



Thursday 7th November 2024  
The Main Hall, King Georges Hall  
Northgate,  
Blackburn,  
BB2 1AA.



## Order of the evening

Host for the evening

**Graham Liver**

**5.00pm** Doors Open

**5.30 -6.00 pm** Entertainment from -  
Blackburn Peoples Choir

**6.00 pm** Welcome from Councillor  
Phil Riley – Leader of Blackburn with  
Darwen Borough Council

**6.20pm to 7.20 pm** Awards  
presented to Finalists

**7.30pm to 8pm** Entertainment from  
Blackburn & Darwen Junior Brass  
Band

Food served please  
note all food -  
vegetarian.

**8.00 pm to 9.00pm** Awards  
presented to finalists.

Closing Words Mohammed Sidat  
Chair community CVS

***Blackburn Peoples Choir***



***Blackburn & Darwen Junior Brass***

**Garth Hodgkinson, CEO Community CVS:**

*“What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good” – Aristotle, Greek Philosopher*

Serving others and doing good is what thousands of volunteers are doing in Blackburn with Darwen each and every day in their daily lives. Volunteering is a vital part of life. It gives people purpose and becomes part of who they are and their way of life.

Volunteers create community life and help to foster a sense of belonging and a sense of hope. Everyone doing their bit, helping each other and doing good for the community. We are blessed with fantastic community spirit and a shared hope in the future. This is down to you and everyone else who volunteers. These awards recognise and celebrate volunteering and celebrate that community spirit which we all share. I hope you all enjoy the celebrations and whether you win or lose, keep doing what you do in striving for a better future.

Thanks for your hard work and thanks to everyone who has been nominated and the thousands of volunteers

across Blackburn with Darwen. May I also thank all our sponsors and everyone who has helped to put on these awards. Without your continued support celebrations such as this would not be possible.”



**Councillor Phil Riley Leader of Blackburn with Darwen Council:**

The volunteers we have here in the borough embody the very spirit of Blackburn with Darwen – a place built on resilience, compassion, and a shared commitment to improving the lives of others.

Our communities are at the heart of everything we do as a Council, and we know that it is the selflessness of volunteers that strengthens and unites us.

From offering support to the most vulnerable, to running vital local services, organising community events, and championing positive change – volunteers are the lifeblood of our communities.

The past few years have brought challenges, but they have also demonstrated how powerful we are when we come together.

These awards are a way of saying thank you. To every nominee and winner, know that your hard work does not

go unnoticed. You are truly an inspiration, and this celebration is a small token of the immense gratitude we all feel for the difference you make. Thank you for all that you do.



## A word from our sponsors



“Deaf Village Northwest stands as a sanctuary and support system for the Deaf community. We provide both in reach and outreach support services, including a five-bed residential home tailored for young Deaf individuals with complex needs.

Our focus spans across addressing communicative requirements, promoting independence, facilitating education, and supporting them in employment opportunities. As a multi award winning organisation, we are dedicated to encouraging a more inclusive society. We achieve this by raising awareness and offering Deaf awareness training to some of the leading businesses in the Northwest. We believe that volunteering is crucial for both individuals and communities alike. It serves as a cornerstone for building stronger, more cohesive societies. Engaging in volunteer work provides a sense of purpose and

fulfilment. Knowing that you are making a positive difference in the lives of others can be incredibly rewarding Supporting the Community Volunteer Awards aligns with our organisation's values of inclusivity, empowerment, and community engagement. By championing these awards, we are contributing to the celebration of volunteers and the development of stronger, more inclusive communities for all” Donna **Morton – Deaf Village**



“As a local charity, our volunteers are vital to the organisation, and we simply could not deliver the services or support as many people as we do without them. Our volunteers do not only give us their time – they bring a vast range of skills and experience which really add value to what we can offer for older people and help to develop the charity’s services. We are pleased to support the Community Volunteer Awards as they are one, very visible, way to say thank you to everyone who gives up their time to volunteer in Blackburn with Darwen. The borough is fortunate to have so many people who contribute in so many different ways and it is right that this is celebrated.” **Vicky Shepherd – BwD Age UK**



“PM+M is an independent, leading firm of accountants, financial planners, and business advisers, with over 100 years of experience in advising local business owners and individuals. As a firm with deep roots in Lancashire and the Northwest, we’re passionate about making a positive impact in our local communities, working together as a firm to prioritise making Lancashire a great place to live, work and play. PM+M is delighted to sponsor the Community Volunteer Awards – putting a spotlight on the amazing work of our local volunteers and celebrating the impact they are making in Blackburn with Darwen. The awards ensure that the people who go the extra mile to make a difference to the lives of others gain the recognition they deserve and provide us with an opportunity to say thank you to everyone who gives up their time to volunteer in the borough - we are proud to be involved!”

**Ceri Dixon – Partner PM&M**

## A word from our sponsors



“As a Charity, funding can be limited, we could not provide all the Services on offer without the support of Volunteers. The Awards are a fantastic way to recognise, nominate, identify, and celebrate! The Carers Service is one of many local organisations that come together as a community to raise the profile of Volunteers and to shout from the roof tops the amazing work they do. The Carers Service are proud to be a part of this event, to be a part of the local community, celebrating and supporting Volunteers. When I sit on a table of nominated volunteers all glammed up and excited – I think... “wow! These people have worked so hard in supporting carers and the Carers Service, befriending carers, running groups, and running reception. I am so proud of them.”

**Sam Morris CEO – BwD Carers Service**



“The TIME and TALENT of our volunteers are crucial to provide support to the Hospice services. Volunteers do not give their time to be thanked or applauded, but each and everyone deserves recognition for giving their time and expertise freely. We know that each and every volunteer deserves an award, The Community volunteer Awards enables us to say, ‘Thank You’ and show our appreciation, and to shout out for all the wonderful achievements taking place within our own towns and communities. The Community Volunteer Awards Allows us to show our appreciation to all volunteers out there and we would like to take this opportunity to applaud each and every one of you.”



