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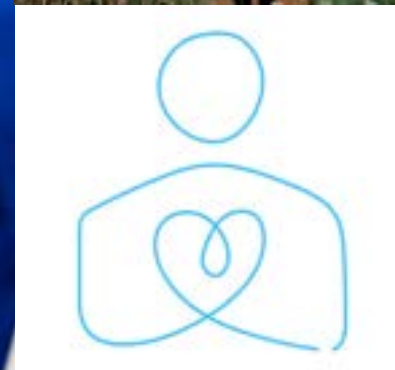
creating
opportunities
for 21 years
Impact Report 2023



www.regen.org.uk



Halifax Opportunities Trust is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England, number 4089288. Our registered charity number is 1086183.



Welcome

Through commitment, support and collaboration around **50,000 people's lives are better** since we officially started operating as a charity in 2002.



Rev Canon Hilary Barber
HQT Chair

As we reflect on this milestone, there's a lot to be proud of and celebrate. Our progress so far has motivated us to continue working with people in Calderdale, understand their aspirations and create opportunities so they get to where they want to be.

It's been inspiring to read all the stories and achievements of those who have been involved with HQT over the years and how many lives we've made better in our local community. Of course, this hasn't been without its challenges, but makes our achievements all the more rewarding.

Our charitable objectives address poverty, wellbeing and disadvantage; the very reason we exist is to improve the quality of life and prospects for local people. I have every confidence that Halifax Opportunities Trust has the expertise and experience to support those affected the current cost of living crisis and is demonstrating this already, through some of the dedicated workstreams that have been introduced this year.

Finally, as you will learn from reading this report, I'm thrilled that our commitment to the environment has been driven-forward with a carbon reduction roadmap, and that our ambition of getting into property has been realised with the purchase of our first house. Both will have a lasting impact on our vibrant community.

I am positive that by working together we can overcome whatever challenge is ahead, as we have many times before, and come out stronger, healthier and happier.



Some people who make us great...



Caren Parkinson
Children & Families Lead

“The highlight for me is seeing the difference our Children and Families work has made in Calderdale. Making a difference is the greatest reward”



Alison Haskins
HQT CEO

“The Trust embodies my own values and beliefs so it has been a wonderful experience to live these practically and actually be able to effect change.”



Sarah Waddington
Outback Manager

“I feel really lucky to work alongside the most dedicated, caring and friendly people”



Barbara Harbinson
former HQT CEO

“One of the strongest and most robust community anchor organisations in the country 21 years on. That is one hell of an achievement”



Mohammed Aslam
former HQT Chair

“Over the years the Trust has become more valuable to the community as more people benefit from what it has to offer.”



Kausar Shahid
Community Advancement Manager

“Something that's stayed the same, is that supporting the community remains one of the most important elements of what we do.”



Surraya Bibi
Inclusive Integration Manager

“HQT genuinely believes in being an organisation that is community focussed and community led...”



Abrar Hussain
Community Projects Lead

“We are always evolving and responding to the needs of our community and that is what drives us forward.”



Jenny Lynn
Park ward Councillor

“I love the way it [HQT] keeps on growing, and changing - whilst remaining true to its core values of mutual support - the very best in community enterprise.”

Creating opportunities

for 21 years

2002

We began operating!

While we were born in 2000 and registered as a charity in 2001, we didn't begin operating as a charity until April 2002.

Our OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY



2002

A regeneration charity!

The work we delivered when we first started operating involved business advice, employment and IT support. 14 people worked at the Trust.

2003

New specialisms!

We began delivering ESOL in 2003 as part of our focus on learning. At this time we also introduced children and families support via Sure Start in West Central Halifax.

2005

Jubilee opens!

We opened Jubilee Children's Centre in 2005 as part of the Sure Start programme. It was built to deliver top quality childcare and support for the community in modern premises, which it continues to do today.

2006

Innovation in action!

On 15th June 2006 The Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre became part of HOT. The Centre on Hopwood Lane was developed to house 40 businesses in a purpose-built space.

2007

A Royal visit!

On the 17th July 2007 the Princess Royal, HRH Princess Anne visited The Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre. The purpose of the visit was to demonstrate innovation and entrepreneurship.

2010

Apprenticeship Opportunities!

We began delivering apprenticeships in 2010, in support of people looking for a career in education or childcare.

2012

The Outback opens!

