Halton Speak Out CiO

Charity number 1170145

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2026

Halton Speak Out CiO

Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2026

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Prepared by the Greater Merseyside Community Accountancy Service

Halton Speak Out CiO

Trustees' report

The trustees during the year were:

Name

Mr Gerard Upham
Mr Kenneth Williams
Mrs Sheila Maloney
Mrs Lynne Melarangi
Mr Colin Rotherham

Method of appointment

Appointment of trustees is governed by the constitution of the charity. The executive committee of trustees is authorised to appoint new trustees to fill vacancies arising through the resignation or death of an existing trustee.

Principal address

Higher House
Northwich Road
Brookvale
Runcorn
WA7 6PE

Bankers

CoOperative Bank
PO Box 250
Skelmersdale
Lancashire
WN8 6WT

Governing document

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation registered on 14th November 2016.

Objects of the organisation

For the benefit of the public, the relief and support of children and adults with learning and other disabilities includiing persons who are vulnerable, by the provision of advocacy and like support services, training, educational and other services designed to relieve their condition, and to allow them to take their full place in society.

The provision of facilities which will enable them to take part in the dramatic and visual arts, including the provision of training, education, practical demonstrations and participative learning.

Independent examiner

on behalf of:

Greater Merseyside Community Accountancy Service

St Maries
Lugsdale Road
Widnes
WA8 6DB

Review of progress and achievements

Organisational restructuring

During the year, following the award of a five year National Lottery funding programme and the successful negotiation of a new ten year lease for the Community Centre, the charity undertook a review of its organisational structure to ensure that staffing and resources were aligned with the delivery requirements of the funded programme and the charity's longer term financial sustainability.

A business case was prepared and presented to the Trustees, outlining a revised staffing structure and the associated financial implications. The Trustees approved the revised structure, which resulted in the Operational Manager post being made redundant, as the role was no longer financially sustainable within the charity's forecast resources.

Any costs arising from the restructuring and redundancy process have been recognised in the accounts in the period in which the obligation was established.

Reserves

As a responsible organisation, we must safeguard our centre, our staff and the community we serve. Although our accounts show a high balance, these funds are not accessible for general operational spending.

In line with our Trustees' reserves policy, **£81,559** is ring-fenced to cover six months of essential operating costs — including rent, staff salaries, utilities and provision for six months of redundancy payments (**£31,807**). These reserves are protected and cannot be used for any other purpose.

We also hold restricted grant funding allocated to specific projects, as well as a dedicated Ellatogether performing arts fund. Although Ellatogether's contributions are categorised as unrestricted, they carry conditions on use: the funds must be used at the discretion of Halton Speak Out to promote inclusive performing arts. In practice, this means the fund is restricted in nature. The balance as of **31 March 2026** is **£46,809**.

These funds ensure we operate sustainably and responsibly. They do not represent surplus money and are not available for general spending.

Halton Speak Out CiO

Independent examiner's report on the accounts of Halton Speak Out CiO for the year ended 31 March 2026

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2026 set out on pages 5 to 9

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the examiner
As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts using procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission and to state whether matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent examiner's report
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- ❑ to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
- ❑ to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Jane Williams
MAAT

Greater Merseyside Community Accountancy Service
St Maries
Lugsdale Road
Widnes
WA8 6DB

