

Trustees Annual Report 2019



1. Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers

The Charity name is: St John's Centre, Charity Number: 1146058, Company number: 7597525,

Registered office:

St John's Centre,
St John's Road
Old Trafford,
Manchester M16 7GX

Trustees:

Appointed October 2012: - Revd. John D Hughes, Miss Evelyn Cosham (Treasurer), Mrs Louise Dunn, Mrs Glynis Craig (Chair), Mr Mark Nesbitt: Mr Ralph Rudden

Appointed Nov 2017: Mr Richard Taylor

Appointed 2019: Mr Mathew Tanner

Trustee Resigned: Mrs Sandra Barber – Nov 2018

Additional information:

Senior staff member in charge of day-to-day management of the charity: Revd. Christine Aspinall

Independent examiner of accounts: Mr Alastair Gillian, 53 Burnedge Fold Road, Grasscroft, Oldham OL4 4EE.

Bankers:

Barclays Bank
587, Wilbraham Road,
Chorlton-Cum-Hardy,
Manchester,
M21 9AL

2. Structure, governance and management

St John's Centre is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Charity; it is constituted by Articles of Association, adopted March 2011.

Trustees are appointed in accordance with our governing document: 4 Parochial Church Council (PCC) nominated representatives, who are appointed by the PCC at the meeting prior to St John's Centre's AGM, plus 3 members from the local community and 2 spaces for co-opted members onto the board from affiliated groups. Trustees are formally elected at the Annual General Meeting. When trustees have been recruited they are asked to attend an interview, and given an induction pack with information on the charitable company, background information, reports from the last two meetings, a business plan, relevant policies and a code of conduct. We also provide a trustees' handbook. Ongoing training is arranged for trustees, with opportunities provided for specific training as and when needed.

Decisions are made by trustees sitting as a board at 6 meetings per annum. Specific work is carried out by standing sub groups. Subgroups are set up as and when needed, time limited and specific. The board retains all liability for decision making around financial issues. Day to day management of the project is the responsibility of the Centre Manager, at present Christine Aspinall.

3. Financial review:

Reserves policy

Explanation of any Deficit *See second part of this report for examined accounts for the year 2018/2019*

4. Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

NONE

5. Charitable Aims, Objectives, Public Benefit statement

The charity's objects ("Objects") are specifically restricted to the following:

- 1. To further, or benefit, the residents of Old Trafford, Manchester and the neighbourhood, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation, leisure time, occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.*
- 2. To promote such other purposes as are charitable according to the laws of England and Wales for the benefit of the public as may from time to time be determined.*

6. This Annual Report contains all aspects of public benefit of the charity.

Staff & Board Members 2018/19

Christine Aspinall – Manager

Diane Browne - Administrator

Elaine Eland – Volunteer Coordinator

Sabikun Ahmed - Crèche worker; **Lizzie Quinn** - Crèche worker

Rose Thompson – Finance

Emma Wilton - Learning Coordinator

Board Members: 2018/19



John
Hughes



Louise
Dunn



Evelyn
Cosham



Ralph
Rudden



Ric Taylor



Glynis
Craig
(Chair)



Mark
Nesbitt



Mat Tanner

Mission Statement:

Through education and recreation, we seek to promote good relationships within our diverse community; give individuals the opportunity to realise their full potential; meet the needs of the present and create a sustainable resource for the future.



The Chair's Comments: Glynis Craig

Once again I am immensely proud to be providing the introduction to such a comprehensive report detailing the work of the St John's Centre. This report covers a successful year in which the Centre has continued to serve the people of Old Trafford and welcome new friends to our community. I wholeheartedly thank the staff and volunteers for their hard work in making this possible. I also wish to thank my fellow boards members who volunteer their time to ensure that the Centre has good governance. As you read on you will see that the Centre has had much to celebrate over the last 12 months but also faces a reduction in funding. Although we have been successful in the past in obtaining funding from bodies such as the council, church and grant organisations; we are now looking at a much reduced income for 2019-2020 and a real possibility of staff redundancies. The board are determined to work to ensure that the centre will survive these challenges. In times of financial restraint we are aware that the people most disadvantaged can be the people who need the centre most. I know that we can rely on the goodwill and help of all our users and friends to support St John's Centre going forward.

Centre Manager: Christine Aspinall

Our Successes

St John's Centre has now been serving the community of Old Trafford for 37 years. It is our eighth year as a Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee. We have had an excellent year, and through the hard work of our Board, staff and volunteers, all areas of our work continue to flourish. We are delighted to say that we are continuing to meet ever-changing needs and addressing inequalities within the community that we serve. Our Centre reflects the diversity of our community and we are able to reach out to those who are marginalised.



We have expanded our existing support for people who have English as a second language (ESOL), in particular refugees, asylum seekers and new settlers to the area. Our volunteer-led ESOL serves those unable to access Government-funded courses. There has also been a lot of emphasis at the Centre this year on food poverty; we have continued our existing



projects and instigated new ways to address these issues, including our Community lunch with Fareshare food, The Bread and Butter Thing, and Foodcloud (supermarket food for free).

Community Learning continues to be our main activity during the daytime and this continues to flourish. Numbers of learners have increased again, and they have grown in confidence, gained skills and qualifications, become work-ready and - just as importantly - gained new friends and found a place of welcome. Our learning is delivered through our strong partnerships with learning providers Trafford College, the WEA and Manchester Adult Education Service (Talk English), and through our dedicated volunteers.

Volunteering. There has been a growth in volunteering at the Centre, overseen by our Volunteer Coordinator Elaine - and we have 48 active volunteers at present, which is just amazing. Our volunteer-led ESOL classes, held twice a week, have grown once again this year.

Volunteers are supporting many other activities on offer as part of the Centre's work, and they themselves are gaining much-needed skills, experience and confidence to become more work-ready, as well as contributing to the smooth running of the Centre.



Our Work with Young People



Our Ofsted-registered crèche facility for children aged 6 months to 5 years has helped 110 children in their development, and enabled their parents to access learning, in the last academic year. Our crèche is a super facility that helps children to get a good start in life to achieve their full potential and school readiness, and is particularly important for those whose home language isn't English.

Work Experience: Once again we have been able to offer work experience to four young people aged 14-16yrs from local high schools. Although this does create more work for staff, it's great having the young people around, and we always make sure that it's an enjoyable experience for them.





Summer School ran for four weeks this year for 8-13 year olds, giving 90 children a positive holiday experience, including challenges, fun and fabulous meals. This was partly funded by Trafford Housing Trust's Holiday Hunger fund, The High Sheriff's Trust and included our own financial contribution.

Stay and Play sessions for under 5s and their parents and carers continue to be popular: great creative activities, stories songs and healthy snacks. We have had great parental feedback about our provision, and we can see that the children love it too!



We have also held **Half term activities** for 0-13 year olds, which are always well attended.



Monthly '**Messy Church**' sessions, which provide a creative workspace for learning and spirituality for families with young children mainly aged 0-11, have been well attended by members of our community.

Hosting and Supporting Voluntary Groups

St John's Centre remains an asset for the wider community, for private parties, community events and is well used by local community groups; this year we have provided space and worked with over 25 groups in various ways, and the Centre has had around 30,000 individual visits.

STEP (Strategies to Elevate People); Old Trafford ABC Boxing & Fitness; Singing for the Brain (Alzheimer's Society); Manchester Inspirational Voices Choir; Trafford African Caribbean Over 50s Lunch Club; Yoga with Dana; Mr Shin's Taekwondo Academy; Step Aerobics; Brownies; G-Camp; Shylarks Harmony Singing Group; Friends of the Earth; Cabaret for Freedom; Lovenotes Singing Workshop; OT Creative Space; St John's Church; More to Life.



Solar thermals have now been installed on our roof, giving us green energy for heating water for the Centre; another initiative in partnership with St John's Sunshine, who secured a grant toward this work.



From January to April 2019, St John's Centre served as a shelter for twelve homeless men. The guests have a safe bed for the night, share a hot evening meal and breakfast, and socialise with the volunteers. This is in partnership with Greater Together Manchester

Our Challenges



Funding: Our biggest challenge by far this year has been securing funding for the future. Big Lottery Reaching Communities funding came to an end in August 2019, leaving us with a gaping hole in our finances. Despite some herculean efforts to replace this funding (£97k per year) we haven't as yet been able to. Seven funding applications were unsuccessful. There is a real threat of redundancy to our staff, and - to this already struggling community - the threat of the Centre no longer being here.

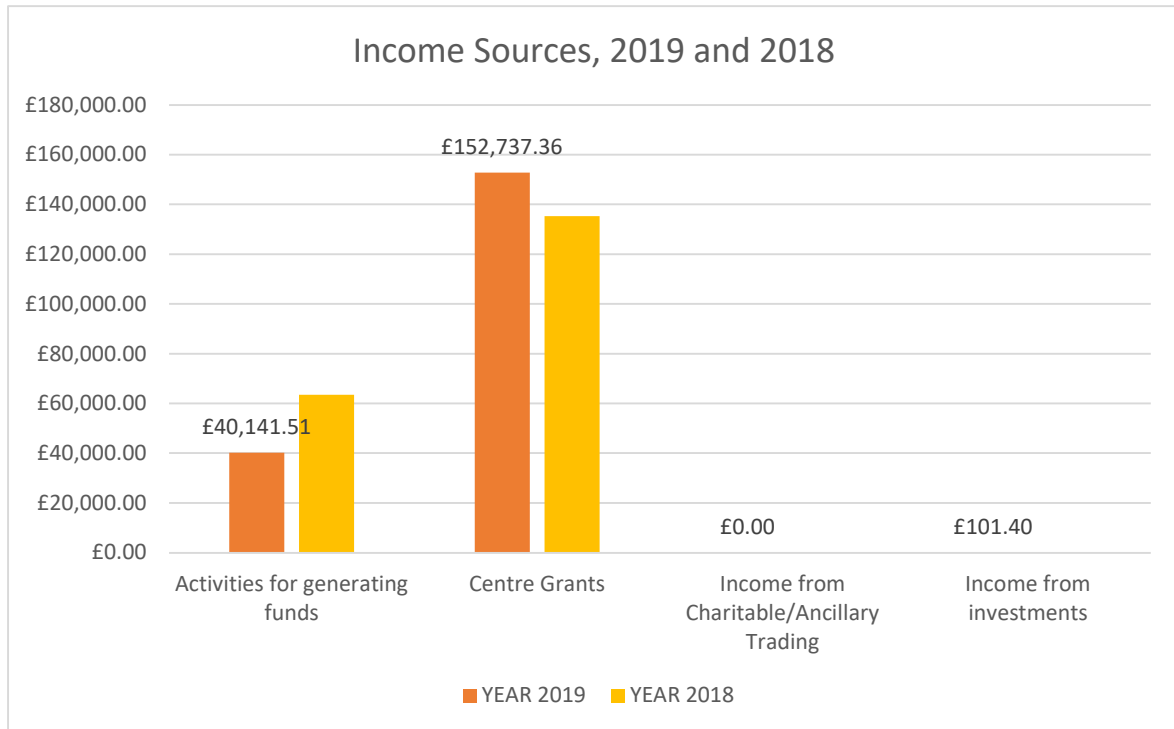
We have been very fortunate indeed that someone anonymous made a very generous donation to our work. Someone that believes in what we are doing for the people of our community, who realises the difference we make to people's lives, to their health and well-being, and to the lives of their families. Thank you whoever you are. This has meant we are able to continue our activities until May 2020 and has also bought us a little time to look at becoming a little more financially sustainable.



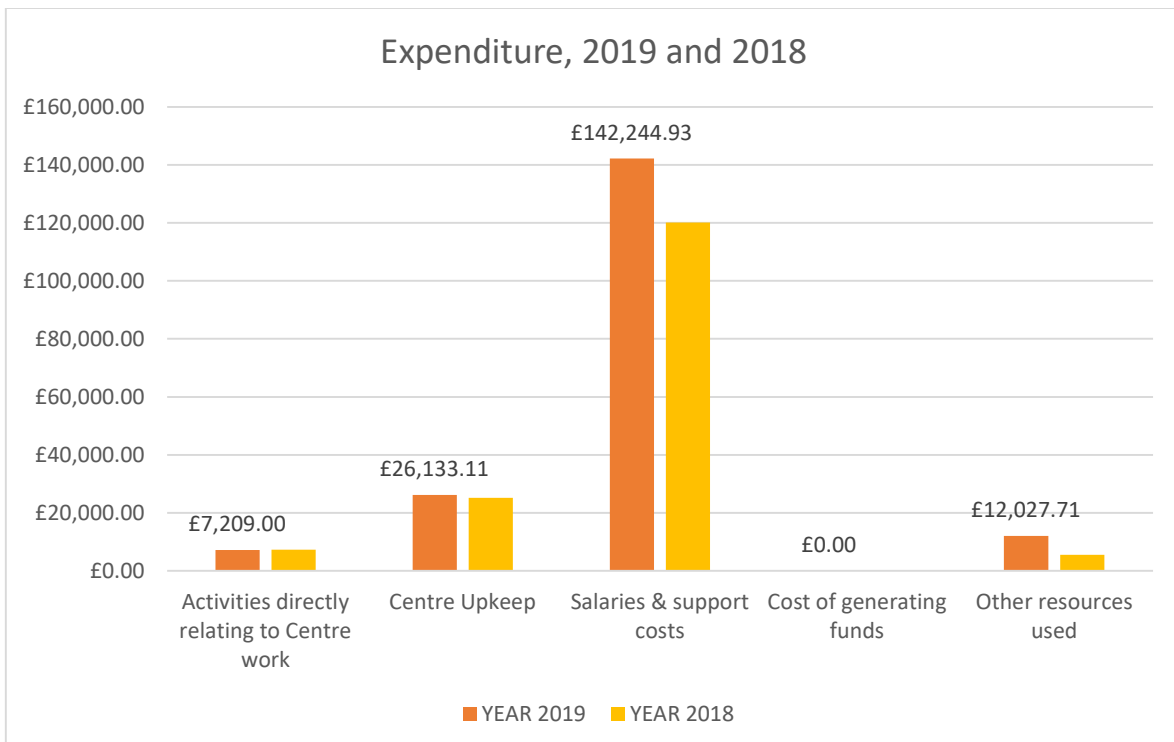
After consultation and guidance, we are reapplying to several of those funds that turned us down, and to other funders who have been identified. In addition, we are hoping to set up St John's After School provision from Sept 2020, which will bring us in further core funds. We will be doing a scoping exercise and business plan for this. Also, bringing back into use our stage, we hope to be able to offer space for concerts, and other types of evening entertainment, which will bring us in some revenue.

Finance this year Income & Expenditure

Income for Financial year April 2018-March 2019 **£192,980**



Expenditure for Financial year April 2018-March 2019 **£187,614**





Big Lottery and beyond – Building for the Future Project

Emma Wilton, Learning Co-ordinator

Elaine Eland, Volunteer Co-ordinator



Learning

This year, we continued to meet the targets required as part of our Big Lottery funding, as shown below.

Measure	Target for 2018-19	Number achieved
Number of courses	40	44
Number of learners	400	486
Qualifications gained	100	68 ** (see below)
Number of volunteers	30	54

Courses

We continue to offer our core courses of ESOL, ICT, English and Maths, along with Dressmaking, Community Interpreting, and Driving Test Preparation.

Our new courses for 2018-19 were:

- *Basic Bike Maintenance*
This was provided by the Chainlink charity, but unfortunately had only limited success, although it was free;
- *Science*
The WEA provided two very popular Psychology courses, and a Biology course that did not attract enough learners to run.
- *Life in the UK*
The WEA provided a taster session for this course, which was very successful, and we have been able to run this course for the first time in several years.

Our Discover Manchester volunteer-led ESOL sessions have gone from strength to strength, and now involve sixteen volunteers and over 50 learners, who are not only improving their English and their understanding of British culture and society, but also getting help with many aspects of everyday life, from food and public transport, to benefit applications and school places for their children.

Sadly, two of our longstanding teachers left us this year – David Dixon (Painting), who has retired, and Mariam Chunara (Dressmaking), who is setting up her own local business but still pops in to see us from time to time!

In August 2019, the Adult Education Budget for Great Manchester was transferred from central government to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and organisations had to bid to provide courses. The WEA, our longstanding course provider, was one of the successful bidders, and our relationship means that we are their preferred venue for a significant proportion of their courses, so we still have a full timetable of courses.

This change means that this adult learning funding is now focused entirely on employability. We have therefore been able to offer more vocational courses. The Level 2 Award for Support Work in Schools has been the most popular of these; Health and Social Care, Childcare and Customer Service have taken longer to attract learners, so we will be starting these in late 2019/early 2020. We will also be offering accredited follow-on courses for ICT and Dressmaking.

Because of our relationship with Trafford College, we are still able to offer some leisure courses – they are providing Craft courses, and a Drawing and Painting course, as well as their usual ICT and Functional Skills courses.

Learner Numbers

We had a large increase in the number of people enquiring at the Centre, to 870. The number of visits to our website has gone up to 26,300 visits from 8,700 visitors, and our social media followers has also increased to 930.

Our total number of learners (486) and learner enrolments (746) are slightly up on last year.

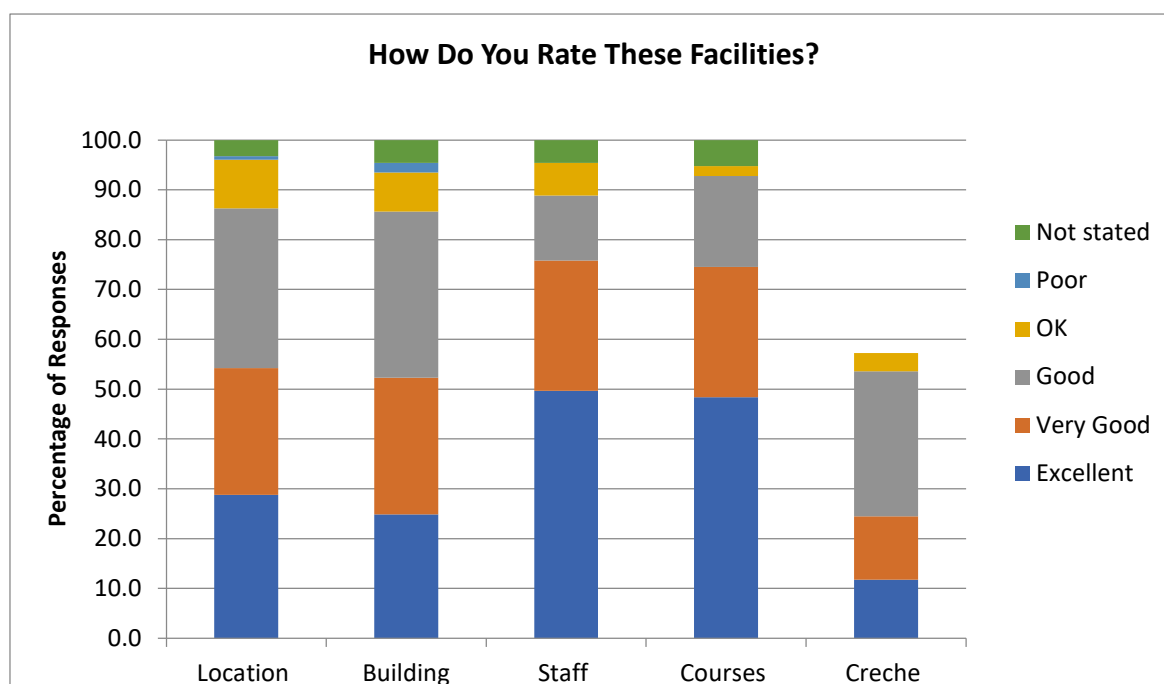
Learner Qualifications

Circumstances outside our control meant that we were not able to hold as many accredited classes as we had hoped this year, because:

- Mariam Chunara, the dressmaking teacher, left teaching, so we were unable to run the accredited dressmaking course that had been planned;
- The WEA had planned to offer an accredited ESOL course in Summer Term, but changes by the awarding body meant that there was not enough time to run this, so a non-accredited course was run instead.

****These two courses would have enabled us to meet our target of over 100 qualifications.**

Learner Satisfaction and Achievements



As shown in the above table, the vast majority of learners were happy with all aspects of their course and the Centre. The only “poor” comments were for aspects of the building.

In addition, all learners say they have gained or improved skills, and:

- 95% say they have increased confidence
- 95% have improved self esteem
- 74% reported improved work readiness/employability
- 79% feel better equipped to engage with statutory agencies

Our Learning Coordinator works with our learning providers and our learners throughout the year, to ensure that we are offering courses that local people need; to publicise our courses to everyone in our community; to make access to the courses easy and fair, and free to those who need it; and to maximise learner retention.

Other Achievements

As well as meeting targets, the following activities were completed as required as part of the Reaching Communities funding:

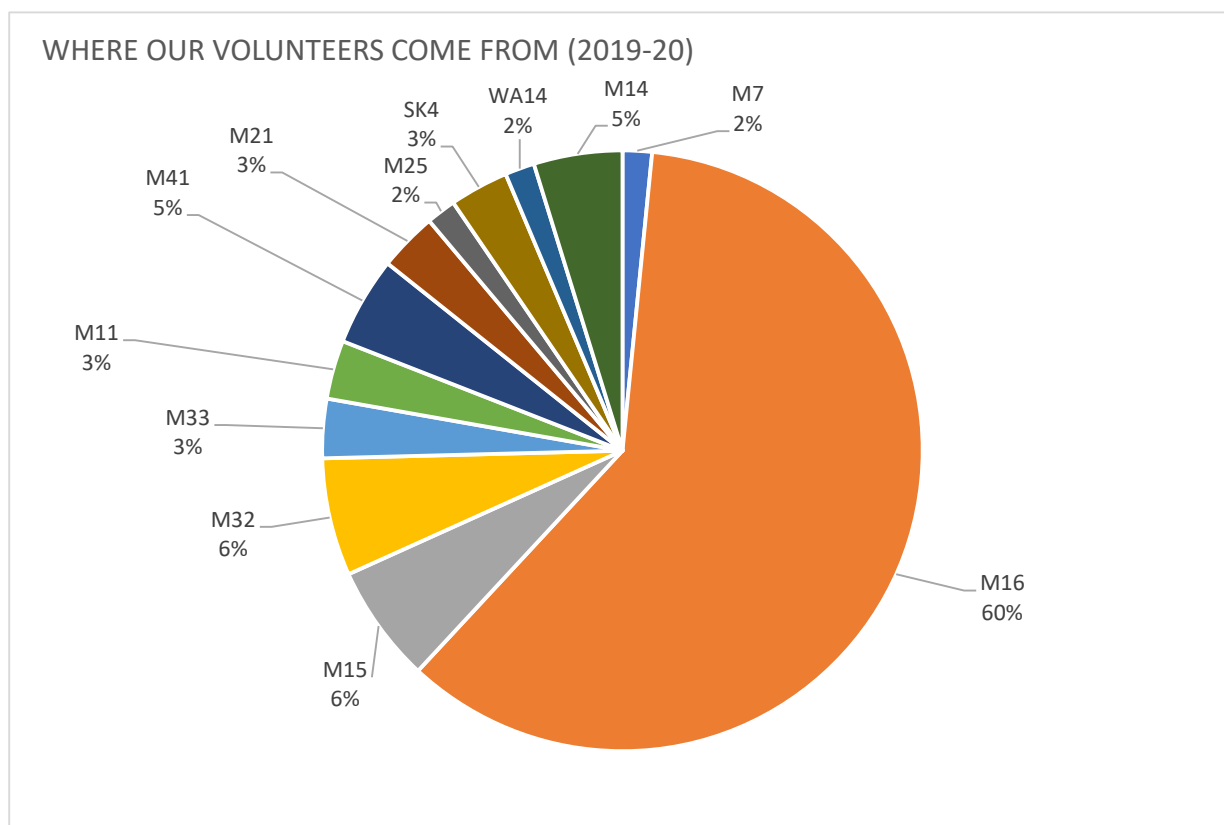
- Independent evaluation for the end of the project completed;
- Learner and Volunteer evaluations and Focus Groups;
- AGM in December 2018;
- Open Day in September 2019 (More than 200 people attended);
- Halloween party and February Half Term activities organised by the crèche;
- Learner and Volunteer celebration events held in June and July 2018.

