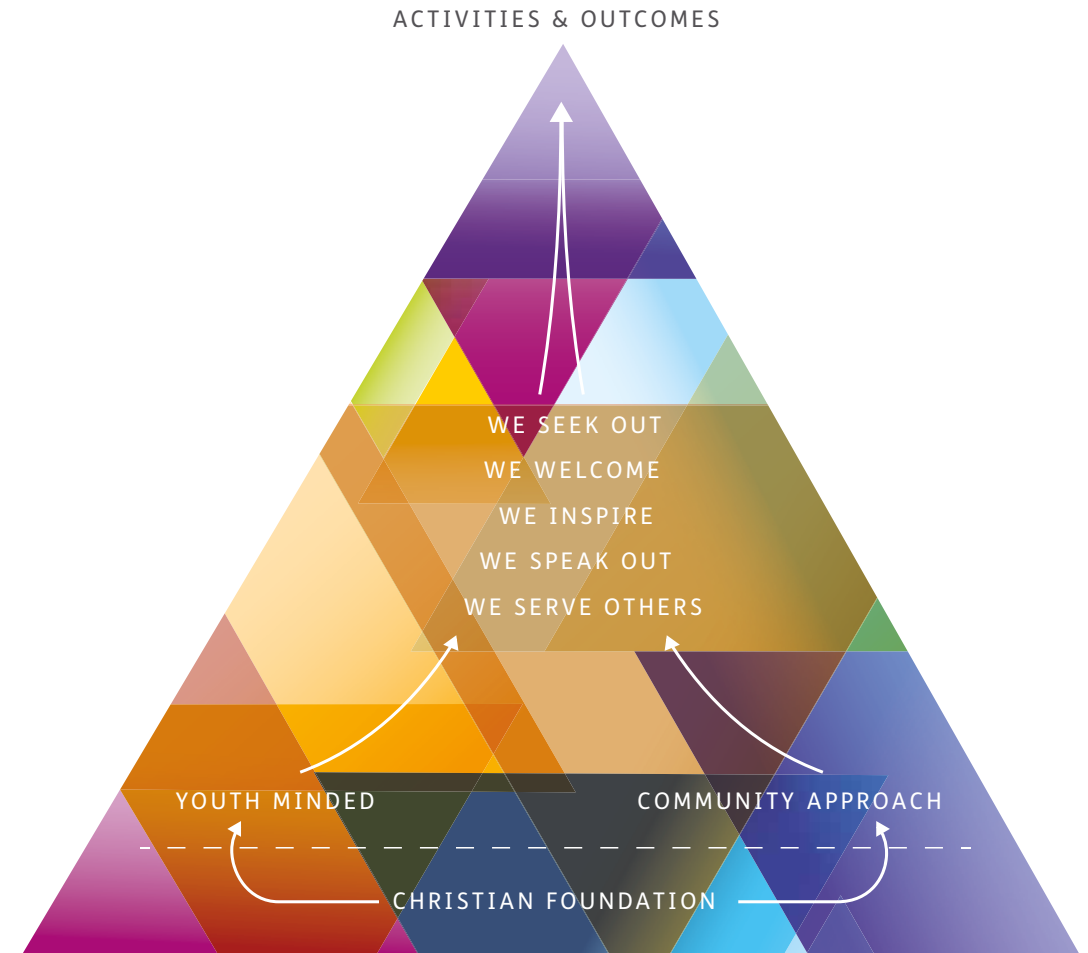
## Who we are

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YMCA is the largest and the oldest charity working with young people in the world. Across England there are 114 YMCAs. Each one is a thriving and active community. A community that is transforming lives.

We focus on young people and help them play an active and fulfilling role within their communities. We call this a youth minded community approach.

We are proud of our Christian heritage and ethos. We are an inclusive Christian movement transforming communities. We provide a wide array of community-based activities and services to help meet local needs wherever we are based.



