



# Impact review

18/19



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# Introduction

Today YHA is a leading charity. We are a successful social enterprise, and one of the UK’s largest membership organisations. We have a history to be proud of, a trusted brand and a loyal supporter base. We are a youth organisation, but we serve all ages – providing adventures, opportunities and employment. We own and maintain properties of local significance.

While we are not primarily an environmental organisation, we are well placed to contribute to the protection of the natural world. We are not a mental health organisation, but residential, physical activity, being outdoors and access to culture all lead to increased wellbeing. We are not a hotel chain, but we must maintain the highest standards for overnight stays, food and customer service. We are big, we are diverse and we are stable.

In my two years at YHA, it has been a constant delight to see and hear how we make a difference to people’s lives. Every day we welcome thousands of people to stay with us, and through our amazing people and places we create memorable, meaningful experiences of adventure and discovery.

Much of this goes unrecorded – it’s just what we do. In this impact review I hope we give a flavour of how we make the most of our hostels and capabilities to benefit all that we meet, but particularly how we improve outcomes related to health, wellbeing and life-chances for young people and families who face challenges and disadvantage in their lives.

**James Blake**  
Chief Executive



# Impact and transparency

Reviewing and reporting on our impact really matters to us. We have a duty of care to those who support us – by staying with us, joining our membership, by giving and by volunteering – to report on our impact as a charity. Even more importantly, we have a responsibility to our beneficiaries to review and determine what we are doing well and should do more of – and where we could have an even greater impact if we did things differently.

As we develop our Strategy 2020 to take us to our 100th year, we are thinking a lot about how we might improve analysis of our work – how we report on what we have done, what it cost and what it achieved.

As important as it is to know how many people stay with us, over the year ahead we will be finding out much more about who stays with us. Our emerging strategy has both social inclusion and community cohesion at its core. YHA aims to be accessible to all and we want to actively encourage people from different backgrounds to use our shared spaces and places. To do this, we need to better understand who stays, works and volunteers for us currently. And we need to better understand the barriers to access so that we can work to remove them.



We know that YHA's universal offer is based on the very best standards in hostelling – it's why our user satisfaction scores are so high. We know that YHA programmes such as school residentials are based on the best evidence – on research such as Learning Away. And our targeted programmes are developed in partnership to create shared objectives that are jointly measured. Similarly, our volunteering and work experience opportunities continue to be based on the latest evidence of what works and the highest standards.

But across all of these we seek to better understand the individual and community impact that we are having. We need to continue to draw on best evidence and to undertake our own evaluations. This can be expensive. This can be time consuming. And – particularly when looking at long term impact – it can be very challenging.

Within this, we need to report on how much our impact costs. Much is made around charity overheads and traditional models focus on presenting as low a charitable overhead as possible. But is this right? When increasingly funders and partners want effective governance and monitoring and evaluation of impact, are we failing if we don't ensure appropriate funding on governance and management? And how do we best reflect cost per beneficiary? We know we need to increase access to our work to a wider group – and targeted work is always more costly. How do we reflect this in our reporting?

This impact review is our starting place for reporting on what we do and how we do it. For the fullest picture it should be read alongside our annual accounts.

It is important to remember that just because something cannot be easily counted or quantified it doesn't mean that it hasn't improved somebody's life. Every time I visit a hostel I see first hand the difference we make – to individuals, to families, to our staff and to volunteers. When a child visits a beach for the first time, or makes a den under the bunk bed or makes their first trip to the Tate, the impact is joy.

Transparency and good charity governance underpin our emerging strategy. Over 2018/19 we revised our governance to give members even more say in YHA and, as we go forward, we look forward to being challenged by members, partners and beneficiaries to do more and report better. Thank you for your part in reading this review and we look forward to working with you on our next steps.

**Anita Kerwin-Nye**

Director of Strategy & Engagement





# A ground-breaking movement in the making

YHA officially formed on 10th April 1930, amid austere but revolutionary times.

The Great Depression had hit, inner city working conditions were harsh, unemployment high, life expectancy low, and decent housing in desperately short supply. The outdoors offered health benefits, but train travel was restrictive and overnight stays were beyond the means of most.

In the same year, welfare reform peaked with the introduction of a fully government-funded benefits system. Rambling and cycling clubs were forming, ushering city dwellers to the fresh air of the countryside. And, in 1932, the longstanding countryside access campaign was to come to a head in direct action with the Mass Trespass of Kinder Scout.

Set against this background, YHA was established on a shoestring by a band of passionate volunteers. Inspired by the German example of two decades prior, our founders gave ordinary young people in Britain the opportunity – for the very first time – to escape to the countryside and enjoy leisure pursuits on a scale only previously possible for the wealthy.

In the early years, clusters of hostels sprang up regionally. And, as the decades rolled on and our membership expanded, more hostels were added to create a large, varied network. Hostels in towns and cities opened, democratising access to centres of culture and heritage. Standards improved. Opportunities grew.

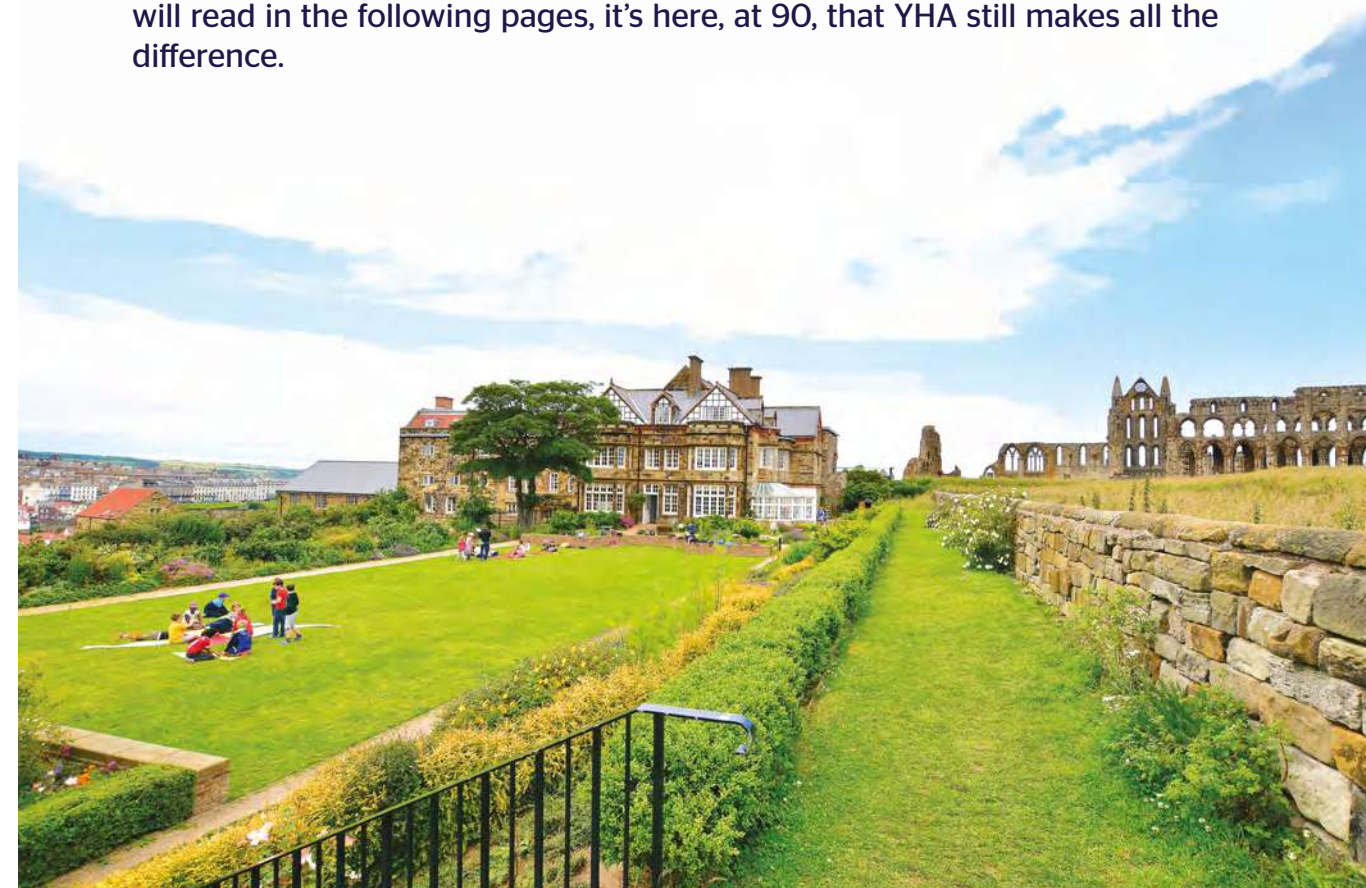


## Charitable object

To help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, and appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities, particularly by providing youth hostels or other accommodation for them in their travels, and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.

