IMPACT REPORT

YMCA HEART OF ENGLAND

2025

THE CHRIS BRYANT CENTRE

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Our mission

Our Mission is to inspire young people to discover their potential so that they can live life in all its fullness.

LETTER FROM THE CEO

PAULINE TOMLINSON
CEO YMCA Heart of England

WOW – what a year it has been. Our impact reports this year captures a snippet of what we have achieved over the last 12 months and importantly how our work has served to change lives and impact communities for the better.

We are blessed to have wonderful staff and volunteers who go the extra mile to ensure that the work of YMCA Heart of England reaches those most in need. We also acknowledge our key partners and stakeholders who have contributed to the wonderful achievements outlaid within this document.

Importantly and without apology we acknowledge how God has enabled the plans for this organisation to flourish as we underpin everything we do with prayer and so we take time out to acknowledge His hand in all that we have achieved.

As we look forward, we are excited to see the delivery of our 5 year strategic plan and our People & Culture Strategy being lived out in the years ahead. We are excited about how we will invest in our people and we are excited that our aims are to reach and serve many more young people, residents and communities across our region.

We do all this not for personal accolade, but to build a sense of hope for those whose voice is often not heard.

In the months and year ahead we look forward to being more, doing more and serving more and we want to take this opportunity to say a huge THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to the impact we have and will continue to make by God's grace.

IMPACT OVERVIEW

This period has marked a significant organisational advancement for YMCA Heart of England. Our continued commitment to delivering high-quality services, strengthening operational excellence, and enhancing the experiences of the people we support has been reflected in the external recognitions we have received at a national level. These acknowledgements underscore the effectiveness of our strategic direction and the professionalism demonstrated across our teams, partnerships, and programmes.

EVIDENCE OF EXCELLENCE

YMCA OF THE YEAR

Our organisation was formally named YMCA of the Year by YMCA England & Wales - the highest organisational honour within the national YMCA movement. This designation is awarded to the YMCA that demonstrates outstanding impact, sector-leading practice, and a proven commitment to improving outcomes for young people and communities.

LEWIS SEWELL MEMORIAL AWARD

Youth Ambassador Shantisha Pande was honoured with the Lewis Sewell Memorial Award at the Youth Matters Awards ceremony, which is a national recognition presented by the Lewis Sewell Memorial Trust. This award celebrates a young person who has demonstrated exceptional courage, resilience, and positivity in the face of adversity - qualities that reflect the spirit and legacy of Lewis Sewell.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

The launch of our Strategic Plan marks a defining moment in the organisation's evolution. Developed through an extensive co-creation process involving trustees, staff, volunteers, residents, and young people, this visionary framework establishes a clear, ambitious path for growth, innovation, and excellence, positioning YMCA Heart of England as a national leader in youth services and community impact.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The 2024/25 financial year again saw the organisation achieve key financial targets, continuing the positive trend of the past few years. This included a 5% increase in Annual Turnover, up to £7.5m, aided by another strong performance within the Housing sector.

Alongside this, we were able to complete the purchase of The Orchard building, which has helped increase the value of the Housing Assets owned by YMCA Heart of England by 23%, to £24.7m.

All that led to an overall surplus for the year of £839,539, helping position the organisation on a strong footing from a financial perspective.

