

IMPACT REPORT

2023/2024

ymcataunton.co.uk



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you



YMCA TAUNTON

Registered Charity Number: 1152585

Message from CEO



Clare Langley

YMCA Taunton CEO

YMCA Taunton has demonstrated substantial community impact through its diverse range of programmes and services. With a total revenue of **£549,418** for the year ending August 2024, the organisation has successfully delivered vital services across youth engagement, education, food security, and community health initiatives.

Looking ahead, we developed a strategy for major building refurbishments, working closely with our users to design spaces that truly reflect the needs of the community—especially the young people of Taunton, both now and into the future. We secured Planning Permission to create an additional 230m² of facilities without sacrificing any outdoor space.

Following a year of dedicated behind-the-scenes work, we were thrilled to receive a £2.1 million grant from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport through the Youth Investment Fund. This funding will enable us to expand our programme with new and exciting activities, strengthen the continuity of our services, and provide a safe, inspiring space where young people can thrive.

Message from Chair

The results highlighted in this report are the result of the hard work and effort of our team. Their interactions with young people and preschool children would not have been as successful as this report demonstrates, had it not been for their excellent commitment to providing opportunity and challenge to young people and working together to achieve this common objective.

I would like therefore to recognise and thank our team, our employees, our volunteers and trustees for their hard work and the support they have given the charity throughout the year. We have a fantastic facility, but it is their efforts that make the building a hub of the community. I am confident with your help; the charity can continue to grow over the coming years bringing meaningful change to the children and young people in our catchment area. Thank you for your efforts.



Nick Low

Chair of Board

Our Mission

YMCA Taunton aims to encourage and nurture the physical, spiritual and intellectual development of young people within the Taunton Deane constituency so they can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

As a small charity, we feel we are more in touch with our local community and able to react quickly when situations and problems arise.

How we make a difference

Our charity's performance has influenced the lives of young people by providing opportunities within a safe and supportive environment, through our key areas of work.



“The Community Pantry has provided us with a much needed service and made life easier.”

“YMCA are brilliant they are extremely caring and supportive and I know my child is safe in their hands.”
Preschool Parent

Community

We offer support to the wider community through recreational and leisure activities.

Family Work

We deliver a range of family services, including a preschool and holiday clubs.

Training and Education

We seek to support young people through education and skills-based training.

Support and Advice

We support young people during difficult times through a variety of initiatives.

Health and Wellbeing

We promote health and wellbeing across a range of programmes and individually tailored work.

YOUTH CLUB

1253

Interactions



616

session interactions
with our young carers

We supported

50 YOUNG
CARERS

100

seasonal gifts were
given to our young
carers

We provided

1235



Safe Holiday Spaces

We provided

856



Children's Hot Meals

8 COMMUNITY
PANTRY EVENTS

Provided support for

400+ Families



9627

Community
Meals

PRESCHOOL

50

Children
Educated

11%

11%
increase
in total
number
of children
attending our
Preschool

26078

Preschool
Education Hours

23

Different
sports and
weekly classes
for all agesSport Sessions
for adults

1725

Sport Sessions for
Young People

384

Alt Education

1131
HoursWe provided space
for alternative
education provision44
hrs

Talking Cafe

We provided space for
people to chat to their
village agent

Day Support

We provided space for adults
with learning disabilities
to receive support117
Hours

16 Staff | 16 Volunteers | 6 Corporate Partners | 2 Community Cooks | 3 Mental Health First Aiders | 1 ASIST Caregiver

INCOME

£549,418

EXPENDITURE

£547,749

ADDED TO
RESERVES

£1,669

75

Warm Packs

We provided packs to
households to help combat
the cost of living crisis

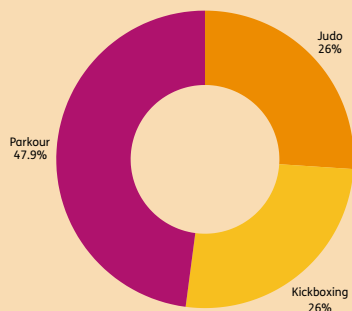
Young people are at the heart of everything we do at YMCA. Over the past year, we delivered 384 sports sessions for young people, alongside regular youth clubs, young carers groups, and holiday activities designed to support wellbeing, confidence and connection. Our preschool continues to provide a nurturing start for little ones and their families. We're proud to have seen increased participation across all our clubs and activities, reflecting the growing need for safe, inclusive spaces where young people can thrive.

