



THE FOYER FEDERATION

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2019 - MARCH 20

Our vision

At the Foyer Federation, our vision is of a truly equitable society in which all young people have an equal chance to realise their power and purpose. A person's strengths, not their circumstances, should shape their journey.

We look forward to a future in which young people take ownership and leadership over their paths and develop the strengths and talents needed for a fulfilling life.



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BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The year started badly for us and ended well. Preferable to the opposite! We struggled to access the levels of grant income we had hoped for and corporate relationships were not coming to fruition. In June, our Chief Executive decided to leave and the Board of Trustees, who were already having monthly meetings, had grave concerns for the future of the organisation and the network as a whole.

Our remaining team responded admirably showing all the aspects of our core values. Led by Joel Lewis, who assumed the role of acting Executive Director of the organisation, we focused efforts on an Advantaged Thinking approach. We had the UK's most dedicated network for young people in the Foyers around the country, we had significant toolkits for support built over time and an excellent set of Trustees, many of whom themselves operate or have operated Foyers and experienced first-hand direct working with young people.

Our wider network allowed us to forge a strategic partnership with another formidable membership organisation, SEUK. This brought a wealth of skill and assistance, and access to their shared services team who took control of our financial reporting through our Treasurer, Sabira Kanji (FD SEUK).

A minimum viable product approach was taken to sustain the organisation through uncertain funding times. With the savvy use of resources, both internal and the excellent skill of Colin Falconer as consultant, the team and Board of Trustees were able to drive the organisation forward to a surplus position while improving delivery to our core membership and investor group.

Towards the end of the year, when the realisation of a surplus to help build reserves was coupled with the knowledge that the foundations of the organisation were secure, the focus moved to the strategy for the future.

The trustees are pleased to present their annual Trustees' report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st March 2020, which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities, Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

The structure, governance and management section include a reference to related party transactions in note 4 and all trustees give of their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Details of trustee expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in note 4 to the accounts.

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Company Secretary and in accordance with the Foyer Federation Charity policy, and to withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises. The Treasurer of the Foyer Federation, Sabira Kanji is also the Director of Finance for SEUK and has complied with the governance of related party transactions.

Work is ongoing on our strategy which will start implementation next year.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board of Trustees, whose loving approach to the organisation and its mission allowed us to move through a difficult time with support and scrutiny, never panic. On behalf of the Board I would like to thank our exceptional team. In particular Joel Lewis, who led us through this period with honesty, skill and determination to improve our work and deliver to our members.

Last and by no means least, I would like to thank our membership and network whose work does so much for young people. Our figures this year show a near doubling of the percentage of refugee and ESOL youth needing support of their talents and unsurprisingly a 10% increase of mental health issues. In spite of the above, pages 5 and 11 show the positive impact of our work against a backdrop of reduced funding.

These are encouraging results and with 80% of members enrolled in our FOR Youth programme we hope to be able to maintain or improve these.

Our future lies in inviting more organisations and individuals to embrace Advantaged Thinking and an asset-based approach, sharing our knowledge for the elimination of deficit thoughts and actions.

