



2025 Annual General Meeting Report

Whalley Range Community Forum



Location: JNR8 Youth & Community Centre,
82 Cromwell Avenue, Whalley Range,
Manchester M16 0BG

Website: <https://whalleyrange.org>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WhalleyRangeCommunityForum/>

WHALLEY RANGE COMMUNITY FORUM



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JNR8 Youth & Community Centre Goals:

Holding regular user group meetings and making the centre a safe accessible and welcoming space for all building users

1. Acting Chairperson's Introduction

I am writing this in the capacity of Acting Chair being asked to take over responsibilities by Bill Williams (our Chair) when he became hospitalised in October 2025. After a period of great uncertainty, we were shocked to learn that Bill had died on the 29th of December. He is greatly missed. This year the Forum has been recovering from this loss and continues to undertake many of the same activities of last year.

We marked 30 years of the establishment of the Forum and held a celebratory event at the BMHC in September, attended by 30 people who had been involved in the Forum as previous workers, trustees, partners, who through 'just a minute' shared their experiences and what the Forum had contributed.

A very successful 28th Celebrate took place in Manley Park in June working with partner Whalley Range Youth Opportunities Association and other local organisations. Coordinated by Jess Coulson with the 2025 theme of 'Cooperate - build a better world'. This year we were working towards Celebrate taking place in May at JNR8 our youth and community hub, (due to reduced funding).

The theme is 'Connect with your Community' celebrating the UN International Volunteer year. JNR8 continues to be busy, and flourish, providing a mixture of hosting groups and meetings (e.g. dementia support and Climate Action Group), partnership activities (e.g. the NHS funded 'Leg Up Club.' MCC core funded health and wellbeing)

The Forum also acts as the coordinator of the Age Friendly Whalley Range and Chorlton Network which hosts regular activities for older people, takes part in Manchester wide networking and generally encourages older people to socialise, and actively contribute.

There continues to be an increase in demand for personal support as a result of a poverty, poor housing, and social isolation and a lack of specialist provision. This means that the Centre acts as a distribution point for emergency supplies and food vouchers and provides an important social hub for many isolated people.

Our hard-working community development worker, Chris Ricard, supported by Kate Richardson, the admin and finance worker, juggling the growing demands. We successfully applied for funds for three years of MCC OMVCS funding, which has an additional broader focus on responding to our community.

Alongside that, we have been re-establishing ourselves as a Forum in the ward and carried out developing a new plan for the next five years, through a process we called Re:JNR8, using participatory approaches with representatives of local groups and partners, and a growing number of Forum meeting attendees.

We have strengthened the requirements for new trustees and the process of recruiting and inducting them.

I am optimistic that with the addition of a substantial number of new elected and active trustees that the Forum will go forward from strength to strength.

Many thanks go to our Forum team, our partners, and the establishing team of volunteers.

Carol Packham

2. Current Board/Committee Members and Staff

- Carol Packham: Acting Chairperson
- Martin Rathfelder: Treasurer
- Tanveer Shah: Secretary
- Mary Watson: Committee Member
- Ann Knowles: Committee Member
- Shakila Khan: Committee Member

