

## Whalley Range Community Forum Worker Report November 2025



### Funding updates

Our current MCC core grant – the 3-year ‘Supporting Communities Fund’ - ends in March 2026. A new application for 3 years for OMVCS – Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector funding – was submitted in August.

The decisions will be made by OMVCS in December 2025. One of the terms of our funding support is our WRCF 5-year Development Plan which ‘expires’ this year.

We will be working with partners to identify W/R priorities, support and work with local groups and individuals and to develop and maintain partnerships. The upcoming development day will be an opportunity for people to get involved and have a say as we produce the new Plan for the next 5 years.

Supporting Communities funding was awarded to infrastructure organisations to support people through the cost-of-living crisis

**Charities Connected** – Successful application for another 50 ‘everyone connected’ Vodafone SIM cards with 40GB data and unlimited UK calls and texts every 30 days for 6 months. The Forum distributed 50 SIM cards previously along with reconditioned smart phones to local residents - including people who were digitally excluded, on low or no income and a family seeking asylum in this country.

**Hygiene Bank:** we work in partnership with this charity who receive donations of hygiene products to distribute to charities to support their residents who struggle to buy essentials. The team successfully nominated WRCF to receive a £1000 donation - which we can use for cost-of-living preparation for winter supplies – e.g. dehumidifiers, slow cookers etc.

### Food Insecurity fund

Successful application for 3x3 week budget cookery sessions starting on December 1<sup>st</sup> – poster will be distributed soon!

Our NIF funded one-to-one budgeting support has moved to Wednesdays - as some leg up club attendees struggle with a variety of issues, including health, benefits, and digital navigation.

This one-to-one grant supports an average of four people each week - but the funding is short term - so we have built the service into our OMVCS application...

### General community support

WRCF holds funds for new and emerging community groups and neighbours holding one-off events – who don’t have their own bank account to receive local grants. During the period,

we supported alley planting and have just been approached by the local-to-JNR8 street group to hold a Forever Manchester small grant for a seasonal party to meet up/connect with neighbours over hot chocolate and cake...

We work with MCC and local community groups using the mutual aid and street groups to share information – including news from the neighbourhood team to inform residents about resurfacing of alleys, reporting flytipping, sharing events and consultations etc.

### **Age-friendly work**

The Whalley Range & Chorlton Network held another walk around the Whalley Range benches - combined with a litter pick to acknowledge International Older Peoples Day. News just in is that the 6 new age-friendly W/R benches have arrived and will be installed imminently. We will organise a big celebration around the benches trail - probably in the spring. We have been running a series of craft workshops to make and create waterproof bench folders made from hessian and recycled materials to attach to benches informing people 'What's On'.

Our Chair exercise, craft group and music group are very busy and the groups have connected lots of people, some of whom were previously very isolated. Lots of friendships have been formed – and as the Forum promotes local initiatives, people are attending other community sessions further afield, widening their networks and experiences.

**JNR8 weekly groups** have met weekly and welcomed new attendees - and we have three 2-hour cookery sessions coming up from next week aimed at reducing sugar and fats, one pot soup and batch cooking for winter: flavours of Man  
Time to Change volunteer-led self-help mental wellbeing group are celebrating this week. It is their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of meeting together with friends to cook and eat, and will be holding a celebration tomorrow at JNR8

The NHS/MLCO partnership project Leg Up club is mainly for people with long-term health conditions and reduced mobility, though people who are feeling isolated are invited to attend. The group meets weekly with access to Neighbourhood Health team, NHS district nurses and care navigators and health and wellbeing services. Also a craft or wellbeing exercise activity – and a hot meal. We extend the invitation via street groups for events and when we welcome speakers, e.g. Talking therapies, Carers Manchester and scam awareness sessions.

We held a Leg Up 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday in October, combined with our Friday Warm Space community Hub which was a great success: Looking after your Physical, Mental and Financial Health – with lots of support services in attendance and a freshly cooked soup lunch – and bags of winter essentials: hot water bottles, blankets, draught excluders and warm socks provided for free.

People meet up at our Warm Hub (which is 3 years old this year and now runs throughout the year) for tea and toast, soup and a brew - to socialise, get advice or help with benefits and housing issues etc., pick up essentials e.g. toiletries - and maybe a foodbank voucher.

39 vouchers were distributed since the last meeting – this included new clients and people receiving ongoing support.

We hope to be able to share good news about our funding outcome at the next meeting...