



OUR IMPACT

April - September
2025

Groundwork Cheshire,
Lancashire and Merseyside.



OUR MISSION

We take practical action to create a fair and green future in which people, places and nature thrive.

WE HELP PEOPLE IMPROVE THEIR PROSPECTS

Increasing confidence, skills, wellbeing and employability and helping those out of work find jobs in the green economy.

WE HELP PEOPLE CREATE BETTER PLACES

Making communities greener, healthier and better prepared for the future and enabling people to work together to bring about change in their local area.

WE HELP PEOPLE PROTECT THE PLANET

Supporting people and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, cut waste and take practical action to combat climate change.





FOREWORD

Welcome to our latest Impact Report.

I'm really proud to share some recent examples of how Groundwork is changing places and changing lives - providing vital support to people and families across Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside.

- See how our Green Doctors are set to provide even more advice and practical support to help people save energy and save money.
- Discover how a Winter Warm Club is making a massive difference to the lives of the local community in Blackpool.
- Read how programmes like Roots To Wellbeing and the King's Trust are helping people to build their confidence and improve their resilience and wellbeing, as well as their prospects.
- Learn about how growing projects like Grow Speke, Grow Blackpool and Grozone are providing vital access to high quality green spaces, whilst helping people to learn new skills and feel less isolated.
- See how the number of Business Improvement Districts we manage continues to increase - expanding into new areas and enabling more local businesses to respond positively to the challenges presented by the economy and the changing landscape of the high street.

We are delivering more things, in more places, for more people, than ever before. And the relevance of what we are doing is key - delivering against some of the biggest issues we face as a society - fuel poverty, food poverty, wellbeing, the environment, isolation and a feeling of despair.

Thank you for being a crucial part of our mission. As this will be our last newsletter of 2025, on behalf of everyone at Groundwork, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



A.J. Darron

Andrew Darron
Executive Director

APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2025



Improving people's prospects



174

people supported into education, training, or employment



77

formal qualifications gained



26

schools and educational establishments supported



107

people reporting positive health and wellbeing outcomes



210

people supported with 1 to 1 coaching and mentoring



1091

households supported to become more resilient



Creating better places



29

sites worked on



33.5k

m² of land improved



1283

organisations supported



17,258

hours of volunteer time



£249k

value of volunteering



£104k

Value of grants distributed



Protecting the planet



£92.5k

potential domestic energy savings via Green Doctor advice



1,185

people helped to reduce domestic energy use, water use and waste to landfill



£240k

potential domestic carbon savings



285

people supported to make greener choices



162

biodiversity improvements or nature-based solutions implemented

Improving peoples' prospects

From isolation to inspiration

A young man from Tyldesley says that he has finally got his career path back on track - thanks to Groundwork and the Roots To Wellbeing programme.

Jabuisa, known to his friends as JB, had hit rock bottom. Moving to Greater Manchester, for personal reasons had completely derailed his life. He went from having a stable, full-time career to being suddenly unemployed and serving as a full-time carer for his parents. Isolated in a new town, his world narrowed, his confidence vanished and he felt stuck in a rut.

His life took a dramatic, positive turn thanks to a single decision - joining Groundwork's Roots To Wellbeing course. He found it to be a perfect mix of group collaboration and personal support, tailored to his unique needs.

Jabuisa is currently volunteering with Techmate, a digital mentor service, where he helps others in the Wigan Borough with technology. His confidence has soared and he has a clear vision for his future. He says; "My dream is to work in IT, either as a software engineer, or in cyber security and I feel I am now on the right path to achieving my goal."

[Read more](#)

"This course helped me gain the specific skills and confidence I needed to take the next step in my career."



Roots To Wellbeing is a free 10 week course in Wigan and Leigh. It helps you to improve your health, your wellbeing and your chances of finding employment.

Never Underestimate The Power of a Cuppa.

Eight years ago, local resident Colin Hughes would regularly walk past the gates of the newly opened Grow Speke community garden.

He desperately wanted to get involved, but decades of unemployment had stripped him of his confidence. Despite a lifetime of skills and knowledge, from joinery and cooking, to nature and gardening, Colin questioned whether he had anything to offer the project.

Then, one day, as he paused outside the garden for the umpteenth time, a small act of kindness changed everything.

Colin is now employed by Groundwork at Grow Speke and recently won an employee award recognising his extensive knowledge.

[Read more](#)



L-R: Colin with Ian Jones

How One Course Changed Two People's Lives

Andrew and Eric lived just a few miles apart from each other in Atherton and Leigh, but had never met.

As they approached retirement age, they were both looking to be more active in their local community, make new friends and try new things. As it turned out, they found exactly what they were looking for after taking part in the Roots To Wellbeing course.

