

Our Neighbourhood Network



Success Story

About the Project



Our Neighbourhood Network is a partnership between Alliance Homes and The For All Healthy Living Company.

Together, we're out and about in our neighbourhoods, listening to local people, backing community ideas and helping connections grow. We believe the best ideas already exist within our communities—sometimes they just need the right people around them to help them flourish.

Over the next few pages, we'd love to share some of the stories, moments and achievements from the past year, all made possible thanks to the support of The National Lottery Community Fund.



Some of the team at Our Neighbourhood Network

Together, Our Neighbourhood Network supports over 500 beneficiaries each year, creating opportunities for people to improve their wellbeing, build confidence and strengthen local relationships.

Our team is made up of highly connected community workers who are deeply rooted in the neighbourhoods they work alongside. Each of us brings our own passions and specialist knowledge—from health and wellbeing, to creativity, community growing and the environment—but none of us stay in our lanes. You'll rarely find us sitting behind a desk. Most of our work happens through conversations, cups of tea, community events and simply being present. One conversation naturally leads to another. A health chat might become a gardening project. A creative workshop might uncover someone who needs a little extra support.

Because we work closely together, we're able to follow opportunities as they emerge, bringing the right people together at the right time. We don't see people's lives in neat categories, so neither does our work. We let relationships lead the way. Whilst the number of people we support is important, it only tells part of the story. The greatest change has been seeing local people move from attending activities to shaping them, leading them and creating opportunities for others. The pages that follow share some of those stories—stories of community leadership, growing partnerships and the everyday moments that are helping to build a healthier, more connected and resilient South Ward.

Our Neighbourhood Network



This year with ONN

This year the Our Neighbourhood Network has placed local people at the centre of decision making, recognising that communities already hold the ideas, skills and relationships needed to create change. See our sections on Asset Based Recruitment, research and External influence.

Rather than designing projects for people, we have focused on creating the conditions for community-led ideas to emerge. This has included supporting residents to lead activities, developing volunteer opportunities, enabling young people to create and run the Bike Project, and working alongside community members to shape events such as the Winter Warmer, V Dubs Christmas event and seasonal workshops.

Community voices have also shaped our wider strategic work. Residents have informed research projects, contributed to conversations around health inequalities and helped influence local decision making through trusted relationships rather than formal consultation alone.

Over the year we have strengthened partnerships with organisations including Alliance Homes, Weston Hospicecare, Healthy Living Company, researchers, local contractors, community groups and voluntary organisations, ensuring that community knowledge is valued alongside professional expertise.

Our approach has increasingly shifted from asking communities to participate in projects towards supporting communities to lead them.



"It didn't feel like people were coming in with all the answers. We were listened to, our ideas were taken seriously, and we were trusted to make things happen. That's what makes a difference."



One of the biggest lessons this year has been that communities respond best when they are trusted rather than directed.

Projects that have had the greatest impact have not been those designed by organisations, but those that have emerged from local passions and strengths. Our role has increasingly become one of creating space, removing barriers and connecting people rather than leading every activity ourselves.

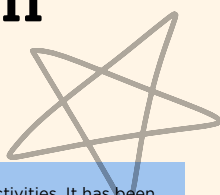
We've also learned the importance of strategic translation. Working closely with both communities and organisations allows us to translate lived experience into meaningful insight, helping health partners, researchers and local organisations better understand the realities of everyday life within South Ward.

We have also become increasingly aware of consultation fatigue. Communities are often asked similar questions by multiple organisations. By helping researchers rethink not only how they engage people but also what questions they ask, conversations become richer, more respectful and more valuable.

Perhaps most importantly, we have seen that investing in relationships creates opportunities that could never have been planned at the beginning of the year.



Movement for all programme



Movement for All has never been about creating a timetable of activities. It has been about paying attention to where energy already exists and creating the space for it to grow.