Chris Ricard, Development Worker, 07751 666150

communityforumwhalleyrange@gmail.com

Kate Richardson, Admin Support

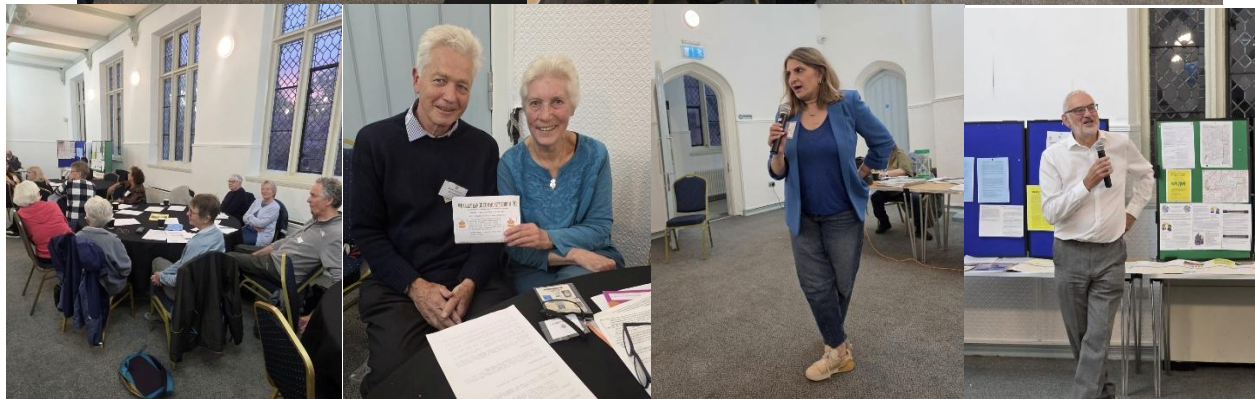
wrcommunityforum@gmail.com

Office: 01618813744

Forum Meetings:

- General Meetings are held bimonthly at different venues across the ward - and to encourage better attendance we have adapted themed meetings around priorities raised, e.g. planning, trees, housing.
- Trustee meetings also look at specific topics, e.g. the trustees discussed the priorities for the new MCC grant application for the next 3 years of funding, reviewed the Treasurer and workers roles - and held finance update meetings.

WRCF Constitution: due to be reviewed in 2026 as part of the new 5-Year Development Plan to reflect changes in trustee roles and format of committee meetings and membership.



3. Projects & Activities

What's on at JNR8? (pronounced 'generate') <https://whalleyrange.org> [Find us on Facebook](#)

Term time classes and activities from Whalley Range Community Forum/Age-friendly Whalley Range
JNR8 Youth & Community Centre, 82 Cromwell Avenue, Whalley Range M16 0BG (Back of Manley Park Church) 0161 881 3744

Monday:	Whalley Range Women's Group 11-12:30 Social group for all women in WR Term time only	Cooking classes coming soon Mondays subject to funding – Register your interest: 0161 881 3744	Conversation & Crafts Mondays 1-2:30 Crafts and wellbeing	Visit our website: scan the QR code below 
Tuesday:	ESOL Classes coming soon For men and women with low-level English skills	10-12 2 nd Tuesday monthly Positive Living group for Boost attendees. Call 0161 881 3744 for details	12-2 JNR8 Music Group for over 50's: meet people, learn to play an instrument - and have fun!	2:15-3pm Chair-based Exercise Fitness for people with low mobility 
Wednesday:	10-11am Keep Fit for Women (female instructor) Make friends and get fitter!	11:45-1:30pm Leg Up Club social group for people with health conditions, particularly leg health issues. Games, chat, hot food and drink	2-3pm Age-friendly Afternoon Tea: Over 50's, refreshments, chat/ plan trips	Cost of Living Support Budgeting advice 0161 881 3744
Thursday:	Volunteer-led Spanish for all	11:30-1:00pm E: kazkarim@yahoo.co.uk		
Friday:	10am-1pm Warm Hub , friendship, tea, coffee, toast, soup, advice, signposting, and support. clothes rail, limited toiletries	1-2pm 5-week Boost Resilience Course: for people who want to improve confidence. Call 0161 881 3744 to book onto the course	Time to Change Whalley Range Mental Wellbeing volunteer-led self-help social group. 5-7pm	Pool, Tai chi, music, chat, cooking and more. Call Carol: 0778885544 for information

• **Whalley Range Community Forum Advice/signposting for residents**
 • **Foodbank voucher referral contact Chris on 0161 881 3744 for details**
 • **Hate Crime 3rd Party Reporting We can support you to report hate crime/incidents online. Call 0161 881 3744 FREE CITY COUNCIL HATE CRIME REPORTING 08000 830007**
 • **Whalley Range Community Forum Residents Meetings. Bi-monthly 2nd Thursday of the month**
 • **Age-friendly Whalley Range & Chorlton Network monthly meetings Call 0161 881 3744 for meeting dates**