We celebrated the opening of the Outback Community Kitchen and Garden on 14th July 2012, as part of the Halifax Festival.

2016

A new look and CEO!

We said a sad goodbye to Barbara Harbinson Chief Executive of HOT for over 15 years on 31 October 2016 and welcomed our current CEO Alison Haskins the following month. We also welcomed a fresh new logo!

2022

More awards!

Community Spirit Awards winners in 2 categories:

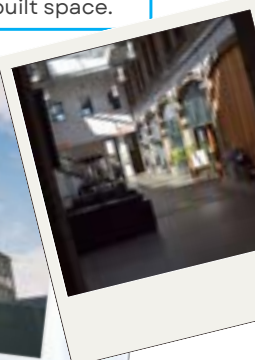
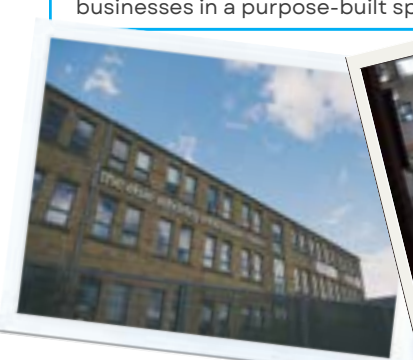
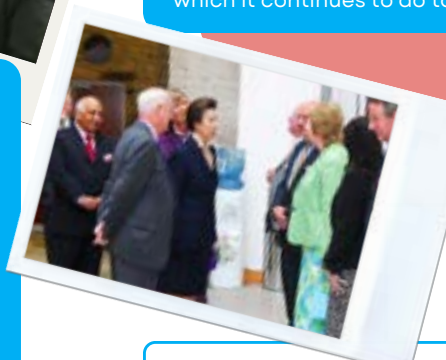
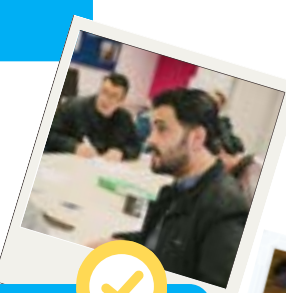
- 'Great and Green Award' - The Outback Community Garden
- 'Outstanding Achievement Award' - Caren Parkinson

2018

Award winners!

In 2018 we were delighted to receive two awards recognising our charity and our enterprising nature. These were:

- 'Charity of the Year' - Community Foundation for Calderdale
- 'Enterprising Organisation' - Locality



Why we are here

We're here so people have the opportunity to grow in a vibrant, multicultural and self-sustaining community

What we do

We create opportunities for a better life

We're people powered and community focused so individuals and families in Calderdale live as well as possible with practical support that builds skills, confidence and aspirations

How we do it

Strengthen Communities

Advocate for equity

Drive Progress



WE CARE



WE COLLABORATE



WE ARE COMMITTED



WE ARE ENTERPRISING

21 years in numbers



we've created opportunities for around

50,000 people

Our workforce has grown from

14 to 180



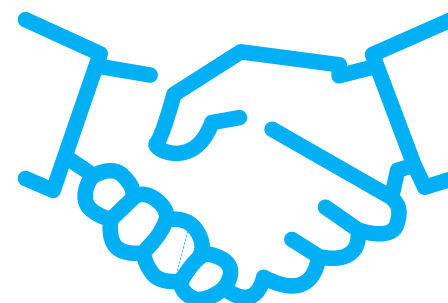
We operate from

eight

sites across **Calderdale**

£70 million

of funding received to deliver **place-based** community projects



We have worked with over

200

local, regional and national **partners**

Where we were

Shaping the future...

It's been quite a journey since Halifax Opportunities Trust officially launched in April 2002 – a community-led and run regeneration charity set up to continue the work of West Central Halifax Partnership. This significant date on our timeline was marked by a community launch at our flagship site, Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre. 21 years on, the charity has evolved into an organisation equipped and perfectly positioned for the aspirations of Park ward and the wider Calderdale community.

Since 2002, we've invested almost £70million into place-based community projects and initiatives. We've created opportunities for around 50,000 people through our six core areas; children & families, apprenticeships, inclusive integration, community & wellbeing, employment and enterprise. We've worked with over 200 national, regional and local organisations, charities and funding partners to ensure individuals, families and businesses within our local community have the opportunity to thrive and contribute to a brighter future for all.