Supported through investment from Sport England, the project has allowed conversations to become opportunities and opportunities to become communities. Rather than asking people to fit around a predetermined programme, the journey has remained flexible enough to follow emerging interests wherever they lead. Sometimes that means noticing when one class is no longer enough. Sometimes it means hearing someone casually mention another interest. Sometimes it simply means recognising when a group is ready to take the next step without us.

That flexibility has allowed the journey to unfold naturally.

Current opportunities now include Tai Chi, Seated Exercise, Women's Swimming, the Bangladeshi Football Team, Badminton, Movement & Yoga and Line Dancing.

Following the Path

The map opposite captures just a few of the paths that have emerged. A single Tai Chi class quickly became two as more people wanted to take part. Those same conversations revealed a need for something gentler, leading naturally to the development of a Seated Exercise group.

Elsewhere, conversations with members of the Bangladeshi community led to the creation of a football team. Once relationships had formed, another shared passion surfaced. One conversation about badminton became the next path to follow. Women's Swimming tells a different story. What began with support has gradually found its own feet and is now community-led, with the group confidently sustaining itself. None of these journeys were planned from the outset. Each one emerged by staying curious, listening carefully and following where people naturally wanted to go.

What We Are Seeing

The activities themselves are only part of the story.

What has become increasingly visible is confidence growing quietly between sessions. New friendships forming. People introducing neighbours, inviting family members and sharing ideas that hadn't previously had a place to grow.

The investment has given us the freedom to stay alongside those conversations instead of working against them. It has allowed resources to move as new opportunities emerge, rather than remaining fixed to a plan created months before.

Movement for All continues to remind us that communities rarely grow in straight lines. They branch, overlap, pause, change direction and sometimes surprise us. When given the space to do so, one conversation often becomes the beginning of the next path.

Rita's Words

From no activity to all 3 classes & wanting more!



It's bloody lovely — I don't even have a word big enough to explain how great it has been. With all the challenges at home taking care of my son, this is my little bit of me-time. I feel like a 60-year-old again! I'd never set foot in a gym, but these sessions have given me the confidence to try new things. Over the summer, I even joined an open Tai Chi session on the beach with some of the ladies from the group. We even moved some of the classes into the park next door, and I felt confident enough to join in because I'd made friends at the group. We were having so much fun, I stopped worrying about anyone watching. I don't even care that I can't do some movements perfectly — I'm getting there, and I can do a heck of a lot more than I used to.

WESPORT PARTNERSHIP



I think yourself and the centre have been irreplaceable. The local contacts and connections you have been so important to the work we want to do with the partnership. Beyond this, the physical space offered by the partnership has been huge - the use of the space for meetings and for our work wider than this, then how important it is that people know and trust you and the centre has been crucial. Most importantly, the efforts you have put in to work in the partnership, to build our sessions, provide value and insight, input and contribute a leading role as a partner is phenomenal. We would be facing a much greater challenge without the FAHLC on board, and don't take this for granted. -OLLIE CROW PLACE AND COMMUNITIES OFFICER FOR wesport



◆ And heres a few numbers...

Every contribution, no matter the size, helps us continue our vital work. Here's a snapshot of how your kindness has made a difference this month:

154
PEOPLE

Attending on average every week
(sometimes a bit more)

244

SESSIONS THIS YEAR

And that's only the official sessions — the community clearly didn't get the memo about "limits"



The Healthy Living Centre continues to strengthen its reputation as a trusted and welcoming hub for health advice, specialist workshops, support groups and clinician-led programmes. Its growing range of innovative activities is helping local people make positive, lasting improvements to their health and wellbeing. Recent examples include Musculoskeletal Day, "Alright My Liver" and The Rattlers, each designed to engage participants with important health topics in an accessible and supportive way and by linking these clinical interventions with community activities.



◆ A summer in jubilee Park

It all started with a conversation

Like many of our projects, this one didn't begin with a funding bid or a detailed plan. It began with a conversation with a local parent. Together with residents living around Jubilee Park, we decided to create a relaxed space for children and families throughout the summer holidays. We brought along food, drinks and a handful of activity ideas, but the aim was simple: let the community shape what happened next.