- **JNR8 Community Hub:** A range of classes, courses and activities aimed at supporting mental and physical health, reducing isolation and promoting resilience and self-help. Additional support based on community priorities around poverty and affordable food, housing, health and benefits advice/signposting.
- **Foodbank voucher referrals:** April 2025-March 2026 – 190 vouchers issued.
- **Age-friendly Whalley Range & Chorlton Network:** Promoting positive ageing, campaigning for community benches, responding to consultation and holding walks, classes and events to improve health and reduce isolation.
- **Forum grants held for other groups:** e.g. in 2025 – neighbours alley parties and greening, Age-friendly benches information folders – supporting groups to become established and promote their activities at JNR8 and Celebrate Festival
- **Community Events during 2025:** Celebrate Festival – including pre-festival activities and post-festival exhibition. See 2025 Celebrate Report here: <https://www.whalleyrange.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Celebrate-Report-2025-.pdf>
Age-friendly GM Festival and Older People's Day walks, Age Without Limits Elders performance, Looking after your Physical, Mental & Financial Health event with Citizens Advice, budgeting and energy support, community festive feast

Our current 3-year MCC grant - Supporting Communities Fund - comes to an end this month.

The grant focused on supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis - and our funders described how our organisation met the criteria as:

'A grassroots, community-led and multi-purpose facility providing services and activities that reflect the needs, and benefit the wellbeing, of an area and its residents.

Groups supported by this fund will strengthen the resilience and support the independence of residents in the local area. This will include, but not be exclusive to, services that are aimed at vulnerable people and those experiencing poverty.'

4. Health & Wellbeing Initiatives

Leg Up Club: a partnership with Manchester Local Care Organisation to support people with lower leg conditions, long-term health issues and isolation. Provides direct access to health services; guests at Leg Up Club included Glaucoma Uk, Manchester Carers Forum, creative art, mindful yoga, winter warm packs distributed and a hot meal provided.

The Celebrate Festival Health & Wellbeing/Age-friendly marquee is facilitated by the Forum, Health checks were provided by the local pharmacy, health taster sessions e.g. chair exercise, mindful chair yoga and services promoted screening and hosted health awareness stalls, e.g. Answer Cancer, Dementia Action, Glaucoma UK, Falls team. Also cost-of-living advice and mental health information from Manchester Mind was displayed.

Nourish is a zine that explores and celebrates the interconnectedness of food, community and wellbeing. For the zine the facilitator spoke to different community groups and people in Whalley Range about what food means to them. We collected their favourite recipes; we spent time talking about the different ways that food can bring people together, we learnt how places are growing their own food to eat, how nothing goes to waste, and importantly we spent time eating together.

The **Time to Change** group continues to meet with approximately 10 weekly attending and the core group of about 20 people. We celebrated 10–11 years of the group in November. Doing activities that people in the group bring in – e.g. games or art or discussions about a particular subject, like reducing moisture in your home, eating well, activities we would like to do, listening and playing to music, singing. About 20 people are messaged every Thursday, hoping they are well with a short reminder, who's cooking, what's on?

There is also a weekly email sent out to people who attend the group and those who used to attend it - who occasionally pop up and visit - which is great. The email tells people what has happened at the group previous week what is planned for the next day's activities and usually has some topical information, e.g. about the solstice, includes an appropriate song link and notice of local events coming up, groups, free music etc.



Environmental Initiatives: As stated in our previous Supporting Communities application:

Actions to reduce our environmental impact and/or that of the people we work with:

- Encourage an emphasis on local active travel e.g. cycling, bike repairs and promoting cycle training projects, support local initiatives, try to use local tradespeople and employ local people
- Use/promote sustainable food consumption and growing, run healthy cooking classes
- For organisations that use our bank account for their activities we will include in our contract steps to reduce their own carbon footprint, including traders at the Celebrate Festival
- Circulate the Climate change wellbeing focused Whalley Range Map to residents.