Total income increased by

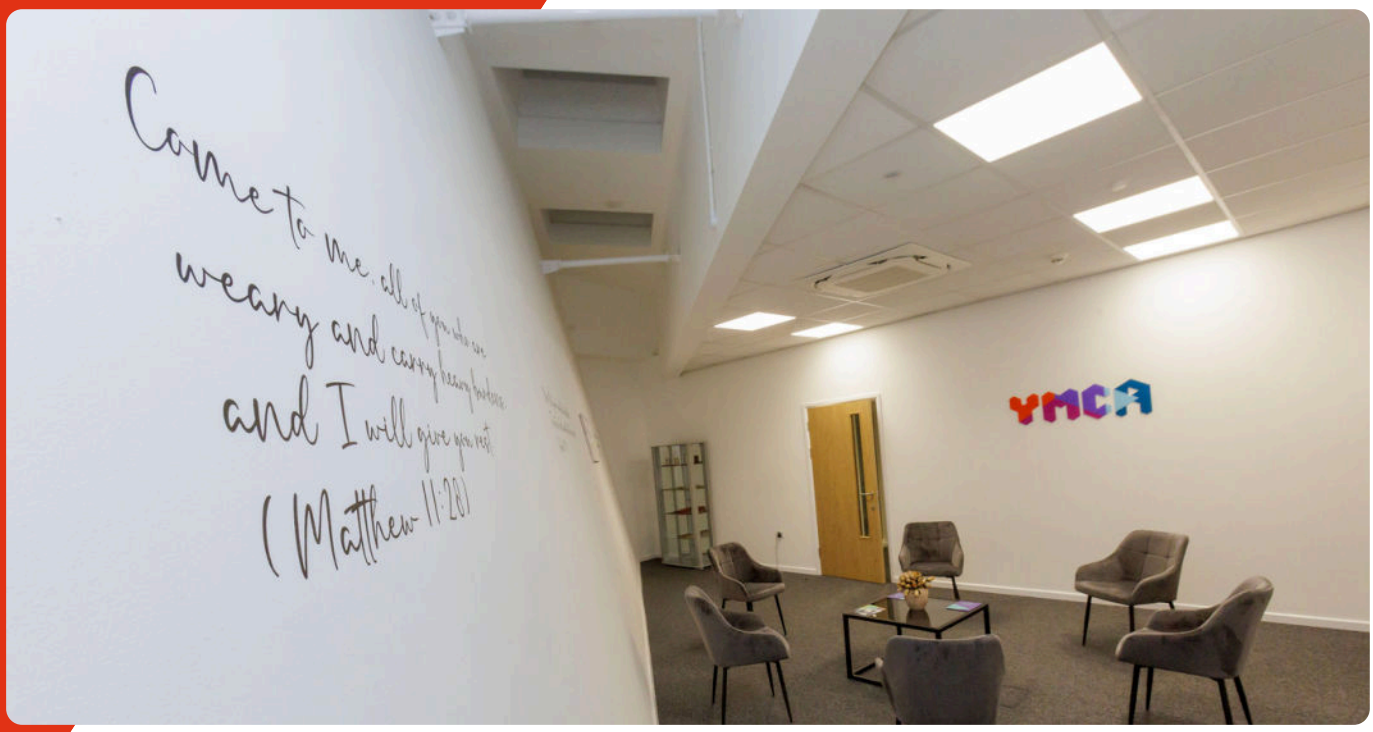
▶ 5%

Total value of Housing Assets owned increased by

▶ 23%

Annual Surplus of

▶ £839,593



CHRISTIAN MISSION & CHAPLAINCY

This year has been a season of both reflection and growth for the Christian Mission and Chaplaincy presence within the organisation. Though we operate in a diverse workplace with varying beliefs, our shared aim has been to offer a caring, ethical, and spiritually grounded presence for all. Through listening, encouraging, and supporting individuals, the chaplaincy and Christian mission activities have contributed to the wider goals of wellbeing, community connection, and holistic support for staff and residents alike. Whether through quiet reflection space, one-to-one conversations, or acts of compassion and service, our role has been to embody values of compassion, believe, integrity, inspire and love in action. We continue to serve not by promoting religion, but by offering voluntary and inclusive opportunities for staff and residents to experience support, belonging, and deeper meaning—especially during times of challenge, transition, or celebration. The Chaplaincy continues to serve the emotional, spiritual, and pastoral needs of our organisation. We remain committed to being a presence of hope, compassion, and faith within our workplace community.

11,709+
minutes of face-to-face support to staff.

23,999+
minutes of face-to-face support to residents.

1,565
times staff members were seen for support.

