

Volunteering Annual report

What are we doing well and what could be improved?



The information in this report covers November 2024-October 2025



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1 | Recruitment & retention

We looked at how many volunteers we have, how long they've stayed, how many we recruited and how many left - and their reasons for doing so.

We have 118 volunteers

- * Long service: 21 volunteers have been with us for 5+ years
- * Our average volunteer has been with us for 3 years
- * New starters: 38 volunteers joined us this year

Induction survey results

New volunteers attend a comprehensive group induction led by our Volunteer Coordinator with support from experienced volunteers. Six volunteers responded to our request for feedback; overall the results were very positive.

"Enjoyed my experience at the induction session, felt welcome in a warm friendly inclusive atmosphere. It was helpful, informative and the information was presented well."



Volunteer induction
in June 2025

- * Leavers: 17 volunteers departed this year

Exit survey results

Seven volunteers shared feedback. Volunteers leave for a variety of reasons but all responding volunteers would recommend Stretford Public Hall to other people who are interested in volunteering

Our volunteer numbers continue to rise. We retain a good number to sustain the team. We consistently attract interest from new volunteers, and receive positive feedback about our induction process.

Recruitment & retention

Volunteer support & communication

* New volunteer support plan:

As part of our efforts to make volunteering at the Hall as inclusive as possible, we've developed a draft volunteer support plan. This has been offered to individual volunteers as needed - one volunteer has disclosed a dementia diagnosis, enabling us to tailor our support to keep her included and feeling useful. Another volunteer with autism has worked through the plan with us to identify how we can support him to avoid future meltdowns by managing his stress levels. We aim to roll out to all volunteers on request from 2026.

* Changes since 2023-24:

We had found a larger volunteer team means fewer opportunities for individual engagement with staff, particularly the Volunteer Coordinator, and some volunteers were feeling out of touch.

- In response, this year we began using whatsapp broadcasts for quick news / call-outs for help.
- We also developed a new online event calendar, enabling volunteers to see how / when they can get involved.
- Our new-style Volunteer Network meetings have met with favourable feedback.



* New welcome table:

Following our autism-friendly training, we've introduced a welcome table stocked with sensory, communication, and accessibility aids to support all visitors to the Hall. These resources are also available to volunteers, helping create a more inclusive and comfortable environment for everyone.



Recruitment & retention

Volunteer development & training

* Training

Event & Hospitality volunteers receive in-house training offered at intervals through the year. All hospitality volunteers are also asked to undertake free online Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety training, giving them an accredited qualification. We are grateful to Trafford Council for enabling free access to this training.

Hospitality
volunteer bar
training in May
2025



Learning our new
cocktail menu,
inspired by a
volunteer's
suggestion



* Building skills & confidence

Volunteering at the Hall gives people space to try new tasks, build routines, and grow their confidence at their own pace.

For volunteers' week celebrations on social media with the other community hubs, we highlighted the impact of volunteering on the confidence of one of our Tuesday helpers



Sue (pictured, left) is one of our friendly meet and greet volunteers. Every Tuesday she supports our visitors to find the right help at the Stretford Advice Hub. Sue has profound hearing loss and lipreads to understand speech. After an extended period of unemployment had left her feeling down, her jobcentre workcoach suggested she try volunteering. She visited the Hall for advice and applied to volunteer with us. Since Sue became part of our team, we have seen how she has grown in confidence in speaking to people. Sue tells us she really enjoys volunteering at the hall - getting out of the house, getting more involved in her community and she particularly enjoys volunteering alongside Deborah (pictured, right). We're so glad she decided to join us!

Case study: How volunteering in our community hub supported one volunteer's job search

"I just wanted to tell you how grateful I am that you have given me the opportunity to volunteer with Stretford Public Hall.

As an older divorced guy I struggle to fill my hours with meaningful activity, and it has been really nice to spend some time with the volunteer team and feel like I am contributing to my community. There's also been a few of the activities, such as the rummage sale, I have attended with my sons, and they have not hated it, which is about as much I can ask from teenage boys.

I have had pretty low job satisfaction for the past few years, and was looking to do something which I felt to be more meaningful and rewarding. I wanted to get a job in the public sector, or with a charity, but have always struggled to get interviews with these types of organisations.

Since volunteering at the community hub it has given me the confidence to speak about what public good and the volunteer sector means to me, and given me some hands on practical experience helping people where I can, and directing them to others when I can't within a public sector adjacent space.

Despite the fact I have only been with you for two months, I have been able to put this experience down on my CV and it has led to five interviews, almost all the jobs I applied to, including a successful one with Trafford Council which begins in January. I will see once I get through the training if I can get some reduction in hours to continue with the community hub.

I have absolutely no doubt that being able to speak about my experience at the Public Hall has been critical in finding what I hope will be a job I have for the rest of my working life. Thanks again."