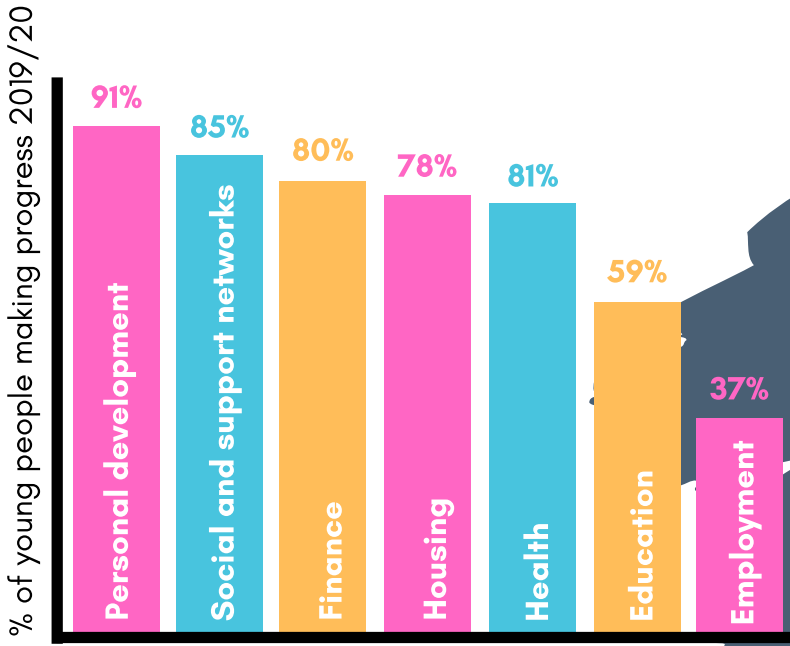
With renewed thanks to all who subscribe to this aspiration and support us in our work.



Andrew Croft - Chair of Trustees, Foyer Federation



OUR IMPACT



37% of young people started work during stay (up from 30%)

36% of young people took up a new qualification during their stay (up from 20%)

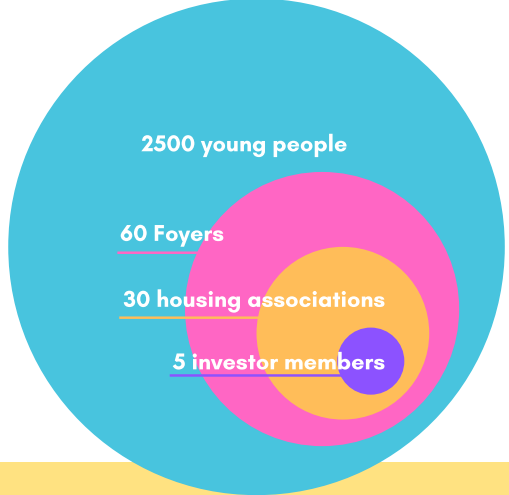
7 Theory of Change areas

48% of young people moved into their own tenancy or to university

7% reduction in eviction rates

69%

of young people feel their opinions are listened to and valued by their Foyers



- 53% age 16-18
- 45% substance use issue
- 43% diagnosed MH issue
- 15% ESOL



OUR MISSION

We want young people to thrive – not just survive. All young people should have the chance to realise their potential, harness their power and achieve a fulfilling, loving, sustainable adulthood.

We work with young people with experience of homelessness through a UK-wide network of Foyers, which provide safe accommodation and a nurturing environment in which residents live, learn and work.

Our mission is to offer innovation, programme delivery and capacity-building support to ensure the Foyer network continues to secure the best outcomes for 16-25-year-olds who can't live at home. Through our quality development framework, engaging programmes and targeted training, we model a whole-person approach to empowering young people.

Advantaged Thinking is our asset-based philosophy and it guides everything we do, encouraging young people to aim high, dream big and fulfil their ambitions. It focuses on young people's strengths and talents and asks them to view their futures through that lens rather than using deficit-based labels and perceptions.

OUR OBJECTIVES 2014-2021

Our strategic seven-year plan centered around the following four objectives:

- To create a call to action within the network and beyond; a movement for Advantaged Thinking.
- To create the conditions for a new youth offer based on the learning from 20+ years of supporting the Foyer network.
- To tell a different story about young people by enabling young people and the services that work with them to tell their stories in an authentic way.
- To create an organisation that is creative, instinctive and lives its values.

The Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, in accordance with section 17 of the Charities' Act 2011, sets out two key principles:

- The organisation must have an identifiable benefit and;
- The benefit must be to the public or a section of the public.

OUR VALUES

We have five core values that every member of our team upholds in all aspects of our work:



1. Authentic

Authentic leadership is about sticking to your values, being comfortable in your own skin and not trying to be someone you're not.



2. Brave

Courage is about having the quiet inner confidence to stand up for what really matters to you.