1,834
times residents were seen for support.

Christian Mission Events

- Weekly staff prayer meetings
- Monthly lunchtime fellowship open to all
- Seasonal Community Services: Easter and Christmas
- Weekly Word of Encouragement
- Monthly Spirit Article for Staff Newsletter
- Bible Study class for residents
- 8 Staff attended YMCA Christian Mission Conference in October 2024

Chaplaincy

- Regular pastoral support to staff and residents across sites.
- Blessings of flat for residents at their request
- Counselling to staff and residents
- Monthly visit to Billy Bear Nursery to provide pastoral support
- Advice around religious and spiritual care

Staff & Residents Engagement Activities include:

Weekly milkshakes or hot chocolate
Wellbeing Wednesday
Thankful Thursday

Partnerships & Collaborations:

Worked with HR to support our well-being strategy
Partnered with local churches for spiritual resources in Birmingham and Coventry

Chaplaincy Impact

On Staff

- The service the Chaplaincy offers provides pastoral care, prayer support, and spiritual encouragement, helping staff manage the emotional demands of day to day work and personal life.

On Residents

- Beyond shelter and food, the Chaplaincy address the spiritual, emotional, and relational roots of issues our residents present, offering hope, identity, and purpose.
- Through faith-based mentoring, prayer, and discipleship, our residents often experience healing from trauma, addiction, and broken relationships. Building healthy relationships among residents through different activities organised on site.
- Residents being baptised after coming to faith.

On the Community

- Chaplaincy initiatives often include community events and partnerships with local churches and organisations, fostering inclusion and mutual understanding.
- Impacting the neighbourhoods and communities that we serve in a positive way.

Testimonials of positive impact:

- I always have an amazing time connecting with the Chaplain. Every Wednesday and Thursday, I know I can drop by for a relaxed and genuine chat. Whether we're talking about life in general or diving into meaningful biblical discussions, it's always a refreshing experience. [Resident]
- It’s an opportunity to socialise and for the kids to do something fun. [Resident]
- Can we do painting every day? “Thank you for organising the painting, that was so lovely!” [Child of a Resident]
- The chaplain was a lifeline during my loss. [Staff]

PUBLIC RELATIONS, COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Newsletter

Since its launch in May 2024, the newsletter has been consistently delivered to YMCA Heart of England residents, staff and stakeholders. It serves as a key communication tool for sharing organisational updates, success stories, and upcoming initiatives.

The newsletter has achieved strong engagement, with an average opening rate of 60% among residents and 40% among staff, aligning with the operational communication KPIs.

+7000
Newsletters sent

60%
Residents' opening rate

Social Media

YMCA Heart of England sustained regular and guideline-compliant content, further enhanced by executing 30 targeted social media campaigns during the year.

During the reporting period, 523 posts were published, reaching 35,025 users - a 148% increase from the previous year. Overall, page and profile impressions totalled 55,721, representing an 18.6% growth.

55,721
profile impressions

35,025
users engaged

Events

Over the year, the organisation successfully delivered a comprehensive programme of events across its sites, enhancing engagement with residents and the wider community. Resident feedback remained consistently strong, achieving a median quality score of 86% and exceeding the established KPI. In addition, engagement in 24 networking events facilitated the establishment of 9 new strategic partnerships.

47

events held accros all sites

86%

Residents' satisfaction score

Fundraising

Over the year, fundraising efforts were strategically advanced through the delivery of key initiatives, the hosting of dedicated events, and participation in ongoing campaigns, including year-round efforts such as Sanitary Bank and the Amazon Wishlist. These activities secured £1,944.09 in monetary contributions and £8,767.15 in non-monetary support, reinforcing the company's resources. Collectively, they have strengthened operational capacity and enhanced the ability to deliver impactful programmes across the community.

