ymca portadown

Annual Report 25/26

ymcaportadown.com



Our value base is that YMCA Portadown is a place of welcome, opportunity, wellbeing, peace & justice



Parachute games during our health and wellbeing sessions



Our schools work continues which includes hosting KJHS at our centre for some social time.



Our Annual Big Breakfast Fundraiser was another great success and included a visit by The Mayor



Summer Scheme included trips to W5 and the Planetarium



Staff wellness day to reconnect and recharge



We hosted our annual prayer breakfast that gathered people from the movement and local churches



Our recently reformed Football Team, took part in a series of tournaments across the borough



Young people and staff represented the movement at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day



YMCA hosted our Community Christmas Event that saw upwards of 400 people celebrate the season with us



Our EVAWG Programme worked in partnership with both the Men's and Ladies Teams from Portadown Football Club



6 Young People from Portadown, partnered with YMCA Lurgan and Boston for an International Project



Our Core Provision continues to thrive, with up to 200 young people attending weekly

Standing Committee Introduction

Darryn Causby - Chairperson

As Chair of YMCA Portadown, I am pleased to present this Annual Report, reflecting on another year of meaningful work and positive impact within our community.

YMCA Portadown continues to play a vital role in supporting children, young people, and their families. At the heart of our organisation is a clear and enduring commitment to provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment where young people can grow in confidence, develop their potential, and feel valued. Over the past year, we have seen firsthand how even small opportunities and experiences can make a profound difference in the lives of those we serve.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to our dedicated staff team. Their professionalism, compassion, and unwavering commitment ensure that our services are delivered to the highest standard. Each day, they respond with care, skill, and creativity to meet the individual needs of young people, making YMCA Portadown a place where everyone feels supported and included.

We are equally grateful to our volunteers. Their generosity of time, energy, and spirit strengthens every aspect of our work. Volunteers enrich our programmes, mentor young people, and help build connections across the community. Their commitment is invaluable, and we are deeply appreciative of all they contribute.

It is also important to recognise the young people who engage with YMCA Portadown and their families. Their resilience, enthusiasm, and willingness to participate and grow are a constant source of inspiration. We are privileged to share in their journeys, and we are committed to providing opportunities that empower them to achieve their goals and make positive choices for the future.

We are deeply grateful to our funders and supporters, whose generosity enables us to continue delivering vital programmes and services. We also extend our sincere thanks to everyone who supports our fundraising efforts, whether by attending events, volunteering, or providing ongoing donations. Your support makes a real and lasting difference, ensuring that YMCA Portadown can continue to be a trusted place for young people and their families.

Looking ahead, we do so with optimism and a renewed sense of purpose. The year to come presents exciting opportunities to build on our successes, develop new programmes, and strengthen our services.

We remain committed to responding to the evolving needs of children, young people, and their families, and to ensuring that YMCA Portadown continues to be a place of support, growth, and opportunity for all who come through our doors.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their ongoing guidance, commitment, and governance throughout the year. I would also like to acknowledge the valuable support and partnership of YMCA Ireland, which continues to strengthen our work locally and helps ensure we are connected to the wider YMCA network.

Together, we look forward with confidence and purpose to the year ahead, and to continuing to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Darryn Causby

Management Report

Andrew McCreery & Arianne Crowe

This year has been a significant period of transition for Portadown YMCA, as a new CEO and Youth Work Manager stepped into their roles, building on the work and legacy of those who have led before. It has been a genuine privilege to support the organisation through this time of change, navigating new approaches to funding while seeking to provide stability and direction for our teams.

Throughout this journey, we have been continually encouraged by the dedication, care and professionalism of our staff, alongside the commitment of our volunteers who give their time so generously. We are also deeply grateful to our funders and partners, whose support makes this work possible and enables us to respond to the needs of our community.

Most importantly, it has been a privilege to see and hear first-hand the impact of this work in the lives of young people. Their stories of growth, resilience and connection are a constant reminder of why this work matters.

As we look ahead, we do so with hope and responsibility—focused on consolidating what has been built, strengthening our foundations, and exploring opportunities for sustainable growth in the year ahead.