**Hilary Barrett – CEO East Lancashire Hospice**



“SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK employs over 6,200 people, operating across hundreds of sites, as a local employer, we recognize our responsibilities to our people, neighbours, and the local communities where we work. We have developed close relationships with several local organisations and charities in the Blackburn with Darwen area and sponsored local community events. At SUEZ, our core values are around people and the planet. It is also really important to us that we are a good neighbour to the communities around our operations, and we offer our own colleagues a day a year to volunteer for a cause that they are passionate about. We believe that it benefits both the community and our colleagues, improving the mental health and wellbeing for all involved as a business that cares deeply about people and the planet, we are proud to support these awards, recognising individuals who give their own time to benefit the community.” **Victoria Crabtree – Regional Manager SUEZ**





# Health & Well Being Award: Individual Finalists



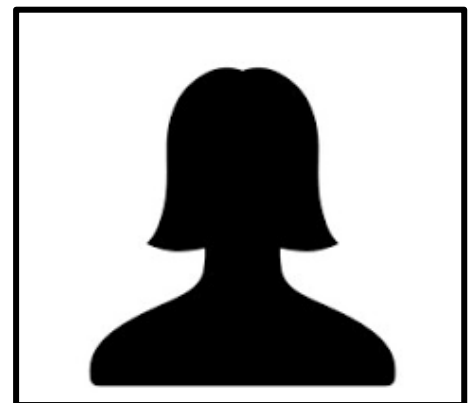
## **Shaheen Elahi**

I am married with 2 children, 1 son and a younger daughter who has learning disabilities, I am a full-time Carer, and I found myself with some spare time on my hands, I wanted to do something useful in, something for me. I had been in contact with the BwD Carers service, and I decided that I wanted to give something back, so I started volunteering for them. I volunteer once a week for 3 hours and I am also volunteering for a woman's over 50's group at Bangor Street Community Centre once a week for 3 hours. It is a very rewarding to see that we help both the individuals, the carers, and the elderly to communicate and enjoy their time. Volunteering is exceptionally good for my mental health, gets me out of the house, it is reassuring that there are people who enjoy your company I am privileged to be nominated, I did not do this for the reward but for the satisfaction of helping people.

## **Barbara Leyland**

Barbara is a valued member of the creative and support department here at East Lancashire Hospice. Barbara runs our quiz and bingo session every Thursday come rain or shine; she never misses a beat. The quiz is always informative and ends up a fabulous discussion around the chosen topic. She creates an atmosphere of pure enjoyment helping to ensure that member's mental health and well-being is very well looked after and creating a group of very special friendships.

Barbara has been volunteering in the creative and support department since 2016 and really takes her time to get to know our members, she assists with the patients who need extra support and always has the time and patients to support struggling members,



## **Sahil Usman**

"Volunteering is an integral part of my life, ensuring that I can make a meaningful impact while managing my own health, well-being, and education. In my role as a volunteer, I support vulnerable individuals, raise awareness about cancer, and educate my community. I volunteer in various capacities and locations, focusing primarily on community support and raising awareness.

Volunteering allows you to give back to your community, learn new skills, and make meaningful connections. It is a rewarding experience that helps others while also enriching your own life."

"I am incredibly honoured and thrilled to be nominated for this award. It is a significant recognition of the dedication and hard work I have put into my volunteering efforts. This nomination not only validates my commitment to making a positive impact in the community but also inspires me to continue my mission with even greater enthusiasm."

# Health & Well Being Award: Group Finalists



## ***Blackburn Foodbank Volunteers***

The Foodbank volunteers help in the foodbank warehouse sorting food donations, as well as at the foodbank centre where they chat with clients, pack food parcels, and prepare refreshments. They also help signpost clients on to other agencies. Volunteers also carry out essential admin tasks such as data entry and letter writing; manage our website and social media pages, encourage food donations and help with fund and awareness-raising. In addition, we have volunteer who provide their vehicles and time to collect food from a variety of venues.

The volunteers provide 'more than just food' by going the extra mile in offering support through signposting to a plethora of agencies across the borough to address the

underlying reason for food poverty with the aim of eradicating the need for reliance on the foodbank.

## ***Accrington, Blackburn & Darwen Community First Responders***

Accrington, Blackburn & Darwen Community First Responders volunteer for Northwest Ambulance Service. They are all trained by NWS to often administer lifesaving care to residents within the area. The team is a long established in the area and often offer cover 24/7 to the residents of the area.

It is a valuable and often unseen team who care about their local communities. They raise funds for their own kits and uniform and use their own vehicles. Their volunteering is vital to their surrounding communities, this is done purely in their own time. They are willing to spend time away from their own families to help those in need.



## ***Shad Chefs Woman Hub***

Jo, Jackie, Cheryl, and Suzanne all volunteer at the Shad Chef's Woman Hub. All four decided to give something back after each one had gone through a tough time, wanting to put their experiences to beneficial use they decided to help other women going through similar things and created Shad Chefs Woman Hub, and they have never looked back.

Open every Thursday from 7 PM to 9 PM at the Community Hub on Railway Road, Blackburn. They welcome all women aged 18 and over from any area they have created a safe space for women to come along to have a brew, have a chat, make friends and have some valuable alone time away from family pressures. The team also offer support and signposting from housing issues, mental health, to addiction and recovery.

The work they do is vital and has helped so many women through tough times.

# Prosperity, Learning & Employment Award: Individual Finalists



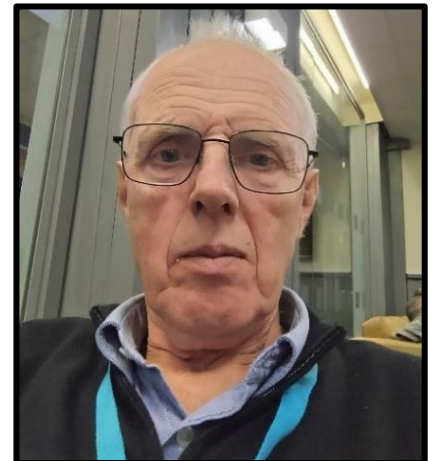
## **Bev Ormerod**

“My name is Bev Ormerod, and I am in my 60s. I am married to Dave, and we have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. I trained as a register nurse & then mental health nurse in 1980s. In 2008 I trained as a social worker then worked as a teacher for many years in many different sectors, including prisons, high schools, colleges, universities and as a private tutor. In about 2018 I became terribly ill and had to stop work. I did not work again until last year when I decided enough was enough. I set up Neurodynamix CIC to help and support individuals and their families, I was compelled to help people with Neurodiversity, having been diagnosed recently myself, I realised how little support was out there for the neurodivergent and I wanted to make sure others did not struggle like I did. I currently offer 1.1 services, Craft sessions, drama, and lots more”.

## **Sandy Woods**

“I moved to Blackburn about 34 years ago and when my sons started attending Scouts, I decided to get involved, that’s where my volunteering commenced, I still volunteer for the Scouts as and when needed, I also volunteer for the SSAFA, a forces charity where I juggle the money coming in and buying goods and services for the veterans in need. At Immanuel church I help out when needed, cutting grass, delivering services.

On Saturday Afternoons I referee for the Rugby which is good fun, keeps me fit and a beer afterwards!! I’m retired and I have time on my hands, so I look at it this way and I receive £200 pension from the Government, so I give back 10 hours of volunteering, it’s very rewarding making a difference to someone else’s life when you volunteer you get so much more back than you give.



## **Fizza Zafar**

I am Fizza, I am in year 12 doing Dt maths and Physics but that is not all I do... I am quite creative, and I was interested in innovative technology which is how I happened to do my work experience at the Making Rooms. I have now volunteered for over a year, and I love it. As a volunteer, I welcome newcomers tell them what we are about and give them a safety induction. After which, if they are interested in any of the machines, I help them get started on a simple design/ project that they make and can learn from but also take home with them.

I volunteer because I simply like it... love it even. One last thing I had like to add is to present my gratitude to all the staff members at The Making Rooms. They have been the most kind and hospitable people I have ever met.