3. Loving

Love is at the heart of all we do. It means genuinely looking out for the world around us, and knowing when to be tough and when to be kind.



4. Maverick

Mavericks are born to be original, quirky and maybe even a bit unpopular to shake things up and make them better.



5. Savvy

Savviness isn't a science; it's a mindset. It's about being smart and creative, while keeping one eye on the now and one at the end of the game.

Trustees have reviewed the vision and mission of the charity in the light of this guidance and have been mindful of it when setting the aims and objectives for the coming year. They believe the activities of the Charity and the achievements detailed in this report clearly demonstrate that the Charity meets both these requirements.

OUR ACTIVITIES

A MOVEMENT FOR ADVANTAGED THINKING

Power Up was a funded programme that focused on creating meaningful listening experiences, amplifying the voices and views of young people, and embedding a regular listening practice into the organisation and network. In its second year, we ran a residential for 10 young people from nine Foyers, released a report containing our learnings, and launched a talent bond scheme.

Corporate Connections was a programme in its first year of funding, aimed at a small group of Foyers in a region of the southeast. It aimed to develop young people's employability skills, train staff in a new employability approach, and secure work placement opportunities in corporate businesses.

CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR A NEW YOUTH OFFER

Our **membership** is the core of our purpose as a charity. We have three tiers of membership, each with a distinct offer: community member, FOR Youth partner, and Investor. We currently have 60 members, of which 30 are FOR Youth partners and five are Investors.

FOR Youth delivered its third year and continues to help services embed Advantaged Thinking practices in their services and secure positive outcomes for young people. The bespoke consultancy offer is complemented by rigorous data benchmarking and reviews to ensure best-practice quality development is maintained.

Fellowship for Leaders was a funded programme with a focus on developing current and future leaders from within the Foyer community. Through a combination of guest speakers, workshops and peer learning, representatives from 14 Foyers made the commitment to their leadership journey.



TELL YOUNG PEOPLE'S STORIES IN AN AUTHENTIC WAY

Power Up's focus on listening authentically enabled us to capture young people's stories and experiences and, through this, challenge Foyers to deepen their own listening practices and foreground the voices of their residents.

The Hear Me Out fund, part of Power Up, encouraged young people to be at the forefront of their own narratives by investing small amounts of money in them directly to kickstart passion projects of their design.

We partnered with three leading youth and housing associations to deliver the second **Room for Young People conference and awards**. This shone a light on the achievements of young people from our network and beyond.

Our **new website** was designed with the intention of providing a platform to promote young people's skills and talents. There is a TrustYouth page dedicated to telling young people's stories and sharing their experiences and insights, as well as promoting the work we do directly with them.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year was bookended by adversity, but defined by a refreshed approach and a series of successes in the face of challenge.

In June 2019, our CEO became the latest team member to leave the organisation, following a number of key staff including our Director of Operations and Funding, Head of Partnerships and Development Manager. With one new Programme and Innovation and Manager and one rekindled relationship with The Foyer Federation's former Director of Innovation, the team doubled in size, held together by our vision, led by our Director of Network who stepped into an Executive role, and strengthened by a new partnership with Social Enterprise UK.

The key focus in the first half of 2019-20 was meeting our commitments to our membership, increasing our value and building on our strengths as an organisation. In the second half of the year, we were able to move into a phase of evaluation and renewal.

We began planning a new strategy fit for the Foyer Federation of the present day that will drive positive change for young people who have experienced disadvantage.

A MOVEMENT FOR ADVANTAGED THINKING

In the second year of funding for Power Up, we took 10 young people to an action-packed residential where they shared their views about their Foyers and their future aspirations, which we wrote into a report with six key recommendations. Download the report *Putting Young People at the Heart of Your Service* from foyer.net/power-up

We also launched a new talent bond scheme, Hear Me Out!, and awarded a total of £3,120 to 14 young people to grow their skills and talents in whatever way they saw fit. This included providing initial capital for young entrepreneurs launching enterprises, funding courses and classes that helped to unlock dream careers, and paying for equipment to enable photographers, sculptors and voice actors to pursue their passions.