£10,711.24

in all donations

14

fundraising initiatives organised

OPERATIONS

The past months have been both dynamic and challenging, yet the organisation has successfully navigated obstacles while delivering significant positive outcomes. As 2024/25 came to a close, performance data demonstrates clear progress, with the majority of key performance indicators showing strong achievement and green ratings. This reflects the sustained impact of the organisation's work across its services and highlights the effectiveness of teams in driving measurable results for the communities and individuals served.

Asset Management

- 100% of the planned maintenance program for 2024/25 has been completed, resulting in positive improvements across many schemes, making them feel more modern, brighter, and homely. This approach will continue to be delivered in 2025/26.
- As part of the capital works, The Coppice has been successfully redeveloped, bringing it back into use as a modern head office facility. This has created additional hireable space and freed up rooms in CBC, which will support increased income generation from these spaces in 2025/26.
- The acquisition of The Orchard has also been completed, bringing it into YMCA ownership. This safeguards it as a valuable supported housing scheme, enabling a continued positive impact on people's lives for many years to come.

Health & Safety

- 100% compliance was achieved across Gas, EICR, Asbestos, Fire Alarm Systems, and Emergency Lighting at all YMCA Heart of England schemes.
- Energy Performance Certificates were ensured for 100% of schemes.
- The Health & Safety policy, along with a range of supporting policies, was reviewed and updated.
- Implementation of the PeopleSafe system provided frontline staff with additional support, assistance, and security during lone working.

Capital Works

- The redevelopment of The Coppice into a modern head office created additional hireable space and freed up rooms at Chris Bryant Centre, supporting plans to increase income generation from facilities in the coming year.

Housing

- Achieved an average of 98% Occupancy across all schemes, maintaining the same consistent levels of performance as in prior years.
- Achieved a void loss of 2.57% against a 4% representing another successful year where we have minimised the loss of rent on vacant properties.
- Successfully awarded 2 Housing and Support contracts by Birmingham City Council for 60 units of accommodation and support, generating additional income in excess of £200k per annum.
- Successfully awarded the Gold award under the Supported Exempt Accommodation Quality Standards (SEAQS) which is accredited by Birmingham City Council supporting that consistently exceed standards for delivery high quality services to our residents.
- The team at Northfield successfully handled an urgent decant of all residents following the flooding in Birmingham, working tirelessly to secure alternative accommodation and ensure residents were supported throughout.
- The team in Coventry successfully handled an out of hours leak which severely impacted two residents, going above and beyond to minimise the impact and support our residents through this traumatic experience.

Maintenance

- Maintenance performance has remained consistently strong throughout the year, with 98% of all maintenance jobs completed within the timescales set by organisational policies. Notably, 100% of emergency repairs were completed, representing a significant achievement.
- All emergency repairs were responded to within 24 hours.
- Additional reactive projects, including flood response at Magdalene Court, leaks at St. Margaret's, and Henrietta Street Lofts, were addressed promptly, with repair work delivered efficiently to minimise disruption to residents and staff.

Billy Bears Nursery

- Achieved 100% parent satisfaction
- Achieved 100% staff satisfaction.
- All staff 100% up to date on all mandatory training.