Eighty-nine years on and we continue to deliver on our founding purpose – last year alone, we welcomed 938,051 staying guests, including 411,643 young people under 26.

Times have changed. Travel has changed. Yet, today, many young people still live in crowded, polluted cities, lacking access to adventure, nature and fresh air. Affluence and life chances directly correlate. Many of the problems YHA was born of still exist. But the path from childhood to adulthood is no longer quite so straightforward. The conveyor belt of school, training, job for life, has become antiquated. Community and family cohesion are under threat. The challenges young people face today are many and complex. And, as you will read in the following pages, it's here, at 90, that YHA still makes all the difference.






# YHA today

Today, YHA is in impressive shape. We have a stable financial base. We top the Hostelling International list for customer satisfaction. Our operational standards are at their best. And our 150 uniquely characterful properties are well placed to enable us to tackle some of the most pressing social issues of the day.

Over the last ten years, we have transformed the sustainability of our charity. By operating on the principles of social enterprise, we continue to offer everyone affordable access to the countryside, our coasts and the culture of towns and cities.

Those that can afford to pay for their stays, do. Through efficient operation of our network, the revenue we make covers the bulk of our costs. That means the support we receive from members, donors and funders is invested where it can make the greatest difference: into our work with young people and their families – particularly those with challenging lives.

As we move forward, our focus is on making the most of our hostels and capabilities to achieve greater impact for all we meet. But particularly those who stand to benefit most.



Over the last ten years, we have transformed the sustainability of our charity. By operating on the principles of social enterprise, we continue to offer everyone affordable access to the countryside, our coasts and the culture of towns and cities.



**50**  
YHA Camping  
& Cabins sites

**84**  
LotC-  
accredited  
sites

# Our hostel network

hosting over  
**400,000**  
young people in  
2018/19

facilitating almost  
**1 million**  
adventures per year,  
for people of all ages

# Our top-level theory of change

✓

Access to the outdoors, nature, culture, volunteering, training and employment opportunities all have an evidenced positive impact on a person's life outcomes.

✓

Evidence also shows us that many people are increasingly disconnected from these things.

✓

Using our places and spaces, we connect people to each other, to nature and heritage, and to activities that support the development of essential skills for work and life.

✓

By doing this we support improvements to people's physical health, sense of mental wellbeing, life skill development and employment prospects.

## Social impact

Over and above our universal offer of affordable accommodation for everyone in their travels, our social impact focuses on two key themes:

✓

Health and wellbeing

✓

Developing young people

## In the UK today

1.46 million

families struggle to fund a day out together

248,000

children aged 4-11 are overweight or obese

330,000

disabled children have never accessed activities outside of their home

788,000

young people aged 16-24 are not in employment, education or training

178,000

children have caring responsibilities and no or limited recreational time

50%

of mental illness (except dementia) arises by age 14

40%

of young people experience at least one mental disorder by age 16

1 in 2 women

1 in 3 men

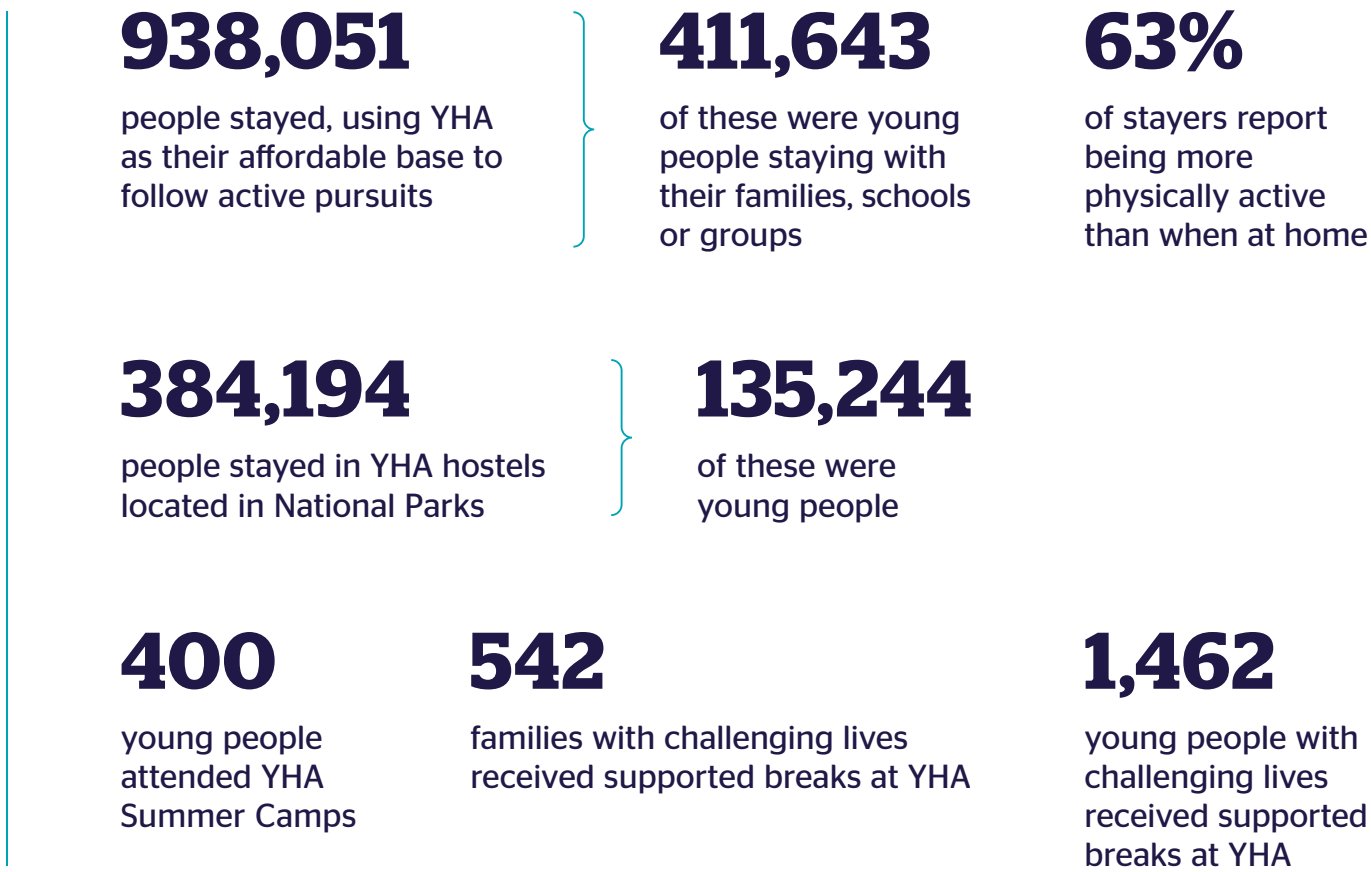
in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity, costing an estimated £7.4bn a year

## Beneficiaries

In short, we're here for the benefit of everybody. Our universal offer of affordable accommodation, along with the enthusiasm and local knowledge of our staff, enables guests of all ages to access the outdoors, adventure, culture and heritage in meaningful and rewarding ways. Yet, as the following evidence will attest, our places, people and programmes make the greatest difference to young people and their families, especially those with the most challenging lives and facing the greatest barriers to participation.



# Health and wellbeing



## Interventions

- affordable accommodation
- free for young people and families with challenging lives
- dedicated activity centres
- YHA Summer Camps

## Outcomes

- increased physical activity
- improved family relationships
- community cohesion
- reduced isolation
- greater life satisfaction
- improved sense of wellbeing
- improved self-confidence
- better communication skills
- greater appreciation for the environment

# Developing young people



## Interventions

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Educational</b>  | <b>Work readiness</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• outdoor adventure and curriculum-linked residentials</li><li>• experiential learning</li><li>• exposure to nature and culture</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• residential volunteering</li><li>• traineeships</li><li>• work placements</li><li>• work experience</li></ul> |

## Outcomes

- character development
  - greater resilience
  - life skills
  - work skills
- improved life chances**



# Health and wellbeing





We are passionate about improving physical health and mental wellbeing. We're here to help everyone, regardless of age, gain new skills, grow in self-esteem and enjoy active, healthy lifestyles.

The experiences we have in our formative years shape our attitudes and behaviours into adulthood. We understand that childhood is a crucial time for laying the foundations for physical and mental health in later life. It is here that we make the greatest difference, so we prioritise programmes targeted at positive outcomes for young people and their families.



# The problem

Recent years have seen significant decline in physical activity, 'green exercise' and physical literacy. We are increasingly disconnected from nature. Access to the outdoors, adventure, culture and heritage is crucial to our wellbeing, yet it remains far from universal or equal. Consequently, we have seen increases in obesity and clinically diagnosed mental health problems in young people. The trends are expected to continue. These physical and mental health factors affect young people's personal and social development and give rise to behaviours detrimental to their prospects.