A summer led by imagination

Every Friday, the park came alive.

Children rediscovered old playground games while teaching us new ones. Rounders returned to the field, pizzas were cooked in the outdoor oven, apples were pressed into fresh juice and hammocks appeared between the trees.

The biggest hit was the simplest activity of all...a huge pile of cardboard boxes. Before long, the park was filled with imaginative dens, tunnels and hideaways.

As the weeks went on, the community kept bringing new ideas. One of the children's favourites was a Halloween Zombie Day, where children armed with Nerf blasters defended the park from zombie parents. On 31 October, that idea became reality with support from Our Neighbourhood Network and South Ward Activity Network,



More than just a summer programme

While the activities were fun, the biggest changes happened between them.

One parent told us there had previously been two groups of children who rarely got along. Over the summer they began playing together, and many of the tensions between them appeared to settle.

The park also became a place where generations connected. A local resident who lives overlooking Jubilee Park joined us every week, sharing his knowledge by helping children repair and maintain their bikes.

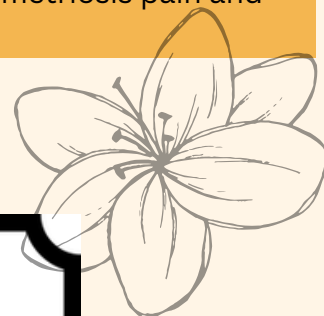
Looking back, the greatest success wasn't any single activity. It was seeing a community shape its own space, build new relationships and create traditions that continue long after the summer holidays ended.



South Ward is often a focus for research because of the challenges it faces. However, communities can quickly experience consultation fatigue, with the same voices being asked the same questions time and time again.

Our Neighbourhood Network works alongside researchers to bridge the gap between academic research and community life. We help translate academic language into everyday conversations, encourage approaches that respect local culture and relationships, and often begin by asking a different question: "What is the question we should be asking?" By involving communities from the very beginning and building on trusted relationships, research becomes more meaningful, more inclusive and ultimately more valuable for everyone involved.

This year we have worked together with researchers, researching ; Chronic pain, greif, green spaces, pelivc pain,endometriosis pain and smears.



PRIDE IN PLACE

LED BY YOU – BACKED BY UK GOVERNMENT

Influencing Pride in Place

This year, our Neighbourhood Network has supported the development of Pride in Place programme by sharing an approach rooted in relationships, trust and community strengths.

Rather than relying solely on traditional engagement methods, we have championed an asset-based approach that recognises the skills, passions and influence already present within our neighbourhoods. By identifying trusted local people from communities whose voices are often underrepresented, we have helped create opportunities for them to lead conversations within their own networks.

This approach acknowledges that people are often more comfortable sharing their experiences with someone they already know and trust. It moves beyond asking communities to take part in engagement, instead supporting local people to shape it themselves.

By encouraging leadership from a wider range of communities, Pride in Place is beginning to hear perspectives that are often absent from formal consultation, creating a richer and more representative understanding of North Somerset's neighbourhoods while strengthening local leadership for the future.

The Food Pantry

Our story

Every week, familiar faces gather at our Community Food Pantries. Some come for affordable food, others come for a chat, and many come for both.

Operating across two locations, the pantries bring together food from a variety of sources, including FareShare, surplus food from local supermarkets, bulk purchasing and produce grown through local allotments. By bringing these different routes together, members can access a wide range of quality food while helping to reduce food waste.

Members pay a small annual membership and, each week, can choose ten or more items for just £4.50. Fresh fruit and vegetables are especially encouraged, with one token giving members access to as much fruit and veg as they need, helping make healthy choices the easiest choice for local families.

The pantry has become much more than a place to collect food.

As people return each week, familiar conversations continue, friendships develop and neighbours look out for one another. Many stay for a cup of tea, sharing stories, swapping ideas and catching up on what's happening locally.

