

Fat Macy's – Impact Report 2022

# Our impact in 2022

**Fat Macy's**



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# Founders' foreword

We started this year with a bang, opening our second restaurant [Sohaila](#) on Shoreditch High Street. It's been transformational having our team and trainees all in one building - where both support work and work experience hours can coexist. Our office on the top floor has meant our charity team are much more connected to the day to day running of the restaurant and catering company, allowing us to integrate operations and impact.

This has been game changing - our support hours have increased throughout the year, along with trainee satisfaction in our programme and better outcomes for our trainees. We're so very thankful to Brookfield Properties for their support with this new home for Fat Macy's.

Despite some difficult times throughout the year, with recovering from omicron in late 2021, to various train strikes and the growing impact of the cost of living crisis, 2022 has been a year of wins. We saw an expansion of our outreach work to get referrals from a wider range of locations across London - from Harrow to Camberwell, and Ealing to Romford. Our trainees are also coming to us from more places - we've started trialling working with the DWP and new charity partners to reach more people who can benefit from the programme.

Our trainees themselves have put many hours into the Milestone Programme, and have seen some real success stories in their lives, both personally and professionally.

We've been delighted to see our story picked up in the press - from features in Suitcase magazine to a double page spread restaurant review by Jay Rayner in The Observer, and features in Stylist magazine.

Our team and programme have expanded - recruiting a new Exec Chef and Training Lead, Doug Rollé, and launching our Advisory Board of graduate trainees, Annie, Marlon, Perry, Sally and Shafik. Our team has been winning awards, featuring on radio programmes and hosting forums.

We've been backed by some incredible corporate partners, including Brookfield Properties and Brotherton, who have been there every step of the way as we grow our impact and develop our programmes. We're incredibly thankful for your support and excited to see what future years have in store for us.

This report is a bit different from our previous ones - we're telling the story of the year we've had, the impact we've achieved and the lessons learnt along the way.

We hope you enjoy it,

Meg and Nathalie



## Who are we?

Fat Macy's is a social enterprise that helps people experiencing homelessness to move on from temporary accommodation and build a stable life.

We do this through culinary and hospitality training in our food businesses and tailored 1:1 support around wellbeing, employment and sustaining a tenancy.

At the end of their work experience, trainees can access a deposit grant worth up to £1,300 and three smaller grants worth up to £250 in total for resources they need to enter the workplace.





# Our Values

## We strive for equity

Every person has different life experiences and access to opportunities. We recognise this imbalance as a team, both in wider society and in our organisation. Striving for equity means ensuring that extra support is given to those who have been under-supported in the past, and welcoming people as equals no matter their role, area of work, or background.

## We focus on strengths

We focus on an individual's strengths. When working with team members and trainees, we look for abilities, talents, resources and resilience that can be harnessed for personal development. In particular we help trainees to find and use often overlooked strengths to address challenges they face. As an organisation we support everyone to grow by building on their capabilities.

## We cultivate empathy

Empathy plays a central role not just in supporting trainees but in how we work as a team. We try to put ourselves in other people's shoes to make better decisions and build better relationships both at work and in life. We seek to understand how others feel in difficult situations and be mindful of the added pressures and struggles others may face. Cultivating empathy doesn't mean we shy away from hard conversations. We give fair and honest feedback when it's required, but always deliver it with the other person's feelings in mind.

## We empower others

We believe that a key part of motivation is having agency. In the team we strive for a culture of trust and encourage people to act autonomously, with appropriate support and direction, to meet the goals of the organisation. With trainees, we empower them to take charge of their future, career and tenancy so they can create positive change for themselves. Anyone in the organisation can have a say in how Fat Macy's operates.

## We're continually improving

We are constantly learning as a team and we use data and experience to guide our business and programme decisions. We regularly reflect on what works and what doesn't, rather than following the status quo. We use our size to our advantage to stay nimble and adapt quickly. When the evidence supports it, we're not afraid to make bold, decisive changes in order to do better for our trainees, as a charity and as a business.

# Our impact

# 2022 in numbers

In 2022:

- Our trainees and graduates accessed over 309 hours of 1:1 support, including over 160 hours focused on our Support Curriculum.
- 27 people participated in our training academies and new 1:1 introduction sessions.
- 11 people completed their Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene qualification with us.
- Trainees completed almost 1070 hours of training and work experience.
- 3 people had their Move On Grants approved.
- 2 people used their grants to move into their own place.
- We worked with 28 different referral partners.