“The staff motivate me by saying I can do it, and they include me.”
Youth Club Attendee”

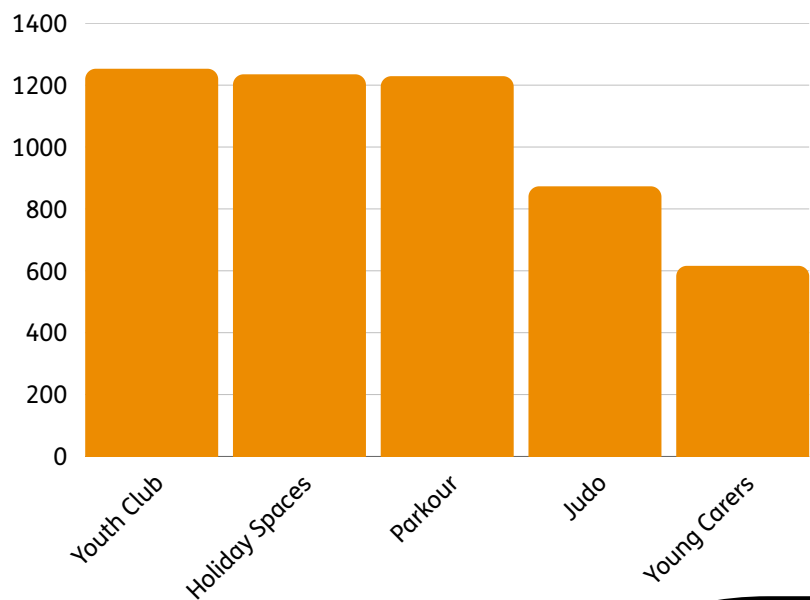
5431

YOUNG PEOPLE
INTERACTIONS

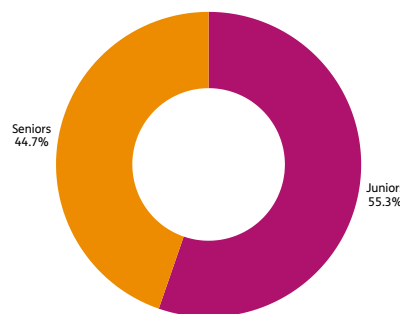
“We are all from different backgrounds and the YMCA makes us feel accepted”
Young Carer”



We ran **384 sports sessions** this year, helping young people stay active, healthy and engaged. Parkour topped the list as the most popular activity.



45% of our young people attending our clubs are of secondary school age, and **55%** are primary school ages.



The YMCA Taunton Preschool was rated **GOOD** by Ofsted.

We educated **50** children during the year.

Ofsted
Good
Provider



11%

11% increase
in the total
number of
Preschool
attendees

29%

29% increase
in the total
number of
Youth Club
attendees

6%

6% increase
in the total
number of
Young Carer
attendees

Leah's Story

Leah, who is 14, has been caring for her Mum (a wheelchair user) for several years.

We understand the vital role young carers play in their families. That's why we're dedicated to providing a supportive and nurturing environment for young carers whose added responsibilities can often impact their social lives, education, and overall wellbeing.

Leah has been attending our Young Carers group since early 2024 and won a Pride of Somerset Youth Award in May 2024.