While we always have room to grow, we are incredibly proud of the progress we've made along the way. People and community are part of Halifax Opportunities Trust's DNA, which has driven us forward and continues to guide us towards our purpose for **people to grow in a vibrant, multi-cultural and self-sustaining community.**

Responding to challenges...

From employees to trustees, volunteers, participants and partners, we're passionate about creating opportunities and we're optimistic that together we can continue to make great strides for a better life, stronger community and brighter future.

Our timeline (pages 3-4) charts some of our many milestones over the last two decades. From the early days, where we operated from a single site with a team of just 14, to today with around 180 employees across eight sites throughout Calderdale - we've grown in many ways.

What remains the same is our resilience to local challenges and responding to the hopes of our community. We are used to thinking innovatively and adapting to change so individuals, families and businesses have relevant and accessible support. This was particularly demonstrated throughout the COVID pandemic, when we flexed our muscles as a community anchor to collaborate with other charities and organisations and provide essentials for the most vulnerable residents of Calderdale.

This, alongside various charity awards, shows how we have continued to make an impact through place-based delivery - addressing the real, lived experiences of local people with co-designed services that truly make a difference.



Where we are

Our delivery...

Our six key areas of delivery have been defined based on our connection with those we work with. Our roots within Park ward, our historic links to regeneration and our fundamental role as a community anchor, have all lead us to deliver projects in a wide variety of specialisms. Many times an individual will receive support from a number of teams simultaneously and we're able to do this because of our flexible and holistic approach to:



Creating opportunities for work and life

employment

Providing good quality employment support for local people is one of HOT's key objectives. This has been more challenging this year due to the unsettled funding landscape, ongoing post-COVID impact, and the cost of living crisis.

Many participants have complex and multiple barriers to employment and this, combined with an increase in people in crisis situations, means the Employment team has worked hard so people can overcome challenges. The team continues to provide holistic support, which includes intervention-based approaches for employability.

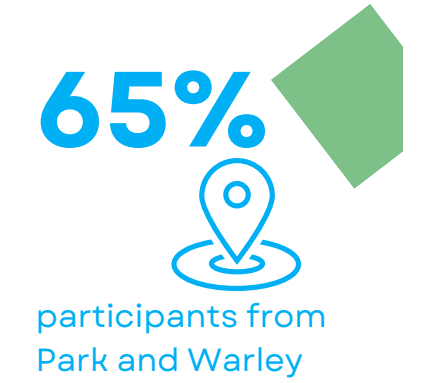


Danyaal

“When I decided university wasn't the right choice for me, I didn't know which direction to take. The Employment team listened to my needs and I found work where I can build skills for a career in IT.”

This is delivered alongside the team's employment support services, for people seeking work or employment advice locally. Danyaal (pictured above), found himself seeking work after making the decision to leave university. The employment team supported him with interview techniques and signposted him to local employers with vacancies in the field Danyaal was interested in.

Through working with the Trust, Danyaal's confidence has grown and he has found employment, where he can gain experience in the business world and build skills for life and work.



Where we are

Creating opportunities to boost wellbeing

community & wellbeing

Community and Wellbeing represents a lot of the place-based work the Trust is involved with to support sustainability, social cohesion, inclusion and promote community action.

The Staying Well project is part of this area of work and creates opportunities for local people to engage with social activities so they meet others, learn and share practical skills to combat isolation and loneliness.

Staying Well's regular groups, Knit & Natter and Arts & Crafts, take place at Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre. They are participant-led where group members mutually decide the activities and syllabus, which enhances social interaction and builds confidence and trust among peers.

Rosalyn (pictured above) is a regular participant at both groups, which have offered her a lifeline since her mother passed away. Through attending the groups Rosalyn has been able to meet new people and build friendships, while sharing her excellent knitting skills with other members of the group.



Rosalyn

“After my mother died I experienced grief for a long time. I live on my own, so coming to the arts and crafts group means I can talk to people about how I feel and make new friends.”



Creating opportunities for volunteering

community & wellbeing

Feeling a sense of belonging is important for all of us and a lot of the work that takes place at the Outback Community Kitchen and Garden supports this.

Based in the heart of Park ward, the Outback is our very own greenspace that runs on sustainable principles, with a large garden that grows organic fruit and veg, as well as two beehives that produce delicious honey,

The team at the Outback share this ethos and run the kitchen and garden through a number of practical workshops, groups and activities, as well as via volunteering opportunities.