Belief is everything. Because from belief come the effective and successful outcomes that are changing lives.

## **Our vision**

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Our vision is of an inclusive Christian movement transforming communities so that all young people can belong, contribute and thrive.

## **Our values**

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The way we act at YMCA is characterised by five strong and distinctive values that flow from our Christian ethos.

### **We seek out**

We actively look for opportunities to make a transformative impact on young lives in the communities where we work, and believe that every person is of equal value.

### **We welcome**

We offer people the space they need to feel secure, respected, heard and valued; and we always protect, trust, hope and persevere.

### **We inspire**

We strive to inspire each person we meet to nurture their body, mind and spirit, and to realise their full potential in all they do.

### **We speak out**

We stand up for young people, speak out on issues that affect their lives, and help them to find confidence in their own voice.

### **We serve others**

We are committed to the wellbeing of the communities we serve and believe in the positive benefit of participation, locally and in the wider world.

## What we do

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We have specialist expertise in working with young men and women, and aim to be the voice of all young people.

We give people practical support to help them achieve their full potential. We live in your community, providing a broad range of activities and services to meet local needs.

Every day we do inspiring work supporting young people and helping them belong, contribute and thrive in their local communities. You'll find us getting involved in a wide range of services in your community, including:

### **Housing**

We're the largest provider of safe, supported accommodation for young people in England, providing just under 10,000 beds every night.

### **Education, skills and training**

We enable young people to choose from a wide range of education and skills-based training to help them achieve their full potential and live independently.

### **Youth and community**

We're here for all young people, supporting those going through difficult times, as well as providing activities for all young people in a community to enjoy.

### **Early years**

We work with young people of all ages, recognising that support at the earliest years can have a positive impact on a young person's long-term development.

### **Physical activity**

We are the largest voluntary sector provider of activities and services to promote health and wellbeing in England.

### **National / local**

We have a national voice for young people across England.

We deliver our services to local communities across the country.

# 114 YMCAs

Delivering:

- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Education and training
- ▶ Youth clubs
- ▶ Health and fitness programmes
- ▶ Crèches
- ▶ Holiday clubs
- ▶ Disability programmes

And so much more...

...to **530 communities**  
across the country.

We have over **130  
charity shops.**

We've always had  
a national presence  
with local relevance,  
responding to the specific  
needs of the communities  
we serve.



## Our history

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### 1844

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YMCA was founded by George Williams – a worker in the drapery trade in London. Concerned about the welfare of his fellow workers, he started a prayer and bible study group. This soon grew and attracted men from across London.

### 1851

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YMCA begins to spread across the globe, as YMCAs are established in the USA and Canada.

### 1879

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The American YMCA opens its first gym.



### 1891

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The American YMCA invents basketball and goes on to invent volleyball in 1895.



### 1912

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The first purpose built hostels are built in London and Cardiff.

### 1914

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During World War I, the British YMCA extends its work across the Channel to support the troops.



### 1932

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YMCA sets up the British Boys for British Farms initiative which benefits 25,000 young people.

### 1940

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YMCA continues its war work and mobile canteens are introduced to bring refreshments to the troops.

### 1959

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Many English YMCAs start opening youth clubs to promote young people's personal development.





## 1970s

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YMCA Training for Life is launched to help unemployed young people. YMCA Training has supported over a million people to date.

## 1984

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Y Care International, the overseas development agency of YMCA in the UK and Ireland, is established.

**Today YMCA helps over 58 million people in 119 countries worldwide, working with young men and women regardless of race, religion or culture.**



## Our way of working

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We don't just think 'youth'.

We also think 'community.'

By coming along to their local YMCA, a young man or woman can become part of an inclusive community of people of all ages, faiths, cultures and backgrounds.

Not ghettoised but included.  
Not apart from, but part of.

That's our youth minded community approach.

### **At the heart of each community**

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We tailor the services we provide at each YMCA to meet the needs of people in the area...