Our Work in Numbers

Reflecting the size & scale of YMCAs Portadown's work across the community

370
YOUNG PEOPLE

6
SESSIONS PER WEEK

ea Education Authority

EA CORE PROVISION

255
YOUNG PEOPLE

11
SESSIONS PER WEEK



SCHOOLS WORK

58
YOUNG PEOPLE

208
SESSONS PER YEAR

EMPOWER 2 TRANSFORM

E2T GOOD RELATIONS

TOTAL 1249 UNIQUE BENIFICARIES 18202 ATTENTANCES ACROSS THE YEAR



JOB START CASE STUDY

Kingston & Tianna A Journey with YMCA

Celebrating the Journey of Tianna and Kingston

This year, YMCA Portadown is proud to highlight the remarkable achievements of two outstanding young leaders, Tianna and Kingston, whose journeys within our organisation embody the very essence of youth development and empowerment.

Both Tianna and Kingston have been active members of YMCA Portadown for several years, engaging consistently in a wide range of our drop-in and targeted programmes. Their commitment and enthusiasm were further demonstrated through their successful completion of the Empower 2 Transform programme, where they not only gained valuable skills but also grew in confidence, leadership, and personal development.

As young leaders, they have completed a variety of OCN-accredited and non-accredited qualifications, strengthening their knowledge base and preparing them for new responsibilities. Their progression from participants, to dedicated volunteers, and now to valued members of staff is a testament to their resilience, hard work, and passion for supporting others.

We are delighted to welcome Tianna and Kingston into their new roles as part-time youth support workers through the Job Start scheme.

In these positions, they will engage in ongoing training and contribute to three face-to-face youth work sessions each week, bringing fresh energy, lived experience, and a strong understanding of the needs of local young people.Their voices, insights, and commitment to youth advocacy will be a significant asset to our organisation. We are genuinely excited to see the impact they will continue to make—both within YMCA Portadown and across our wider community. Their journey illustrates the power of youth work: creating opportunities, nurturing potential, and supporting young people to become leaders in their own right.

We look forward to everything they will bring to the team in the year ahead.



A PLACE OF PEACE & JUSTICE

Empower 2 Transform

EMPOWER 2 TRANSFORM

PEACEPLUS
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Cohort One officially came to an end in March last year; however, the impact of the programme has continued, with many young people remaining actively engaged. A number of E2T participants have progressed onto new opportunities, including several who travelled to Boston, while two young people successfully moved into employment through JobStart.

In the lead-up to Christmas, we were delighted to reconnect with many of the cohort at a large E2T event held at the La Mon Hotel. This brought together young people from across different areas, providing an opportunity to celebrate their journeys, strengthen connections, and reflect on the progress they have made since completing the programme.

Cohort Two delivered a high level of engagement, with a total of 277 sessions facilitated, amounting to 1,020 hours of direct programme delivery. This consistent input provided young people with regular opportunities to build skills, develop relationships, and engage meaningfully across all aspects of the programme.
We had 29 young people successfully complete the programme, with 32 OCN Level 2 qualifications in Diversity and Good Relations achieved. Throughout the programme, we developed strong partnerships with organisations including Common Youth, Invisible Traffik, PCSP, and the PSNI, enhancing the learning experience and opportunities available to participants.

Young people took part in a range of engaging activities such as team-building trips, go-karting, a residential experience, and a visit to Emerald Park. These experiences supported relationship building, confidence, and personal growth. The impact of the programme was evident in increased confidence and stronger peer connections, with young people sharing that they felt more confident, developed “new social skills,” and were “making new friends.” One participant reflected on their personal growth, stating, “I learned that I am brave.”

At the CSHS Prize Day, the YMCA Award was presented to Ellen and Ollie in recognition of their outstanding contribution and progress. In addition, every young person received a recognition award to celebrate their achievements and commitment throughout the programme.

Cohort Three is well on track to complete their 250-hour commitment, with 93 sessions delivered to date, equating to over 400 hours of engagement. This reflects strong participation and consistent involvement from the group.

Young people have taken part in a range of activities including trips to Stormont and the SSE Arena, as well as go-karting and escape rooms, all of which have supported team building, confidence, and relationship development. The introduction of the Pillar Passport has also provided a clear structure for tracking individual progress across the programme, helping young people to recognise their growth and achievements.

Looking ahead, further opportunities are planned following Easter, including a residential experience and a visit to the courts in partnership with PCSP and the PSNI. These experiences will continue to support young people in stepping outside their comfort zones, building independence, and developing a deeper understanding of the world around them.





A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Schools Delivery

Schools-Based Work

YMCA Portadown's schools-based programme is delivered in partnership with Killicomaine Junior High School and Millington Primary School, supporting young people through targeted, needs-led engagement.

Throughout the school year, thematic areas of work are identified through a combination of curriculum alignment, teacher-identified priorities, and the voices and experiences of young people.