In addition to Leah being a carer, she is also a St Johns Ambulance cadet and actively involved in fundraising activities. She recently organised a food collection at her school which was donated to our Community Pantry.



Leah deserves to be recognised for all her extra responsibilities and the caring role she takes on each day.

Sarah Milton, YMCA Young Carers Group Leader

We are extremely proud of Leah. She is an inspiration and without her daily help, everything would be hard work. She is an absolute credit.

Leah's Mum

VISITORS

We are very proud of our work and welcome the opportunity to show people around our centre.

Councillor **Simon Clarke** toured our facilities to see everything offered for Young People.

Councillor **Federica Smith-Roberts** visited and called our Community Pantry “**a brilliant voluntary initiative**”

MP **Rebecca Pow** visited to see how YIF funding will improve our services.

SEN

ITV's Ben Mcgrail visited the centre as part of a larger report into SEND provision in Somerset.

He interviewed parents in the SEN Parent Support Group and the report was on TV in July 2024.



We were shortlisted for a **Youth Matters Award** for our **Community Pantry**

FOOD RESILIENCE

9627 meals provided

8 Community Pantry events helped **423** individuals and their families.

856 hot meals for children.

1235 breakfasts for children.

960 take and make bags.

1500 free community meals.



EVENTS

Easter Raffle
Family Bingo Night
Nativity Play
Preschool
Graduation Ceremony
Christmas Fair



Working with the Community

We work closely with other charities such as Open Door and Fareshare to ensure surplus food goes to those most in need.

Any unused resources are also shared with the community - such as our basketball hoop that we donated to Selworthy School (pictured).



Sally's Story

Sally moved to Taunton eight years ago and wanted to make new friends so joined our U3A sessions.

I have made good friends here, and the short tennis group, in particular, has been the source of much merriment over the years. We have had seasonal tea and birthday parties after our games made possible by the help of the YMCA staff, all of whom have been unfailingly willing to accommodate our requests for a social extension to our booked sessions.

WARM & WELCOMING PROJECT

With support from the Community Matters Fund, our Warm and Welcoming project made a real and lasting difference to **75 vulnerable households** in our community who were feeling the pressure of the rising cost of living.

Throughout the winter, we opened our doors to provide a warm, welcoming space where people could drop in, feel safe, and access practical help. We ran a series of down-to-earth sessions focused on money matters – covering saving, budgeting, benefits advice, avoiding loan sharks, and help with things like energy bills, housing issues, and eating well on a budget.

Alongside the practical support, the project helped people feel more confident and connected. It gave them the chance to meet others in similar situations, and to learn how small changes – like eating better or staying active – could support both their wellbeing and their household budgets.

We're very grateful to National Grid Electricity Distribution for their vital support, which allowed us to run this project when it was needed most.

“The staff are welcoming and friendly. We love the YMCA because it is an inclusive community space
Achieve Group”

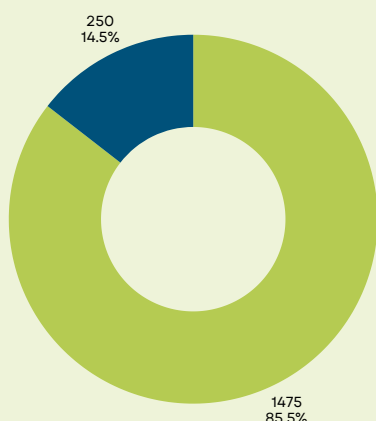


We believe health and wellbeing should be accessible to everyone. Our facilities – including a sports hall, squash court, astro pitch, dance studio and fitness suite – are open to the whole community. Income from our sports facilities and meeting rooms helps to sustain our wider charitable work.