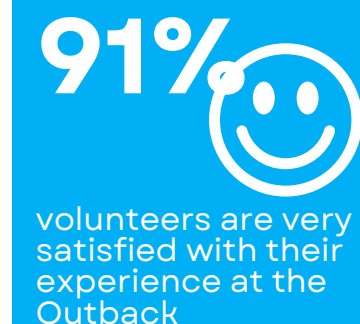
Arlene (pictured above) is a volunteer at the Outback Kitchen. She supports the HOT team and fellow volunteers prepare free hot meals for the Tuesday Takeaway each week, as well as for many events hosted at the greenspace.

After caring for her late husband, Arlene struggled to get out and meet new people, which meant she became isolated. Through working as a volunteer at the Outback, Arlene has found a purpose and hopes that through her experience she will be able to find work so she can retire, travel and meet more new people.



Arlene

“I learned about the Outback Community Kitchen and Garden through the bereavement of my husband. I call the kitchen my happy place, as I can help others, meet new people and make friends.”



Where we are

Creating opportunities for business growth

enterprise

One of the Trust's four values is 'We are enterprising' which is demonstrated most prominently through our two business centres, Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre and Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre (EWIC); both run through our subsidiary trading company, HOT Enterprises Ltd.

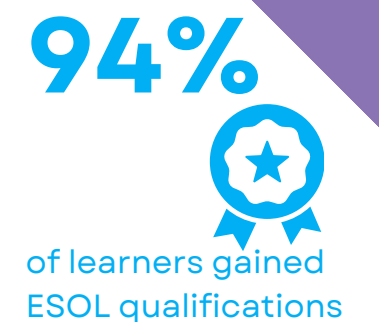
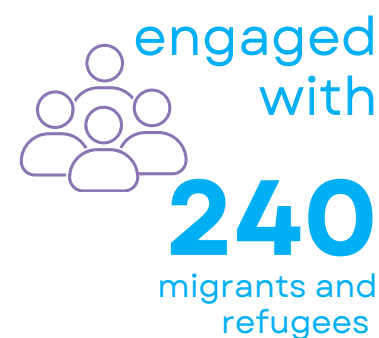
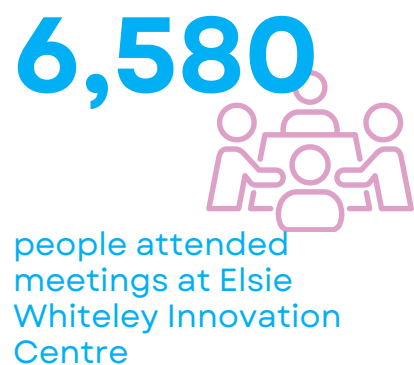
EWIC is a social enterprise. From start-up to seasoned pro, the Centre offers flexibility for businesses to grow through a range of virtual, co-working and private office spaces. This is facilitated through start-up grants that subsidise office rental costs for new businesses established for up to 18 months.

Arren (pictured above, right) is the Managing Director of the Digital DRA, a debt resolution company. He launched the business in 2021 and benefited from a start-up grant to get up and running. Now, two years on, Arren and his team remain at EWIC where they commend its high standards of customer experience and flexible approach to quality workspaces.



Arren

“The Digital DRA has found a home at the Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre, and our experience here has been nothing short of exceptional from day one.”



Creating opportunities to thrive in the UK

inclusive integration

As the most culturally diverse neighbourhood in Calderdale, Park ward has a long history as a welcome hub where migrant communities from across the globe arrive, settle and flourish in Halifax and the surrounding areas.

This is as true today as it was when the first generation of South Asian migrants began arriving in the post-war era of the 1950's and 60's. And, with the ongoing war in the Ukraine, we're seeing a rise in migrants from this part of the world.

To enable migrant families and individuals to make the most of their new lives in the UK, we're proud to deliver a number of Inclusive Integration programmes, including ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) from Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre.

Khatam (pictured above) fled her home in Syria so her young family could be safe. When she first came to the UK, she couldn't speak English which made it difficult for her to integrate and communicate. Through a number of ESOL classes and vocational courses, delivered by the HOT Inclusive Integration team, Khatam is now able to interact with her community and has built strong friendships, as well as set-up her own confectionery business, which further builds on her English language skills.



Khatam

“When I came to the UK I left behind many of my family members in Syria. I had to remain strong for my children, but without English language, I had no independence. HOT helped me unlock my potential and become a role model to my family.”

