

IMPACT REPORT 2024/25

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE
HAPPIER, HEALTHIER AND MORE
HOPEFUL FOR THEIR FUTURE





OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



1,254
young people aged 6-25

15,679
overall attendances

43,659
contact hours

816
sessions delivered

7,515
hot meals provided

28
hours of physical activity
delivered each week

117
young people
mentored

"When at Salmon I felt
cared for, listened to
and understood, it was
a safe space to open
up to the workers"

"Prior to joining
Salmon I was a very
shy, introverted
person that didn't like
to say much around
others. However,
doing volunteering
and having to interact
with workers and
young people put me
in a position to be
more confident and
be more comfortable
around others."

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

What an absolute privilege it is to walk alongside the incredible young people of Bermondsey.

Every day, their energy, creativity, and determination remind us why this work matters so deeply. At the heart of everything we do are strong, long-term relationships. We want every young person to feel supported to live healthier lives, grow in confidence, build brighter prospects in education and work, and find joy in being active members of their community.

Together, we are working to break down the inequalities that too many young people face. Whether it's sharing a warm meal, providing mental health support, offering work experience, training and traineeships, or opening up 28 hours of sport and exercise each week, our focus is on creating opportunities and removing barriers.

This year, we launched a new mental health programme, led by Clinical Psychologist Blessing Bakare. Already, this service is making a real difference—giving young people the space, care, and tools they need to overcome challenges and build resilience for the future.

Our vision is simple: we want young people to grow up happier, healthier, and more hopeful. For over 100 years, we have stood alongside the young people of Bermondsey, and with your support, we will continue to do so for years to come.



OUR VISION

We aim to inspire young people to fulfil their potential and contribute to their community within a framework of Christian values.



OUR MISSION

We seek to...

- Improve young people's physical and mental health and wellbeing by encouraging healthy diets and active lifestyles;
- Prepare young people for further education and work by improving their educational attainment, providing access to training and supporting their transition into further education or employment;
- Involve young people in community engagement by encouraging volunteering and by boosting their political and spiritual awareness, so increasing their ability to relate to others.

Our method

- We are open to all: we welcome all young people and their families.
- We provide open-access, targeted and specialised activities which are enjoyable, educational, challenging and safe.
- We build relationships that inspire young people to develop their ambition to achieve a fulfilling life by discovering and developing their talents and increasing their enthusiasm for learning and training.



WHO WE ARE



Salmon Youth Centre is one of the largest youth centres in the UK and is a model of youth work excellence.

Salmon provides an outstanding recreational facility where young people have fun, form healthy friendships and develop their interests and skills. Salmon is a welcoming, safe and encouraging environment where they develop their self-worth, their communication skills and their interpersonal relationships. This transforms their prospects when they transition from primary to secondary education and from there to college or work. Accessible to everyone aged 6-19 for a contribution of just 50p per visit, members enjoy a wide variety of activities, starting with a free hot meal. Healthy food is followed by healthy exercise. Salmon

has facilities for badminton, basketball, boxing, climbing, dance, football, gymnastics, trampolining and volleyball. These take place in our four-court sports hall, our well-equipped exercise gym, and on our 30-metre climbing wall.

We encourage young people to realise and develop their gifts; to develop their self-respect; and to develop their interpersonal skills. We aim to promote and improve their health and wellbeing; improve their prospects in their education and work; and encourage them to engage positively with their community.



OUR IMPACT



HIGHLIGHTS

HEALTHY EATING

In 2024/25, we provided 7,515 nutritious hot meals to children in the after-school sessions. These healthy meals, which always include fruit and vegetables, are much appreciated by parents, many of whom are struggling to provide regular cooked meals due to the escalating cost of food and the overall cost-of-living crisis.



APPRENTICES

This year, six apprentices aged 18–25 joined the staff team, gaining valuable work experience, leadership skills and improving their overall employability. They successfully completed Level 2 and Level 3 Youth Work qualifications, along with a range of job-related training courses. Working directly alongside young people, they made a meaningful contribution to programme delivery.

