



Annual Report 2025

Welcome from the Chair

This has been a year of growth and progress for YMCA Edinburgh, and one where we are looking ahead with growing confidence. As we continue to deliver on our three-year strategy, it is clear that the strength of our organisation lies in our people – a dedicated staff team, strong leadership, and committed volunteers who bring our mission to life every day.

I want to personally thank everyone involved in our work. Their professionalism, compassion and commitment have enabled us to respond to increasing need across our communities, while continuing to deliver services of the highest quality.

Like many organisations in our sector, we have navigated a challenging funding environment. Despite this, our strong reputation and clear sense of purpose have helped us maintain momentum and build relationships with both new and existing partners.

We remain guided by YMCA Vision 2030 and by the voices of the young people and communities we serve. With demand continuing to grow, we look ahead with determination and confidence.

**Donald
Macdonald,
Chairperson**



Introduction

About YMCA Edinburgh

YMCA Edinburgh SCIO is an independent, self-governing charity supporting children, young people and families. Based in Leith for over 20 years, our work is rooted in the local community while benefiting from strong international connections. As part of the global YMCA movement, we are connected to over 58 million people across 119 countries, united by a shared Vision 2030.

Working alongside young people and families, we create opportunities, strengthen connections, and provide the support people need to grow and thrive.

Our Work

Our services are shaped around three core themes: Youth & Play, Mentoring, and Adult & Family Support. Together, these areas allow us to respond to need in a joined-up and flexible way, supporting individuals and families at different stages of their lives.

Our Ethos

We are committed to being needs-led and relationship-focused. This means listening to and working alongside those we connect with and the wider community to design and deliver services that reflect peoples lived experiences.

We believe all children should grow up safe, happy and respected with opportunities to develop and thrive, irrespective of life circumstances.

Voice

At the heart of our work is a commitment to youth participation and community voice. The insights and experiences of those we support shape how we design our services and make decisions. We also work to ensure these voices are heard beyond our organisation – influencing local decision-making and contributing to wider national conversations.



Mike
Kerracher
CEO

VISION 2030

Grounded in our local community, our work responds directly to the needs, experiences and aspirations of the young people and families we support. At the same time, we contribute to the wider goals of YMCA Vision 2030 – working as part of a global movement to create opportunities, strengthen communities and support people to thrive. Vision 2030 is focussed around 4 pillars of impact:

			
Meaningful Work	Community Wellbeing	Just World	Sustainable Planet
YMCA believes that all young people deserve the right to learn, engage in flexible, dignified and meaningful work, and build sustainable livelihoods.	YMCA believes that every person should have the means to grow and thrive in body, mind and spirit while taking care of their individual and collective wellbeing.	YMCA believes in the power of young people and communities to promote and advance justice, peace, equity and human rights for all.	YMCA believes that we should all commit and take action for the protection and regeneration of our Planet, preparing for a Just Transition to a world where humans live in full harmony with creation.

Values

Over the past year, YMCA Edinburgh worked with young people, families, staff, volunteers and partners to shape our organisational values. Grounded in good practice and lived experience, these values reflect what people expect from YMCA today and guide how we grow and develop for the future.

Honesty

We speak and hear truth with compassion, creating spaces where everyone feels safe, respected, and heard.

Integrity

We stay true to our word, our purpose, and our values in everything we do.

Inclusive

We welcome everyone and work to create spaces and a community where people can belong, free from judgement.

Resilience

We adapt, learn, and stay steady, helping people feel safe, supported, and ready to move forward.

Holiday Playschemes



Youth & Play.

Free, referral-based holiday provision removing financial barriers to play for local, Primary aged children.

Delivered from Leith Community centre, over 7 weeks of the school holidays.
Native Ukrainian speaker at sessions supports participation of Ukrainian children and families.

- 24 sessions delivered
- Avg. 25 young people per session
- Food provided at every session

Playschemes also act as a pathway into volunteering and employment with local young people going on to volunteer and gain paid employment in the sessions.

