

Our Manchester
**Voluntary and
Community
Sector Grants**
2018–2023 Impact Report



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Foreword

“Manchester’s voluntary and community sector contributes enormously to the city of Manchester and the wellbeing of all our communities. Investing in the sector helps to connect people and bring communities closer together, and also supports a sense of pride and belonging.

Manchester’s Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise sector does an incredible job, and I am delighted to reflect on the work that the Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme funding has achieved to continue supporting our residents from a diverse range of communities.

The OMVCS programme has the ambitions and spirit of Manchester at its heart and support all aspects of the Our Manchester Strategy. It’s the people who volunteer and work in the VCSE sector, and the people they work with in turn, that make this such a rewarding and inspiring programme.

The 2018–2023 programme boasts a lot to celebrate, but what makes it more incredible is that this was achieved in the face of considerable adversity, such as the devastation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns. The pandemic exacerbated

many existing health and social inequalities in our communities. The work being progressed through Making Manchester Fairer, and the new OMVCS programme for 2023–2026 will address this whilst building resilience within the VCSE sector.

I’m thrilled to see the examples of memorable achievements and contributions from some of the funded groups in this report. They demonstrate the differences that VCSE organisations have made with the Council’s support, and it’s something I’m extremely proud to be part of.”



Deputy Leader,
Councillor Joanna Midgley,
Executive Member for the
Voluntary and Community Sector



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Our Story

Manchester City Council is committed to supporting the city’s Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) sector in creating resilient and vibrant communities and ensuring residents can access what Manchester has to offer.

The VCSE sector plays a crucial role in making a difference to people’s lives by improving skills and job prospects, encouraging residents to get involved in their neighbourhoods, building local partnerships, and celebrating the city’s diversity.

In recognition of this, the Our Manchester Voluntary Community Sector (OMVCS) Grants Programme was launched in 2018, helping the city to achieve the ambitions set out in the Our Manchester Strategy 2016-2025. Developed through an innovative co-design process, multiple Council grants were integrated into one, the burdens associated with bidding and reporting were reduced, and the funding lifecycle was extended to three years. These changes have helped organisations to plan for the medium term so they can

best deliver their ambitions and support Manchester residents.

An original investment of £7.4million over three years (£2.4million per annum) supported 63 organisations to continue to maintain their existing track record of working with Manchester residents.

To deliver on the ambitions of the OMVCS programme, the organisations met at least one of the following objectives:

- A strong sense of citizenship and pride in the city
- Collectively improve health and wellbeing
- Support the positive contribution older people make to city life and their communities
- Continue to be recognised as a pioneering Age-Friendly City
- Increase volunteering across the city
- Support carers to carry out the invaluable work they do
- Improve the resilience of individuals and communities.

Owing to the pandemic, the programme was extended by two years, increasing the Council’s investment to £12million. Over five years, this resulted in Manchester residents accessing the funded services over 827,000 times through a wide variety of activities, including information and guidance, advice, peer mentoring, befriending, networks, volunteering, and much more.

To support the amazing work of these organisations, a dedicated Our Manchester Funds team was established, providing a link to the Council and, importantly, a place to get support and encouragement when groups have needed it most. The team has worked to build a relationship based on communication, trust and flexibility, having an open-door policy to resolve challenges together and help organisations reach their goals. This was especially true during the pandemic, when the team adjusted monitoring arrangements and enabled funding to be used flexibly so that the sector could focus on providing support for residents in a responsive way.

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Our Story

This report celebrates five years of the OMVCS programme, bringing statistics to life by highlighting stories of the differences being made to people’s lives, thanks to the fund supporting the work of VCSE organisations in the city. Included within are several case studies that show the types of outcomes achieved by the OMVCS programme, and quotes directly from residents about their experiences. You’ll also read about the other work the Our Manchester Funds Team has done over the past five years, and what’s on the horizon for the fund in future.

The team wants to thank all the 63 organisations on the first-ever OMVCS programme. This report highlights just some of the stories and organisations on the programme, but every single one of them has made an enormous impact on residents. If you’d like to find out more about the organisations on OMVCS 2018–2023, [visit the information in the appendix.](#)



The Our Manchester Funds Team in action.

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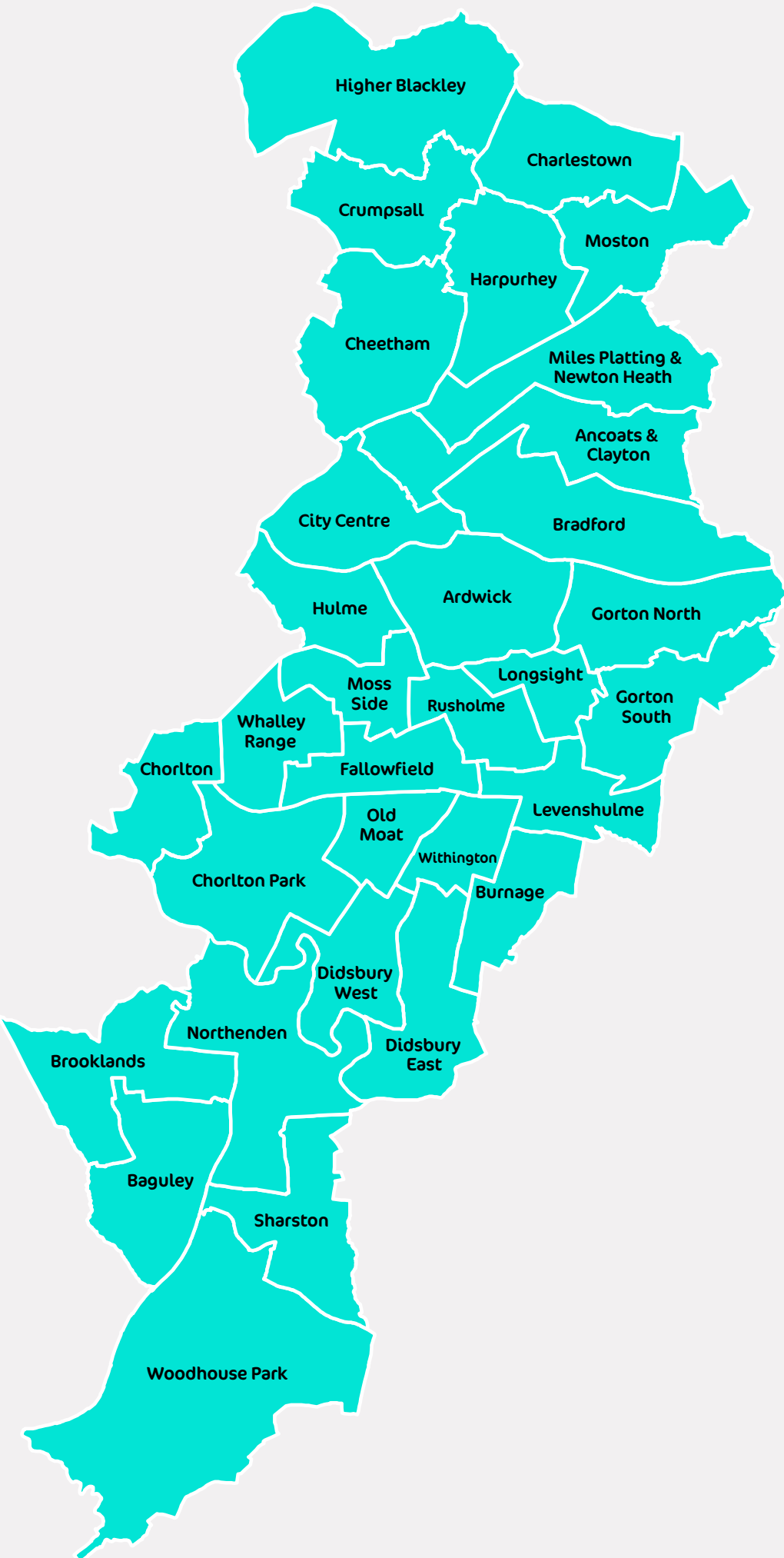
Our Programme

