

2024/25

Impact report

open door



A message from one of our volunteers

I first became aware of ODC years before I personally got involved with them, when my friend accessed them for mental health support back in 2018. Even back then they provided effective support that really helped my friend get to a better place and stay in that place. In 2022, after a year-long personal mental health crisis, I knew I had the lived experience and natural good qualities to help others and knew I wanted to give back to my community. In short, I wanted to be the positive change I wanted to see.

At the time, I was accessing another charity for help and it was a member of staff at that charity that told me about Open Door's programme for children who are looked after, OOMOO. This program interested me personally due to my tumultuous childhood and my desire to be a foster parent. I felt that my lived experience gave me the power to positively contribute to the kids' lives and it's something I think I can say I have achieved.

These are kids who are in the situation they are in because adults broke their trust and let them down in some way or another. Here at OOMOO we give them a community of other children who are in similar situations, we give them the space to express themselves without them having to suppress themselves. We give them consistency and the comfort to know that we will be there for them. We bridge the gap between the kids, their carers and the social workers. We lift them up and celebrate them, we go to awards so they see their accomplishments mean something and we celebrate their birthday so they know THEY mean something. And I can honestly say I've seen the difference it makes because I've seen these kids grow and seen how we've helped them grow. I've seen kids go from being the quickest to start a fight to be the first to stop and mediate conflict.

What I have personally gained from the charity is a sense of responsibility to others, more confidence than I've ever had before, an understanding of helping in a professional setting and how best to advocate, not just for others but for myself. I have been given training opportunities in understanding autism and mental health first aid and in fact the charity is also responsible for putting me in touch with a training company that I gained two counselling skills diplomas with. Through the charity I have also been able to network with other charities and other people in different helping roles, who are also passionate for helping others, which has given me the tools and information I need to make an effective and positive difference.

I am very deeply passionate about this charity and it's not even just the work the charity does, it's the staff and the positive work culture that has been cultivated here. I have volunteered in other charities that also do good work however their work culture just does not compare to ODC. The way every single person (and I really truly do mean every person) who works in this charity makes me feel included and valued, which is something I have sincerely never experienced before. From the people I actively work with, to the bar staff and the management, I truly do mean everyone. I have not met a single insincere person here.

The staff are always interested in how I'm feeling, always enquiring in how they can help and support me (I had multiple staff members reach out and offer to bring me things I might need when I was in hospital). I feel like a genuine part of the team. They are always grateful for my help and it's something I am told often.

I am very proud of Open Door Charity and to be a part of it. I'm proud of its staff for what they do, what they as a charity have accomplished, the impact they have and the positive work culture that they promote, and it is a true privilege to be a part of it.

Thank you!

To all of our volunteers and everyone who supported us...

Every point of data, every pixel of a graph is a life you have changed.

We can't do this alone, and we want you to know how much we value your time, your compassion and your energy.

We can't thank you enough for being the kind, wonderful people we know you are.



What is Open Door?

We reimagine what mental health support looks, sounds, and feels like using innovation, arts, and culture as catalysts for change.

We shape change by offering unique, evidence-based programmes in a non-clinical setting, using shared lived experience as a driving force in the creation and implementation of our support options.

Our services are free and without waiting lists, focusing on creating lasting, impactful change in our communities and beyond.

Our goals

- To shape meaningful change in mental health by transforming cultures, using arts, culture, and innovation as catalysts for change.
- To share what we do with others to inspire change across Merseyside, the UK, and beyond.
- To keep creativity and shared experience at the heart of everything we do.
- To continue to provide free, immediate mental health support without waiting lists.

