



High Hopes for Halliwell-being

Annual Report

1st January 2025 - 31st December 2025

The story of our Seventh year!

2025 has been a year of growth, success, and meaningful achievement for us. It's been a busy yet incredibly rewarding time — one that has allowed us to reflect on our progress, celebrate our milestones, and identify areas where we can continue to improve.

While our fundraising efforts did not quite match the levels of 2024, this has not stopped us from delivering the activities and events that our community values and depends on. Guided by the priorities outlined in our community consultation, we've remained focused on our business plan and worked tirelessly to bring our shared vision to life.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support that makes our work possible, and we look forward to building on this momentum as we move into 2026 together.

- **High Hopes existing groups**



Our walking group continues to thrive as we explore new local areas together, enjoying regular stops for drinks and plenty of time to catch up. Thanks to the

Good Companions minibus, we've also ventured further afield on exciting trips to local parks, adding wonderful variety to our routes. When Harry retired in September, we found a new minibus company and have since enjoyed five trips to more distant parks, where the change of scenery—and the lovely meals included—made each outing extra special.





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A huge part of our success is down to Geoff, our dedicated volunteer group leader, who celebrated his 80th birthday this year. Geoff is a true asset to the group. He has an impeccable sense of when to pause so everyone can catch up, and he keeps us entertained with fascinating stories during our breaks. His

thoughtful leadership ensures that all walkers feel welcome, comfortable, and included, no matter their pace.



Walking remains one of the most accessible and effective forms of exercise—simple, free, and often underestimated despite its many benefits. A brisk walk helps build stamina, burn calories, and boost heart health. For many, it's a gentle yet rewarding way to stay active, improve wellbeing, and support a healthy lifestyle.

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

Fun Days Parent & Toddler Group continues to flourish thanks to the dedication of our four fantastic volunteers: Bernie and Liz, both experienced childminders, along with Edith and Barbara, who run the kitchen and provide snacks for parents and children.

The group has grown into a truly welcoming space for families—a place where toddlers, babies, and their parents or carers come together to play, learn, and form lasting connections.

As children move on to school, we're delighted to welcome new babies and toddlers, bringing a wonderful sense of renewal and growth.

Responding to the needs of our families, we made the decision in 2023 to remain open throughout the holiday season. This means the group now runs for 50 weeks of the year, closing only for two weeks over Christmas.

Each session is filled with opportunities for fun and development. Children enjoy a variety of toys, games, crafts, and a lively "song time." Beyond the activities, the group provides a nurturing,



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FUN DAYS TODDLER GROUP



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supportive environment where parents and carers can connect, share experiences, and build friendships.

Fun Days is more than just a parent and toddler group—it's a community where families come together to make memories and friendships that can last a lifetime.



Our Chair Yoga class is going from strength to strength, with around eighteen participants joining each session. What began as a weekly activity has grown into a popular and welcoming group that's attracting new faces to the centre. Some participants first connected with us through the Diabetes Prevention Programme, while others are entirely new to the centre. Many are now exploring additional activities we offer, which is

wonderful to see. The class is clearly making a positive difference—supporting both physical well-being and mental wellness.

Chair yoga is an excellent option for older adults or those new to exercise. This low-impact activity is especially helpful for people with conditions such as arthritis, as it allows participants to stretch and strengthen without putting strain on their joints. It also helps reduce the fear of falling, offering a safe and supportive environment where individuals can build strength, improve balance, and increase flexibility.

Each week, participants look forward to the class—not only for its physical benefits, but also for the sense of community and connection it fosters. It's a great example of how exercise can be adapted to suit all ages and fitness levels, promoting overall well-being in both body and mind.





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Our WhatsApp group, originally created during lockdown to help volunteers, service users, and staff stay connected, is still going strong today! We now have 45 members, and new people continue to join. Every morning, we share our familiar “good morning” messages and chat about what’s happening in our day.