The regular rhythm of the pantry creates opportunities that don't always happen in more formal settings. It becomes easier to notice when someone hasn't been for a while, celebrate good news together or gently connect someone with additional support if they need it.

Food may be what first brings people through the door, but relationships are what keep the community growing.



7023kg



Food Pantry's surplus food
shared with the community

1173



Hours volunteered in Pantry

152



Food Pantry Members



Growing Together Bob's story

Hello, i am Bob,
I've lived on the estate all my life. I was married to my wife Maureen for 53 years and we had a good marriage. Basically, she became ill and ended up with a brain tumour. We actually lost her.
From then on, I went downhill. It was really hard and I couldn't cope. I didn't think I was going to get over it. I didn't think I was ever going to get well again.
The worst thing is the loneliness. When you've been with a person all those years and suddenly you're on your own, life becomes totally different and hard.
I come to the gardening club at Coleridge Road Community Garden and I've got to say that, from when I first came into the garden until now, it's been a brilliant journey for me because my health has improved 100%. I love sowing the seeds and seeing the produce grow as it goes along, watering it, feeding it and then eating it. It's very good.
I hear the birds singing and I see the butterflies, and all that. It's a lovely place to be and it's really good for my mental health.
When people come in, I have a chat and then get on with whatever we're doing.
I honestly don't know where I'd be without the garden. It's given me something to focus on, got me out of the house and helped me through some very difficult times.



The community garden is home to a range of community-led initiatives that bring people together, build skills, and improve wellbeing. Our Tool Shed project is a social group that helps people learn how to safely use tools and create simple items for their own gardens, such as planters and raised beds.
Nature Tots is a weekly forest school-style toddler group, attended by around 20 children and their grown-ups
Wild Women meets monthly to celebrate all aspects of womanhood, providing opportunities for wellbeing activities, mindfulness, connection. Our Nature Crafts Group brings people together to create crafts using natural and sustainably sourced materials. Alongside these activities, local childminders regularly use the space, and we host a variety of volunteering sessions where people can help grow produce, maintain the community garden, and contribute to the ongoing development of the site. These opportunities provide valuable social connections, develop practical skills, and support the wider community.



◆ Changing the View ◆

BBC The Wake Up Call

Some conversations begin around a table. Others find their way onto the radio.

This year, conversations that had been quietly growing within our communities travelled beyond the neighbourhood when BBC Radio Bristol's Wake Up Call broadcast live from the For All Healthy Living Centre.

The morning wasn't about promoting a project. It was an opportunity to challenge the usual narrative of Bournville. Too often, the area is spoken about through the lens of deprivation, statistics and need. This was a chance to tell a different story, one of creativity, kindness, resilience and neighbours who are already creating positive change.

It felt less like a radio broadcast and more like a community morning that just happened to be live on air. People dropped in for a free fruit and pancake breakfast, children joined the Bournville Big Brush before walking to school, and the room filled with conversation, quizzes, games and plenty of laughter.



Octavius Leaving a Legacy

Commissioned for the Winterstoke Road Bridge rebuild, Octavius launched its 2026 Leaving a Legacy project in partnership with the ONN Growing Together gardening team, the Healthy Living Centre and Windwhistle School.

Thanks to the support of partner organisations, an incredible local community, and a team of dedicated volunteers who pulled on their wellies and rolled up their sleeves, together with Octavius we delivered an impressive £100,000 of social value.

As part of the Legacy project the great Rhyne Community Garden was transformed into a vibrant, accessible community garden, complete with a refurbished tea shed, accessible raised planting beds, and a cosy fire pit where friends and neighbours can come together, connect, and share stories for years to come.



Arts and Health weekend

The Weston Arts + Health Festival, co-created by Super Culture and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust, is a free annual weekend celebrating the connection between creativity, health and community. Through creative workshops, walks, performances and shared experiences across Weston, the festival creates spaces where people can connect, explore and discover how creativity can support wellbeing in everyday life.

our Neighbourhood Network was involved from the early planning stages of this year's Weston Arts + Health Festival, bringing community insight, local knowledge and ideas that helped shape the festival as it developed.