309

hours of 1:1 support

27

participants in our initial training

11

Level 2 Food Safety & Hygiene qualifications

3

Move-On Grants approved



## Things our trainees bought with their Milestone Grants in 2022

1 bus pass

3 books

1 pair of jeans

2 pairs of shoes

1 iron

1 ironing board

1 laptop

1 microwave

2 towels

1 phone

2 clothes vouchers

1 vacuum cleaner







"This has been a very, very long road. Up and down, it's been like a rollercoaster. Some days I thought, 'Am I going to get there?' But I'm very excited, I can't wait. I can't wait! Woo!"

Shafik, on completing the Milestone Programme



“Fat Macy’s has inspired me to do something to help others and myself when things were not going so well in my life.

Fat Macy’s has given me a sense of achievement and made me proud of myself for how far I’ve come.”

Marlon, Fat Macy’s Graduate





## Case study: Amika

## Using our connections to support trainees and graduates

Amika started the Milestone Programme in 2021 having completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Surrey, where she got a first.

She completed half of her hours at Ebury, and then told us she was really keen to work in HR after completing the programme. She helped research and write our policies with our Head of Operations.

We supported Amika with getting her British Passport, worked on her CV and drafted cover letters with her in 1:1 sessions.

She took her first steps working in HR during her work experience at Fat Macy's, where we tailored our programme to meet her needs, and found work experience for her with one of our partner organisations - Brookfield Properties.

She completed two weeks of HR work experience there, alongside a much larger corporate HR team. She accessed life coaching and 1:1 support from the team.

Amika was offered a day of headshots and filming with our partner, Lightning Travel Recruitment - they worked on her LinkedIn page, CV, took headshots and made a [short video](#) of Amika, talking about her professional superpowers. She then found a role as an HR Assistant at MTVH Housing Trust through the Fat Macy's network, and has been working there for almost a year.

She applied for and completed her CiPD Level 3 in People Practice, scoring a high mark. She plans to access her Housing Deposit Grant in early 2023.





# Case Study: Emmanuel Long-term support matters

Emmanuel started Fat Macy's in 2017 and was the first trainee to complete the programme after the initial pilot group.

He completed the programme in early 2018, and moved into a one-bed apartment by mid-2018. He has lived there, supported by Fat Macy's, ever since. BBC3 created a short video called '[Amazing Humans](#)' about Emmanuel's story. He now works full time at a catering company.

"I moved to the UK in 2009, but after two weeks my mum kicked me out of the house. English was still a new language to me and I had to go to college every morning without showering. I was struggling. I couldn't focus in class and I had to stop because it was too hard to study without a home. I felt all alone and I didn't have any family to talk to. After seven years of moving around and spending evenings in a night shelter, someone from a youth centre helped me to get a place in the YMCA hostel. I feel like I don't deserve to live in the hostel - it's a really stressful environment.

When Meg arrived at the hostel, it was the first time I felt full of hope. At my first event I was so shocked that everyone welcomed me as if I'd always been part of the team. I was so happy after the event that I never missed another supper club. No matter what's going on in my life, I'll always be able to smile because of Fat Macy's. Fat Macy's changed my life and continues to help me. Working with Fat Macy's has made me more confident in my abilities and I've learnt a lot. They always believe in me and are always there to talk to. I finally feel part of a family."

Emmanuel has told us that being able to access long term support while renting has ensured he has been able to sustain his tenancy for five years - the longest he has lived independently.

We have helped with conversations with his landlord and helped Emmanuel access his birth certificate and passport in ongoing support.



## Case study: Okiki

23 year old Okiki joined the Fat Macy's Milestone Programme in June 2022. When he joined, Okiki was studying film at college, and had a steady part time job in retail. Really, he was doing everything 'right'.

Okiki took the decision to join Fat Macy's very seriously. It took several visits from our Outreach Team to build the trust. "I had a preconceived notion that anything like this, there is something that the organisation is trying to get out of you. But the way you framed it, it seemed genuine."

When we met Okiki, his plan was to progress to a Level 4 Apprenticeship in media production. He saw Fat Macy's and the grants we provide as a way to access the kit he would need to do this. But, like many young people, Okiki has changed his mind about what he wants to do in his career.

He is now focusing on finding a Level 4 apprenticeship in software engineering. He has taken online courses to develop his skills, and is now working on his application for a coding bootcamp.

## Working with younger trainees

Fat Macy's has worked with Okiki to develop those transferable skills that are invaluable to anyone pursuing career development.

"You helped with setting up my SMART goals and my CV. Also, being on the interview panel when you were recruiting - that was really helpful to see what I need to do and improve in order to get a job."

We have always supported trainees and graduates with a range of career plans at Fat Macy's. It's key to our tailored approach. Since the COVID-19 pandemic however, our trainees have typically been younger than before. And something we all do a lot when we're young is change our minds!