The group has become a vibrant space where we can talk about what’s going on at the centre, share ideas, and check in with one another. If someone hasn’t been active for a while, we make a point of reaching out privately to ensure they’re okay.

Some people do join the group but later decide it’s not for them—often because the constant notifications feel a bit too busy. They may choose to leave the chat, and that’s absolutely fine. They can still stay up to date with everything that’s happening at the centre through our printed or emailed monthly calendar of activities and events.

It’s a simple but powerful way to keep our community spirit alive helping everyone feel connected, supported, and engaged in whatever way works best for them.



Thursday Friends has become one of our liveliest and most well-attended groups, regularly bringing together over twenty-two people every other week. Each session begins with a light lunch, giving everyone a chance to sit together, chat, and settle in before the fun starts. After lunch, the group gets stuck into a rotating mix of activities, including quizzes, bingo, games, and rounds of *Play Your Cards Right*. Participation has grown

steadily throughout the year, and it’s been wonderful to see so many new and familiar faces joining in.

A defining feature of Thursday Friends is the blend of carers and the people they support. This mix creates an atmosphere of understanding and companionship that benefits everyone. Sharing a meal adds something special too—dining together helps people feel valued, strengthens relationships, and offers an important source of emotional support. More than just a social club, Thursday Friends provides a meaningful space where people can unwind, enjoy themselves, and feel connected. It’s a place where conversations flow easily, laughter is common, and bonds naturally form. The group continues to make a significant positive impact on the emotional and social well-being of all who attend.



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Line Dancing has quickly become a joyful and energetic weekly activity. Every Friday from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM, participants gather for an hour of movement, music, and fun. The class is open to everyone—whether you're just starting out or already familiar with the steps. Last year, we welcomed around 10 to 14 dancers each week, and numbers have now grown to between 14 and 18. It's been fantastic to see the group expanding and becoming more confident with every session.

Throughout the year, members pick up new routines and enjoy the challenge of learning together. The social side of the class has flourished too, with many participants forming

close bonds. Their enthusiasm and team spirit even leads to lunch outings to celebrate the friendships made through the group.

Beyond being enjoyable, line dancing provides a wide range of health benefits. It enhances balance and coordination, supports heart health, and keeps the mind active. It's also recognised as a beneficial activity for people living with conditions such as Alzheimer's, dementia, and depression.

For many older adults, the class offers an accessible way to stay active while enjoying meaningful social interaction.



Whether you're hoping to stay fit, try something new, or simply meet new people, our Line Dancing class offers a warm and welcoming environment where everyone can join in and have a great time.



Our Happy Mondays Singing Group continued until February 2025, but attendance had dropped to just two or three participants per session. We weren't certain whether the timing or day was the main challenge for those who wanted to attend. Shortly after, unforeseen circumstances meant the facilitators were unable to run the sessions for a few months, and the group has not resumed this year.

We remain hopeful about bringing the singing group back in the future, potentially at a different day or time to better suit participants' schedules.



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We were pleased to host three **Saturday Breakfast Club** sessions in January, February, and March. These monthly sessions offered a warm, welcoming space for families and individuals who may be struggling. Guests were able to enjoy a free breakfast, friendly conversation, and a supportive environment. Children also had access to toys and games to keep them entertained.



We hope these sessions provided comfort and connection to those who attended. All three events were proudly funded through our own fundraising efforts.



- **High Hopes new groups**

Bolton Manbassadors Update

Our Community Centre Development Manager attended an event at All Souls on Wednesday, 5th March, where they shared a stall with Lisa from HBS. It was a productive afternoon, providing the opportunity to connect with other organisations and meet a few members of the community.

Following the event, Bolton Manbassadors visited the centre for a meeting. During this meeting, they discussed potential opportunities for collaboration, including delivering an activity at the centre. One idea that emerged was a support group focused on gardening. Bolton Manbassadors suggested applying for £500 through their fund to purchase gardening equipment and sundries. They also mentioned the need to find a volunteer to facilitate the group. At present, this is on hold as a suitable volunteer has not yet been identified.