Support into employment

We are keen to support any volunteer motivated into employment through volunteering at the hall. Over the past year, we've provided six references to support volunteer job applications / volunteer positions at other charities

2 | Time & tasks

What have our volunteers have got up to over the year?

**Our volunteers gave 5,403 hours
an increase of 28% on 2023-24!**

- * **26 of our volunteers gave the equivalent of 10 working days each over the year.**
- * **Our average volunteer gave the equivalent of one hour per week of their time.**
- * **Over the last 6 months, an average of 65 volunteers were active each month (2023-24 average was 56/month)**

Special mention to
the volunteers who
each gave between
20-30 working days'
worth of time!



Grace Kenny

Christine Ovens

Eric Atkinson

Mark Etherington

Stephen Peers

Simon Borkin

Devon Finley-Reynolds

Barbara Guest

Geraldine Carroll

Time & tasks

What do our volunteers do? Our current volunteer roles:

Events Volunteers

- Front of house - greeting & ticket sales
- Stewarding: helping our building to be accessible to all
- Setting up & packing down

50 volunteers

Hospitality Volunteers

- Running the cafe for our weekly warmer
- Serving on the bar or cafe for cinema, music events and weekend/evening events
- Friday Fish & Chips

37 volunteers

Sound Technicians

- Ensure the successful delivery of technical requirements for our community events
- Maintain & organise our equipment

8 volunteers

Plus of course our board of Directors!
8 volunteers

We are proud of our diverse & flexible range of volunteer roles and tasks.

Community Hub Helpers

- Welcome desk for Together Tuesday & Stretford Advice hub
- Community errands
- Digital support
- English conversation cafe

47 volunteers

Hall Helpers

- Gardening Club
- Decoration for events
- Reception cover
- Arts & crafts
- Leafleting/promotion

52 volunteers

Heritage Volunteer

- Volunteers interested in celebrating and preserving Stretford Public Hall's history!
- Archiving, oral history, tours and events

14 volunteers

Repair Cafe Volunteer

- Share knowledge and experience to help our community do simple repairs.

9 volunteers

Volunteers can undertake as many roles as they wish, so the total will exceed our total number of volunteers

3 | Impact

What impact has our volunteers' activity had on the Hall and for our community?

We estimate that over 4,600 people engaged in **community activities** our volunteers helped to run over the past year.

✱ **Our community hub volunteers are vital to the running of our regular and one-off activities supporting our friends in the Stretford community**

- Fish & Chip Fridays
- Friday Film Club
- New Roots refugee welcome sessions
- Community cookery class
- Chairobics set up
- School visits & School uniform pop-up shop
- Together Tuesdays: 25+ volunteers regularly helping each week, including Gardening Club, English conversation cafe, weekly warmer community cafe, digital help and service signposting on our welcome desk.

✱ **Our hub volunteers are getting busier! For reference, in 2023-24, volunteers supported activities accessed by 3,612 people**

Despite officially taking a break for summer, our English Conversation Cafe volunteers continued to meet informally with their group in a local park.

Conversation Cafe meet-up
at Victoria Park



"Thank you for our class Team and teachers. because I get big knowledge and also I have get good social interaction and also I have improved my speaking practice with a group of people. I am so happy I meet with those good teams."

Our community hub volunteers have delivered air fryers, electric blankets, radiators, and children's clothes

Our regular community hub user John, who is housebound, was served with an eviction notice. Our volunteer Christine supported John by collecting paperwork and delivering to Trafford Council as well as conducting her regular visits.

Digital volunteers' case study from our volunteer John:

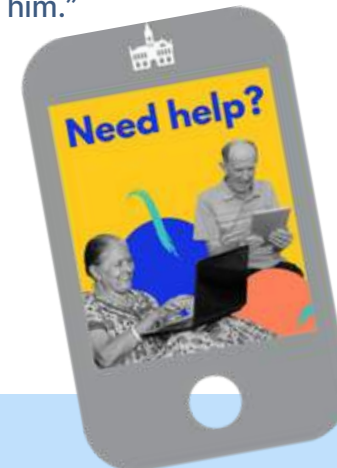
"M is an 81 year old gentleman in a wheel chair who lives in a first floor rental property and needs to change to the ground floor because of his mobility. He was very upset and being quite loud and difficult to deal with - HOST [Housing team] asked us to help. Trafford Council wanted to conduct a telephone interview with him the next day, but wouldn't progress unless he provided the last 2 months of Bank Statements via email.

M was very worried about doing this, and I think he was quite confused what in essence was happening. He didn't want to be 'hacked' and didn't understand why they were asking for all of this info.

We listened, we put his mind at rest, and we eventually sent the email from his phone with the attachments with M's blessing. 5 minutes later he got a reply confirming that they had everything they needed and tomorrow's appointment was confirmed. M left very happy to the point he was thanking people on his way out. He apologised for being loud and we had a bit of a laugh with him about it in the end.