Flag your group

As part of this year's Weston Arts + Health Festival, the Neighbourhood Network worked with local groups to create flags celebrating the organisations, communities and informal networks that make Weston such a vibrant place to live. Each flag represented a different community group or local asset, highlighting the people, places and activities that bring communities together every day. Together, they created a colourful showcase of the strengths that already exist across Weston. The festival culminated in a parade along Weston seafront, where the handmade flags were carried proudly through the town, led by a local samba band and followed by a local saxophonist. As the procession moved along the promenade, it became a moving celebration of the groups, organisations and grassroots communities that contribute so much to life in Weston. More than a parade, it was an opportunity to shine a light on the wealth of community assets that already exist. By celebrating both formal organisations and informal community groups side by side, the festival reminded us that strong communities are built through the many people and places that quietly make a difference every day.



Community story



“Supporting the Flag Parade as part of the Arts and Health Festival is important to us at Alliance Homes.

It brings people together and celebrates the rich, vibrant community we all share.

By taking part in creative community events with our customers and our communities, we demonstrate our genuine commitment to the places we live in - and to the people who make them what they are”. Helen

Creating systemic change with community voice.

Over the coming year we want to continue moving towards a fully community-led model where residents increasingly design, lead and sustain activities themselves.

We will continue investing in community leadership, strengthening partnerships and supporting local people to turn their own ideas into action.

Alongside community activities, we also see growing opportunities to support health partners, researchers and local organisations through strategic translation, ensuring that services are shaped not only by data but by a deeper understanding of the human experience.

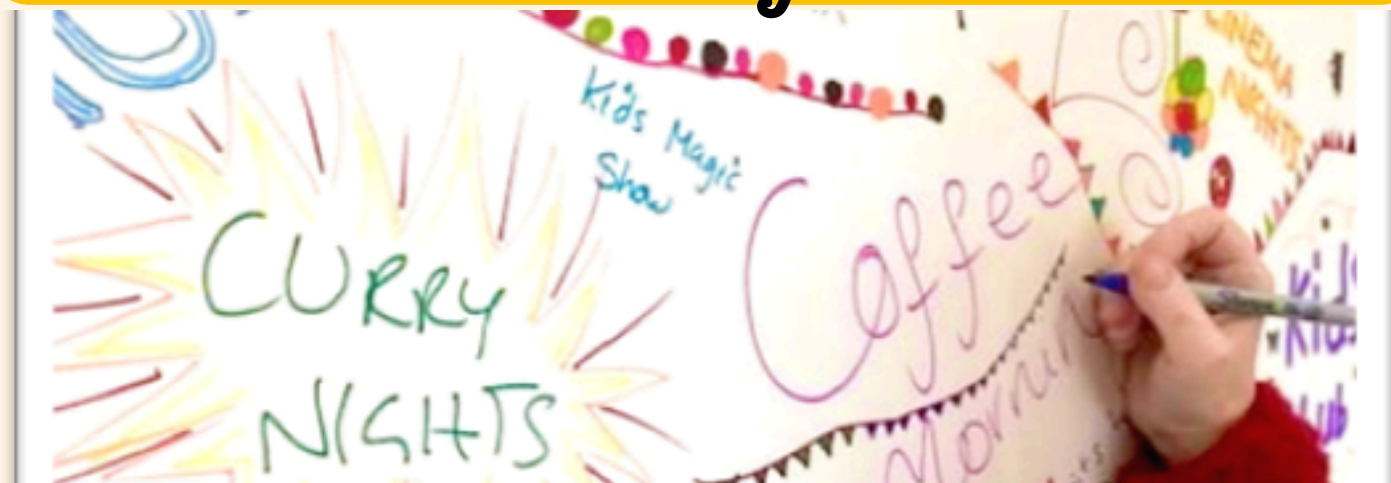
Our long-term ambition remains unchanged: to strengthen local leadership, increase community power and continue building neighbourhoods where people feel connected, confident and able to shape the future of the place they live.



