



Safe to heal, free to thrive

Changing lives for child refugees

The Baca Charity impact report
2023-24



Baca is working for a world where all child refugees are welcomed, safe and inspired with hope to rebuild their lives for a better future

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ABOUT US

Scan this QR code to watch the film:



Welcome

Imagine being a child refugee, on your own and often thousands of miles from home and everything you know. Who is there to protect you, to help you thrive and grow? Like your family might have done, if only they were around.

This is where Baca comes in. We support young people who have been forced to flee their home country because of war, persecution or trafficking.

We are much more than accommodation providers. Based in Loughborough and Cambridge, we not only provide safe homes, but the education, mentoring, friendship and care that enables young people seeking safety to fulfil their potential and become thriving members of the community.

This report details our achievements in 2023, as we work towards a world where all child refugees are welcomed, safe and inspired with hope to rebuild their lives.

41%

of all forcibly displaced people globally are children¹

5,000

children arrive annually in the UK, having fled their country, according to the Home Office

31%

of trafficked children are reported missing each year from care in the UK²



Picture: the 2023 Baca annual celebration event

¹ UNHCR
² 2020 figures in 2022 report: www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/ECP04-A9-SIHW-report_AW7.pdf

From our CEO

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

As I reflect on another successful year of Baca, I am struck by the incredible journey we are on with the young people we serve.

In 2007, we opened our first house in Loughborough, East Midlands. In 2022, we expanded to Cambridge. We now operate 14 properties across both regions, offering safe homes to 47 child refugees.

The perseverance, determination, generosity and kindness of the young people Baca works with continue to inspire me. As you will read in this report, they have immersed themselves in education, sports, their communities and more – often against the odds.

These young people have fled war, persecution, exploitation and trafficking. But now, thanks to you and other supporters, they are rebuilding their lives and experiencing something that most of us take for granted – safety, freedom and the hope of a bright future.

In this report, you can read about how Baca works hard to support them on that journey, how we not only provide a home, but also constantly try to enrich our young people's lives (in this report, we've changed their names to protect their identities). We go above and beyond a baseline service because we believe each young person we have the privilege of working with should have the opportunity to thrive.

We are driven by our commitment to this mission, and so are determined to take our holistic care model to more towns and cities to meet the needs of more young people. We will do this by working with similar organisations supporting young refugees and people seeking asylum, influencing how they do things.

While key themes in this report are celebration and hope, this year we also experienced a devastating loss when one of our young people died following a heart transplant. He showed great courage and determination during his illness and received wonderful support from his friends and the Baca staff. His death came as a surprise to all of us, and we miss him.



Jimmy Zachariah
CEO
Baca

It is important to be realistic about just how tough things can be for our young people. The system does not make life easy for people seeking asylum, and there is little in the way of specialist provision for children.

Many people in Baca's care are also still living in limbo, waiting to see if the authorities accept their asylum claim or not. Imagine having this hanging over you as you try to get on with a new life in a foreign culture, and to process the trauma of what you have been through back home and on your journey to the UK? All of this is now even more pronounced since the racially-motivated riots that took place in summer 2024.

Against this backdrop, however, our young people's resilience continues to shine through. They are supported by our amazing team which I am proud to be part of. We would not be who we are without the team and supporters who are part of our journey.

I mentioned earlier that the young people inspire me daily. I should add that every day I am humbled by them, too. In the face of adversity, and often away from their nearest and dearest, they choose to not give up and spread their warmth and positive attitude to those around them.

I hope this report gives the reader a strong sense of how incredible Baca's young people are – and how we continue to pursue excellence in order to see them thrive.

Jimmy Zachariah
CEO
Baca

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REFUGEE AND A PERSON SEEKING ASYLUM?

A refugee is someone who has been forced to leave their country due to war, violence or persecution, and is unable or unwilling to return. An asylum seeker is someone who has applied for refugee status, but there has not yet been a decision on their claim.

2023 at a glance



young people in our supported accommodation



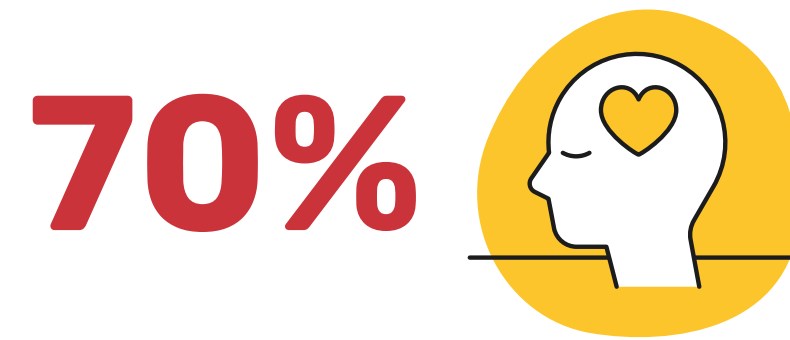
young people in education



young people joined in at least one sports session



local authorities we've worked with across the UK



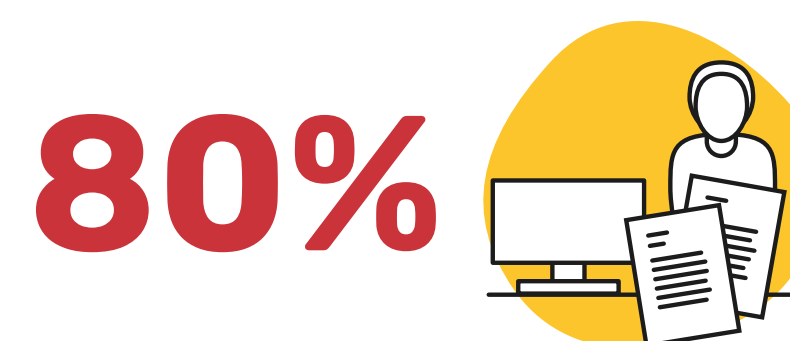
of the young people we work with see an improvement in their emotional wellbeing each year



community members have taken part in volunteering to support Baca



young people from 17 countries looked after since we began



of our young people engaged in education, employment or training



regular volunteers support our young people with such things as careers advice, teaching and overnight stays



How we change young people's lives

Baca recognises the difficulties faced by young people seeking asylum in the UK. Our holistic approach to care and support ensures that child refugees have the best opportunities to heal and thrive in their new home.