I wanted to highlight this as we made a difference to someone and as always it felt good. Everyone is different and has different ways of dealing with things but he just wanted some help and someone to listen to him."

Maged & Marek helping at our Get Online weekly digital volunteer drop-in session



Spotlight:

Busy event programme

Over 12,400 people attended our volunteer-supported events in 2024-25!

* **Our events are more frequent and bigger than ever - over the course of 2024-25, our volunteers helped us deliver 53 events. For reference, in 2023-24, volunteers helped with 37 events attended by 2,290 people**

* **Our diverse range of events included:**

- Stretfest (attendance 4,200) including our 10th birthday
- Pride (attendance 2,000)
- Christmas Fair (attendance 1,300)
- Rummage in the Range vintage sale
- Northern soul & motown nights
- Christmas & Britpop singalong concerts
- Life drawing
- Cinema & Tour de France screenings
- Halloween Teen Party

Our programme keeps our volunteers busy and interested - and attracts new volunteers to join the team

Our Chair, Simon Borkin, cutting the cake at our 10th birthday celebration in March 2025



Spotlight:

Development of our Heritage Group

Early in 2025, our Heritage volunteers formed an interim committee.

They agreed a plan for the year, designed promotional materials and held a research outing. They led the organisation of this year's Heritage Open Day, developing a fantastic programme of activities for all ages. The group will use the profits from the day to invest in equipment for their project, for instance recording devices for oral histories.

Over 150 people attended our 2025 Heritage Open Day



Stretford Public Hall
Heritage Open Day
Saturday 13 September, 12-4pm

What's On

Ground floor

Foyer Tour sign up
See our volunteer welcome team to reserve your place on our clock tower & basement tours, or to promenade with Enriqueta Rylands.

Underhall Cafe
Enjoy hot & cold drinks, snacks and homemade cakes. All profits go to our Volunteer Heritage Group future activities.

Tombola Try your luck to win a prize!

Family craft activities Fun for everyone!
Make a spinning top, build your own Stretford Public Hall, design a brick or a victorian tile.

First floor

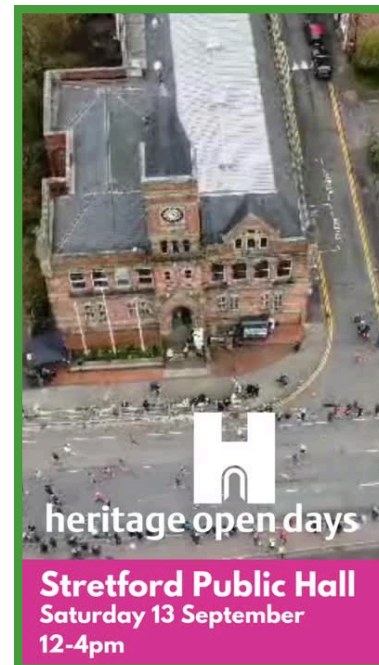
Ballroom Talks
1pm & 2pm Stretford Public Hall: the building, the history (Richard Bond, local historian)
2.45pm 'Langford: A Manchester Love Story' including book signing (Juliette Tomlinson, local author)

Information & exhibition

- Stretford Public Hall's Heritage Group
- Trafford Local Studies Centre
- Buttress Architects
- The Victorian Society - Manchester

Rylands Film
'Ahead of his Time: John Rylands' legacy'
Project led by Emerald Arts with local children
15min film, repeated

www.stretfordpublichall.org.uk/heritage



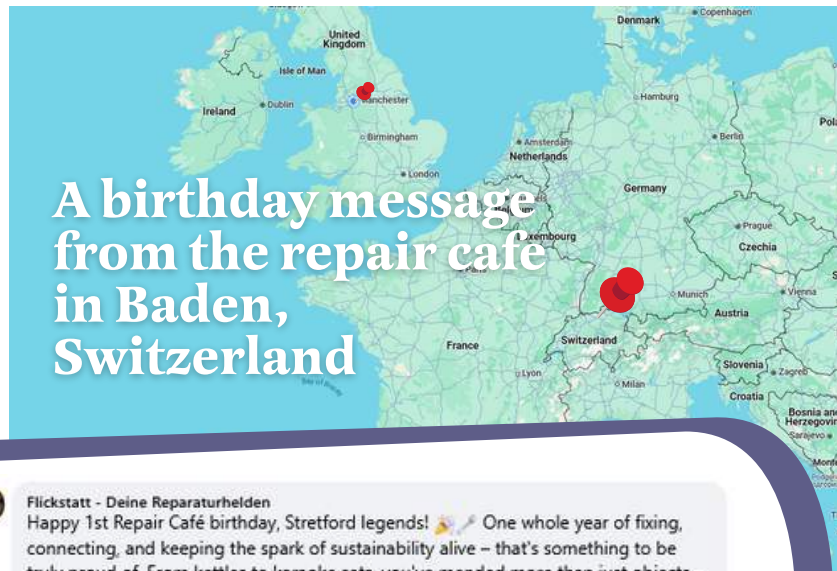
Spotlight:

Our Repair Cafe turned 1

Part of the international Repair Cafe network, our monthly volunteer-run drop-in fix-it session continues to flourish and celebrated their anniversary in June 2025. Recently they even mended a reclining armchair!