Halton Speak Out CiO

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 March 2026

	Notes	2026 Unrestricted funds £	2026 Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Incoming Resources					
Grants and donations	(2)	7,702	139,367	147,069	169,652
Other Income		5,300	-	5,300	-
Centre Café & Room Hires		98,527	-	98,527	140,904
Bank Interest Received		-	-	-	-
Total incoming resources		111,529	139,367	250,896	310,556
Resources expended					
Salaries and NICs	(3)	59,014	104,933	163,947	171,098
Payroll fees		417	322	739	1,016
Consultancy		310	11,430	11,740	12,348
Sundry expenses		1,001	55	1,056	1,726
Equipment		2,135	2,256	4,391	8,579
Rent & Premises Costs		37,038	-	37,038	57,825
Repairs & Renewals		3,848	-	3,848	-
Postage, Stationery & Telephone		1	362	363	1,900
Insurance		2,458	500	2,958	2,040
Website, Advertising & Publicity		448	100	548	864
DBS Checks		291	-	291	194
Volunteers		-	68	68	-
Training		-	-	-	197
Café Supplies		3,903	-	3,903	21,120
Information & Resources		558	-	558	2,235
Project costs		1,205	4,329	5,534	8,816
Governance Costs		-			
Independent Examination & Accountancy		450	-	450	315
Professional fees		10,345	2,971	13,316	2,584
Administration		15	-	15	15
Total resources expended		123,437	127,326	250,763	292,872
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources		(11,908)	12,041	133	17,684
Transfers between funds		23,139	(23,139)	-	-
Fund balances brought forward		156,267	55,646	211,913	194,229
Fund balances carried forward	(4)	167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913

Halton Speak Out CiO

Balance sheet

as at 31 March 2026

		2026 Unrestricted £	2026 Restricted £	2026 Total £	2025 Total £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	(5)	-	-	-	-
Total fixed assets		-	-	-	-
Current Assets					
Debtors and prepayments	(6)	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	(7)	167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913
Total current assets		167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913
Current liabilities: amounts falling due within one year					
Creditors and accruals	(8)	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities		-	-	-	-
Net current assets / (liabilities)		167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913
Total assets less current liabilities		167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year		-			
Net assets		167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913
Funds					
Restricted Funds			44,548	44,548	55,646
Unrestricted funds		167,498		167,498	156,267
Total Funds		167,498	44,548	212,046	211,913

Approval of the accounts

The annual report and accounts were approved at a meeting of the Trustees held on



Ged Upham
on behalf of the Trustees

Halton Speak Out CiO

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2026

1 Accounting Policies

a Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (The Charities SORP).

b Income

Donations and legacies are accounted for when received by the charity. Other income is accounted for on an accruals basis as far as is prudent to do so.

c Grants

Revenue grants are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on receipt, subject to any required conditions being met or services being provided. Capital grants are recognised on receipt in the Statement of Financial Activities. This policy has been adopted to give a true and fair view as recommended by the SORP.

d Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £250.

Rates of depreciation:

Fixtures and fittings:	25% reducing balance
Equipment:	25% reducing balance

e Pensions

Contributions are charged when they become due in accordance with the scheme rules.

f Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are either:

Unrestricted general funds

These are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds

These are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Designated funds

These are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes or projects.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Halton Speak Out CiO

Notes to the accounts continued

for the year ended 31 March 2026

2 Grants and Donations	2026 Unrestricted funds £	2026 Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Grants				
Halton Borough Council:				
Adult Project	-	38,850	38,850	48,118
Carers Breaks	-	2,160	2,160	1,272
Youth Engagement	-	-	-	-
HBC 24	-	-	-	7,872
Halton 50	-	-	-	574
HBC 24 Christmas	-	-	-	657
HBC Residential	-	-	-	500
The National Lottery Funding	-	38,326	38,326	75,952
TNL Year 5 funding	-	50,801	50,801	-
The Police & Crime Commissioner	-	1,950	1,950	-
Liverpool Airport Fund	-	2,730	2,730	-
TNL: Know Your Neighbourhood	-	-	-	11,248
SWAP Funding	-	4,550	4,550	-
Your Housing Cleaning	6,938	-	6,938	16,019
Ella Youth Fund	-	-	-	7,000
ASDA Community Fund	-	-	-	400
Donations	764	-	764	40
	7,702	139,367	147,069	169,652

3 Staff costs and numbers	2026 £	2025 £
Gross salaries	131,335	130,717
Other Wages	13,797	37,974
Redundancy	16,950	-
Social security costs	1,809	2,314
Employer pension	56	94
	163,947	171,098

The average number of employees during the year was 4.8 FTE (2025:4.8)