Looking ahead, in 2026 we plan to seek funding to cover staff costs to run the group. This initiative is considered important, and we hope to get it up and running once resources, staff and volunteers are in place.

- **Organisations using the centre**

Halliwell Befriending Service (HBS)



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Their Mission:

Loneliness and isolation among older people is a serious and growing issue in the UK, often leading to both mental and physical ill health. HBS aims to reduce this risk by offering warmth, friendship, and practical support through their one-to-one befriending service and regular activity sessions.

HBS shares an office with High Hopes and delivers a wide range of activities at the Community Centre, including:

- Fortnightly activity sessions
- Fortnightly luncheon club
- Weekly craft class
- Weekly computer class



Alongside these regular groups, HBS also organises one-off events throughout the year—such as reminiscence sessions—to further engage, connect, and support older members of the local community.



HAFWAY continued to make use of our building until April 2025, holding their sessions on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday evenings. They are also temporarily storing some items in the summer house and small office while the Parish Centre neared completion. Throughout their time with us, their commitment to empowering young people has remained clear and consistent.

HAFWAY's mission is to support young people to raise their aspirations, overcome challenges, and thrive despite the disadvantages they may face. Through their guidance and encouragement, they work to build confidence, resilience, and the belief that every young person can achieve their full potential. We wish HAFWAY every success in their new building and look forward to seeing the positive impact they will continue to make for young people in our community.



Kabod Sanctuary provides vital support for both the spiritual and practical well-being of its congregation and the wider community. Every Sunday, they hire the main hall from morning until 5 p.m., offering a consistent space for worship and fellowship.

This year, they registered as a charity, strengthening their ability to serve the community. Beyond spiritual guidance, they provide



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services such as career support, social care, family assistance, immigration advice, and financial guidance.

Through this holistic approach, Kabod Sanctuary fosters personal growth, resilience, and overall well-being for those they serve.

The Caribbean and African Health Network (CAHN) runs its Green & Arts Wellbeing drop-in session every Wednesday in the main hall, offering a relaxed and inclusive space where people can explore creativity and personal growth.

Through this service, CAHN continues to make a positive difference in the Stockport and Bolton communities. Their aim is to strengthen feelings of belonging, encourage care for the environment, and celebrate cultural identity within these diverse areas. By providing a friendly and supportive atmosphere, they inspire participants to take part in creative activities that enhance well-being and build meaningful connections.

A particularly powerful element of the programme is the chance for individuals to express their feelings and life experiences through art. Many participants have found that painting and other creative practices offer a therapeutic outlet—helping them process emotions, heal, and share their personal stories. The Green & Arts Wellbeing Service not only supports emotional expression but also helps people rediscover joy, confidence, and a sense of achievement.



The National Diabetes Prevention Programme is currently running regular sessions in our community room, continuing throughout 2025 and into 2026. Each group

follows the **Healthier You NHS Diabetes Prevention**

Programme, a nine-month course designed to help people at risk of Type 2 diabetes make healthy, long-term lifestyle changes.

Four full programmes are being delivered here, each with **13 group sessions** offering personalised support on healthy eating, physical activity, and weight management.

We're pleased to be hosting this important service for our community.





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Rebuild with Hope are a charity founded with the vision of supporting individuals who face significant barriers to employment and reintegration into society. Their work began with a focus on helping ex-offenders rebuild their lives by providing training, skills development, and support to successfully re-enter the workforce and their communities. Over time, their mission expanded to include others facing obstacles such as long-term unemployment, disabilities, or limited access to education. They are committed to creating opportunities for those who need them most, empowering individuals to overcome challenges and helping them build a brighter future. Through this work, they also aim to strengthen and uplift our local community, fostering a more inclusive, resilient society where everyone has the chance to thrive.

We had our first "Pop up Shop" on the 16th of October and had another on the 12th of December, we are really pleased how these went and are hoping that in 2026 we will be organising more with Rebuild with hope.



