



Celebrating the Now and Planning for the Future

Inspiring Communities Together

Annual Report

April 23 - March 24

Our Vision

A place where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and participate in making a positive difference to their neighbourhood.

Mission

We will achieve positive outcomes for local people based on the knowledge understanding and information that the community have about their area, through empowering individuals and groups to release their potential to develop their own solutions.

Values

- We will be accountable to and representative of the local community.
- We will be innovative and provide value for money in our approach to deliver of everything we do.
- We will value all volunteers, staff and members of the organisation.

Charitable objectives of Inspiring Communities Together

- To develop the capacity and skills of those who are socially and economically disadvantaged by working with individuals and groups who live or work within the neighbourhood of Charlestown, Lower Kersal, Seedley and Langworthy and neighbouring districts.
- To work with individuals and groups within these neighbourhoods to help them to make a difference locally.



CREATING BETTER
PLACES TO LIVE



STRENGTHENING
LOCAL VOICES



IMPROVING
PEOPLES LIVES

Measuring out impact

As a neighbourhood-based Charity we recognise the importance of understanding and acting on the voice of those we work for and with. We have now established a model which takes a lifecycle approach to ensure that people age well throughout their lives:

- **Supporting the younger members of the neighbourhoods we work in to have the best start in life**
- **Providing opportunities for people of all ages to develop and grow and ensure that they are equipped to improve and enjoy their own neighbourhoods.**
- **Continuing to lead on the delivery of Age Friendly Salford ensuring older people have a voice and can stay healthy and wellbeing within their own neighbourhoods.**

Message from the chair

Once again I have had the privilege of representing Inspiring Communities Together in the role of Chair for another year, I thank my fellow Trustees for their continued support in enabling me to fulfil this role.

Inspiring Communities Together has come a long way from the humble beginnings in 2011 as the successor vehicle for the New Deal for Communities programme – employing just a part time Co-ordinator working with the then Chair Ann-Marie Pickup MBE. Established as a Charity in 2014 we now employ an average of 18 members of staff at any one time, many from the local communities we work in across Salford.

As I reported last year the Board spent time reviewing and developing our model of working during 2022/23 and we now have a strong delivery programme of work framed against a long term Strategic Plan.

This year we have invested time and resources in both forward planning and raising our profile. In July we appointed our Marketing and Communications Manager, a post we started to develop in 2022. This has enabled us to explore different approaches to how we communicate with a wider audience. Please check out our new Yogurt Pots Nursery and Inspiring Housing web sites. These websites along with the Age Friendly Salford website bring together the different elements of our work. Look out for the launch of our new Inspiring Communities Together web site which will bring together all our work under one website. This will make it easier for people to search for information both on individual programmes of work and our collective Charity model.

Along with the Annuity we have been successful in securing funding to enable us to deliver programmes of work in the short to medium term however it is important that as a Board we start to focus on long term forward planning. The board have therefore identified three Strategic Priorities to work on over the next four years:

- **Delivery - Improve our impact through good-quality, high impact delivery**
- **Resources - Strengthen business practise to support high performance**
- **Accountability - Ensure we are meeting our governance requirements**

Every couple of years we carry out a staff survey recognising that it is important to listen to and work with our staff to ensure we can support their wellbeing alongside those of the variety of participants we work with. I am pleased to report that once again staff report Inspiring Communities Together as a good place to work. There were areas highlighted that we can improve on and we are now working with staff to ensure we address these.

After over twenty years of working in childcare in Lower Kersal our Childcare Manager left us to take up a new opportunity in a different part of Salford. We all wish her well in her new role! As is our approach we used this staff change to reflect on our children and families model and have created a new role of Room Leader to support our Early years provision. We are delighted that a current member of staff Janine has taken up this opportunity.

We welcomed a further two new members of staff, Rosie to fill the role of Development Worker for our environment work as part of our People and Place programme and Tori to support the co-ordination of our Age Friendly Salford programme.

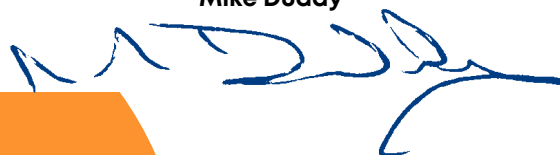
We recognise like many organisations recruitment can be a challenge and have therefore outsourced much of our core back office provision. This enables us to focus our energy on delivery whilst ensure good quality back office support as and when required.