Sporting Activities 2023/2024:

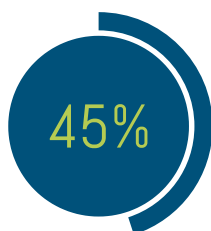
Aerobics | Table Tennis | Short Tennis | Pickleball | Badminton | Squash | Basketball
Football | Dance | Judo | Gym | Pool Table | Snooker



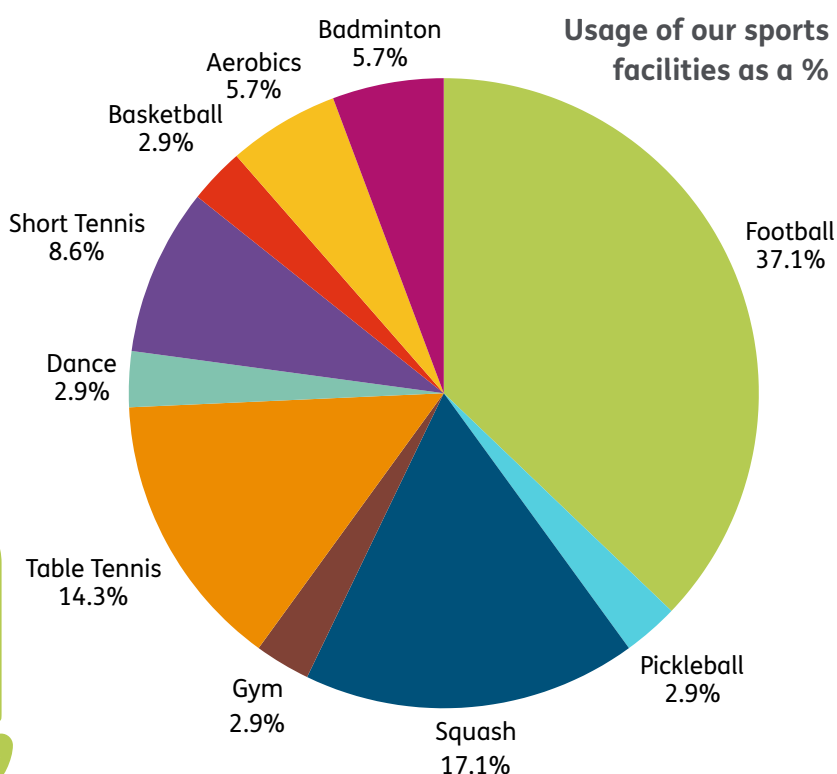
Our sports for adults, including squash, football and badminton held **1475** sessions.

Our special fitness classes for those aged over 50 include aerobics, short tennis and table tennis. We held **250** sessions, which make up **14%** of all adult sessions.

45% of our income comes from our sports facilities and meeting rooms



“We enjoyed a fantastic 1st session with Badminton on Thursday evening and found everything ideal
Rob W”



Sue's Story

Sue has been attending our U3A sessions for 3 years. The sessions are aimed at those aged 50+ and offer not only physical sessions of Table Tennis and Short Tennis, but each session is accompanied by refreshments in a social environment.

I used to play 'big girls tennis' several times a week until a severe flare and diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis left me with no confidence and an inability to play at my previous level. A friend told me about Short Tennis some three years ago and this has become a regular session for me since then. The sessions allow me to enjoy the rhythm of tennis but as a softer, more manageable exercise.

The YMCA provides a small and intimate space where a number of players gather to play, chat, drink tea and enjoy a biscuit or two. The activity has provided friendship and support to a group of older folk, many of whom are still active into their 70s and 80s. The staff are very helpful and cater to our requests and respond to the odd complaint. Through months of quite intrusive building works, they have maintained their humour and resilience. Thank you YMCA.



Pictured: 50+ fitness sessions

STAFF TRAINING

- Community Food Champions
- Food Allergy & Intolerance
- Food Hygiene L2
- Young Mental Health Awareness
- Paediatrics & Emergency First Aid
- Effective Safeguarding Practice
- Health & Safety
- Trauma Informed
- SEND Code of Practice
- Supporting Early Language Development
- Understanding Children's Rights
- Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting
- Prevent
- Advanced Child Protection Update (multi-agency)
- Safer Recruitment
- Corporate Fundraising
- Storytelling in Fundraising
- Data Analytics
- Data in Fundraising
- Measuring Outcomes



ADULT SUPPORT



We are proud to work with **Achieve Day Support** who provided **117 hours** of support for adults with learning disabilities at our centre.