'Not only do YMCA support the kids but they have also brought a community back together and provided so many things for the kids to do', -parent of attendee.



Youth & Play.

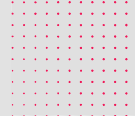
Playrangers and Friday Activity Hub

Free to access, twice-weekly play opportunities for primary-aged children in Leith.

Outdoor, all weather, child-led play using the Playranger model, delivered at the park space at Cables Wynd House. Alongside a weekly session providing arts, craft and games indoors, followed by outdoor activities at Leith Links.

- 67+ sessions delivered
- Reporting indicated increased happiness, friendships and increased levels of physical activity.

Across both sessions a Ukrainian play worker supports engagement with newly arrived families. Whilst sessions offer pathways to accredited youth volunteering opportunities.





Youth & Play.

Street Soccer Sessions and Partnership

Weekly free sessions at Leith Community Centre engaging young people through sport.

Presence of YMCA Edinburgh Youthworker supports coaching staff and relationship building with young people.

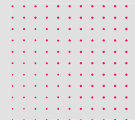
Up to 50 young people attending weekly.

Successful partnership mentoring model developed, with Street Soccer adult players coming forward as supported, volunteer mentors.

Further progression routes through volunteering, training and employment across the partnership.



**STREET
SOCCER
SCOTLAND**





Youth & Play.

Girls Wellbeing Groups

Delivered in partnership with Pilmeny Development Project, as part of a local Community Mental Health Initiative, we provide twice-weekly groups supporting girls' mental health and wellbeing.

Session topics are set in collaboration with attendees and focused on self-care, confidence and emotional wellbeing, with additional family support and mentoring available where beneficial.

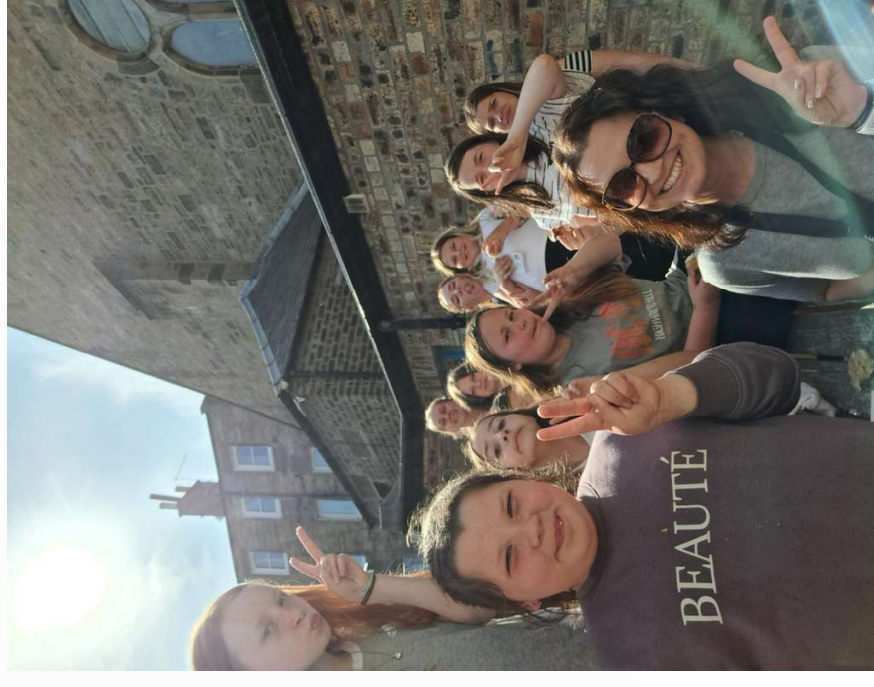
- 29 young people supported
- 7 received additional 1:1 mentoring support



Pilmeny
Development
Project



YMCA
Edinburgh



Youth & Play.