As we come to the end of our 2023-2024 programme of delivery we have much to celebrate but also reflect on we need to forward plan if we are to maintain our Charity and the work we delivery for the communities of Salford.

Please take some time to read about the work we have delivered on the past year, check out our website or link with us through social media – we would love to hear from you.

Finally I would like to offer my thanks to all our funders, partners and Trustees who without their support the staff team would not be able to achieve the positive outcomes we share with you in this report.

Yours faithfully
Mike Duddy



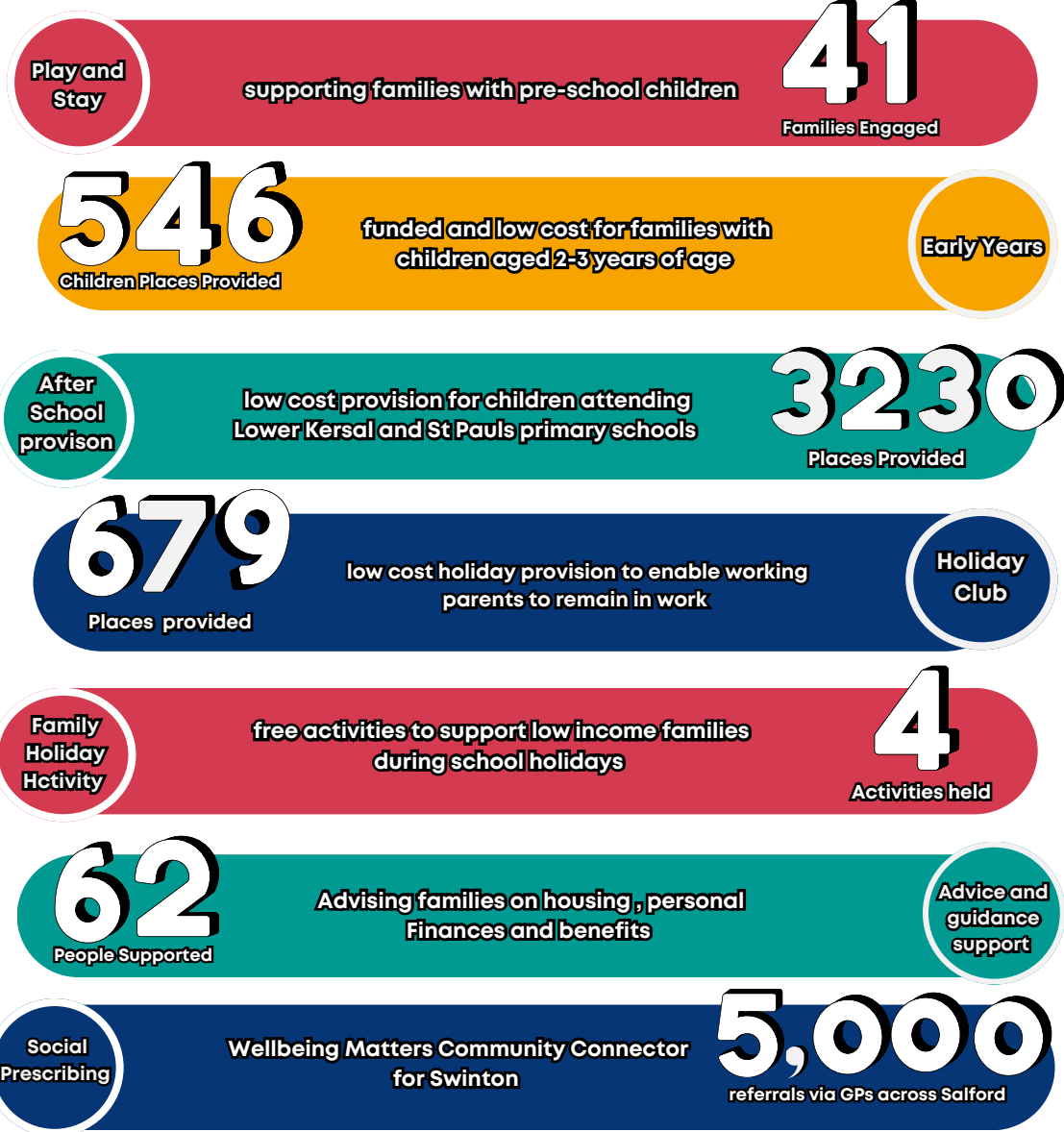
Children & Families

Providing excellent quality child care provision in CHALK

We will work to ensure all children in Charlestown and Lower Kersal have access to the best possible start in life, with support to meet their developmental and educational milestones and become confident and capable learners ready to start school.