# The solution

With such an expansive network of hostels and activity centres, YHA is uniquely placed to get people of all ages active outdoors and engaged in their own wellbeing. Our youth hostels are the gateway to National Parks, sites of historic significance, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, our varied coastline, and the culture of towns and cities. They're meeting places. And they're the bases from which people can try an activity for the first time or pursue interests for a lifetime.

Our targeted programmes are designed to offer specific support to several currently underrepresented groups. For young people and families with challenging lives, such as those coping with poverty, disability, caring responsibilities and those who have fled conflict zones, YHA has provided free and part-funded residential breaks with the aim of improving activity levels, creating a sense of belonging and supporting mental wellness.



1.46m families

struggle to fund a day out together (ONS, 2015)

Children who regularly play outdoors

are happier, healthier and more confident (Natural Connections Demonstration Project, 2012-2016)

Only 17.5% of children

in school years 1-11 currently meet government guidelines of at least 60 minutes of sport and physical activity per day (Sport England Active Lives Survey, 2018)

Just 1 in 5

children regularly play outside (Natural England, 2016)

# Inactivity contributes to:

- Health risks including obesity
- Lack of physical literacy
- Inability to deal with stress
- Mental health problems
- Low self-esteem or self-perception

# In 2018/19

938,051

people stayed, using YHA as their affordable base for active pursuit

411,643

of these were under 26s staying with their families, schools or groups

104,799

young people took part in YHA-led activities

542 families

1,462 young people

with challenging lives received supported breaks at YHA



# Physical health

Almost 1 in 2 women and 1 in 3 men are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity. The resulting cost to health and social care is approximately £7.4bn per year (Sport England, April 2013).

Research shows that the steepest rise in health benefits associated with physical activity occurs between zero exercise and 100 minutes per week. Benefits include reducing the risk of chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and some common cancers.

(Nigam, 2011)

We can make the greatest impact on health outcomes by tackling inactivity – creating accessible, attractive and affordable routes to participation.

The availability of open space and leisure provision impacts positively on young people's physical activity. Generally, the outdoors is perceived as the most important environment for physically active play.



Early exposure to outdoor activities makes a lasting impression. Children and adolescents introduced to outdoor activities are more likely to choose an active lifestyle in adulthood.

**Competence and enjoyment are the two most important factors for children and make the difference between continued participation and disillusionment. Tailoring activity to the individual and their ability matters, giving focus to young people's "needs, wishes, voice and choice."**

(Sport England, 2016)

By

providing affordable accommodation to all, we can improve equality of access to green spaces.

targeting specific, underrepresented groups with the offer of free and supported breaks, we enable those who otherwise miss out to access inspiring places and discover the value of outdoor activity.

providing a wide variety of activities, we can engage young people in sporting and outdoor pursuits, offering tailored programmes and the opportunity to try new things. We can nurture positive attitudes and improve physical literacy – increasing participants' motivation to pursue physical activity long term, and improving poise, balance and confidence in an increasingly risk-averse world.

**26%**

of children in the most deprived areas are obese

**12%**

of children in the least deprived areas are obese

**Children in the UK's most deprived areas are twice as likely to be obese than those in the least deprived areas. Significantly, the gap has widened over time.**

(Obesity Statistics Briefing Paper no. 3336, House of Commons Library, 2016)



# Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health is as important as physical health. And, as with physical health, childhood experiences are determinative. Most children grow up mentally healthy, yet surveys suggest that more children and young people have problems with their mental health today than 30 years ago. There are interventions we can make to build the bedrock of lifelong mental wellness, high self-esteem and emotional resilience.

**Each year, mental ill-health costs the UK economy an estimated £106 billion through lost productivity, welfare benefits and health care.**

(OECD, 2018)

1 in 8 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder – that’s roughly 3 children in every classroom (NHS Digital, 2018, ‘Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2017’).

50% of mental health problems are established by age 14 and 75% by age 24 (RC Kessler et al., 2005).

**Mental illness during childhood and adolescence results in UK costs of £11,030 to £59,130 annually per child.**

(M Suhrcke, D Pillas & C Selai, 2008)



**“The arts, including music, dance, theatre, visual arts and writing, are increasingly recognised as having the potential to support health and wellbeing.”**

(Public Health England, 2016)

**By**

**providing inspiring, welcoming spaces, common rooms and self-catering kitchens**, we encourage people of different ages and diverse backgrounds to make friends, share stories and engage with a wealth of life and cross-cultural experiences. This is vitally important in today’s society.

**providing hostels in areas of national cultural significance** – not least Cardiff, Stratford-upon-Avon, Ironbridge, Liverpool, Manchester and near Hadrian’s Wall – and with seven London hostels, we offer affordable, often doorstep access to national museums and heritage attractions. In the delivery of theatre workshops and history packages to groups of young people; by providing discounted tickets to attractions; and in organising West End Wednesday to allow lone travellers to see a show at a reduced cost and in company, we provide a variety of access points to the arts, culture and heritage.

**hosting or leading residentials for youth groups and schools**, we offer opportunities for personal growth and group bonding. Be it a revision retreat in a remote corner of the Lake District, or an activity package at one of our dedicated centres, young people are given the chance to break with the distractions and complications of home and stretch themselves, work together, understand each other and communicate better.

**providing activity camps and funded residentials for young people and families living in challenging situations** – with significant risk factors for mental ill-health – we offer people the chance to spend quality time together as a family or peer group. Through these funded trips, we can reduce feelings of isolation, provide respite, raise hopes and aspirations, and demonstrate there’s a whole world out there, beyond the confines of young people’s present circumstances.

**“One of the most significant impacts of residentials is on relationships, both peer relationships and relationships between staff and students – at both primary and secondary level.”**

(Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Learning Away 2015)



# Survey results 18/19

## Children’s results

We piloted a quantitative survey for children and young people to complete at the start and end of their residential stay.

The survey captured data on 1,026 young people’s wellbeing, physical activity, skills and development.

As a result of a group/school residential	Ages 7 to 11	Ages 11 to 16
tried a new sport or activity with YHA	56%	46%
left happier than they arrived	39%	32%
made new friends	66%	80%
gained confidence	88%	69%

## Group leader results

According to leaders, YHA is delivering the outcomes schools and groups require. As a result of school or group residentials with YHA, amongst their pupils:

100%	100%	95%	95%
reported improved wellbeing and confidence	reported greater independence and improved life skills	reported a raising of aspirations	reported improved friendships



## Case study

### YHA and British Triathlon

In 2017, YHA teamed up with British Triathlon. In the first year we hosted more than 70 meets and events. Our partnership aims to encourage people of all ages and abilities to give the sport a go and develop those already engaged with triathlon.

### Tri Activator Training

In 2018, young triathletes completed their British Triathlon Activator training with YHA. The one-day course is designed to help participants develop the skills to lead triathlon activities, become ambassadors for the sport, and improve confidence, communication skills, presentation skills and creativity.

At the end of the course, participants were motivated and looked forward to using their skills in the future.

**100%** of participants increased in self confidence

gained new knowledge and understanding

“I would like to do something working overseas - like with refugees... problem solving and the confidence and skills I learnt will help me with that.”

(Participant)





# Case study

## Free family activity breaks

In August 2018, YHA worked with the Family Holiday Association, Venus and Family Action, to deliver free, three-night family activity camps at YHA Ravenstor and YHA Edale.

Eighty-four young people and parents joined us for the trips, drawn from inner city areas of Manchester and Liverpool. All were low income families and most had additional, complex needs which included difficult relationships, disability, long-term health issues and trauma. Some had recently settled in the UK, having fled conflict zones, and lived on incomes well below welfare benefit amounts for British citizens. This inhibited their ability to participate in cultural or leisure pursuits that would aid their integration into UK society.

During the activity camps, families walked, talked, played games together, explored the countryside and participated in climbing, archery and canoeing. They spent quality time together, cementing family bonds and making happy memories with newfound friends.



**76%**

of participants  
had never had  
a family holiday

**39%**

of participants  
had a disability

**Most exercised less  
than the recommended  
150 minutes a week,  
putting many at risk of  
obesity.**

As they left, all families reported improved health, wellbeing and a greater sense of satisfaction with life. For those with English as a second language, our guests achieved more confidence in communication as well as a real sense of belonging.

**85%**

of parents were  
more active than  
usual

**74%**

of 7 to 11-year-olds  
were more active  
than usual

**96%**

of parents and 7 to  
11-year-olds learnt  
something new

**61%**

of 11 to 18-year-  
olds learnt  
something new

**“Everything was 10/10. Staff,  
place, group and facilities spot  
on. Wouldn’t change anything.  
We are all extremely happy  
and very, very grateful for this  
fantastic adventure! Thank you  
a million times!”**

(Participant)





# Case study

## Common ground for children with a rare condition

Myhre syndrome is an extremely rare genetic disorder that manifests in short stature, dysmorphic facial features, mild to moderate intellectual disability and bone abnormalities.

