



High Hopes for Halliwell-being AGM Report

1st January 2020 - 31st December 2020

The story of our year through covid

Even though there were concerns over the spread of Covid 19 as we went into 2020, we had no idea of the devastating consequences it would bring and so High Hopes for Halliwell-being was looking forward to a busy community-led year, full of social events and groups using the centre.

Reflecting on the journey of 2020 at High Hopes for Halliwell-being, it's been one of the hardest for our community and for our community presence due to Covid-19 and the restrictions that have been in place. This is a different report from the one we intended to write, but there are still successes to celebrate, challenges we have overcome and a real need for us to invest in our community, rebuilding lost connections and restoring life to our Community Centre.

From January to March our **existing groups** were running as usual with good numbers attending. Once the announcement was made that we were going into lockdown the community centre had to close and all activities were stopped.

Our **Fun Days Parent & Toddler Group** stopped in March 2020 and due to the group size and dynamics this stopped fully for the rest of 2020.

Our **walking group** was a different story, this started and stopped through restrictions in 2020 because it was an outside activity and only a small group.

Chair Yoga, again this was sporadic, like the walking group but due to it being held inside we could only have 6 people to attend this activity.



Creative Writing - Again this group started and stopped throughout COVID. Through lockdown some of the writers have written poems that we have



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shared on our Whatsapp group, social media and all are available on our website.

We were sorry that the **Men in Sheds** couldn't start as planned and are hoping that this will start in 2021.

Sounds Right Phonics Class – Began in January 2020, this was another group that started and stopped through the lockdowns and tiers.

Our **internet café and coffee morning** closed in March 2020.

When the community centre closed, Sharon (Community Development Worker) and Steph (Group Activities Development Worker) had to be fully furloughed. Becky, who is the Communications Worker, who works 4 hours a week wasn't furloughed as she could carry on in her role and help with other work that came up. In July, Sharon and Steph started back part furloughed / part working and this carried on throughout 2020.

● **New Groups**

We weren't expecting to get any new groups through 2020, but were very pleased that the dance group **All Starz** approached us to use the centre on a Wednesday night. They have 3 sessions and have around 15 children per session. Again this was fragmented due to lockdowns and tiers.

With all activities paused due to Covid restrictions, we saw a massive need to connect with our community and we are so pleased with how our community has developed its online presence. We have around 40 members who have joined our **Whatsapp group**. Here we have 2 volunteers who share a weekly quiz, they also play scattergories. They chat daily about allsorts of things and share what they have been up to or if they have been anywhere. They have also been sharing makes and bakes (also available on our website gallery) . It's a lovely, lively group.



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We also started a fortnightly **zoom** bingo and a fortnightly zoom quiz, the quiz went to monthly due to restrictions being slightly lifted and numbers falling.

● Partnerships and Relationships

High hopes for Halliwell-being and Halliwell Befriending Service have worked together with support phone calls and shopping for the vulnerable. We also delivered Bolton Council's care packages and organised a Covid safe Christmas party for some of our vulnerable people, which included a zoom bingo so others could join in, due to numbers in the building being restricted.



HAFWAY and Halliwell Befriending service are organisations that have a permanent base at St Paul's Community Centre, they have offices and use the hall on a regular basis. We usually work closely together on large events, for example, The Christmas Fayre and are hoping in the future to carry this on.

We have a good relationship with Bolton CVS and access their training programme for staff and volunteers and will be working with them in the future to apply for funding and to update our business plan.

We wanted to get the information out to our service users, volunteers and staff about Covid and during a zoom meeting through Bolton CVS and Public Health Bolton our Community Development Worker made arrangements with Public Health Bolton to deliver Covid information sessions, these took place via zoom and we had a huge uptake where they gave advice about Covid, test and trace and symptoms. At the end of each session we had questions that people could ask, and with the feedback they felt more informed and confident about how to approach their own individual situation.