BACA SUPPORTS YOUNG PEOPLE WITH

- Basic needs such as a safe home
- Education and life skills
- Emotional and therapeutic needs
- Social and community engagement

WHICH LEADS TO

- Increased personal safety
- Increased engagement with education, employment and training
- Improved emotional wellbeing
- Improved physical wellbeing
- More social engagement

WHICH LEADS TO

Positive and empowered young people, able to live independently as contributors to society

Our progress

We're working to provide a safe place for child refugees to heal and have the freedom to build a better future. Read about the difference we've made to young people's lives in 2023-24

Baca don't just take care of you because you are young, they are more, they are family.

Mukhtar

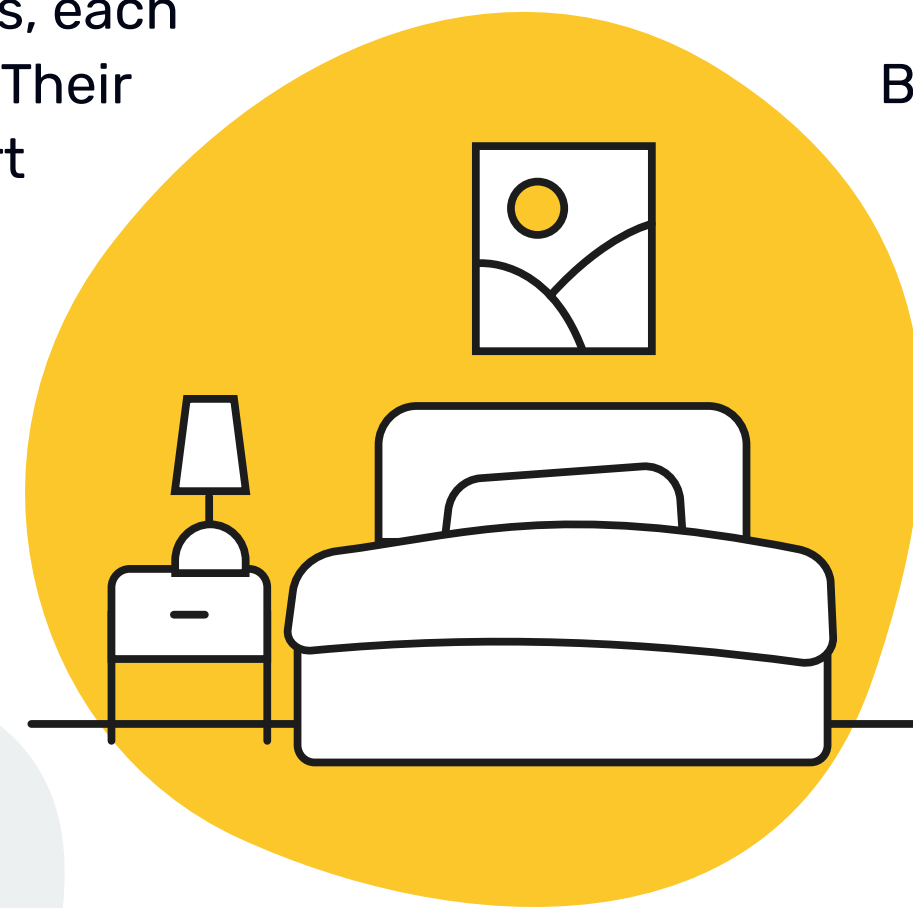
Basic needs

A ROOF OVER MY HEAD

Each year around 5,000 children arrive in the UK alone without their families, having fled their home country. Many of them have been trafficked and are traumatised.

Baca serves 50 of these young refugees, each one having lost the only life they know. Their courage is inspiring but without support they are at extreme risk of harm and exploitation, unsure who they can trust or where they belong.

The first part of that help begins with fulfilling basic needs, which at its simplest, is somewhere safe and welcoming to live.



This year we completed the refurbishment of some new houses we have bought in Loughborough and are now able to support 39 young people in the area in ten houses and one flat.

Baca has also completed its second year in Cambridge, where we have recently bought another house, bringing the total to three. We are now supporting 11 young people in the city.

The house is big, the rooms are big. It has a nice garden and a nice living room. We have a timetable for cleaning. We clean one area each and then swap to a different area next week. We all do our bit and keep the house nice.

Mustafe

OUR PROGRESS

A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Food plays a big part in anyone's culture and identity, and the young people we work with are no exception. At Baca, we encourage our young people to cook together as a way to connect, and to share recipes from home.

This year, we have gone one step further and have worked with eight of our young people to create a recipe book, written by them in English and translated into their home languages.

It is much more than a collection of cooking tips, however. Each recipe in *Come, Eat!* which we self-published in 2024, tells a story, too – the young people sharing memories of home, who they cooked with, and how they learned to make the meal.

'For me, the place I am from, Tigray, is not known by many people, neither is the food,' reads one entry. 'This meal would be shared with my family. It would be a special time when we slaughtered an animal and ate meat.'

'You can get all the ingredients in this country, but goat is more difficult to find.'