Reaching out to people across communities.

Engaging with young people from groups that might be hard to reach, like gangs.

We support young people holistically.

We don't just provide a bed, we also seek to help a young person gain the training, skills and confidence to go on to lead independent lives.



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.

We work across four key areas, with a fifth – support and advice – running through them all.

## **SUPPORT & ADVICE**

We believe every young person should have someone they can trust.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

We believe that every young person should have a safe place to stay.

## **FAMILY WORK**

We believe every family should have the support they need to develop and lead more fulfilling lives.

## **HEALTH & WELLBEING**

We believe that everyone should be able to enjoy the benefits of physical exercise, from improved health to better education and life chances.

## **TRAINING & EDUCATION**

We believe that every young person should be able to fulfil their full potential.

The next few pages show just a few examples of the work we do...

# Support & Advice

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We're there for every young person in the community, supporting them through difficult times with a wide range of services. In each case, our aim is enabling the young person to grow and develop in every aspect of their life.

## Ross's story

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When a family falls apart, the children can slip through the cracks.

When Ross was young his mother and father were splitting up and the atmosphere at home was confrontational and disturbing.

Ross rebelled by skipping school and doing drugs. The situation affected his mental health, and he began to feel worthless and alone. He tried hanging himself, and was admitted to a psychiatric hospital. When he was discharged, Ross was homeless.

Luckily Ross moved into a YMCA.

We gave him the support and advice he needed to turn his life around.

"They gave me the motivation and a lot of help to sort myself out including coming off drugs. Now I volunteer at YMCA. It's given me a sense of purpose and I feel really, really happy knowing I can help people. My Mum says she is really proud of me."

Ross is now hoping to join the police force. "They helped me and I want to be able to do that for other people going through similar things."

"Without YMCA I would have absolutely nothing. It's just a brilliant organisation."

## Accommodation

We're the largest provider of safe, supported accommodation for young people in England. We supply nearly 10,000 beds every night, ranging from emergency beds to longer-term supported living.

### YMCA Humber's Community House

YMCA Humber's Community House gives ex-offenders a stepping stone to living independently. A mentor guides the residents through specific issues and gets them ready for moving into their own home.

We've helped people beat addictions, refrain from criminal activity and move forward by gaining qualifications and full-time employment.

- ▶ 63% of residents have gained at least one qualification
- ▶ Three people have moved on to University
- ▶ 90% of residents have stopped using drugs
- ▶ Most have managed to regain closer ties with their families
- ▶ All speak positively of their time in the house

When the Community House first opened in 2010 there was considerable protest from the surrounding neighbours as they were concerned about ex-offenders living nearby. Neighbours are now very positive about what is being achieved there.



## Family work

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Being part of a healthy, stable family gives a young person the best start in life. We offer a range of support to families including childcare services, before and after school activities, family mediation and parenting programmes.

### Jack's story

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When families go through difficult periods, it can be extremely upsetting for the children involved. In extreme cases, children and young adults choose to run away. Burton and District YMCA's Reach Out Family Mediation Service is providing a lifeline to families who are struggling to keep relationships intact.

Jack was 16 and scared by his parents' behaviour when they drank. Home didn't feel safe, but he couldn't tell them how he felt as he was worried about how they would react.

Jack came to Reach Out. After a few sessions with the team his confidence grew and he agreed for them to contact his parents.

The team helped Jack and his parents meet up and listen to each other. Jack had the courage to say what he needed, and his parents responded with understanding. Everyone was able to agree a plan of action on how they would overcome their problems.

After a few weeks the team checked in with Jack. His relationship with his parents has improved greatly and things are much better at home – meaning there is one less homeless young person.





## Health & Wellbeing

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We're committed to creating healthy, sustainable communities in which people can fulfil their aspirations. We're the largest voluntary sector provider of services promoting health and wellbeing in England.

### YMCA OnSide

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Everyone benefits from physical activity. So sports and exercise facilities should be available to all, including young people with disabilities.

