



# High Hopes for Halliwell-being Annual Report

1st January 2021 - 31st December 2021

The journey of High Hopes for Halliwell-being in 2021 has been very different from the previous year. From January 'til April - due to Covid-19 restrictions - we couldn't start any of the activities. April was the month that things started to get back to some normality and some of our activities restarted. This report is a much more positive one than the one we expected to write, as at the beginning of the year we were not in a great place financially and the community centre wasn't being used as a community centre should. We have lots to celebrate as we've been able to rebuild lost connections, gain new ones, and restore life back into our Community Centre.

## The story of our year

- **Existing groups**

Our **Fun Days Parent & Toddler Group** started back on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021. We're so pleased to see our volunteers back and hear the children playing in the hall and outside in the yard. We have seen a rise in numbers, showing a need for this provision. They play with the toys and games, and enjoy "song time". Parents and carers make good connections and build supportive relationships. We even organised a Christmas party and "Moo Music" came to entertain the children and Father Christmas gave out presents.



Our **walking group** started back in April 2021 and has swelled in numbers to around 15-18 people fortnightly. They have explored lots of new local areas and they stop off for drinks too! We are excited that our walking group is active and growing.

The feedback from the walking group is that they enjoy the company and feel good about getting some "steps in". Our volunteer group leader (Geoff) enjoys telling people stories and a little bit about the local area. We have been successful with a Bolton CVS fund so that we are able to take them further afield, to other green spaces via coach, where they have a walk and usually lunch in a local café.

**Chair Yoga** also started back in April with two sessions - due to the people attending - as there was a need for "distancing", to be Covid-secure. We carried this on 'til October when we were able to return to one session per week. This is great exercise for body and mind and the attendees look forward to this group work every week.





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**Creative Writing** – We provided a ten-week course in 2021 for 6 people. It's a fun activity for beginners who would like to learn to write poems and stories.

We're sorry that the **Men in Sheds** didn't take off as we had planned. We do have a few service users that help in the garden, have worked on the sheds and done some woodwork, but it hasn't gone much further than this.

We thought our **WhatsApp Group** would go quiet once "lockdown" finished, but we are still adding people to the group. We have our morning chorus, where we all say "good morning" to each other and talk about all sorts of things, from what we are up to that day and what's happening at the centre. It's also a good way to ask what they would like to see at the centre and if anyone has gone quiet we will call them privately to see if they are ok.

Our **Internet Café and Coffee Morning** on a Friday morning morphed into our **Thursday Friends group** and started in October. It was started because of our WhatsApp group, where we had volunteers doing quizzes and playing Scattogories on-line but then wanted it to be carried on in the community centre, so after asking about days and times, we now meet fortnightly on a Thursday afternoon. They have lunch, play the games plus Bingo and Play Your Cards Right.



**Sounds Right Phonics Class** – Started back in April with 2 sessions on a Saturday morning. Children, parents, and carers enjoy the fun and educational sessions.

**All Starz** used our centre 'til November, they then moved to St Paul's Parish Centre to the upstairs room which is much bigger and works better for them.

- **New groups**

In 2021 we concentrated on getting our regular groups and activities back up and running as a priority. Our **Thursday Friends** is the only new group started, and this has been a success.



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- **Partnerships and Relationships**

High Hopes for Halliwell-being rents office space and the use of the community room to **Halliwell Befriending Service (HBS)** and **HAFWAY (youth group)**. The two groups are stakeholders within the building and have a permanent base in the centre. High Hopes shares an office with HBS. All three charities have worked together on improving the courtyard at the back of the building making it a more enjoyable space to use for all our service users. We also worked together on our Christmas Fayre, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December. We had local small businesses and people fundraising for their charities, hiring a stall in the Community Centre, Parish Centre or St Paul's Church. All three buildings served food and had games for families to play. The children also had a chance to see Santa. We were also very pleased that **High Lawn School Choir** agreed to come and sing a few songs at each venue and the **All Starz Dance group** performed in the Church. Even though the weather was very wet we had 200+ people that came out to support us and it was a very enjoyable day.



We also worked together with **HBS** on group Christmas parties including one group that went to The Olympus Chippy and another that was cooked and served a traditional Christmas meal in the Parish Centre. All groups had a wonderful time because they were so happy to be able to celebrate again, together.

We have a good relationship with **Bolton CVS** and have commissioned them to help us write our new business plan and they have given us support with our large community consultation.