**If we eat together
we cannot be
enemies.**

From the book *Come, Eat!*



The greatest game on Earth

BACA IN THE NEWS

The Baca football seven-a-side team, affectionately known by the boys and girls as 'Bacalona', has been making headlines.

A recent book, *50 Years of the PFA Awards*, includes the story of how football is helping to change young lives at our charity.

'We have found football helps with language and emotional wellbeing, plus it allows them to let off steam – girls as well as boys,' says our CEO, Jimmy Zachariah.

'Some of our young people join local football clubs, which is a great way to understand the community.'



ASYLUM APPEALS

It is impossible to imagine what it must be like for a young person to be waiting for an asylum decision, worrying what the future holds for them if the decision does not go their way.

Unfortunately, this is too often the case among the child refugees at Baca.

At any one time, we also have several appeals against a negative asylum decision in the pipeline, which can profoundly affect our young people's ability to pursue education, hobbies and other opportunities – the everyday things that will help them heal and thrive.

Baca is there for our young people throughout this process, just like a loving parent would be. We help them deal with the stress, bureaucracy and complications of the process, supporting them with their mental health, attending solicitors' meetings with them, advocating for them, and taking them to other appointments, often many miles from home.

And it's worth it. In 2023, four young people's asylum appeals were successful, granting them five years of leave to remain in the UK, and so far in 2024 two more young people have won their appeals.



Education and life skills

LEARNING CURVE

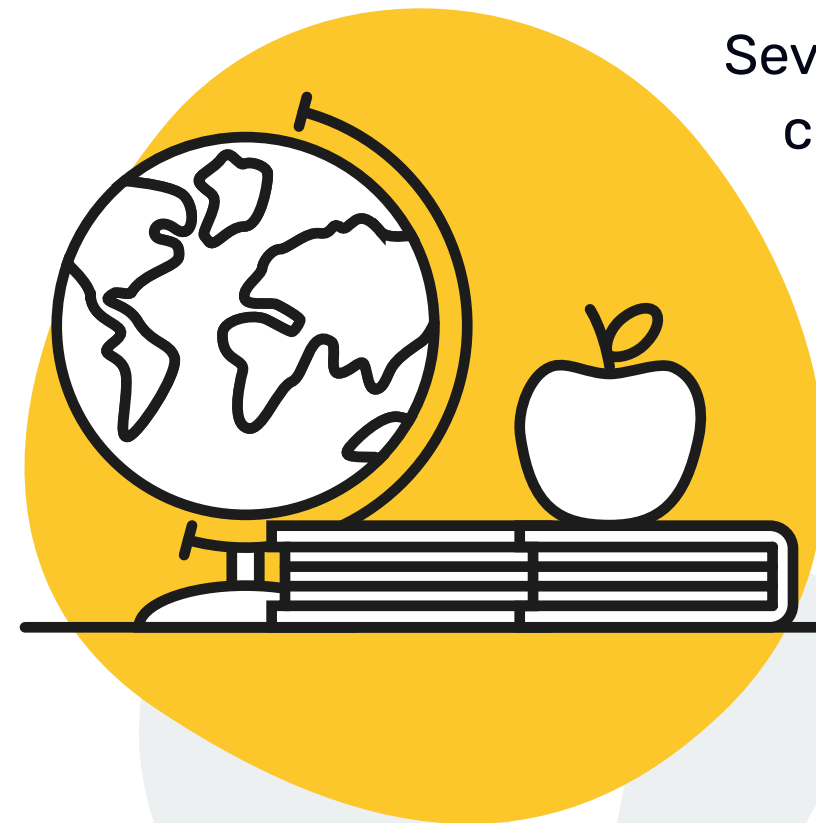
When they first arrive at Baca, most of the young people know little or no English. Some are illiterate in their own language, having had no formal education or their school years disrupted by war.

To address this, Baca teachers run classes in Loughborough every weekday morning in English, maths and ICT. This year, 27 new arrivals attended what we call 'Baca College'.

In Cambridge, our young people attend one of the local colleges which runs entry level classes – the first steps into formal education.

Baca's education support includes a tutorial group for an hour a week. This is available for all our young people, and is a place where they can discuss more emotional issues such as confidence, their wellbeing and the language needed to express how you feel.

In addition, young people can take advantage of one-to-one mentoring, where volunteers help with reading, writing, speaking, listening and maths.



Several young people have completed their GCSEs this year, and some former young people have gone on to further study where, if they ever want it, Baca teachers are always there to support them.



When I arrived here, everyone, they showed me we are with you, we take care of you. Step by step, they teach me each and everything.

Solomon

NEXT STEPS

Many of the young people who are at college struggle to maintain their place. There are many reasons for this, but one key factor is that it takes too long to get into the mainstream vocational courses they want to do. The young people get stuck in entry level classes and can become disillusioned. This can lead them to drop out of education and take a low-skilled job with little opportunity to learn and develop the skills needed for more skilled work.

This year, however, we hope to have turned things around. At Baca, our young people can now take Entry Level 2 exams, instead of just Entry Level 1. This will reduce the time they need in college before starting a vocational course.

MOVING INTO WORK

While many of our young people will gain qualifications at college that help them into employment, for some this traditional route through education doesn't work.

This year we have strengthened our focus on non-mainstream training options and work opportunities for young people, developing systems for supporting them into employment, such as group sessions on developing a CV.

We have also been looking into other ways to introduce them to the working world, including through volunteering, work experience, attending job fairs, placements and visiting employers.

For example, we took a small group of young people to Everyman Racing, a company that runs driving experiences on a racetrack near Loughborough. They had an open day to highlight a range of careers, including hospitality and car mechanics.

Following this event, we identified a local garage that will take on a young person with an interest in car mechanics for some work experience. If this goes well, it could create opportunities for other young people who are keen to work in the sector.