Our frontline team has had to learn to adapt quickly to our trainees' changing aspirations. It can be tricky, but it reminds us all not to forget our own ambitions!

Next year, we plan to launch a career mentoring programme, so that trainees can be paired with mentors from the industries they are interested in.





# Case study: Perry

# From trainee to colleague

We were very excited in February to hire Perry, a recent graduate of the Milestone Programme, who joined the Sohaila front of house team.

Perry had joined the Milestone Programme in July 2021, and flew through the training. The increase in his self-esteem was clear for anyone to see, as he became a confident and integral part of the team.

"I feel part of the 'work family' and have an awesome P&E officer."

The transition from trainee to colleague was not seamless however, particularly for Perry and his P&E Officer, Tasneem.

One of the greatest challenges for the whole team was knowing how and when to share information. When the restaurant managers have feedback for trainees, they work with that trainee's P&E Officer to deliver it in the most effective and supportive way.

As Perry and Tasneem were now colleagues, we had to consider how appropriate this was.

"Supporting Perry during his transition from trainee to staff has been tricky at points as there do need to be certain boundaries in place to keep everyone feeling safe and for things to feel fair. However, as Perry's length of service with us has increased, it feels more straightforward in some ways now than it did at the start and I am happy to help him with work-related challenges so long as I have his permission and, in a way, I can lean into being a supportive colleague at times like this."

Looking forward, we will be creating guidelines for supporting any future trainees who go on to become colleagues, including an information sharing agreement.



# Reflections on the year and lessons learnt

# January

We were so excited to officially open Sohaila, our restaurant and wine bar on Shoreditch High Street. After a very 'under the radar' soft opening in December, we were hopeful that Sohaila would be a lot busier than our first restaurant and we were not disappointed.

Nonetheless, the typical January downturn in restaurant trade, paired with the Omicron wave of coronavirus made January a quiet month for us and so we were not able to offer our trainees as many training and work experience hours as we would have liked.

Despite this, we were thrilled for Perry when he completed the Milestone Programme in January! Perry completed the Milestone Programme in almost exactly six months - our target for the programme. He worked closely with our Progression and Engagement team and so was ready to apply for his Move On Grant almost as soon as he completed his 200 hours.

We also started an important and ongoing piece of learning and development as a whole team. We all participated in a "Talking About Race" workshop, facilitated by Be Inclusive Hospitality. This was organised by our colleague Tasneem Sharrem, who spearheaded the team's work on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the rest of the year.



## Lessons learned #1

# Having a head office means we see more of our trainees...as long as we can offer enough training hours

One of our main hopes when opening the new space was that trainees and graduates would feel like it was their space and that they would come in just to say 'hi' or to use the office for things like job-hunting. To our delight, this was absolutely true by the end of 2022! For those who joined the programme in 2022 in particular, the new office is seen as a place to come whenever you just need some company and a cuppa.

The office and meeting rooms have also helped our Progression and Engagement Team increase the amount of 1:1 support they can provide our trainees and graduates with. They are able to pop down to the restaurant whenever a trainee is on a training session, to say hello and arrange 1:1s. They are also able to fit more into their days now that they do not have to travel all around London to meet with trainees.

We have however noticed that when there are fewer training hours available, it is harder to engage our trainees. 2022 was the first year we carefully tracked the number of 1:1 support hours used by trainees. Throughout the year, we saw a slight but noticeable correlation between the training hours available in the restaurant, and their engagement with the support offer. We think the two elements have become increasingly tied now that we have our office and restaurant in the same building.



# February

In February we welcomed two Kickstart Trainees to the team: Eliza and Malkiel. They quickly became integral members of the Outreach Team and were offered more long-term contracts at the end of their placements with us. Between them, they have changed the way we run our outreach programme, built excellent connections with the hostel teams, and formed many new referral partnerships for Fat Macy's.

Our recent graduate Perry submitted his Move On Grant application to the Board of Trustees in February, and had it approved meaning he could start flat hunting right away. Not only that, but Perry applied for a front of house role at Sohaila, and got the job! We were thrilled to welcome Perry as a colleague, so soon after he completed the Milestone Programme.

We also continued to explore Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at Fat Macy's. Following on from our Talking About Race workshop in January, the team held a debrief where colleagues could share what they had felt during the workshop. The next step was a wider discussion about what we needed to do next. We knew that one workshop was not the end of the story and that we wanted a programme of continual reflection and improvement. It was through these discussions that the Fat Macy EDI Working Group came into being.



# March

March was a time of innovation and new opportunities for the team.