# Prosperity, Learning & Employment Award: Group Finalists



## **Neuro Dyna-Mix**

Neuro Dyna-mix volunteers help and support neurodivergent individuals with everyday challenges. Offering one to one help for both children and adults, to navigate through the complex benefits systems, diagnosis, attending important meetings & appointments, helping with EHCPs, working with families and schools to support children with neurodiverse conditions & S.E.N.D.

They also provide social groups in comfortable, welcoming, and safe environments around Blackburn with Darwen. Offering arts and craft classes, drama, and mindful journaling which all help tremendously to combat social isolation. The Volunteers go out of their way to make their clients feel supported and listened too.

“The have spent a considerable amount of time both inside and outside their working hours providing me with valuable support both on the phone and in person It's helped me so much”.

## **Offload Northwest**

Offload Northwest originally supported men by offering a safe place to open up and talk about their mental health, this has now expanded due to the high demand of their amazing service, and they have a women's group too. By providing drop-in sessions the volunteers are able to offer a safe, welcoming place for people to offload.

Offload Northwest have also started to support people in the community in lots of other ways, The volunteers signpost people to the relevant services while offering a helping a hand. The volunteers work tirelessly to ensure they work with everyone in the community, and no-one is left behind, they organise events, work with other groups, work with families, young people.



## **Phoenix Hub**

Phoenix Hub and the dedicated team of volunteers reach out to people in Blackburn and Darwen who find themselves rough sleeping/ homeless. The homeless drop-in that acts as a one-stop shop for every service that people experiencing homelessness may need.

The volunteers are dedicated to ensuring that these people have a voice and can access services that they desperately need, Volunteers all with lived experience turn up week in week out to ensure that people have a warm, welcoming safe place with no judgment. They offer a breakfast every morning, individuals can access a shower, clean clothes and a listening, empathic ear.



They work tirelessly and have helped countless people get back on their feet and into housing/ drug services/ employment/ out of debt/ mental health support/ healthcare.

## **A word from our sponsors:**



“My name is Khalid Saifullah, and I am honoured to serve as the Managing Director at WEPA Professional UK. In addition to my role in the company, I am privileged to hold the position of Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire, where I am dedicated to supporting and representing our local community.

Volunteering is a core value for me because I believe in giving back and actively contributing to the well-being of our community and the environment, I was brought up in. It provides a meaningful way to make a positive impact and create a sense of unity and support among people. The benefits of volunteering extend beyond personal growth. For the community, it fosters a culture of

collaboration and compassion, addressing local needs working together to help develop solutions. Through volunteering, we can collectively address issues, promote inclusivity, and create lasting change.

It's very important to support the CVA as we need to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contribution of volunteers from our community. Setting the standard for future community members to follow and improve on. Most importantly is highlighting the dedication to fostering a strong and supportive community which is what Blackburn with Darwen is known for.”



**Khalid Saifullah MBE – CEO Wepa**



“Active Lancashire is the strategic lead for Sport and Physical Activity in Lancashire. We connect with like-minded local organisations and individuals to help bring about active lifestyles. Volunteering not only helps the community it keeps people physically and mentally healthier.

It helps organisations/grassroot clubs etc become sustainable. It enables everyone to learn new skills, build confidence and self-esteem and make new friends. It is a way of giving back which makes you feel better too regardless of whether you are in paid employment or not. We want everyone to have the place, space and opportunity to get active and healthy and part of that is

supporting and empowering volunteers in the community to have the skills, knowledge and support to address challenges and create lasting change. It is important that what volunteers do is recognised in the community”.

**Jane Moodie – Active Lancashire**





## A word from our sponsors:



“Volunteering is important because it enables individuals to help others in a selfless way. Volunteering benefits everyone and is a terrific way to have a positive impact in the community.



Volunteering is also fun and can bring fulfilment to people’s lives. Numerous charities and CICs depend solely



on volunteer work to operate and provide services where mainstream organisations cannot or do not offer a much-needed community service. Volunteers often bring bespoke knowledge, understanding and a high level of enthusiasm which enhances the experience for the beneficiaries and

impact on the individual, group or community.

Supporting the Community Volunteer Awards is the perfect way to acknowledge the dedication, commitment and selflessness

of those people who chose to volunteer.” **Blackburn Rovers Football Club & Community Trust**



Volunteering is a cornerstone of vibrant and resilient communities. It fosters a spirit of generosity and mutual support, enabling individuals to contribute their time and skills for the greater good. The benefits of volunteering are manifold. For the community, it strengthens social bonds, enhances civic engagement, and addresses local needs more effectively.

Supporting the Community Volunteer Awards aligns perfectly with Chubb Fire & Security’s values and mission. These awards celebrate the selfless contributions of individuals who dedicate their time and energy to making their communities better places to live. By recognising and honouring these volunteers, we not only acknowledge their hard work and dedication but also inspire others to get involved in volunteering.



“Volunteering is a powerful tool to demonstrate to our communities the opportunities and inclusive nature of humans. Volunteering is colour-blind and has no restrictions, allowing everyone to participate and make a real difference to our communities. Having an opportunity to collaborate with the community allows people to explore opportunities without over committing and to build relationships to work together to plan and achieve bigger goals for our communities. It also empowers individuals to build self-confidence and resilience. Blackburn



College is at the heart of the community, and we are proud to support the community awards.”

**Dr Fazal Dad – Principal and Chief Executive, Blackburn College**



# Grass Roots Community Action Award: Individual Finalists



**Vicky Kelly**

“I am a single parent with a son who has had many problems over the years, I came across the BwD Carers Service by chance, contacted them was allocated a caseworker who helped me and my son immediately. I started to attend a craft class and after a year I decided that I wanted to give something back to the Carers service, so I started volunteering with them.

I volunteer every week and support the respite team with their dementia group, we do lots of different activities singing, dancing, arts, and crafts. I love making the members feel relaxed and happy, I like seeing them smile, listening to their stories, enjoying themselves. I also help out neighbours, friends, and family when I can – it’s important to help when you can.

I volunteer because I like to give back to my community however, I reap so much more I have gained confidence, built up my self-esteem, made many friends and I will continue for as long as I can.”

**Samantha Nye**

“I am a mum of 6 children with a lovely supportive fiancé. I have suffered a number of traumas throughout my life, having been through and come out the other side I wanted to support others.

I moved Darwen 9 years ago and became socially isolated and I decided to enrol at Blackburn College, it was during my time at university that we went into lockdown, and I kept seeing individuals asking for support that they just couldn’t get because services had been cut due to the pandemic.

I could not let these people go without support and that is when I set up Darwen Community Helpers. It is just grown from there; we help anyone who walks into the hub for support with whatever may be troubling them. If we cannot help, we will signpost them. As well as running the hub & shop we run community events, groups, and day trips to help with social isolation.”



