



High Hopes for Halliwell-being Annual Report

1st January 2024 - 31st December 2024

The story of our sixth year!

2024 has been an exceptional year for us—one filled with growth, success, and meaningful achievements! We've had a busy yet incredibly rewarding year, and it's been a time to reflect on all we've accomplished and celebrate our milestones. Our fundraising efforts have been stronger than ever, enabling us to continue delivering the activities and events that our community values, while also launching exciting new initiatives.

Following the priorities outlined in our community consultation, we've stayed focused on our business plan and worked tirelessly to bring our vision to life. We are deeply grateful for the support that has made this all possible, and we look forward to continuing this journey together into 2025.

- **High Hopes existing groups**



Our **walking group** has become a fantastic weekly gathering, with 8 to 14 participants regularly joining in. After consulting with the members, we shifted from a fortnightly schedule to meeting every week in January, and it's been a great success! The group enjoys exploring new local areas, with regular stops for drinks and the chance to catch up. We've also ventured on exciting trips to local parks, thanks to the

Good Companions minibus, adding variety to our walks.

Geoff, our dedicated volunteer group leader, is a true asset to the group. He has a keen sense of when to take a break for others to catch up and keeps everyone engaged with fascinating stories as we rest. His leadership ensures that everyone feels comfortable and included, no matter their pace.

Walking is an incredibly accessible and effective form of exercise. It's simple, free, and often overlooked, despite its many health benefits. Walking briskly helps build stamina, burn calories, and improve heart health. For many, it's an easy yet rewarding way to stay active, lose weight, and feel healthier overall.

We're proud of how our walking group has grown, and we look forward to more enjoyable, healthy, and social walks in the future!



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Fun Days Parent & Toddler Group continues to thrive thanks to the dedication of our three fantastic volunteers: Bernie and Liz, both experienced childminders, and Edith, who runs the kitchen and serves snacks for both parents and children. The group has become a welcoming space for families, where toddlers, babies, and their parents or carers come together to form lasting connections.

As children graduate to school age, we're excited to see fresh faces as new babies and toddlers join the group, bringing a sense of renewal and growth. In response to the needs of the families, we made the decision to continue through the holiday season, a practice we have continued since 2023. This means the group is open for 50 weeks of the year, only closing for two weeks during the Christmas period.

Each session is packed with opportunities for fun and learning—children engage in play with toys, games, crafts, and enjoy lively "song time". Beyond the activities, the group offers a nurturing environment where parents and carers can connect, share experiences, and build a network of supportive relationships. It's more than just a group—it's a community where families come together to create memories and friendships that can last a lifetime.



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Our **Chair Yoga class** is truly going from strength to strength, with around eighteen participants joining in at each session! This class has not only become a popular weekly activity but has also drawn new faces into the centre, many of whom are now exploring other activities we offer. It's heartening to see the positive impact it's having on both the body and mind of our attendees.

Chair yoga is an ideal exercise for older adults or those who are new to physical activity. It's a low-impact form of exercise that's particularly beneficial for people with health conditions like arthritis, as it allows participants to strengthen and stretch without putting undue stress on their joints. The class also helps reduce the fear of

falling, making it a great way for those who may not be used to exercise to build strength, improve balance, and increase flexibility in a safe and supportive environment.

Each week, our attendees look forward to the class, enjoying both the physical benefits and the sense of community it fosters. It's a wonderful example of how exercise can be adapted to meet the needs of all ages and fitness levels, promoting well-being in both body and mind.

"Our WhatsApp group, which began during the lockdown to stay connected with volunteers, service users, and staff, is still going strong! We're still adding people to the group and continue our morning chorus where everyone says, "good morning" and shares what's happening in their day. It's a space where we can talk about what's going on at the centre, suggest new ideas, and check in with each other. If someone hasn't been active, we'll reach out privately to make sure they're okay. It's a great way to keep the community spirit alive and ensure everyone feels connected and supported."

This highlights the ongoing connection, support, and engagement within the group.



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Thursday Friends group has been bustling with energy, consistently attracting around eighteen people every fortnight. This group enjoys a delicious lunch together, followed by engaging activities such as quizzes, games, bingo, and Play Your Cards Right. This year, the group has seen remarkable growth, and it's wonderful to witness the increasing number of

participants.

What makes this group so special is the inclusion of both carers and those they care for, which fosters a deep sense of connection and well-being for everyone involved. The benefits of social dining cannot be overstated—sharing meals together often boosts self-esteem, enhances social networks, and provides valuable emotional support. For our members, *Thursday Friends* offers a safe, welcoming space to bond over shared experiences, creating a strong sense of community.

