



# 2024/2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Holbrooks Community  
Association

[www.holbrookscommunity.co.uk](http://www.holbrookscommunity.co.uk)  
[hca@holbrookscommunity.co.uk](mailto:hca@holbrookscommunity.co.uk)



## Chair's Foreword – Joseph Clifford

Holbrooks Community Association continues to flourish, showing progress not only through ongoing upgrades to its facilities but also through the steadfast dedication and outstanding contributions of its committed staff and volunteers. The improvements made to the building have been impressive, with additional enhancements planned to ensure the centre remains a welcoming, comfortable, and well-equipped space for everyone who visits. It is truly uplifting to witness how these developments are shaping the centre into a lively and inclusive hub that meets a wide range of needs.

What stands out most is the remarkable variety of activities and events hosted here. From the vibrant and much-loved community café, offering a cheerful gathering spot for residents, to the Social Supermarket supporting those on lower incomes with affordable food, cleaning, and hygiene products, the centre is buzzing with life.

Alongside these, the lettings to diverse community and statutory groups provide opportunities for creativity, learning, and connection, reinforcing the centre's role as a vital cornerstone of the local area. These initiatives not only foster a strong sense of belonging but also unite people, creating chances for collaboration, mutual support, and shared experiences.

None of this would be achievable without the extraordinary effort and backing of our staff, volunteers, and the wider community. I want to express my sincere gratitude to every person who has contributed to HCA's success. From those working tirelessly behind the scenes to keep everything running smoothly, to volunteers who give their time and energy so generously, and to community members who continue to engage, participate, and support the centre's activities – your commitment is deeply valued. It is this collective effort that has made HCA the thriving hub it is today, and I am truly thankful for all you do.

Of course, all of this requires significant work and financial investment. Maintenance, ongoing improvements, and the broad range of events demand resources, planning, and funding. This report offers an update on how these challenges are being addressed and the strategies in place to ensure the centre continues to prosper in the months and years ahead.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joseph Clifford".

Joseph Clifford

Chair Of Holbrooks Community Association

## Overview of 2024-2025

In response to the UK's ongoing cost-of-living crisis, Holbrooks Community Association (HCA) has taken proactive steps to engage with local residents, listening carefully to their concerns to identify and address the most pressing challenges. By working closely with the community, HCA has developed targeted services that not only provide immediate support but also empower individuals, reduce reliance on aid, and strengthen overall resilience.

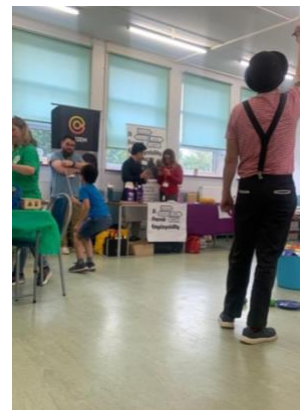
One of our key priorities has been ensuring access to affordable essentials, particularly tackling food insecurity. Through the Social Supermarket, HCA offers low-cost food, cleaning products, and personal hygiene items, easing financial pressure for households. In 2024–2025 alone, the supermarket welcomed 174 members and distributed more than 500 food bags, providing a vital lifeline for families in need.

Equally important is fostering social connection and combating isolation. Our Community Café creates a warm, inclusive space where residents can share experiences, build friendships, and enjoy a hot meal on a pay-as-you-feel basis. This initiative not only supports mental well-being but also strengthens the sense of belonging within Holbrooks.

HCA's room hire service enables a wide range of organisations and groups to deliver activities and services at the heart of the community. Among these is Stay and Play, a group for preschool children and their parents, offering a safe environment for play, learning, and parental support. Regular NHS Health Visitor sessions also take place, providing accessible health advice and check-ups for young children.

HCA also recognises the importance of maintaining a safe, welcoming, and modern environment, and has therefore prioritised a programme of ongoing refurbishment across the centre. Recent improvements have included upgrades to key facilities, general repairs, and enhancements to accessibility, ensuring the building continues to meet the needs of all residents. These refurbishments not only improve the comfort and functionality of the space but also support the delivery of a wider range of services and activities. By investing in the centre's physical environment, HCA is creating a more vibrant, accessible, and future-proof community hub that can continue to serve Holbrooks for many years to come. Beyond these, HCA provides space for diverse activities such as fitness classes, arts and crafts, support groups, and skill-building workshops. These community-led initiatives create opportunities for learning, growth, and social interaction, fostering both personal development and community cohesion.