Bring it back home

ISAIAH'S STORY

Isaiah arrived at Baca aged 16, having fled his home country of Tigray. Since then, he has made incredible academic progress, passing GCSE maths and English.

While studying for his GCSEs at a local college, Isaiah decided he wanted to help the younger people at Baca College – our in-house classes where young people newly arrived in the UK can learn in a safe environment.

Isaiah suggested he could be a classroom assistant, helping to teach students in their native language. The teacher thought it was a great idea and asked him to support lessons once a week.

Isaiah's one-to-one work with Baca students has made a big difference, especially for Fatima who found maths particularly difficult. Thanks to Isaiah, she says, she is much more confident in her abilities.



After his time as a classroom assistant, Isaiah looked for more volunteer opportunities and has been working for the Red Cross as an interpreter for Tigrinya and Amharic.

Isaiah says it's important to have empathy with those you are interpreting for: 'I wanted to interpret because I wanted to help others struggling with finding their words to express themselves but uncomfortable because of the interpreter.'

I didn't like how some interpreters made me uncomfortable because of my dialect.'

All this volunteering, however, is not affecting his academic drive. He is now working towards GCSEs in ICT and business and looking into A-level courses that can help him achieve his goal of going to university to study IT or business. In September, Isaiah began

studying Level 3 Access to Higher Social Science. He is working towards a very special goal: to give back to other young people at Baca by one day becoming a Baca Support Worker himself. Isaiah's experience, passion and commitment to acquire the skills to support other people seeking safety will put him in a great position to do this.



Emotional and physical needs

YOUNG MINDS MATTER

While the young people in our care are now safe, they can still have the uncertainty of an asylum case hanging over them, as well as the pain – often trauma – of their past experiences.

They could be struggling to process their new surroundings or missing the comfort of their own culture and family.

Providing in-house therapeutic support, therefore, is key in supporting the young people's emotional wellbeing.

Exercise and sport, meanwhile, are not only good for the body – but the brain and emotions too.

51

young people have attended at least one therapy group or one-to-one session



OUR KIND OF THERAPY

We use art, drama and dance to build on the innate creativity of the young people at Baca, overcoming the language, accessibility and cultural barriers often posed by traditional counselling techniques. Dance is so important in many of our young people's cultures.

As well as sessions in-house in Loughborough and Cambridge, one of our art therapists runs regular therapy sessions at WQE College, Leicester, for young people who are studying and unable to get to Baca after college.

DOES IT WORK?

One of the key measures of increased personal safety adopted by Baca, is the number of young people going missing from care. This is one of the biggest risks faced by unaccompanied minors, due to trafficking and other vulnerabilities.

Baca has had no young people go permanently missing from placement in the last three years – a significant achievement compared to figures for the country as a whole.

WHAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THINK

The following is the verdict of one person in our care, talking to new arrivals about the power of therapy: 'If you are sad, if you want to talk and if you don't have a friend or a family you should go to talk. You can trust: no one knows what I say, so I can be free, no one can listen, like having a person in the family to talk to.'