6. Future Goals (The Year Ahead)

Working with our 5-Year Development Plan which will feature on our website.

Our current trustees held discussions with the Forum worker prior to the OMVCS MCC grant application submitted in September - and we selected three of the categories that best described our organisation's work as:

- Community hub/centre
- Mental Health and wellbeing support
- Community capacity building through partnerships.

Our selected 3 priority areas from the Our Manchester Strategy 2025-2035 are:

- **Objective 1:** Our people will Be happy, healthy and active from childhood to adulthood.
- **Objective 2:** Our people will Be proud of our diversity feel valued and included , knowing they belong.
- **Objective 3:** Our people will Participate engage and influence decisions about their communities and neighbourhoods

We have increased attendance at our Forum meetings since our WRCF 30-year celebration. We held a Development Day called Re:JNR8 in 2025 - to guide our Development Plan, based on identifying priorities and aims, working with local groups and a graphic artist to capture discussion.



Whalley Range Community Forum – Annual General Meeting

Financial Report April 2025 to February 2026

This is a summary of income and expenditure for the eleven months between April 2025 and February 2026. Audited accounts will be available after the end of the financial year in March 2025 and will be presented to a future trustees meeting.

There has been spending this year on grants that were given to the organisation before April 2025 and have been held in reserve. The WRCF Small Grants include Manchester City Council grant awarded for a newsletter, and NHS grants awarded for the Leg Up Club and Cold Weather Support. We are holding £1050 which are managed grants on behalf of community organisations and a Big Bike Revival grant which was used for Celebrate 2025.

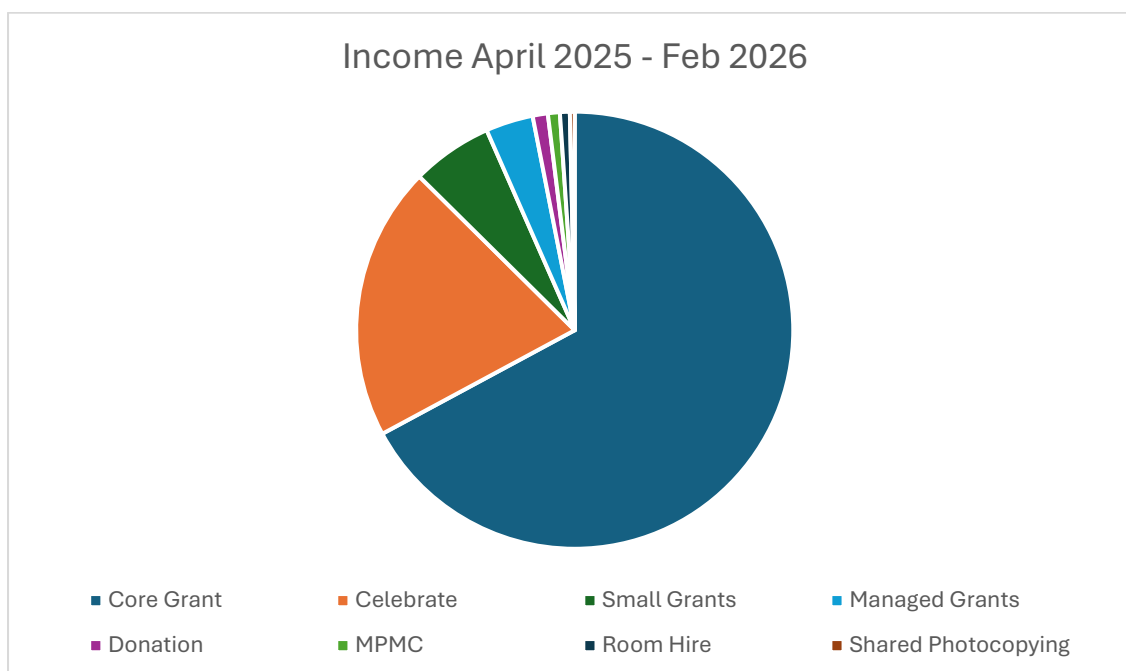
Table: Grants held in Reserve

Grants Held in Reserve	£
WRCF Small Grants	£20,344.51
Managed Grants	£1,050.00
Celebrate	£161.47
Total	£ 21,555.98