This collaborative approach ensures that each term's programme is relevant, responsive and impactful. Key themes explored include transitional skills, mental health first aid, alcohol and drug education, building positive relationships, AI and social media awareness, and social action.

This year, 178 young people from Millington Primary School and 79 from Killicomaine Junior High School participated in the programme.

Each cohort was invited to the YMCA towards the end of delivery for a celebration day, recognising their achievements and strengthening their connection to the centre.

The programme continues to be a valuable pathway for building relationships with schools, young people and their families, while easing the transition from school into wider youth provision at the YMCA. It is a privilege to be trusted by our partner schools and a joy to work alongside the many young people who engage so positively with the programme.



A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Go Global

The Go Global Programme (2025–2026), delivered in partnership with YMCA Portadown and YMCA Lurgan, supported young people aged 14–18 to develop global awareness, personal growth and active citizenship. Delivered over 13 weeks, the programme was designed to deepen participants' understanding of values, beliefs and global issues, while strengthening confidence, leadership capacity and community engagement.

The programme was structured across three key phases. In Phase 1, participants completed an OCN Level 2 qualification in Values and Beliefs, providing a foundation for critical thinking, self-reflection and discussion around global themes.

Through this process, young people identified shared interests in issues such as poverty and homelessness, aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Phase 2 focused on broadening perspectives through an international residential experience in Boston, Massachusetts. In partnership with YMCA Boston, participants engaged with diverse communities, explored cultural differences and observed youth work practice in an international context. This experience enabled young people to contextualise global challenges and reflect on their own values and experiences.

In Phase 3, participants applied their learning through a youth-led social action project.

Working in partnership with MACS, young people designed and delivered an initiative supporting children and young people experiencing homelessness and care transitions. This phase demonstrated increased confidence, teamwork, and a commitment to social responsibility.

Participant feedback reflected increased empathy, gratitude, and awareness of social issues, with young people reporting a greater understanding of the challenges faced by others and a desire to contribute positively within their communities. All participants rated the programme 5 out of 5, indicating high levels of satisfaction and engagement.



A PLACE OF WELLBEING

Juniors & Afterschools

25/26 Delivery

Junior Provision Overview

Our junior provision runs three weekly sessions—Tuesday evenings, Thursday Kidz Zone, and Friday evenings. We work with young people in P4–P7, offering a safe, supportive space with a range of activities and programmes. Across 2025/26, not including summer scheme or additional engagement sessions, we delivered 123 sessions, across our, drop-ins, and after-school support for local young people.

1. Environment & Climate
2. Health & wellbeing
3. Living in safety & stability
1. Inclusion Diversity Equality of opportunity & Good relations
1. Youth voice

229 YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED IN OUR SESSIONS

138 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN OUR TARGETD PROGRAMMES



Highlight

Over the weeks leading up to Christmas it was absolutely heartwarming to watch our young people pour their hearts into a special Christmas project. They didn't just buy gifts, together they crafted Christmas crackers from scratch, filling them with care and most importantly hope. The true magic began when they took to the streets to hand deliver them. To see our young people connecting directly with local residents, spreading joy to those who might be isolated and bringing a smile to faces in our community was truly unforgettable. They showed us that true Christmas magic isn't bought it is created.







Next Steps

We are concluding the 2025/26 program on a high note and are thrilled to continue our engagement with our junior provision in West Portadown.
Next Steps
Our goals include:

- Offering a variety of new activities and programs for young people
- Expanding our Kidz Club provision to welcome P3 students, aiding their transition into P4.



A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Intermediates & Seniors

Senior Provision Overview

Our senior provision offers three weekly youth sessions—Wednesday evenings, Thursday evenings, and Friday evenings. These sessions provide a safe, welcoming environment where young people can engage in positive activities, build relationships, and access tailored support. Across 2025/26, not including summer schemes or additional engagement sessions, we delivered a total of 122 sessions, supporting local young people through drop-ins, group work, and ongoing developmental programmes.

- 1 Learning and achieving
- 2 Health and wellbeing
- 2 Living in safety and stability
- 1 Inclusion Diversity Equality of opportunity and Good relations
- 3 Youth voice

193 YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED IN OUR SESSIONS

171 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN OUR TARGETD PROGRAMMES



Highlight

Intermediate Health & Wellbeing Programme. Over four weeks, YMCA Portadown partnered with Portadown Football Club to deliver an engaging Intermediate Health & Wellbeing Programme. Young people took part in a mix of fitness sessions, including football drills, 1v1 and 3v3 games, and weekly workouts that promoted physical activity, teamwork and confidence.