Tori focused on using networking opportunities to build connections across London. She worked with colleagues in the sector to help form the Homeless Link Pan-London PRS Forum.

Our trustee, Iona Popat, was able to put Meg and Tori in touch with the team behind UNICEF's UK Youth Council. Meg and Tori spent a morning with the UNICEF team, learning about how to build a service-user led advisory board. This paved the way for the launch of our Advisory Board later in the year.

Tasneem continued to push the team to make changes to improve Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Fat Macy's. In March, she chaired the first ever Fat Macy's EDI Working Group meeting. The team explored different practical ways we could seek to make changes, and people signed up to work on the projects that best suited their strengths. It was only the beginning of a major piece of work for the Fat Macy's team in 2022.



# Spotlight: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group

In the summer of 2021, thoughts about how to improve equity, diversity and inclusion at Fat Macy's began to be discussed within the team and it was decided that initial steps could be taken to see where to begin on this journey.

Tasneem contacted Lorraine Copes, founder of Be Inclusive Hospitality, to discuss how they could support Fat Macy's to think about this more broadly and in January 2022, Be Inclusive Hospitality conducted a 'Talking About Race' workshop with the whole organisation.

Following the workshop, the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Working Group was formed in March 2022 and the terms of reference were drafted and agreed the following month.

A few of the key achievements of the EDI Working Group to date include:

Refinement of recruitment processes to make them more inclusive including:

- Anonymised applications,
- Accepting different formats for applications
- Sending applicants interview questions in advance

The drafting and finalisation of our Diversity Statement

The collection of EDI metrics for current staff members and job applicants

Making our pay structure transparent and ensuring staff know how to ask for pay rises at Fat Macy's

The EDI Working Group continues to meet monthly and following the Staff Satisfaction Survey conducted in November 2022, there was a clear increase in people believing in Fat Macy's commitment to embed equity, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

## Lessons learned #2

By the end of March, only one person had attended our Training Academies in 2022, and following another Training Academy with no participants, the team came together to solve the problem together.

We had been struggling to recruit trainees since summer 2021, with very few participants in the Academies held from August 2021 onwards. We thought carefully about the barriers preventing people from participating. We also thought about what had changed since early 2021, when we had waiting lists for our Academies. The two themes that stood out were that post-Covid people were busier and that people were more anxious.

## Time to change our Training Academies

More referrals were in part-time work or at college, so were unable to commit to a 4 day training programme. This also meant that they couldn't be flexible about their availability. Whilst the extended Training Academies introduced in summer 2021 were in response to trainees' feedback, attendance at Academies had steadily declined since this change.

A vast majority of referrals had high levels of anxiety, which often prevented them from coming to the Academies. The model we were using meant we couldn't offer a range of dates, so if people missed a date because they were anxious, they had to wait two months for the next opportunity.

We knew that the solution had to be more flexible, allowing referrals to pick from a range of times and dates. It also needed to consider the changing needs of the people being referred to us, particularly their anxiety. This meant that we wanted the new programme to be deliverable as quickly as possible after someone first spoke to us, to reduce the build up of worry. We also wanted the sessions to be shorter, making them less draining. At the same time, we needed to consider the business needs of Fat Macy's Ltd. and the capacity of our staff.

What we came up with was a short 2-3 hour Sign-Up Session. This can be delivered 1:1 or to a group. It can be run in any setting, meaning we can meet people where they are most comfortable. The sessions give potential trainees all the information they need about the Milestone Programme to make an informed decision. They also include three short activities which give us and them the chance to get to know each other better. This gives the sign-ups a taster of our 1:1 support programme, and helps us to ensure new trainees get the tailored approach we aim for right from the start.



# April

In April we welcomed Doug Rollé to the team as Executive Chef and Training Lead. Doug has driven the improvement of our kitchen training offer, and begun the development of a new training curriculum. Our trainees are more excited than ever to have their kitchen training sessions, and are discovering a real passion for food.

We also held our first ever Fat Macy's Culture Club. An offshoot of the EDI Working Group, Culture Club aimed to use literature, TV and film to explore issues of identity in an accessible way.

April saw the closure of our first restaurant, Ebury by Fat Macy's, as we decided to focus on our Shoreditch site.

"I loved training with Doug, who taught me lifetime skills and gave me a passion for cooking."

Fat Macy's Trainee



# May

In May, the Progression and Engagement Team focused on refining the systems and processes that ensure they are able to deliver a consistently excellent standard of support to our trainees and graduates. We launched our 'Trainee Checklist', a tool to simultaneously track a trainee's progress through the Milestone Programme and to remind staff of all of the steps involved. It has guaranteed that no stage of the process is forgotten for any one of our trainees, creating a more consistent experience.