The Corporate Connections programme, funded for two years, offered employability training to young people and sought to establish strong relationships with corporate businesses to create real routes into employment. Although the COVID-19 crisis scuppered a good deal of the planned work, we established strong relationships with a number of businesses, delivered training in Foyers, and created a workbook for young people to use when developing employment skills.

Renewed focus on our external communications has helped to share the Advantaged Thinking message with network member organisations beyond. We used our social media platforms and new website to highlight examples of Advantaged Thinking from within and outwith our network, and to suggest ways to centre the principles in day-to-day practice.

CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR A NEW YOUTH OFFER

Foyers are facing an increasingly challenging landscape, both in terms of funding reductions and the ever more complex needs of the young people being referred to services. Maintaining a Foyer model can be difficult under these circumstances, both financially and practically, and as a result we have seen a reduction in membership of approximately 19%, from 74 to 60 services.

We have, however, maintained a group of five committed Investor members who help to shape our focus and co-create tools and products. This year, we created a new tool - the Advantaged Thinking Action Pack - based on the Investor group seeking a way to consistently embed Advantaged Thinking practices and values in their staff team and work with young people. The set of flash cards contains the seven tests of Advantaged Thinking, as well as the skills that embody each test and a challenge, action or reflection for each one. Feedback from the initial five organisations was very positive, and we shared the product with our FOR Youth services soon after.

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30 of our services are currently on their FOR Youth quality development journey, whether in the initial commitment year, at the endorsement stage, or ready to become a certificated, accredited Foyer. This year, nine Foyers began their journey with a commitment to FOR Youth, 15 moved into the endorsement stage and created their Quality Development Plans, and six completed their verification visits to become fully accredited Foyers. We have been delighted to see the level of engagement and enthusiasm for the process from the 30 member services on the FOR Youth path, and have strengthened the community further with an exclusive quarterly newsletter and password-protected website page containing downloadable documents to strengthen Advantaged Thinking practice.

One of the core elements of the FOR Youth process is data collection and benchmarking. Not only does this give Foyers an objective view of their service's strengths and challenges compared to the national average - it also enables us to share a Foyer's-eye view of the world with commissioners, funders and the wider community too. The following statistics from 2019-20 reviews demonstrate that while the pressures on services are currently increasing, so too are positive outcomes for young people thanks to Advantaged Thinking service values and talented, creative, driven staff.

-  **53% of young people are aged 16-18** (2018-19: 53%)
-  **43% of young people have a diagnosed mental health issue** (2018-19: 33%)
-  **The average time a young person stays in a Foyer is 47 weeks** (2018-19: 60 weeks)
-  **15% of young people are from refugee or ESOL background** (2018-19: 8%)
-  **36% of staff are trained in coaching** (2018-19: 65%)
-  **78% of staff are trained in asset-based working** (2018-19: 78%)
-  **Evictions: 12%** (2018-19: 19%)
-  **81% of young people improved health** (2018-19: 68%)
-  **85% of young people improved social skills** (2018-19: 76%)
-  **91% of young people improved personal development** (2018-19: 88%)
-  **37% of young people starting work during stay** (2018-19: 36%)
-  **36% of young people starting a qualification during stay** (2018-19: 20%)
-  **51% of young people in work or education on leaving the Foyer** (2018-19: 40%)

The core membership offer remains centred on building a strong, asset-based community of practice within the youth housing sector. Our quarterly regional meetings provide and opportunity for practitioners to share challenges, successes and ideas for development. We also answered the network's call for support with innovation by holding two Ideas Labs, designed to bring Foyer leaders together to work on reframing a common problem and creatively addressing it to find new avenues to explore.

At the beginning of 2020, we centred young people at our regular staff-focused events by holding a new type of event called the Great Northern Gathering. We brought staff and young people from the central region and two northern regions together to work on a creative project: storyboarding a video advert to show potential residents and the public the positive impact a Foyer can have in a young person's life. The creativity the young people brought to the event gave it a new spark of energy, and we will be looking to centre young people more and more in our network events going forward.