Emergency repairs completed on time

▸ 100%

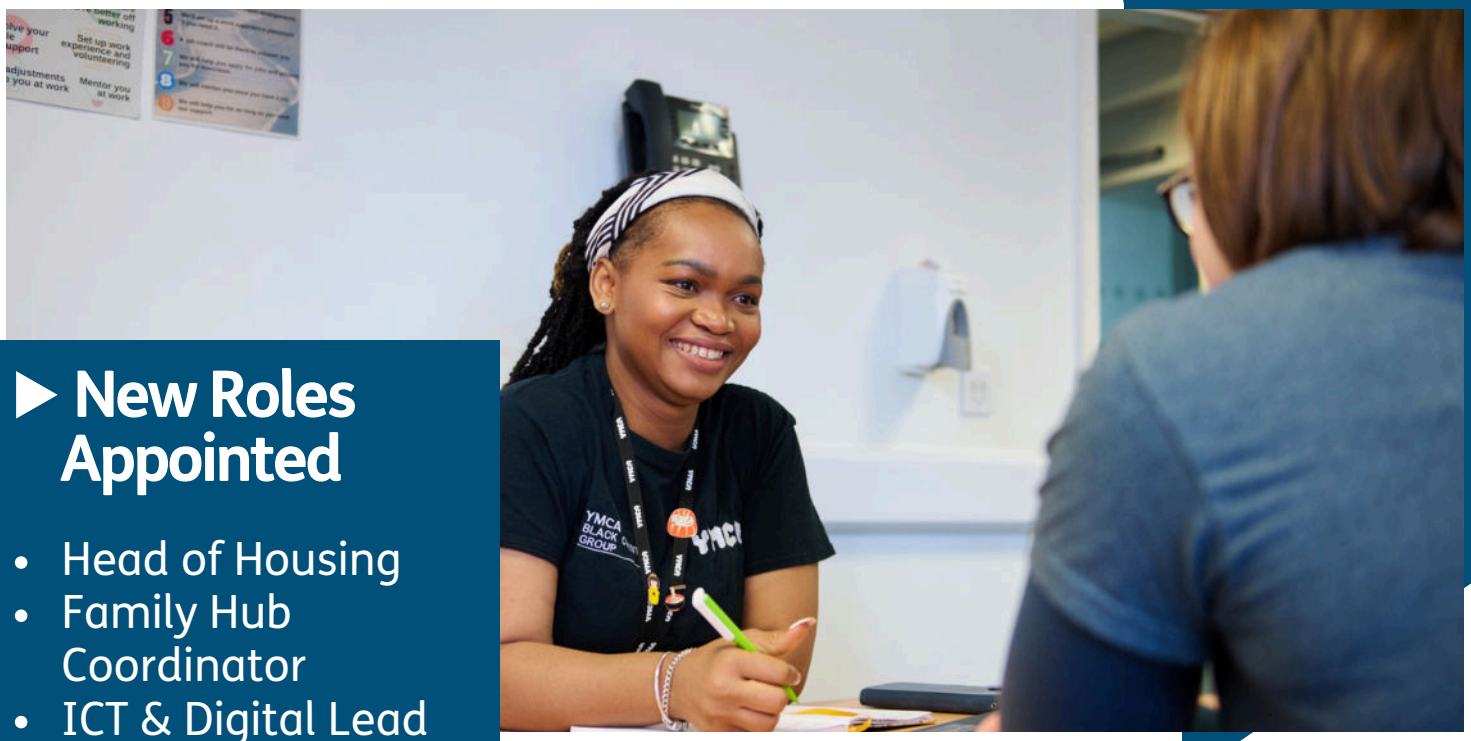
Satisfaction among parents and staff at Billy Bears

▸ 100%

Annual Surplus of

▸ +£200,000

HUMAN RESOURCES



▶ New Roles Appointed

- Head of Housing
- Family Hub Coordinator
- ICT & Digital Lead Professional
- Recruiting for Director of Business, Community and Youth

▶ Achievements

- Investors in People (IIP) Award
- Matrix Accreditation
- 3% staff pay increase
- Additional day's leave
- New training delivered

The past year has been a strong period of growth and development for the Human Resources Department, with continued investment in people, leadership, and organisational excellence. YMCA Heart of England currently employs 108 individuals, including bank workers and volunteers, and has successfully reduced staff turnover from 23% to 17%, maintaining levels well below the UK average. Sickness absence has remained stable at 3.06%, also within national benchmarks.

The organisation was proud to achieve both the Investors in People (IIP) Award and Matrix Accreditation, reaffirming its commitment to quality and staff development. In recognition of employee contribution, all staff received a 3% pay increase, alongside the introduction of an additional day's leave to celebrate birthdays, supporting wellbeing and work-life balance.

Several key roles have been appointed, instrumental in strengthening our services and supporting future growth. Recruitment is also underway for a Director of Business, Community and Youth to further enhance our leadership capacity.