Local Language Leads to System Change

ONN strengthened its role in influencing the wider wellbeing and health ecosystem by adopting the Argonaut language as a consistent framework for collaboration and delivery. This shared approach helped shape conversations, align priorities, and promote a common understanding of wellbeing across partners and stakeholders. New roles were developed to reflect this way of working, embedding wellbeing more intentionally into leadership, decision-making, and service delivery. As a result, ONN not only enhanced its own capability but also demonstrated leadership across the wider system, supporting stronger collaboration and contributing to a more connected and sustainable approach to improving health and wellbeing.

Community Hubs



COLERIDGE ROAD OUTDOOR HUB



Nature Tots has always been non-negotiable for us come rain, shine or even ice and snow.

It's the cornerstone of my week, not just for my child and me but for the wider community too. The group gives us chance to explore wildlife, learn about allotment gardening and enjoy outdoor play. Each session is thoughtfully designed by George the Community Gardener who consistently provides creative themed activities using natural and engaging materials whether it's homemade play dough, leaf and petal craft, weaving or our personal favorite planting and potting.



Wild Women, we meet on the last Friday of the month. We share food together, laugh together and do some wellbeing activities together. "always my favourite day of the month!"



Loxton Road Community Hub

Stay tuned for our Winter Program Guide, featuring seasonal service projects, new classes, and opportunities for involvement during the holidays.



Our Hubs Training Opportunities



12 people from the community joined a First Aid at Work training course delivered in the community hub space delivered by a local First Aid training provider.

All 12 attendees gained their First Aid at Work certificate, strengthening skills and practical knowledge through training opportunities for people in the community.



The Bike Maintenance Project

Sometimes the strongest community projects don't begin with funding or a plan. They begin with people who care enough to do something. The Bike Project is one of those stories.

Driven entirely by three young people from the Bournville Estate, the project has grown from a shared passion for bikes into a weekly community space where people can bring their bikes for free or pay-what-you-can repairs, learn new skills and spend time together. What makes the project so special is that it wasn't created for them—it was created by them. They recognised something their community could benefit from and turned their own interests into an opportunity for others. Every Friday evening they give their time, share their knowledge and create a welcoming space where everyone feels able to stop by, ask questions or simply have a chat.

Recognising the potential of their idea, the Neighbourhood Network provided a home for the project at the Bournville Community Hub, giving it the space to grow while allowing the young people to remain firmly in the driving seat. A small start-up seed fund from the Alliance Homes Community Together Grant then provided the essential tools and bike parts needed to bring their vision to life.

In doing so, they are changing the way young people are seen. They have shown that leadership doesn't always begin in a boardroom or with a job title. Sometimes it starts with three young people, a toolbox and a desire to give something back to the place they call home.

The Bike Project is a powerful reminder that when communities invest in the ideas that already exist, remarkable things can happen—not because someone created them, but because someone believed in them.



◆ Youth Awards 2026 ◆



What began with three young people, a toolbox and a passion for bikes has gone on to inspire far more than the local community.

This year, the Bike Project was named the overall winner of the Environment Category at the Reset WSM Youth Awards—a fitting recognition for a project that has shown how caring for our environment and caring for one another can go hand in hand.

The award recognised far more than repaired bikes. It celebrated the time freely given, the skills generously shared and the welcoming space the three young people have created every Friday evening at the Bournville Community Hub.

For the three young people behind the Bike Project, the evening was a celebration of everything they had built together. Their idea had grown from a simple passion into an award-winning community initiative—proof that some of the most meaningful change begins not with a grand plan, but with people who care enough to take the first step.

Their story is a reminder that when we invest in young people's ideas, trust them to lead and celebrate their successes, we don't just recognise achievement—we encourage the next generation of community leaders.



What the bike boys say :

Quotes randomly from the boys or marie inthis section

Ready to help? Opportunities range from serving meals and helping at events to providing mentorship and behind-the-scenes support. Learn more at reallygreatsite.com

A gift today helps us plan for tomorrow.