Trustees, staff and volunteers access their training programmes to keep up to date with safeguarding, health and safety, etc and we have also been successful with funding from them.



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- **Events, trips & Fundraising**

The walking group did a **sponsored walk** in May, they were really pleased when they raised over £1000 to help towards the running costs of the Community Centre. We thank them all for their effort and time.

In September we organised a trip to **Bakewell Markets**, the coach was full, and the feedback was great. Everyone had a wonderful time and most came home with a Bakewell tart.





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We organised a **Thursday Friends Christmas Party** and with the help of **HBS** and all our wonderful **volunteers**, this event was a certain success! We had them singing and laughing and all had a joyful time.



Our **Parent and Toddler group** had a fantastic time at their **Christmas party**. We arranged for Moo Music to come and join us and we even had a visit off Santa!





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We organised a **Christmas lunch at Olympus Fish and Chips** and we had around 60 people who attended this event. Everyone had a great time and a good meal.



As previously mentioned, we organised the **Christmas Fayre** with HBS and HAFWAY.





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- **Building developments**

We were successful with a Covid Lottery Fund at the end of 2020 which included costs towards the hall being painted, tiling of the toilets, replacing blown and cracked windows, fitting emergency outside lighting down the side passage and outdoor electric sockets and a few other things. This work carried on 'til May 2021.

High Hopes and HBS moved their office into the large meeting room as HBS were recruiting an extra staff member and needed the room. HAFWAY moved into the old High Hopes and HBS office. So we now have a small meeting room that we can offer out for hire.

Medway replaced the blown radiator and soaked carpet tiles in the small office . They also replaced the radiators in HAFWAY's new office as requested due to the other 3 leaking and our concern that there was a fault with them all and didn't want another flood.

With concern over a neighbour's tree hanging low over the yard wall, dropping berries and growing so tall it was getting tangled in overhead wires we approached them to ask if we could pay to have the tree drastically cut back. They agreed and were so pleased when we got a tree surgeon in, to have sun and light going into their house, they gave us a donation towards the cost.

- **Involving people from our community**

A lot of our projects are led by our local volunteers and all our activities come from consultations with our community and service users, who express an interest in attending these activities. The walking group is led by a council trained volunteer, as well as our Fun Days Toddler Group which is led by a fully qualified Child Minder.

- **The difference we are making.**

The feedback from our community members this year has shown that people need and want to reconnect with their peers. People have said that because of "lockdown" their mental and physical health has suffered, and they have been very lonely.

Most people have been very happy to return to our activities and we have also seen an increase in numbers with new people accessing the centre.



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Here are a few comments from our “friends”:

“I was going through a bit of a bad patch in my life before I found out about the activities at St Paul’s, this has given me a focus and something to look forward to each week”

**“Before I started coming to St Paul’s I had mental health issues and anxiety, in just the short time I’ve been coming it’s helped me a lot and gets me out of the house to interact with some lovely and kind people”**

“As a user of the Chair Yoga group, I have found it to be very welcoming and a safe environment, through Covid, great care was given to Covid advise. It has opened opportunities to join in other activities, coach trips and organised walks, various classes, just what the area needs.”

## List of successful grants from funders who we would like to thank for 2021:

1. Celebrate 25 Lottery - £1000
2. Asda - £300
3. Asda - £600 (Feed the Community Fund)
4. Smile Amazon-(Ongoing)
5. Coop-(ongoing)
6. Awards for All, Lottery- £10,000
7. Arnold Clark Community Fund - £1000
8. Albert Hunt Trust - £1000
9. Postcode Neighbourhood Trust Lottery - £20000
10. Asda Green Token - £200
11. Foyle Foundation - £4000
12. Sir James and Lady Scott Trust - £1500
13. Sowing the Seed (St Lukes) - £500
14. Bolton CVS Health and Wellbeing - £3991
15. One Small Thing (Ambition for Ageing) - £500
16. Bolton CVS Festive Fund - £200

## ● Our future plans

**Community Consultations:** As the world has changed since Covid, we needed to see what people wanted from their community centre. We have now done a community consultation to see what we need to do going forward. We will work from this to provide activities, events and also speak with our Council to see how they can help with issues in our area.





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**Business Plan:** Following the consultation and area mapping exercise we have started to write our business plan and we will work with this over the next 3 years.

**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.

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