Girls Wellbeing Impact

Highlights from the girls perspective

- "Seeing the others"
- "All the different things we do"
- "I like getting to know people that I don't know from school"

The difference it makes

- "Understand my feelings better"
- "Feel less alone"
- "Speak up more"
- "Make friends"

Young people reported the group helped:

- Increased confidence and ability to speak up.
- Develop stronger friendships and a sense of belonging.
- Better understand emotions and how to manage them.
- Increase awareness of wellbeing, relationships, and personal safety.
- Provide access to a safe, supportive space where they felt listened to.



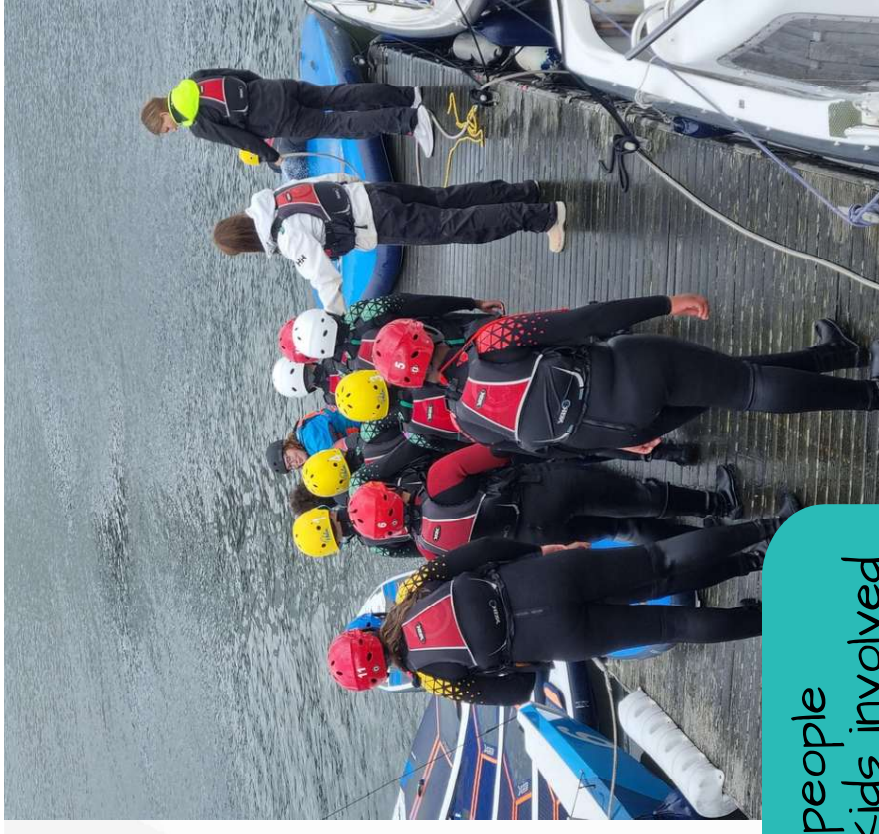


Friday Night Lights Impact

Attendees report:

- 100% improved wellbeing
- 63% reduced involvement in anti-social behaviour
- 77% would otherwise be on the streets
- 100% felt more connected to their community

Police and Schools partners continue to report improved positive decision making and relationships/interactions in school and community settings since core members time involved in the group.



"We have seen first hand how this group gives young people purpose, structure, and a safe space to belong. The kids involved at Friday Night Lights have grown to respect themselves and their community. For me, supporting this project is a direct investment in the safety of Leith as a community."

- Paul Gray, Police Scotland

Mentoring

Mentoring is a core part of YMCA Edinburgh's approach to supporting children and young people through trusted relationships. Our mentoring programmes provide consistent, one-to-one support, connecting young people with trained volunteers and staff who offer guidance, encouragement and stability.

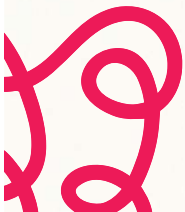
Through a relationship-based model, mentoring helps young people build confidence, strengthen resilience and engage more positively with school, family and community life. Working closely with partners and referral pathways, our approach ensures support is tailored, responsive and grounded in the needs of each individual.