Our expert tinkerer volunteers have given over 180 hours and examined nearly 80 items in their first year!



A birthday message from the repair cafe in Baden, Switzerland

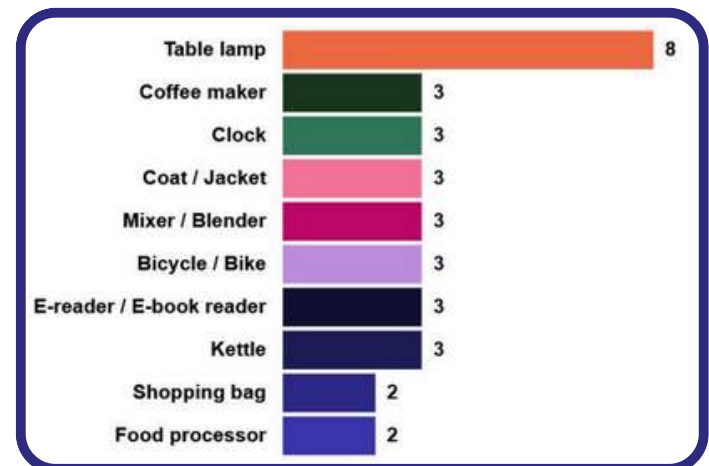


Flickstatt - Deine Reparaturhelden

Happy 1st Repair Café birthday, Stretford legends! 🎉 One whole year of fixing, connecting, and keeping the spark of sustainability alive – that's something to be truly proud of. From kettles to karaoke sets, you've mended more than just objects – you've built a space of community, care, and circular spirit. 🌟

Massive respect to your incredible volunteer team and a big shoutout to Stitched Up for lighting the torch! 🕯️ May this Sunday's celebration be buzzing with stories, repairs, laughter, and shared wisdom. And here's to many more years of making the world a little less wasteful and a whole lot more wonderful.

The most presented products in the first year of the Stretford Repair Cafe:

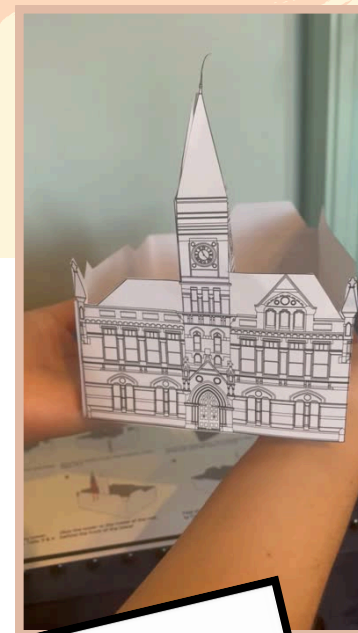


Spotlight:

Celebrating & sharing volunteer talents!

- ✳ 11 volunteers bake tasty cakes to give away or sell at our events
- ✳ 16 volunteers help with arty / creative projects
- ✳ 16 volunteers fluent in other languages can help us to support community hub users

Eric, a qualified architect, designed us a 'Build yourself a Stretford Public Hall' craft activity



Hazel transforms vegetables from The Bread and Butter Thing into soup each Tuesday for our Weekly Warmer



Denise's welcoming Weekly Warmer bunting (she also makes delicious cakes!)

Kate used her blue badge tour guide expertise to become Enriqueta Rylands at Heritage Open Day



Cantonese
German
Mandarin
Punjabi
Italian
Hindi
Polish
Spanish
Tamil
French
Arabic



4 | Reward & recognition

It's important that our volunteers feel recognised for the effort and time they give.

Christmas lunch for Together Tuesday volunteers, with staff providing the lunch, games & gifts - and a lovely poem written by our community hub manager.



Our gardening club once again received the top category award in this year's RHS Britain in Bloom In your neighbourhood NW awards!

New tabards to ensure our gardening club get recognition for their brilliant work in our Pocket Park and redeveloped car park space



It's time to say thank you!



Following our successful event in 2024, we once again held a **Stretford Volunteer Social** during **Volunteers' Week** to thank and celebrate our volunteers.



We invited anyone who volunteers in, or is from, Stretford. 50 volunteers and staff attended - we had a potluck buffet to share food, undertook colouring activities to capture what volunteering means to us, played games and listened to music from the blueSci Good Neighbours ukelele band

In November 2025 we're launching a new Volunteer Award scheme, starting with 10 year achievement awards.