Whilst we pride ourselves on our tailored approach to support work, we know that having structures to work within improves outcomes for our trainees. Since launching our Support Curriculum at the end of 2020, over 71% of our trainees have remained on the programme. Prior to the launch of the Support Curriculum, less than 42% of trainees stayed on the programme. Providing guidance and tools for our frontline team, has allowed us to continue to improve the quality of the support we provide.



## Lessons learned #3

As we approached the halfway mark of 2022, the Progression and Engagement Team were spending a lot of time trying to contact and re-engage trainees who had not been in to complete training hours in some time. We always bear in mind that the Milestone Programme isn't right for everyone, and we know that sometimes people's circumstances change before they finish the programme. What we were finding however, was that a group of trainees were neither progressing nor leaving the programme. The team was spending a lot of time trying to think of new ways to approach the same situation. We agreed that we needed some scaffolding that we could all use when struggling to decide how to proceed with disengaged trainees.

## How to support trainees who are not engaging

Tasneem and Tori collaborated to write comprehensive guidance on how to support trainees who are not progressing with the programme, including a range of scenarios. It included clear timelines to follow, and examples of ways to communicate clearly with trainees. This guidance has empowered the Progression and Engagement Team to make decisions about difficult situations. It has also given trainees a structure within which to make decisions about their future rather than allowing indecision to roll on indefinitely.





# June

In June, we began our work on finding employment partners for our trainees and graduates. We were approached by several hospitality companies, who were excited to find ways to support Fat Macy's. This prompted a longer piece of work, led by Eliza, to create different partnership models.

We also tried some different ways of using our new Sign Up Sessions. We hosted our first ever 'drop-in sign-up' session. We invited residents from one of our partner hostels to come to see Sohaila and the Fat Macy's offices, and to give them the option to participate in a Sign Up Session right there and then. Having the opportunity to come along with a group of friends meant that we met people who would ordinarily be too nervous to come along to a session. We also ran a similar model at a hostel, where people who were interested could come and find us in the hostel lounge and complete their Sign Up Session on the spot.





# July

July was a big month for our graduates! One trainee started a new job on the reception team at a hotel. Another trainee finally had her graduation ceremony for her Master's in Law, after it had been postponed due to COVID. And one of our graduates accessed his Move On Grant to move into a more stable home.

The team focused on referral partnerships. We attended the Single Homelessness Project's Employment, Training and Education fair in Camden, began conversations with the team at Crisis Skylight and presented to a number of work coach teams in different JobCentres around London. This work in the summer led to a big increase in referrals later in the year.



## Lessons learned #4

We had very low numbers of referrals in the first half of 2022. We knew from speaking to colleagues in the sector that we were not alone in this - engagement with homelessness and employability services was low.

We had already adapted our onboarding process for new trainees to reflect the changing environment as the impact of the pandemic on everyday life dissipated. Now we needed the people to test the model. Whilst there was a steady trickle of referrals coming through, very few were truly interested in the programme.

We turned to the evidence, digging into our records to understand what had changed. We quickly saw that over 90% of the referrals for people who went on to join the Milestone Programme in the previous two years had come from two referral partners. More importantly, they were from organisations where we had close working relationships with specific members of staff.

## Outreach – what works?

The people had moved on to new jobs in other organisations, and this was why the number of referrals we were receiving had plummeted.

Building effective relationships with staff in other services is key. If the staff know that they can trust Fat Macy's, they will not only make referrals, but they will work with us to ensure the success of our trainees. Having a presence in hostels through outreach activities is important - it helps people get to know us and puts faces to the organisation - but we can't be there all the time.

As the year progressed, the whole team spent time getting to know our colleagues in our partner organisations. We listened to their needs, and collaborated with them to overcome barriers to engagement.



As these relationships deepened, the referrals flooded in. We also saw more people both completing their initial training period and going on to join the Milestone Programme.

# August

Traditionally, August has been a quiet month for us, as Londoners take advantage of the hot weather and spend their free time in the park! But this year, August was anything but.

Most excitingly, another graduate, used their Move On Grant to move into their own place!

We launched two exciting partnerships. Teddy led our jointly funded programme of cooking classes with supported accommodation provider, [Focused Living](#). We hosted a lunch for London based prison rehabilitation charity, [Switchback](#).

Their mentors and mentees visited Sohaila, enjoying a Lebanese feast. They spoke to our team about the specific barriers faced by those leaving prison and how we could tailor our programme to address these. Building on our learning from earlier in the summer, these new partnerships were cultivated carefully. We took time to tailor our outreach programmes to each organisation's structure.