A moving story

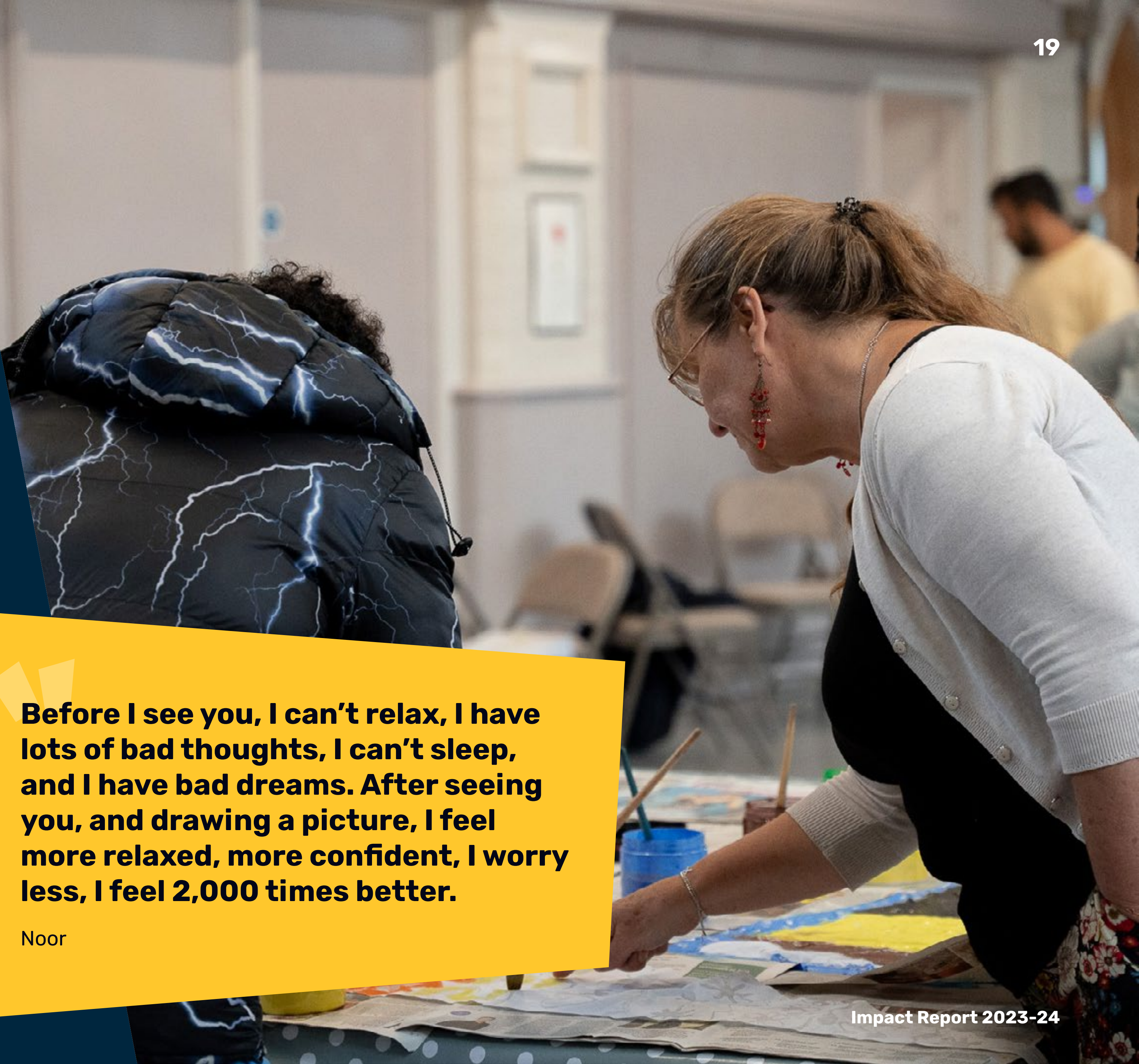
CREATIVE THERAPY IN ACTION

In Cambridge, as in Loughborough, our young people are able to get in-house therapeutic support, both one-to-one and in group sessions.

We have also started working with other organisations: 18 of the boys attended a drumming workshop put on by Social Services, for example.

A highlight for six of the boys last year, was a movement workshop put on by the local Infusion Physical Theatre. Baca's creative therapist picks up the story: 'The workshop was called *Soothe* and inspired by the nervous system and brain chemicals. The first part focused on movement relating to the stress responses of fight, flight and freeze.

'Then the session involved looking at connection with some fun work in pairs which the boys enjoyed. It was great to see them having fun, improvising . . . laughing.'



Before I see you, I can't relax, I have lots of bad thoughts, I can't sleep, and I have bad dreams. After seeing you, and drawing a picture, I feel more relaxed, more confident, I worry less, I feel 2,000 times better.

Noor

A QUESTION OF SPORT

While football remains the most popular sport among our young people, we provide a wide range of options to ensure as many as possible can take part in sport. This includes gymnastics, boxing, swimming, running and, this year, a trip to try out skiing at Tamworth's SnowDome.

As well as organising sports in-house, we have also connected more young people with a range of local clubs. For example, two boys from Afghanistan told us how much they loved cricket, and we have found a local team for them to play in, where they have become regulars.

As well as the benefits of keeping fit, such experiences are also a great way to meet people outside Baca, and helps our young people build a deeper connection to the community where they live.

12

The number of different sporting activities our young people have taken part in



Kicking on

SAMUEL'S STORY

When Samuel, a young refugee from Eritrea, arrived in the UK at 17, he was placed in hotel accommodation alongside adults. It was a frightening and lonely environment, made worse because he didn't understand what was happening to him, and was unsure if he would be sent back to Eritrea or stay in the hotel permanently.

Samuel's life began to change, however, when he arrived at Baca.

On his first day, he showed off his impressive gymnastics and kickboxing skills to his new housemates. Within a month we had helped him join a local gymnastics club, and the weekly sessions became a highlight for him, giving him a sense of belonging.

Life in the UK wasn't easy however. He endured a long period of isolation due to his serious concerns about



his asylum status. But with the support and encouragement from Baca to not give up, Samuel's perseverance paid off when he received a positive asylum decision.

After the immense relief of getting his decision, Samuel felt he could take up kickboxing sessions as well as the weekly gymnastics. Exercise, he says, has had a transformative effect on him and helps improve his mood. It also is a way for Samuel to integrate into the local community.

He is thriving academically, too, and is teaching himself computer programming. 'If you put your mind to something and believe you can do it,' he says, 'you can achieve anything.'



Social and community engagement

MAKING CONNECTIONS

We encourage more connections between our young people – and between them and the staff, the wider community, and even decision makers and experts involved in issues that affect them.

Such initiatives are important in developing the language and inter-personal skills that will benefit our child refugees in adulthood. Strong community connections locally and beyond are also crucial for nurturing a more inclusive attitude towards the young people in our care.

35

members of the local community have taken part in Baca volunteering events



SUMMER TRIPS

Our annual summer residential trips are a highlight of the year – an important chance to spend time together away from any worries and concentrate on having fun.

But they are not only for the benefit of our young people. They are designed by them, too, with the young people organising meal plans, a cooking and cleaning rota, day-time activities and what we do in the evenings.

This year, 32 Loughborough young people travelled to the Peak District. The weather was hot so water activities were the order of the day. One young person taught a member of staff how to improve their diving.

We also had our first Cambridge residential trip, with the team taking seven young people to Norfolk. This included raft building, archery and canoeing, and a day out in Great Yarmouth.

As well as the residential trips, over the past year we have taken 37 young people on seven different day trips. These have varied from karting to exploring the caves in Nottingham.



VOLUNTEERING IN ACTION

It began as a Saturday morning hobby. Now it's a weekly volunteer commitment that gives back to the community.

Over the past year, some young people in Cambridge have regularly taken part in the local park run. Four of them are now regularly giving up part of their Saturday mornings to help out with the organisation of the event – as well as take part in the running they love.

Some other young people in Cambridge have been volunteering in the British Heart Foundation and Cancer Research charity shops. Yet another is volunteering at a local café.

And in Loughborough, two young people are volunteering as interpreters with the Red Cross.



ART IN THE COMMUNITY

This year, our young people have been taking their creativity to the outside world.