YMCA Edinburgh delivers two mentoring programs, Plusone mentoring, an early intervention mentoring service for 8-14 year olds and intandem mentoring, offering longer term mentoring support to children and young people experiencing Scotland's care system.

plusone
MENTORING



Mentoring Scotland's young people



Mentoring impact

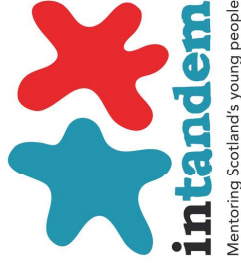
59 young people supported
39 trained volunteer mentors

Over 90% of young people report:

- improved confidence and wellbeing
- increased access to new opportunities
- that having a mentor gives them someone they can trust and feel safe with
- that having a mentor helps manage friendships and relationships

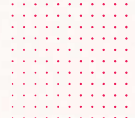
Additional impact:

28 young people connected into wider group activities
42 families supported with practical and relational support



plusone

MENTORING





Adult & Families

Women's Wellbeing Group

A weekly, trauma-informed programme supporting women experiencing social isolation and mental health challenges.

- 33 women supported across 43 sessions
- 100% felt welcomed and able to talk openly
- 90% reported increased confidence
- 80% developed new skills

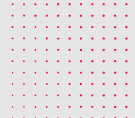
The group provides a safe, supportive space for connection, self-care and personal growth.

1:1 Support & Signposting

Tailored support helping women access essential services and build confidence.

- 12 women supported
- 100% received appropriate support or referrals

Support included access to grants, food security and mental health services.





Participation and Voice

Participation and voice are central to YMCA Edinburgh, ensuring that the experiences of young people and communities shape our services and decisions. Over the past year, we have created more opportunities for meaningful engagement, supporting individuals to influence both our work and the wider systems around them. This approach strengthens our impact while building confidence, leadership and a sense of belonging.





Participation and Voice

Youth Forum - The Equals

Young people influencing YMCA services and policy.

Their work helped secure National Lottery funding to expand the project and its scope, including introducing a new regular games group programme as an alternative provision to our sports focussed Friday Night Lights project.

The group also have the role of representatives of YMCA Edinburgh, whilst gaining accreditation for their voluntary service and impact in the community.