In 2013, seven YMCAs set up YMCA OnSide clubs, sports sessions that are available to all. OnSide is particularly targeted at young people with disabilities, encouraging them to participate and volunteer.

The clubs offer a diverse range of activities in an inclusive environment. Young people experience different types of sport with sessions kept simple and easy.

They can try sports they have never tried before. The project also aims to get disabled volunteers working alongside their non-disabled peers, develop sports leaders and get young disabled people participating in national sports festivals.

OnSide is growing and growing:

- ▶ In 19 sports clubs across the country
- ▶ Engaging 2,280 disabled people

The clubs have created inclusive environments with more opportunities for young people to take part in sport together. Siblings can now spend more time together, and young people and their parents can socialise and make new friends.

# Training & Education

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Helping young people gain the confidence to make decisions about their own lives is an important part of our work. As providing an environment in which they can flourish. Education is more than formal schooling – that’s why individual YMCAs offer a range of education, skills-based training, placement and apprenticeship schemes.

## Molly’s story

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The transition to adulthood is a difficult period. Many young people lack confidence and feel shy. Sometimes they need support to realise what they are capable of, and the opportunities available to them.

Molly was a bright and talented teenager with a creative mind, but she grew up in an area with high youth unemployment. Her mother passed away when she was 11. Molly’s father couldn’t cope, which meant Molly was left to take care of herself.

Molly felt abandoned and isolated, and was bullied at school. The verbal abuse became physical and she changed schools three times. She left school with no GCSEs, feeling as though she was useless and her future was bleak.

At the age of 17, Molly started training with YMCA. At first she found it hard to trust people, but as she met other young people who had gone through similar things she was able to focus on her studies and started believing in herself.

Molly wants to help other people, and wants to become a bereavement counsellor. She is looking forward to her work placement, and to a future she never thought she’d have.

“I like being in a place where everyone is doing well. I’m working really hard now and I’m really proud of all the work I’ve done. Now I’m looking to the future.”