4 Restricted funds summary	Balance b/f £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	Balance c/f £
Adult Project	-	38,850	29,357	(5,352)	4,141
Children & Young Peoples Prog	-	-	-	-	-
Carers Breaks	5,053	2,160	1,112	-	6,101
24 Grant	60	-	-	(60)	-
24 Christmas	87	-	87	-	-
HBC Residential	105	-	105	-	-
HBC Youth Grant	-	-	80	-	(80)
TNL: Know Your Neighbourhood	10,618	-	9,965	(653)	-
In Your Hands	176	-	225	49	-
PCC Community Safety Grant	-	1,950	1,916	(34)	-
SWAP Funding	-	4,550	2,547	-	2,003
Police & Crime Commissioner	5,430	-	-	-	5,430
The Community Foundation	169	-	-	(169)	-
Ella Together Youth Fund	6,224	-	1,322	-	4,902
Liverpool Airport Fund	-	2,730	-	-	2,730
Torus Foundation	-	-	-	-	-
HBC: Youth Engagement	-	-	484	-	(484)
TNL Yr 5 grant	-	50,801	33,296	-	17,505
The National Lottery Fund	27,724	38,326	46,830	(16,920)	2,300
	55,646	139,367	127,326	(23,139)	44,548

Transfer of funds relate to training and office costs and include contributions towards rent of the building.

Halton Speak Out CiO

Notes to the accounts continued

for the year ended 31 March 2026

5 Tangible assets

	Fixtures & Fittings	Computers & Equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£
At 1 April 2025	2,769	5,592	8,361
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 March 2026	2,769	5,592	8,361
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2025	2,769	5,592	8,361
Charge for year	-	-	-
At 31 March 2026	2,769	5,592	8,361
Net book value			
At 31 March 2026	-	-	-
At 31 March 2025	-	-	-

6 Debtors and prepayments

	2026	2025
	£	£
Debtors	-	-
Prepayments	-	-
	-	-

7 Cash at bank and in hand

	2026	2025
	£	£
Bank Current a/c	212,046	211,913
	212,046	211,913

8 Creditors and accruals

	2026	2025
	£	£
Accruals	-	-
Other Creditors	-	-
	-	-

9 Trustee remuneration and expenses

No trustees received any remuneration or expenses during the accounting period to 31st March 2026.

10 Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the charity's activities and the composition of the board of trustees (being drawn from local statutory and voluntary organisations) it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a trustee may have an interest. All transactions in which a trustee may have an interest are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the charity's financial regulations and expenditure procedures.

HALTON SPEAK OUT AGM
3RD SEPTEMBER 2026
10AM – 12.00



AGENDA:

1. Welcome – Ged Upham – Chair of Trustees

2. Chair of Trustees' Report – Ged Upham

3. Community Centre Manager Report – Yvonne Smallman

4. Development Manager Report – Lynne Hall

5. Youth Project Report – Natalie Solenecki/Jack Hampson – ready by Natalie Solenecki

6. Adult Project Report – Sue Jones – read by Nick Grace

7. Community Speakers – on behalf of The Community Centre Manager and the Development Manager

8. Financial Report

9. Any other business

10. Close

Chair of Trustees' Report

This has been a year of change, growth and new adventures for Halton Speak Out. (HSO)

Following a successful Lottery funding bid, we took the opportunity to restructure the organisation to help secure its future and ensure that HSO can continue to grow and thrive within our local community. With change came some goodbyes. We said farewell to HSO's founder, Mal Hampson, and our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Samantha McClure. We thank them both for everything they contributed to HSO and for the strong foundations they helped to build.

We also welcomed Lynne Hall into the newly created role of Development Manager. Yvonne Smallman continues to manage the Community Centre, Jack Hampson continues as Youth Project Worker and is now joined by Natalie Slonecki, also a Youth Project Worker and Sue Jones who continues to lead our important self-advocacy work.

Each member of the team has shared the successes and challenges of their projects within this report. As Chair of the Trustees, I am delighted with the progress made over the past year. Change can, of course, bring uncertainty. Would the new structure work? Would HSO continue to grow and thrive within our community?

We should never have doubted it.

"Change can be frightening, and the path ahead is not always clear. But with courage, commitment and the right people beside us, change can bear fruit, creating new opportunities, fresh beginnings and an even stronger future."