Our values



Fire



Professional

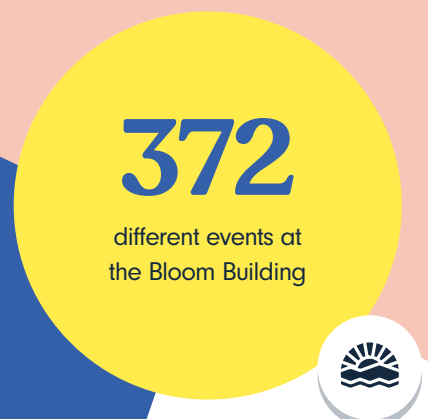
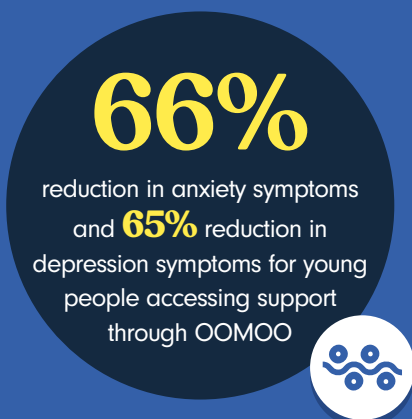
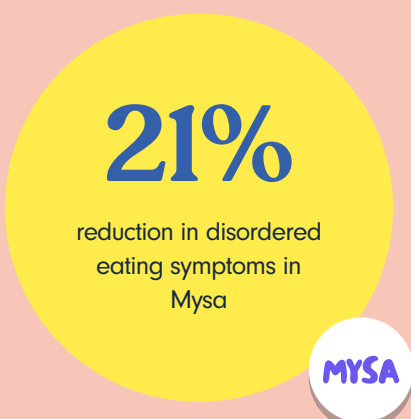
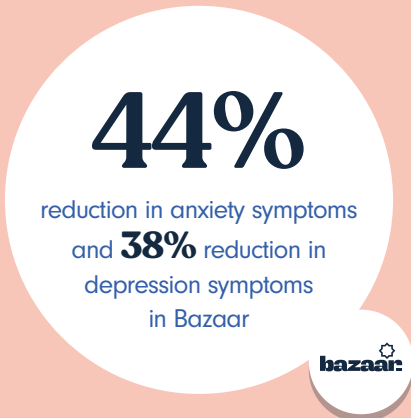


Visionary



Human

At a Glance





bazaar

Bazaar is our eight-session programme delivered at the Bloom Building that blends elements of CBT, mindfulness and more.

Open to people aged 14-35, Bazaar gives people the tools to control and combat negative thought patterns as they work through the programme with a volunteer peer mentor.

Our impact

This year **253 people completed at least one session of Bazaar**, accessing the tools and techniques they need to help them with their low mood and anxiety.

Overall, **39%** of people who start Bazaar finish the full eight weeks – slightly higher than the **37%** of people who access NHS Talking Therapies (Nuffield Trust, 2024).

Everyone who completed Bazaar would recommend it to others, and members consistently praised the impact of having a mentor with them to complete the programme. One member said: “Anyone can Google how to deal with mental health, actually having someone to talk to and go through it with you helps... you see the good in you instead of all the bad”.

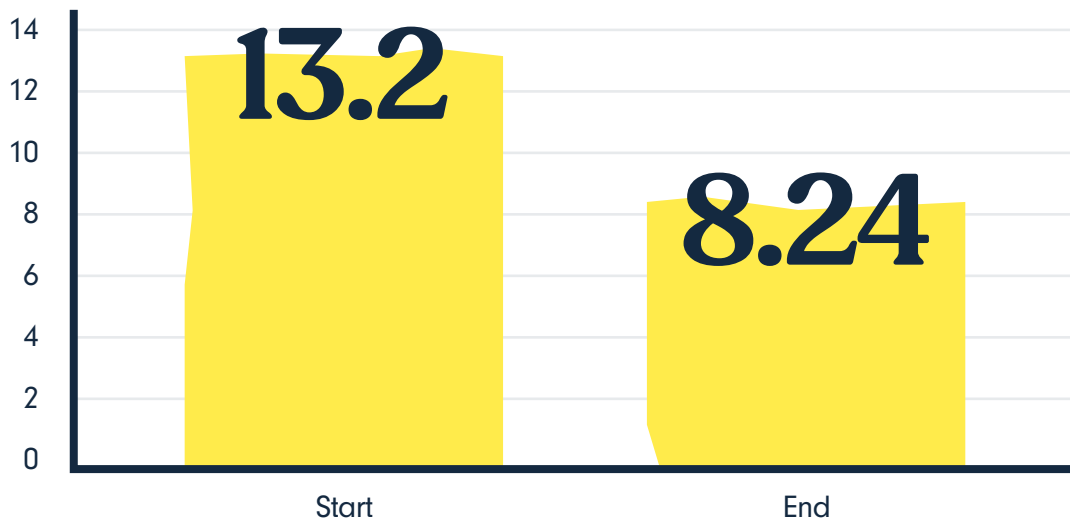
When we analyse the feedback via a semantic analysis – a tool that looks at the emotions behind the feedback – we see the trends emerge: **trust** – with peer mentors and staff; **joy** – from the colourful programme and the vibrant space of the Bloom Building, where sessions are delivered in cosy sheds; **anticipation** – for coming back each week as well as preparing to use the tools and techniques they’ve learned.