Families with disabled children, such as those affected by Myhre syndrome, face a combination of financial, emotional and practical pressures. Fear of public reaction causes parents to shy away from social interaction. Without support, it's easy to become isolated.

In December 2018, eight affected families were provided a free weekend stay together at YHA National Forest, with food and accommodation funded through YHA's Family Breaks Programme. This was a singular opportunity for parents to exchange information in the company of others with shared experience. For children with Myhre and their siblings, this was a safe and relaxed atmosphere in which to meet and mix with other children.



**“We are looking forward to meeting everyone and getting information from each other. This is the first time we are meeting face-to-face - we have only ever met on Facebook.”**

(Parent)

**“Families with disabled children feel less isolated when they have contact with other families in a similar situation and have somewhere to turn for information and advice.”**

(Parent)



## The social benefits of YHA Summer Camps

Every summer, five of our flagship activity hostels host YHA Summer Camps. Catering for 8 to 16-year-olds, camps are specifically designed to engage young people in meaningful activity during the six-week summer holidays.

In 2018, 400 young people from Royal Air Force (RAF) families took part.

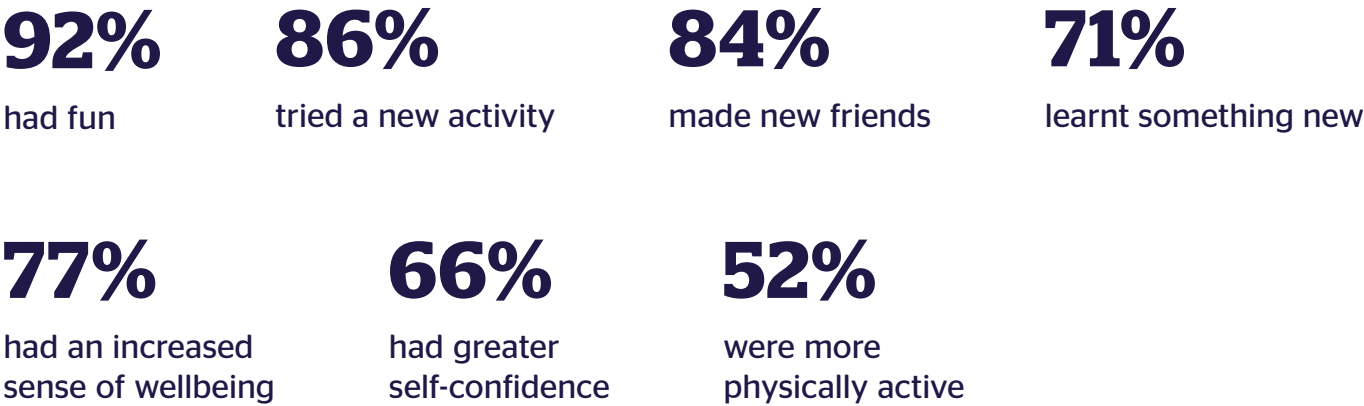
Service life is characterised by frequent moves to different parts of the UK and abroad. This can have a negative impact

on pupil performance and attainment at school. The impact is greater in cases where children have special education needs.

YHA Summer Camps provide young people with the opportunity to test and learn about themselves, to grow in confidence by trying new activities in a new setting and in the company of new people. Camps encourage youngsters to be as active as possible - both during their stay and upon their return home.



We asked last year's participants to rate their camp experiences. The evaluation confirmed that significant social benefits, and that experiential recreation improves young people's health and wellbeing.



**“The activities really stretched him and were well planned and organised. He loved the food and is still talking about the amazing leaders! He is more confident in himself.”**

(Parent)

### Longer term outcomes

Two to three weeks after camp, parents indicated several positive effects on their children:



**If you represent a youth or family organisation and would like to discuss how we could work together to support groups of your beneficiaries, email us at [breaks@yha.org.uk](mailto:breaks@yha.org.uk)**

**If you would like to support our work with young people and families, email us at [fundraising@yha.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@yha.org.uk)**



# Developing young people





Our second thematic focus is on improving young people's life chances through education and upskilling. Travel broadens horizons. High quality learning experiences away from home hold unique value in removing distractions, engaging students with their subject matter and making lessons more memorable. In turn, this raises attainment and ambition.

Our volunteering opportunities, work experience and traineeships are designed to expand skill sets and prepare young people for the world of work. We are dedicated to enriching young lives, encouraging young people to achieve and aspire - whatever their background or circumstances.



**Residentials transform relationships, fostering a strong sense of community and belonging between staff and students. This supports a wide range of positive social outcomes long after the return to school.**

(Learning Away, 2017)



## The problem

Though it has reduced a little over the past decade, the attainment gap is still significant. And it is widest for pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and those assessed with special educational needs (EEF, 2018).

Transition periods between phases of education pose a risk to pupils' motivation to learn. As young people move from the familiar to the unknown, drop-out rates increase. This is particularly concerning for vulnerable learners and those already falling behind (EEF, 2018).

The route from education into employment is no longer straightforward. The once ubiquitous model of transition to adulthood – characterised by moving from education to employment (often into a job for life) – is no longer the norm. Getting that first job can be difficult.

Finally, participation in youth development schemes is lower amongst young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, further inclining the playing field.

## The solution

Taking part in enrichment activities helps develop core skills and prepares young people for life. We provide opportunities for young people to participate in outdoor activities and hands-on learning, giving them the chance to explore and cultivate new interests. These enrichment activities build character and confidence.

Group and school residentials are particularly important. At any time of year, they promote academic achievement, personal growth and class cohesion. Around times of transition, outdoor adventure is key to strengthening resilience and supporting young people to cope better with adversity and change.

YHA is the UK's largest provider of quality-assured residentials. We have 84 Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) accredited sites.

Last year, 110,315 young people accessed an affordable residential through their school or youth group.

Currently, 320 schools on the Department for Education list of 5,200 schools located in the most deprived areas access YHA hostels and programmes. Uniquely, we match-fund educational breaks for students eligible for pupil premium and coping with additional challenges. Last year, 1,462 young people benefited.

Working with partners such as NCS and DofE, with schools specialising in SEND, through our volunteering offering, work readiness schemes, and as an Investors in People Gold employer, we nurture young people's personal and social development, improving employability and prospects.



# Education and enrichment

We offer a range of packages and self-led residentials in inspiring surroundings. With over 130 hostels equipped to accommodate groups and a menu of half-day, full day and bolt-on activities available, our residentials are flexible and can be tailored to meet the specific requirements of each group.

## Life skills and enrichment residentials

- discovery package
- transition trips
- revision breaks

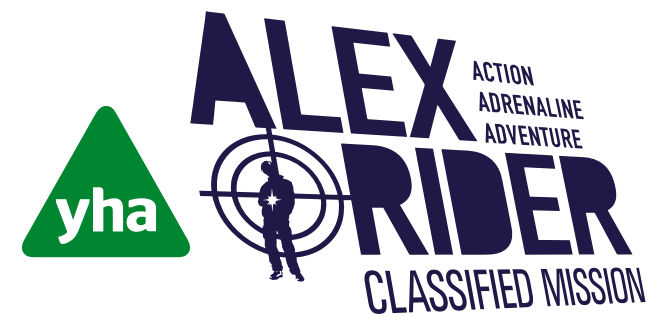
## Curriculum-linked packages and field studies

- history
- Alex Rider Classified Mission
- geography
- ecology
- geology

## Residentials available with YHA

### Activity packages

- action adventure packages at our dedicated activity centres
- multi-activity packages delivered network-wide
- bolt-on activities to fill evenings and down time



In partnership with Walker Books and author Anthony Horowitz, we created a unique residential. Over the course of two, three or four nights, students – or ‘agents’ – hone their skills through a variety of adventurous activities including rock climbing, raft building, orienteering, navigation walks, night hikes, gadget design and code breaking.

**“From the moment we arrived, the special agent mission and new agent names got the group instantly hooked. All activities linked to the spy theme and gave the trip a new element.**

**The last day’s activity which led to the discovery of the Alex Rider books hidden in a room was brilliant! It meant we had 30 copies of the book (a rare thing indeed) and we started reading as a class as soon as we got back.**

**We have done lots of literacy work: comparing the book to the film, persuasive writing and lots of vocabulary work based on Horowitz’s rich language. Our science has come from creating spy gadgets for Alex which covers a lot of areas of science in the new national curriculum.”**

(Andrea Fischer, year 5 teacher)

Our aim is to encourage enthusiasm for reading and, in the long-term, literacy, whilst giving students the chance to enjoy and learn from real challenges in the great outdoors.