As Mal said when she left the organisation, this Centre is in good hands, capable hands, and hands that were all about community. How right she was. This team is remarkable. I would also like to say a huge thank you to all the organisations who hire and use space within the Centre. You are an important part of our community and contribute greatly to the life and vibrancy of HSO.

Our sincere thanks also go to all of our funders, who believe in the work we do and support its continuation and progress. Your investment enables us to deliver vital projects, develop new opportunities and respond to the changing needs of our community. The future is challenging for all charities. Funding is increasingly difficult to secure, while the needs of our communities continue to grow. But we know that by working together, we can meet those challenges.

Together, we will continue to build this Community Centre, listen to our community and respond to its needs.

On behalf of the Trustees, thank you to our staff, volunteers, funders, partners, Centre users and everyone who contributes to making HSO what it is today.

We are proud of what has been achieved this year and look forward to the future with confidence, excitement and a shared commitment to our community

Brookvale Community Centre Manager's A.G.M report

Since starting my post in 2023, we have made great progress in enhancing our community centre. The past year has shown how much can be achieved when people, partners and volunteers come together to support one another

Footfall and income of Grown:

Our focus has been to increase footfall and strengthen income for the Centre. This year has not disappointed, with an impressive 8.7% increase.

Key Drivers of Growth

Enhanced social media presence – Regular updates and targeted campaigns have increased awareness of the centre and promoted our activities to a wider audience.

Support for community groups – Working closely with local groups and helping them develop has enabled them to expand their activities and reach more people.

Promotion of room hire – Improved marketing and accessibility, supported by the Know Your Neighbourhood grant, have increased demand for our rooms and generated additional income for the centre.



Funding/Grants

We have been successful in grants, this included SWAP funding from Cheshire Police, which enabled the centre to provide six months of activities and free lunches for older people.

The activities included:

- Four bingo sessions, arranged following requests from the older people attending
- A Christmas afternoon tea, with a free Christmas gift for everyone
- A sing-along event featuring songs from their era

Lords' mayor Fund



We have been extremely lucky in this year to be chosen for the lord's mayor funding. In total we received £5,250 and this will be spent on a new website for the cent

Know your neighbourhood

In April 2025, the National Lottery funded our **Know Your Community** project, which enabled us to offer 12 different activities at the centre as free six-week courses.

The aim was for these activities to become established groups and continue after the funded period, generating regular room-hire income. Five of the 12 groups successfully continued and are still running at the centre today. These groups provide ongoing activities for the local community while generating valuable income to help keep the centre open.

Massage Sessions

Chris, a qualified therapist, provides five affordable 30-minute sessions at the centre every two weeks. These are very popular, and she kindly donates all money raised back to the centre.

Regular activities

Our regular activity groups continue to go from strength to strength. Alongside our existing programme, we now offer Chair-Based Yoga, Line Dancing and Mindful Miniatures.



Brookvale Family Café

Brookvale Family Café rents a large space within the centre. The café attracts new visitors, promotes our activities and provides a welcoming place for people to meet and socialise. Café staff also share information about upcoming events, groups and activities.

Jo Cox Event

Each year, we hold an event to celebrate the life of Jo Cox. This year, Central Credit Union, Stop Loan Sharks and Citizens Advice joined us to offer information and support. We provided free coffee and cakes and invited residents to share their ideas for the local community. It was a lovely afternoon that helped us build valuable partnerships for the future.

Volunteers



The centre has welcomed more than 40 volunteers, including employees from local businesses who are given a volunteering day by their employers. Their valuable time and support make a real difference to the centre and our community.

Looking Ahead

I am extremely proud of everything we have achieved over the past year. Brookvale Community Centre continues to grow as a welcoming place where people can meet, make friends, learn new skills and feel part of their community. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff, trustees, volunteers, community groups, funders and everyone who supports the centre. We look forward to developing new activities, partnerships and opportunities, ensuring Brookvale Community Centre remains a valued part of our community.

