



thehopecentre.
ST HELENS

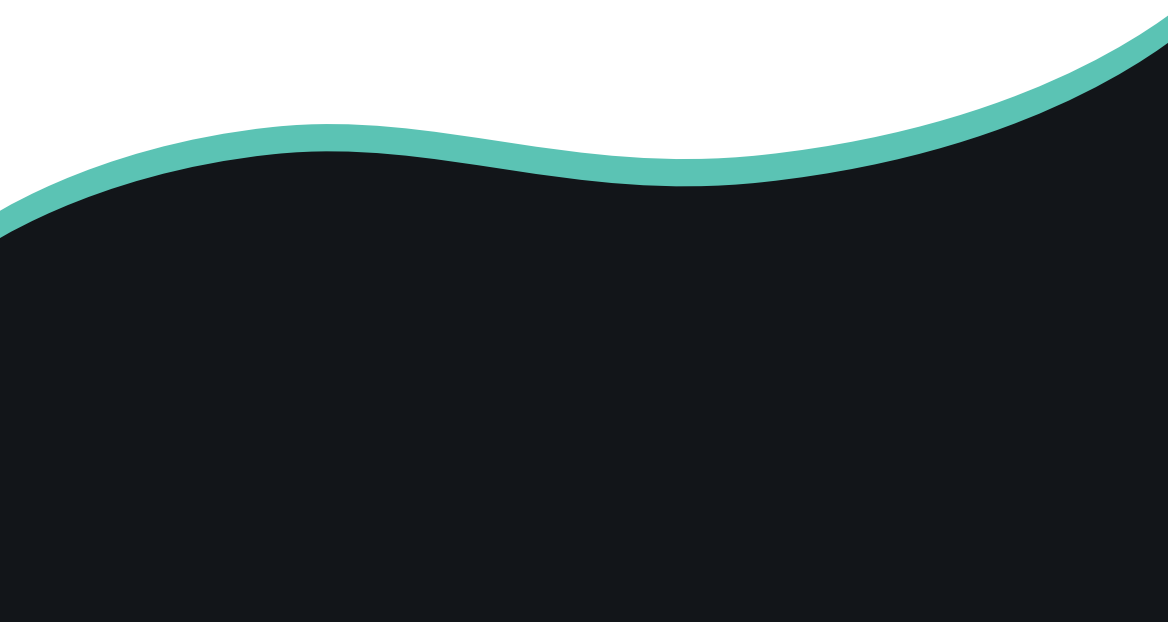
BRINGING LIFE & HOPE TO OUR COMMUNITY

Impact Statement 2023 - 2024

Discovering & celebrating the good news stories of the work of the Hope Centre.

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Introduction



This was me 20 years ago - we all look a little different as the years have passed and the same can be said for the Hope Centre – we have changed our delivery, adding new services and pruning others but our ethos has always remained the same – supporting people in need with an open heart.

During these 20 years the Hope Centre, like us all, has faced a number of challenges, we have experienced the highs and lows been to the top of mountains and seen the depths of the valleys.

When we started our activities in 2004 we were focused on helping people find employment, helping write CVS, ensuring the right support was available. Then in 2006 we were invited to take over the local soupie at 103 Church Street which was feeding the local homeless community, nowadays we do so much more including all aspects of personal care and support, 2012 saw the St Helens Foodbank open its doors for 6 months, 12 years later it supports more people than ever imagined, we have developed mental health courses, opened a food pantry and a furniture restoration project, and I am extremely proud that each project continues to hold the beneficiary at its heart.

We have lived through a pandemic, and currently in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis and with the support of the St Helens community have continued to be able to support the people of St Helens who need support, however that looks.

One of the biggest changes has been the introduction of technology and handheld devices as something that most of us or all of us carry and we can do almost everything from sitting anywhere on our devices. We can buy almost everything from a place that was once only known as a rainforest!

However, one thing that remains unchanged is the amazing community of St Helens. Their willingness and unselfish giving to help families and people who need it most. People are generous and kind - always looking out for each other, we are a town that looks after each other.

Thank you for being part of our story and looking forward I know there are more challenges to be faced and accomplishments to be celebrated, and I know that together we continue to make a difference.

Angela Metcalfe
Project Director

The Hope Centre

The Hope Centre, St Helens is a multifaceted charity hub of support, advocacy & practical support. We are dedicated to serving those in our community who are most in need through our various projects, courses and training opportunities and as we continue to grow, we do all we can to help as many people as we can.