This year, ABL Health, in partnership with Your Health Bolton, delivered a six-week healthy eating programme in our community. Participants learned a variety of practical and sustainable ways to eat more healthily and how to lose weight safely and effectively.

We're grateful to ABL Health and Your Health Bolton for providing such valuable support and guidance, helping local residents build long-term healthy habits.



Reyna's Reiki has begun using our community room on Saturday mornings each month to deliver calming 90-minute meditation and Reiki sessions. Meditation helps quiet the mind and promote focus, while Reiki is an energy-based healing practice — together they create a deeper sense of relaxation and well-being. We're pleased to provide our space for these peaceful and restorative sessions.



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Twilight Therapy provides out-of-hours academic tuition for children and young people who are struggling in mainstream education, combining learning support with emotional guidance. They also offer a range of adult services focused on education, emotional well-being, and family therapy, helping families navigate challenges together.



They rented one of our office spaces from January and occasionally used the main community room throughout the week. Unfortunately, the arrangement did not work out as hoped, and they concluded their use of our space in March.



Bolton College offered a series of taster sessions at the centre to give the community a preview of some of the courses they could enrol in. The sessions took place on Fridays and included CV Skills, Mental Wellbeing, Sign Language, Nail Art, Make-up, Art, Mending Clothes, Skin Care, and Fitness and Nutrition. Additionally, Bolton College hosted a special event at the centre during this period.

- **Partnerships**

High Hopes rents office space and provides access to the community room for **Halliwell Befriending Service (HBS)**, a key stakeholder that has established a permanent base at the centre. By sharing an office with HBS, High Hopes promotes close collaboration, enabling both organisations to work together effectively in supporting the local community. In 2025, High Hopes and HBS worked together on several initiatives:



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On 3rd April, we enjoyed a memorable day trip to **Knowsley Safari Park**, with a total of 53 participants. The excursion was chosen for its accessibility, as most of the day was spent on the coach, with opportunities to get off for lunch and to explore other attractions, such as the sea lion shows and various animal exhibits.



An amazing day out

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with everyone agreeing that it was a wonderful day out. The only minor disappointment was that the lions were very sleepy, so we didn't see many, but this didn't dampen the enjoyment of the trip.



On 8th May, we celebrated **VE Day** with a memorable event at the community centre. Guests enjoyed a buffet, dressed up in period-style outfits, and watched Winston Churchill's historic speech on TV. Everyone had a fantastic time, coming together to remember and honour this important day. We had a visit from our Asda Community Champion, Christine, who handed out Asda Community Diamond awards to all our well-loved volunteers, making the day extra special.



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The **Community Fun Day**, on the 14th June was a brilliant fundraiser for **High Hopes** and **HBS**, with proceeds shared between the two charities. The event showcased a mix of stalls from both organisations and local small businesses, bringing the community together in a lively and welcoming atmosphere.

With bright, dry weather on our side, everyone enjoyed the outdoor space, while dedicated volunteers ensured the day ran smoothly. The photos capture the joy, fun, and sense of community that made the event such a success.



On the 18th of September, we took a group on a **trip to Cheshire Oaks**. Everyone had the chance to explore the shops, choose where they wanted to eat, and meet back at the coach at the agreed time for the journey home. Once again, we had a full coach of 53 people. Attendees enjoyed the day and said they would have loved to stay longer.





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On Saturday, 29th November, we hosted a festive Christmas Fayre, bringing together High Hopes, HBS, and HAFWAY for a joyful community celebration. The fayre featured stalls from small local businesses, alongside fundraising tables run by 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 well-fed, including bacon sandwiches, hot turkey and gravy barms, and indoor toasties. A highlight of the day was Santa's visit—he delighted the children and handed out presents from Santa's Grotto, beautifully set up in the summer house in the courtyard.

We were also thrilled to welcome back the High Lawn School Choir, whose Christmas carol performances were enjoyed by all.

As in previous years, we used a clicker to count attendees and were pleased to record 268 visitors. Although this was slightly fewer than last year—largely due to the awful weather—it was still a fantastic turnout.

