



Netherton Feelgood Factory

Annual Report 2024-25



Charity Number - 1074508 / Company Limited by Guarantee - 3614799

TRUSTEES

Bill Penney (Chair)

Jim Flynn

Les James

George Loughlin

Helen Martin

Ursula Ingham

Linda Cluskey

Mark Buxton

Who's Who - 2024-25

STAFF

Sandra Duncan—Chief Executive

Hayley Beer—Business Manager

Malcolm Bannon—Healthy Living Services Manager

Carol Miles—Breastfeeding Support Sefton Co-ordinator

Kirsty McCormick—Breastfeeding Support Sefton Assistant

Jennie McGowan—Specialist Mental Health Mentor

Annabel Ritchie - Health and Wellbeing Mentor

Clare Browne—Specialist Community Mentor

Ann Anirah—Health and Wellbeing Mentor

Martin Brecknock—Project Co-ordinator, Netherton Community Garden

Eddie Murphy—Gardener

Toad Stevenson—Community Co-ordinator

Carol Robinson— Business Support Worker

Dawn Brown—Community Support Worker

A huge thanks too, to all of the volunteer members of the Feelgood team who make such a difference week by week!

Improving Lives, Promoting Health

Chairman's Introduction

Another successful year has passed and I am again pleased to convey my personal appreciation to all the Trustees for their sterling commitment to the Feelgood.

Once again my thanks go out on behalf of the Trustees for their dedication to all of the staff and Managers who again have gone far beyond so I thank you all.



The Trustees recognise the enormous contribution that all our volunteers make in the existence of the Feelgood and the time and effort that they freely give to our Community.

I would also like to thank all our Partner Organisations and all our sponsors.

Once again I am so proud to say we have supported our local community and will continue to do so in the coming year.

Again I thank you all.

Bill Penney
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Mental Wellbeing

The Feelgood Factory provides support for people in the community experiencing mental distress and ill health through two main routes. Our mental wellbeing support services incorporate groups targeting coping strategies and peer support together with individual support with mentors. In addition to that the Mental Health Drop-In provides a twice-weekly safe space for people with more severe and enduring issues. in the Feelgood Factory (Tuesday) and Linacre Mission (Friday).



“

Thank you for taking the time to listen to me without judgement, I feel very safe talking.
Compassion Corner

”

“

I love this class, I feel so relaxed and reset for the weekend
Mindful Movements

”

Promoting and protecting mental wellbeing is a vital part of building healthier communities. Many individuals in society today experience mild mental wellbeing problems such as stress, low mood, or anxiety. These challenges can affect daily functioning, relationships, and overall quality of life.

Supporting people with mild mental wellbeing problems requires a proactive and compassionate approach. By fostering resilience, encouraging healthy coping strategies, and reducing stigma, we empower individuals to manage their wellbeing more effectively.

Our general mental wellbeing programme expanded somewhat during the year. In addition to individual support sessions, workers ran groups teaching coping skills including Grow Your Confidence, Think Differently, Cope Differently, Building Healthy Relationships, Compassion Corner and Mindful Movements, a gentle stretching and guided meditation sessions for relaxation and stress reduction.

Two Namaste Netherton sessions were run in the Community Garden .

Outreach work was undertaken in the Maghull Advice Centre, where a member of staff was available once a week for bereavements and general mental wellbeing support.



Summary Overview

Attendances at Think Differently, Cope Differently	- 52
Attendances at Grow Your Confidence	- 14
Attendances at Building Healthy Relationships	- 36
Attendances at Mindful Movements	- 120
Attendances at Compassion Corner	- 22
Attendances at Mental Health Drop-In	- 259

Bereavement Support

An important part of our mental wellbeing support focuses on bereavement. The Feelgood has long recognised that it is important to provide a listening ear from an early stage to prevent feelings of loss developing into problems requiring counselling.

Bereavement support is not counselling. It aims at helping people develop coping strategies and rebuild their lives both through individual mentoring and through group support.



“

You're the only one who sees me
as complete person
Bereavement 1-to-1

”

“

I was able to process my
thoughts, feelings and emotions
and this has put me in a much
better place than I was before.
Bereavement 1-to-1

”

Bereavement is a universal human experience, yet its impact is deeply personal and often complex. The loss of a loved one can affect every aspect of life, from emotional wellbeing and physical health to social relationships and daily functioning. While grief is a natural response, the way individuals cope with bereavement varies widely, influenced by cultural, social, and personal factors.

Supporting bereaved people requires sensitivity, understanding, and a recognition that there is no single "right" way to grieve. Our support aims to enable individuals to navigate the challenges of loss, reduce feelings of isolation, and foster resilience during a profoundly difficult time. This involves practical assistance, emotional support, and access to appropriate services, as well as creating an environment where grief is acknowledged and validated rather than hidden or stigmatized.

Support has been provided throughout the year both through individual support sessions and through bereavements support groups.