Here's a video all about our volunteers which we shared on our social media and printed out stills as a display in our foyer for visitors to see during Volunteers' Week



5 | Experience & feedback

What do our volunteers tell us about their time with Stretford Public Hall?

We hold regular meetings to give volunteers the opportunity to discuss their experiences, one-to-ones with our Volunteer Coordinator are available on request and we run an annual survey to invite anonymous comment.

This year we ran our survey in conjunction with the other 5 community hubs, during September 2025.

41 Stretford Public Hall volunteers responded out of 123 registered volunteers at the time of the survey, a 33% response rate

1. What do you enjoy about volunteering with Stretford Public Hall?

This could be in general, or a specific task that you've really liked over the past year.

Our volunteers told us they enjoy:

- Feeling part of a warm, friendly community
- Enjoying meaningful roles and varied events
- Taking pride in contributing to something positive locally
- Appreciating supportive, welcoming staff and volunteers

"I enjoy being part of a team that works to support our fantastic hall. I've enjoyed being part of the Heritage team. I like meeting people from the local community."

"I feel proud to be involved in an organisation which is so positive and embraces members of the community who might not always feel included.

For example, the Tuesday hub, including Conversation Cafe; Stretfest and Stretford Pride. It is good to have such a wide range of volunteering options in one place - I have taken the opportunity to try out different things."

"I love doing something that helps me connect with and be known within my community. I also love the variety of volunteering experiences I can get at the hall - from older people's events to northern soul nights - from welcoming people to serving on the bar. Making our beautiful building accessible to all sections of our lovely Stretford community is fantastic."

"I always enjoy the Christmas Fair, both the planning and the actual event, and it is rewarding that it has become a popular event for local people."

"I love the friendly and welcoming atmosphere at the hall. Fellow volunteers and staff are always so helpful and supportive."

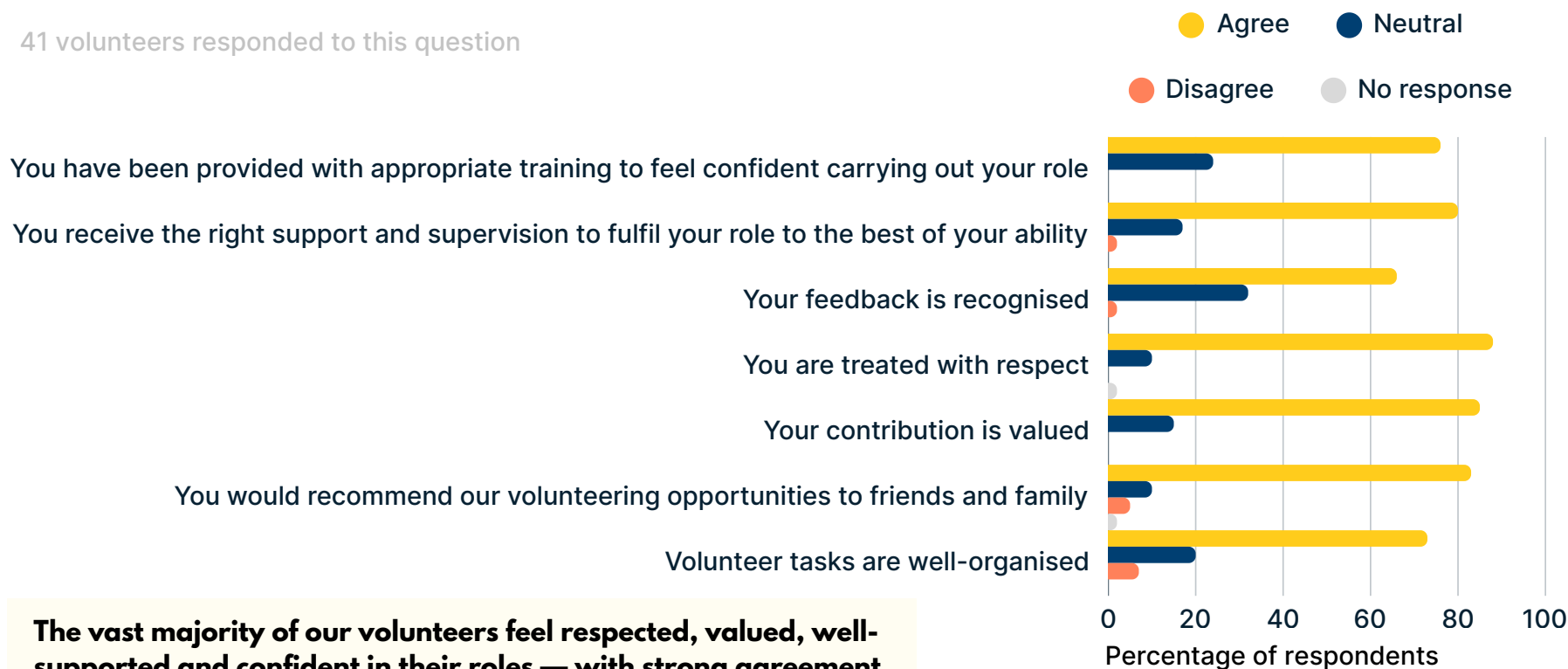
2. Is there anything that you would like to change about volunteering with Stretford Public Hall?