### Learning outcomes:

- ability to listen to instruction and respond
- resilience and self-motivation
- collaborative working, supporting, communicating and recognising team achievements
- strategic thinking as an individual and member of a team
- increased confidence and physical literacy through participation in adventurous activities
- ability to provide constructive feedback to all groups
- comparison and reflection on performance, understanding areas for improvement and progression



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# The benefits of residentials

	Immediate gain	Enduring benefit
Time away from home	Fresh perspectives away from normal routine, people and influences	Experience, which will inform future decision-making
Enrichment activities, practical challenges and real-life learning	New skills and understanding. Positive engagement with learning	Greater knowledge, improved skills and understanding
Opportunity to develop and practise social skills	Enhanced relationships with peers and leader. More successful transition experiences at all key stages	Improved relationships, team working, communication skills and problem solving. Enhanced trajectories to work or further study
Opportunities to overcome fears, stretch and achieve	Increase in confidence resulting in greater participation and willingness to try new things	Greater motivation to achieve and raised aspirations
Break down of existing barriers and hierarchies	Better understanding of people, difference and diversity	Greater community cohesion and sense of belonging

# Survey results 18/19

## Children's results

	Ages 7 to 11	Ages 11 to 16
got on better with their class or group	86%	75%
got on better with their teachers or leaders	80%	77%
learnt more about the environment	88%	72%

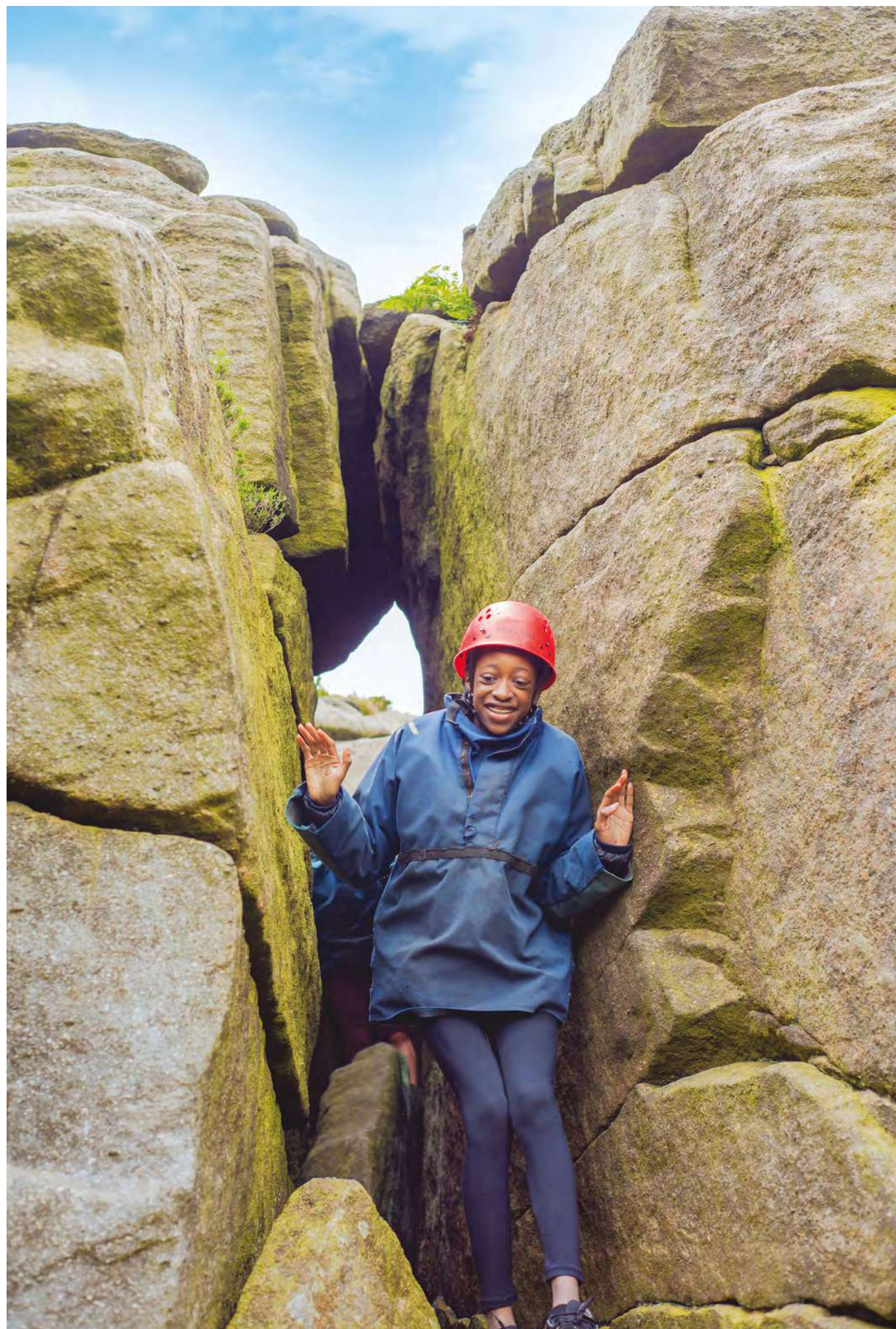
## Group leader results

As a result of school or group residentials with YHA, amongst their pupils:

100%	82%
reported greater independence	reported improved engagement with learning
95%	53%
reported the learning of new skills	reported smoother transitions or progression

“Overall, studies of adventure learning interventions consistently show positive benefits on academic learning. On average, pupils who participate in adventure learning interventions make approximately four additional month’s progress.” (EEF, 2018)





## Case study

### Huge progress in Halifax

By its own admission, Parkinson Lane School has not always been a high performing learning institution. However, since 2005 – when YHA and Parkinson Lane primary school began working together – the impact of the outdoor activities on students’ personal and academic development has been remarkable.

Head teacher Gugsy Ahmed attributes a significant part of their progress, from under-performing school to an Ofsted rating of outstanding, to their long-standing partnership with YHA:

**“YHA has really made a difference to our educational achievements as a school.”**

Almost 99% of the pupils are drawn from ethnic-minority backgrounds, mainly Pakistani, and almost all of them speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average, as is the number of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Despite the challenges, the school continues to record high academic performance as evidenced by not just its coveted outstanding rating but also other numerous accolades, including Investors in Pupils, Arts Mark, International School and Healthy School status.

According to Parkinson Lane teacher representatives, outdoor learning facilitated by YHA has resulted in significant academic progress. They have noticed that students who attend YHA residentials and take part in extra curricula activities “make greater sub-level improvements, as compared to those who don’t participate.”



# Smoothing transitions and bridging the attainment gap

“The gap between poor pupils’ attainment at the end of primary school and the end of secondary school has widened. Since 2012, low-income pupils have been making less progress year on year, compared to their more affluent peers.” (Social Mobility Commission, 2017)

Secondary school drop off means poor children are failing to finish school with qualifications that will create opportunities for them to succeed in life.



Transition points – leaving early years to primary, primary to secondary and secondary to college or university – means upheaval: new surroundings, new people and new (and numerous) teachers. Change can be daunting. And though most cope, transition can damage motivation and academic achievement. The harm caused by transition is most profound for young people from economically disadvantaged households and from ethnic minority groups (Rodda, Hallgarten and Freeman, 2013).

## What can we do about it?

In a 2014 study, researchers set out to find the most effective way of improving outcomes during transition periods. A tailor-made residential programme delivered by YHA came top – by some way.

For the study, new secondary school pupils took part in a bespoke three-day residential at YHA. Measuring outcomes using the Basic Needs Satisfaction in Life scale (BPNS), researchers compared the results of this residential against a one-week induction delivered at school and a pre-existing ‘off-the-shelf’ outdoor adventurous activities (OAA) residential.



## The results were clear

The data showed that pupils with the lowest levels of self-determination initially achieved the greatest increase in their scores and that these increases were most evident following the YHA programme. The student sample included pupils of lower socio-economic status and ethnic minorities, and therefore those most likely to find transition challenging and face difficulties in accessing natural spaces (Natural England, 2011).

The research concluded that tailored OAA programmes, like ours, are most effective in improving educational trajectories for those at risk in transition and with limited connection with nature. Programmes are most effective when teachers and providers shape them together. YHA is a champion of Brilliant Residentials, a Learning Away campaign that advocates just this.

**“In relation to the most positive outcomes in self-determination, the tailor-made programme achieved the strongest scale of change for the greatest number of pupils in all three subscales of autonomy, competence and relatedness.”**

(Allan, Mckenna, Buckland and Bell, 2014)



# YHA winter residentials

Only 1 in 5 children experience a residential every year and students in disadvantaged areas have the least opportunity to take part (Learning Away).