This group is not only about having fun and playing games, but also about providing a vital social outlet that positively impacts the mental and emotional health of all those who attend. It's a place where friendships are built, laughter is shared, and connections are strengthened.

Our **Line Dancing** is a fun and engaging way to stay active.

Held every Friday morning from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM, this class welcomes both beginners and those with some experience. Attendance typically ranges from 10 to 14 people, and it's amazing to see how the group has grown in skill and confidence.

Throughout the year, participants learn a variety of new dances, and many have formed lasting friendships. In fact, the group has even organised a Christmas meal out to celebrate their camaraderie!





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Line dancing isn't just fun—it's also a fantastic form of exercise that promotes overall health and well-being. It helps improve coordination and balance, boosts cardiovascular health, and sharpens brain memory. Additionally, it has been recognised as an effective activity for those dealing with Alzheimer's, dementia, and depression. This class offers a great opportunity for older adults to stay active while reaping the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of dance.

Whether you're new to dance or have some experience, *Line Dancing* is a wonderful way to have fun, stay fit, and connect with others in a positive and supportive way.

- **High Hopes new groups**



Our **Happy Mondays Singing Group** held a successful taster session on April 29th, which received a positive response. Although we did not initially have funding for this group, Think Cre8tive was so pleased with the turnout that they have generously offered their time free of charge till funding is secure.



To cover some of our costs, we charge a £3 fee per person, which everyone is happy to pay. This fee helps cover both Think Cre8tive's time and the costs of running the sessions. The sessions are held on the first and third Monday of every month, and we are excited to see the group grow!

- **Organisations using the centre.**

Halliwell Befriending Service (HBS)

Their Mission:

Loneliness and isolation in the older community is a serious issue in the UK that can cause ill health both mental and physical. Their aim is to help





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reduce the risk of isolation by providing a service of warmth, friendship and support through their one-to-one befriending service and activity sessions.

HBS shares an office with High Hopes and offers a range of activities at the Community Centre. These include:

- Fortnightly Activity Sessions
- Fortnightly Luncheon Club
- Weekly Craft Class
- Weekly Computer Class

In addition to these regular sessions, HBS organises various one-off events throughout the year, such as reminiscence events, to engage and support the local community.



Kabod Sanctuary

Kabod Sanctuary plays a pivotal role in nurturing both the spiritual and practical well-being of its congregation and the wider community. Every Sunday, they hire the main room at the Community Centre for the entire day, from morning until 5 p.m., ensuring a consistent and dedicated space for their services, 52 weeks a year.

In addition to providing spiritual guidance, Kabod Sanctuary offers a wide array of services designed to support individuals and families in various aspects of life. These include career development, professional networking, and mission support, as well as essential help with social care, family matters, immigration issues, and financial challenges such as money management and debt advice.

Through their holistic approach, Kabod Sanctuary serves as a crucial resource for those in need, fostering both personal growth and community well-being.



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CAHN
Caribbean & African Health Network

Caribbean & African
GREEN & ARTS
Wellbeing Services

CAHN Green and Arts Wellbeing Services is offering a wide range of creative and physical activities. All inspired and influenced by Caribbean and African art, history and culture.

Our service brings people together into a safe and supportive space where they can:

- Develop relationships
- Contribute their ideas and experiences
- Recognise and value their own skills
- Learn something new and
- Improve their physical and mental wellbeing

JOIN US FOR FUN, FRIENDSHIP, ARTS AND CRAFTS

STOCKPORT North Reddish Community Centre Longford Rd West, Reddish SK5 6ET Every Tuesday at 1-3pm	BOLTON St. Paul's Community Centre Halliwell Road, Bolton, BL1 8BP Every Wednesday at 2-4pm
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Contact Michelle Ayavoro: greenandartswellbeing@cahn.org.uk
or 07789 975 205 <https://portal.cahn.org.uk/greenandartswellbeing>

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The Caribbean and African Health Network

(CAHN) hosts their Green & Arts Wellbeing drop-in every Wednesday in the main hall, providing a space for individuals to explore creative expression and personal growth.

Through their Green & Arts Service, CAHN is making a meaningful impact in the Stockport and Bolton communities. Their mission is to promote a sense of belonging, environmental responsibility, and cultural enrichment within these vibrant areas. By offering a welcoming and supportive environment, they encourage participants to engage in creative activities that foster both well-being and connection.