We recognise that for many of our families, everyday life can be a struggle. We want our parents/carers to feel able to seek information, advice and guidance from us to support them to help meet their child's needs and aspirations as they grow and develop.

Over the past few years we have continued to develop our model of working which is based in our core delivery area of Charlestown and Lower Kersal and now provide support for both families and children.



"Thank you very much for supporting me at a time when I felt isolated and helpless"

- Play and Stay participant

"Money is a bit tight at the moment so free provision has really helped. Having the option of free snack and lunch has been a big help. I felt happy sending my child as they have previously attended the setting and I have been able to work during half term. It has helped my child to socialise with other children"

- Holiday club Parent

"Thank you for all your hard work, I know my child is safe with you and she is doing really well. She is more confident and her English has improved so much"

- Early Years Parent

It's been a great morning, doing activities which have brought back old memories, things which I can do at home. My boys and myself have loved it and had so much fun!"

-Family Activity Participant

Advice and Guidance

We continue to invest in our own advice and guidance worker, who works across all our programmes and therefore is shared with our Ageing Well and Social Prescribing worker who can refer people into the support ensuring quick access to advice and guidance. Alongside this support the majority of our staff have also completed Level 2 advice and guidance qualifications.

Our advice and guidance worker has this year provided the following types of support

:

- **Benefits related**
- **Housing**
- **Volunteering**
- **Debit advice**

CC was struggling financially and with her health. She was not entitled to Pension Credit as her husband receives a small personal pension. Due her own ill health she struggled with everyday activities and her daughter visited a couple of times a week (she works full time and lives over an hour away) to help with tasks such as shopping and housework.

CC contacted us and after an initial conversation with our advice worker CC was advised to request an Attendance Allowance form and to keep a diary about how her health. We helped CC complete the form. Two months later CC was awarded Attendance Allowance at the lower rate of £68.10 weekly as well as a backdated payment of over £500.

The Attendance Allowance meant that CC now employs a cleaner once a fortnight and can afford to take taxis to her appointments. She can now spend quality time with her daughter rather than her daughter cleaning and running her to appointments.

CC said "I feel I am more active and can get out more. I've started to meet up with friends again who I'd lost touch with as before I was dependant on my daughter to run me around. I am more independent now."

CC contacted us again following a short stay in hospital, saying that she didn't feel safe at home when using the bath. We encouraged her to contact Age UK Salford and as a result she has had an occupational health assessment and has had grab rails fitted in the bathroom.



Wellbeing Matters Social Prescribing:

We continue to deliver the Wellbeing Matters Social Prescribing programme along with our other Voluntary Sector partners. During 2023-24 the partnership supported over 5,000 referrals via GPs across Salford.

"Guy has helped me gain my confidence back which means I am now leaving the house on a regular basis, it is still difficult at times but I can cope with this much better than before."

People and Place

People	Place
<p>Placements – Supporting people to develop their knowledge of the voluntary sector whilst gaining into work skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Learning – Learning for work/learning for life. Employability skills and confidence building.</p> <p>In work learning– Apprenticeship roles both introductory level (2) and next steps to enable staff development (level 3- 5).</p>	<p>Green Champions – the overarching programme delivered through a programme of neighbourhood activities and monthly group meet ups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green and Grow – Intergenerational activity which takes place at Sports Village, Kersal bringing together community members with children from Yogurt Pots • Grow to Learn – Opportunity to learn more about growing and putting what you learn into practise. Takes place in Cornerstone and Chimney Pot Park • Junior Green Champions – Programme of learning and activities to support children develop their knowledge and take ownership of their own natural environments. • Street based activity – Regular litter picks bringing together communities to improve the place they live or work

104 Environmental engagement activities delivered.

38 Green champions recruited.

240 Environmental volunteering hours recorded .

33 Grot spots reported and cleared .

374 Bags of litter collected and removed .

55 Programme co-created with primary school children attending our after school club at Yogurt Pots)

"Doing these sessions with Rosie reminds me of working on the allotment on Littleton Road with my daughter years ago when we won best in show for her rhubarb".