Evidence from Learning Away shows that the sooner a residential takes place in the school year, the greater the impact on students. Yet school residentials are more likely to take place in the summer term, immediately prior to transition points and just as teachers are waving their class goodbye.

## Benefits of winter residentials



more time for learning to be embedded and reinforced in school



deeper relationships earlier in the school year



students more willing to try something new, ask for help and participate



behaviour improves along with motivation to learn



## Learning Away's pupil survey showed:

**77%**

said the way they were taught on the residential will help them do better in the subject

**87%**

of secondary pupils felt more confident to try new things

**79%**

of primary pupils said they know their teacher better

**72%**

of primary pupils said that their behaviour was better at school

**71%**

felt more strongly motivated to learn

LEARNING

AWAY

Responding to this evidence, YHA winter residentials launched this year to improve outcomes and access. YHA winter residentials are, on average, 35% cheaper than standard pricing. This makes us more affordable for schools struggling with resources and offers a greater return on investment.

**If you are from a school and want to discuss how we could help improve outcomes for your students, email us at [education@yha.org.uk](mailto:education@yha.org.uk)**

**If you would like to support YHA's work with schools, email us at [fundraising@yha.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@yha.org.uk)**



# Employability

The route into work can be fraught with challenges. Not least for those leaving education with poor attainment. Leaving school without adequate qualifications has short and long-term consequences, on self-esteem, employment prospects and life chances. Improved attainment leads to better health outcomes and reduced crime.

## 788,000 young people

(aged 16 to 24 years) are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (Office of National Statistics, 2018)



## Partnerships that improve prospects

Working in partnership, we provide a variety of opportunities for young people to develop themselves and their chances of future economic independence through volunteering and work-readiness programmes. We make a tangible difference to young people's chances by offering practical work experience that boosts CVs, increases confidence and develops communication skills.

National Citizen Service (NCS) is a four-phase programme specifically designed to provide teenagers aged 15 to 17 with enrichment experiences. The programme aims to empower and engage, strengthen UCAS statements and CVs, and encourage young people to meet new friends and grow their networks. Annually, c.8,000 NCS participants complete a four-day residential adventure and activity programme with YHA (NCS Phase 1).

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is recognised as one of the world's leading youth achievement awards. YHA is the largest single provider of cost neutral DofE Gold residentials in the UK, enabling young people of limited means to find an accessible and rewarding way to complete their Gold Award. Our young volunteers undertake a shared activity in a residential setting away from home for five days and four nights. It is designed to push personal boundaries, develop new skills and enhance both CVs and UCAS applications.





# Volunteering opportunities

YHA was built by volunteers. By enthusiasts who spent weekends doing up old buildings, turning their hands to ground work, plumbing, plastering and procurement. Today volunteers are no less important, but we have developed and refined our opportunities to ensure tangible benefits for those that gift their time. We offer a broad range.

## Supporting the operation of hostels:

- residential hostel placements
- work experience
- traineeships
- local volunteering
- volunteer managing

## Supporting the maintenance and repair of hostels:

- working holidays
- group volunteering
- DofE Gold residentials
- volunteer handy persons

## Supporting our youth activity programmes:

- summer camp team leader
- volunteer trainee instructor
- festival volunteer

## Helping to promote YHA:

- volunteer photographer
- volunteer videographer
- various admin roles

## Socially inclusive volunteering

Volunteers of all ages support us, giving their time and skills for a number of different reasons, including making a contribution to their community, making social connections, and fostering a sense of purpose, self-esteem and life satisfaction.

Volunteers make an enormous contribution to YHA. For example, volunteer working parties meet regularly at local hostels to maintain and improve our spaces while making new friends and building skills. It is only through the

support of our volunteer hostel managers that we are able to operate some of our smallest and most remote hostels. In exchange, volunteer managers are given accommodation and the opportunity to explore somewhere new for a week or two a year.

**“I enjoyed myself. It was good to get away from it all into a very different environment. Met some lovely people and the area was beautiful to explore.”**

(Barbara, volunteer manager after a week at YHA St David's)

## In 2018/19

Of our **1,984** volunteers } **947** were under 26 years old

Young people participated in a variety of volunteering roles:

**367**

completed volunteering and residential sections of their DofE Award with YHA

**224**

completed a residential hostel placement

**124**

participated in residential and non-residential group volunteering through partners such as North Lindsay College, the University of Bath and the University of Coventry

**67**

participated in work experience



# Volunteering outcomes

## Self-reliance and independent living

Because many of our hostels are in rural locations, opportunities are necessarily residential. Volunteers stay for free and prepare their own meals in our self-catering kitchens. For many young volunteers, this is their first experience of living away from home, meal planning, and learning to live responsibly and courteously with others.

## Communication and interpersonal skills

Whether working with our staff teams to run a hostel or volunteering as a group to paint a room or create a garden, young people learn key team working skills, how to interact with new people, and to undertake and overcome new challenges together.

**94% of young volunteers reported growth in confidence and the development of new skills as a result of their experiences with YHA.**

## Self-awareness and empathy

Hostels are vibrant, lively shared spaces, accommodating visitors from many different cultures. As a result, the experience of volunteering in a hostel is often eye-opening and horizon-broadening. Few experiences are as immersive as volunteering at a hostel.

## Self-confidence

Within a supportive environment, young volunteers receive clear instruction and adequate training. This foundation enables them to gain a sense of achievement and realise their capabilities. This empowers them with greater self-confidence to pursue their life goals.



# Case study

## Volunteering at YHA Summer Camps

Each year, more than 40 volunteers are recruited from across the UK to support the running of YHA Summer Camps and provide pastoral care for participants.

Volunteers develop their leadership skills whilst getting the opportunity to travel to a part of the UK they perhaps haven't explored before. The week or more away provides invaluable work experience for young people thinking of pursuing careers in youth work, teaching or outdoor education in particular.





# Work placements for those leaving education



Four London YHA hostels hosted four students from Hendon School on work placement over a 10-week period. All in year 12, as per government requirement, the students had to remain in full-time education. However, without the necessary GCSEs, they had not been able to progress to A level. All were looking to complete NVQs whilst resitting Maths and English in the hope of gaining the UCAS points to progress in their education.

**Working one day a week, the students joined team members to complete tasks including:**

- greeting guests
- making teas and coffees
- maintaining safe and tidy working environments
- stock-taking
- managing difficult or challenging situations

The opportunity to undertake a variety of duties and responsibilities was appreciated and students reported the development of new skills in communication, problem-solving, leadership and customer service.

Students gained experience of the workplace, the importance of time keeping and techniques for working at pace. They learned patience, business language and gained confidence to take the initiative.

**“It has made me see myself as more employable. I am more of a confident person now than before.”**

(Participant)

**If you are an organisation working to support young people into employment and would like to discuss how we could work together, email us at [volunteering@yha.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@yha.org.uk)**

If you would like to donate or fund our work around life-skills and employability, email us at [fundraising@yha.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@yha.org.uk)



# Special educational needs and disabilities

## Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a young person's ability to learn and impact:

- behaviour or ability to socialise
- reading and writing
- ability to understand things
- concentration levels
- physical ability

YHA works with young people with SEND through partnership with individual schools and organisations such as MENCAP, the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and I CAN to enable these young people to achieve positive outcomes.

## Work experience for Woodfields School pupils

The attainment gap for pupils with special educational needs is larger than any other group. This is linked closely with economic disadvantage: 27% of pupils with SEN are eligible for free school meals compared to 12% without (EEF, 2018).

Residential trips away from home can be particularly powerful for young people with special educational needs. Our aim is to deliver educational residentials and work experience opportunities that improve students' sense of wellbeing and independence through exploration and fun.

Woodfields School in Sheringham, Norfolk, serves pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties and autism spectrum disorders. We welcomed the students to YHA Sheringham to complete their work experience. YHA helped them achieve the same amount of time on work experience as mainstream pupils, in a more manageable way, by offering shorter two-hour sessions rather than full days.

Despite their disabilities, they have found the hostel easy to move around. The students spoke positively about the warm hostel environment and talked about friendly, polite guests and staff. Lesley, Woodfields School Transition Coordinator, felt that this has been positive for their social skills. She also felt that the experiences helped them appreciate what a real work environment is like.

## Ten years of residentials for Lydgate School

We have worked with Lydgate School for more than a decade, collaborating to create residentials that enable young people with physical, emotional and medical difficulties to travel, explore, learn and enjoy new experiences. The partnership is particularly important because of the high proportion of financially disadvantaged young people at the school; the number of students receiving pupil premium is higher than the national average.

Judy Rowland, ex-teacher and lead on outdoor education, underlined the significance of YHA's support for the students: "Without YHA, [the students] wouldn't have gone anywhere else, nor experienced a different environment."