**Pamela Ward**

I have always volunteered since I was a Teenager, mostly supporting older people with shopping and listening to their stories. I now volunteer at BwD Carers service – I run the sewing Bee group, Crochet group and at Albion Mill I run the Knit and Natter. The Groups are all well attended with lots of fun and laughter, they have created many lasting friendships.

I like volunteering because I like people, and if I know how to do something I like to pass on that knowledge. In the classes we have a lot of heartache, but we won’t be defeated and when someone has learned how to knit, sew or crochet seeing their pride and joy is worth all the tears.

I’m shocked to be nominated, as there are so many others out there doing the same as me, my reward is seeing people have a good time, make friends and learn something new along the way”.

# Grass Roots Community Action Award: Group Finalists



## ***Friends of Infirmary***

Friends of Infirmary are a community group who support the older and vulnerable people of BwD. The Group run two weekly coffee groups, one at Highfield Pavilion and one at Albion Mill, the volunteers set up serve beverages and sit and natter with those attending.

The luncheon club is held at Blackburn College, The Gardening club is held at Albion Mill and Highfield Park, the volunteers cut the grass, maintain the shrubs and keep everything nice and tidy. The volunteers also help to organise one-off community events.

Without their help and support the clubs simply could not go ahead, their enthusiasm, dedication and wonderful personalities positively impacts anyone attending the events.

## ***BwD Carers Service – Respite Service***

The respite service was set up to provide carers a safe space where their loved ones could go to whilst they have a couple of hours of respite break from their caring role.

It is an amazing service in a safe space being managed by some incredible people who are so friendly, caring, and absolutely love supporting people. Feedback has been fantastic; Carers do not know who they would have turned to without this service it would have been so difficult for them to get a break.

The group spend a lot of time planning activities and events to keep the cared for engaged in activities such as dominoes, karaoke, paintings etc. They deal with making brews, setting up and clearing after the sessions.



## ***Roots Community***

Roots Community are a Recovery focussed volunteer group who work to improve the outcomes of those in recovery and the wider community. They do this by engaging in regular weekly activities with the intention of paying into society rather than taking out. These activities include Community Clean-ups and the Guerilla Gardening. In the two years that Roots Community have existed they have given approximately eight thousand hours to improve BwD streets and green spaces and removed somewhere in the region of 12,000 bags of general and recyclable waste.

They have rebuilt and repaired fishing platforms, removed graffiti, fixed fences, trimmed trees and bushes, pulled up weeds and grown vegetables, fruits and herbs on disused 'brown land'. All this great work is delivered by people who are traditionally written off as a problem and they do so in a spirit of cohesion and altruism.



**A word from our sponsors :**

BAM



operates in the construction, property, civil engineering, public private partnerships, mechanical and electrical contracting, and consultancy engineering sectors. Volunteering is essential to the way we do business at BAM to support the communities we are building in. In many instances we would not be able to facilitate the fantastic work in the community with volunteers supporting VCSE organisations. Volunteering is central to us leaving a sustainable legacy for communities. Community Volunteer Awards are an important opportunity for us to celebrate the amazing work happening in and around

Blackburn with Darwen. We are proud to sponsor all the hard work that has been happening in the community and at this event. **Katie Tilyard – BAM Construction**



Volunteering is vitality important to make a positive difference and impact to people’s lives. Sharing knowledge and skills assists hugely in benefiting the local area. At Rhodar we undertake many local activities across the UK with schools, community hubs, welfare bodies etc. It can be the catalyst on a big scale to stimulate change for the good. We support the Community Volunteer Awards to demonstrate, support and applaud that the effort of people and community bodies are recognise and do make a tangible difference. As Rhodar and as myself representing Rhodar, we’re looking forward to celebrating the achievements of so many, we feel very honoured to be a part of it. Brilliant too that there is an avenue and a vehicle in these awards to show off the often-modest individuals who make such a difference.



**Darren Payne - Director of Client Services for Rhodar Group**



Volunteering is extremely important; a person volunteering gives us their time and their knowledge. Every individual who volunteers helps to improve the services that are available to our communities and in a time of austerity and increasing cuts it is so important to recognise and appreciate the difference our volunteers are making. For the individual who is volunteering they are benefiting from meeting new people, being part of an organisation and likeminded people, learning and sharing new skills and knowing they are making a difference. The awards highlight to the community that volunteering is valuable and hopefully raises the profile of volunteering. As well as recognising people who are giving their valuable time and energy to make a difference in our communities.



**Shigufta Kahn CEO – The Wish Centre**



“Volunteering is a straightforward way to give back to a community – it is through the kindness of strangers that we make society a better place. Doing things out of the goodness

of your heart nourishes the soul and the mind. As a local newspaper we believe it’s essential to support initiatives such as the Community Volunteer Awards as they remind people of the good in the community and how people can really make a difference, we are thrilled to partner and sponsor these awards – they’re a brilliant opportunity to celebrate our amazing county and the people that make it such a special place to call home.” **Richard Duggan Editor of the Lancashire Telegraph**





## ***A word from our sponsors:***



The Spark service is a collaborative approach made up of a group of partners. We provide Drug and Alcohol support for people of all ages,

including families and children across Blackburn with Darwen.

At Spark we are passionate about volunteers many current staff have entered this field as volunteers. volunteers are passionate and dedicated about what they do. Often volunteers come to a service area with purpose, and this is demonstrated in their values. So far this year SPARK has had twenty-one active volunteers, nine who have moved into paid employment, five with Spark, contributing to an amazing 1837.5 volunteer hours for the service. By supporting the volunteer awards, we celebrate, thanks and show volunteers our support to their impact on service and wider society.



***Claire Illingworth – Spark***



Chip in aims to support young people into quality volunteering opportunities across the borough. We work with a wide range of partner organisations to offer these opportunities where young people can learn new skills, develop, and grow. Volunteering is incredibly important and can have such a wide impact on individuals and communities too.



There are a range of benefits to volunteering such as learning new skills, meeting new people, improving mental health and wellbeing, and making a difference.

Volunteering is extremely powerful, and the difference people can make through volunteering can be huge. The Community Volunteer Awards are an important way to celebrate some of the boroughs most amazing volunteers, to highlight volunteering in itself and the impact it has on individuals and the community.

***Becca Porter – Chip In***



Volunteering is essential because it strengthens the fabric of communities. It enables individuals to contribute meaningfully to local initiatives, helping to address challenges and provide support where it's most needed. volunteers play a critical role in sustaining projects, from youth clubs to environmental initiatives, making a lasting positive impact.

Volunteering also brings people together, creating bonds that make communities more resilient and supportive.

Supporting the Community Volunteer Awards is a fantastic way to recognise and celebrate the invaluable work that volunteers do. These awards highlight the individuals who give their time selflessly, encouraging more people to get involved and make a difference. At Newground Together, we believe that recognising the efforts of volunteers helps to build a culture of participation and community spirit, ensuring that local projects and services continue to thrive. It's an opportunity to thank those who are at the heart of making positive change.