The second and final year of funding for Fellowship for Leaders enabled us to share Advantaged Thinking leadership skills with 19 representatives from 14 Foyers, including practitioners taking their first steps into management and experienced leaders looking to refresh their knowledge and skills. Through a series of overnight residentials and one-to-one coaching experiences, we covered subjects including authentic leadership, self-care and resilience, and influencing and storytelling.

TELLING YOUNG PEOPLE'S STORIES IN AN AUTHENTIC WAY

The second year of the Power Up project, made possible by The Listening Fund, continued the positive impact we saw in year one. We took 10 young people from nine Foyers on a two-night residential trip where they faced their fears, pushed themselves to overcome obstacles (both mental and physical!) and made positive connections with other young people they hadn't met before.

The focus of this project was on authentic, meaningful listening. Over the course of the three days we invited young people to speak about their experiences, tell their stories and share their views, and through these, challenged Foyers to deepen their own listening practices and put more decision-making power into the hands of their residents.

The report we produced, *Putting Young People at the Heart of Your Service*, drew attention to six key challenges for services seeking to make genuine, impactful change.

We held the first ever round of Hear Me Out funding - a talent bond scheme that invests directly in young people's skills and talents. This enables young people to be the authors of their own stories with a financial boost to help them along the way. This year, we invested in 14 young people's projects, including:

- Swimming lessons to help a young person unlock their dream career as a flight attendant.
- Setting up a freelance cleaning business, employing other Foyer residents.
- Expanding a boxing club in the Foyer to include women-only classes and put on extra sessions.
- Starting a mobile burger van social enterprise to skill up young people and make extra money for the service.
- Purchasing supplies to hold a regular craft club in the Foyer and practice leading sessions.
- Marketing a new mobile catering arm of an existing cafe that turns donated food into delicious, low-cost meals for the local community.

These stories were captured on a page of our new, modernised website dedicated to telling the stories and sharing the experiences of young people from our network. Using our brand and presence as a platform, TrustYouth celebrates the talents and skills young people possess and works towards a world in which these abilities do not go undiscovered.

For the second year running, we partnered with Clarion Housing Group, LiveWest and InspireChilli to present the Room for Young People conference and awards, shining a light on the achievements of young people within our network and beyond. It is a leading event in the sector in how it is shaped and led by young people, and it highlights young people's stories in the awards, the conference themes and the event's presentation.



INTO THE FUTURE...

Young people are at the heart of everything we do at The Foyer Federation, but we realise we need to do more to ensure they are also at the forefront of it too - both in terms of the way we work, and our messaging to the world outside of Foyers. Towards the end of 2019-20, we began working on a new three-year strategy that has a strong focus on youth leadership, including a commitment to our youth involvement plan and focus on campaigning. We call it The Home of Advantaged Thinking, and you can find out more about it in Our Future Plans.

CREATE A CREATIVE, INSTINCTIVE, VALUE-LED ORGANISATION

Throughout all of our work, we are led by our five core values and our Advantaged Thinking philosophy. Here are some of the ways in which we represented our values in 2019-20.



Authentic

This year, we reflected on our central focus as an organisation and retooled our strategy with a renewed drive on delivering directly with young people. We are committed to seeking only funding that fits with our vision and mission to make this happen.



Brave

Our reduced staff team has shown resilience and stepped up to deliver our offer effectively with a smaller senior management team at the head of the organisation.



Loving

We gathered our allies to collaborate with those that care about the mission to ensure we have a positive future ahead. Our Friends of Foyer event brought former staff and board members together to look at and plan for the future of the organisation.



Maverick

By championing Advantaged Thinking throughout our network and beyond, we challenged the status quo of young people not getting the deal they need to thrive.



Savvy

In challenging circumstances, we reduced the cost base of the organisation to make it more sustainable for the future.