Being away from home, doing day-to-day tasks for themselves – such as taking a shower, choosing what to wear, and taking care of their own room keys – gives students an increased sense of independence and achievement.





# Employment

YHA's ethos from the very beginning has been to create new opportunities for people. Though we started as a voluntary organisation, today we are an Investors in People Gold employer. Working in partnership locally, we also offer programmes to upskill the unemployed – with some opportunities leading to employment.



## Case study

### YHA and the Department for Work and Pensions

We're working in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Jobcentre Plus to support the Youth Obligation scheme – a government initiative aimed at delivering intensive work-focused support for the unemployed. Key aspects of this include work-related training or guaranteed work experience. Both help young unemployed people develop skills and experiences that can enable progression to apprenticeships and jobs.

Steve joined us for four days work experience at YHA Snowdon Llanberis. He is trying to make a successful transition back into work following several months of unemployment. Steve assisted with housekeeping, gardening, painting and grounds maintenance. He gained work-focussed training, successfully completing courses in health and safety at work and safeguarding.

Steve felt the experience had improved his self-confidence as well as practical and communication skills. He learnt about hostelling, YHA's work and the associated employment and travel opportunities available.

**“It's a good opportunity. People here are nice. I wouldn't mind getting a job here.”**

(Steve)

As well as hands-on work experience, we offer job seekers tours of hostels so they can get a sense of YHA as a workplace. A group joined us for a tour of YHA Conwy recently.

“The feedback from those on the tour was fantastic. Your passion for your job shone through and a number of claimants wished to apply for opportunities straight away. For the young people from Isallt (the local homeless unit) to come along and see opportunities available to them when they feel particularly disadvantaged was great to see and hopefully we will be able to develop a fruitful relationship, making a real difference to the lives of these young people.” (Jobcentre Plus staff member)



## Case study

### YHA and the House of St Barnabus

Since 2017, we've worked with the House of St Barnabas to offer employment and work training to young people facing housing, training, employment and other personal challenges. The experiences help to develop young people's skills, offer a route into the hospitality sector and can result in a job with YHA and progressions to independence.

Recently Ryan was referred to us. He had moved back to the UK from Australia and was struggling to find housing. He was dealing with bereavement, having lost his mother before his return. Without family or friends to help him settle, finding affordable housing and employment became difficult. He was at risk of being homeless and, in his words, “it was a hard life mentally.” The House of St Barnabas stepped in to help him with affordable, secure accommodation. YHA assisted with the offer of a work placement.

Ryan completed a course in hospitality and catering, then joined us at YHA London Central. After just three days, he had impressed staff so much that he was offered full time employment in the maintenance department.

**“The staff were great! Very supportive.”** (Ryan)

The House of St Barnabus and YHA partnership helped Ryan secure housing and employment, which in turn helped improve his mental wellbeing.







# Case study

## YHA and We Mind the Gap

We Mind the Gap is a charity that gives new opportunities to under-served women in local communities - bridging the gap from state-dependence to full-time work or education. YHA Manchester worked with We Mind the Gap to support Kirsty, a care leaver with no prior work experience.

Kirsty completed a three-week placement at the hostel. She undertook a range of tasks with enthusiasm. The placement helped boost her confidence whilst giving her some practical experience in the workplace. She left with a certificate of achievement and a reference. On her last day, Kirsty thanked the staff with a card in which she wrote how pleased she was to have been given the chance to work with them.



**1,341**  
employees

**472**

are young people

**= 35%**  
of all staff



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Gold

In 2018, we retained our Investors in People Gold accreditation - an award we've held since 2013. Our latest Investors in People report identified four key strengths:

### people

they are passionate about what they do

### values

they underpin the culture of the organisation and are used for peer recognition

### standards

the world class standards are leading to operational consistency

### impact

measuring impact enabled people to take pride in the true value of what YHA does

YHA's working culture nurtures talent, with clear routes to progression. This has meant that many people have stayed with us, gaining internal promotion, building their careers here and winning long service awards.

**“One of the results is that the overwhelming number of people now say, unequivocally, that YHA is a GREAT place to work.”**  
(Investors in People assessment)



# Support us





# Our core capabilities

- ✓ We have a measurable impact on children and young people's health and wellbeing. We have been collecting vast amounts of impact data over a number of years both around scale of reach and increasingly around impact on individuals.
- ✓ We can roll out projects with fidelity at a national scale. Drawing on skills from the hospitality sector, we have built an operations function that can roll out new projects in a standardised, efficient and effective way, maintaining quality standards and cost controls.
- ✓ We operate a social enterprise that provides significant and sustainable sources of income.
- ✓ We have a strong, trusted brand that is engaging and relevant to our users and supporters.
- ✓ We manage 150 community assets, engaging local people, local buildings and local knowledge. This is key, as the charity sector at large is being encouraged to identify community assets and local solutions.
- ✓ Our digital services are ahead of the curve, improving our effectiveness and ability to trade online. As well as our existing digital services, we're planning and investing in new ones.
- ✓ We have a strong membership and a 90-year movement. As we prepare for our 90th anniversary, we prepare to harness the power of that movement.
- ✓ Volunteers. Volunteers are the life blood of charities. From trustees to seasonal hostel managers, to handymen and women, our volunteers remain at the very core of what we do.
- ✓ In house communications talent. The materials we produce, the videos and print resources, are comparable to the resources produced by agencies.
- ✓ A strong workforce. We have talent throughout our organisation and passion and enthusiasm for the organisation's work that is rarely seen so consistently.



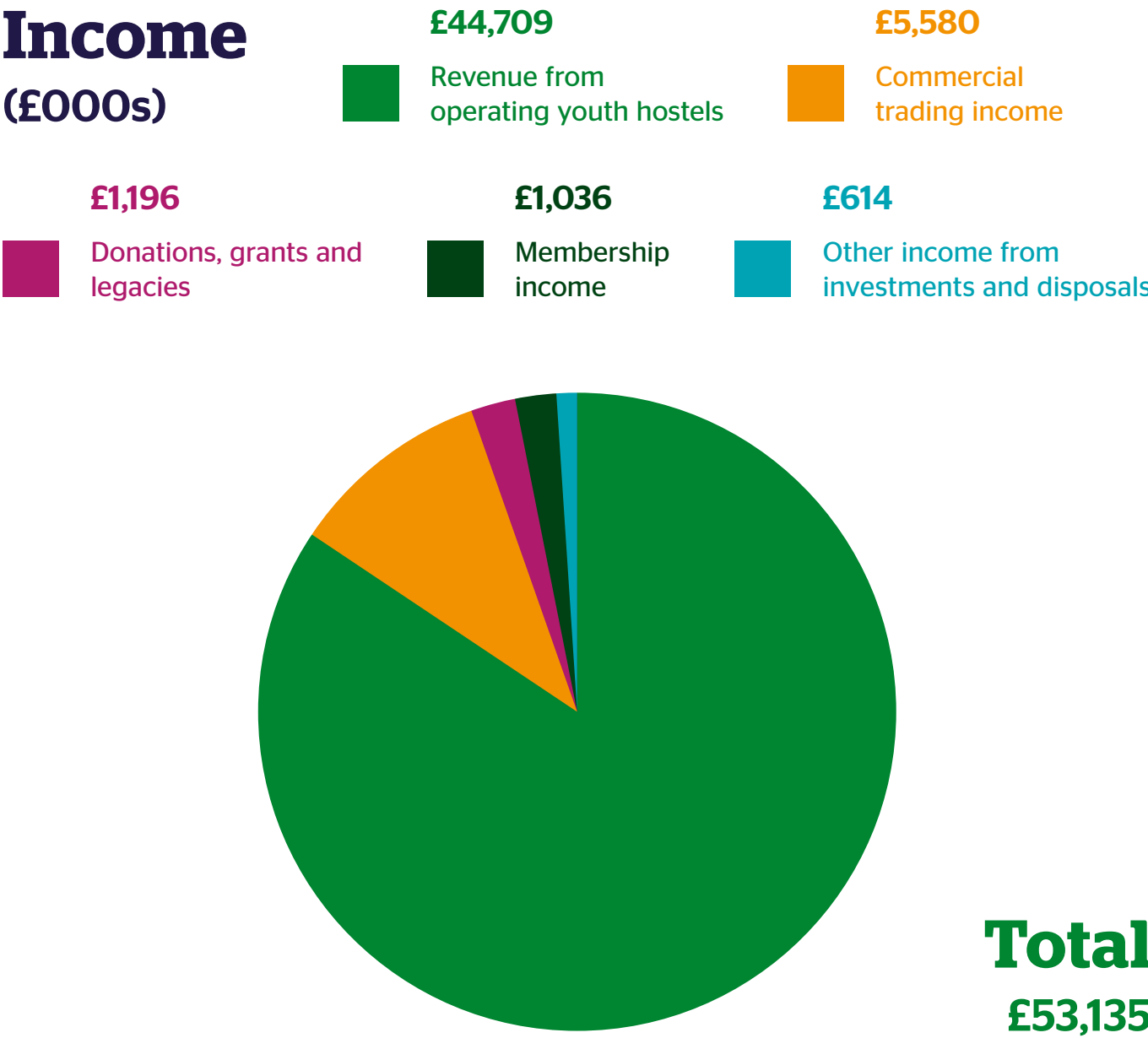


# Accounts

YHA is a charity working to social enterprise principles. Earned revenue i.e. income we receive from the groups, families and individuals who stay with us together with our commercial trading income, covers the costs of delivering the “all” in our charitable object – operating and maintaining our network of youth hostel and the lion’s share of our overhead including governance, membership and fundraising costs.