Through these services and activities, HCA continues to serve as a true community hub—connecting residents with essential resources, enriching experiences, and a strong support network. Every group and initiative contributes to a vibrant, resilient Holbrooks, empowering people of all ages and backgrounds to thrive despite economic challenges.





## **Our People**

**Without the support of the below, the work of Holbrooks Community Association would not have been possible.**

### **Trustees**

Joseph Clifford – Chair Father Simon Oaks – Vice Chair. Debbie Jones – Treasurer

Kim Rawlings – Trustee Mark Pemberton – Trustee Louise Dixon – Trustee Viru Kansara - Trustee

### **Staff at HCA during 2024/2025.**

Rachel Lancaster – Strategic Manager – Part Time - Contractor

Daniel Sabin – Site Services – Part Time

Kristy Chan – Community Café Coordinator

Tony Hourihan – Community Centre Coordinator

### **Volunteers at HCA gave freely of their time to help support the delivery of services:**

Viru Kansara, Daniel Sabin, Susan Ryrie, Mick Duggan, Louise Dixon, Joseph Clifford, Pat Clifford, Meredith Womble-Lancaster, Lawrie Womble-Lancaster, David Womble, Ted Sutton, Sonja Dacre, Marcus Swinburn, Suman Gill, Pat Healy, Patsy Doig, Jane Bailey and a special mention to Evans Cash and Carry for picking up and dropping off many things for the centre.

We would also like to give a special mention to all of the Holbrooks residents who have supported and guided the organisation throughout the year.

### **A Tribute to our Trustee and Friend, Debbie Jones.**



In this report we pay tribute to one of our trustees, Debbie Jones, who sadly passed away in January 2025.

A long-term resident of Holbrooks, Debbie became involved in the community centre about 15 years ago and supported it in every way that she could. Mainly it was her personal knowledge of people in Holbrooks who had skills and abilities to help out which she drew upon to the benefit of the centre, of always managing to find somebody to lift, carry, repair and donate items whenever it was needed.

She volunteered when at events, stood as the gateway on the door not letting people in and out, and the last time she helped out was at a Pottery session particularly supporting a young lad with learning difficulties who really appreciated her help.

Outwardly Debbie would seem to be quite loud and blustery, you could hear her coming from a mile off and knew to put the kettle on ready, but we all knew that that was a front and underneath that hard exterior was a kind person generous of spirit, a true friend. So as we have a minute silence let's remember Debbie and thank her for the work she did to support Holbrooks Community Centre.

## Partnerships

**During the last year the HCA has worked with the following partners:**

### Coventry City Council

Holbrook's Ward Councillor Rachel Lancaster

### Council Departments:

Coventry Adult Education, Community Resilience Team, Culture and Leisure, City Development Directorate, Coventry City Council Community Development Team, #CovConnects, Coventry HAF team

### Community Partners

West Midlands Police, President Kennedy Secondary School, John Shelton Primary School, Holy Family School, Parkgate Primary School, Holbrooks Primary School, Holbrooks Community Care association, Coventry Food Network, Tesco – Arena, Morrisons – Holbrooks, Evan's for everyone, Henry Court, NHS, Pathways Family Hub, Xyla Diabetes Support, The Sabbath SDA Church, Apolistic Church International, Rehoboth Church, SLM Prayer Group, Smart learner, Family conferencing services, Referral and Assessment Services.

### Other Partnerships

Coventry and District Credit Union, Coventry Independent Advice Services, Coventry Foodbank, Evans For You, Bookers Cash and Carry, Fairshare, Purple Planet Packaging, St Luke's Church, Coventry Food Network and The Right Honourable Taiwo Owatemi.

### Funding Partners

Heart of England Community foundation, National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, Awards for All, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Coventry City Council Resilience Fund, Good things Foundation, Coventry City Council Device Bank, National Data Bank, Severn Trent Community Fund.



## Activity Report

### Social Supermarket

The Holbrooks Social Supermarket has remained a vital lifeline for local residents, continuing to offer around £20 worth of groceries each week for just £7 per visit. Every member visiting the store is also welcomed into the community café, where they can enjoy a hot meal and unlimited hot drinks as part of their experience.