Overall, it was a wonderful day filled with festive spirit, community engagement, and heartwarming moments.

We also volunteered at HBS's Christmas party, just as they did at the two parties we organised—teamwork at its festive best! Our celebrations at the Community Centre were full of fun, with a tasty buffet, games, and plenty of singing. HBS's party at St. Luke's Community Hall was equally wonderful, featuring a delicious traditional Christmas meal that everyone enjoyed.

Both events were filled with laughter, friendship, and festive cheer. It was a joy to come together and help make the holiday season truly special for our community.



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Community Centre Christmas parties:



HBS Christmas Party





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• High Hopes, Events, Trips, Activities throughout 2025

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

Games nights:



Throughout the year, we hosted three fun-filled games nights on 19th March 9th July and 15th October. Each event featured a variety of games, including quizzes, the Generation Game, Play Your Cards Right, bingo, and more, ensuring there was something for everyone to enjoy. Guests had the option to bring their own food or snacks, or order pasty and peas, which we served during the evening. These games nights are an important part of our fundraising strategy, and we were delighted to welcome over 45 attendees at each event. The nights not only raised valuable funds but also brought the community together for laughter, friendly competition, and shared memories.



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15th May –Trip to Summerseat Garden Centre



Other news from 2025:

Bolton CVS “Community Conversations”:

We delivered just over 25 Community Conversations with our service users on behalf of Bolton Council, partly focusing on local responses to the riots in Bolton. This included two group sessions: one group with 11 participants and another with 10 participants. The remaining conversations were delivered on a one-to-one basis or with two people together.

The conversations explored how people felt about living in Bolton, capturing both positive and negative experiences. Participants were encouraged to share their views on community



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safety, cohesion, and their sense of belonging. We also gathered feedback on levels of trust in public services, including the police, hospitals, and other key services, as well as trust in Bolton Council.

The Community Centre Development Manager took part in the training so she could cascade the learning back to the wider team, enabling us to deliver this project effectively. The training focused on how to facilitate Community Conversations and gather meaningful, honest feedback from service users.

We were blown away by the feedback shared during these conversations. At the start of each session, participants were asked to introduce themselves and tell us a little about their background. This prompted some very emotional responses, with a few beneficiaries becoming tearful as they reflected on their journeys.

Many participants shared how accessing our services had changed their lives for the better, explaining that they had been in a very difficult place before engaging with our support. They spoke openly about improvements in their confidence, wellbeing, and sense of purpose, highlighting the positive impact our services have had on their lives.

Benevity

In 2023, we signed up to Benevity, a platform that connects companies with opportunities for staff volunteering and support through donations. This allows us to build stronger links with local businesses and create more opportunities for volunteers to contribute to our community.

NatWest Volunteering Efforts

While this year was quieter in terms of corporate volunteering, we were delighted to welcome a volunteer from NatWest who joined our Thursday Friends Group. She helped prepare and serve lunch, participated in the quiz, and fully engaged with everyone. She enjoyed her day so much that she is planning to return to support us again in the future.



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- **Building developments**



main hall, vestibule, and toilets. These updates have made a noticeable difference, brightening up the centre and creating a more welcoming environment. Throughout the year, we've also addressed several routine maintenance tasks — such as updating fire exit signs, replacing lights, and making other small but important improvements to keep the building safe and well-maintained.

In April, we began a refurbishment of our kitchen to make it safer, more accessible, and more user-friendly for our volunteers. Two new ovens were installed at a convenient height, making it much easier to remove cooked food safely —

especially important as many of our volunteers are older and previously found it difficult to bend down. We also added a new eight-ring induction hob, which has improved both efficiency and safety. Unlike our previous hob, the induction model cools down quickly, reducing the risk of burns and making the kitchen a safer place for everyone. In addition to the kitchen improvements, we also had several areas repainted, including the kitchen itself, the outside windows,





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- **Involving People from Our Community**

Most of our activities and events are powered by our amazing local volunteers, whose passion and commitment make a real difference in our community. Everything we organise is shaped through ongoing conversations with community members and service users, ensuring our activities genuinely reflect what people want and need.