The vast majority of our volunteers are satisfied with the current arrangements.

Of the 32 volunteers who responded to the survey, 26 gave a version of No in response to this question - the main being they had more time to volunteer! A few requested access to more training & clarity over responsibilities at events (e.g. ensuring everyone gets a turn on the bar) - taking action on both will help with the issue reported by two volunteers that it can be the same 'faces' helping at our evening events.

3. With regard to your experience of volunteering at Stretford Public Hall, to what extent do you agree/disagree that:

41 volunteers responded to this question



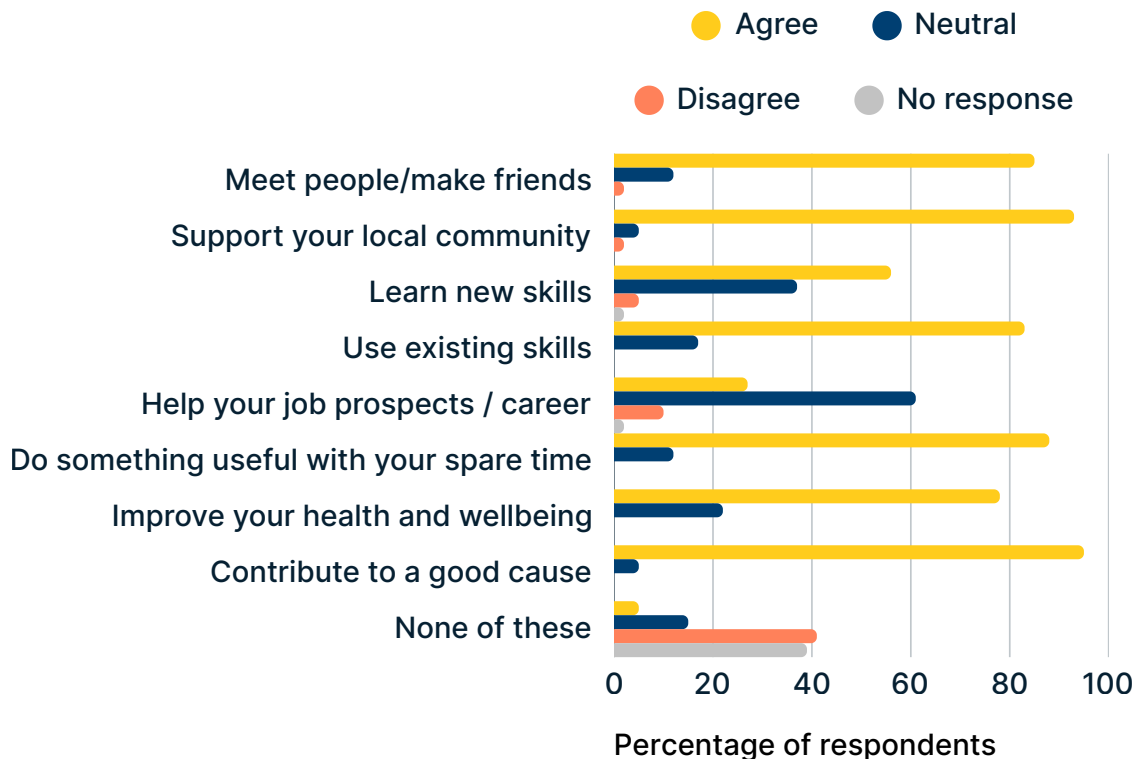
The vast majority of our volunteers feel respected, valued, well-supported and confident in their roles — with strong agreement across all key measures of volunteer experience

4a. We'd like to know about the impact of volunteering at Stretford Public Hall on our volunteers. To what extent do you agree/disagree that volunteering here helps you to:

41 volunteers responded to this question

Our volunteers are overwhelmingly motivated by community connection, contribution to a good cause, and social interaction - with strong agreement across all impact measures except career progression.

We explore individual motivations for volunteering and support those seeking work / training as a stepping stone to employment - it is not a priority for many of our volunteers.



4b. If you can, please tell us more about how volunteering at Stretford Public Hall has had an impact on you:

We received so many wonderful responses to this question, and wish we had space to print them all!

Volunteers report that volunteering at Stretford Public Hall impacts on them in a number of positive ways:

- Social connection and community belonging
- Sense of purpose and pride
- Confidence and personal growth
- Skill development and learning
- Improved wellbeing and mental health.