This means that 100% of the income we receive from membership fees and donations, grants and legacies is invested in improving facilities at our youth hostels and into programmes helping those who might otherwise not be able access our charitable activities. Whether that is providing free or supported breaks for children and families from lower social economic groups, activities to improve the physical health and wellbeing of children and families with challenging lives, or into volunteering, work experience and training to equip young people with the skills they need for life and work.

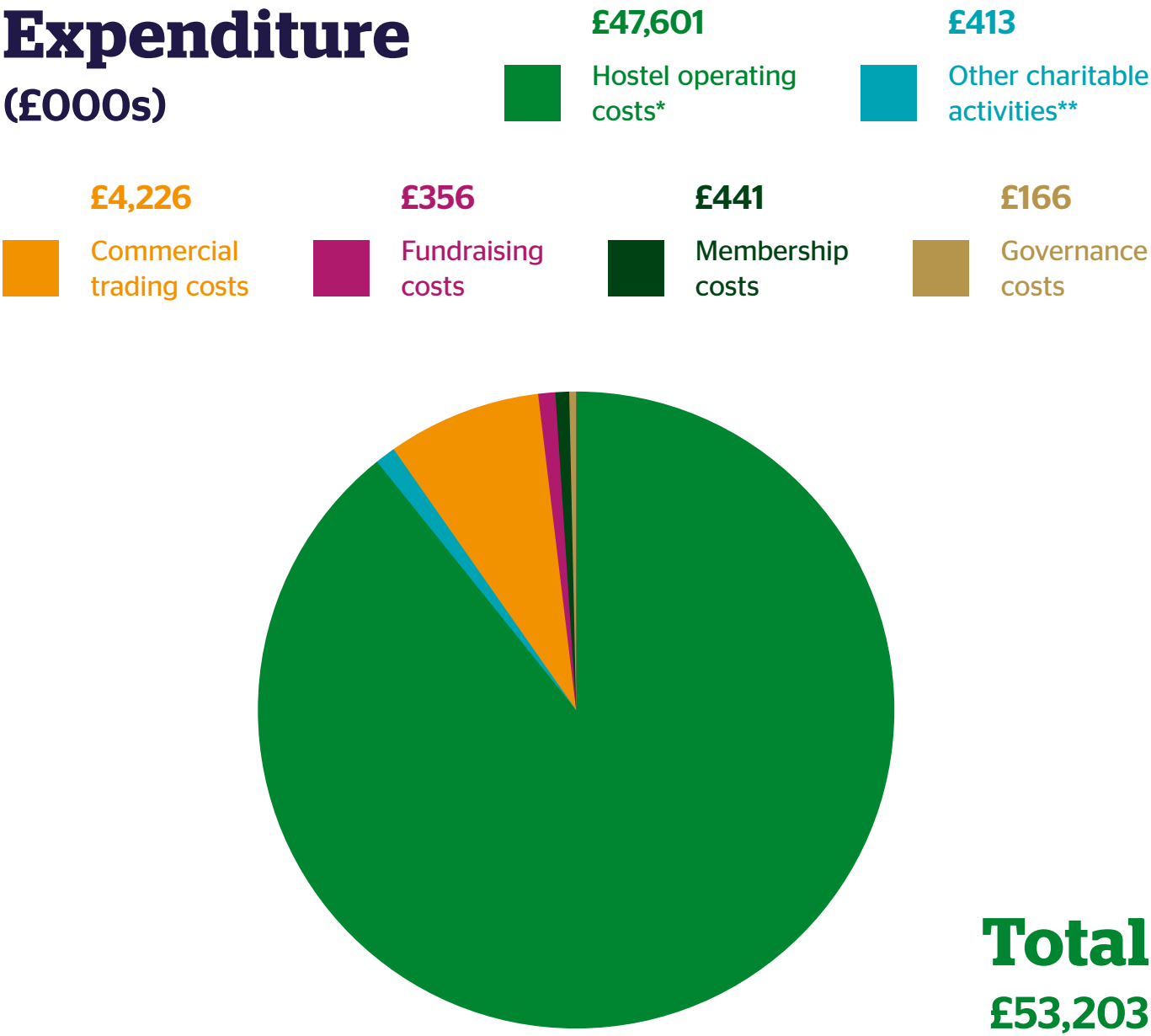
## Income (£000s)



# Charitable object

To help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, and appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities, particularly by providing youth hostels or other accommodation for them in their travels, and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.

## Expenditure (£000s)



\* The full cost of delivering our charitable object through the running of our network of hostels including hostel running costs, expenditure related to capital investments e.g. depreciation and property maintenance, loan interest, and all marketing and support services

\*\* Includes expenditure related to provision of supported breaks for children and families, costs related to delivery of charitable programmes and partnerships, and costs related to delivery of volunteering and work experience placements for young people.



# Now, let's do more

As we approach our 90th birthday, the scale of our ambition matches that of our founders.

In a world where people are increasingly disconnected from one another, from nature and from heritage, we will use our shared spaces in a network of both historic and contemporary buildings to help people find themselves, find each other and find new passions.

At a time when it is increasingly difficult to navigate careers – and with growing gaps in life chances – we will lead the way in developing the skills of young people. Supporting their own employability and helping them to develop as active and connected citizens.

To achieve more, we will look to welcome more people, develop new partnerships and increase our role in the community. Not only will we continue creating opportunities for the disadvantaged and those with adverse childhood experiences, we want to encourage, empower and include more diverse underrepresented groups including BAME, LGBTQ+, home-schooled children and those in alternative provision.

We cannot do it alone.

**We need you.**

**If your organisation shares our aims and you'd like to discuss working together, please get in touch at [impact@yha.org.uk](mailto:impact@yha.org.uk)**

If you can help fund our work, please visit [yha.org.uk/give](https://yha.org.uk/give)





# Thank you to our partners and supporters

Addaction	GO Outdoors
Amey	Halton Housing
Barking and Dagenham College	HSBC
BrewDog Foundation	In the Works PR
British Triathlon	Join Muir Award
Buxton and Leek College	Leeds Beckett University
Centrepont	Leeds Building Society Foundation
Chance for Change	Lions Club of Street & Glastonbury
Clark Foundation	Mace Foundation
Cleveland Way National Trail	Mencap
Coast to Coast LEADER Local Action Group	MHA Carpenter Box (Carpenter Box Charitable Foundation)
Department of Work and Pensions	Mr & Mrs D Byers
English Football League Trust	National Citizen Service
Family Action	National Deaf children’s Society
Family Holiday Association	Network Rail
Four Acre Trust	Next Ltd

North Lindsey College	The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award
North York Moors National Park Authority	The Patron’s Fund
North York Moors, Coast, and Hills LEADER Programme	The Williams Family Foundation
P F Charitable Trust	Trafford Housing Trust
Peaks and Dales Ladies Darts and Dominoes League	Undeb Bangor
Pilkington Charity Fund	University of Bath V-Team
Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust	Venus
Rathbone	Viridor (Viridor Charitable Donations)
Rotary Club of Redruth	Vokhus
Rotork Ltd	Waltham Forest College
Royal Air Force	We Mind The Gap
Royal British Region	Western Somerset and Levels & Moors Leader Programme
Scrap Car Comparison	YMCA Derby
The Bernard Sunley Foundation	Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy administered by the Environment Agency

## Thank you

With thanks to all the individuals who have donated, made regular gifts and fundraised for YHA.

YHA remains ever grateful to former friends, members and life members who have remembered us in their wills.

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# Where will your next adventure take you?

To book a YHA stay, visit [yha.org.uk](https://yha.org.uk) or call our  
contact centre on **0800 0191 700**

To enquire about a group stay or residential, visit  
[groups.yha.org.uk](https://groups.yha.org.uk) or call our special reservations  
team on **0800 0195 465**

We are YHA.

We transform young lives forever through travel and real adventure.

**Because where you go changes who you become.**

stay | join | give | volunteer      [yha.org.uk](https://yha.org.uk)