Partnership work was also undertaken with Crosby and Netherton Libraries and training in bereavement support delivered to staff at Brighter Living Partnership.



Summary Overview

People attending Bereavement Support Groups - 18
Number of individuals supported through bereavement - 38

Physical Wellbeing

Physical wellbeing is a cornerstone of overall health, influencing not only individual fitness but also social connection, resilience, and quality of life. AS a healthy living centre The Feelgood Factory invests in physical wellbeing programmes—such as exercise classes, walking groups, food and nutrition training, and accessible recreational facilities to help local people of all ages thrive.



“

I'm nearly 70 and I can't believe I get to kick a ball around a pitch at my age
Walking Football

”

“

I've learned so much from the cooking course. I look after my wife now that she has dementia so it has given me so much confidence in the kitchen

”

The Feelgood Factory physical wellbeing programmes play a vital role in preventing long-term health conditions, reducing social isolation, and encouraging healthier lifestyles. They also provide opportunities for individuals to build confidence, develop new skills, and strengthen community bonds.

Physical Exercise

We continued to run several physical exercise programmes throughout the year including Mixed Yoga, Line dancing, Zumba, Aerobics, Clinical Pilates, Walking Football, Man Cave Sport, Tone and Stretch, and Monday Walks.

Food and Nutrition

The normal healthy cooking programmes have continued in the Feelgood Factory to help local people adopt healthier lifestyles. We also ran a Save Money, Cook at Home programme and a supported cooking course for Expect. In addition to these outreach cooking programmes were run as follows:

- Orrell Trust Jolly Soap team (adults with additional needs)
- Cooking for young adults leaving care
- Intergenerational Cooking Event at Orrell Trust

Health Checks

General health checks and CVD monitoring was undertaken on a regular basis at Strand By Me and the Home Office.



Summary Overview

Attendances at Exercise Classes	- 3,029
Attendances at Internal Food Programmes	- 96

Breastfeeding Support

Breastfeeding is widely recognised as one of the most effective ways to support the health and wellbeing of both infants and mothers. It provides essential nutrition, strengthens the immune system, and fosters early bonding between parent and child. Beyond individual benefits, breastfeeding also contributes to public health by reducing healthcare costs and improving long-term outcomes for communities.



“

So happy and proud to reach one year of breastfeeding! The support from this group has made all the difference.

”

“

Helped a lot, don't feel alone, made friendships that mean something to me, having a safe place to come.

Perinatal Mental Health Group

”

Supporting breastfeeding requires a coordinated approach that combines professional advice, peer support, and wider societal change. Breastfeeding Support Sefton aims to provide all three of these needs in one very small service.

The service is delivered by trained volunteers who support parents by way of four support groups run in different parts of Sefton (Netherton, Bootle, Southport and Formby) and through social media.

Breastfeeding Support Sefton is an integral part of the wider Infant Feeding Team, particularly by member of the UNICEF BFI Gold Steering Group and the Every Child Matters Forum. The service also works with businesses and other agencies to promote the acceptance of breastfeeding throughout Sefton.

In addition to the breastfeeding work, the team have also been working on the further development of the perinatal mental support groups for parents. Originally run in partnership with PANDS Sefton, the group is now an independent entity. This weekly support group held in the Feelgood Factory is well attended and is now supported by a Whats App group.



Summary Overview

Attendances at Support Groups	- 1,715
Contacts	- 998
Volunteers at end of year	- 21
WhatsApp Membership	- 219
Instagram Followers	- 1,104
Facebook Followers	- 1.9k

Children & Families

Children and families living in our local areas often face multiple challenges that can affect their health, education, and overall wellbeing. Poverty, limited access to resources, and social inequalities can create environments where opportunities for growth and development are restricted. These circumstances not only impact children's immediate quality of life but can also have long-term consequences for their future prospects and the health and wellbeing of their adults. For these reasons the Feelgood Factory has been developing its services to support local children and families.



Thank you for believing in my little girl and in everything she does.

These sessions are great, I can't believe the difference in his confidence, Thank you so much

Support for children and families in our local areas is essential. Effective interventions can help reduce the impact of disadvantage, promote resilience, and ensure that all children have the chance to thrive regardless of their background.

Monday Club

The Monday After-School Club provides a safe space for children to come to meet new friends, access different opportunities and learn new things. It is an inclusive space for children with additional needs /neurodivergent children to mix and be involved. Community engagement has been encouraged through sessions outside of the centre and community fundraising for the group participants. Groups of children and their families were taken to Knowsley Safari Park and Walton Hall Garden as well as the Anfield football ground.

Holiday Activities

A programme of activities was run throughout the long summer holiday and during the Autumn half-term break. The summer club included activities such as a silent disco, music, drama and cooking. Half-term saw Hallowe'en activities and a bonfire party. In conjunction with the Community Garden and Winter Wonderland Grotto was run in December.