Measuring impact

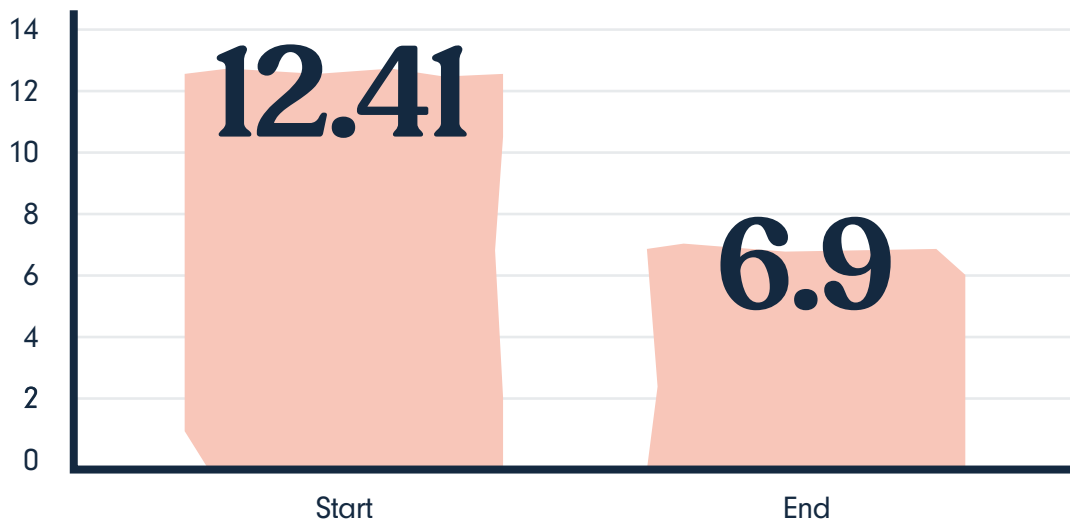
We use two main scales to measure our impact in Bazaar: the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) and the General Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7), to measure the symptoms of depression and anxiety respectively.

On average, our members this year saw a **38%** reduction in depression symptoms and a **44%** reduction in anxiety symptoms.

We see a 38% reduction in PHQ-9 scores



We see a 44% reduction in GAD-7 scores



Looking across our members this year, we see that the average scores start in the ‘moderate’ threshold and end in the ‘mild’ threshold for both anxiety and depression.

“I am able to see just how much I have learned which has helped me reach the point I am at today. From being off work, to back in work with a better mindset is a big achievement, thanks to Bazaar.”

Bazaar member

Of our members who completed the programme, 77% showed improvements on the PHQ-9 and 81% improved on the GAD-7 – we can confidently say that despite everyone’s experience with poor mental health being different, the vast majority of people who complete Bazaar feel better by the end.

“It was a mind-blowing and eye-opening experience. It’s brought me so much joy [and] given me the tools to improve my life.”