The organisations across the city funded by our programme support different Manchester communities, which include:

- Older people
- LGBT
- Communities experiencing racial inequalities
- People with disabilities
- Carers
- Homeless people.

Our 63 organisations are based across the city, with many operating citywide services.

For more information on the services offered by all the organisations on the programme, [please see the appendix.](#)



“I had nowhere to go and **Coffee4Craig** helped me when I really needed them; they got me a taxi a few times and got me into a place. Without them, I would still have been on the streets, and the last time I slept rough I was sexually assaulted. The police never found the man who did it, but Coffee4Craig got me to the hospital for help. I owe them my life really.”

Homeless Person, Manchester

“I never knew angels existed, until I met the staff at **Saheli.**”

Resident, Manchester



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Our Statistics

April 2018 – March 2023



from April 2018 – March 2023



amount of funding across 5 years



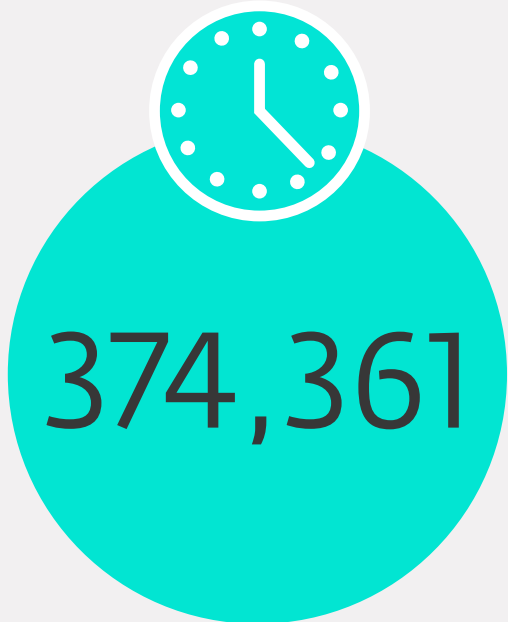
service users supported



VCSE organisations across the city working in a variety of communities



additional funding secured from a wide range of sources



volunteer hours = £4.3million*

*economic impact using Real Living Wage at £10/hour



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A Thriving and Sustainable City

We will maintain Manchester’s vibrancy and ensure that all our communities are included in the life of the city, regardless of their age, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, faith or socioeconomic background.

All FM

Manchester has a vibrant and diverse community to be celebrated. Our people are our assets, and our programme provides stability for community groups to support that; it also provides opportunities for local people to reach their potential and more. This story not only shows Simone’s progression, but also community organisations working together with the same aims.



Simone’s story

Simone came to us via our women’s training programme. She had been nursing her husband, who had recently died, and was bringing up their son, who had special education needs. Her family and her husband’s family both believed that she should now dedicate her time to solely bring up the child, find a new husband and not get a job.

She came to us via a referral from Women’s Voices, a community organisation based in Longsight. With great courage and despite her lack of confidence, she participated and was tasked with preparing a live show. This presented another hurdle: what if someone who knew her was listening? She decided to present using a different name and, after presenting her segment live, was elated. She had achieved something she never thought possible, as she didn’t think she was talented enough, and thought her family would object because she had a son to look after.

We then offered her a regular show slot that she could work around. With our support she broadcast her first live one-hour show on ALL FM, and was extremely proud of herself.

“This is the first thing I can really say was all my own work”

Simone continued to broadcast shows every week. Eventually, she asked if she could change her show, as she wanted to do one for her community – not in English, but in her native language. Her show features guests talking about issues in their community, issues for women, music, and community events. Simone now has a co-presenter, who she has taken under her wing to give the same kind of support and encouragement to that she was once given. She is unrecognisable from the person who first arrived here for training. In how she talks, how she smiles and her confidence behind the mic, she owns the studio. Simone now has a huge social media following and is involved in supporting community foodbanks and sending clothes, food and aid abroad.

[Learn more about All FM](#)



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A Highly Skilled City

We will continue to support all our residents to learn, progress, upskill and retrain so they can access the city’s current and future employment opportunities.

Manchester Deaf Centre

Adam’s story reflects how VCSE organisations in Manchester are vital in unlocking potential. Here we read about how Manchester Deaf Centre supported a service user to become a volunteer and then progress to be a paid employee.



Adam’s story

Adam was born fully deaf in one ear and partially deaf in the other. He grew up in a mainstream environment with no contact with other deaf people, relying predominantly on lip-reading to understand spoken language and experiencing communication barriers all his life.

Adam first contacted MDC for support while working in a job where he experienced discrimination that negatively affected his confidence and mental wellbeing. Staff provided him with employment and benefits advice, enabling him to leave his job and focus on his mental wellbeing. He joined the wellbeing group as a way of meeting other deaf people and trying new activities in a supportive environment.