***Liam Smith, Community Programmes Manager - Newground Together***

# Young Peoples Award: Individual Finalists

## **Lucie Brown**

I am 15 years old, and I was born and go to school in Darwen. I enjoy swimming and I am currently a rookie lifeguard with Lancashire Tridents. I am an active member of Girlguiding and have been for 10 years, I started my Girlguiding journey as a rainbow and moved up to brownies and later, guides. As a guide, I was a brownie unit helper and after guides, became a young leader.

I enjoy volunteering in my community and wider events such as the Children's Village at the Royal Lancashire Agricultural Show and Darwen Rotary Day. I started volunteering because I like helping people. I continue to volunteer because I enjoy seeing the girls grow into outstanding young people and seeing them try new activities and broaden their skills.



## **Emma Evans**

I am a full-time university student in my final year studying crime and criminal justice. I got into volunteering because one of my assignments during my second year of university, I volunteer with Citizen's advice Witness service primarily in Blackburn magistrates court and occasionally the two Burnley courts. I volunteer around 1-2 days a week,

In my role I support witnesses and victims awaiting trial at court. I show them around the court room as well as explaining any facilities and measures they may need on the day or answer any worries or concerns. I continue to volunteer because I enjoy helping people and secondly to gain experience, I strive to have a job in the criminal justice system when I graduate therefore it is beneficial to keep gaining experience.

## **Fizza Zafar**

I'm Fizza, I am in year 12 doing Dt maths and Physics but that is not all I do... I'm quite creative and I was interested in new technology which is how I happened to do my work experience at the Making Rooms.

I have now volunteered for over a year, as a volunteer, I welcome newcomers tell them what we are about and give them a safety induction. After which, if they are interested in any of the machines, I help them get started on a simple design/ project that they make and can learn from but also take home with them. I volunteer because I simply like it... love it even. One last thing I had like to add is to present my gratitude to all the staff members at The Making Rooms. They have been the most kind and hospitable people I have ever met.





# Young People's Award: Group Finalists



## **Blackburn Youth Darts Academy**

Blackburn Youth Darts Academy is non-profitable organisation launched in March 2017. The Academy enrolls young people aged between 6 to 18 years to participate in darts activities. They hold weekly coaching sessions and attend competitions locally and nationally. With over sixty members and a waiting list they have successfully shown the young people of Blackburn with Darwen, that Darts is good fun, better than playing on a game console!!!

Blackburn Youth Darts Academy have provided lots of young people with the chance to play a different sport learn and improve their mathematics. The academy

allows children grow their self-esteem, make friends, and keep active.

## **The Children's Storehouse**

The Children's Storehouse was created to support the disadvantaged children of Blackburn with Darwen, providing essential items for mums to be, babies and children. Supplying good quality free items - clothing, prams, cots nappies for babies and low-income families, but also supporting the refugee, asylum and families fleeing from domestic violence, families who find themselves with nothing.

The volunteers all work hard to raise funds and donations, they make sure that all donations are clean and fit for use. At Christmas they provide toys for families who are struggling.

Working closely with social services, health professionals, churches, and foodbanks they are always busy, all the volunteers are compassionate, caring and hardworking they make those using the facility feel wanted, loved, valued and accepted into the local community.



## **St Georges Mill Hill Scout Group – Canalside Activity Centre**

In April 2016 volunteers from St. Georges Mill Hill Scout Group agreed a lease with BwD Council for a 3-acre plot of land adjacent to Feniscliffe Allotments to develop as an outdoor activity centre initially for Scouting use.

Over the last 6 years, the volunteers have developed the site to have a wide range of activities including bush craft, archery, axe throwing, catapults, airsoft, pond dipping, Harry Potter hunt, mountain biking, team building,

canoeing and kayaking. The centre also has a small allotment. Canalside Activity Centre is run by a small, dedicated set of volunteers who are also Scout Leaders at St. George's Mill Hill Scout Group. “



## A word from our sponsors:



“Volunteering is a good thing to do, you can get a lot of satisfaction out of it, and it feels good to achieve things. Volunteering is an integral part of society and of the community. Volunteers meet needs and increase the capacity of the community and are essential to healthy community life. They reach areas that local authorities cannot – they’re a different route into the community, and they have a better understanding of the community, and its needs

Volunteering opens up other opportunities that you might not have realised existed before. We sponsored the Renee Black Award as a way of carrying on her legacy. Everyone knew her, she was very straight forward, and you always knew where you stood with her. She was one of the founding members of the Interfaith Forum – she saw the benefits to interaction between faiths and we celebrate our different faiths together. Everyone loved her, it was a sense of mutual love. We are keen for her legacy to continue in volunteering through this award.” **Interfaith Forum**



“Volunteers connect with each other through shared motivations and values. Volunteers give their time and trying to make their communities a better place to live, grow and work within. Volunteers reflect on their experiences and share good examples to make their communities better for all. Through their volunteering, individuals improve their skills, and their prospects should they wish...three of our most recent volunteers are now employed full time. Whilst most who volunteer do it for their own personal and/or private reasons, it is important that Volunteers and their efforts/activities are highlighted and showcased at such events as the Community Volunteer Awards, without Volunteers our communities would be poorer spaces. **Geoff Wilkinson - Voice**



“Volunteering is important on a number of levels in that it gives individuals and the community a chance or an opportunity to participate in providing a stronger community. The community benefits by having services provided that otherwise would not be available because of the high cost of providing them, also the local community benefits from having Community activities which would not normally be provided by the local council. The community volunteer awards are a fantastic way of recognising the huge effort put into the delivery of the organisation/groups by people who don’t usually get

recognised or appreciated for what they do for the local community. We are very happy to be supporting the community awards to praise and celebrate the volunteers who do not receive any type of recognition on the amount of hard work they put into supporting the local community” **Kay & Brian – UCO**



# Renee Black Award: Finalists



## ***Aid 4 Ummah,***

Ahmed Leli decided to sponsor Feniscowles Cricket Club to try and break barriers and unite two quite different communities in Blackburn with Darwen.

Following on from this Aid 4 Ummah and Feniscowles Cricket Club created an annual 'sleep out to help out'. Staff, volunteers, and players sleeping outside to raise awareness for homelessness here in our hometown all the funds raised then went towards winter projects.

Ahmed's goal was simple to highlight those most in need in Blackburn by collaborating with a different

community with different beliefs bringing them together for one purpose and one goal - help those in need. This project has brought two quite different communities together which would never have happened in Blackburn, creating bonds and friendships which never would have materialised otherwise.

## ***Neuro Dyna-Mix***

Neuro Dyna-mix volunteers help and support neurodivergent individuals with everyday challenges. Offering one to one help for both children and adults, to navigate through the complex benefits systems, diagnosis, attending important meetings & appointments, helping with EHCPs, working with families and schools to support children with neurodiverse conditions & S.E.N.D.

They also provide social groups in comfortable, welcoming, and safe environments around Blackburn with Darwen. Offering arts and craft classes, drama, and mindful journaling which all help tremendously to combat social isolation. The Volunteers go out of their way to make their clients feel supported and listened too.