Our Walking Group is guided by a trained volunteer and supported by two members of staff who are fully first-aid trained. Their teamwork helps create walks that are safe, enjoyable, and welcoming for everyone.

The Fun Days Toddler Group is beautifully run by two qualified childminders, with 2 helpful volunteers who prepare snacks and drinks for the children, adding an extra touch of warmth to each session.

Except for Chair Yoga and Line Dancing, all of our other activities are supported by volunteers. Their enthusiasm ensures that sessions run smoothly and that every participant feels valued, supported, and part of a friendly and inclusive community.

The Difference We Make and Referrals from Organisations:

Our impact within the community is evident not only through the services we provide but also through the positive feedback we consistently receive. We are proud to be a trusted resource for individuals who benefit from the support we offer. Whether through our range of activities or the personalised attention we provide, we know we are making 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 reflect the growing trust in our services and the strength of our collaborations with partners who share our commitment to supporting 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 tell us how our services have helped them feel more connected, supported, and empowered. The sense of belonging and opportunities for personal growth we offer contribute to a stronger, healthier community where everyone can thrive.



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Our work is rooted in the belief that by being accessible, inclusive, 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 2025:

1. Reaching Communities – 3rd full year of funding (last year) - £5725.75 x 4.
2. Garfield Weston Foundation - £10,000 towards core costs.
3. Growing the Good Work (Bolton Cllrs)- £1000 towards our community kitchen.
4. Growing the Good Work - £250 towards VE Day Celebration
5. Bolton CVS “Conversations” - £1250
6. Edward Holt Trust - £2500 – Core costs
7. Sir James and Lady Scott Trust - £2700 – Costs towards our Chair Yoga, Line dancing and walking groups.
8. ASDA Foundation: £600 towards Christmas Fayre and Christmas Parties.
9. Growing the Good Work (Bolton Cllrs)-£100 towards Christmas Parties.
10. Forever Manchester Energy: £2500 towards our energy bills.

• Our Future Plans

We are committed to continually engaging with our community to ensure that the activities and services we provide truly meet their needs. By listening to the preferences and feedback of those we serve, we can adapt and develop new programmes that are both beneficial and in demand.

Our goal is to ensure that every individual has access to the support, opportunities, and sense of belonging they need to thrive.

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 real difference in the lives of so many people.



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We'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to each member of our team for the invaluable contribution they make every day:

- **Sharon Bolus – Community Centre Development Manager**

Working 24 hours per week, Sharon leads the vision for our community centre, ensuring it remains a vibrant and welcoming space for everyone. Her dedication to developing and enhancing the centre's services has had a significant and lasting impact on the people who rely on it.

- **Steph Stather – Group Activities Development Worker**

Working 21 hours per week, Steph plays a key role in creating, developing, and facilitating group activities that bring people together and foster a strong sense of community. Her efforts ensure that every event is enjoyable, accessible, and engaging for all who take part.

- **Aileen Baxter – Peer Community Worker**

Working 10 hours per week, Aileen plays a vital role in supporting and empowering individuals within our community. Through her peer-based approach, she helps community members feel supported, connected, and encouraged to take part in our services and activities.

- **Becky Frazer – Communications Worker**

Working four hours per week, Becky played a key role in keeping our community informed and connected through our social media networks. Her communication efforts helped us stay in touch with our service users and partners, ensuring everyone remained up to date with our activities and initiatives.

- Due to other commitments, Becky left at the end of July. Before leaving, she provided a thorough handover to our existing staff, who have since taken on her responsibilities and are doing a fantastic job. We thank Becky for her valuable contribution and wish her all the best for the future.

Behind every success at High Hopes is a team of dedicated, passionate people working together to change lives for the better.

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

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

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/highhopesforhalliwellbeing/>



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