In addition, with generous support from The Hargreaves Foundation, four sports trainees were funded to support the delivery of physical activity sessions in our clubs. These trainees obtained coaching qualifications in basketball, gymnastics and football, and completed additional training in safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, mentoring and first aid.

“I see Salmon as this second home and a place I know no matter what age there will be people more than happy to help me.”



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

A growing number of young people attending Salmon have experienced four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). So we have appointed a part-time psychotherapist to deliver weekly one-to-one sessions, to help young people develop strategies to manage the trauma they faced.

This year, we also welcomed clinical psychologist Dr Blessing Bakare to our team. She brings a wealth of expertise in young people's mental health, along with a personal connection to Salmon—having been a member herself. She will be invaluable in raising awareness around mental health and providing support to young people who are struggling.

Wellbeing remains a central focus of our work. We have expanded our mental health team by recruiting volunteer counsellors and a student counsellor from the University of Greenwich. We continue to build strong partnerships with external agencies, particularly Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

To support everyday wellbeing, we introduced the “Wellbeing Challenge” into our club sessions this year. This encourages young people to engage in five key actions: being active, helping others, learning something new, being mindful, and connecting with others.



MENTORING

This year, we provided mentoring to 117 young people through a range of tailored programmes designed to meet diverse needs. These included:

- School-based mentoring for students at risk of exclusion;
- Academic mentoring to support improved outcomes at GCSE and A Level;
- Intensive support for at-risk young people, delivered in collaboration with families, schools, social workers and police to achieve the best possible outcomes;
- Guidance on next steps in education, training, and employment; and
- Mentoring to promote personal and social development.

Our mentoring programmes equip young people with the resilience and skills needed to navigate adversity and stress. We are committed to expanding our capacity to offer more intensive, one-to-one support by recruiting additional volunteers. We also take a gender-informed approach, recognising and responding to the distinct needs of girls and young women as well as boys and young men.



“At 14 I became a Young Leader, and that became a turning point for me.”

YOUNG LEADERS

Ten young leaders aged 14–19 took part in the programme this year. The aim is to provide them with vital skills to raise their aspirations and improve their employability whilst contributing positively to their community through volunteering. The young leaders help support the primary age club sessions, termly trips and a holiday scheme for over 100 primary school children. They also take part in weekly training, learning about youth work. They are an integral part of the team. They lead with great maturity and were able to use their training to solve problems and manage issues that arise. This year's highlights included hosting a group from Germany for an exchange in the summer a visit to Cambridge University to meet the Master and students from Jesus College. They also visited The Gallup team in the Shard and completing the Gallup strengths finder assessment and then had some professional strengths coaching. The day also included support with employability skills, job applications and interview skills.



WORK EXPERIENCE VOLUNTEERS

43 young people aged 14–19 took part in work experience placements, volunteering alongside our staff, engaging directly with children and young people. They gained valuable insights into youth work by learning on the job and supporting a wide range of activities. Participants included City of London School students completing nine months of community service, as well as others undertaking weekly volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award or school and college work experience placements. Across the board, they demonstrated enthusiasm, energy and a strong commitment to making a positive impact.

RESIDENTIALS, TRIPS AND HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Salmon outings and holidays are usually the highlight of the year for many young people, especially if their family cannot afford holidays.

In 2024/25, we organised 39 trips for young people, all offered free of charge or at a nominal cost. These included visits to Cambridge University, art galleries, music studios, the Horrible Histories boat tour and an employability-focused trip with Gallup. Our sports teams also travelled to various basketball and football tournaments. Young people enjoyed outings to Thorpe Park, the cinema, bowling, Air Thrill, swimming, Flip Out, and our much-loved annual pantomime trip.

Residential highlights of the year included a five-day sailing experience on a 72ft tall ship, two outward-bound adventure residentials, a week-long camping trip to the Newday Festival and an international youth exchange hosting a group from Germany. These experiences play a vital role in broadening horizons, building confidence and sparking curiosity in the world around them.

In total, 376 young people participated in trips and residentials this year. In addition, we ran several daytime holiday schemes, with 404 young people engaging in our vibrant programme of weekly centre-based activities.