One of the most transformative aspects of their service is the opportunity for participants to express their emotions and experiences through art. Many have found painting and other creative activities to be a therapeutic way to communicate, heal, and celebrate their unique stories. The Green & Arts Wellbeing Service not only provides a therapeutic outlet but also

nurtures a sense of joy and accomplishment among those who take part.



HAFWAY continued to utilise the building throughout 2024, with their sessions held on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday evenings. In addition, they are currently storing some items in the summer house and small office. While their presence remains temporary, as the Parish Centre nears completion, HAFWAY's commitment to empowering young people remains unwavering. HAFWAY's mission is to help young individuals raise their

aspirations, overcome challenges, and thrive despite the disadvantages they may face. Through their ongoing support and guidance, they aim to inspire confidence and foster resilience, ensuring that young people can reach their full potential.



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Nuffield Health continued to run their "Move Together" fitness sessions until September this year, offering free classes for girls aged 11-16. These sessions, led by Nuffield Health instructors, were designed to support both physical and mental well-being, helping participants build strength, confidence, and resilience.

The classes provided an exciting opportunity for girls to try a variety of activities, with a focus on movement, connection, and enjoyment. From yoga and boxercise to bootcamp-style classes, there was something for everyone. It was also a great chance for participants to have fun and meet new people in a safe, welcoming

environment. Unfortunately, due to funding cuts, Nuffield Health had to give notice on the room, and we were sad to see them go. We hope that, in the future, they secure the funding needed to resume these valuable sessions.

- **Partnerships**

High Hopes rents office space and the use of the community room to Halliwell Befriending Service (HBS), who are key stakeholders within the building and have established a permanent base at the centre. High Hopes shares an office with HBS, fostering close collaboration between the two organisations.

In 2024, **High Hopes and HBS** worked together on several initiatives:



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A memorable day trip to **Southport** on the 16th of May. A total of 53 people participated in the excursion, which was chosen for its accessibility—Southport's mostly flat terrain made it an ideal destination for older individuals. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with everyone agreeing that it was a wonderful day out.



The **Summer Fayre** proved to be a fantastic fundraiser for both High Hopes and HBS, with the proceeds shared between the two charities. The event featured a variety of stalls, including those run both charities, as well as local small businesses within the community.



Thanks to the dry, bright weather, we were able to make full use of our outdoor space, creating an inviting and lively atmosphere. Volunteers from both organisations worked together to ensure the success of the day, contributing to the smooth running of the event. The pictures from the day capture the joy of the community, as many took the opportunity to enjoy the sunshine and participate in the festivities.





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On the 8th of August, we organised a much-anticipated trip to **Chester**. While we had visited the city in 2023, the weather was so wet that many people felt they hadn't had the chance to fully explore

and enjoy what Chester had to offer. As a result, participants requested a return trip in 2024, and we were happy to accommodate them.

Once again, we had a full coach of 53 people. Attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, with some choosing to go shopping, others visiting the stunning Chester Cathedral, and several participants taking a relaxing boat trip along the River Dee.

On Saturday, 30th November, we hosted a festive **Christmas Fayre**, bringing together High Hopes, HBS, and HAFWAY for a joyful community event. The fayre featured stalls from small local businesses, as well as fundraising efforts from individuals and community groups supporting their chosen charities, all set up inside the Community Centre.

We offered a variety of food and hot drinks to keep everyone warm and satisfied, including bacon sandwiches, hot turkey and gravy barm, and toasties indoors, while HAFWAY served hot chocolate and waffles outside. With seating both inside and outside, guests could enjoy their refreshments in comfort.

A highlight of the event was Santa's visit, who came along to delight the children and hand out presents. Santa's Grotto, set up in the summer house in the courtyard, was a magical



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experience for all. We were also thrilled to have the High Lawn School Choir return to sing Christmas carols, and their performances were a hit with everyone in attendance.

As in previous years, we used a clicker to count attendees, and we were delighted to welcome 328 people who came out to support us. It was a fantastic day filled with festive spirit, community engagement, and heartwarming moments.



We also collaborated with HBS to organise the groups' **Christmas parties**, one held at the Community Centre and the other at St. Luke's Community Hall, where a traditional Christmas meal was cooked and served. Both events were a great success, with everyone enjoying the festive atmosphere and the entertainment. It was a joyful time for all, and we were pleased to come together to make the holidays special for the community.