This free, 10-week programme, helps you to improve your health and wellbeing, as well as your chances of finding work. Little did Andrew and Eric know, but the course proved to be a turning point for both of them, including the start of a fantastic friendship.

[Read more](#)



L-R: Andrew and Eric



Improving peoples' prospects



174

people supported into education, training, or employment



77

formal qualifications gained



40

young people supported to learn and achieve

Creating better places

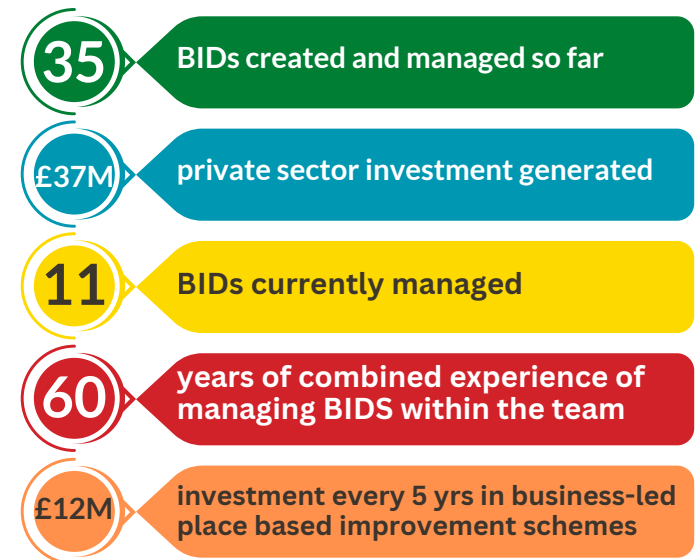
Business Improvement Districts

More and more businesses around the country are benefiting from being part of a Business Improvement District (BID).

Work is currently progressing well across a range of our Business Improvement District (BID) projects, reflecting strong momentum in both new BID development and renewals.

- **Trafford Park:** Feasibility work has started, with business consultations and workshops currently underway. These sessions are designed to assess support for a potential BID.
- **Ellesmere Port (Origin):** The team is developing a comprehensive consultation and business planning process to underpin a potential BID proposal.
- **Knutsford:** Preparations are complete for the BID ballot, which is taking place throughout November. This represents an important opportunity to establish a new BID focused on driving local economic growth, place enhancement and coordinated business support.
- **Winsford Industrial Estate:** The BID5 ballot is also taking place during November. Winsford is our longest established BID, having provided support to local businesses for over 20 years.
- **Ashbourne:** Work is nearing completion on the Ashbourne BID proposal, with final documentation and business plan development in progress. The BID ballot is anticipated to take place in March 2026.
- **Winsford and Neston Market Town Assessment:** Consultation and engagement activities have now commenced in both Winsford and Neston, involving local stakeholders, community groups and partner organisations.

New BID opportunities are also being explored in **Sandbach, Rossendale and Blackburn**, where early discussions with local authorities and Town Councils are underway.



Double Gold Success At RHS Awards

We are so proud of our community growing projects!

Both [Grow Speke](#) and [Grow Blackpool](#) recently received the prestigious 5-star 'Outstanding' award at the [RHS](#) North West In Bloom Awards! Grow Blackpool was also named Best Community Garden In The North West.

It is much deserved recognition not only of the quality of the green spaces they provide, but the positive impact they have on peoples' lives - providing welcoming places where people can feel part of a community, whilst learning new skills.

[Read more.](#)

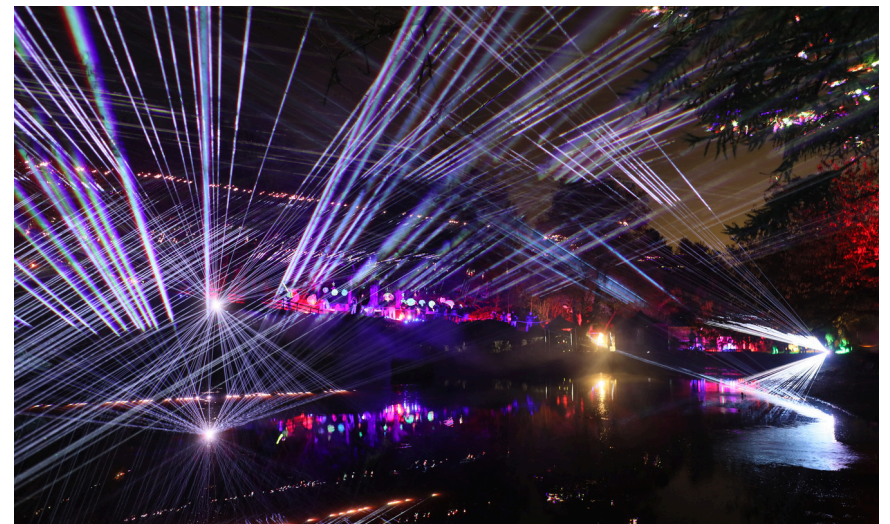


Festival Lights Up Rivington

The Rivington Festival of Light was a huge success, with well over 4,000 people attending the event over 4 days in October.