Over time, Adam’s wellbeing improved and he developed BSL language skills, which led to staff suggesting he should become a group volunteer as a stepping stone to returning to paid employment.

“Compared to a year ago, Adam is completely different – it’s been a transformation. He’s become more confident

and self-assured, interacting with both deaf and hearing people. Since volunteering with the wellbeing group, Adam has proved himself to be a brilliant deaf role model for other group members; he also has a great empathy and understanding for other service users. In January 2022, an opportunity arose to join MDC’s paid staff team, and we were delighted to be able to offer this role to Adam.”

“Manchester Deaf Centre has been an absolute lifesaver for me. I didn’t fully understand the importance of becoming involved with the deaf community. They’ve improved my confidence, my feelings of self-worth, and have given me a sense of identity.”

[Learn more about Manchester Deaf Centre](#)



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A Progressive and Equitable City

We will strive to create a truly equal and inclusive city where everyone can thrive at all stages of their life, and quickly and easily reach support to get back on track when needed.

Back on Track

back on track >
changing lives through learning

This is a great example of how our funding has helped a person in crisis, providing guidance and support to turn their life around. Stories like this show how important the sector is in providing the commitment, tools and skills needed to make changes and succeed. They also show how the right support can build stepping stones and enhance progress for anyone with problems in their life.

Sarah’s story

“I live in Harpurhey in Manchester. I’ve had years of struggle with my mental health, which was tied up with my use of alcohol and cannabis. I was in and out of hospital. The picture was always the same: I would be admitted, I would feel a bit better, I’d be discharged, and then I’d go back to the drink and the whole cycle would start again. I was making loads of 999 calls to the police too, usually when I was drunk. Somehow, having the police around always made me feel safe, and all the police who came to my home knew me by name.

I was told many times that I had to stop drinking before I could get help with my mental health, but also that my mental health had to be better before I could stop drinking. This cycle went on for years and at my worst I would drink all day. It came to a head when I was arrested for wasting police time. I knew I had to stop drinking or I would end up in prison. I was spending my days locked up in my flat, not really washing, eating, or taking care of myself.

I had been to Back on Track before, but I never stuck to it properly. In March 2022, I joined four courses and was

getting support that gave me a reason to get up in the mornings. I wasn’t drinking, so it started to break the spiral.

The courses at Back on Track have been really useful, and I have been improving my maths and English – I didn’t finish school and always wanted to improve my reading and writing. I enjoyed feeling that I belonged somewhere and was around other people.

My mental health has improved massively. I haven’t made any 999 calls, and I haven’t had any alcohol for six months now. I have rebuilt my relationship with my son, and we have just welcomed a new grandchild into the world. I am already a part of his life, and this is my motivation to keep moving forward.

I went to the end-of-term event at Back on Track in July and was awarded a certificate for ‘Outstanding Personal Progress’, which was a surprise! I usually just wear jogging bottoms all the time, but I decided I was going to get properly dressed for the event, so I bought a summer dress and did my hair. I felt good about myself.

[Learn more about Back on Track](#)



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A Liveable and Low-Carbon City

We will create sustainable, safe, resilient and cohesive neighbourhoods, with more affordable housing, good-quality green spaces, and accessible culture and sporting facilities.

Thanks to our funding, we are able to provide support networks and reduce isolation for residents across the city, making neighbourhoods permanently safe and connected. Louise’s story shows the importance of a liveable city and the lifelines our programme supports.

Louise’s story

Louise is a 90-year Chorlton resident living in her own flat in a managed complex. She is Black British and has been a member of Chorlton Good Neighbours (CGN) since 2010, when the scheme manager referred her for some support. Although Louise has rheumatoid arthritis of the spine, and diabetes, she is still sharp, forthright, and has a dry sense of humour. She loves to be out and about and can’t bear sitting indoors all day long.

Louise doesn’t have any family, so she relies on CGN for her social outlet, accessing activities that keep her physically fit. She attends two exercise classes during the week and says that they keep her going. Louise goes out on day trips and attends the monthly Sunday teas. Louise says: “These activities get me out; it’s great to get people together and have fun. I would be stuck indoors otherwise and would not be motivated to go out.”

For the past ten years Louise has also benefited from a regular befriender, at first having a younger woman Joanna, who used to take her adopted daughter along to see her. They still keep in touch even though Joanna now lives in the Lake District. For the past 18 months, new volunteer Kay has been Louise’s befriender, making

a huge difference to her life: taking her to the cinema, to gardens, to shops to buy carpets and fancy trainers, and into Manchester City Centre to visit the Christmas Markets.

“Kay really looks after me; we go to places I have never been to before. She is like a fairy godmother. Thank you for giving her to me.”

Louise



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A Connected City

We will become a digitally inclusive city, with better digital infrastructure, access to digital technology, and strong digital skills.

Benchill Community Centre



A digitally inclusive city can't just rely on technology; it's also about guidance, knowledge-sharing and building confidence. Manchester is well placed to offer this in an approachable, non-judgmental and supportive way. This case study demonstrates how a community has benefited from a local person committing their time and effort to help others progress, and how crucial digital inclusion is to improve lives.

Marvin's story

Marvin initially came to Benchill Community Centre wanting to support his learning for his college course and to do any volunteering we could offer to boost his learning and confidence.

Through offering his time, Marvin has developed strong team-working and teaching skills to complement his course. He has supported and answered learners' questions, helping them to achieve their IT goals, while improving his own interpersonal skills. The Centre supported him in developing a teaching plan for learners, helping him to develop his teaching and communication skills. It has also improved his confidence and given him strong connections within the community.

Marvin assisted an 81-year-old with a new smartphone so he could communicate with his sister who lives in Italy. She had bought it for him when she came to visit, but he had never used one before. Marvin helped to get it ready for him and showed him how to use WhatsApp, messages, contacts, etc. After visiting the Centre a couple of times each week, he now uses it to reconnect

with his family. It has boosted his confidence in using new technology, and he now knows where to come for any support, and not just digital.

Marvin also helped a 92-year-old with his new iPad. He transferred his account from his old one and ensured his new one was working properly. At times he struggles to press the screen correctly because of his hand tremors, so Marvin is now exploring different software options to help him with this.

One client lost her partner recently and needed to scan and send items to the solicitors. Marvin helped her upload the items at an especially difficult time for her. She was extremely grateful, and said it was a 'huge weight off my mind'.

Learn more about Benchill Community Centre



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Our Volunteers

Through lending a hand and giving their time to help others, Manchester’s volunteers are pivotal to the work of the voluntary sector.

This section of the report highlights just some of the amazing work that Manchester’s volunteers have done. Since its inception, one of the programme’s priorities has been to continue to increase the city’s volunteers. We support organisations that provide opportunities for people from all backgrounds and areas of the community to volunteer and develop their skills.

Our funding has contributed to thousands of volunteering hours being delivered across the city to the value of £4.3million (economic impact using Real Living Wage at £10 an hour). However, what we have achieved and the impact on people’s lives is valued much more than its monetary value.

MoodSwings



Anne-Marie’s story

A great example of how a volunteering placement developed into an opportunity for a local resident to enhance their skills, knowledge and employability. A progressive and equitable city requires opportunities for residents to thrive at all stages of their life.

Support provided by Anne-Marie at Moodswings, as a result of the OMVCS funding, has given service users the support they need to get back on track with their lives.

Ann-Marie contacted Moodswings when she was looking at completing a counselling placement as part of her course. She began her counselling placement hours with them and began offering support remotely due to the restrictions of the pandemic. As time passed, Ann-Marie was able to offer in-person sessions from the Moodswings office in Manchester, and towards the end of her placement was able to join their student mentoring programme.

Anne-Marie recalls: “I started my counselling placement with Moodswings in January 2021, and during the following year and a half I realised what an amazing charity it is and how it helps such a diverse range of people with their mental health. The staff and

volunteers really care about the wellbeing of those who use the service and are always willing to go the extra mile for them.”

“When I qualified as a counsellor and learned about their Student Mentoring programme, I saw it as an opportunity to continue helping with the incredible services Moodswings offer and assist those who cannot afford to seek help privately.”

Ann-Marie Chinnery, Counsellor

“I just want to say thank you so much for organising the placement with Anne-Marie. She was amazing and helped so much. I’m in a lot calmer place at the moment and I’m very grateful.”

Service user feedback



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Our Volunteers



A recent photo of some of the volunteers that make Burnage Library's work possible.

Assist Neighbourhood Care

"I started by driving people in for the lunch club and used to take Christine and a couple of others. Turns out we'd been neighbours for 40 years! She looks after me as much as I look after her. She's just a remarkable person – warm, interesting and funny.

“At the groups you can see how much Assist means to people. They get to know each other; it brings the community closer together and it’s such a good feeling helping them out. I do odd jobs and push wheelchairs on trips. I’m with it for life now, as it’s so rewarding. It’s made me change the course of my life and I’ve moved into care work – with a reference from Assist.”

"It's made me change the course of my life and I've moved into care work – with a reference from Assist."

Volunteer

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Our Volunteers

Healthy Me Healthy Communities

“Emma was accessing more of our services from Gorton Central and joined as a volunteer in November 2021, both at Gorton Central and No93 Café. She shared her passion for growing, and her interest in vegetarian and cultural cooking, and also helped people to navigate community services. Although Emma had previous learning success and work experience, since having children, she had experienced low confidence and self-esteem.”

“The volunteering helped Emma to improve her confidence and think about the type of job she would be interested in for the future.”

Volunteer

Levenshulme Inspire Foundation

“Kristian is in his thirties and came to us at a difficult time in his life, when he was recovering from a brain tumour and a relationship breakdown. Sadly, he was living in a hostel awaiting rehousing. He started volunteering with us, packing the food bags at our centre.

“After six months, we were able to provide a reference for Kristian, stating he was a good citizen and a reliable volunteer with us. The reference helped him to get rehoused in his own flat.”

“During his time with us we saw Kristian’s confidence and social skills improve; he also made friends and got involved in our allotment group. Kristian repeatedly told us that the highlight of his week was packing the food bags.”

Volunteer

“The Exercise and Eat session at the Levenshulme Inspire Centre has been a lifesaver for me. Earlier this year I had a broken hip and was in hospital. Then my wife of 61 years got ill and died – in the same hospital. So I came out to an empty house. I keep looking at her chair and talking to her like normal. I felt very alone. However, coming here on a Tuesday gives me something to look forward to and breaks up the week. I have made friends too.”

Resident, Levenshulme



Group session, Levenshulme Inspire



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Our Ways of Working

To support VCSE organisations in the city, the Our Manchester Funds teams’ approach is being approachable, listening, and responding to feedback.

We haven’t been afraid to try new things and have aligned our processes with recommendations from the sector, such as adapting monitoring processes to ensure we’re only asking for relevant information, and increasing the amount of time that can be spent on direct service delivery.

We have also done our best to be approachable, providing a friendly ear to work out problems and solutions together. Don’t just take our word for it, hear from the groups we support:

MASH

Annie has had one meeting with Seb so far, which was very supportive and helpful. Annie really appreciated Seb taking the time to come out to the MASH centre and spend some time discussing successes, challenges

and future plans. Annie’s contact with the wider Central VCS Programme Management Team so far has been extremely helpful. There is a genuine willingness to help and support the VCS to make the best of the grant scheme and to have honest conversations about what is and isn’t working and to adjust projects and outcomes accordingly.

Assist Neighbourhood Care

Overall, the team are doing great. There is so much more involvement than before. The emails are all useful information with clear accessible language. Whenever we have needed anything we have received speedy responses to emails that treat us with respect and as equals

Cheetham Hill Advice Centre

Our Liaison Officer has been extremely helpful generally, but I would like to thank her for her support over the past quarter in particular.

We had an unexpected vacancy that could have led to a significant negative impact on the delivery of our services and also on our delivery of this grant. We were

able to contact our Liaison Officer directly and have a positive and constructive discussion on how to proceed. This led to a quick decision and the authorisation to temporarily redeploy an existing member of staff in the role. This meant we had the capacity to support our volunteers, as well as keep a member of staff in post while we were awaiting the outcome of an external funding decision.

The funding decision was positive, and after the quick response we were able to discuss the matter with someone who understands our service and the needs of the volunteers, the charity, and the people who use the service.

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Our Ways of Working

“As always, we appreciate the excellent communication we receive from the team.”

Nephra Good Neighbours

“Excellent support from the OMVCS team as always.”

Gaydio



St George's Community Association

“As always, the OMVCS team have been fantastic! Always supportive and helpful. In particular, it was a great help to us and all the VCS organisations on the programme to receive the news that the OMVCS grant was to be extended to cover 2021/22.”

Fallowfield Library

“We always feel that the OMVCS team listen to us and notice what we do.”

Trinity House



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“We are so very grateful that the team is so helpful and supportive. It is great to know that you have a clear understanding of how this funding really helps the LGBTQ+ community.”

LGBT Foundation

“Thanks again for your continued support during this tricky time for the sector, and this period of significant change for our organisation. Your patience is greatly appreciated.”

The Proud Trust

“Had some really helpful support with the planning for extending the funding for another year. Very warm and professional support and advice.”

George House Trust

“Thanks for your ongoing support, quick responses and for keeping us updated on the future funding situation, as well as other opportunities.”

Manchester Carers Forum



All FM

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Our Portfolio

As well as running the OMVCS programme, for the past five years our team has also supported the voluntary sector in a variety of other ways, including developing other grants, which are detailed here:

Our Manchester Development Fund

The Development Fund was set up in 2018 to fund the Our Manchester initiatives in future years, and to offer 16 unsuccessful previously funded Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups up to 12 months’ development funding. This was subject to each agreeing to deliver a development plan with support from the Council and Macc’s Capacity Building Team. The groups were funded between 2019 and 2023.

North Manchester Together

North Manchester Together is a group of public and voluntary sector partners all committed to supporting and strengthening the voluntary and community sector in north and parts of east Manchester. The group supports the sector through organisational development, funding and communications activities.

Population Targeted Funds

Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC) invested £2.165million into OMVCS for the delivery of two Population Health Targeted Funds. The funds were focused on delivery of some of the MHCC priorities set out in the Manchester Population Health Plan 2018–2027.

COVID-19-related funds

The team also supported the development of several funds during the COVID-19 pandemic, working with partners to support the sector to respond and to recover:

- **Covid Impact Fund**
This fund ran in 2021 as part of the response to the pandemic. The programme funded mental health and wellbeing activities, and was focused on supporting communities particularly affected by the pandemic.
- **COVID Health Equity Manchester (CHEM)**
This fund was made available in response to the disproportionate, adverse effects of COVID-19 on some of Manchester’s communities. Funding focused on engaging and working with specific groups and communities to respond to the wider consequences of COVID-19 and increase awareness and safety to limit the spread and impact of the pandemic. This group’s work continues, now

“The **Albert Kennedy Trust** has really helped me with my confidence; they helped me with the darkest bits of my life and showed me the way to go forward.”

Homeless Young Person

under the banner of Community Health Equity Manchester, and is connected to the work of the Our Manchester Funds team.

- **Covid Recovery Fund**
This fund was established in collaboration with Young Manchester, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning, and One Manchester, and is worth £1.4million. It funded capacity building-related projects to increase the long-term resilience of Manchester’s VCSE. The fund supported 26 partnerships, and funded projects such as training for a shared CRM system, and employing a network co-ordinator to support and grow the partnership.

OPeNS (Older People’s Neighbourhood Support) Fund

The primary aim of the OPeNS Fund was to increase the health and wellbeing of older people across Manchester using its resources of £1.065million.



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First Thousand Days of a Child’s Life Fund

The aim of this fund was to improve the health and wellbeing of children in their first 1,000 days of life (from conception to the age of 2), as this is crucial to their long-term health and wellbeing.

The Fund’s objectives were to support mothers, fathers and families to increase their use of voluntary and statutory-sector support services, so they could develop friendships, relationships and connections in their communities.

VCSE Infrastructure Contract

Supporting the OMVCS and additional grants we’ve been able to develop over the past 5 years is the VCSE Infrastructure service contract. Macc has delivered this service throughout the life of the OMVCS fund 2018–2023, with an offer that includes capacity building, volunteer coordination and influencing support, alongside the organisation’s wider work to promote a healthy and sustainable VCSE sector for Manchester.

Macc has worked closely with the programme team throughout the 5 years, from supporting the initial design and development of the OMVCS programme, to maintaining a collaborative working relationship with the team. This approach has enhanced the OMVCS fund, as well as each organisations’ wider programmes of activity.

If you’re a VCSE organisation that wants some support, you can access it at: Manchester Community Central www.manchestercommunitycentral.org

“Before I met **Freedom From Torture**, I went through so many difficult things. When I met FFT, there was a big helping hand from them every day – anything I want. I feel like helping someone is the only thing you can do for people, because as a human being, we just have to do that, as a human being. I want to be a radiologist, help the people who need help, and that’s the thing I can give to people in this country.”

Refugee\Asylum Seeker

“**Talbot House** have been supporting our family in every possible way they can. They have helped us filling out forms, sorting out mobility, communicating with social services, housing organisations, calling to check up, and even home visits to support us mentally and emotionally. They even arranged the moving van, and came on the day to show their support and help with the move.”

Resident, Manchester

“I can’t put it into words. **Wythenshawe Good Neighbours** have been a lifesaver for me. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Your Christmas gift was the only one I received.”

Resident, Wythenshawe

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“What has consistently stood out to me throughout my time with the team is just how innovative, collaborative and progressive the OMVCS programme is; it’s a good example of grant-giving. The fund’s great strength is that it recognises and responds to what already works well in Manchester’s VCSE sector, aiming to support VCSE organisations to continue what they excel at. It’s a dynamic and diverse space supporting thousands of Manchester residents in wide-ranging ways every week. Being able to support some of that work is, for us as a team, incredibly rewarding.

“We’re really proud of the relationship between the team and the organisations on the programme, along with our flexibility, adaptability and the Our Manchester approach in practice. It’s so gratifying to be able to work in a way that organisations clearly appreciate and find helpful. That’s one of the fundamental principles of the team, so I’m thrilled to see the positive feedback we’ve received. As a team, we’re committed to building on what’s worked well as we design our future funding programmes.

“The numbers within this report are hugely impressive; for example, the number of volunteers and the total hours they’ve put in, the additional income raised, how many people have been supported – it’s staggering, especially for just one fund among many others the

Council operates. The real richness for me, though, comes through the case studies. The depth of impact that Manchester’s VCSE organisations can have on an individual’s life is profound and should not be underestimated. As we look back at what’s been achieved for individuals and communities throughout this report, I can’t help but look to the future, and I’m excited to see what can be achieved through the 2023–26 round of the OMVCS fund.

“I want to give huge thanks to the Our Manchester Funds team, who have done such consistently incredible work on the OMVCS fund from its inception. Thank you to the officers at the Council and beyond, including the NHS and Macc, who have been involved in the co-design and running of the programme over the past few years. Thank you also to our councillors, who have supported our work, not least of course, Councillor Sue Murphy, who was instrumental in bringing this fund together before she passed. Most of all, though, I want to express my huge gratitude to the groups in the 2018–23 OMVCS programme for their tireless effort and energy, their flexibility, their kindness, and for making it such a special programme of work that we can all be proud of.”



Keiran Barnes,
VCSE Manager



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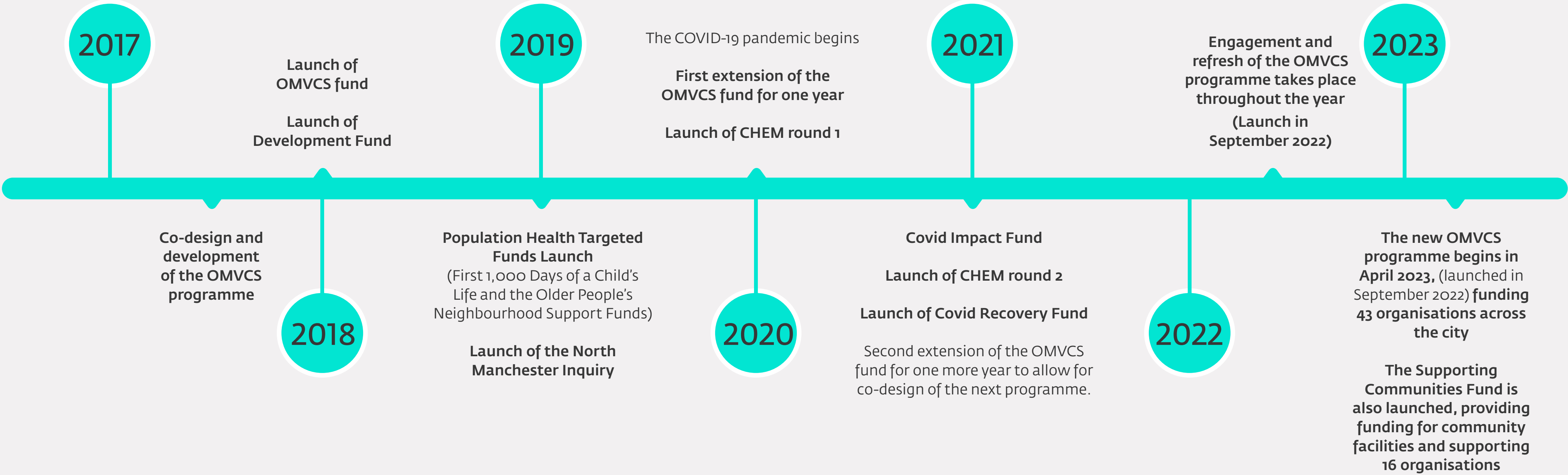


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- **4CT**
Supports people, neighbourhoods and communities through capacity building and development of services, partnerships and community facilities. Delivers services to improve opportunities and quality of life for residents with get-ready-to-work clubs. Works with community organisations and centres, and a variety of community-based services.
- **African Caribbean Care Group**
Provides high-quality, person-centred health and social care for the African Caribbean community. Its services include advocacy, arts and crafts, carer support, health promotion, lunch clubs, music therapy, and a nurse drop-in clinic.
- **African Caribbean Mental Health Services**
A community-based organisation providing free confidential and culturally appropriate services for African and African Caribbean people suffering from mental ill health. Services include assessment and management of care, counselling, CBT therapies, drop-ins, advocacy, and advice and support for individuals in their own homes.
- **Age UK Manchester**
Provides support for older adults at every stage of later life. This includes day care, home care, residential services, advice, social activities, opportunities to learn new skills (and to have their existing skills celebrated), and volunteering opportunities in local communities.
- **Albert Kennedy Trust**
Provides support and housing solutions for 16 to 25-year-old LGBT people who are homeless or living in a hostile environment. Includes advice services, workshops, partnership meetings with other organisations, and life-skills training.
- **All FM – All Arts and Media**
Uses arts, media and radio-production training to combat isolation and exclusion of vulnerable members of Manchester’s communities. They use radio-production training as a means to improve the soft, employability and IT skills of the long-term unemployed.
- **Alzheimer’s Society**
Provide direct support for people diagnosed with dementia and their carers, including peer support, and a singing-for-the-brain musical therapy session. They also build relationships with other organisations and communities, helping them become more dementia-friendly and helping shape service delivery.
- **Assist Neighbourhood Care**
Helps isolated and vulnerable older people in the Withington area by providing services to enable them to stay living in their homes for as long as possible. Promotes a thriving, supportive community by offering services such as befriending, driving, advocacy, and telephone support.
- **Back on Track**
Works with people who have had problems with alcohol, drugs, offending, homelessness and mental health. Helps them to create a community where everyone can learn skills to achieve self-determination, and live a happier, healthier and more fulfilling life. Support includes classes for English and maths, catering and hospitality, as well as short work tasters.
- **Barlow Moor Community Association**
Provides a community facility that is accessible and welcome for all. Activities include exercise classes, arts and crafts, holiday play schemes, and a community learning library. The Association also hosts a number of groups, such as yoga, a stroke café, credit union, faith groups, and meditation services.
- **Benchill Community Centre**
Brings together residents and community, voluntary and other organisations in the Northenden area to improve education, relieve poverty and promote healthy lifestyles and wellbeing. Services include welfare rights and benefit advice, support for new migrants/asylum seekers, ESOL classes, support for carers, healthy living initiatives, and computer courses.
- **Burnage Good Neighbours**
Supports and cares for older residents across the neighbourhood by providing a befriending and visiting service, emergency food shopping, transport to hospital appointments, wheelchair pushing, day trips, exercise classes, a luncheon club, and coffee mornings.
- **Burnage Library, Activity and Information Hub**
Friends of Burnage Library provides an inclusive space for local people of all ethnicities, faiths and ages. Facilities are available to access information, connect with and support one another, learn new skills, access Wi-Fi, and build skills through classes and clubs.



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- **Caritas Salford**

Works with vulnerable children and adults experiencing poverty, exclusion and anxiety. Also works closely with statutory health and social care services and community and voluntary agencies to provide a homeless drop-in service, refugee support, older-people services, a deaf service, community centre, and foodbank offer.

- **Cheetham Hill Advice Centre**

Provides appropriate legal advice and information, free face-to-face advice in social welfare law across the categories of welfare benefits, debt, housing and immigration. Also supports residents to enhance their life chances and increase their independence with foodbanks, ESOL classes, adult education, employment advice and support, and peer support groups.

- **Chorlton Good Neighbours**

Helps to create a neighbourhood where older people can be supported to have a meaningful, enjoyable and valued life through a range of activities. These include weekly exercise classes, coffee mornings, a singing group, a snooker afternoon for older men, a befriending service, and practical help to support appointments, such as transport or wheelchair assistance.

- **Coffee4Craig**

Helps those who are homeless by running a drop-in centre using the provision of food as a gateway to further support and transition towards housing and independence. Runs in partnership with a number of homelessness organisations/services, local councils, and Greater Manchester Police.

- **Connect Support**

A carer-focused organisation that provides families with the most appropriate and effective forms of support to help them care for a loved one with severe mental health problems. Includes a carer support service, support groups, volunteer schemes, and education and training.

- **Didsbury Good Neighbours**

Supports senior members of the community through a volunteer befriending service and a programme of weekly activities. Offers one-to-one befriending support, help with shopping and transport, and a range of group activities, such as coffee mornings, chair exercise classes, support with digital technology, and a lunch group.

- **EMERGE – FareShare Greater Manchester**

An environmental charity and social enterprise based in the heartlands of east Manchester that serves the wider community by ensuring that good surplus food can reach people struggling in Manchester.

- **Freedom From Torture**

The only specialist provider of therapy and practical support for torture survivors in the UK. Delivers a holistic, multidisciplinary service that integrates psychological therapy with social and welfare support, including psychological therapy, a women's yoga group, a football group, and legal support.

- **Gaydio**

A training, skills-development and broadcast organisation targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people across

Manchester. Creates positive change in the lives of LGBT people through utilising radio and media skills to operate the UK's only LGBT-targeted station, and by delivering a series of education, skills and confidence-building programmes.

- **George House Trust**

Providing various services for people living with HIV in the north west, to help them live happy and healthy lives and be free from stigma and discrimination. They include a project supporting older HIV positive people, a welfare fund for those who are unemployed or on a low income, and a community project supporting Black African HIV-positive men.

- **Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People**

An organisation 100% run and controlled by disabled people delivering projects that aim to promote the full participation and inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of mainstream community life. Provides training, workshops, information and advocacy, discussion forums, publications, and peer support.

- **Greater Manchester Rape Crisis**

Supporting women who have been affected by sexual violence at any time of their lives, listening to and believing survivors, aiming to raise awareness and being understanding of sexual violence. Provides a telephone helpline, a free face-to-face counselling service, a specialist counselling service for students, and a specialist service for South Asian women, including group work and counselling in a range of languages.



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- **Healthy Me Healthy Communities**

Enables people to improve their communities' life expectancy and quality of life by reducing health and life inequalities, opening community shops, volunteer training of community grocers, improving employability, and developing neighbourhood approaches to improve health and wellbeing.

- **Higher Blackley Community Organisation**

Providing the people of Blackley and the wider community with an accessible, affordable and usable community space. Working with local people and supporting the older and isolated members of the community by hosting a range of groups, such as arts, theatre and exercise.

- **Hopewell (formerly known as North Manchester Black Health Forum)**

Works with older people from Black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities to live independent, safe and fulfilled lives. Activities include a health and wellbeing group, a social drop-in, and peer mentoring.

- **Hulme Community Garden Centre**

A vibrant garden centre and a safe, accessible green space that sells ethically and sustainably sourced plants and environment-friendly home and garden products. Improves health and wellbeing by providing volunteering opportunities, nature-based activities, and a refuge for wildlife in the heart of the city.

- **Just Life Foundation**

Works with people who are close to the streets, supporting a person's experience of housing vulnerability to make it short, safe

and healthy through services such as welfare advice, healthcare co-ordination, rehousing support, as well as general health and wellbeing support.

- **Levenshulme Inspire**

Seeks to raise the aspirations of the individual and unlock the potential of the community, from the very youngest to the very oldest. Provides holistic services and opportunities to create a better future for the people of Levenshulme and South Gorton, including room hire, a community café, a volunteering programme, and target projects such as a work club and ESOL.

- **LGBT Foundation**

Delivering a wide range of services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities, such as counselling, sexual health testing, social and support groups, drug and alcohol support interventions, community safety initiatives, and befriending.

- **Manchester Action on Street Health**

Work for and with female sex workers to promote sexual health, wellbeing and personal safety, while offering choice, support and empowerment to promote individual positive life changes. They also work with others to tackle and address the root causes of the challenging issues faced by many of their service users.

- **Manchester Bangladeshi Women's Organisation**

Provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive community that is led and run by women for women. Includes services such as health and wellbeing sessions, support and signposting for disadvantaged women who are victims/survivors of domestic abuse or who have suffered mental ill health. Also provides expert cultural and bilingual support for women of Bangladeshi heritage.

- **Manchester Carers Centre**

Works to make Manchester a place where the role and contribution of unpaid carers is universally understood, valued and respected. Provides health and wellbeing activities, information and advice, community drop-ins, money matters and grant work, training, respite, and social opportunities.

- **Manchester Carers Forum**

An organisation led by unpaid carers for unpaid carers. They focus on reducing the isolation and inequality that many carers experience, empowering them through peer support to feel more confident and happier in their caring role.

- **Manchester Deaf Centre**

Ensures that deaf people are fully included in, and able to contribute to and access, Manchester communities and services with confidence. Offers an employment service that helps deaf people to find work, in addition to a wellbeing group, advocacy, and BSL and Deaf-awareness training.

- **Manchester Men's Room**

Supports young men aged 18–30 engaged in, or at risk of involvement in, sex work by providing a range of services, including street outreach, support and one-to-one casework, advocacy, an arts programme, and engagement online.



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- **Manchester Mind**

Supports people experiencing mental-health problems by promoting the health and wellbeing of people affected by mental distress. Takes a positive approach to mental health, challenging stereotypes and discrimination. Provides advice, community cafes, and peer mentoring, as well as free training for community groups and local organisations in mental health awareness.