"The have spent a considerable amount of time both inside and outside their working hours providing me with valuable support both on the phone and in person It's helped me so much".



## ***Offload Northwest***

Offload Northwest originally supported men by offering a safe place to open up and talk about their mental health, this has now expanded due to the high demand of their amazing service, and they have a women's group too. By providing drop-in sessions the volunteers are able to offer a safe, welcoming place for people to offload.

Offload Northwest have also started to support people in the community in lots of other ways, when they are struggling, they give them free food donated by local

organisations. The volunteers signpost people to the relevant services while offering a helping a hand. The volunteers work tirelessly to ensure they work with everyone in the community, and no-one is left behind, they organise events, work with other groups, work with families, young people.



# Environment Award: Individual Finalists

## **Wayne Dixon**

Wayne along with his dog Koda, have tirelessly cleaned up the streets in Blackburn with Darwen for many years. Having travelled for many years Wayne returned to his hometown and saw lots of social issues and negative changes, driven by his passion for his hometown Wayne wanted to do something, so he started cleaning up and has never looked back.

Not only keeping his mission local Wayne has travelled the length and breadth of the country for many years, making it his mission to collect litter and clean up the nation's coastlines, raising awareness about the environment and social issues. Wayne also links in with local schools to talk to the pupils about what he does and why he is so enthusiastic about looking after our towns. Wayne has successfully inspired hundreds of youngsters to become eco warriors, encouraging tomorrow's environmentalists.



## **Angela Gatehouse**

I am sixty-five and I have lived in Blackburn for the last 30 years, having worked in retail when I retired, I needed something to do, I wanted to give something back and I found out that the East Lancashire Hospice was looking for gardeners, I have always loved Gardening so I thought I would give it a go.

I volunteer 5 days a week and I have been at the Hospice for the past 6 years; my role involves cutting grass, weeding, planting and even cleaning paths. I love going to the Hospice the people are lovely to work for and I enjoy seeing the garden in bloom, spring is the best season for me.

Volunteering gets you out and about meeting new people, it makes you feel good. When you look at what you have accomplished it's a great feeling of achievement.

## **Betty Mossop**

"I have been volunteering for the last 10 years, looking after my "Secret Gardens" that I created next to Hindle Court in Darwen, I first noticed it when I was taking Rosie for a walk and decided that I wanted to do something about the space. When I first started it was just a mass of brambles- it took me 3 months of filling my wheelie bin to clear everything. Now it is a lovely space to enjoy, looking at the flowers, listening to the birds.

I have over the last few years created a number of "Secret Gardens" planting flowers, creating paths, and creating a space for people to enjoy. I love being outside and meeting new people, chatting about plants, and hearing their feedback about the Secret Gardens – everyone loves them.

Volunteering has helped my mental health – instead of wallowing in my loneliness I am out and about, it's wonderful. "



# Environment Award: Group Finalists



## ***Cherry Tree Library Community Apiary***

The volunteers have transformed previously unused space to provide a setting where honeybees and other pollinators can thrive. They have created a fantastic educational resource where people of all ages can come together to learn about bees and the important part they play in our ecosystem.

The project offers hands outdoor and indoor opportunities to get involved, with activities including: - planting, gardening, site maintenance, running bee themed creative activities etc. volunteers and visitors to develop new skills and knowledge which can be taken back to families, friends and communities thereby ensuring the spread of understanding about the importance of caring for our environment and the promotion of biodiversity.

## ***Keep Blackburn Tidy***

Are an amazing group of Blackburn residents who work together tirelessly to keep Blackburn streets tidy, clean, and welcoming. Every day you can see members with their red bags cleaning and tidying the streets of Blackburn, they do not stop at picking up rubbish - trimming bushes, planting flowers, and cleaning up back allies, all to make the town look a better place. The impact this group has made to the community is huge, they collaborate well with the local council and have managed to change the mindset of thousands of residents. Keep Blackburn tidy has become a community and many individuals who were isolated are now active picking up rubbish in their own community, but they have also become part of something so much bigger - a family.



## ***The Little Potting Club***

A children's community gardening club run by Vicky and her wonderful family. This is an all year round, volunteer lead club for the children to learn about and take part in growing and harvesting the foods we eat, how to look after and help our pollinators and encourages an environmentally friendly approach to gardening. Vicky dedicates her Saturday afternoons to share her wealth of knowledge with our children within the Rose Garden at Whitehall ParkIt's an enjoyable experience for all, where our children look forward to every weekend, coming together in a welcoming, friendly place in our local park and take part helping each other and also learning through play. This is so important and encourages a healthy, memorable understanding of our world and develops valuable social skills also.





# Culture, Leisure & Sporting Life Award: Individual Finalists



## **Chris Walton**

I got into volunteering as I was interested in the Exchange and what they were doing. I volunteer in two roles, as a customer service assistant for events, and as a history researcher. As an assistant, I help out at any events the Exchange are hosting as a history researcher, I work in my own time, so it varies week by week I am really interested in the Exchange's history. It is a great building with an amazing story that has been forgotten about over the years.

The Exchange is connected to so many names and places in Blackburn's own history, and it has had huge cultural significance, hosting among others, Charles Dickens, and the Suffragettes. I've really enjoyed doing the research – I've learnt so much more about the town's history and it's motivated me to extend my own research further than

just the Exchange.

## **Sliding Doors Young Peoples Committee**

Amazing supporters of the Mill Hill's Got Talent and Mill Hill Festival, they are incredibly inspirational, warm, kind and welcoming volunteers who made sure that everyone had a lovely day.

On the day of the Mill Hill festival, they worked so hard, picking up litter, handing out water, helping out wherever they could, signposting people, collecting funds, they did a tremendous job, and they helped to make the festival the success it was. They got involved in organising, publicising, and promoting the festival.

At the Mill Hill's got Talent, they sold raffle tickets, bingo tickets and made sure everyone had an enjoyable time.



## **Keith Brunt**

I first got into Volunteering when I was 16 (24 years ago) when I started a local football team, since then I have gone onto form Blackburn Youth Darts Academy, which has seen hundreds of children attend our sessions. This year I have formed another Youth Darts Academy in Oswaldtwistle too to give more children more opportunities.

Currently I run Blackburn Youth Darts Academy doing Admin, applying for grants, and securing sponsorship. I also run the coaching sessions all day every Saturday. Additionally, I run the Darts Plus initiative going into schools running maths sessions through darts. I do all this around working Full time. I like to volunteer and help others; I am especially keen to give children opportunities to participate in sport. There was nothing like this around for me as a child and I want to try make a difference within

Blackburn for young people.

# Culture, Leisure & Sporting Life Award: Group Finalists



## **Arts 2 Heal**

A grassroots organisation dedicated to supporting mental wellbeing through art-based interventions. Our volunteers, many of whom were once beneficiaries themselves, are enthusiastic about giving back to the community. Despite facing their own challenges, they consistently demonstrate unwavering dedication and creativity in their work. Over the years, our volunteers have consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment to our mission. They work tirelessly to ensure that Arts 2 Heal is open to the community six days a week, providing essential support through a variety of art workshops and non-art-based services. These include one-on-one and group sessions, both at our hub and in the community, as well as outreach initiatives with partner organisations. Our volunteers' contributions are far-reaching.