DISABILITY WORK

Our trained and experienced staff play a vital role in supporting the integration of young people with disabilities into our mainstream clubs. We work in close partnership with parents, carers, and special educational needs schools to help these young people build key life skills, including communication, personal safety, money management, independence and leadership. Our clubs serve as a vital ‘in-between’ space—bridging the gap between home, school, and the often-overwhelming wider world. We encourage the young people to step beyond their comfort zones and grow in confidence. Their presence also enriches the wider club community, fostering greater understanding, empathy and inclusion around neurodiversity and disability.



CREATIVE ARTS

Our young people can express themselves artistically in our music studio, dance studio and visual arts studio. The music studio is equipped with keyboards, guitars, drums and other instruments and a recording suite where demos and podcasts can be made. Each week we delivered 22 hours of facilitated sessions in music, art and dance. The young people have continued creating podcasts, all the content including artwork, music and voices is exclusively the young people’s own.

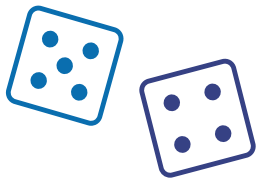
“I would say Salmon is more of a family because they really know you”



“I love the activities and love the staff”



CHLOE’S JOURNEY



Salmon Youth Centre means the absolute world to me. I’ve been attending since I was 10 years old, and the impact it has had on my life is truly beyond words.

During my pre-teen years, I was often labelled the “weird” kid who was full of energy, constantly talking, and struggling to fit in. But from the moment I walked through Salmon’s doors, I felt accepted for exactly who I was. My youth workers helped me channel this as well as embrace it. They provided me with positive ways to channel it and, more importantly, they always listened.

Having Salmon and the youth workers by my side made a huge difference, especially for my anxiety. They gave me a safe space to open up, and knowing someone genuinely cared helped ease the way I felt. They helped me build coping strategies, gave me encouragement when I doubted myself, and simply reminded me that I wasn’t alone.

Some of my most cherished memories are from the residential trips, where I got to escape the stress of home and experience real peace. At 14, I became a Young Leader, and that role became a turning point for me. It boosted my confidence and helped me manage my anxiety in ways I never thought possible. I travelled on a plane for the first time, completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award and exploring future career paths which eventually led to discovering my passion for working with young people and helping others.

Salmon has given me the inspiration to want to provide what I was once gifted when I was a young person, ensuring every young person understands they aren’t alone and to give them a space where they feel safe and listened too.





SPOTLIGHT: BLESSING BAKARE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Blessing grew up in Bermondsey and began her journey with Salmon attending club from the age of seven.

This year we welcomed back former Salmon member, Blessing Bakare, as our new mental health worker. Blessing attended Salmon on and off until the age of 16. She then went on to pursue a career in psychology, completing her doctorate and working as a Clinical Psychologist who specialises in working

with care-experienced young people. Blessing is available during the club on Mondays and Tuesdays and also offers a one-to-one therapy space for young people. Her role provides a safe space for young people to talk, build resilience, and find support for their mental health.

“It feels special to return to Salmon and support young people in the place that once supported me- it’s like a full-circle moment. It feels like a privilege to be able to support the young people to explore their thoughts, emotions and experiences in this way”