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Community Centre Christmas party:





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St Lukes Christmas Party:



- **High Hopes, Events, Trips, Activities throughout 2024**

As well as all the events, days out that we worked in partnership with HBS, High Hopes organised:



Games nights:

Throughout the year, we hosted three fun-filled games nights on 20th March, 29th June and 6th November. Each event featured a variety of games, including a quiz, the





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Generation Game, Play Your Cards Right, bingo, and more, ensuring there was something for everyone to enjoy.

Guests were given the option to bring their own food or snacks, or they could order pasty and peas, which we served during the night. These games nights are an important part of our fundraising strategy, and we were

delighted to see over 45 people attending each event. The nights not only raised funds but also brought the community together for laughter and friendly competition.



Saturday Breakfast Clubs:

At the end of 2023, we were successful in securing funding from the Household Support Fund through Bolton CVS, which supported us through to March 2024. With these funds, we were able to host three Saturday Breakfast Clubs. During these sessions, we provided food vouchers, offered a warm space, and served breakfast to those in need. Most of the attendees were families with children, although some individuals living alone also joined. To keep everyone entertained, we provided toys and board games for people to enjoy.



Following March, with additional support from our own fundraising efforts, we were able to continue these Breakfast Clubs and held six more sessions throughout the year. Although we were unable to offer food vouchers at the self-funded sessions, we were still able to provide a warm space and breakfast for attendees, ensuring they had a welcoming environment to come to.



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A summary of the trips for people, mainly for people with walking difficulties:

18th April: A minibus trip to **Birkacre Garden Centre**. The day began with a relaxing visit to the garden centre, allowing everyone to explore the beautiful plants and flowers on display. The group then enjoyed a delicious lunch at the café, where they could take their time and socialise.



30th October: A special trip with a 53-seater coach to witness the **Blackpool Illuminations**. Before heading out to see the spectacular light displays, everyone gathered at the centre for a chippy tea. The evening was filled with excitement as they toured the illuminated streets of Blackpool.

12th December: A minibus journey to **Bolton Garden Centre**, where everyone enjoyed the festive atmosphere and browsed the extensive Christmas decorations. After the shopping and browsing, the group was treated to a pre-booked Christmas meal at the garden centre's café. This year, they had 34 attendees for the meal. The festive spirit and camaraderie made it a wonderful occasion.





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On the 10th December our **Parent and Toddler group** had a fantastic time at their **Christmas party**. The event featured a special performance from Moo Music, providing a fun and interactive experience for the children. The excitement peaked with a surprise visit from Santa, bringing joy and holiday cheer to everyone in attendance. It was a memorable morning full of laughter and festive spirit for both the parents and children.



Other news from 2024:

Multiply Adult Numeracy Programme: Great Places Housing Group reached out to us as part of their involvement in delivering the Multiply Adult Numeracy Programme in partnership with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). This initiative aimed to improve adult numeracy in a fun and informative way across Greater Manchester.

The programme covered a variety of practical topics such as:

- Shopping on a Budget
- Priority Bills & APRs
- Healthy Eating & Nutrition
- Income & Expenditure

The sessions were designed to relate directly to everyday life, with engaging and fun activities woven into the teaching to keep it interactive.





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Upon completing each session, attendees received a £30 voucher and a certificate as a reward for their participation and progress. Additionally, lunches were provided at each session, making it an enjoyable and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Benevity: In 2023, we signed up to **Benevity**, a platform that connects companies with opportunities for staff volunteering and support for donations

NatWest Volunteering Efforts:

20th June & 5th September: We were fortunate to have NatWest staff volunteer with us on two occasions. On both days, they helped improve the appearance of our building by tidying up the side of the building, pulling weeds, and clearing pots. They also took time to plant bedding plants for the summer, ensuring the area was beautiful and welcoming for everyone.



25th November: A group of NatWest volunteers came back for another round of community support. They first helped with cleaning the front of the building before heading out to do a local litter pick, cleaning up the surrounding area and making the community environment cleaner and more pleasant.





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- **Building developments**

New Notice Board: We are excited to share that we now have a new notice board outside the building, providing an updated and accessible way for everyone to keep informed about the activities and events at the community centre.

Railings Update: The railings outside the building have been moved slightly and are now secure, ensuring a safer and more stable environment for all.

Office Refurbishments:

- **High Hopes and HBS Office:** In May, both the High Hopes and HBS offices underwent a refurbishment. New desks were installed, and some staff members received new chairs. In addition, storage cupboards were added for better organisation. To give the office a fresh, vibrant feel, some staff even put on their painting clothes and brightened up the walls.



A little bit of a change to our office...

- **Rented Office:** Another office, which is rented out, has also been painted, giving it a fresh new look and ensuring the space is welcoming for tenants.