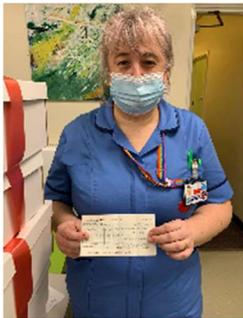


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● Events, Trips & Fundraising

Due to COVID, we have only been able to organise a small **Christmas party**, as mentioned above. All our usual events had to be cancelled and these were fantastic opportunities for fundraising. We usually have a Summer and Christmas Fayre, quiz nights and other events, for example, meals and trips out. We are hoping to organise these again in the future.



We had arranged a disco night for the beginning of April 2020 at a local club, this was going to be a **fundraiser** for the community centre and part of what was raised was going to go to the Bolton Breast Unit. This was another blow for our fundraising plans as we couldn't go ahead with it and had already started selling tickets. We even reorganised it for

September but in the end it was obvious it wasn't meant to be, so we came up with a plan to give lovely Christmas chocolate/food hampers to the people who had bought tickets and to hopefully sell a few more hampers.



This was well received and all the people were happy. This meant we were able to donate £700 to the Bolton Breast Unit, which we always wanted to achieve. They were over the moon with our donation. We had fantastic donations from Asda, Morrisons, Sainsburys, Aldi and the Coop which really helped with how much we raised.





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● Building developments

We were successful with a Covid Lottery Fund from the Government and were able to get funding towards our core costs and maintenance of the building.

“Sowing the Seed” fund from St Lukes Church donated £500; this was to regrout the walls in the yard. One of our fantastic volunteers has done an amazing job.



Involving people from our community

Some of our projects are led by our local volunteers, such as the walking group, as well as Fun Days Toddler Group and the Men in Sheds.

Our Whatsapp quizzes are run by 2 of our wonderful volunteers, who share the weekly quiz.

Other groups such as the Creative writing and Chair yoga, have come from suggestions from our community, who expressed an interest in attending these activities.





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The difference we are making

With feedback from our community members shows we are making a difference. We are keeping them connected and less socially isolated, helping with their mental health and wellbeing. Here are some responses from the whatsapp group:

“The happy chorus of good morning and all the pictures brightens the day. The brain teasers keep my mind active. Contact with the centre keeps my communication skills in practice and on the whole my quality of life is better.”

“I really enjoy the group, it has kept me amused with all the comments flying around. I enjoy the quizzes and scattagories, which I also play with friends. It’s a good idea keeping everyone involved and entertained.”

“This group has been a lifeline, keeping us all in touch, letting us know what’s going on. Knowing there is a place to turn to and know you will get help without going outside. I hope this group keeps going.”

“Under the Covid regime, quizzes, Scattegories, raffles and bingo continue on Zoom and WhatsApp, which are competitive, but still friendly. Without making a fuss, it is obvious that the "staff" continue to maintain contact with both Halliwell residents and the wider Bolton Community. One of the early events was a very useful meeting online with a member of Bolton Public Health, who talked to us and answered questions about Covid and what the Council and NHS were doing to support us. I joke to my friends that I receive good Morning greetings from people I wouldn't recognise if I met them. I do feel that I know them as friends, and it is a comfort to feel that, living alone and if I didn't respond someone would notice and make sure that nothing was wrong. We have beautiful photographs, amusing videos, jokes, a focus with efforts like the Sir Tom Moore 100 Challenge and above all friendship and a very strong sense of community, which I think will survive the traumas and lockdowns of the last year. My thanks to everyone involved, for so unobtrusively making it happen.”



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Future Plans

3 key areas we are focusing on:

1. **Community Consultations:** As the world has changed since covid, we need to see what people want from their community centre. So we are looking to do community consultations to see how people are and what they want going forward.
2. **Business Plan:** Following the consultation we will then concentrate on writing a new business plan for the next 3 years.
3. **Developing the community centre:** We will be working on getting the community centre up to full capacity so that we aren't so reliant on grants for our core costs. We will concentrate on activities that come from our consultations and follow our updated business plan to develop our community centre.

Although Covid has not gone away, we feel that the future for our community centre will look better and brighter in 2021.

To keep updated please follow us on our social media platforms and website:

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

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

Twitter: https://twitter.com/hopes_being

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