In Loughborough, Clare, one of our art therapists, worked with them on an exhibition for the local Charnwood Museum.

The result was called *All Together We Are Stronger* and was inspired by injera, a giant pancake-like dish from Ethiopia and Eritrea. It symbolises the power of food and its associations with community, culture and belonging.

The centrepiece of the exhibition was a tablecloth made from individually decorated pieces, sewn together using traditional wax printing techniques. It consisted of symbols, pictures and words which were important to the young people, particularly in relation to sharing food and celebrations in their cultures.



In Cambridge, our young people took part in a project where they painted one of 31 giraffe sculptures displayed around the city.

They painted the animal with flags, a vibrant African sunset, and fingerprints tracing their paths to the UK. The sun on the giraffe's head illustrated hope and light, while a tree demonstrated shelter and growth.

A big thanks to local young people's charity Break, one of the organisers of the project, which was keen for us to take part in the project and donated the giraffe to Baca.



MAKING WAVES

Part of the role of Baca is to be advocates for the young people we serve. Drawing on their stories, achievements and challenges, we want to:

- raise awareness
- create a greater acceptance of people seeking asylum
- create improvements in the care of child refugees.

This year we worked with partner charity ECPAT to raise awareness of child refugees being denied care and ending up in inappropriate accommodation such as hotels.

Part of this was promoting ECPAT's report on the issue *Outside The Frame: Unaccompanied children denied care and protection*. Nine Baca young people played their part too, travelling to London to present the report to MPs. Two of our young people actually sat in on the briefing we gave in Parliament to MPs, giving first-hand accounts of their experience of the asylum system.



We were also key contributors to Missing People's *Good Practice Guidance* on supporting unaccompanied children who arrive in the UK and are at risk of going missing. And we also worked with Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Bedfordshire and ECPAT on *Creating Stable Futures*, which drew on the voices of young people who had experienced modern slavery.

This year also saw the publication of *Kicked Out!* by A.M. Dassu, who specialises in children's books addressing displacement, migration and identity. Baca advised the author on the content of the book and received significant profile on the back of its publicity.

Engaging with local schools has been rewarding, with enthusiastic responses to our efforts to expand understanding. We presented to Sir Jonathan North School's citizenship GCSE students, for example, providing insight into education for child refugees in Leicestershire. We also presented Baca's work to Loughborough Grammar School's year 12 geography students studying migration, providing them with real-life examples to use in their coursework and exams.



Money matters

Check out our approach to fundraising, some of the generous organisations and individuals that back us, and how we spend our money

FOCUS ON FUNDING

Baca's funding primarily comes from contracts with partner local authorities. We would like to particularly acknowledge our partnership with Leicestershire County Council, who we have been working with for 16 years.

Baca would not be able to deliver our holistic support services without the support of various grant funding bodies and foundations (see page 31). We thank them for their generosity and commitment to our work.

Amid the challenge of the rising cost of living, we have been humbled by the long-term commitment of our supporters and local communities. The unwavering support from individual fundraisers, churches, schools, universities and various community members has been invaluable.

We have also developed new connections within the community, broadening our outreach and engagement significantly over the past year, which has been greatly aided by the introduction of our new branding, website and communications materials.

Baca subscribes to the Code of Fundraising Practice in all its fundraising activities. The code is implemented through our human resources and fundraising processes. Every person involved in fundraising for Baca is trained and inducted on the expectations set out in the code of practice.

It is also reflected in our fundraising pack, and we comply with all the GDPR legal requirements regarding donors' or fundraisers' personal data.

No third-party organisations or consultants were used for raising funds for Baca. And there have been no breaches or complaints received with the application of this code and GDPR regulations in the reporting period.



Picture: Oliver Savage recently completed an 870-mile walk on the Welsh coast path to raise funds for Baca and other charities

FUNDRAISING AND SUPPORT IN KIND

Thank you to everyone who has campaigned for us, made donations, volunteered their valuable time and skills, and supported us financially.

Thanks to your generosity, we've been able to provide a safe place for child refugees to heal and the freedom to build a better future.

Here are some highlights of the financial support and support-in-kind that we have received.

- This year, the fundraising appeals the Gift of Learning Classroom Appeal and All Together We Are Stronger Christmas Appeal raised a combined total of £2,821 to fund our classrooms.
- A standout moment was support from the Diocese of Leicester and Bishop Martyn. After visiting Baca in Loughborough, Bishop Martyn selected us as their chosen charity for the Bishop's 2024 Lent Appeal. This led to engagement with multiple churches, attendance at a men's breakfast, a webinar and more than £5,000 in donations from existing and new church connections and individuals.

- The Loughborough University Rag Committee selected Baca as one of their partners for the 2023-24 academic year, meaning we'll receive a percentage of funds raised from their events.
- Loughborough Students Union Action Society, over six gardening sessions at the Baca centre in Loughborough, have transformed the outdoor space. Strengthening our relationship with Action has also provided us with discounted access to university sports pitches.
- We won the Gallagher Insurance Helping Hands Competition complete with £2,000 prize money, and hosted their team for a day of gardening at one of our young people's homes.
- Aggregate Industries supported us by volunteering a day to paint our car park walls.
- We have secured funding from Waitrose Give a Little Love and Tesco Loughborough Community Grants.

- Our engagement with Loughborough Grammar School has been exceptional and we are thankful for their wide-ranging support. This includes them raising funds at their 2023 Christmas carol concert and a non-school uniform day. The school also took part in fundraising and chose Baca to present at their whole school assembly during Refugee Week.