- **Manchester Refugee Support Network**

Provides practical support in Manchester for those fleeing persecution, conflict, and various forms of injustice and abuse through a number of activities. These include improving access to services for refugees and asylum seekers, greater understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and establishing a greater voice for refugees and asylum seekers.

- **Manchester Settlement**

Serves the communities of north Manchester to alleviate current and future poverty through targeted activities and open access services. These include alternative education for young people at risk of exclusion, a wellbeing programme, volunteer-led adult education, careers advice, art workshops, and funding workshops for community groups.

- **Moodswings**

Provides free, ongoing support for people suffering from emotional distress, through one-to-one support and training, life-skills classes, singing-for-confidence groups, IT classes, and other services aimed at supporting people to progress towards their recovery goals.

- **Nephra Good Neighbours**

Improves the lives of residents by offering opportunities for volunteering, social interaction and recreation through a range of services: a befriending service, iPad classes, brain-training/coffee mornings, and get-with-IT sessions.

- **Northmoor Community Association**

Set up by local people in 2000 to provide inclusive user-led services falling outside statutory provision. The Association is a safe, welcoming space that helps to relieve poverty and promote health and wellbeing. It provides vital skills and learning opportunities for local and vulnerable people to build resilience and meet their needs.

- **People First Housing**

Community-based and tenant-led, and formed by the residents of Hulme to give them a voice in the decision-making process affecting their housing. Delivers a wide range of community-support services, including a reablement support service for people being discharged from hospital, a befriending service, guided walks, visits to museums, and arts and crafts sessions.

- **Rainbow Haven**

Provides a place of welcome, support and opportunity for refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants. Offers expert advice, communal activities, a volunteering programme, and varied training courses that lead to people gaining improved wellbeing, life skills and confidence.

- **Saheli**

Gives Asian women a chance to get away from violent domestic abuse situations by providing a safe, culturally familiar environment that helps them decide their next steps through one-to-one support, group activities, telephone advice and support. Also delivers training to organisations and schools, and a social enterprise providing opportunities to pursue a career in teaching.

- **St George's Community Association**

A thriving community centre in which a variety of educational, social, leisure and recreational activities take place. Meeting the needs of all ages and abilities in the local community, the activities aim to increase volunteering across the city by providing residents with an opportunity to develop skills in the centre.

- **Stroke Association**

An association with the aim of preventing strokes and achieving life after stroke through research, information-sharing and awareness-raising. Its key services include a stroke-recovery service, community activities such as cafes and long-term support, and POPPS (partnership for older people projects), plus courses that deliver health-promotion information and supported exercise.

- **Talbot House Support Centre**

Aims to improve the quality of life for parent-carers of people with learning disabilities. Enables parent-carers to receive respite and support in a safe environment where they can identify with and support one another. Facilities include telephone support, access to carer training, education services, pamper services, carers lunches, and legal advice.



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- **The Place at Platt Lane**

Library and community resource managed by local people, providing a range of opportunities, such as work clubs, arts and crafts sessions, and financial support sessions. Also hosts councillor/MP surgeries, a credit union, and Talk English ESOL classes.

- **The Proud Trust**

Supports lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people to help people help themselves and one another, through group work, one-to-one support, volunteering, a community café, training, research, events, social action, and supporting structured networks for sharing and learning across organisations.

- **TLC St Luke's**

The centre offers a holistic range of interrelated services addressing mental health and wellbeing with a range of services, including an art project, advocacy, guidance and advice. The art project aims to build participants' sense of self-worth, improve the lives of people experiencing mental health issues, and develop skills and opportunities.

- **Together Dementia**

Improves and supports the quality of life for people affected by dementia, by providing high-quality activity groups and support for carers, such as a walk-and-talk group, a carers drop-in, a creativity club, and a gospel choir club.

- **Tree of Life Centre Wythenshawe**

Centre for health and wellbeing, responding to the needs of the community. Helps to build resilience and independence, and minimises social isolation by providing a number of services:

an IT learning centre, a job club, health and wellbeing classes, a community café, a foodbank, and a supported volunteering programme that helps to build skills and experience.

- **Trinity House Community Resource Centre**

A safe and accessible centre providing education, training, personal development and recreational services for the benefit of the community, through youth and after-school clubs, adult training, services for older people, and fitness classes.

- **Turkey Lane and Monsall Neighbourhood Centre**

A community centre offering local residents relevant and accessible activities that improve their health and wellbeing, and encourage active participation in the local community. Activities include youth clubs, a women's activity group, advice sessions, computer drop-ins, drama groups, and healthy-eating workshops.

- **Venture Arts**

Works with learning-disabled people, supporting them to play a valued role in Manchester's vibrant culture. Activities include an arts club, a cultural enrichment programme, and a programme that sees learning-disabled adults pass their art skills on through becoming learning mentors in Manchester skills.

- **Wai Yin**

One of the largest Chinese community centres in the UK, Wai Yin provides a range of services for Chinese men and women and other ethnic minority groups. Services include information and guidance, mental-health support, education, training and employment services, cancer support, and an elderly carers project.

- **Whalley Range Community Forum**

Supports and works with residents to create a stronger community and reduce isolation by providing a wide range of activities, including Talk English beginners, t'ai chi, afternoon tea for older residents, keep fit for women, and computer classes. The Forum also supports new local groups to establish themselves, helping them to develop a track record so they are able to apply for funding in their own right.

- **Whitemoss Club for Young People**

Provides an inclusive, vibrant and inviting social space for the people of Blackley, helping to raise their aspirations through its services. These include youth and play opportunities for local children, after-school clubs, holiday provision for young people, a work club, a lunch club for the elderly, and the north Manchester age-friendly group, Nomads.

- **Women MATTA – Women in Prison**

A women's centre for women providing practical and emotional support, advocacy and advice for women at all stages of the criminal justice system: point of arrest, serving community orders, and leaving prison in both one-to-one and group settings. Also works with the Probation Service and GMP to deliver the region's 'whole system approach' for women in the criminal justice system.

- **Wythenshawe Good Neighbours**

Provides social and creative opportunities for citizens aged 50+ to engage with their community. This could be as a service user, a volunteer, a collaborator, or by simply helping to live a more independent life through signposting, befriending, community lunches and trips out, advocacy and provision of advice and guidance, and social, cultural and economic opportunities.