## **Mill Hill Events Committee**

In September 2022 the Mill Hill events and festival group decided that they wanted to bring back the Mill Hill Festival, they set up a team of local volunteers who then went and begged and borrowed to ensure that the event would go ahead, they needed money for a stage, toilets, children's inflatables, sound system, security, first aid, printing of flyers etc. they set about contacting local businesses and set up a Go Fund Me page etc.

After 8 months of hard work, they pulled off the most fantastic day - everyone there had a fantastic time, there was no trouble, and spirits were lifted. For one day all the problems were forgotten and everyone came together, in the glorious sun to celebrate, sing dance and party - everyone thoroughly enjoyed it, the children were not forgotten there were many free activities put on for them.



## **SAS Rights**

A women-led and serves women, girls and those who want to support and celebrate them – which, of course, includes men and boys. At its heart is the facilitation of communication and understanding in and between groups, particularly vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups.

They offer a plethora of services information-providing services, acting as intermediary between hard-to-reach and vulnerable community

members and support services, providing subsidised and affordable exercise classes, free bicycle lessons, art/crafts and conversation classes online chats and advocacy help, occasional workshops and training sessions SAS Rights has brought together persons who would ordinarily not have had reason or opportunity to meet. They have built a community and has shown the best of Blackburn and Darwen – how the community's diversity is a big plus, a resource and strength.



# Lindsay Dunn Award: Individual Finalists

## **Muaaz Nadat**

“British values are incredibly important to me, and they are the driving force behind my commitment to volunteering. I am passionate about creating an inclusive environment—one that fosters tolerance, eliminates discrimination, and provides essential services to marginalized groups in our society. This includes supporting veterans and addressing social isolation among the elderly. For over 10 years, I have volunteered with a range of groups, from the elderly to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. One of the most meaningful roles I have taken on is serving as a youth justice panel member. This experience has given me a deep sense of empathy for young people in the justice system, many of whom come from challenging and traumatic backgrounds. My goal is to help them find a positive path forward, and I do this by building rapport over shared interests, like gaming or fitness, which helps them feel more comfortable opening up.”



## **Bev Ormerod**

“My name is Bev Ormerod and I'm in my 60s. I'm married to Dave, and we have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. I trained as a register nurse & then mental health nurse in 1980s. In 2008 I trained as a social worker then worked as a teacher for many years in many different sectors, including prisons, high schools, colleges, universities and as a private tutor.

In about 2018 I became terribly ill and had to stop work. I did not work again until last year when I decided enough was enough.

I set up Neurodynamix CIC to help and support individuals and their families, I was compelled to help people with Neurodiversity, having been diagnosed recently myself, I realised how little support was out there for the neurodivergent I currently offer 1.1 services, Craft, drama sessions and lots more”

## **Sahil Usman**

“Volunteering is an integral part of my life, ensuring that I can make a meaningful impact while managing my own health, well-being, and education. In my role as a volunteer, I support vulnerable individuals, raise awareness about cancer, and educate my community. Volunteering allows you to give back to your community, learn new skills, and make meaningful connections. It's a rewarding experience that helps others while also enriching your own life”.

“I am incredibly honoured and thrilled to be nominated for this award. It is a significant recognition of the dedication and hard work I've put into my volunteering efforts. This nomination not only validates my commitment to making a positive impact in the community but also inspires me to continue my mission with even greater enthusiasm”.



# Lindsay Dunn Award: Group Finalists



**Offload Northwest** originally supported men by offering a safe place to open up and talk about their mental health, this has now expanded due to the high demand of their amazing service, and they have a women's group too. By providing drop-in sessions the volunteers are able to offer a safe, welcoming place for people to offload.

Offload Northwest have also started to support people in the community in lots of other ways, when they are struggling, they give them free food donated by local organisations. The volunteers signpost people to the relevant services while offering a

helping a hand. The volunteers work tirelessly to ensure they work with everyone in the community, and no-one is left behind, they organise events, work with other groups, work with families, young people.

**Phoenix Hub** and the dedicated team of volunteers reach out to people in Blackburn and Darwen who find themselves rough sleeping/ homeless. The homeless drop-in that acts as a one-stop shop for every service that people experiencing homelessness may need.

The volunteers ensure that these people have a voice and can access services that they desperately need, Volunteers all with lived experience turn up week in week out to ensure that people have a warm, welcoming safe place with no judgment. They offer a breakfast every morning, individuals can access a shower, clean clothes and a listening, empathic ear. They work tirelessly and have helped countless people get back on their feet and into housing/ drug services/ employment/ out of debt/ mental health support/ healthcare

**Phoenix Hub**



**Voice** Saturday breakfast club volunteers all devote their Saturday mornings to feeding and supporting the most chaotic individuals. Many of the volunteers have their own struggles-health, families, and mental health however they come along every Saturday to prepare a cooked free breakfast. Not only do they offer a free breakfast they also chat and find out what is going on in the lives of the service users - if they can support and signpost them to other services - they will do. They offer the service users a safe and welcoming place - no judgement just empathy and understanding. All voice volunteers work hard and are passionate about what they do, working with the most chaotic individuals isn't an easy task and takes very confident, kind-hearted individuals, all the volunteers from the voice Saturday breakfast club are empathic, generous people who have helped make the most chaotic individual feel respected.





# Community Involvement Award: Finalists



**The Children's Storehouse** was created to support the disadvantaged children of Blackburn with Darwen, providing essential items for mums to be, babies and children. Supplying good quality free items -clothing, prams, cots nappies for babies and low-income families, but also supporting the refugee, asylum and families fleeing from domestic violence, families who find themselves with nothing.

The volunteers all work hard to raise funds and donations, they make sure that all donations are clean and fit for use. At Christmas they provide toys for families who are struggling.

Working closely with social services, health professionals, churches and foodbanks they are always busy, all the volunteers are compassionate, caring and hardworking they make those using the facility feel wanted, loved, valued and accepted into the local community.

**Darwen Community Helpers CIC**, a much-needed community hub in the centre of Darwen, providing a number of services such as warm space, focus groups, well-being classes, low-cost meals, a food bank, and a baby bank. Sammy had experienced multiple traumatic things in her childhood and was enthusiastic about making life better for others, she had always wanted to create a space where anyone could come, receive emotional support and practical help with things. somewhere for those experiencing poverty, those that are lonely & isolated to turn up for company, a chat, and in a place where they felt cared for, valued & listened to. This has been achieved on a huge scale, over the years the hub has grown and now has a shop and over 20 volunteers who are all committed to making Darwen a better place to live.