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

Special thanks to our funders:

- Leicestershire County Council
- Rutland County Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Leicester City Council
- Peterborough Council
- The National Lottery – Reaching Communities Fund
- Samworth Foundation
- The Henry Smith Charity
- CHK Foundation
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- BBC Children in Need
- Society of the Holy Child Jesus
- Magnify Foundation
- The Simon Gibson Charitable Trust
- The Balcombe Charitable Trust
- The Swire Charitable Trust
- The Cambridge Build Society Community Fund
- The Maud Elkington Charitable Trust
- Cambridgeshire Community Reach Fund
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire
- Next PLC

A background image of a city at night with blurred lights in various colors (blue, green, red, yellow) against a dark sky.

**THANK
YOU**

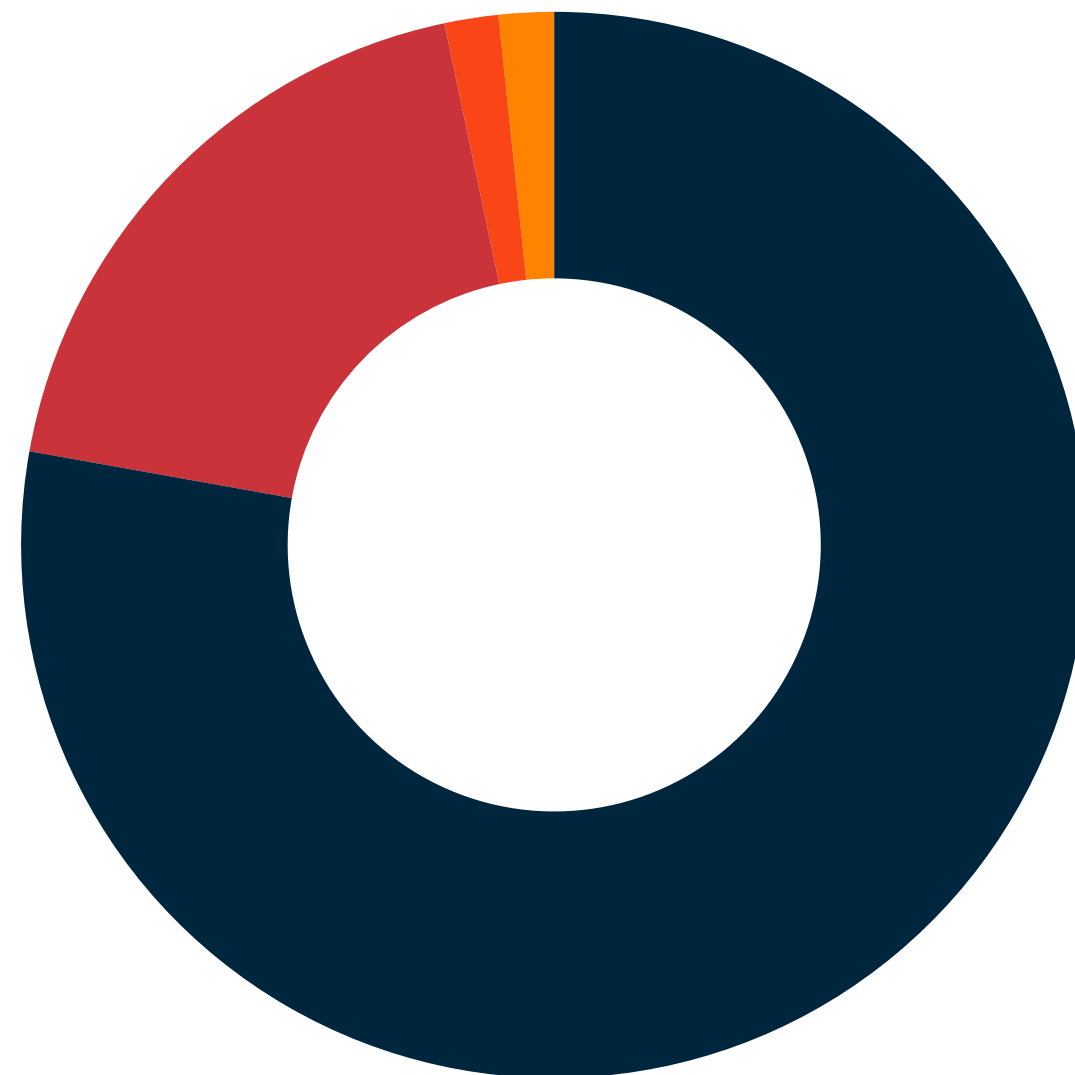
FINANCES AT A GLANCE

INCOME

Accommodation and support	£1,750,315	78%
Grants and trusts	£424,799	19%
Donations and legacies	£36,674	1.5%
Investments	£37,630	1.5%

Total income £2,249,418

Our total income for the year increased by £258,395, or 13% on the previous year.