Holbrooks has been an active member of the Coventry Food Network, working alongside Food Hubs across the city to strengthen the collective response to food insecurity. In partnership with GP surgeries, social care teams, and local schools, a referral system was introduced to ensure that support reaches those who need it most.

During the festive period, the Social Supermarket provided low-cost Christmas hampers, easing the pressure many families feel due to rising food prices — particularly for traditional Christmas dinner essentials. In 2024, 62 families received a hamper.

Since opening in September 2022, the Social Supermarket has supported 174 individuals and provided 554 bags of groceries. Including household members, the initiative has helped feed a total of 424 people.

### Community Café

The Community Café opens its doors every Monday from 12:00 to 14:00, offering a freshly cooked hot meal on a pay-as-you-feel basis. Visitors can enjoy comforting dishes such as curry, chilli, Bolognese, cottage pie, baked potatoes, dessert, and unlimited hot drinks in a warm, welcoming setting.

The café was created in response to the increasing pressures of rising food and energy costs. Many local residents shared that they were skipping hot meals to manage household expenses. By providing an affordable option, the café ensures that people can rely on at least one hot meal each week, while also giving them a space to connect with others and reduce feelings of isolation.

Thanks to support from the Severn Trent Community Fund, which began in January 2024, this service has been made possible and continues to grow. Since opening, 76 individuals have visited the café, with a total of 324 hot meals served to the community.

### Household Support Fund – Emergency Food Distribution

Holbrooks Community Centre continued providing emergency food parcels in partnership with Coventry City Council, supported by the government's Household Support Fund. This collaboration will continue for the full duration of the fund, ensuring that residents facing immediate hardship can access essential food support when they need it most.

Since the initiative began, **275** emergency food parcels have been distributed to **175** individuals. Including family members, this support has reached a total of **472** people through Holbrooks Community Centre.

### Community Events

Throughout the year, we've delivered a wide mix of events and activities designed to bring people together, ease financial pressures, and strengthen the sense of community at the centre. Below is an overview of some of the much-loved events and initiatives that have become a regular part of what we offer.

- **Baby Sales**

These events give parents a welcoming space to buy and sell high-quality, gently used baby essentials—

from clothing and toys to prams and nursery furniture. Families not only find fantastic bargains, but also the chance to meet other parents and build connections within the community.

- **Rummage Sales**

A firm favourite with local residents, our rummage sales promote sustainable shopping by offering a wide variety of preloved items at low prices. Whether it's clothing, homeware or hidden treasures, these events help people save money while supporting the centre's ongoing services.

- **Halloween Celebrations**

Each year, our Halloween parties bring the community together for safe, family-friendly fun. With themed decorations, costumes, games, pumpkin carving and plenty of treats, these events offer an enjoyable way for families to celebrate without the added cost or worry.

- **Community Marketplace**

This showcase event brings local makers, crafters and small businesses together under one roof.

Residents can browse unique handmade goods, fresh produce, and affordable items while supporting local enterprise and encouraging community spirit.

- **Uniform Bank**

Our Uniform Bank ensures that families have access to good-quality school uniforms throughout the year. By offering preloved school wear at no cost, we help reduce the financial strain of back-to-school preparation and make sure every child starts the school year with confidence.

- **Quiz Night**

Quiz Night has become a much-enjoyed social event, giving residents the chance to team up, test their knowledge, and have a great evening out at little to no cost. These nights encourage friendly competition, laughter and community bonding—proving that a simple quiz can bring people from all walks of life together.

- **Police Forum**

We have hosted two well attended police forum events. The police forum gives the community the chance to air their concerns, worries and questions regarding crime and antisocial behavior in the Holbrooks area community police officers.

## **Recruitment of a Community Centre Coordinator**

In March 2025, we recruited Tony Hourihan as our Community Centre Coordinator. Tony will be responsible for increasing food support to the community, and maximising the usage of the centre, including community events and room hire. This post was funded by Awards for All.

## Finance

The organisation has worked hard to secure external funding to support service delivery and activities for local residents, as reflected in the Statement of Financial Accounts below. The success of these funding opportunities has provided greater stability and has enabled the organisation to recruit staff, strengthen its operations, and focus resources more effectively. This improved financial position has allowed the centre to plan confidently for the long term and continue delivering valuable support to the community.