APRIL 2025 - MARCH 2026 LYNNE HALL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Completed Projects



Thanks to the National Lottery Awards for All Know Your Neighbourhood grant, we offered a joyful mix of free activities, from salsa and sewing to yoga, floristry, crochet, sign language, line dancing, pastel art and mindful miniatures. Hundreds of local residents joined in, trying new things and building real connections. Five new community groups have since grown from these sessions and now hire rooms with us, contributing to our income and strengthening the centre's future. Two moments summed up the spirit of it all: Ian's dedication in growing Mindful Miniatures from scratch, and our lovely Vera salsa dancing with such joy it felt like she belonged on the grand theatre stage.

Ongoing Projects

From November 2025, after an firm interview process, I was proud to step into my dream role as Development Manager at Halton Speak Out. The opportunity arose when Mal retired, and I remain deeply grateful to her for the foundation she built and the chance to continue her excellent work.

Since starting, several important grants have been secured:

- **Creamfields - Youth Project** — £750 for a children's residential
- **Liverpool Airport - Youth Project** — £2,370 for a children's residential
- **Halton Borough Council - Youth Grant** — £9,993 for creative writing sessions
- **Community Foundation for Merseyside** — £2,460 Older People's Breakfast Club

These grants will create meaningful opportunities for both children and adults, strengthening wellbeing, confidence and connection. They also generate valuable room-hire income, helping secure the centre's long-term sustainability. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our funders for awarding us these grants.

Up and Coming Projects

To strengthen the centre's long-term sustainability, the Centre Manager and I have developed new partnerships with Central Credit Union, Home Instead, Stop Loan Sharks, Your Housing, Elton Larder, Runcorn Police, Citizens Advice, Digital Create and United Utilities. These relationships enhance our credibility, open joint funding opportunities and strengthen our role in the community. We are also introducing a bi-monthly newsletter to share centre updates, events and volunteer opportunities across social media and the local area, helping residents stay connected and involved.

Community Member Projects

We're continuing to grow community-led activities at the Centre, giving local people real opportunities to shape what happens here. Our resident-run line dancing group shows how local ideas can become successful, self-led programmes, and as new groups form, we'll support them to get established and grow. By involving people in planning, decision-making and delivery, we're building activities that are well attended, rooted in local pride and genuinely led by the community.

To build on this, we're setting up a volunteer fundraising group where residents can share ideas, help plan events and take on small roles that make a big difference. Room-hire groups will also be invited to get involved, strengthening ownership and giving more people the chance to shape the Centre's future. We know it can be challenging to find fundraising volunteers, so if you have ideas, skills or even small suggestions, please let me know, every contribution helps us grow and strengthens what we can achieve together.

Financial and Infrastructure Projects

A big part of my role is making sure the centre has a strong and secure future. We're building a mix of income streams so we're never reliant on one source. Our funding now comes from steady room hire, grants, community fundraising, raffles, goodwill donations and small but important earned income from teas, coffees and event activities. This blend of income, helps us keep the centre open, supporting local people in a steady, sustainable way.

Our rent increased in November 2025, and so did other rising costs, at that moment, we did not increase our hire charges and have taken this hit ourselves. With this in mind, we will strengthening our room-hire income and from 1st November 2026, prices will be updated, and we're promoting our spaces more widely through social media, and will be through our refreshed website and new platforms like Instagram and Twitter. This will help us reach new groups and expand on our regular bookings.

Special Achievements and Proud Moments



The Centre Manager has created a new therapy, counselling and hot-desk room downstairs. This flexible space will be marketed in these three ways, giving us more room-hire options and helping us support even more people in a calm, welcoming environment.

We want to give heartfelt thanks to our many volunteers, our Trustees and everyone who gives their time so generously, their gifts for fundraising and their time. Their support at events and fundraisers keeps the centre thriving and shows just how much our community cares. As an organisation, we could not manage without their hard work and input. It is not only their hard work and dedication that is wonderful, but they have also become our friends. People attending our centre continues to rise year on year, with thousands of local people coming through our doors to take part in activities, seek support or simply connect with others. I would also like to thank everyone who hires rooms from us, your support is invaluable.