Youth Led > Young People's decisions and actions supported by staff

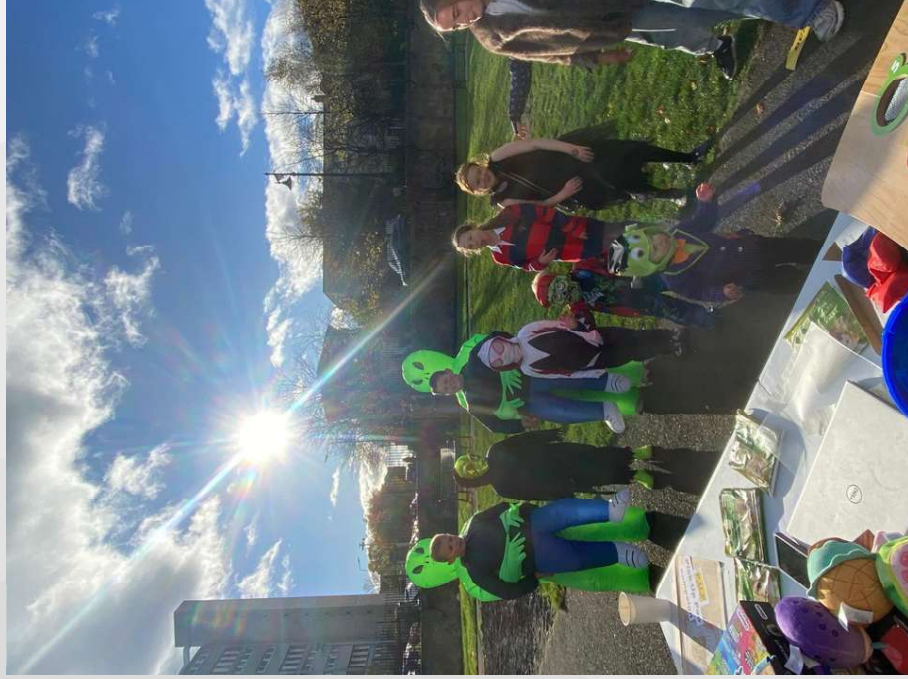


Members of The Equals meeting Prince William, May 2025



Participation and Voice

Cables Wynd House Young Residents Forum



YMCA Edinburgh has supported young residents of Cables Wynd House to take an active role in shaping their community, working in partnership with Making Rights Real on a human rights-based housing report.

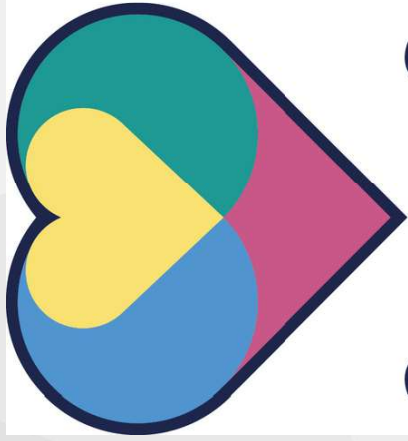
Young people identified key issues affecting their daily lives and built the confidence and skills to advocate for change, contributing to Edinburgh City Council's commitment to replace faulty lifts.

This work is ongoing, with young residents continuing to influence decisions and push for improvements to their living environment. Recent developments include young residents holding workshops in local schools to gather and take forward the views of other young residents of Cables Wynd House.

Pictured left, a sunny day in Leith, with YMCA Edinburgh supporting the Cables Wynd House Family Fun Day as residents judge the fancy dress competition .



Participation and Voice



The Promise Scotland



SUPPORTING CHANGE FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & CARE EXPERIENCED ADULTS

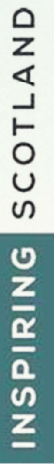
Investment through The Promise Partnership has strengthened YMCA Edinburgh's workforce capability and approach to practice. We developed and delivered training based on the Skilled Helper model, supporting over 40 practitioners and embedding relationship-based, trauma-informed approaches across our team. This work also enabled us to meaningfully consult with our community in work to shape YMCA Edinburgh's new values, ensuring they reflect the experiences and voices of those we connect with.

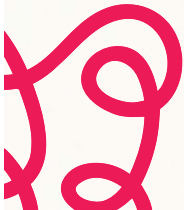
Financial Report 2025

Opening Balance:	£185,702
Income	
Total Income:	£309,213
Expenditure	
Fundraising:	£3,030
Charitable Activities:	£333,047
Total Expenditure:	£336,077
Closing Balance:	£165,636

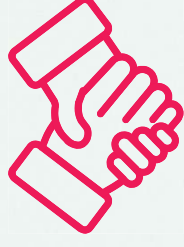
The reduction in overall funds reflects planned delivery during the year. At the same time, the organisation strengthened its unrestricted reserves, improving its ability to respond flexibly to future needs. The remaining balance supports ongoing programme delivery commitments.

Key Partners





Thanks



YMCA Edinburgh is grateful for the contribution of our committed team of 15 staff and the incredible dedication of over 45 volunteers, whose time and support are central to our work.

Our board of trustees and staff team express their sincere gratitude to all our funders. Your support is vital to our work in the community.

FUNDERS 2024 - 2025

Baillie Gifford

City of Edinburgh Council

Corra Foundation

Cash For Kids

EVOC- Community Mental Health Fund

Garfield Weston Foundation

Impact Funders

Inspiring Scotland

Leith Community Fund

Leith Benevolent Trust

National Lottery Community Fund

Robertson Trust

Scottish Children's Lottery