Sohaila was not left out of the fun this month. We received a glowing review from [Jay Rayner in The Guardian](#), leading to a surge in bookings at the restaurant.

"It's charming, the food is great and at its heart is a noble purpose."

Jay Rayner, The Guardian





## Lessons learned #5

This year we said goodbye to 7 trainees before they finished the Milestone Programme. This can be hard to take, and on the face of things, can sound like a failure.

But it is important to remember that success looks different for different people. We never want to hold our trainees back, and sometimes that means letting them go without completing the Programme.

In particular, 4 trainees found accommodation through different means. One trainee became eligible for social housing and moved in with their partner. One trainee was forced to find privately rented accommodation earlier than expected.

## Success looks different for different people

And one trainee was moved into his own flat through a housing association. When this trainee came to us, he was living in a high support hostel. He typically spent his days there, not going outside very often. But he threw himself into the Milestone Programme with such enthusiasm and determination that he quickly became a core member of the team. When not training at Fat Macy's, he started to go out more, getting to know people in his local community. Having not worked for almost 20 years, he focused on his CV and interview technique with the Fat Macy's team and then went to a careers fair where he signed up with a catering agency. Hostel staff told us how remarkable the change in his confidence was.

For this trainee, Fat Macy's did not end up providing him with financial support to move into long-term accommodation. Instead we were a place for him to build connections with people and grow his self-esteem. Once he'd done that, he was ready to make his next steps on his own.





# September

September was another exciting month for our graduates. Amika worked with our new partners, Lightning Travel Recruitment, to create a video CV and to develop her presence on LinkedIn. Another trainee started the Bar Course, taking her a step closer to her plan to become a barrister.

We hosted an intern, Alexi, through the Laidlaw Scholar programme at LSE. Alexi used his expertise in economics to develop a model for calculating the impact Fat Macy's has on the time it takes someone to save a deposit and first month's rent.

Tori hosted the Homeless Link PRS Forum, delivering training on Psychologically Informed Approaches to Move On Support, continuing to build our connections with other local services.



# Spotlight: Advisory Board

One of the highlights of 2022 was the launch of our Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is a consultative body, made up of graduates of the Milestone Programme. They will advise the charity on policy and programme changes, participate in recruitment processes, and, most importantly, amplify the voices of lived experience at the decision making level of Fat Macy's.

Our first Board Members are Marlon, Shafik, Annie, Sally and Perry. Our Board Members represent a wide range of life experiences, and all come with a determination to make Fat Macy's an even better experience for future trainees.

September saw the inaugural meeting of the Board, where they explored how they are going to work together for the year ahead, and what their key focuses will be. In 2023, the Board plan to:

- Consult on our social media strategy to ensure it better represents our trainee experience.
- Launch a regular anonymous trainee feedback survey.
- Explore campaigning opportunities for Fat Macy's.
- Work with the Progression and Engagement Team to find more housing options for graduates.



"I joined the Advisory Board because I knew I had it within me to make a change."

Sally, Advisory Board Member

# October

We were extremely proud of our Progression and Engagement Officer, Tasneem Sharrem, who won the Head Office Impact Award at the Be Inclusive Hospitality Impact Awards in October. Tasneem's tireless dedication to creating a more equitable and inclusive organisation for both our trainees and colleagues has led to important changes this year, and this award was more than deserved.

We hosted the first of our new model Open Days, which was very well attended by 5 different services. Visitors got to tour the restaurant, meet the team and taste the food. By coming to the Open Day with friends and key workers, people were able to overcome the hurdle of visiting us for the first time with someone to hold their hand. One of our newer trainees also brought a big group of friends from his hostel, encouraging them to find out more about the Milestone Programme.



## Lessons learned #6

In October we partnered with the Anne Craft Trust to deliver safeguarding training for the entire team. The demands of the charity and our restaurant are very different, and so it's rare that we get to bring the two halves of the Fat Macy's team together.

Whilst the focus of the day was safeguarding, we also gained something else. Through the experiences shared and questions asked throughout the day, the team gained a much deeper understanding of each other's day-to-day challenges. For days afterwards, we would hear, "I had no idea you guys had to do that!"

## Shared learning experiences have a bigger impact that you expect

This has in turn allowed the team to be more empathetic towards each other. When our roles are so very different, it is easy to get bogged down in the things that are making your day difficult. These shared learning experiences however, open us up to understanding what makes our colleagues' days difficult, which then allows us to be more supportive.

Looking ahead to 2023, we are excited to plan more opportunities for the whole team to come together and to keep deepening those connections.





# November

In November, we received funding from CAF Venturesome which opened up a whole range of possibilities for us.