Every visit is a reminder of just how vital this centre is, a place where community spirit is lived, shared and strengthened. It is not only the community that is strengthened, the centre and my role has helped me personally grow in self-esteem and confidence, and I thank all of you for this.

And the momentum isn't slowing. Footfall is up, fundraising is up, room hire is up**,** our income overall is slowly climbing, every indicator is moving in the right direction. The centre is growing, thriving and becoming an even more amazing anchor for our community, and I am even more excited about what's ahead. This is only the beginning watch this space as our amazing, hardworking Brookvale Team carry on Mal's wonderful vision of a thriving community centre for everyone.

AGM 2026

By Natalie Slonecki & Jack Hampson

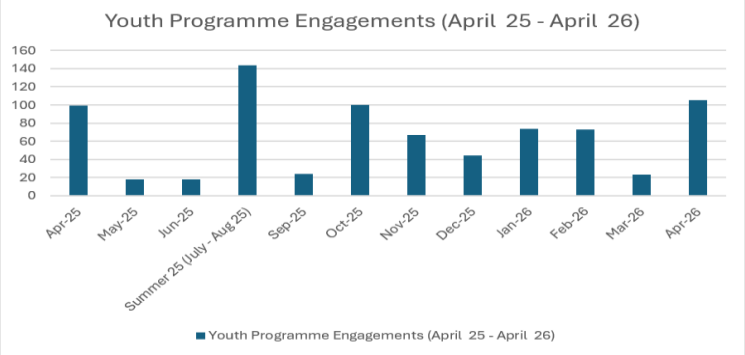
Completed Projects:

Our main projects completed during this year were monthly discos, a dance programme and the half term/Summer activities.

- The monthly discos ran from October 25 and finished on March 26.
- We ran a dance programme, a six week activity for kids to learn how to waltz, salsa and ballroom dance. Completed between: November 25- December 25
- We provided and offered a range of activities throughout all the half-terms, with our flagship programme being the summer half-term, where we see our highest numbers (144 young people)

Running these programmes supports our five year bid with the lottery in achieving "at least 3 youth programmes every year.".

The total number of young people that have come through our centre and interacted with our activities and youth projects is 789 (increase of 36 young people, 4.78% increase from the AGM data a year ago).



Ongoing projects

Our ongoing projects include more monthly discos, more half term activities as well as a creative writing project and the youth group.

- Our creative writing project allows young people to create a play about something they believe matters or something they perhaps struggle with. We have already completed one session of this and our next session show is on the 9th September. We have two sessions left of this year long project running from the ages 15-25 including SEND or a young carer.
- Our half term activities have been running throughout summer, we have had some amazing turn outs, therefore we know what activities to run next time to hopefully have the same outcomes.
- Our next disco will be in October and we are hoping to put on a show for the young people.
- Another ongoing project is our youth group, each week we ask them to do a different activity, whether this is learning a new language or learning how to be a volunteer. Their achievement is running their own activities to the young people coming through the centre, we are hoping they can run a few more in the next half term.

Supporting the National Lottery 5 year bid in:

"Help **at least 5 young people per year** move into **training, volunteering, or jobs**."

Upcoming projects

Some of our upcoming projects we are involved in are:

- Building/decorating a Bin with our Youth Group in combating littering around the Community Centre.
- Due to the success of last year's trip, we will once again be taking our youth group to Anglesey, where they will have the opportunity to enjoy and take part in a range of exciting activities away from the centre.
- To celebrate our Creative Writing project, we will be hosting a showcase at the Brindley Theatre for all our young people who have taken part, with all four short plays being screened.

Community Projects

- A key intergenerational event we had was a community quilt. This was where adults and young people came together to produce a quilt that they had to make, they sewed on things that matter to them e.g. friends, love, a teddy they like and more.
- We also have strong partnerships with all our consultants and stake holders, allowing us to use their activities more knowing it's a good outcome for the young people.

Financial and Infrastructure Projects

When it comes to financing our youth work projects, funding comes primarily from two main sources

- **Ella Youth Fund**: Funds our Half-term activities.
- SWAP Funding: Put on Kids Disco's between the months of October 25 to March 26.
- **Halton Borough Council Youth Grant**: Envision and put on our Creative Writing Project.