Bazaar member

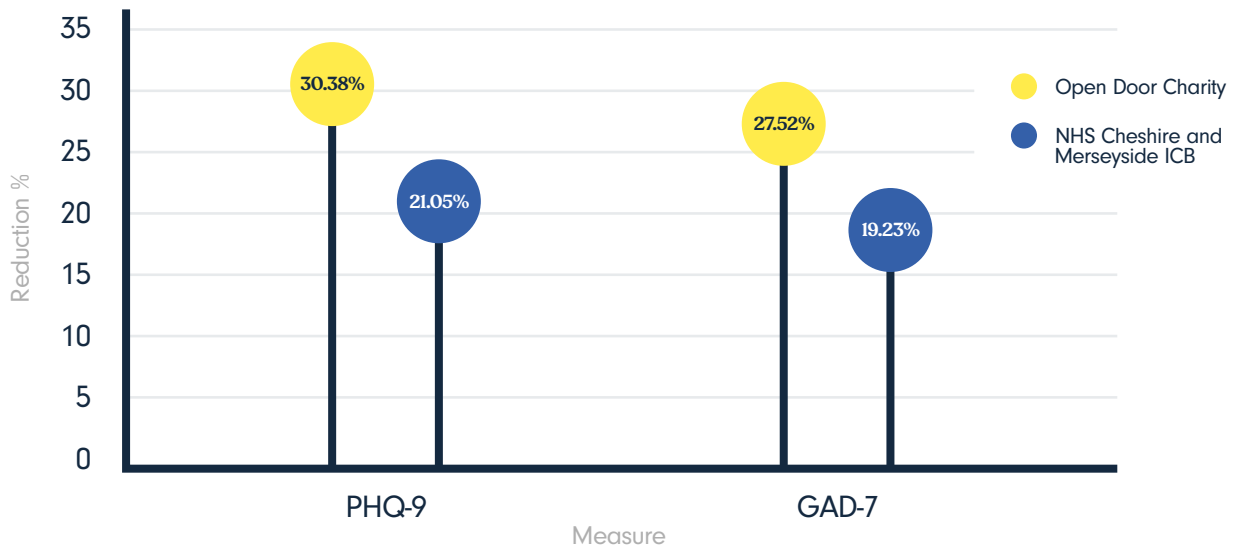
How does this compare to other services?

Bazaar is here to complement existing support – it’s not about competition.

Using 2023/24 data from NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, we can see that for people who do not meet the clinical thresholds for anxiety depression (i.e. the people we intend to support with Bazaar), **Open Door outperforms the NHS in symptom reduction.**

This shows that Bazaar complements existing support, and for people experiencing low mood and anxiety, Bazaar is one of their best options for support.

For people with more mild depressive symptoms, Open Door sees a greater reduction in both measures



“Being on Bazaar has helped me to improve my confidence and encouraged me to heal. I've learned that healing is a long journey and [I] have developed strategies to help me deal with this.”

Bazaar member

Case study

Sarah's Story



Sarah came to Bazaar last year looking for support with anxiety. Her home life was difficult, with ill parents and had recently been diagnosed with ADHD.

Sarah is an animal lover, enjoys playing on her Playstation and spending time playing the piano, drawing and getting out in nature, but she was really concerned about how much she worried about different things. Paired with a volunteer peer mentor, Sarah then started her Bazaar journey.

For the next eight weeks, she was exposed to new tools and techniques to help her with her anxiety. She said that she enjoyed learning to ask why she was feeling worried and challenging her negative thoughts. She also said that she was learning new tools to distract herself, avoid bad habits and help her sleep.

By the end of the programme, she said her mentor was 'really helpful, kind and knowledgeable', and that it was 'great to see the things I have had to deal with written down and ways to manage them'. In the end, Sarah's GAD-7 score had gone from 15 down to two, suggesting minimal anxiety.



“My experience was a journey, had it’s ups and downs along the way but overall I’ve found myself again, but even stronger than ever.”

Bazaar member



bazaar Partnerships

Throughout the year, we’ve been hard at work to expand Bazaar even further. We want to take what we do at Bloom out to new environments with our partners, such as universities and other charities to deliver Bazaar remotely and increase the positive impact we can have with the programme. We’re so excited to start this new journey, and we’ll have more to report on next year.



Branch is an online mental wellbeing hub for children and young people in Wirral, from 0-18 (and up to 25 with additional needs).

It's a way of finding the best tools and the right support.

www.branch-wirral.co.uk

When a child or young person completes the Branch matching questionnaire, they receive a dashboard of suggested services and support for that young person's mental wellbeing needs.