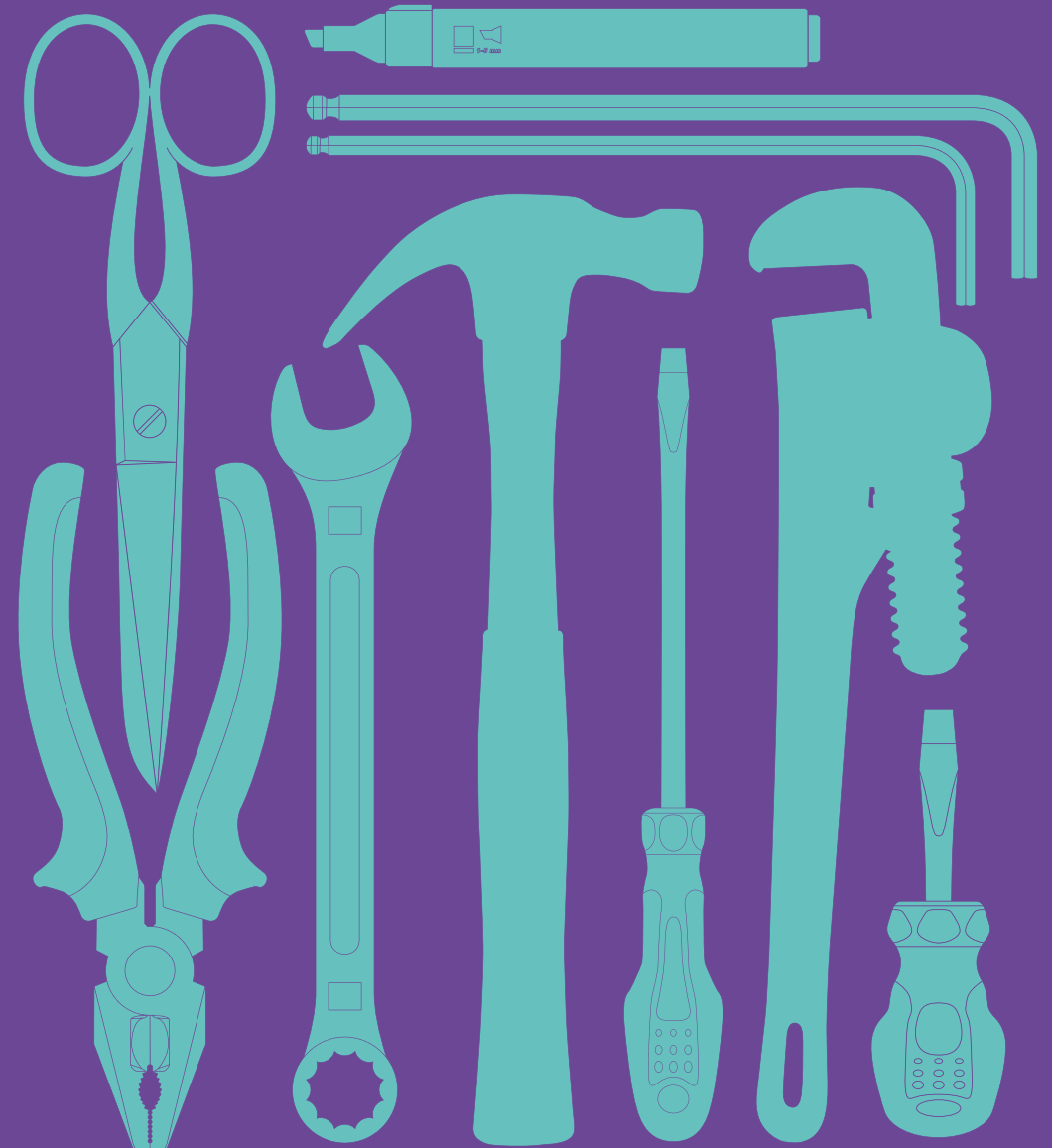


## Making a difference

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- ▶ Every night YMCAs provide just under 10,000 beds for young people.
- ▶ Every year our volunteers give almost 800,000 hours of their time to help young people.
- ▶ Over 33,000 young people come along to YMCA youth clubs every year.
- ▶ Last year, over 75,000 people enjoyed a drink or a bite to eat at a YMCA café.
- ▶ We help over 9,000 parents with crèche and childcare facilities every year.
- ▶ YMCAs own and manage 54 gyms, 9 swimming pools, 29 leisure centres, 48 community halls and 8 outdoor activity venues.
- ▶ Over 292,000 people used a YMCA gym last year.
- ▶ YMCA has a presence in 119 countries.
- ▶ Across the world we help over 58 million people.

Every year YMCA helps almost 43,000 people to engage in education, skills and training to improve their opportunities in the job market.



Take a youth minded community approach. Share your skills, or learn new ones, by volunteering.

You can help with:

- ▶ Sports, exercise and fitness
- ▶ Youth Work
- ▶ Day camps / holiday schemes
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Fundraising and publicity
- ▶ Administration and Finance
- ▶ Mentoring
- ▶ Becoming a board / committee member

Or you could help in a YMCA shop - over 1,200 people like you are already volunteering in our shops around the country.

Raise money for YMCA by taking part in a sponsored event, or getting together with people at your local YMCA to raise funds.

Support our vital work reaching out to over a million young people every year by making a donation. Just £25 could pay for a hot meal and a warm bed at a YMCA hostel.

Find out more at

[www.ymca.org.uk](http://www.ymca.org.uk)

Get involved. Join the  
transformational community.

To read more about us visit  
[www.ymca.org.uk](http://www.ymca.org.uk)

To hear more about us call  
**020 7186 9500**

To experience us, visit your  
local YMCA.

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# YMCA

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.

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