"I purposefully moved to part-time work (now retired) so that I could volunteer locally and do something that would connect me into my local community more - and SPH has fitted the bill perfectly. I've seen the variety of events put on increase and every new type of event bring a whole new audience into the Hall, which is just fantastic. I hoped I would meet friendly neighbours and colleagues but it's gone beyond that and I have started to develop some lovely friendships. The success and sustainability of the Hall is there for all to see and is down to the wonderful Board (also volunteers of course) and the wonderful staff team. I'm so proud to be part part of this wider team."

"Being part of the heart of the community "

"Gain confidence in speaking to people when they first come into the building, where I wouldn't before."

"its made me a nicer person"

"It has helped me get to know many people in Stretford, even if just to say hi to while walking around Stretford. It's a good feeling to be involved in a good community cause."

融入社群,建立歸屬感!

Integrate into the community and build a sense of belonging!

"I feel like I'm giving back to the community by volunteering and that makes me feel like my time is being spent doing good and maybe making things better for the public."

If you joined during the last 12 months:

5. Please tell us about your experience of becoming part of Stretford Public Hall's volunteer team.

We received 18 meaningful responses, with two clear, positive themes:

- Volunteers feel genuinely welcomed and quickly part of the community
- The onboarding experience is smooth, organised, and confidence-building

"It's a bit like one of the famous soaps on telly, a newcomer comes along and everyone is so kind and friendly they look out for you and in return do the same."

"Everyone has been very welcoming and friendly. The kind, positive atmosphere is easily the hall's greatest strength. Its a place I want to be."

"Really felt welcomed and part of the team, thoroughly enjoying my role as sound tech at various events that are run at the SPH."

"Really smooth and organised onboarding process"

"I feel like I've been there forever (in a good way!)"

6. Is there anything Stretford Public Hall could do better to support our volunteers?

Of the 41 volunteers which responded to the survey, the vast majority feel well supported. We received 9 suggestions for improvements, mainly around gardening equipment and having opportunity to socialise with other volunteers. The former we are working on (funds permitting) and the latter suggests some volunteers aren't aware of the current opportunities to meet up, so we will do more to promote our volunteer network nights. Outside the survey, anecdotal evidence tells us we could provide further clarity around our ever-increasing programme of activities.

"No - I think the balance is right now in terms of volunteer meet-ups, inductions, ongoing training, duty manager briefings. The volunteer coordinator is also available if a 1-2-1 chat is needed (which is offered regularly)."

"Not really - [our Volunteer Coordinator] does an amazing job in supporting volunteers in finding roles that suit them and in sorting things out when necessary."

7. If you have any other feedback or suggestions, please comment here:

Very few responses, mostly praise for our efforts and our Volunteer Coordinator.

"Keep up the good work."

6 | Demographics

We've looked at a range of population measures to see how reflective our volunteer cohort is of the local community in Stretford and Gorse Hil

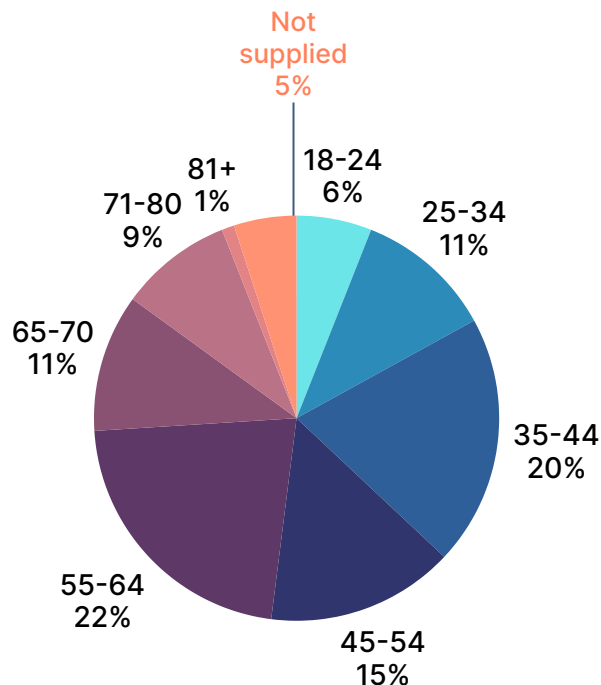
Volunteers are invited to complete our diversity monitoring form on application - it is not compulsory and many volunteers opt to not respond.

We will look in detail at sexuality, religion and disability every few years as the number of volunteers providing information is so low that yearly changes and comparisons to the local population don't reveal much.

The data here is correct as at October 2025.