"I've really enjoyed myself today; it was so therapeutic. I can't wait to see everything come together with the vegetables growing and the sun shining. This yellow reminds me of the sun"



3 MMU social work student completed and passed their placement with us

6 Work based placements offered

5 Learning opportunities including Apprenticeships

1730
placement hours completed

Age Well: Age Friendly Salford

Salford is an Age Friendly City and is committed to supporting older people to stay healthy and well.

In January 2023 we started the delivery of the five year contract for Age Well, funded by Salford City Council and delivered in partnership with Age UK Salford and Salford CVS. Whilst we have been the delivery lead for this work for a number of years we were previously not the contract holder so this will be the first major contract that Inspiring Communities Together has secured and will lead on.

550 Older people engaged across Age Friendly activities

900 Hours completed by Volunteer Wellbeing Champions

300 People supported through training and workshops

5000 Visits to our bespoke Age Friendly Website

Check and Chat

For those individual who may be unable or are struggling to leave their home for what ever reason

Brew and Chat

For those who wish to spend time with other in an informal conversation exploring how to look after their own wellbeing

Walk and Talk

For those who wish to improve both their physical and mental wellbeing

Tech and Tea

5 week low level digital skills programme delivered in community buildings

Learn With Lunch

5 week learning programme aim at older people to help them with the knowledge to look after their own health and wellbeing at home



“Being involved in AFS activities has changed my life. I’ve met some fantastic people and feel part of my neighbourhood again.”

“AFS has given me back my confidence. I lost touch with people after my husband passed away, and now I’m in contact with people almost daily.”

Case Studies

Children and Families

J, a working parent, used to only send their children to the Yogurt Pots Holiday Club for one or two days at a time because of money concerns, even though the club was good value. The cost of childcare and relying on older grandparents added a lot of stress. But during the Easter holidays, the club offered a free scheme, allowing J's children to attend every day. This removed a big financial and personal burden, letting J and their spouse focus on work without worry. The children loved the club and came home happy each day. J was very grateful and said, "Thank you to Yogurt Pots for helping working families!"

People and Place

A has lived in the Langworthy area for the past six years having moved from Kent. He has been claiming Employment Support Allowance for 4 years for PTSD and depression and did not feel part of the community so wanted to look at doing some volunteering.

A was attending the Cornerstone as he uses the foodbank each week. This happened to be the same day as Inspiring Communities Together Advice and Guidance Worker was in the building offering support to people. A told our worker that he had been doing some volunteering at Tatton Café as he had previously worked in catering but this was not a regular volunteering role and he wanted something a bit more structured.

We discussed that registering with Salford CVS would be a good start and contacted one of the volunteer development workers for Age Friendly Salford to see about A registering as a wellbeing champion. Also discussed the environmental activity in Seedley and Langworthy delivered by Inspiring Communities Together. A is waiting for his references to come through for his volunteering as a wellbeing champion and then he is looking forward to starting some volunteering with the tech and tea project supporting older people to improve their digital skills.

A is now regularly volunteering with the grow to learn project. He goes above and beyond in order to be useful during these sessions including staying behind to de-weed the area near Langworthy Cornerstone and reporting any issues in Chimney Pot Park during the week when we not in the area. A has now joined Salford Rangers and has made a special request to adopt Chimney Pot Park to see if this opens up opportunity for more improvements. He has also joined Salford Heroes litter picking and goes out every day. He is now making new friends and feels part of the community.

Ageing Well

As S was an older person one of the workers spent time talking to her about Age Friendly Salford and the opportunities she might be interested in getting involved in.

S expressed an interest in Walk and Talk and attended the next session which was held at Clifton Country Park. S got chatting to others and said it was the first time in a long time she had done something for herself. She has gone on to join the Brew & Chat session in Swinton:

"I loved it, I haven't laughed that much for a long time." She is now a regular attendee and has started a Tech & Tea course to improve her digital skills, as she is keen to take on online banking.

S had created a life for herself focused around her family. When not helping her daughter she stayed in a lot and was not connecting with other people so feeling lonely and socially isolated.

S now has activities for herself and loves writing all the activities she is now involved in in her calendar. Her daughter has become far more independent and is able now to tackle things herself as she knows S has other commitments.

"I now have things written on my calendar that are just for me and my wellbeing."

Investing in our staff

We continue to support the wellbeing and personal development of our staff, recognising that the majority are also local residents of Salford. This year we carried out a staff survey. Feedback was very positive, however there were some areas which were highlighted.

What you said about working at Inspiring Communities Together



Good place to work



Work is exciting and rewarding



Opportunities to learn and grow



Good team work ethic

Things you said we could improve on

Office environment - make less clinical	Wellbeing - encourage more staff wellbeing activities	Team sharing - daily huddles
Away days - More than a years	Line Management - Open Conversations	Celebrations event - Review Current Model

As we do each year annual appraisals are carried out each year during October and outlined below is the collective feedback.

What helps staff	What we need to keep in mind as managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 weekly catch ups with line managers – 53%. • 6 weekly 1:1 meetings – 59%. • Wellbeing action plans (WAP) – 29%. • Peer support from colleagues – 100%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all staff were aware of the wellbeing resources – review and revise the induction pack for new starters. • Timetabled Office meetings were missed as a sharing opportunity.

Staff personal development

Working towards

- level 5 in leadership
- IAG level 2 (Information , Advice & Guidance)

Achieved

- Level 2 Childcare
- Level 3 Digital Marketing
- Level 3 Principles in Management and leadership
- Level 3 Adult education and training
- Common purpose

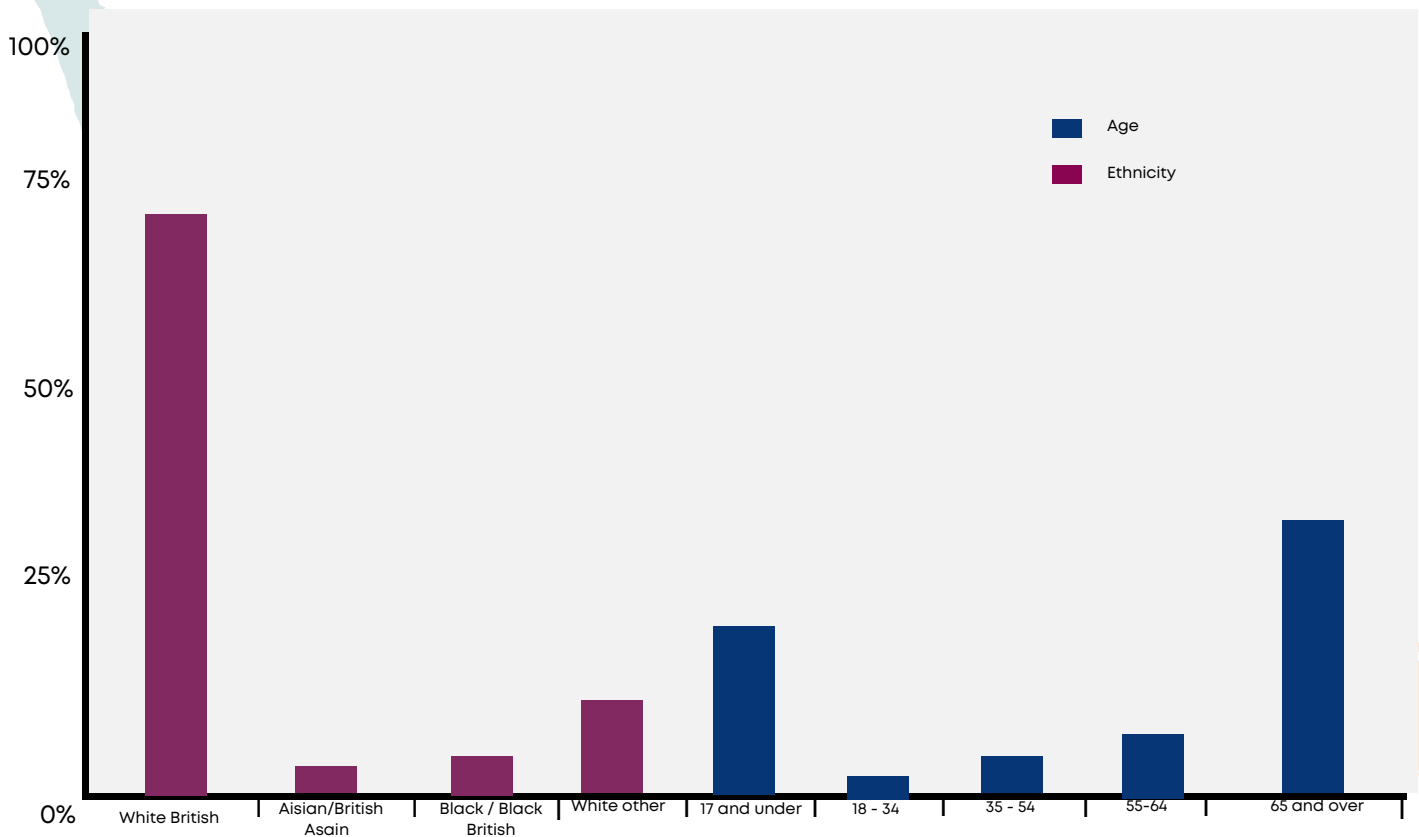
Who have we engaged with?

This year we have been able to deliver more community-based work meeting people in places that are important to them, while keeping our telephone and virtual delivery approach as well.

We had over 1226 engagements with local people either through Yogurt Pots, people attending events and activities via Zoom and in the community, or accessing support over the telephone. Our equality monitoring tells us:

Gender - 85% Female, 2% Male, 2% LGBT and 3% of respondents chose 'prefer not to say'

Disability - 7% told us they had a disability

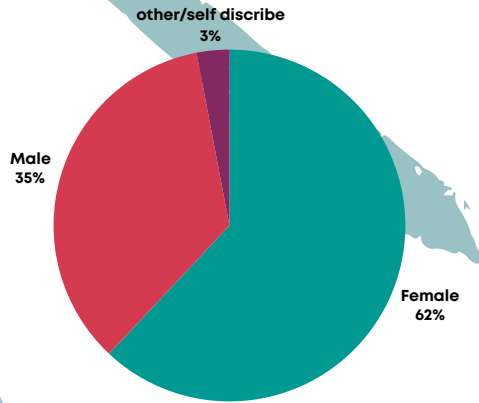


Annual neighbourhood consultation – 110 completed

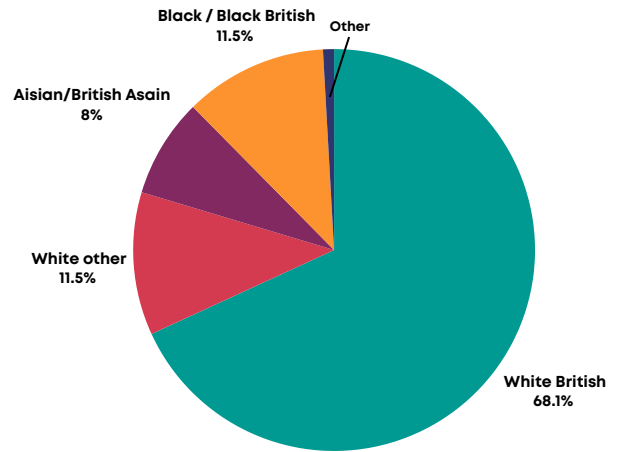
Each year during quarter three delivery we ask residents to complete a short neighbourhood questionnaire to help us gauge how the community is feeling about where they live. We have developed the questionnaire as an online form and distributed the link via social media and our local contacts during October – December 2023. The staff team encouraged people they were supporting to complete the forms, and the nursery staff encouraged parents and older children to complete forms.

Demographics - 75% of respondents live in Charlestown, Kersal, Seedley or Langworthy