The group enjoy a wide range of our activities including the pool table in our social area, and utilising our outside space for gardening.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

We provided a safe and nurturing space for two providers to offer alternative education provision for school age children. In addition to our meeting rooms, our Squash Court, Astroturf Pitch and Social Space with pool table was utilised to offer diverse learning environments.

1131 HOURS



WORKSHOP

We were delighted to be awarded a grant from the National Grid Community Matters Fund to deliver our **Warm & Welcoming Project** to help combat the cost of living crisis.

We're proud to offer practical, everyday support that makes a real difference. Throughout the year, we've signposted visitors to the right help – whether that's Village Agents, local council services or other community organisations. We've arranged white goods deliveries for families in crisis, provided clothing and toiletries to those in need, and supported people with financial advice, CVs, job interviews, telephone skills and work experience. We offered access to a blood pressure monitor, which led to two people seeking urgent medical care that may well have saved their lives. **It's often the little things that have the biggest impact – and we're here to help however we can.**

“ I visited YMCA Taunton to see the Community Pantry in action - a brilliant voluntary initiative
**Councillor
 Federica Smith-Roberts** ”

“ The YMCA do so much for people of the community and they also help people through the food bank.
Parent of Young Carer ”

“ The support we received was incredible. I will forever be grateful.
Preschool Parent ”

World Mental Health Day

We took time to talk and listen over a cuppa to raise the importance of conversation to support our mental health and wellbeing.

We shared teabags with our clients to take home and connect with a friend, neighbour or family member.

We shared tips for conversation starters and listening skills as part of our **#SmallTalksBigDifference** campaign.

Mental Health First Aiders

Like traditional first aiders who provide immediate assistance for physical injuries, MHFAiders provide initial support, encouragement, and signposting of a person to identify and access sources of professional help and other support. **We have 3 Mental Health First Aiders**

ASIST Caregiver

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) empowers people to provide skilled, life-saving interventions. ASIST trained caregivers help those with thoughts of suicide feel less suicidal and more helpful. **We have 1 ASIST Caregiver**



Talking Cafe

We are proud to work with the local Village Agents and provided space for **44 hours** of support and signposting across 11 months.

Volunteers

Volunteer support has grown by **77%** this year, with our amazing team giving a total of **1,345 hours** to help with everything from deliveries and DIY to cooking, cleaning, removals and event support. The value of this donated time is estimated at over **£15,000** – a huge contribution that helps us do more for our community.

1345
volunteer hrs

The Link Group helped us with gardening, delivery of a fridge and building maintenance.



The Achieve Group donated to our Community Pantry and donated 50% of the proceeds from their Italian Feast Event.



Fundraisers

Our supporters help us raise funds via **Bags 2 school** 4 times a year.

Our supporters have started to use **Easyfundraising** this year.

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Our corporate partners support us with donations of cash, supplies and food for our Community Pantry.

Asda

Co-op

Lidl

Marks & Spencer

Morrisons

Sainsbury's



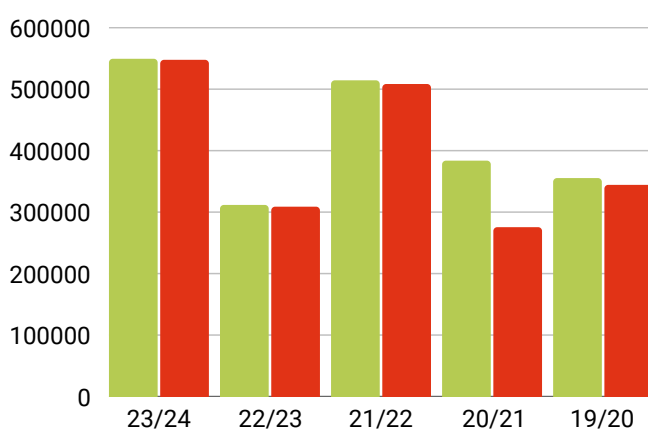
Our income during the 2023/24 reporting period increased significantly due to a **£227,922** grant from the **Department of Culture, Media and Sport**.

▲ 76%

Our income increased by 76% compared to 2022/23

Income/Expenditure

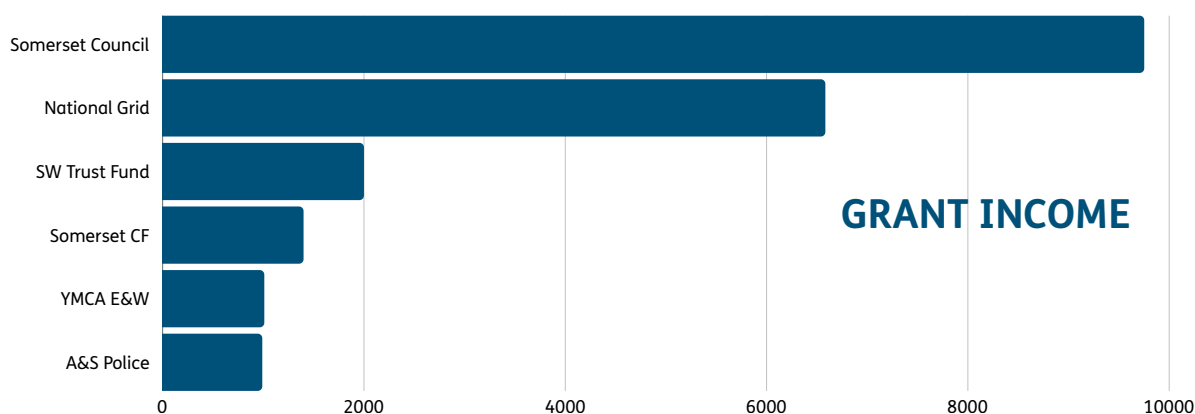
Our average yearly income over the past 5 years is: **£422k**



CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

The heating was replaced in the Preschool, and both the heating and lighting were replaced in the Rowlands Room.

These expenditures will in time create savings in running and maintenance costs. LED lights and controllable heating have been used making us more environmentally responsible.



We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our funders, whose contributions have helped make our work in the community possible.



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

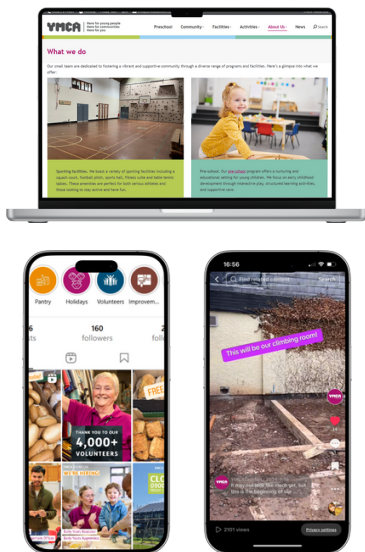
Somerset
Community
Foundation
nationalgrid