The projects from the Hope Centre are extensive and varied but all with one key ingredient that binds them together. Bringing hope is the root of what drives what Hope Centre does on a daily basis.

Since 2004, the Hope Centre has provided high quality support and training for those most removed from society, challenged by unemployment, skills shortages and social deprivation. We have provided courses, advice and guidance to hundreds of people in St Helens.

This booklet outlines our major projects and their impact in our community.

Hope House

Hope House exists to support those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in St Helens by providing advice, advocacy and support. Hope House is a drop in service running Monday – Friday every week and also providing Christmas holiday provision, it provides a basic needs and personal care service for local homeless and those at risk of homelessness.

A gentleman aged 60-65 years' story...

"You have helped in more than one way without your help and support I would be lost, Hope House has been the shoulder to cry on I've needed. Sometimes it's good for my mental health just to come down, have a brew and have a chat.

When I present at Hope House, I know I am guaranteed some good food and a drink which eliminates the stress of not knowing when food might come next. As well as this, I know I am able to use the shower facilities whenever I need to, which helps keep me in a good head space.

The staff help to create a friendly environment and make all feel safe. A place like this is needed for our town, the service you offer is immeasurable and to not have a service so highly dedicated to others' well being would be detrimental to our community."

A gentleman aged 47 years' story...

During 31 years of addiction and living in the YMCA, Hope House has always a place I could rely upon. Whether it be for a friendly chat, breakfast, or advice. It has been a rock throughout that time. Sometimes I needed the service every day of the month, other times it would be once a month. During the inconsistency of my life in addiction Hope House was always that place I could go to.

I approached Hope House's Project Lead with me being 8 months free from addiction, where I asked for an opportunity to give back to a service that has been a lifeline. I have now been working alongside the Hope House team as a volunteer for the last 5 months. I'm now able to work alongside Hope House service users and can show them support and share stories of life in addiction and how your life can be turned around with one decision. At times I do question how this is my life now and how it happened I have ended on the other side of the fence. But I do believe by having the support and reassurance from the Hope House team I have been able to keep striding in my addiction story and keep heading in the right direction.

By holding a volunteering opportunity at Hope House, not only has it positively impacted me it has impacted my family. It has given them hope as I am showing that I am contributing positively back to the community and showing them that I am changed and wanting to help those who I once was surrounded in addiction with. I have now been able to attend rugby matches with my son, something that was a wish has now become my reality. I'm now able to take my daughter shopping, with money that once would have been prioritized on drugs and alcohol. I have also built up past relationships and friendships which has led me to being in a happy relationship, something that was never possible as nothing was worth maintaining as I had a track record of ruining things.

Recently I have been participating in the Breathe Mental Health Course, provided by The Hope Centre. This has given me a focus and aim to have each week and assisted me in gaining back a sense of responsibility as I am keen to attend each session as the personal development, I have noticed is something that I never thought would be possible.

St Helens Foodbank

We don't think anyone in our community should have to face going hungry. That's why we provide three days' nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to local people who are referred to us in crisis. We are part of a nationwide network of foodbanks, supported by The Trussell Trust, working together to combat poverty and hunger across the UK.


This foodbank is run in partnership with local churches, facilitated by The Hope Centre, St Helens and supported by our faithful volunteer base, local supermarkets and the public.

Our Volunteers Say

"Volunteering at the Hope Centre enables me in a small way to help local families and friends who are struggling in this social and economic climate."

"Volunteering helps me to maintain my mental health & wellbeing and to know that I am helping to provide food to local families who need it most"

"Volunteering gives me a reason to come out of the house, to be with a team working together to help the community of St Helens who need our help and support"



“The foodbank helped mum throughout Covid and this is our way of saying thank you.”

- Foodbank Supporter who donated a car boot full of food.

“Thank you so much, I do not know what I would have done without your help ”

- A working mum off work whilst her child was ill, she had not been eating so her child could.



Hope Pantry

Hope Pantry is a collaboration between Hope Centre, Your Local Pantry and Wesley Methodist Church, providing low cost food for a weekly subscription. Pantries soften the blow of high living costs and create the conditions for communities to grow and thrive, by bringing people together around food. Pantries are strengthening communities, fostering friendships, loosening the grip of poverty and contributing to healthier, happier lives.

I have found volunteering at the Pantry such a life-affirming experience. To meet people from all walks of life and see the humour and warmth that connect people. It's humbling to see how people deal with their problems and difficult circumstances. I am so inspired by every person I volunteer with wonderful, wonderful people. Love them all.