**Phoenix Hub** and the amazing team of volunteers reach out to people in Blackburn and Darwen who find themselves rough sleeping/homeless. The homeless drop-in that acts as a one-stop shop for every service that people experiencing homelessness may need.

The volunteers are dedicated to ensuring that these people have a voice and can access services that they desperately need, Volunteers all with lived experience turn up week in week out to ensure that people have a warm, welcoming safe place with no judgment. They offer a breakfast every morning, individuals can access a shower, clean clothes and a listening, empathic ear. They work tirelessly and

have helped countless people get back on their feet and into housing/ drug services/ employment/ out of debt/ mental health support/ healthcare.

# Good Neighbour Award: Finalists



## **Vicky Kelly**

“I am a single parent with a son who has had many problems over the years, I came across the BwD Carers Service by chance, contacted them and was allocated a caseworker who helped me and my son immediately. I started to attend a craft class and after a year I decided that I wanted to give something back to the Carers service, so I started volunteering with them.

I volunteer every week and support the respite team with their dementia group, we do lots of different activities singing, dancing, arts, and crafts. I love making the members feel relaxed and happy, I like seeing them smile, listening to their stories, enjoying themselves. I also help out neighbours, friends, and family when I can – it’s important to help when you can.

I volunteer because I like to give back to my community however, I reap so much more I have gained confidence, built up my self-esteem, made many friends and I will continue for as long as I can.”

## **Charlotte Leaver**

“My name is Charlotte Leaver, I am 36 years old, I am currently studying for my master’s degree in education. I support a vulnerable family that consists of two children with additional needs, one child with complex needs, both parents have additional needs. I also currently run the Rainbow, Brownie & Guide unit at Highfield Church. I also help out at Darwen St James’ Rainbows and Brownie when needed.

I plan and organise the activities within the units, organise the trips out, I also help support leaders in gaining their qualification.

We have a few Brownies /Guides with Special Educational Needs, which involves differentiating some of the activities for the girls, to enable them to fully access the Guiding programme to enable them to achieve their potential. I feel like I am giving something back to the community in which I live.”



## **Bev Ormerod**

“My name is Bev Ormerod, and I am in my 60s. I am married to Dave, and we have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. I trained as a register nurse & then mental health nurse in 1980s. In 2008 I trained as a social worker then worked as a teacher for many years in many different sectors, including prisons, high schools, colleges, universities and as a private tutor. In about 2018 I became terribly ill and had to stop work. I did not work again until last year when I decided enough was enough.

I set up Neurodynamix CIC to help and support individuals and their families, I was compelled to help people with Neurodiversity, having been diagnosed recently myself, I realised how little support was out there for the neurodivergent and I didn’t want anyone else to go through what I did. I currently offer 1:1 services, Craft sessions and lots more”?





# Volunteer Of the Year Award: Finalists



## **Keith Brunt.**

I first got into Volunteering when I was 16 (24 years ago) when I started a local football team, since then I have gone onto form Blackburn Youth Darts Academy, which has seen hundreds of children attend our sessions. This year I have formed another Youth Darts Academy in Oswaldtwistle too to give more children more opportunities.

Currently I run Blackburn Youth Darts Academy where I do Admin, applying for grants and securing sponsorship. I also run the coaching sessions all day every Saturday. Additionally, I run the Darts Plus initiative going into schools running maths sessions through darts. I do all this around working Full time.

I like to volunteer and help others; I am especially keen to give children opportunities to participate in sport. There was nothing like this around for me as a child and I want to try make a difference within Blackburn for young people.

## **Richard Croasdale**

I was born on 13<sup>th</sup> July when I finished school, I went to work at British Northrop Loom Company Ltd as an Apprentice Fitter, where I was taught how to build looms. After I retired, I got a phone call from a friend, who was connected to the museum and library. He asked if I would be interested in doing some voluntary work restoring a Northrop Loom, and I immediately asked “Where?” He knew I would not be able to resist it. He knew that I had always been interested in the cotton and textile industries and also the history of Blackburn, so he knew I would jump at the chance to restore the loom. I went along with Jim to Blackburn Museum and met Nick Harling, the Curator. The loom was one of those that had been brought over from the Lewis Textile Museum after it closed. We put all of the pieces into the gallery, and I began cleaning and rebuilding it. It still stands in that gallery today.



## **Pat Foster**

After retiring I was a bit bored and I wanted to help people and as several of my friends had suffered with Cancer, The Hospice was the obvious choice. I have been volunteering for eleven years now.

I help out in the finance department and the warehouse I volunteer six hours a week. I check emails, use SAGE account programme – print out invoices, statements. I also check supplier accounts to make sure nothing is missing. I love being in the office it gives me great satisfaction to be part of such a wonderful organisation, I’m doing my bit for me and my friends. In the Warehouse I deal with customer enquiries, the sorting of donations to go to our other charity shops and also working on the till.

I have recently been involved in fundraising and I walked The Great Wall of China to raise money for the hospice.

# Lifetime Award: Finalists



## ***Ian Hamer***

“At the age of 13 I joined Blackburn Sea Cadets as a young cadet, then at the age of 18 I went on to the Instructional Staff side of training, there I continued my career as an Adult Volunteer within the Sea Cadet Corps. I now volunteer at Blackburn Sea Cadets & Royal Marines Cadets; we parade twice a week for 2 and a half hour each night with weekends away. We also look at weeks away on National training events.

My appointment at Blackburn Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets is of Commanding Officer, my role is to provide training on a weekly basis for the cadets with the support of the Unit Training Team in a safe, friendly environment, that works on the values and traditions of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, The cadets themselves are my motivation, seeing them achieving new skills or participating with others as a team to succeed or gain new knowledge.”

## ***Judith Houghton***

“My decision to volunteer was made a few months following the birth of my son, on seeing an advert that Samaritans were looking for volunteers it sounded interesting although I was very unsure that I would be able to do this sort of volunteering and ultimately be of any use.

I was invited to an information evening to hear more about the work and decided that, if I were successful at interview that I would like to join their training programme....and as they say the rest is history!!

Having been a volunteer for nearly fifty years I have experienced many changes, However, the belief in the work we do has continued to motivate me throughout the years. There have been many challenges that have stretched me beyond anything I ever dreamed I could undertake but always with our callers at the heart of what we do.”



## ***Vera Green***

After my challenging battle with my spine, which left me paralysed, I found myself at a crossroads. I stumbled upon an advertisement on the notice board for volunteers with SAMS@CBP. The thought of giving back resonated deeply within me, and I knew I had to take that leap. I have always volunteered in life before my illness as I have always loved to give back.

When I began my journey in the scrap store, I was met with a treasure trove of materials and an inspiring group of individuals, all united by a shared passion for creativity and sustainability. Every Tuesday, I now run the "Waste Not, Want Not" food distribution at Food@CBP. This role has become a cornerstone of my life, intertwining my passion for community service with the urgent need to combat food waste and support those in need. Volunteering has become a vital part of my life. It gives me structure and meaning, reminding me that I am part of something much larger than myself.”





# Thank you to our sponsors:

