



**YMCA**  
a world of good

**Happy, healthy and more fulfilled lives**

**Central YMCA  
Impact Report**

**2012-2013**

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# ABOUT CENTRAL YMCA



Central YMCA is the UK's leading health and education charity. For almost 170 years, we've been helping people to live healthy, happy and more fulfilled lives.

Established in 1844, we are the world's first ever YMCA, founders of a global federation that has gone on to become the world's largest charity for children and young people. We offer health and wellbeing services, training, development and qualifications. We support those in greatest need, in communities local to us and far afield, rising to meet the challenges they face in an ever changing society.

Above all, we specialise in designing and delivering innovative and inspirational programmes that engage young people, helping to equip them for employment and ensuring they have the tools to build brighter futures.

Our mission is to create, provide and promote opportunities for people to develop in mind, body and spirit. We aim to:

- **Enable personal development:** creating and providing opportunities for people to make a positive difference to their own health and wellbeing, as well as that of others.
- **Prioritise young people:** focusing on the health and development of young people and future generations.
- **Support our local communities:** researching, developing and delivering programmes that support people at their point of need in Camden, Westminster and Islington, and using the results to inform our work across the UK.
- **Campaign for good health and wellbeing:** raising awareness of major issues that affect health and wellbeing, promoting positive solutions and working in partnership with stakeholders to affect change.

# WELCOME



Yet again, the sheer passion, dedication and creativity of our staff and volunteers here at Central YMCA over the past year has been a constant source of inspiration. On top of our everyday work with tens of thousands of beneficiaries, which we touch upon in this report, we have refreshed our mission and brand and embarked on a new three-year strategic plan. We have, without doubt, laid the foundations for an even more impactful and sustainable future.

Remarkably, we are about to enter our 170th year, yet there remains a compelling social need for us to increase our investment in and focus on education and personal development, particularly in supporting young people as they reach out for the skills, strength and self-sufficiency of adulthood. Our commitment is that we will build on the impact described in this report and explore new ways to engage; new technologies, new locations, new ideas – all in pursuit of our vision of happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives.

If you share our aspirations and would like to be part of our work, then please get in touch.

Rosi Prescott  
Chief Executive

Philip Rogerson  
Chairman

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“

**There is a compelling social need for us to increase our focus on education and personal development, particularly in supporting young people...**

”

**Rosi Prescott, Chief Executive**

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# ENABLING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

We pride ourselves on supporting career development, helping people to overcome common barriers into employment and setting them on the pathway to a fulfilling and rewarding working future. Through the award-winning work of our training provider YMCAfit, government-approved and varied qualifications from our awarding organisation, CYQ, and a wealth of opportunities through YMCA Club, OneKX and YTouring, we support people into employment in the fitness, leisure, health and wellbeing sectors, and beyond.

“  
**The competition is a good showcase for the talent and ability young people possess.**  
”

**Toby Williamson**

## CELEBRATING YOUNG TALENT: TOBY'S STORY

The CYQ Fitness Trainer Competition, delivered in collaboration with British Colleges Sport (BCS), is a skills competition that seeks to recognise and celebrate the excellence of fitness instructors and personal trainers educated within further education colleges across the UK. In 2012, 21 centres and 100 individuals participated. Winner, Toby Williamson, explains what a difference it has made to his career prospects.

For a young man who lives and breathes health and fitness, entering the CYQ Fitness Awards represented a life changing opportunity. Going on to the win the competition, however, has brought Toby Williamson's dream of a career in fitness one step closer and, as the ambitious 20-year-old admits, opportunities like it can provide other young people with a vital career confidence boost.

“I think the competition is a good showcase for the talent and ability young people possess,” he says. “We can be given a bad label as the ‘youth of today,’ and things like this help to shatter that impression.

“For me, coming out on top was a wake up call. It made me think; OK, I'm quite good at this – maybe I should really go for it.”

For Toby, however, the competition was about much more than just proving his skills. It was an opportunity to meet fellow fitness professionals at a world-beating training facility at St George's park, home to the English Football Association's national football centre.

“It was great to meet so many people with similar interests,” he enthuses. “The facilities for the competition were unreal! I was like a kid in a candy shop.”

Despite having won the competition, Toby is determined not to rest on his laurels. In fact, it's made him more determined to take his career to the next level.

“It may mean putting in a few extra voluntary hours in my local gym, but if it results in me doing what I love as a career then it's worth it,” he concludes.



Toby Williamson, CYQ Fitness Trainer Competition winner

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A report commissioned by YMCA\*, that surveyed 500 young people aged 16 to 24, found that:

**98%**

said career or job was of the most concern in their lives

**64%**

of those that specified being concerned about their career or job were most concerned about being able to progress their career

**61%**

said their main aspiration was to have a job which they enjoy

CYQ is the first specialist awarding organisation for the active leisure sector

**94.8%**

of centres would recommend CYQ to other training providers (CYQ annual satisfaction survey 2013)

**66**

regulated qualifications offered (35 more than 2011/12)

**32,005**

qualification certificates awarded (between August 2012 and July 2013).

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*\*This report presents the findings of an online survey of 500 young people aged 16 to 24 who are members of the Youth Sight Opinion Panel.*

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**InstructAbility is encouraging more talented people with a disability to work in the fitness industry and creating the role models that will inspire others to get active.**

”

**David Cameron, Prime Minister,  
in praise of InstructAbility**

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InstructAbility graduates at the Paralympic torch relay

## BOOSTING ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION: **JAMIE'S STORY**

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In 2012, our multi-award winning YMCAfit InstructAbility programme was launched in conjunction with spinal injury charity, Aspire. It offers people with a disability the chance to gain a Level Two Gym Instructor qualification and support to find employment within the fitness industry. Here, InstructAbility graduate, Jamie Lawson, explains how the programme changed her life.

"Let's face it," admits 24-year-old fitness instructor Jamie Lawson. "Everyone thinks gym instructors are super fit people – not someone in a wheelchair."

Smashing preconceptions like these has become a big part of Jamie's life. At school she fought to study PE because she understood the benefits of exercise for her Cerebral Palsy (CP).

"Keeping fit helps my CP and benefits me mentally," she says. "I've seen how it can improve people's state of mind and confidence."

Jamie heard about InstructAbility at Ability Bow, east London, a gym for disabled people. After a little research, she was soon convinced that it could help her towards a career in the health and fitness industry.

Because Jamie uses a wheelchair to get around and has difficulties speaking, attending classes was a challenge. However, through a blend of eLearning and regular sessions at Ability Bow, Jamie successfully passed her Level Two Gym Instructor assessment in July 2012.

Now, with a job confirmed at the Copper Box gym in the Olympic Park, London, she is looking forward to opening more people's minds.

"There are still people in the industry who have been shocked by my qualifications," she says.

"However, with programmes like InstructAbility, hopefully it won't be too long until people start to see more and more disabled instructors working in their gyms."

Since the first  
pilot course in  
September 2010:

**54**  
disabled people  
have qualified as gym  
instructors, with a further  
10 currently in training

**30**  
more courses over a  
three year period are  
scheduled in England  
following a £854,000 grant  
from Sport England.



Leonard Hughes, training a YMCA Club member

YMCAfit has trained over **90,000** students for careers in the fitness industry to-date

## LEARNING TO LIVE: LEONARD'S STORY

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It's been 30 years since Leonard Hughes' life was turned upside down following a diagnosis of HIV.

For a while he pursued his demanding career as an art director, but as Leonard's health deteriorated he made the decision to prioritise his wellbeing over his job.

"I was faced with a problem. The more time I spent at work, the more ill I felt," he explains. "But through working out, I was able to convince my brain and body that I was fit and healthy."

Thanks in part to YMCAfit he transformed his commitment to fitness by completing their Gym Instructor course. What's more, when things got tough financially, YMCAfit was able to suggest a bursary to fund this training.

The Basil Scott Bursary – named after the long-term YMCA Club member who passed away leaving a fund available for good causes within the charity – is specifically made available to help those who will help others within the YMCA federation. Leonard embodies the true spirit of the bursary and, with his volunteering position at YMCA Club up and running, he is looking ahead to a bright future of his own.

Indeed, Leonard is now harnessing his skills, and personal experience of living with HIV, to make a difference to other people's lives.

"It's important to get an encouraging message out," he says. "From my own experience, there was nobody to look at or look up to. But I've been HIV positive for 30 years and I'm fine, so I hope that can be encouraging for others."

Along with helping others with HIV to gain a more positive mind-set about their illness, YMCAfit's training has given Leonard a renewed vigour of his own. "Now I feel like I can finally plan something," he says. "It is giving me a structure to my life. It's given me a light and a purpose."

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**Now I feel like I can  
finally plan something.  
The training is giving me  
a structure to my life.**

”

Leonard Hughes

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## PRIORITISING YOUNG PEOPLE

The YMCA is the world's oldest and largest charity for young people. From YTouring's interactive theatre productions for schools, to YActive's in-demand school holiday playscheme programme – as well as many other programmes and opportunities across the charity's operations – we inspire, educate and engage thousands of young people every year through practical and creative activities and opportunities.

### INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS: A PLAY WITH A DIFFERENCE

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YTouring helps young people to learn, challenge and make sense of our today by addressing important health issues – including the impact on personal choice of extraordinary scientific developments and the effect of mental health breakdown within families. *Stunted Trees and Broken Bridges* was a play that tackled these often taboo subjects.

Imagine there's a student named Emerson. Now imagine he's on trial for a violent attack. He's offered a brain scan that could prove his actions were caused by a malfunction in his mind. If it's true then he might get off lightly, but can he trust the technology? And is it right to use science to judge who's innocent and who's guilty?

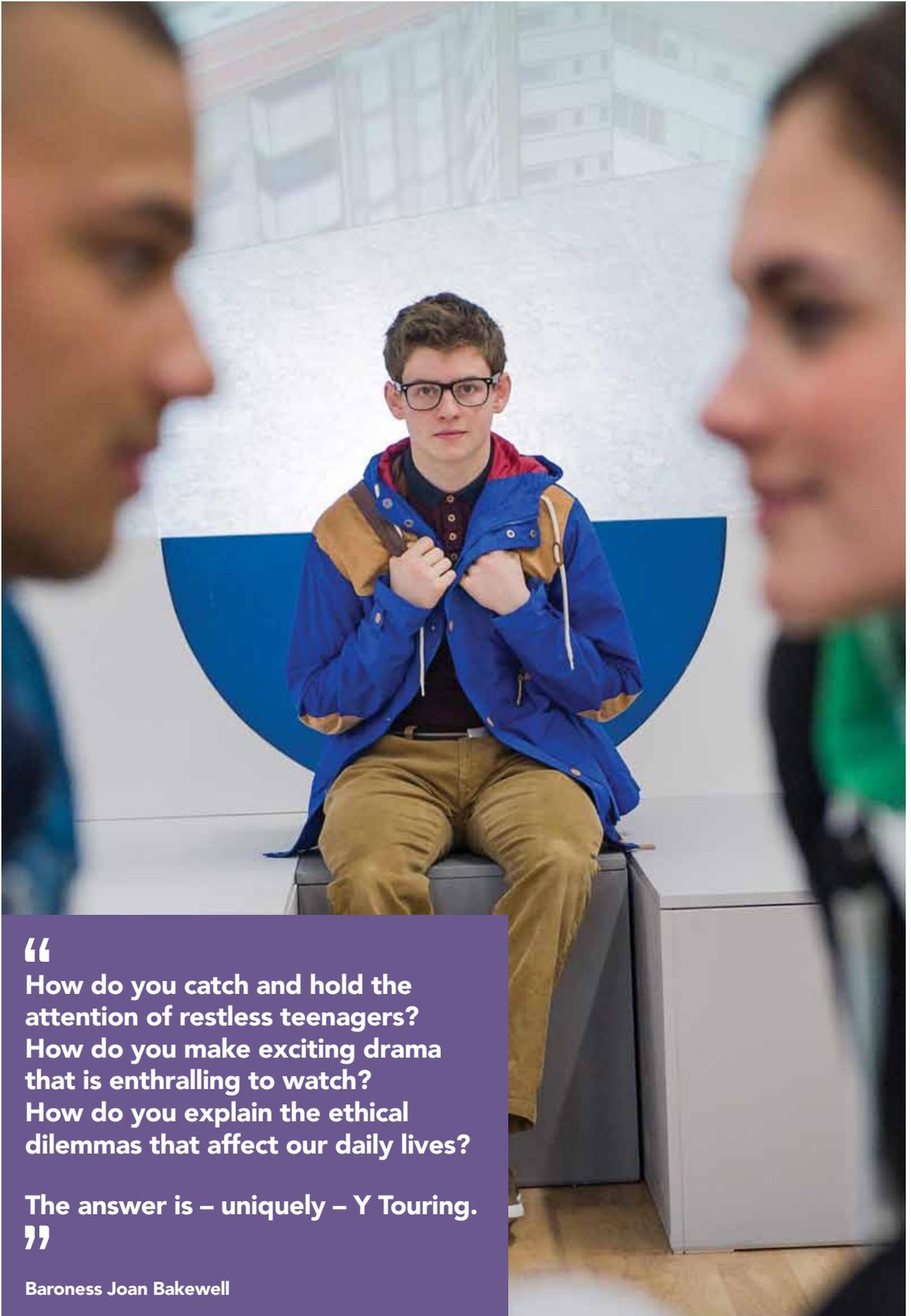
Those are the big questions at the heart of Ben Musgrave's play *Stunted Trees and Broken Bridges*. During 2013 YTouring challenged nearly 5,000 14-16-year-olds to decide the answers for themselves during a tour of 31 schools across the UK, culminating with a show at the Royal Albert Hall and four screenings at Picturehouse cinemas.

After each performance young people had their say during a gripping live debate featuring electronic voting technology. Teachers agreed it was an amazing opportunity to discover more about neuroscience, ethics and technology while engaging with the world-changing issues the audience may have to face in the future.

"It made you think and realise how much the world is actually progressing through science," said one young person who'd been inspired by the show.

"It was a great thing to watch and think about."

*Stunted Trees and Broken Bridges* has been developed in partnership with The Nuffield Council on Bioethics, The British Neuroscience Association and the Association of the Medical Research Charities, and is supported by the Wellcome Trust and Central YMCA.



“

How do you catch and hold the attention of restless teenagers? How do you make exciting drama that is enthralling to watch? How do you explain the ethical dilemmas that affect our daily lives?

The answer is – uniquely – Y Touring.

”

Baroness Joan Bakewell



## CREATING CONFIDENCE: LALE'S STORY

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Our King's Cross creative beacon, One KX, provides young people with an opportunity to connect, collaborate and create in the highly dynamic areas of science, technology and the arts, as 15-year-old Lale recently discovered.

When Lale joined the *Identity Talks* project at One KX she was feeling pretty bad about herself; "Fat, ugly and insecure," to use her own words.

However, it took just seven weeks to transform this self-assessment to "resilient, mature, happy and confident." So, what changed?

*Identity Talks* is a course for young women aged 13-16 that gives them the tools to discover who they are. Through a mix of public speaking, creative writing and photography – climaxing in a TEDxTeen-style talk in front of an audience – the innovative course empowers previously troubled teenage girls to become happier, more confident and inspired about the future.

Because she came from a poor background with a single mother who relied on her support to get along, Lale had plenty of problems to address. She admitted she felt depressed and had used drugs and alcohol to survive in the past.

The course helped show Lale that a different life was possible, and now she's determined to turn things around.

"I'd prefer to spend my Friday nights here than out doing God knows what," she explains.

"The project makes you realise how special you are. I'm not worthless and it has taught me to be more open. It's helped me to dig deeper and discover who I am."

“  
**The project makes you  
realise how special you are.**  
”

Lale

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Over  
**3000**  
hours of active  
engagement with young  
people at One KX's  
Summer programme

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“

If you believe in yourself, and have people around you who believe in you, then you will achieve what you want.

”

Adebisi 'Bisi' Alakan





## NURTURING FUTURE ROLE MODELS: **BISI'S STORY**

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YMCA Club is powered with the help of 250 dedicated volunteers. Doors are open to young volunteers, offering them exposure to the skills and experience needed in preparation for employment. Adebisi Alakan is one of the many to have walked through this life changing doorway.

"If you believe in yourself, and have people around you who believe in you, then you will achieve what you want – simple as that," says Adebisi – better known to her friends as Bisi.

It's this powerful philosophy that's fuelling the 18-year-old Londoner's dreams of becoming a fitness trainer. And now she's well on the way, thanks to the opportunities she's found while volunteering with YMCA Club's YActive youth programme.

It was through shadowing personal trainers at the Club that Bisi gained an insight into how to harness her sporting skills to open up a whole new career.

"Some of the trainers started with nothing but have gone on to be really successful. It was really inspiring to hear their stories," Bisi explains.

Now she's on track to complete a recognised personal training course alongside her A Levels. It's the kind of ambition and drive that's already getting her noticed.

"A lot of people look up to me," she says. "Older people use me as an example: 'Look at Bisi. She's doing this, she's doing that'."

"Now I know what I want to do and how I'm going to get there."

# SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

YMCAs have been at the heart of their communities for over 170 years. Today, YMCAs work in over 500 local communities throughout England. Our research, development and delivery of a broad range of programmes and initiatives support people at their point of need in the Camden, Westminster and Islington areas. We help to forge positive links with our local community by increasing access to and awareness of sports and physical activity opportunities and general health advice.

In 2012/13 Central  
YMCA Club's 250  
volunteers delivered:

**2,080**  
new member inductions

**3,600**  
programme classes

**140**  
crèche sessions

**1,200**  
hours of therapy

## RECOGNISING OLYMPIC-SIZED ACHIEVEMENTS: BUBBLY'S STORY

The Community Games programme, a partnership between the YMCA and the County Sports Partnership Network, has been delivering a range of sporting and cultural activities inspired by the London 2012 Olympics. 'Shine a Light' is part of a re-creation of the Olympic torch relay, involving a series of celebrations to recognise the contribution of volunteers. One such stand out Central YMCA volunteer is Bubbly Patyal.

"I've always measured success in terms of the contributions an individual makes to her fellow human beings," says regular YMCA Club volunteer Bubbly.

By her own standards Bubbly's journey has been packed with achievement. From volunteering for three different causes at university to running a circuit class at YMCA Club, she's always found time to contribute to the community.

"The ethos of YMCA, its commitment to the community and its fundamental belief in putting people first made it inevitable that I would want to volunteer," she says.

"It's been one of the best decisions I've ever made and I've loved every minute of my nine years volunteering."

In 2013 her passion was recognised as part of the YMCA's national Shine a Light campaign, which celebrated volunteers' commitment to getting people active through the Community Games.

The event took place at the Olympic Park where Bubbly's work was praised by Lord Sebastian Coe and Barry McGuigan.

"It's a wonderful thing that Central YMCA recognises its volunteers and the contribution that they make," she says.

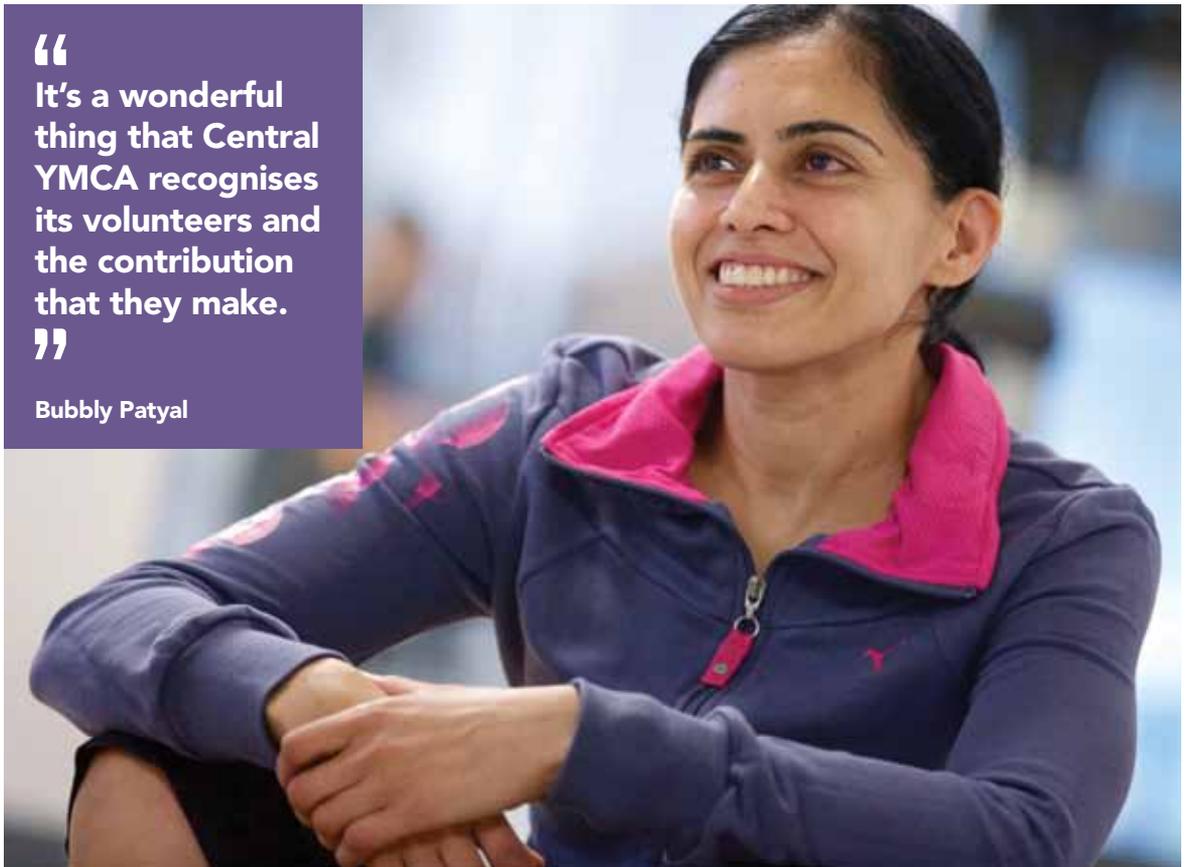
"It shows they're not taken for granted and they really are a part of the 'Y team'."

“

It's a wonderful thing that Central YMCA recognises its volunteers and the contribution that they make.

”

Bubbly Patyal



*Bubbly Patyal*



The Community Games national activity has included:

**3,291**  
communities engaged

**73,954**  
volunteers have contributed

**£3.77 MILLION**  
of volunteer effort

**2,424,296**  
participants

## WORLDWIDE APPEAL: **HOOPS SPRINGS ETERNAL**

On October 13 2012, YMCAs sought a place in history by joining together in a single global event. On that day, over half a million people across 80 countries took part in the YMCA World Challenge. This was an attempt to set a new world record for the largest number of people shooting basketball hoops in a single day. This unique challenge, devised and championed by Central YMCA, mobilised thousands of people to take part in hundreds of events across the globe.

In Russia, a bride interrupted her own wedding ceremony to shoot a hoop. Over in the Philippines and India, mobile hoops took to the streets in specially modified vehicles. Meanwhile in Chile, characters from Star Wars were recruited to promote the event. At the YMCA Club, over 300 children, parents, Club members and staff shot hoops and raised hundreds of pounds for YMCA Gambia.

80

countries took part in the  
YMCA World Challenge





## HEALTH PROGRAMMES: **ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL**

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YMCA Club is a major provider of health and wellbeing services promoting physical activity. Through delivering programmes for hard to reach and in-need groups from the local community, the Club makes a real difference to all those who walk through its doors.

Located in the heart of the West End, our award-winning health club is the most accessible and comprehensively programmed facility in central London. Opening its doors to over 6,000 members, local schools, the wider community and NHS patients, the Club offers a unique and eclectic range of health and wellbeing activities, including:

- YActive– fun for children and young people
- Healthy Living programme– activities for specialist populations and older adults
- Positive Health– support for people living with HIV
- A broad range of evening classes, from pottery to performing arts.

The NHS Westminster Health Improvement Team reported that 76% of individuals who completed the GP Exercise Referral programme with Central YMCA classified the programme as “excellent”.

For 16 years, our Positive Health programme has helped to support those living with HIV. Here are some glowing testimonials from participants:

- “This is an excellent and well run programme. It is not going too far to say that for me it may be a life saver!”
- “Thank you for helping me to get my fitness back. Everyone has been brilliant.”
- “The support and advice I received from the staff was excellent.”
- “Very well organised, great people and very motivated staff.”

**2,132**

patients have used Central YMCA's  
GP Exercise referral programme

**94%**

believe it's made them feel  
better about themselves\*

**92%**

felt it improved their sense of wellbeing\*

*\*2012 survey*

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# CAMPAIGNING FOR GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## THE CAMPAIGN FOR BODY CONFIDENCE: CHANGING HOW WE SEE OURSELVES

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Body image anxiety – feeling uneasy about how our body looks and functions – is a serious public health issue, from which more than half of us suffer. It's a key contributor to low self-esteem and depression, an underlying cause of health and relationship problems and a major barrier to participation in school and progression at work.

The problem is so acute that girls as young as five now worry about their size and appearance. By the age of 10, body image is the single biggest worry for one in three girls and one in five boys, and appearance is the largest cause of bullying in schools. Media, advertising and "celebrity culture" together account for three-quarters of the influence on how we see ourselves, yet the typical "body ideal" that they present is physically unachievable by 95% of the population.

In May 2012, Central YMCA, working with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Body Image (APPG), published the widely reported results and recommendations from the APPG's three-month inquiry into body image anxiety. Since then, in partnership with the APPG and some 25 other charities and industry associations, we have created a new campaign to take forward the APPG's recommendations, for which we are now actively raising funds.

Designed to become a social movement for change, The Campaign for Body Confidence aims to help everyone in the UK to enjoy a healthy attitude towards their body and a positive body image, through:

- **Education:** providing children and parents with high quality information and resources; focusing upon incorporating body image education programmes into the national curriculum, supported by teacher training and a national network for educators.
- **Health and wellbeing:** promoting body confidence based on healthy living and general wellbeing, not just appearance and weight; prioritising the replacement of negative "weight loss" language with positive, healthy living messages. Finding an alternative to BMI as an indicator of health and reviewing evidence that 95% of diets don't work.
- **Social responsibility in media and advertising:** encouraging the media and advertisers accurately and positively to reflect the UK population's body diversity; prioritising their commitment to an industry Code of Practice.

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**Positive body confidence means people feel more comfortable taking exercise, which boosts both physical and mental health.**

”

**Jo Swinson MP,  
Minister for Women and Equalities**

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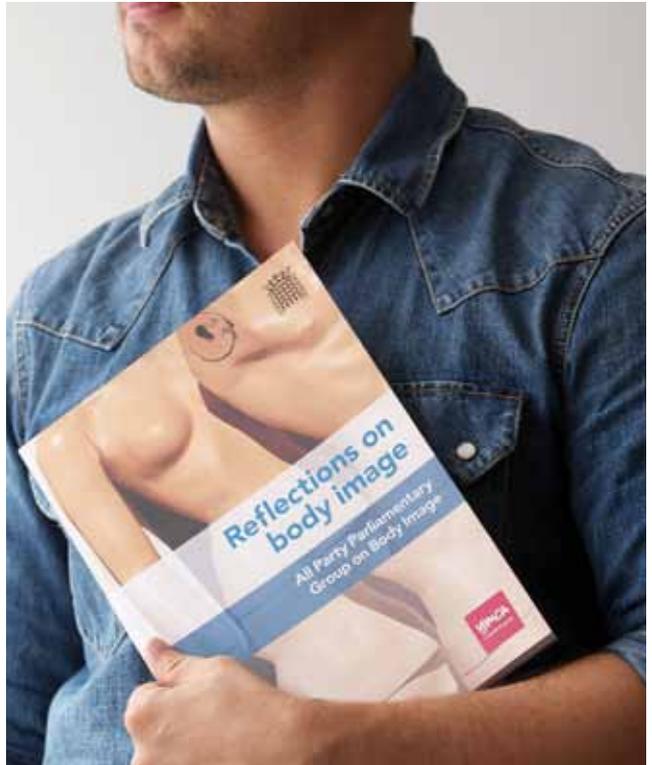
More than **HALF**  
the UK population suffers  
from body image anxiety

**50%**  
of girls and a third  
of boys aged 14 have  
been on a diet to change  
their body shape

More than **95%**  
of dieters regain  
the weight they lost

Source: *Reflections on Body Image*

Image: *APPG on Body Image  
& Central YMCA, May 2012*



The campaign will become an emblem of best practice with the Body Confidence Community bringing people together to create a powerful lobby. A website will offer the authoritative source of information for all things body image while the annual UK Body Image Study will monitor progress.

Body image anxiety affects us all, directly or indirectly, every day. Central YMCA is leading the development of the Campaign for Body Confidence and seeking the investment needed to protect the health and wellbeing of current and future generations.

Through ongoing research, the development of educational resources and campaign activity we will continue to promote a healthier attitude to our bodies.

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**70%**  
**of eating disorders  
could be wiped out  
by removing dieting**

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# FINANCES

The pie charts shown indicate the total income and expenditure across the Charity for the 2012/13 financial year.

## INCOME

**£16,000**  
Donations

**£793,000**  
Investment income

**£39,000**  
Other projects

**£8,556,000**  
Main operational income

Income total =  
**£9,404,000**



## EXPENDITURE

**£176,000**  
Investment costs

**£162,000**  
Campaigns and others

**£146,000**  
Governance costs

**£9,693,000**  
Main operational expenditure

Expenditure total =  
**£10,177,000**



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# CENTRAL YMCA – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Chair:

Philip Rogerson

### Deputy Chair:

Ian Guthrie

### Treasurer:

Philippa Campbell

### Trustees:

David Bennison

Rohan Campbell

Charlotte Dickens

Anthony Griffiths

Colleen Harris

Robert Hayward

Susan Ross Morton

Valerie Morton

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### Patron:

The Rt Hon the Lord  
Remnant, CVO

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Central YMCA



Central YMCA Club



Central YMCA Qualifications



YMCA Fitness Industry Training



One KX



YTouring Theatre Company



YMCAed

With thanks to all those who have contributed to this report, all Central YMCA staff, volunteers, members, students and service users.

With special thanks to: Toby Williamson, Jamie Lawson, Leonard Hughes, Lale, Adebisi Alakan and Bubbly Patyal.

Central Young Men's Christian Association  
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Registered Charity no. 213121

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