Table: Income April 2025 – February 2026

Summary April 2025 - February 2026	Amount	Percent
Core Grant	£59,800	67%
Celebrate	£18,055	20%
Small Grants	£5,335	6%
Managed Grants	£3,125	4%
Donation	£1,000	1%
MPMC	£785	1%
Room Hire	£653	1%
Shared Photocopying	£316	0%
Total (11 months income)	£89,067	100%

Pie Chart: Income April 2025 – February 2026



I have summarised our income into the following headings:

Core Grant the main grant we receive from Manchester City Council

Celebrate costs related to the annual Celebrate festival

Small Grants are grants received for Whalley Range Community Forum work, examples include cost of living projects, cooking on a budget, and events such as health and well being days, festive feast, springtime and Eid celebrations

Managed grants are small grants we manage on behalf of other organisation for example, Whalley Range Women's group and alleyway projects.

The **donation** was from an engineering company, we were nominated by a volunteer at the Hygiene Bank who provide us with free toiletries.

MPMC is money paid to us by Manley Park Methodist Church for telephone calls and office work.

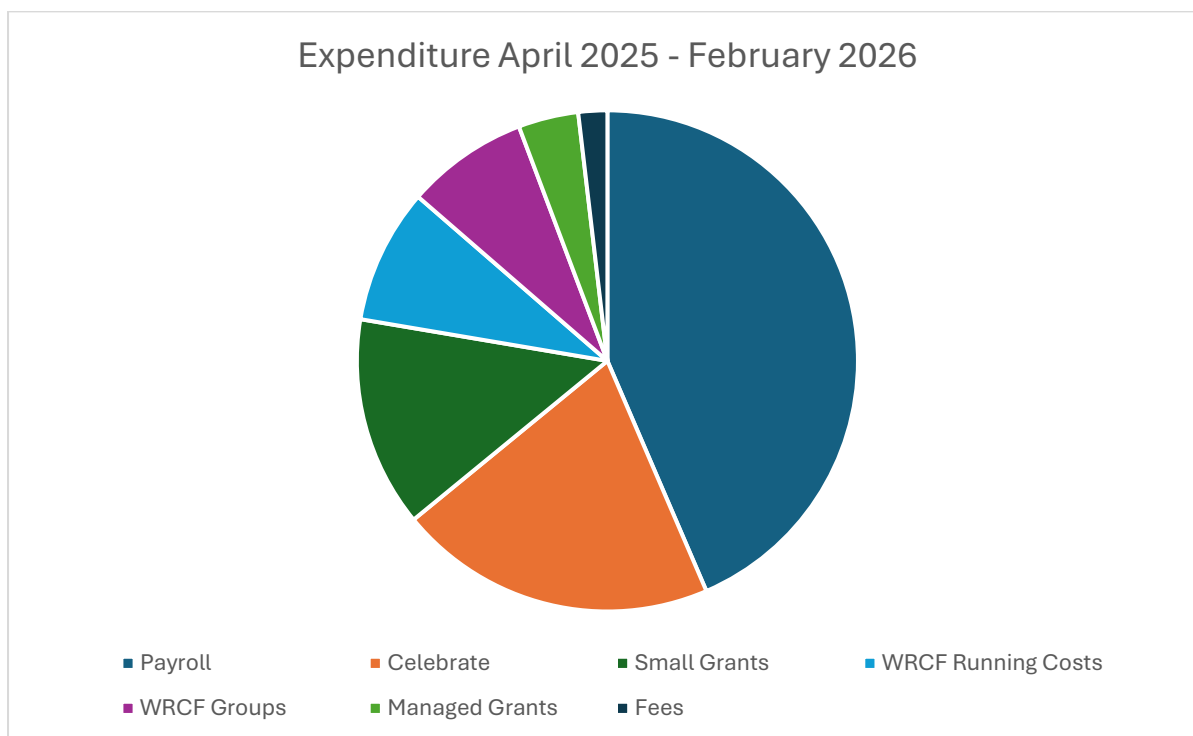
Room Hire is for use of the centre by Whalley Range Women's Group.

Photocopying is payments from Whalley Range Youth Opportunities Association for use of the shared photocopier.

Expenditure April 2025 to February 2026

Summary April 2025 - February 2026	Amount	Percent
Payroll	£ 40,193	44%
Celebrate	£ 18,966	21%
Small Grants	£ 12,546	14%
WRCF Running Costs	£ 8,035	9%
WRCF Groups	£ 7,280	8%
Managed Grants	£ 3,583	4%
Fees	£ 1,723	2%
	£ 92,326	100%

Pie Chart: Expenditure April 2025 to February 2026



I have summarised our expenditure into the following headings:

Payroll all costs relating to staff, salaries, national insurance, tax, pensions.

Celebrate costs related to the annual Celebrate festival.

Small Grants are grants awarded to Whalley Range Community Forum for WRCF Projects examples include cost of living projects, the bench pouches project, cooking on a budget course, and grants for one off events such as financial and health and well-being days, the festive feast and Spring and Eid celebrations.

WRCF running costs include costs relating to premises, photocopier, stationery, telephone, development day, and room hire.

WRCF Groups are costs related to groups run by the forum as part of our core grant including creative conversations, boost resilience and positive living group, Happy Tuesdays music group, armchair exercise, women's keep fit, age friendly afternoon tea, Spanish, warm hub and time to change.

Fees include bank charges, accountancy, insurance and licences

Budget Headings covered by our core grant include: Payroll, Fees, WRCF Running Costs, WRCF Groups.

It is likely that in March 2025 we will spend more than receive in income. These tables include twelve months of our core grant. Although the expenditure is greater than the income some of the expenditure relates to grants received before April 2025.

Organisational Financial Health

On 24th March we had £66,088.65 in the bank. If we lost all our core and small grant income we would need about £4,600 per month to keep going. It is sensible to keep six months worth of running costs in the bank in case of emergency which is £27,600. In my opinion we have healthy reserves.

Decisions to Make

I would like to set up an income system so we can claim gift aid via the government small donations gift aid programme.

<https://www.gov.uk/claim-gift-aid/small-donations-scheme>

I would like us to set up a petty cash imprest system for any cash expenditure.

I would like to look at moving our bank account to make sure we are getting best value for money and the best financial products for charities.

A memorial plaque for Bill Williams would cost us around £600 I propose we agreed to this cost to remember our former chair.

Martin Rathfelder

Treasurer – Whalley Range Community Forum

Assisted by Kate Richardson, Admin Support

24th March 2026

7. Acknowledgments & Thanks to all our partners, supporters and participants



We were devastated by the loss of our Chairman Bill Williams, who died on 29th December 2025.

Bill was the long-time Chair of Whalley Range Community Forum, management committee member of Whalley Range Youth Opportunities Association, vice chair of Age-friendly Whalley Range & Chorlton - and an active member of Victoria Road Residents and Home Watch Residents Association. Bill also contributed to several local groups by being active on their management committees. A much loved and respected member of the Whalley Range community, Bill made a huge impact within the community, and his friends, colleagues and neighbours will miss him dearly. We have set up a Tribute page for people to post photos and memories of Bill:

<https://fataialadewilliamwilliams.muchloved.com/>

Report produced by Christine Ricard, Whalley Range Community Forum Development Worker March 2026