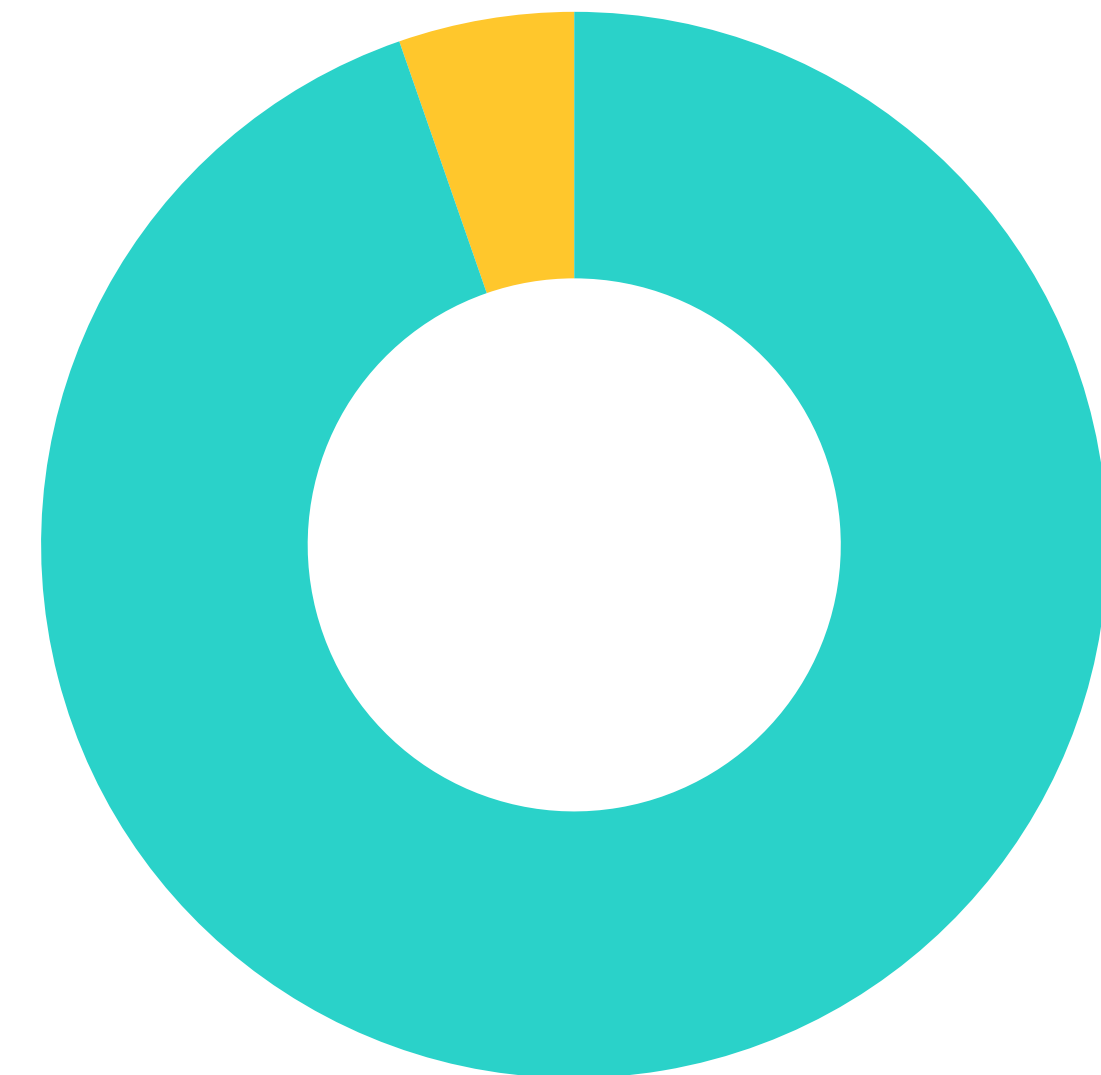


EXPENDITURE

Accommodation and support	£1,707,052	95%
Fundraising	£95,994	5%

Total expenditure £1,803,046

Our total expenditure for the year increased by £163,937, or 10% on the previous year. £1,707,052 or 76% of our income was spent on charitable activities.¹



¹ Due to reasons out of our control, we were unable to spend to our budget in the year, leading to a larger net surplus than intended. Key reasons for this were local authority reorganisation and our Cambridge service development being significantly delayed due to the death of a young person. Furthermore, we were not able to spend on wages in Loughborough as planned due to delays in recruitment to several key roles.

Future plans

You've read about what we've achieved this year. See overleaf for a summary of our priorities for the year ahead

90%

of our care leavers each year report a positive experience moving into independent or semi-independent accommodation

Looking forward

NEXT STEPS

Baca's current strategy runs until 2025, so there is a lot of work going into our new strategy, which will take us to 2028. We'll continue our laser focus on enabling young people to fulfil their potential and become thriving members of the community. Here are the headlines for the areas where we want to drive further progress.



GROW IN CAMBRIDGE

We have turned down more than 40 referrals over the past year due to lack of capacity in Cambridge. Evidence shows there is a serious lack of holistic, top-quality services in the city for young people like those we serve. We will be creating a plan to identify suitable housing through sustainable partnerships, as well as further developing our Cambridge service to meet the young people's needs. This applies in particular to our education work, which complements what the local college provides but currently relies on volunteers. At the moment, also, we can only provide part-time therapy for our young people.

SHARE OUR EXPERTISE

We're really proud of our holistic approach to young people's care. Local authorities continue to reach out to us, saying there is a gap in high-quality provision in their region. As a result, we want to work more with similar organisations who support young people seeking asylum in other towns and cities to influence how they do things. We will be identifying ways to form partnerships with such organisations in order to support the development of services in these new areas.



SPREAD THE WORD

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter,” said Martin Luther King Jr. Our young people want the confidence to share their story. It is a key part of them taking ownership of their healing journey and dignity. Through mentoring and advocacy in the wider world, we’ll continue to equip young people to tell their stories and have their voices heard, particularly when it comes to decisions that affect their futures.

WORK ON WORK

The odds are stacked against our young people, especially when it comes to getting skilled, purposeful and sustainable employment. The educational and systemic barriers are widespread. We’ll continue working to improve our young people’s life skills and focus even more on developing supportive ways into employment. To do this, we will be looking to form partnerships with training providers and employers.

HOME AND AWAY

Safe homes, even after someone leaves Baca, continue to be of huge importance in order for our young leavers to thrive. Some of our young people have been unable to move on because they have nowhere to live. We’ll be working with partners, especially in local government, to address this and find affordable, long-term accommodation for our leavers.





Safe to heal, free to thrive



bacacharity.org.uk



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