- **Hope Pantry Volunteer**

The staff of Hope Centre have helped me a great deal with food. As it helps with my weekly food bill. They are so helpful and care for people a great deal. I thank them very much.

- **Hope Pantry Customer**

Lovely community spirit, nice folk. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication in helping everyone. Every bit of food helps. 10 out of 10. Thank you.

- **Hope Pantry Customer**

Baby Basics

Baby Basics is a volunteer-led project aiming to support new mothers and families who are struggling to meet the financial and practical burden of looking after a new baby. Baby Basics started in Sheffield in the spring of 2009, this centre continues to support families across Sheffield working with a wide range of frontline health and social care professionals. There is an ever increasing network of Baby Basics centres across the country each staffed by a committed team of volunteers.

“Baby Basics were an absolute lifesaver for me when I was pregnant!! Would love to repay all the help they gave me. Wonderful people, can’t thank them enough!

Baby Basics Beneficiary



“Baby—
basics”



The Breathe Course

Our bespoke “BREATHE” mental health course has been developed to enhance the health and well-being of the local people in St Helens struggling with mild to moderate mental health issues such as depression, stress and anxiety.

The BREATHE Programme is a free, 8 week course for adults aged over 18. Classes are weekly, delivered in small groups in a safe and comfortable environment at The Hope Centre. Each session lasts up to 3 hours.

A gentleman aged 46 - 55...

I was referred to the Hope Centre by my Job Coach, he advised that the Breathe Course would be able to help me as I suffer with Depression and anxiety. I had been having problems with my depression and anxiety for a long time however, once I was made redundant from my work I became angry and found it hard to control my anger issues. I had problems with drugs and alcohol in the past, I found life easier to deal with at this point as they seemed to dull my emotions. Since coming off them having all the emotion and no outlet meant that I was angry all the time.

Due to personal circumstances I took a turn for the worst I had no where to go, I couldn't talk to anyone not even my family as I was the strong one, I was the one who had to take care of them! Not being able to provide for them and not being able to talk to them took its toll, we were arguing all the time, I lost control of my temper...life was not good.

I didn't believe that the Breathe programme could help me but I decided to go anyway just to keep the Job Centre off my back, how wrong I was.

The tutor understood and reassured me, she taught me that being able to talk to people, to my family would help me. I started talking within the group and had spoken to my family and friends about my feelings, I felt as if a weight had been lifted from my shoulders.

Because of the Breathe programme I have begun to believe in myself, I went for an interview and got the job right away. It's all because of the Hope Centre and the Breathe Programme.

ReStore St Helens

Born out of a desire to harness the business ideas of the community to benefit the community, Changing Communities is a social enterprise. We aim to do what our vision says – to positively help change communities and improve people’s lives.

Working in partnership with local organisations, we will positively support people and communities to help them develop their sense of belonging, increase local involvement and help them have the confidence to make new life choices.

ReStore Customer Stories

The ReStore project has numerous layers. They restore unwanted furniture to an exceptional standards at reasonable cost.

They restore communities with their ability to see needs and address difficult issues with kind support, and they restore people, helping people who feel at the lowest point gain, not just items for their home, but self-esteem, self-worth and the place in community.

ReStore Customer

"Children who are going to school regularly and on time " – you helped with bedding and toys for a child's bedroom.

"Being able to cook at home, saving money and ensuring Diabetes was under control" – you supplied kitchen equipment.

"House is so much warmer and now feels like a home" – you supplied rugs, soft furnishings, lamps and paintings.

"Everyone there is so lovely, they never make you feel like you are begging, they can't help enough" – A patient who went to buy a few items they were desperate for and came away with a car full of things, lots free of charge.

- Social Prescriber Feedback

Our Statistics

The Hope Centre & ReStore

Together, The Hope Centre & ReStore project had a Social & Economic In Kind Value Equal to £222,852 in 23-24.

Volunteer Hours

Hope House: 3000
Foodbank: 8223
Baby Basics: 515
Hope Pantry: 2206
ReStore: 4627

Hope House fed and supported 383 people, with 5,544 interventions.

St Helens Foodbank fed 10,814 across all hubs in St Helens.

The Breathe Project supported the mental health of 30 people.

Baby Basics gave out 94 moses baskets to families.

Hope Pantry supported 562 families this year.

The ReStore Project supported 69 families, fulfilled 53 commission projects, had 15 tonnes of furniture donated and helped 20 families with full house free furniture donations.

Contact Us

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