Staff training remained a priority, covering safeguarding, GDPR, harassment prevention, and health and safety, ensuring employees are equipped to deliver high-quality services.

These achievements highlight YMCA Heart of England's focus on empowering its workforce and creating an environment where people can thrive, laying a strong foundation for future success.

COMMUNITY & YOUTH

YMCA Heart of England continues to strengthen its youth and community services, delivering a wide range of projects that support, engage, and empower young people. The Youth Club remains central to this work, providing a safe and inclusive space for personal growth, learning, and connection. This year, the organisation delivered a significant number of community engagement initiatives, exceeding key performance indicators and demonstrating strong reach and impact across the region. The focus on Social Value has also been a major success, with 80% of community bookings generating positive outcomes. Furthermore, 97% of young people accessing our services showed improved attitudes, behaviour, and personal development, reinforcing the meaningful and lasting impact our programmes continue to make within local communities.

201

Community events and initiatives delivered

2747

community members enaged

97%

reported positive impact on their lives

YOUTH PROJECTS

FLOURISH GIRLS GROUP

A targeted programme supporting young women's confidence, wellbeing, and peer relationships through creative, reflective, and skill-building activities. The programme was delivered over six weeks during the 2024 summer holidays and again during the 2025 Easter holidays, providing a safe and supportive space for personal development and positive peer connections.

Participants	23
Sessions delivered	10
Attendance	90%

YMCA ROUTES TO SUCCESS

The programme supported 175 students across four Coventry secondary schools, delivering tailored sessions for Years 7–11, including a SEN group. Focused on life skills, confidence, self-awareness, and knowledge of local support services, the programme equipped participants with practical tools and personal insights to prepare for future opportunities.

Participants	175
Positive Feedback	91%
Reported confidence improvement	+81%

YOUTH LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE

The YLC was delivered to young people aged 16–21, providing practical leadership skills, creative opportunities, and personal development. Through workshops, mentoring, and youth-led community projects, participants gained confidence, built resilience, and developed skills to actively contribute to their communities, with targeted support for those from underserved or disadvantaged backgrounds.

Participants	15
Workshops	28
Participants gained leadership skills	85%

LIFE SKILLS

Life Skills is personal development programme delivered to almost 50 participants. It aims to enhance decision-making, budgeting, and awareness of local support services while encouraging individuals to identify trusted networks and gain practical skills. Participants reported significant improvement in confidence, employability skills, and overall readiness for independent living and personal growth.

Participants	49
Explored future opportunities	100%
Reported improved budgeting skills	92%

HOW YMCA HEART OF ENGLAND CHANGES LIVES

Through a structured, outcomes-driven, and evidence-based approach, YMCA's youth programmes support real young people facing real challenges, helping them build confidence, emotional resilience, and the practical skills needed to thrive in modern society.
Our teams work tirelessly and collaboratively to deliver meaningful outcomes, solving real problems and empowering young people to overcome barriers, engage in education and employment, and reach their full potential.

The impact of this work is reflected in the stories of those we support, such as one of our engaged youth programme members, who has flourished through the guidance, mentoring, and life-changing opportunities provided by YMCA.

ELMA'S TESTIMONY

I came to YMCA hoping to overcome anxiety, get out of bed, and know I had people who were there for me. I discovered the YMCA through another youth group that was closing, and I was encouraged by friends to attend. By building trust with the staff, I felt comfortable asking for help and speaking to people without feeling anxious. At the time, I was struggling with my mental health, and Jake and Emma really helped me understand my emotions and how to manage them.

Before YMCA, I struggled with anxiety, low mental health, and making friends, but these are no longer barriers that stop me from living my life. YMCA has helped me so much - they don't just tell you you'll be okay; they explain why, how, and what steps you need to take to achieve something. For example, Jake helped me improve a speech I was worried about for an upcoming exam, which really helped me feel more confident and prepared.
I participated in the Ambassador Programme, which I really enjoyed and which helped me understand more about what YMCA does and why. Julia and Macey from the youth club supported me when I was going through a hard time, listened to me, and offered advice. I now volunteer myself, which helps me express myself and gain confidence.

One of my favourite experiences was a trip to an inflatable park. I was scared of heights and avoided part of it for hours, feeling left out when my friends went ahead. But Jake created a game that encouraged me to face my fear and jump off the high block. I really enjoyed it because he believed in me even when I didn't. I want to go to college for performing arts and hopefully become a drama teacher. Thanks to the incredible YMCA's staff, I feel supported and encouraged about my future.

YMCA Heart of England Housing Services offer more than just a roof over someone's head - they provide safe, stable, and supportive environments where young people and vulnerable adults can start to rebuild their lives. Our teams tackle real-life challenges head-on, helping residents navigate mental and physical health issues, access education or training, and gain the practical skills needed for independent living.

By combining personalised support with practical guidance, we enable individuals to regain confidence, develop resilience, and create a foundation for a brighter future. The real impact of our work can be seen in the achievements of our residents, whose journeys reflect the dedication, teamwork, and compassion of our staff.

RESIDENT'S SUCCESS STORY

Liam (alias) came to the UK from Kurdistan as a child, travelling largely on foot or hidden in lorries. Upon arrival, he was taken into care and remained in the system until he turned 18. After a brief stay at Sutton YMCA, Liam moved into YMCA Heart of England at The Orchard, with Denise Ashmore as his dedicated life coach. Since arriving, he has flourished, achieving significant personal, educational, and professional milestones.

Liam's early experiences left him with PTSD, anxiety, and depression. For approximately 12 months, he had faced homelessness, having fled war, political instability, and human trafficking in Kurdistan. The uncertainty and danger of his journey took a serious toll on his physical and emotional well-being. When he first arrived at The Orchard, Liam was seeking a place he could truly call home while trying to manage his mental and physical health.
With Denise's support, Liam engaged fully with YMCA services, including mental health referrals, life skills sessions, access to formal education, ESOL courses, and employment guidance. He successfully completed his GCSEs, followed by courses in barbering and skincare, and subsequently secured a job at a local barber shop. College attendance and ESOL achievement were particularly meaningful milestones, helping him integrate, build confidence, and gain independence.

During his time at the YMCA, Liam has made remarkable progress. He has grown in confidence, developed resilience, and learned to manage his mental health proactively. He has become more outgoing, built friendships, and engaged with the local community, volunteering for a year at Gap in Moseley to support refugees with English, immigration, housing, and benefits. Through this, he has demonstrated initiative, compassion, and leadership.
Liam has also addressed physical health challenges, including a serious skin condition, with support from the YMCA to access GPs and specialists, which has further boosted his confidence and self-esteem.

After two years of dedicated support and preparation, Liam has recently moved into his own Council accommodation, achieving the long-term goal of a stable home. He continues to work at the barber shop, pursue his passion for personal development, and embrace independence with confidence. His journey highlights the transformative impact of the YMCA's holistic approach, showing how structured support, education, and mentoring can enable young people to thrive despite early adversity.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before You with hearts full of gratitude for all that has been accomplished this year.

Thank You for guiding our steps, sustaining our mission, and allowing us to serve with purpose and compassion. Every achievement, every life touched, and every seed of hope planted is because of Your grace. Lord, we acknowledge that without You, our efforts would be in vain.

We pray that the impact made this year will bear lasting fruit and bring glory to Your name. As we look ahead, grant us wisdom, renewed strength, and unwavering faith to continue the work You have entrusted to us.

Bless our trustees, staff, volunteers, residents, contractors, partners, and supporters who has contributed to this mission.

May Your favour rest upon them, and may Your love continue to shine through all we do.

We commit the coming year into Your hands, trusting that You will lead us from strength to strength.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Supporting people in Birmingham, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull to belong, contribute & thrive.

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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