To make a secure donation, visit reallygreatsite.com or scan the QR code. Every dollar makes a direct impact in the lives of families who need it most

Just some extra activities

Every event tells a story.

A story of neighbours meeting for the first time, families making memories, volunteers giving their time and communities celebrating what they have created together.

These moments may only last a few hours, but the friendships, confidence and sense of belonging they inspire often last much longer. Heres a few snap shots of some of the other stuff that has taken place



From festive wreaths to spring creations, our seasonal wreath-making workshops brought people together to get creative using willow from our allotments and natural foliage gathered from the local area.



Sometimes people don't need a reason to come together. Our seasonal outdoor gatherings simply created the space for neighbours to enjoy nature, share conversations and celebrate each season as it arrived.



Our biggest and most community-led Winter Warmer yet saw residents, volunteers and partners come together to create a fantastic day of festive fun, raising funds for Weston Hospicecare and showing what can be achieved when a community rallies behind a shared cause.



A FairyTale christmas at tyntesfield House - National Trust

Our knitting and crochet community groups were invited to take part in creating a special installation for Tyntesfield's 'Once Upon a Christmas Time' theme this year. Bringing together nine local community groups, the project helped transform the historic house and gardens into a magical fairytale-inspired display.

Participants met at our community hubs and the Healthy Living Centre to design and create giant Crocheted baubles, which became a key feature of the enchanting installation. The project celebrated creativity, collaboration, and the contribution of local people in bringing the festive fairytale experience to life



AND MUCH MUCH MORE.....

Asset Based Recruitment

The introduction of Asset Based Recruitment has become the standard approach to recruitment across FAHLC, ensuring that the strengths, skills and lived experiences of local people are recognised and valued throughout the recruitment process. This approach has successfully been embedded into the appointment of four new roles, with local residents actively participating alongside staff in interviewing and selecting candidates. By placing community members at the heart of recruitment, FAHLC has strengthened its commitment to recruiting people who not only have the right skills but also share the organisation's values and commitment to the communities it serves.



The involvement of local people in the recruitment process has had a significant impact on both the quality of appointments and the confidence of those taking part. Community representatives have influenced recruitment decisions by bringing valuable local insight, ensuring that candidates demonstrate the qualities and behaviours that matter most to local residents. Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with many saying they now feel that their opinions genuinely matter and that they have been able to make a meaningful contribution to shaping local services. This has reinforced the principle that communities should have a voice in decisions that affect them.

The Asset Based Recruitment approach has also delivered wider benefits for community wellbeing and resilience. Many participants reported that, prior to becoming involved, they did not believe they could "do" recruitment or that they had anything valuable to offer. Through training, support and practical experience, they have developed new skills, increased their confidence and gained a greater sense of ownership over local services. This has enhanced local capacity by developing future community leaders and empowering residents to play an active role in decision-making, contributing to improved wellbeing, greater resilience and stronger, more confident communities.



Looking Back, Looking Forward

Over the past year, Our Neighbourhood Network has continued to show that lasting change starts with people.

Together, we've supported over 650 local people, strengthened partnerships, increased the use of our community hubs and green spaces, and created opportunities for residents to lead projects that matter to them.

From community gardens and creative workshops to bike projects, family activities and neighbourhood events, we've seen local people move from taking part to taking the lead.

Along the way, we've built confidence, strengthened relationships and helped create healthier, more connected communities.

We've also shared what we've learned beyond South Ward, influencing wider work across North Somerset by championing asset-based approaches, community leadership and the belief that the people closest to the challenges are often closest to the solutions.

As we look ahead, our ambition remains the same: to continue creating opportunities where communities can thrive, relationships can grow and local people have the confidence and support to shape the future of their own neighbourhoods.

Thank you to every resident, volunteer, partner and organisation who has been part of this journey. Together, we've shown that when communities are trusted, incredible things happen.