Fat Macy's had been in a state of constant evolution since March 2020. The continuously changing environment caused by the pandemic had meant that we had been adapting our programme every few months for over two years. With our permanent home at 232 Shoreditch High Street, and the world feeling somewhat more 'normal', we were finding our flow. We took this opportunity to reflect on our structure and explore how it could better work for the organisation we had become.



# December

December, as ever, was a blur of activity. We had our first festive season at Sohaila, and it was great to see the restaurant constantly busy. This meant that our trainees were able to complete more training hours than they had all year. They all grew enormously in confidence, demonstrating the simple yet important impact of having a busy restaurant.

We continued our work redesigning the structure of the charity team, leading us to hire a new Progression and Engagement Officer. We were able to test new recruitment practices, designed to make the application process more equitable and inclusive. Most importantly, we sent candidate the interview questions in advance, along with an explanation of how the interviews would be conducted. This was a big success, with candidates' answers to questions being more thoughtful and more representative of them as a support worker, rather than them as a performer!





## Lessons learned #7

In December, our Advisory Board Member Sally helped us to organise an end of year party for our trainees and graduates. Our expectations were low as historically, our trainee socials had been very poorly attended.

Well...we couldn't have been more wrong! We had so many trainees, past and present, come along for the evening.

Our move from events to a restaurant model has meant that our trainees have fewer opportunities to meet each other. This party reminded us what we had lost - the opportunity for trainees to share experiences and support each other. Through all the laughing, bad Christmas music and pizza eating, life stories were shared and support was given.

## We need more parties!

Since that evening, trainees have become firm friends, even giving each other a place to sleep when things have been tough. We have also heard about graduates of the Milestone Programme providing advice and guidance to those who are still completing their hours.

We want to find more opportunities for our trainees and graduates to build connections, make friends, and have fun!



# What's next for Fat Macy's?



# Improving our programmes

## More hours for trainees

This year, the link between the training hours available in the restaurant and engagement with our 1:1 support offer has been clearer than ever. In order to maintain momentum, grow confidence and focus on the future, our trainees need us to provide more training hours. In 2023, we plan to grow our restaurant and catering businesses, as well as partner with other catering businesses, in order to do this.

## Amplifying trainee and graduate voices

At Fat Macy's, we have always sought to co-design our programme with our trainees but in 2023, we want to ensure our trainees' and graduates' voices are heard and listened to at every level. To start with, we are very excited to see what our new Advisory Board does in its first full year.

We will launch a new, biannual trainee and graduate feedback survey. Trainees and graduates will be able to provide anonymous feedback on all aspects of the programme, from the training programme, to our grant application processes, to communication with our team. We plan to work with our Advisory Board to make action plans in response to the feedback from each survey.

We will also launch the Fat Macy's Ambassadors Programme. Trainees and graduates will be able to become Ambassadors for Fat Macy's, working with our Outreach and Fundraising Teams to ensure the true experience of our trainees is represented in all our public-facing activities.



# Focusing on wellbeing

## More trips and social events

This year, we have seen the positive impact of social events for our trainees more clearly than ever. The long reach of the pandemic has left many of us isolated and lonely. This is exacerbated by living in insecure accommodation, as it is harder to build a community or even to just have friends round for a cuppa. We have been awarded a free stay in Oxfordshire, through the Landmark Trust's 50 for Free programme, and look forward to taking a small group away for a week of peace and tranquillity! We will also be planning a programme of regular day trips and social events to build our trainees' social support networks.

## Launching our counselling service

We will be launching our new counselling service in early 2023. With the support of the City Bridge Trust, Fat Macy's will be able to give our trainees and colleagues access to private counselling sessions. We know that a key factor in making sure counselling is helpful and positive, is ensuring the client is able to find a counsellor that they feel comfortable working with. That's why we're so excited to be working with a range of BACP accredited counsellors, with a variety of approaches to therapy. Trainees and colleagues will be able to consider what they want to get from the experience, and carefully choose the right counsellor for them. We aim to create an environment that promotes caring for your mental health as you would your physical health, and to begin to reduce the stigma currently attached to accessing therapy.



# Developing our team

## Thinking differently about how we work

At almost 7 years old, Fat Macy's is looking ahead to an exciting future. We're extremely proud of all we have achieved so far, but it's time for a shake up.

From January 2023, we restructured our charity team to ensure it was fit for purpose as we grow our programme. We have expanded our P&E Team by hiring Joel Donnelly as a new P&E Officer. Tasneem has become our Senior P&E Officer, taking on responsibility for building and maintaining relationships with our referral partners. Teddy now divides his time equally between his P&E Officer role, and his new role as Grants and Fundraising Lead. Tori has moved away from our programmes team, and will focus on our impact, public sector partnerships and training curricula, as Impact and Learning Lead. Later in the year, we will hire a new Programme Lead to grow and refine our outreach and support programmes.