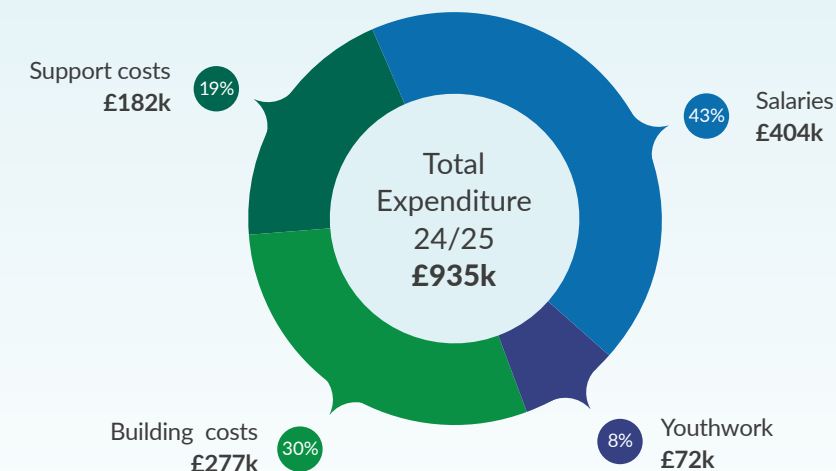
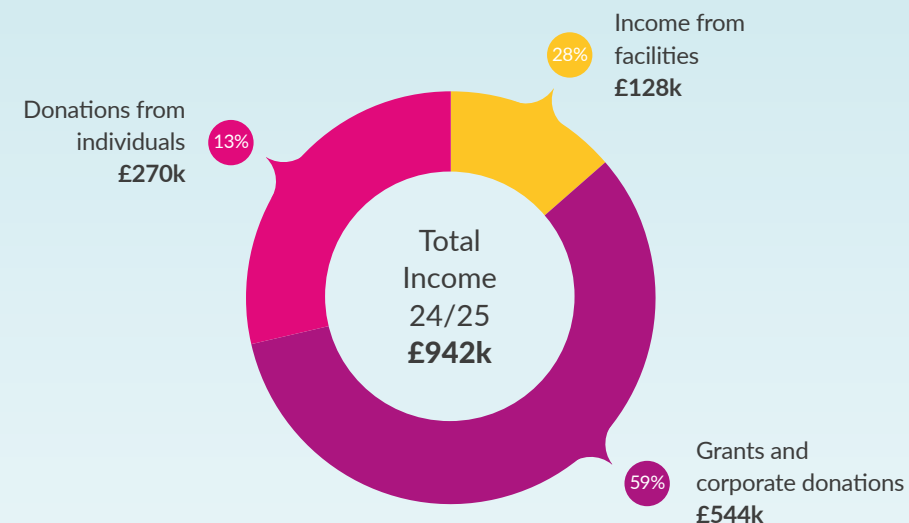
“Meeting up with Blessing (Clinical Psychologist) has given me the space to change my perspective on how my anxiety affects my life and begin to see brilliant changes throughout the weeks”

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

We are very grateful to all our donors and grant funders for their contributions during 2024/25.

The figures are extracted from the audited Annual Financial Statements to 31 March 2025 which have been lodged with Companies House and the Charity Commission and are available on request.

“I’ve learnt that I am quite good with kids and have learnt to deescalate situations which I didn’t think I could but I can”





HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED



VOLUNTEER

- Once a week or once a month
- In after school or evening sessions
- Share your skills in cooking, computers, music, dance...
- Join our Trustees

GIVE

- Help Salmon to continue serving young people
- A regular gift of any amount is really valuable to us
 - Become an SYC ambassador or patron at your church or workplace
 - Consider leaving a legacy to Salmon

“I had the opportunity to go to Cambridge University and be shown around two of the colleges and speak with students and the master of the University. This encourages me to aim for the future and what I can achieve”



WITH GRATEFUL THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS AND FUNDERS



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| Alan & Babette Sainsbury Fund | Drapers Company | Peabody |
| Angus Lawson Memorial Trust | Gallup | Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity |
| Awards for All | Garfield Weston Foundation | Souter Charitable Trust |
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| Charles Hayward Foundation | London Faith and Belief | Tom's Trust |
| Children in Need | Maurice & Hilda Laing Trust | |
| David Riddell Memorial CIO | Merriman Charitable Trust | |

A full list of Major Donors & Funders is given in the Trustees Annual Report & Financial Statements to 31 March 2025.



PARENT FEEDBACK

"I find Salmon to be an amazing place for young children to play and interact with one another. All my children have attended Salmon and the staff are amazing, friendly and approachable. The safeguarding is amazing and my children always feel safe and well looked after. Thank you for all you do for the children is truly appreciated"

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the **salmon** youth centre
in Bermondsey 