Special Achievements

● Personal Stories you make with the children
● Achieving the 10k grant to put on the Creative Writing Programme + Council coming to watch our creative writing projects
● Having over 50 young people attending a Disco



ADULT PROJECT – SELF ADVOCAY

Halton Speak Out – Adult Project AGM Report 2025/26

During 2025/26, Halton Speak Out's Adult Project has continued to promote self-advocacy, inclusion and the voices of adults with learning disabilities across the borough. Alongside our core work, self-advocates have contributed to strategy development, service improvement, research, recruitment, training and a wide range of community activities.

Key Achievements and Projects

Learning Disability Strategy. We worked with Halton Council and local partners to support the development of Halton's new Learning Disability Strategy. Self-advocates helped ensure that the strategy reflected lived experience, community inclusion and the priorities of local people. A particular highlight was two self-advocates writing the foreword to the strategy, demonstrating the value of lived experience, self-advocacy and co-production.

Co-production, Consultation and Service Development. Throughout the year, self-advocates took part in co-production groups, consultations and engagement sessions, ensuring people with lived experience had a stronger voice in adult social care and local wellbeing services. They also joined recruitment panels for the Director of Social Services and Quality Assurance Team, helping to shape leadership and service development.

Research, Inspection and Quality. We contributed to research with Oxford Brookes University, helping to inform future service planning. Self-advocates also shared their experiences with CQC inspectors, ensuring the views of people who use local services were heard. Self-advocates played a key role in developing the Easy Read version of the Living Well in Halton guide, helping to make information clearer, more accessible and inclusive. We will continue to support self-advocates to lead and contribute to Easy Read work and training.

Regional Partnership Working. Self-advocates continued to work with NWTDT and the Pathways Partnership, building regional connections, sharing experiences and learning from others at the Pathways Conference in Blackpool



Community, Social and Member Activities. Our social activities provide valuable opportunities for people to meet, make friends and build meaningful relationships. Events such as quiz nights, board games, afternoon tea, the Valentine's Black Tie Couples Night and the End of Summer Disco brought people together to have fun, spend time with friends and strengthen connections, helping to reduce isolation and build a sense of belonging.#

Ongoing Projects



Brookvale Surgeries.

Provide a regular, welcoming place for people to talk, get advice and access support when they need it. The twice-weekly drop-in sessions have seen increased attendance, supported by stronger links with Social Care and community networks. Next year, we will focus on raising awareness and creating more opportunities for people to connect with others who can help and support them.

CRMZ Young People's Group We are working with young people at Riverside College to explore their hopes, ambitions and future choices. Good planning during the transition to adulthood is essential to help young people understand their options, make informed choices and have their voices heard. We will continue to support young people to explore their futures and ensure services and providers listen to and support their choices.

We are especially proud of one of our self-advocates who successfully completed the Oliver McGowan Training in Learning Disability and Autism. This is a significant achievement and reflects the valuable contribution of lived experience. We will support the self advocate to explore ways to share his learning and knowledge with other self-advocates, helping others to build their confidence, skills and voice.

Impact and Partnership

The Adult Project is strengthening the self-advocacy movement across Halton, ensuring that the voices, rights and choices of people with learning disabilities are heard and valued.
The grant funding and exceptional support from Halton Borough Council have been vital in making this work possible and in creating new opportunities for self-advocates to influence services and decision-making.



For 29 years, Halton Speak Out has championed the rights, voices and lives of people with learning disabilities across Halton, and people with lived experience remain at the heart of everything we do. Throughout 2025/26, self-advocates have helped shape strategies, services and decisions, built friendships and connections, developed new skills and spoken up about what matters to them. With the ongoing support from Halton Borough Council, we have strengthened our partnerships and our commitment to ensuring people with learning disabilities are heard not only in decisions about their own lives, but at every level of service planning and development. We are proud of our 29 year history and will continue to champion self-advocacy, inclusion, choice and the right of every person with a learning disability to have their voice heard and their ambitions valued.