As well as an amazing light show around the Japanese Lake, visitors were also treated to enchanting lanterns, interactive entertainment and food and drink from local vendors.

All the money raised will be used to continue to maintain and conserve this amazing heritage site. Well done to all of the Groundwork staff, volunteers and organisations involved.



NORTHERN NETWORK

As autumn deepens and the last of the leaves fall, many of our green community hubs are winding down for winter – but that certainly doesn't mean things are quiet!

Across the network, hubs are hosting harvest events, making plans for spring, and finding creative ways to keep communities connected through the colder months.

Facilitators have hit the ground running with our second cohort of green community hubs, working to co-create thriving spaces across the north, from Sheffield to Carlisle and beyond. Recent activities have included:

- A workshop with the Yorkshire Mushroom Emporium at Aysgarth Walk Green Space, to learn about fungi and sustainable growing, followed by a pumpkin carving extravaganza.
- The Wensley Hub hosted a group trip to the Peak District offered local young people the chance to connect with nature and each other.
- At Clifton Hospital green hub regular arts sessions are being held for patients, their families and staff.
- The team have also been busy designing beds to grow wildflowers in next year.

[Read more](#)

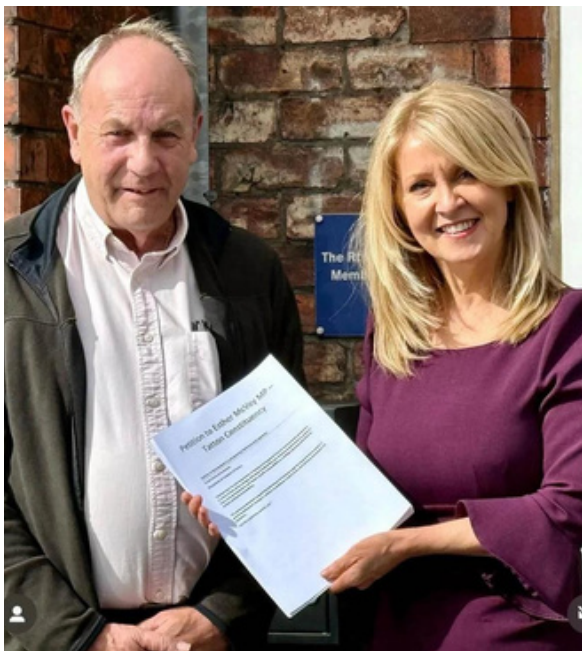


Coming soon



Later this month, the Northern Network heads to Northwich for their second Autumn Gathering! It's for anyone involved in green community projects to come together, learn from each other and chat all things funding. You can expect:

- 🍁 Peer knowledge sharing and networking
- 🍁 A tour of Grozone, a thriving community growing space
- 🍁 Discussion on the role of AI in green projects - this was a real highlight of our Yorkshire edition!
- 🍁 Veggie lunch provided



Wilmslow Looks To Put Peat on the Planning Agenda

Around 500 residents in Wilmslow have signed a petition calling for special consideration to be given to peatland as part of any future development.

The petition, which was organised by the Friends of Lindow Moss, wants peatland recognised from an environmental perspective in terms of its unique biodiversity and natural carbon capture ability.

The group is calling for a special development strategy for peatland to be included in the upcoming Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

(Image: Gary Parker, Chair of Friends of Lindow Moss and Ester McVey, MP for Tatton).



Unloved Wasteland Transformed

An unloved area of wasteland at a school in Northwich has been transformed into a magical new outdoor classroom and playground where pupils can learn, play and enjoy spending time in nature.

Cloughwood Academy won a competition funded by TeacherActive and delivered in partnership with Groundwork, asking students from local schools to submit their designs to improve their school environment.

Well done and thanks to our Grozone Community Garden team who carried out much of the work.

[Watch the video.](#)



Creating better places



1283

organisation supported



17,258

hours of volunteer time



Light Up Leigh took place on Saturday 15th November as part of the Leigh Christmas Light switch on event.

Co-ordinated by our Down To Earth team, its aim is to bring the magic and joy of music, dance and creativity to the town centre.