Age

Our volunteers range in age from 18 to 81+



Age bracket	Stretford Public Hall Volunteers	Overall Stretford population*
Age 20-64	73%	61%
Age 65+	20%	13%

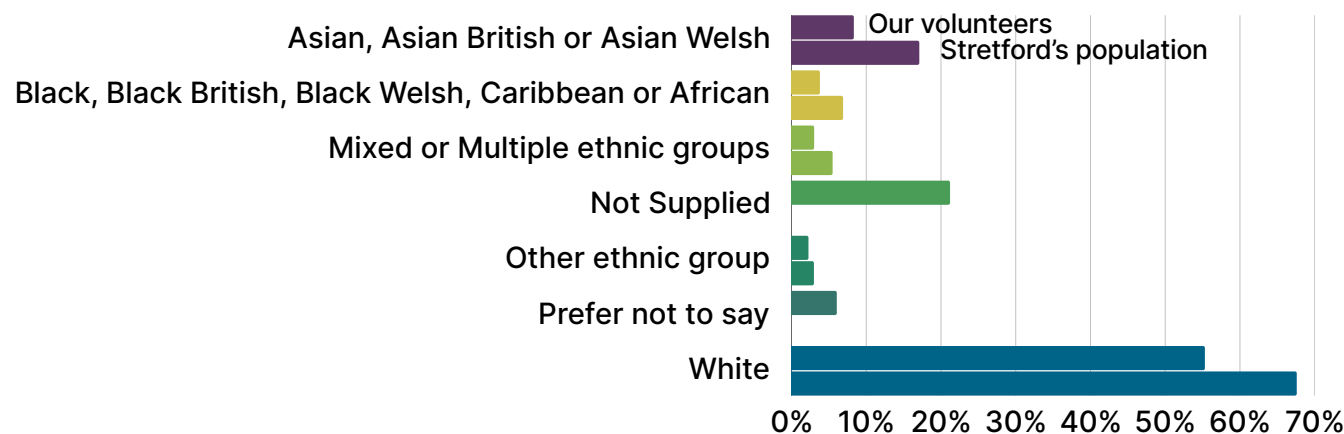
Source: Office for National Statistics, 2021

Our volunteer population is similar in proportion to the local population.

Nationally, people age 65+ are more likely to engage in formal volunteering - the demographic spread of our volunteer team bucks this trend!

Source: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202425-annual-publication/community-life-survey-202425-volunteering-and-charitable-giving

Ethnicity

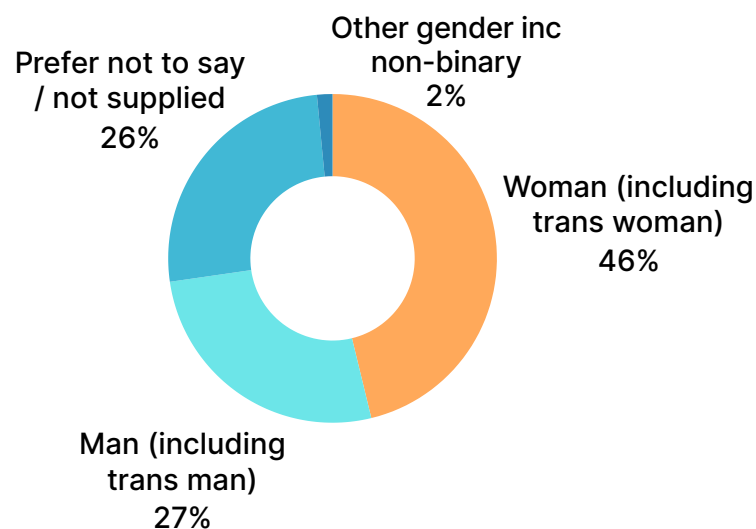


Each bar indicates our volunteer cohort, with Stretford's population proportion underneath.

You can see from this chart that the proportions for each category are similar to the local population (always slightly under due to volunteers not supplying a response)

Source for Stretford population: Office for National Statistics, 2021

Gender



Our volunteer pool is not as reflective of Stretford's gender population, which is 51% female and 49% male

Source for Stretford population: Office for National Statistics, 2021

Nationally, the Community Life Survey found no statistical differences between levels of volunteering men and women. We will keep an eye on potential barriers to volunteering for men but are wary of giving too much weight to the data when a quarter of volunteers did not respond to the question.

7 | Action plan

We've identified actions we need to take and will tackle these as part of our ongoing volunteer management from November 2025

Recruitment & retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusive volunteering: roll out our new personal support plan to all volunteers on request from 2026.• Training plan: develop a training programme for 2026 to ensure volunteers have the opportunity to learn new skills.• Continue our quarterly Volunteer Network Nights but introduce more social time/occasions into our programme
Time & tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek funding to better equip our gardening club• Build on the new online volunteer calendar of activities & events with a monthly summary, available as hard copy in the office, to support better understanding and easier participation.
Reward & recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch new Volunteer Award scheme, starting with 10 year achievement awards in November 2025.

Thank you to our amazing volunteers for their time & effort and for sharing their experiences!



Thank you for funding our Volunteer Coordinator post!



Stretford Public Hall

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stretfordpublichall.org.uk/volunteer