We also must acknowledge that the organisation of today looks very different from the organisation of just one year ago. With this in mind, we are working with an independent body to review the make-up of our board and ensure that we have a group of trustees appropriate to and reflective of our new circumstances and needs.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Sabira Kanji - Treasurer

The Foyer Federation's income for 2019-20 reflected three income streams. 57% of income came from restricted and unrestricted grant income and 43% via membership related fees, consultancy and quality assurance work.

Grant-making trusts are supporting membership organisations less than before. In addition to this, the charity had to function without a CEO and full-time fundraising capacity for the year. This has led to the Trustee board deciding to prioritise earned income opportunities over time consuming project-based grant applications.

Despite the challenges, the end of year achieved a surplus of circa £29k and has undergone various cost cutting measures. The charity's success is a good reflection of the trustees and the Executive Director's contributions and achieved a successful year with a very limited resource in generating alternative funds.

At 31 March 2020, total reserves stand at circa £36k compared to circa £7k in 2019 with a healthy cash-in-bank position of circa £159k.

Our reserves policy states that it is the intention of Trustees to build reserves from unrestricted income that can be used for three purposes:

- To support innovative projects which need a period of testing and development and whose outcome may support future funding business development projects.
- To support the strategic direction of the charity and, where necessary, to underwrite the costs of strategic change.
- To cover support costs and unplanned expenditure in periods where these are not covered by granted income.

Current free reserves stand at circa 36k and Trustees are conscious of the need to grow reserves to return them to the target value of £60k, which will be done through an increase in trading income over the next three years.



OUR FUTURE PLANS

Our seven-year strategy is drawing to a close, so towards the end of 2019 we gathered and met with a group of trusted individuals, known to us as Friends of Foyer Federation, including former and current trustees, former and current staff members, long-term committed network members, and current funders. We wanted to take an honest look at our recent struggles and establish where our friends and supporters felt the heart of our mission lay.

We are extremely grateful for the support of the Tudor Trust and Paul Hamlyn Foundation during this six-month period to allow us time to reflect, question and plan for a new strategy.

The discussions we had with the Friends of Foyer Federation group, our network and then our board members and partners SEUK, provided the insights we needed to establish the right strategic aims and objectives for the future. It also opened up a wider perspective on who our work impacts and how we can move towards a more sustainable income base.

It was clear that our Advantaged Thinking approach to working with young people was the glue that united everyone we spoke to and that we need to establish new partnerships and new customers, and create space for young people to take the lead in our future.

Therefore, as we are finalising our new strategic plan, we are focusing our attention on creating a Home for Advantaged Thinking where young people can realise their power and purpose.

We are looking to soft launch the new strategy in the Autumn/Winter of 2020 after we have reviewed our leadership and governance, consulted on the draft plan with young people and our network, and established new income to enable the strategy to be implemented in 2021.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Overall, we have been reasonably well sheltered from the economic fallout of COVID-19. However, our Fellowship for Leaders programme and training sales have been badly affected, which will lead to a reduction in traded income for next year.

As we move into 2021, we are entering a period of unprecedented economic and workplace uncertainty. The early months of this crisis have shown the essential nature of our work for business and employees in rebuilding and returning to normal. In order to respond to this call for our support, we are reviewing our programme of work for the year ahead. Internally, we will be focusing on the balance between on-premises and home working for our people, and considering how we can continue to deliver the essential training to our customers and in-house work that employers tell us make such a difference to their ability to deliver and improve effectively. We have been overwhelmed at the resilience, capability and flexibility of our staff team who have shown how able they are to respond quickly to need.

Externally, we are reviewing our digital offering, developing plans to respond to the differing needs of our customers in the post-coronavirus world. This includes adapting our service delivery to meet new demands and using insights gathered during the crisis to support our members and young people better.

We are looking at the future needs of the business model so we can respond quickly and effectively. We will continue to involve our stakeholders and members in our thinking as this work and the impacts of the situation evolves.