- **Involving people from our community.**

Most of our activities and events are led by local volunteers who are passionate about supporting our community. All our activities are designed based on consultations with our community and service users, ensuring that the activities offered reflect the interests and needs of those who wish to participate.

The Walking Group is led by a council-trained volunteer and a member of staff that is first aid trained, ensuring the group enjoys safe and enjoyable walks.



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Our Fun Days Toddler Group is led by two fully qualified childminders, along with a volunteer who helps with snacks for the children.

Apart from our Chair Yoga session, we have volunteers supporting every other session, making sure everything runs smoothly, and everyone feels welcomed.

The Difference We Make and Referrals from Organisations:

Our impact within the community is evident not only through the services we provide but also in the positive feedback we consistently receive. We are proud to be a trusted resource for individuals who benefit from the support we offer. Whether it's through our various activities or the personalised attention we provide, we know we make a meaningful difference in people's lives.

We receive referrals from a wide range of respected organisations, including local GP surgeries, Bolton Living Well, NHS Bolton, Social Prescribers, Best Choices, and Social Workers. These referrals highlight the growing trust in our services, as we work collaboratively with these partners to support those who need it most.

Feedback from individuals who use our services or attend activities through partner organisations consistently highlights the positive impact we have on their wellbeing. Many share how our services have helped them feel more connected, supported, and empowered. The sense of belonging and the opportunities for personal growth we offer contribute to a stronger, healthier community where everyone can thrive.

Our work is rooted in the belief that by being accessible and responsive to the needs of our community, we can create lasting, positive change in the lives of those who need it most.

List of successful grants from funders who we would like to thank for 2024:

1. TESCO Groundwork – £500.
2. Bolton CVS Household support round 42 - £6721.
3. CVS Bolton's Fund, Small Grants - £4820.
4. Bolton Council - Area Working / Growing the Good Work - £1000.
5. Provincial Walsh Trust-£1330.
6. Bolton Community Homes CVS-£1000.
7. Reaching Communities – 2nd full year of funding - £5725.75 x 4.
8. The Charity Service – 3rd year of funding, £3000.



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- **Our Future Plans**

Community Consultations: We are committed to continually consulting with our community to ensure we are providing the right activities and services that meet their needs. By staying in tune with the preferences and feedback from those we serve, we will continue to adapt and introduce new programs that are beneficial and in demand. Our goal is to ensure that every individual has access to the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

We have exciting plans for improvements to our **kitchen area**, aiming to make it safer and more accessible for both staff and volunteers. One of the key changes is to replace our current oven with ones that are easier to use, eliminating the need to bend down when cooking or preparing food. These upgrades will help ensure a safer, more efficient working environment for everyone who uses the kitchen.

We are also planning to provide a **shelter in the courtyard** for community use. This will be an excellent addition, especially during events at the centre, providing a comfortable and weather-protected space for people to gather and relax. The shelter will enhance the overall experience for all visitors and event attendees, offering a place to unwind, socialise, and enjoy the outdoors.

The Staff at High Hopes for Halliwell-being

At High Hopes, we are proud of our dedicated team of staff who work tirelessly to support our community. Their commitment, passion, and hard work make a tangible difference in the lives of so many. Here's a heartfelt thank you to each member of our team:

- **Sharon Bolus – Community Centre Development Manager**
With 24 hours per week, Sharon leads the vision for our community centre, ensuring that it remains a vibrant and welcoming space for all. Her dedication to developing and improving the centre's services has had an enormous impact on the people who rely on it.
- **Steph Stather – Group Activities Development Worker**
Steph works 21 hours per week to create, develop, and facilitate group activities that bring people together and foster community spirit. Her efforts help ensure that every event is enjoyable, accessible, and engaging for all participants.
- **Becky Frazer – Communications Worker**
Working 4 hours per week, Becky plays a key role in keeping our community



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informed and connected via our social media networks. Through her communication efforts, she helps us stay in touch with our service users and partners, ensuring that everyone is up to date on our activities and initiatives.

- **Aileen Baxter – Peer Community Worker**

Aileen works 10 hours per week to support and empower individuals within our community. Through her peer-based approach, she ensures that community members are supported, connected, and encouraged to participate in services and activities.

Each member of the High Hopes team plays a vital role in making our services and programs a success. Together, they work with incredible dedication and passion, making a real difference in the lives of those who rely on our support.

Website: <https://www.hopes4halliwell.co.uk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/highhopesforhalliwellbeing>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/hopes_being

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