Protecting the planet

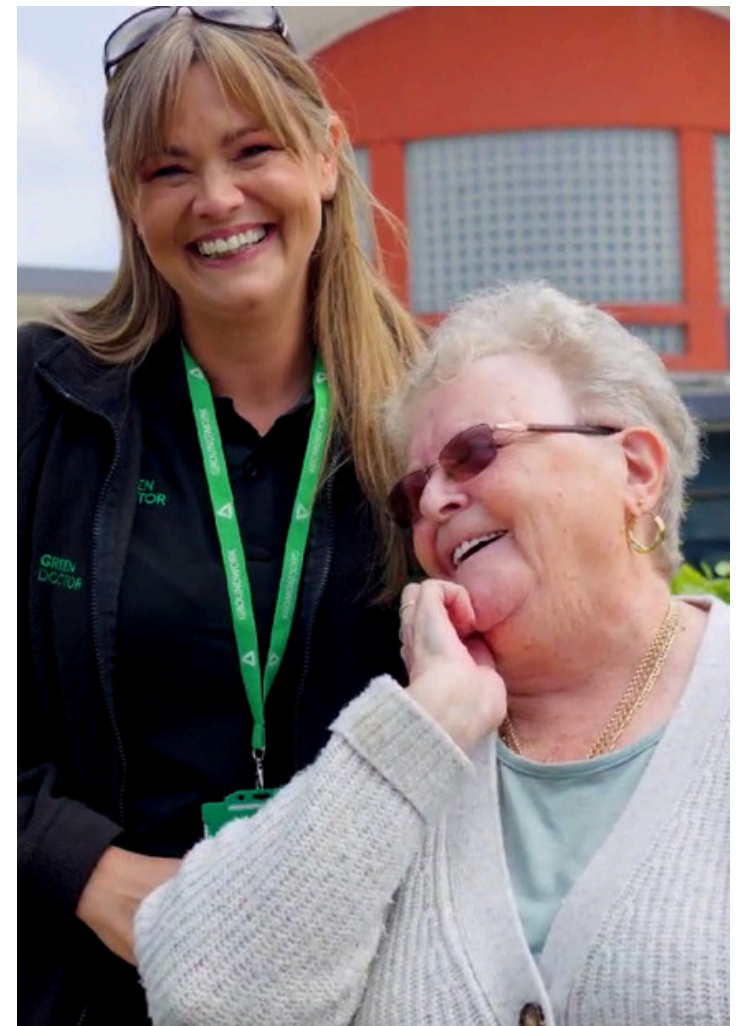
THE COMMUNITY THAT GUARANTEES A WARM WELCOME

The Winter Warm Club is a great example of how @TheGrange community hub in Blackpool continues to change people's lives.

Membership is completely FREE, with 631 people currently signed up. The hub provides a warm place to meet, without using your own gas and electricity. It's somewhere to connect and get support and advice, giving members access to essential services right on their doorstep:

- 🍲 Affordable Hot Meals: You can enjoy nutritious and inexpensive lunch options.
- 🧺 Free Community Launderette: You can access essential washing and drying facilities at NO COST.
- 🛒 Low-Cost Food Pantry: You can buy household essentials and groceries at massively reduced prices, or sometimes get them for FREE.
- 🚌 Social Activities: You can enjoy subsidised day trips and a variety of free social activities and events.

See how @TheGrange has transformed the life of Abi, a local resident. [View video.](#)



More Funding To Fight Fuel Poverty

Both Leigh and Blackpool are set to benefit from a £340k fund from Cadent Foundation, as part of the Stay Warm, Stay Well programme with Groundwork.

STAY WARM IN LEIGH

A new initiative is coming to Leigh to support vulnerable households this winter and beyond, through specialised and tailored energy support.

It will build the skills and capacity of local residents, empowering them to identify and support people suffering from fuel poverty after the project's completion.

STAY WARM IN BLACKPOOL

In Blackpool South, 22 per cent of households live in fuel poverty, almost double the national average (13%).

Launching on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day, the Stay Warm in Blackpool programme will see Green Doctors embedded into the local community.

Support for residents from the new project will be available at 3 locations: N-Vision, @TheGrange Community Centre and Blackpool Eco Hub.

Operating from each community centres, the project will help increase access to individualised support, including energy advice, energy saving measures for the home and personal warmth items.

The Pathway To Net Zero

We are thrilled to have recently launched our Pathways to Net Zero training.

This hands-on 2 day training course supports organisations in confidently navigating the journey to Net Zero. It will provide both strategic direction and practical tools for environmental sustainability leaders.

Groundwork's sustainability consultants delivered the two-day accredited ISEP Pathways to Net Zero course in-person in Winsford, Manchester and Chester from September to November

[Read more](#)



Protecting the planet



1,185

people helped to reduce domestic energy use, water use and waste



£92.5k

domestic energy savings via Green Doctor advice



285

people supported to make greener choices

THANK YOU

We would like to say a wholehearted **THANK YOU** to all of the organisations and people we continue to work alongside.

Together, we are changing places and changing lives.

Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside

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