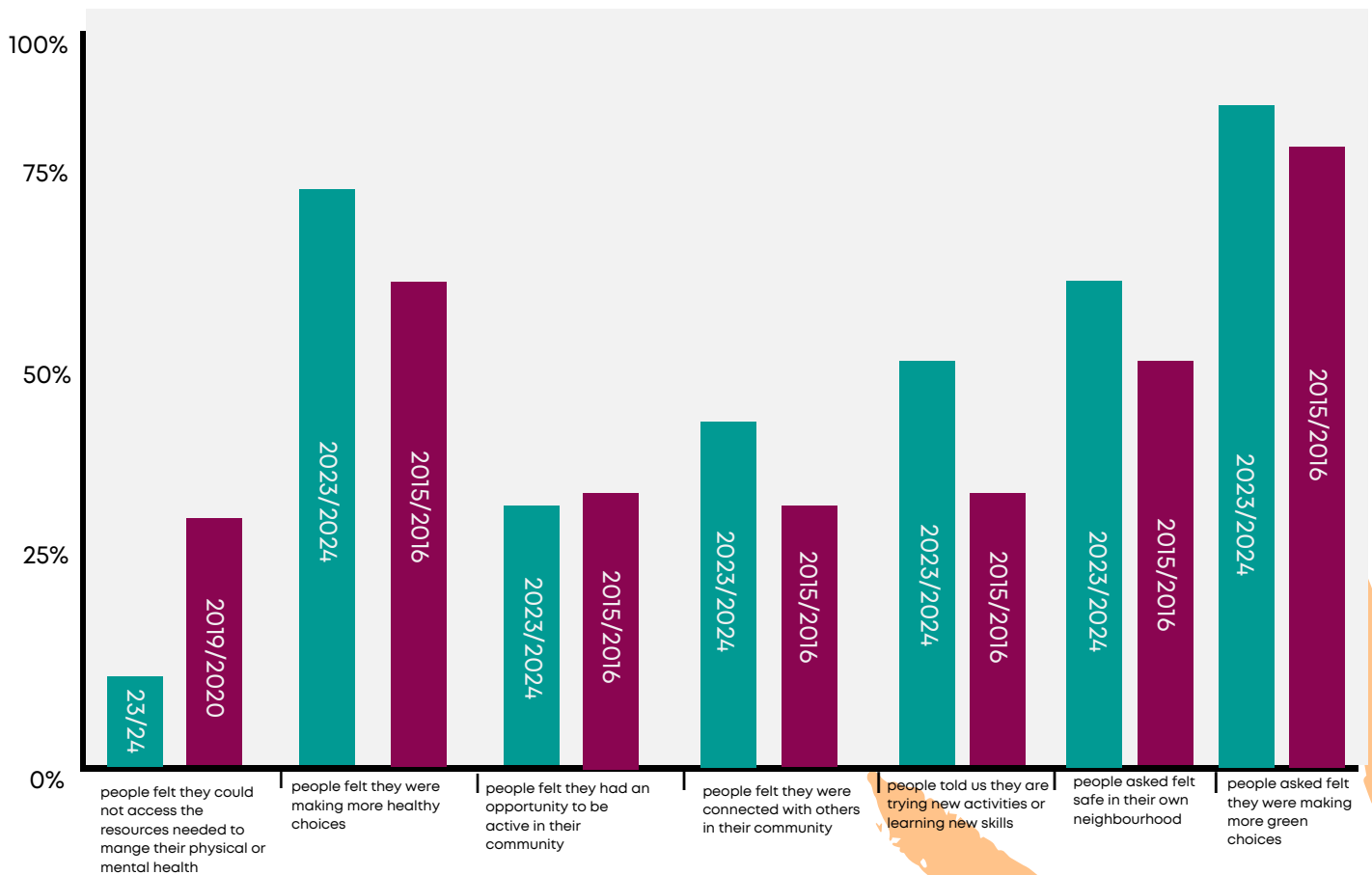
Gender



Ethnicity



Nearly all the areas show an increase in results with some at an all time high from when we started the consultation five years ago. The neighbourhood consultation told us that:



Whilst the data collection is not carried out to research standards and we do not ask the same people the same question each year the feedback does provide a valuable insight into how people feel about living in two neighbourhoods of Salford over a period of time.

What we have spent and earned

Income	
Unrestricted Income	£139,410
Restricted Income (Annuity £90,000)	£564,092
Total Income	£703,502
Expenditure	
Staff costs	£402,811
Project cost	£159,219
Organisational cost	£67,944
Governance	£5,986
Total expenditure	£635,960
Net operating income	£67,542

Alongside the annuity this year we secured fund from the following



Learning for life, learning for work grant

Salford City Council

Age Friendly Salford contract & Job Match grant



Ageing in Place Pathfinder grant



Research Ready Communities grant



who's art, who's culture grant & Healthy Holidays Grant



Research project



Social Prescribing Contract

Inspiring Housing Community Land Trust



Inspiring Communities Together is now the parent organisation for Inspiring Housing Community Land Trust which is governed independently with its own Board of Directors. There is however a recognition that the values and principles of both are aligned and where possible the services they delivery complement each other.