Parenting Support

Individual and group support has been given to parents throughout the period.



Summary Overview

Parents supported through Neurodiverse parenting group	- 11
Membership of Monday Club	- 16
Attendances at Children and Family sessions	- 373

Social & Interest Groups

Social isolation is increasingly recognised as a significant public health concern, affecting people of all ages and backgrounds. It can lead to feelings of loneliness, reduced self-esteem, and poorer physical and mental health outcomes.

In our community today, for a variety of reasons, individuals may struggle to build supportive networks, leaving them vulnerable to long-term disadvantage. For this reason the Feelgood runs its Choices programme to help people come together..



Friday can't come by soon enough. I really enjoy the banter with the lads.
Man Cave

I go to History, Tea and Talk and the Ladies Group . I no longer sit in the house alone I have made some nice friends.

Social and interest groups provide an effective way to combat isolation by creating spaces where people can meet, share experiences, and develop meaningful relationships. Whether through interest-based clubs, social activities, or community-led initiatives, these groups foster inclusion, build confidence, and strengthen social bonds.

Social Groups

The Feelgood Factory runs three main social groups. Tea and Talk (formerly called GAS) is a supportive group for those who just want a quiet space to meet with others.

The Ladies' Friendship Group is a space for women to come together for conversation and to arrange social activities with others in the club.

Man Cave is a weekly group where men can meet for talk and games such as dart and cards.

Interest Groups

For many people meeting in social settings can be a bit off-putting so we run a series of interest groups, where the topic of conversation is already provided. These groups are also good for mental stimulation and confidence development. Groups run in the year were:

- History
- Creative Writing
- Drawing
- Crafts
- Music
- Book Club
- Knitting



Summary Overview

Attendances at Social Groups - 1,177
Attendances at Interest Groups - 2,032

Community Services

Community services provided by local charities play a vital role in addressing social needs, reducing inequalities, and strengthening community resilience. The Feelgood Factory operates at the grassroots level, which makes us uniquely positioned to understand and respond to the challenges faced by local people. and to mobilise local residents as volunteers.



**Thank You for Supporting
Woodlands Hospice**

“

I was feeling a bit fed up, so I went and had a cuppa (and a biscuit) in the Feelgood Factory yesterday. Met Mary. We had a chat and two cuppas. Felt much better ...

”

Shopping Service

We continued to operate our volunteer-led service for people who are unable to get out to do their own shopping. This is much more than just a delivery service. Customers are contacted by phone during the week and the volunteers who drop off the goods will have a chat and check each customer is all right. For many of our clients this is an important human contact.

Community Hub

The Community Hub targeted individuals and families struggling with day to day issues such as food and energy poverty. We distributed frozen meals donated by the LFC Foundation, provided four families with children's birthday presents through Cash For Kids donations and obtained other help for two more families from Halle's Hub. WE also provided emergency food vouchers for L30 Community Pantry & Emmanuel Baptist Community Shop.

Community Lounge

We continued to develop our Community Lounge as a spot in the centre of Netherton where people can meet or just sit in a warm and safe space.

Knitting For Good

The knitting for Good group has continued to meet to knit and natter and provide some beautiful goods for the homeless and for hospices among others. They have now been joined by Sewing for Good.



Summary Overview

- Shops delivered - 924
- Frozen meals distributed to families in need - 5,000
- Christmas Dinner hampers distributed - 70
- Christmas gifts given to families in need - 8

Community Garden

Community gardens have become an increasingly important feature of modern neighbourhoods, offering far more than just a place to grow plants. They provide accessible green spaces where people can come together, share skills, and strengthen social connections. In areas where access to nature is limited, community gardens create opportunities for residents to engage with the environment, improve their wellbeing, and foster a sense of belonging.



“

We love it here it is our happy place where we can relax and enjoy the garden as we don't have a nice garden to sit in.

”

“

Would you pass on how absolutely yummy scrumptious were the potatoes and the cabbages?

”

The benefits of the Netherton Community Garden extends across multiple dimensions. It promotes healthier lifestyles by encouraging physical activity and access to fresh produce, supports mental wellbeing through contact with nature, and builds a stronger community by reducing isolation and encouraging collaboration. Additionally, it contributes to environmental sustainability by enhancing biodiversity and raising awareness of ecological practices.

During the year the garden continued to be used as a venue for community gatherings. In particular it was used to host two Namaste events to promote mental wellbeing, encouraged local people to make scarecrows for the Netherton scarecrow competition, hosted exercise and social groups, ran a flower and produce show, provided a venue for activities by young people and designed its own Winter Wonderland Grotto (which was a bit knocked off course by Storm Darragh).

The brilliant volunteer team led Martin and Eddie produced some very tasty vegetables and fruit. Flowers and plants were good sellers and Val and helpers produced some wonderful jams.



Summary Overview

Volunteer hours - 481

Community Events - 8

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