Where we are

Creating opportunities for career progression

apprenticeships

The HOT Apprenticeships team works with individuals and employers to build skills and workforces through nationally recognised apprenticeships. Specialising in the fields of training, education and early years, the team delivers work-based apprenticeships at Level 2 right through to Level 5.

In 2023, the team introduced a range of new courses to its portfolio to create further career opportunities in early years, play work and SEND. Teaching Assistant apprenticeships have also seen high demand, which have often been paired with SEN training.

Sameer (pictured above) recently qualified as a Teaching Assistant at Ravenshall, a school for children with additional needs. Completing with Distinction, the HOT Learning team guided Sameer through his course and he gained work-based experience, where he secured a permanent role. From starting out as a Teaching Assistant in a new field in education, Sameer has now progressed as a Cover Supervisor at Ravenshall where he continues to apply the valuable knowledge gained.



Sameer

“I completed the course with a Distinction, which helped me secure a permanent role at the school. I have now progressed to become a Cover Supervisor and the knowledge gained from the course is still so valuable.”



49

new apprentices enrolled in 2023

88%

of apprentices passed



generated
£144,000
through levy transfers to
fund
apprenticeships

Creating opportunities for confident parenting

children & families

HOT has developed and delivered a range of community-based services for families with young children in Calderdale for many years. These services operate from a range of Children's Centres and community venues, with teams visiting homes of some of our most vulnerable families.

Part of our work within Children and Families includes a family support service, delivered by the Family Support and Outreach Team, so parents and carers can improve their quality of family life.

Family Outreach Workers like Marta (pictured above) work with children from 0-19 years, alongside their families, at home and in Children's Centre groups.

Marta joined the Trust as an apprentice and now works with local families to guide them through family life, offer parenting advice, build parental confidence and relationships. Since joining Halifax Opportunities Trust Marta has grown in confidence both in her own parenting and professionally, where she hopes to become a Perinatal Mental Health Worker.



Marta

“I joined HOT as an apprentice. Now I am a fully fledged and qualified member of the Family Support Team, which has built my confidence both in my own parenting and supporting others.”

1,011
families received support in their home



1,325
families attended our groups



5,392
families were given advice and support



Where we are celebrating 21 years



Keeping the local community connected

While our six delivery areas keep us focussed, some of the activity we're involved with is often responsive to hyper-local events and a result of our prominence in Park ward. This includes connecting with the community and supporting them beyond our core projects.



80 local individuals and stakeholders were engaged with through **3** Park ward forums at Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre

120

Fuel Cards handed to people experiencing fuel poverty



60

Local people received free HOT meals from the Outback Tuesday Takeaway

120

Pre-loaded sim cards with data for vulnerable individuals to access digital services



Where we are heading

Looking forward...

Thanks to the support of those we work with, we are able to embark on the next 21 years (and beyond) with confidence and ongoing resilience so we continue to flourish. We will begin 2024 with new organisational strategies – our road maps for the next five years are focussed on creating opportunities for a better life. We know we'll be faced with challenges as well as opportunities and we need to be clear about how we'll keep on track.

Our plans for the future consider local, regional and national initiatives and, of course, the emerging possibilities within our community. Through joined-up thinking and working collaboratively, we believe our future plans will bring together our vibrant community and create a better place to live and work.



Our plans

We're ambitious, and in order to turn our goals into reality, we must continue to work together so people grow. Our plans are far reaching and long-term; like many community anchors, we're here for the long-haul.

While it's important we are responsive in our delivery, it's vital that we are pro-active in our approach, driving progress from the front, rather than following from behind. **Our Roadmap for the next five years includes:**



Sustainability

It's within our charitable objectives and part of our purpose to be a role model for sustainability. Of course the Outback is a great example of this, but we want to spread this message across the Trust and throughout our community, with a measurable carbon reduction roadmap.



Community Spaces

Since we first began operating, many of our services have been delivered from Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre. As we've grown-up, we've also grown in size which means our teams are dispersed across a number of sites. We're hoping to secure a better equipped community space to centralise our teams and ensure HOT is more accessible to local people.



Homes

We're pleased to have purchased our first house in Park ward. We are working in partnership with the WomenCentre to provide good quality homes and plan to expand our property portfolio to bring more empty houses back into use for families to live.



Health

Our Community and Wellbeing work is evolving in response to long term health conditions and limited health awareness within Park ward. Social prescribing is a large part of what we do and we're planning to expand this through our work in the community.