Alongside sport, participants enjoyed creative and social activities such as bracelet-making, video games, board games and shared movie time, supported by a selection of healthy snacks.

This programme provided consistent, high-energy engagement and strengthened our partnership with Portadown Football Club, creating a positive space for young people to stay active, connect with peers and build new skills.

Growth and Next Steps

Our senior provision has recognized the necessity for enhanced learning and achievement programs. We are committed to developing an environment that provides both accredited and non-accredited courses. We aspire to maintain a varied selection of topic-based programs and drop-in sessions throughout the week, in addition to extra support sessions that cater to emerging needs. Furthermore, we plan to establish a senior support hub in April 2026 to facilitate ongoing early intervention support.



A PLACE OF WELLBEING

Chaplaincy Programme

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of stepping into the Chaplaincy role at YMCA Portadown during a significant period of social unrest in the local area and organisational transition. In the midst of these challenges, chaplaincy has provided a steady space for reflection, support, and prayer.

Building on the foundations laid by the previous chaplain, I supported staff in hosting our second Prayer Breakfast in September.

This brought together colleagues, partners, and friends from across the church and youth sector. Staff shared creatively, expressing their sense of calling and purpose, creating an encouraging and meaningful atmosphere.

As part of YMCA's Global Week of Prayer, we produced a short piece combining devotional thoughts with drone footage of the local area, highlighting both the beauty of the region and YMCA Portadown's role as a place of safety and hope for generations.

A key development this year has been the introduction of a monthly staff prayer gathering, held on the last Monday of each month. Most staff have engaged with this space, which has become a valued opportunity to pause, share, and pray together.

God continues to build on the legacy of prayer that underpins the vision of YMCA Portadown, guiding and sustaining our work in the community.

YMCA Portadown Chaplain



A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Volunteering & LIT Programme

Young Leaders

Our Young Leaders programme has continued to grow and thrive, with eight dedicated youth volunteers committing their time each week to support sessions. They have taken part in regular supervisions and meetings, helping them to reflect, develop, and contribute meaningfully to planning and delivering activities. Throughout the year, they have played an active role in leading crafts, games, and projects, creating engaging experiences for younger members. Importantly, the programme has provided them with the space and support to build confidence and develop key leadership skills. Many have taken real ownership within sessions, independently running elements such as "YM's Got Talent," which has been a highlight for participants.

Receiving their Young Leader t-shirts has also been a significant moment, giving them a sense of identity, pride, and belonging as part of the team. At Christmas, we were also able to celebrate their commitment and hard work through a volunteer Christmas dinner, where they enjoyed a meal together, received a gift, and took part in a fun white elephant gift exchange, recognising and appreciating all they contribute to the programme.



A PLACE OF PEACE & JUSTICE

EVAWG

Ending Violence Against Women & Girls

Our Senior Provision has been taking part in the Ending Violence Against Young Women and Girls programme over the past few months.

A total of 25 young people took part.
We explored key topics such as:

- Gender norms
- Stereotypes
- Managing anger
- Healthy relationships
- Boundaries and consent

Funding from ABC Council allowed us to create safe, meaningful spaces for these conversations.

We also partnered with two organisations to support open and honest discussions throughout the programme.

Portadown Football Club Visit
We welcomed Director Dave Wiggins and players from the men's and women's teams.

Young people explored pressures, challenges, online responsibility, and how to maintain healthy boundaries.

White Ribbon – Listen, Learn, Lead
Listen: Understand the reality of violence against women and girls.
Learn: Explore root causes and societal influences.
Lead: Learn practical tools, including bystander actions, to create positive change.
Empowering young people to help prevent violence against women and girls.

Growth and Next Steps
Young people will now co-create a visual art piece for the youth centre, inspired by their learning and shared experiences. This piece will act as a lasting focal point within the space, encouraging ongoing conversation, reflection, and peer support. Through the creative process, we aim to deepen understanding and sustain open, healthy dialogue around the topic, embedding it within the culture of the centre.

END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS



A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Summer Scheme

YMCA Summer Scheme 2024 – Weeks One & Two Overview

Our Summer Scheme opened with two fantastic weeks of activity, learning, and adventure for children across the P4–P7 and Junior age groups. Week One set a vibrant tone as young people enjoyed an exciting blend of creativity, physical activity, and community engagement. Highlights included hands-on pizza making, roller skating sessions that built confidence and teamwork, and dynamic sports workshops delivered by Roll With It. The group also benefited from an inspiring visit by Pat McGibbon of Train 2B Smart, who encouraged resilience and wellbeing through sport. With sunshine-filled hours spent at People's Park and an unforgettable day exploring W5 Belfast, Week One offered a memorable mix of discovery and fun.

Week Two continued this high energy, bringing fresh opportunities for curiosity and connection. A trip to Armagh Planetarium sparked imaginations as the Juniors launched rockets and enjoyed an immersive dome show. Back on site, ABC coaching sessions kept spirits high, while another round of pizza making encouraged creativity and practical skills. The group also experienced maze challenges, park adventures, and a close-up look at nature during a visit to Tannaghmore Gardens, where meeting the animals added an extra sense of wonder.

Across both weeks, children enjoyed safe, structured, and meaningful experiences that supported their social development, confidence, and wellbeing. The laughter, teamwork, and lasting memories created truly reflected the heart of our Summer Scheme.



A PLACE OF WELCOME

Community Christmas

On Friday 12 December, YMCA Portadown, was delighted to open its doors to the local community for our 1st Community Christmas Event, welcoming around 400 people through the centre across the evening. Families, children and young people joined us for a celebration that captured the true spirit of Christmas – togetherness, generosity and community.

The event was designed to be fully inclusive, with all activities provided free of charge, ensuring that every family could take part regardless of circumstance.

Throughout the centre there was a real buzz of activity, from Christmas decoration making and snowman cake decorating, to the ever-popular popcorn and candyfloss station

Children also took part in creating Christmas cards for local care homes, helping to spread kindness and connection beyond the walls of the YMCA.

One of the highlights of the evening was Santa's Grotto, hosted in an outdoor teepee tent, which added a touch of magic and excitement for younger children and families alike. A free BBQ, enjoyed despite the winter chill, brought people together outdoors and added to the relaxed, welcoming atmosphere.

The event was delivered in partnership with a Portadown Elim church, and gratefully received donations from some local businesses, reflecting the strength of collaboration within our community. It was made possible through the support of around 20 dedicated volunteers, whose time, energy and warmth ensured every family felt welcomed and valued.

Events like this sit at the heart of Portadown YMCA – serving our community, creating safe and joyful spaces, and bringing people together, especially at a time of year that can be challenging for many. We are pleased to have shared such a special evening with our community this Christmas.



A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Team Development

We recognise that strong teams are built not only through training, but through connection, trust and shared experiences. Throughout the year, we created opportunities for staff to come together outside of day-to-day delivery, including a team day trip to Newcastle and our annual Christmas Dinner. These moments provided valuable space to relax, build relationships and celebrate the collective efforts of the team.

Alongside this, staff engaged in a range of professional development opportunities to strengthen skills, confidence and practice. Training completed included:

- SafeTalk Training
- Equity and Diversity
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- Impact Measurement
- Digital Integration
- Taking Boys Seriously
- Prevention of Young Suicide
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

Together, this balance of relational connection and targeted training has supported the development of a skilled, resilient and well-connected staff team, equipped to deliver high-quality, inclusive and impactful youth work across YMCA Portadown.

We would like to acknowledge the support of our funders and partners

Education Authority

Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council

Special EU Programmes Body
Comhlacht na gClar Speisialta AE
Special EU Skemes Boadie

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The Executive Office

oasis

Portadown Football Club Founded 1887

ERA Edgarstown Residents Association

St Marys YC
Est. Portadown 1959

Killicomaine

Craigavon Senior High School

Alternatives Restorative Justice

Portadown Youth Providers Forum

Portadown Elim

Police Service Northern Ireland

youthlink

JUST A CHAT

boys & girls clubs
reach : involve : enjoy : achieve

action mental health

INVISIBLE TRAFFICK

FareShare

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

CYPSP
Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership

SSYCC

Killicomaine residents

THE Family STORE

PCSP Policing & Community Safety Partnerships

White Ribbon NI

ymca lurgan

Craigavon Area foodbank

healthy kidz

EMPOWER 2 TRANSFORM

ymca greenhill

Governance

Names of Standing Committee for YMCA Portadown 25/26:
Darryn Causby (Chair) Denise Hayward, Gareth Reese, Dave Wiggins (Resigned May 25), Nathan White (Co Opted Jan 2026).

National Representation
John Peacock - National Secretary, Andrea Spence - Head of Operations

Senior Leadership
Andrew McCreery - General Secretary
Arianne Crowe - Youth Work Manager

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HMRC Charitable Tax Ref: XN45820
Charity Registration Number: NIC105739

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