Our Visions	
Inspiring Housing CLT	Inspiring Communities Together
Providing housing to create a place where everyone feels they belong	A place where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and participate in making a positive difference to their neighbourhood.
Our Missions	
Inspiring Housing CLT	Inspiring Communities Together
Providing and managing housing (including social housing) and providing assistance to help house people and associated facilities,	We will achieve positive outcomes for local people based on the knowledge understanding and information that the community have about their area, through empowering individuals and groups to release their potential to develop their own solutions
Shared Values	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be accountable to and representative of the local community • We will be innovative and provide value for money in our approach to deliver of everything we do • We will value all volunteers, staff and members of the organisation 	

During this delivery period Inspiring Housing:

- Strengthen the Board of Directors
- Set of a website www.inspiringhousing.co.uk
- Agreed a three year Business Plan and Strategic Plan
- Continued to work with the Regulator to secure our Registered Social Landlord status
- Continued our work with Salford City Council and Salix Homes to develop new homes

What we have spent and earned

Income	
Unrestricted Income	£36,819
Repairs and maintenance	-£9,639
Organisational costs	-£1,942
Total operating Income	£4,986

Special thanks to

Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers

Board of Trustees during 2023 - 2024



Mike Duddy
Chair
February 2017 - present



Lynne Marsland
Vice Chair
February 2017 - present



Ruth Potts
Secretary
October 2016 - present



Ann-Marie Pickup MBE
October 2015 - present



Orina Hall
September 2020 - present



James Kariuki
May 2018 - Present

Staff during 2023 - 2024

Operational



Bernadette Elder
C.E.O



John Hoey
Marketing & Comms
Manager

Ageing Well (Age Friendly Salford)



Antonia Dunn
Age Friendly Programme
Manager



Tori Taylor
Programme Co-ordinator



Tonicha Wallace
Development Worker AFS



John Rutter
Development Worker AFS



Andrea Whelan
Development Worker
Older People

Children and Families



Carol Hyde
Child and Families
Programme Manager



Janine Wallace
Early Years Worker



Naomi Cassidy
Early Years Apprentice



Dawn Moore
Early Years Worker



Claire Clayton
Early Years Worker



Julie Kay
Advice and Guidance
Worker



Guy Thompson
Community Connector
Wellbeing Matters

People and Place



Joanne Inglis
Trainee Programme
Manager



Rosie Leonard
Development Worker



David Thomas
Development Worker

What we plan to do in 2024- 2025

As we come to the end of our 2023-2024 programme of delivery we have much to celebrate but also recognising that funding for the voluntary sector continues to be a challenge.

- **Some of our funding streams will end in 2024, whilst others we are still waiting to hear if they will be renewed.**
- **Whilst we are not a political organisation we have to be mindful that changes in both national and local government can have an impact on the work we deliver and the funding opportunities available. The Board are mindful of this and are ensuring that our core local offer is sustainable even if the wider programmes of work come to an end.**
- **Staff recruitment has become a major issue for us along with others our challenge at this time is the recruitment of more senior staff to fill management roles which our current staff are not ready to step into. We are however investing in our staff and continue to be innovative to support people remain in employment with us**
- **First steps into employment opportunities through our placement and apprenticeship model which supports those looking to come into work at the Entry level**
- **Maintaining our commitment to being a Living Wage employer despite the high increase in rate this year**
- **Offering all staff access to e learning both core and personal development courses alongside opportunities to expand their learning through a variety of courses (some funded some free)**
- **Providing a wraparound package of health and wellbeing support – building wellbeing into all staff 1-1 conversations.**

Due to the prudence of the board we hold good reserves and have the long term commitment from Salford City Council for the Annuity until 2047 (CHALK) , annual review for Seedley and Langworthy which all provides the funding needed to ensure our core offer can be delivered.

The next steps to long term sustainability is the development of our community led housing model, which in the years to come will provide the necessary funding to support Inspiring Communities Together charitable delivery.

Whilst 2047 may seem a long way away the Board feel they time is now right to start planning for the future and the first stage of this is the development of a Strategic Plan setting out the priorities for the next four years.

Strategic Priority	Area of Work
One	Improve our impact through good-quality, high impact delivery programme
Two	Strengthen business practise to support high performance
Three	Ensure the organisation is meeting our governance requirements

Strategic Pillars

- We will maintain and strengthen our core offer by building on our experience and expertise, proven best practices, and continuous learning.
- We will create a high-performance culture by delivering meaningful, measurable, and financially sustainable results for the individuals we work with.
- We will remain a key partner across the city through Leadership helping shape public services and policy in our field.
- We will maintain and where appropriate grow our partnership working with others whose values align with ours
- We will ensure excellent governance and be accountable to our wider stakeholders



Contact Details

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