### Holbrooks Community Association

#### Receipts and Payments Account 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

##### RECEIPTS

Room Hire, etc	19,461.50	
Donations	4,017.98	
Misc	1,462.86	
Restricted Funds	<u>55,385.77</u>	80,328.11

##### PAYMENTS

Rent, Rates & Services	-	
Repairs, Renewals, etc	5,209.82	
Wages (inc. Management Fees, Casual, etc)	24,732.14	
IT Costs	899.19	
Insurance	645.71	
Telephone & Broadband	-	
Accountancy	350.00	
Bank Commission & Charges	-	
Utilities	334.00	
Misc. (inc. Cleaning, stationery, training, travel, etc.)	2,408.79	
Restricted Funds	<u>41,698.99</u>	76,278.64

##### EXCESS OF RECEIPTS / (PAYMENTS)

4,049.47

### Holbrooks Community Association

#### Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

##### ACCUMULATED FUND

Brought Forward	69,538.56	
Excess of Receipts / (Payments)	<u>4,049.47</u>	73,588.03

Represented by:-

##### CURRENT ASSETS

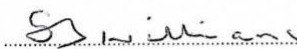
Cash at Bank	73,651.92
Cash in Hand	<u>63.89</u>
	<u>73,588.03</u>

Prepared from the books, records, and information supplied and certified to be in accordance therewith.

Note Please note Cash at Bank of £73,651.92, £46,831.00 is Restricted Funds

45 Baginton Road  
Styvechale  
Coventry  
CV3 6JX

May 2025

  
P J WILLIAMS & CO



## **Future Plans for Holbrooks Community Association (HCA)**

Looking to the future, Holbrooks Community Association (HCA) is committed to strengthening its role as a vital resource for the Holbrooks community, expanding existing services, and ensuring a sustainable model that meets the evolving needs of residents. To support these aims, HCA has outlined several strategic plans focused on securing funding, enhancing community offerings, and maximising the potential of its facilities.

A key step forward has been the successful recruitment of a dedicated Community Centre Coordinator. This role is already making a significant difference by driving the development and delivery of services, managing day-to-day operations, and coordinating the wide range of community groups and activities that take place within the centre. With this position in place, HCA is now able to operate more efficiently, respond more effectively to community needs, and build stronger partnerships with local organisations. The coordinator also strengthens HCA's capacity to apply for grants, manage projects, and promote the centre's services—further increasing its impact within Holbrooks.

Building on the success of the Social Supermarket, HCA plans to expand this essential service to support even more residents. With the rising cost of living and continued food insecurity, HCA recognises the importance of affordable food access. Future developments include broadening the range of products available and increasing the supermarket's capacity to serve additional households. By improving access to low-cost food, HCA aims to ease financial pressures and provide a dependable resource for local families.

HCA also intends to further develop the Community Café, which has already become a popular social space within the area. Over the coming year, the café will continue to grow to welcome more visitors and provide a wider selection of affordable meals and refreshments. This expansion will create additional opportunities for social interaction, reduce isolation, and support wellbeing. The café may also host themed events—such as family days, community lunches, or cultural celebrations—to strengthen social connection across the neighbourhood.

Another important focus for the future is maximising the room booking potential of the centre. By promoting HCA's flexible spaces to a broader audience and ensuring they are used to their full capacity, the centre can generate additional income while supporting a wider range of community activities. Increased room bookings will enable HCA to welcome more local groups, social enterprises, and service providers, creating a lively hub that caters to varied needs. HCA aims to attract organisations offering services that reflect community priorities, including health and wellbeing programmes, training workshops, and youth activities. Making full use of the centre's spaces will help maintain a vibrant, multi-purpose environment that truly anchors the community.

HCA is also exploring opportunities to strengthen its community outreach work, ensuring that support reaches residents who may not currently engage with the centre or who face barriers to accessing services. This includes developing partnerships with local schools, health providers, faith groups, and neighbourhood organisations to deliver activities directly where people are. By taking services out into the wider community, HCA hopes to build trust, raise awareness of available support, and connect with individuals who could benefit from its programmes. This outreach-focused approach will help ensure that no resident feels overlooked and that the benefits of HCA's work extend across the whole of Holbrooks.

Above all, HCA remains committed to working in partnership with residents to ensure that all future developments reflect their needs and aspirations. By seeking regular feedback and adapting services based on community input, HCA will continue to operate in a responsive, inclusive, and meaningful way—ensuring its impact remains strong for years to come.

Photos