South West YMCA
Trust Fund

Somerset
Council



Technology



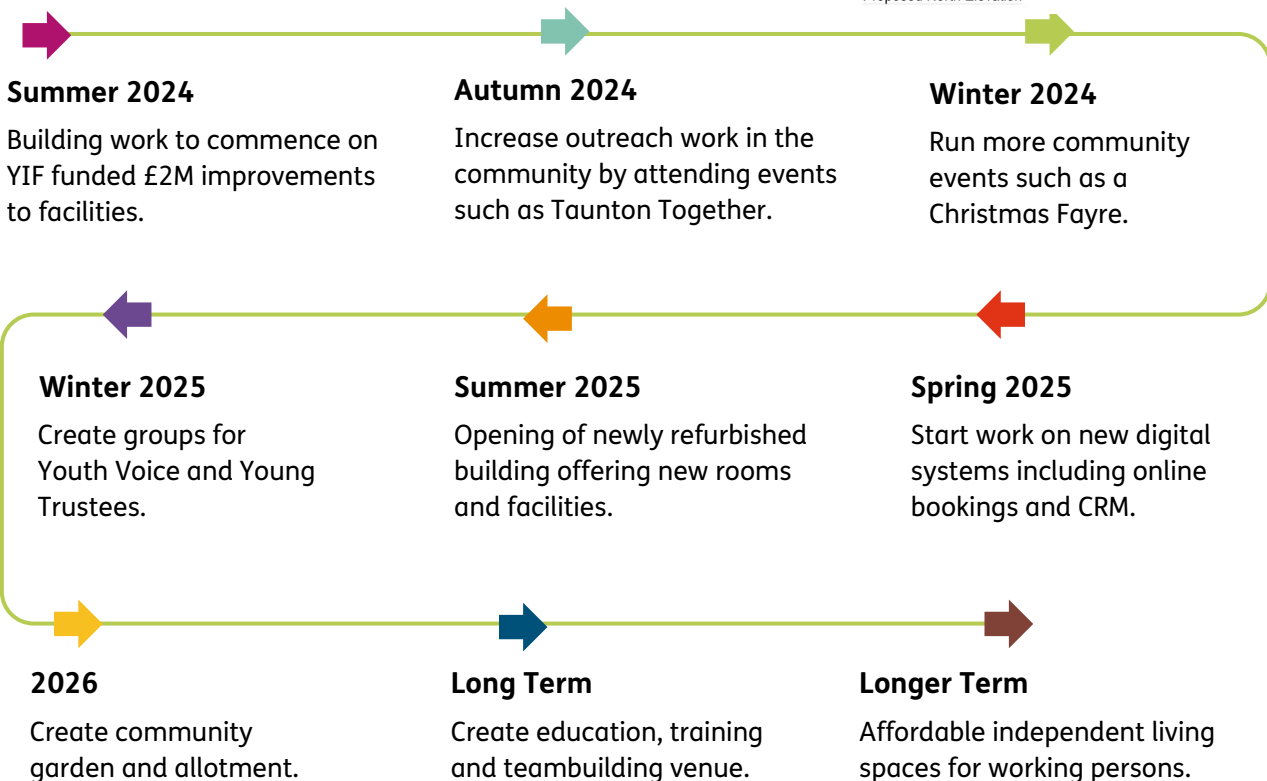
This year we made key digital improvements to help us connect better with our community.

We launched a brand new website, started a monthly email newsletter, created new email addresses under our own ymcataunton domain, and introduced a blog to share stories and updates.

We also joined Easyfundraising, which has already raised £130 for our work. Our social media presence grew too, with new accounts launched on TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Future Plans

We've lots of exciting plans for the future, including our extensive refurbishment project funded by YIF which will be completed in the Summer of 2025.



Thank you

We would like to thank all of our supporters, our volunteers, our members, our sports users, our young carers, our youth club attendees, our preschool parents, our corporate partners, our fundraisers, all of our users and everyone in the community that has made use of our facilities. Thank you for making YMCA Taunton a safe and welcoming space for everyone.



How You Can Help



VOLUNTEER

Volunteering with YMCA Taunton is a meaningful way to make a difference.



DONATE

Every contribution, no matter how big or small, makes a significant impact.



FUNDRAISE

Organise a fundraising event to rally support for YMCA Taunton.



Contact Us

We welcome conversations and feedback about the work we do for the community.

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