VOLUNTEERING

Presently regular volunteers undertake the following weekly roles in St. John's Centre:-

- Staffing the front office;
- Finance administration – named treasurer with banking duties;
- Teaching ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes;
- Teaching and support in IT workshops;
- One-to-one support accessing IT;
- One-to-one support dealing with communication for benefits, housing etc;
- Staffing the Stay & Play session for pre-school children and their parents/carers;
- Cooking a community lunch once a week; and
- Sorting food that comes from Foodcloud to be picked up by the community.
- Bag packing and supporting The Brea & Butter Thing (community food initiative).

The pie chart below shows that 66% of our volunteers come from M16 and M15 postcode areas. Both these postcodes represent areas of Old Trafford.



Additional volunteers that we have at St John's Centre are: -

- School student placements, undertaking their work experience and doing the community volunteering section of their Duke of Edinburgh Award;
- Special event volunteers at our Christmas Fair, Half Term activities, Pantomime etc.;
- Interpreting support for individuals at the Centre;
- Kellogg's volunteers coming via The Bread & Butter Thing;
- Volunteers through Benefacto. Benefacto are an organisation that liaises between large businesses who encourage employees to volunteer as part of their social responsibility ethos, and voluntary organisation that are looking for volunteers.

Soundbites from Learners and Volunteers (names changed for anonymity)

Janinne – Comes from Manchester. Lives locally and comes to St. John's Centre to volunteer. She is a single parent and has long-term health conditions that stops her from finding full time employment:-

"Well I'm really enjoying it, because everybody's really helpful and very welcoming so they made me feel very comfortable, you know straight away. I'm really enjoying it and you know if I get stuck they still calmly explain to me they're very helpful. I'm really enjoying it and it gets me out of the house and it's very important to my wellbeing mental and emotional wellbeing is very important so I'm really enjoying it."

Andreea – Comes from Romania and has only been in the UK for 7 months. She joined her husband in the UK who had come for work 2 years ago. They have a 10yr old child who has been able to find a school place after a 2 month wait. Andreea wanted to learn English as she spoke very little on coming to England. Her English is improving and she has started volunteering, supporting our Stay & Play pre-school session.

"My teacher was a treasure! He was very friendly and did not care where you were from. He gave us lots of extra material to work on at home, and I learnt a lot."



2019 FUNDING FROM

- Big Lottery (Core Funding)
- Near Neighbours (Keep Fit and ESOL Book Project)
- High Sheriff (Towards Summer School)
- THT (towards Summer School)
- Garfield Weston (Core Funding)
- John Grant Davies (Core)
- £50,000 anonymous donation