## Growing our skill set

In 2023, we will start working with consultants to challenge our thinking and help grow the expertise on the team.

We will also launch a comprehensive internal training programme, including quarterly team training days and regular 'mini-training' in areas specific to individual teams. We hope to end the year with a 'menu' of training opportunities our team can choose from.

We're very excited to facilitate our individual team members' professional development whilst also pushing Fat Macy's to try new things!

## Looking ahead to a decade of Fat Macy's

For the first time since we began, Fat Macy's is in a position to build a long-term strategy. This year, we will be developing a 3 year strategy, to take us through to our 10 year anniversary in 2026. With a clear vision for the future, our teams will be able to take greater ownership of their work and grow both themselves and Fat Macy's as leaders in the homelessness sector.



# Fat Macy's in the press



# The Observer

Jay Rayner on restaurants  
Food

Review

## Sohaila, London: 'It's charming, the food is great' - restaurant review

A social enterprise has opened its first restaurant - but eating here is far from an act of charity



Jay Rayner  
Sun 7 Aug 2022 06.00 BST



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What matters is the sprightliness of the food and the cheeriness with which it is delivered:



As an observant (and slightly) wheelchair user, I'm often asked how I manage to get out and about. I tell Richard what his greatest hope is for the future of social enterprise. "I hope that in five to 10 years' time all businesses will deliver social impact on some scale," he says. "We're doing it because everyone should be doing it. It can be really operational and design-led - the same as any other brand - and also be a social enterprise. That's important for people to get their heads around. The rest isn't mutually exclusive."

Occupying a surprise building in the new Ebury Edge development, a parade of colourful pop-ups in Finsbury, Ebury is a mission-driven restaurant run by social enterprise catering company Fat Macy's. As a step inside, the airy space comprises an atmospheric mix of Friday-night wine bar and Sunday brunch spot, with Middle Eastern inspired sharing plates being sent out at breakfast, lunch and dinner. Founder Meg Deberry and I sit outside in the garden.

At the age of 36, Meg set up Fat Macy's to get young London adults out of hostels and into their own homes. Listening to her, I realize how little I know about the cruel reality of the homelessness cycle. Meg explains how disheartened she was after witnessing it firsthand while working in a 100-bed hostel in north London. Glibbstoned, she set about designing a structured pathway out of that cycle, steering profits from the restaurant and catering business into the Fat Macy's Foundation. The venture offers training, support and a housing-deposit scheme for trainees. Not only do participants gain exceptional hospitality training, but they

are guided along a pioneering 200-hour "collaborative programme" that provides them with small grants for essential items, and holistic, one-to-one support to help them gain vital skills for independent living. Plus, at the end of the programme, successful trainees can apply for a housing-deposit grant.

"Social impact," says Meg, "should be an add-on, not a compromise. You'll buy a bad cup of coffee for the charity angle alone, but you need first-class quality to bring customers back." These social enterprises are also sparking a perception shift in the minds of employers, which is particularly necessary in the midst of the UK hospitality industry's current hiring crisis. Meg is committed to challenging perceptions about recruiting people from disadvantaged backgrounds. "We work with well-trained, hard-working adults, some of them graduates - people with years of experience, plans and a life situation

that has led them to become homeless for a period of time. But don't let their difficult experience. To assume they'll be grateful to have any job is something we need to move away from. We want to get them to where they want to go." As she talks, Jason, who recently graduated from the programme and is now living in his own place, arrives.

Fat Macy's has hired him to help with outreach, sending him to hostels around London to talk about his experience with the programme. He is happy to help.

"My last stop is at Redemption Roasters, the UK's first prison-based coffee company, whose mission is to reduce reoffending in the UK. I make my way to its original site - there are now seven London outposts - on Romford's busy-lined Leach's Conduit Street. The lovely Emma opens camera bags and invites me over to join her. I'm impressed to learn that the company has



REVELAL 00

# STYLIST



"How I built a business that helps young people break out of the homelessness cycle"

"...somewhere like Sohaila deserves to flourish. It's charming, the food is great and at its heart is a noble purpose."  
- Jay Rayner

# Our partners

We'd like to say a huge thank to our supporters in 2022 who provided us with funding and guidance.

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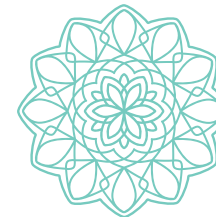
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# Get in touch

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# Fat Macy's