Branch is a new and exciting partnership between Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council and the Cheshire and Merseyside ICB Wirral Place (NHS). We're part of the alliance of organisations that run Branch, which also includes Action for Children, Kooth, Utopia, Koala North West and Wirral My Mind Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (formerly CAMHS).

At Open Door, we also run the Branch matching team – when a child or young person needs a little bit extra support, the team works hard to make sure their voice is heard, and finds the best support for them.

Our impact

Throughout the year, we've helped with **1,458 cases** to help find the right support for a child or young person, and that's just for people who've completed the questionnaire – even more people have been supported with tips and tools for their mental wellbeing as well as self-help resources available on the Branch website.

The Branch team has been working hard all year to make sure that as many services as possible are featured on Branch, and during the year we've been able to include **43 services** to make sure that we can provide a range of support for children and young people throughout the Wirral.

We've also had excellent feedback from the council, with the Director of Children's Services calling Branch an 'overnight success' and that teams across the council are impressed with the data we've collected.

1,458

cases in
the year

589

different young people
matched by the
matching team

1 day

the median time to
contact a young
person

1 day

the median time to
assign them to
appropriate support

Support from the matching team

At the heart of Branch lies the matching team – Open Door staff who work hard to make sure that children and young people find the right support when they need it most. The matching team contacts every single person who needs their support, whether that’s the young person themselves, their parents or carers, or a trusted professional like a GP or teacher.

This year, we’ve supported 605 cases and 589 different young people to find them the right support. We know that navigating the different options for support can be difficult, and we know how important it is that young people feel heard, so we try to contact them as soon as we can. This year, the median time to contact a young person was one day and the median time to match them with the right support is also one day.



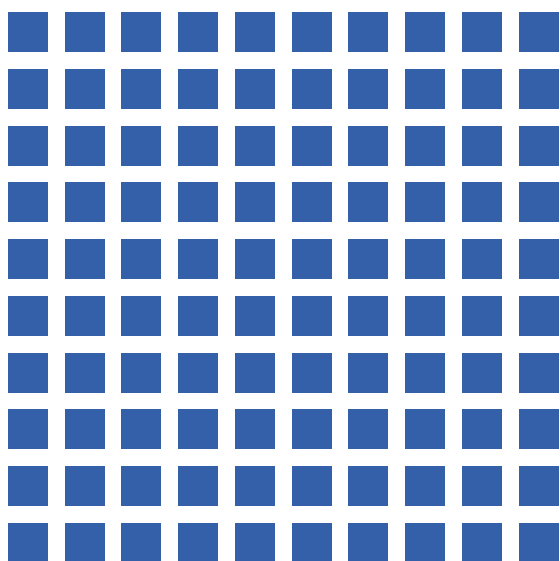
“Thank you so much for listening and your support. It's so refreshing to have tailored actions for mental health support after being lost and overwhelmed by it all. I really appreciate it.”

Parent

“Thank you so very much for taking the time to speak to me and also thank you for helping me with a self soothe plan, I'm sure utilising it will help a lot.”

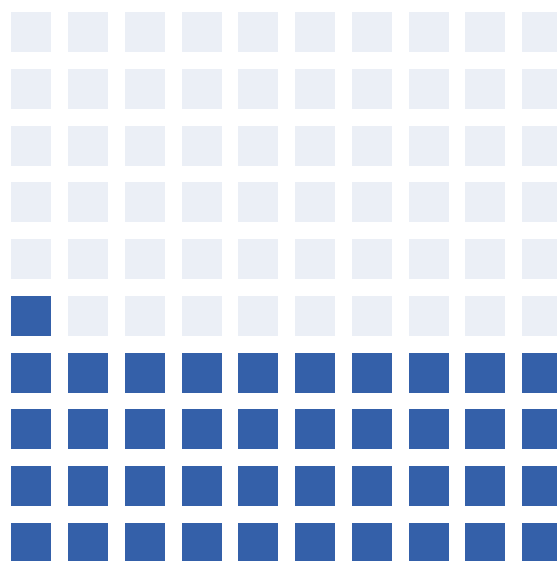
41% of Branch cases need support from a Branch Matcher

1458



All cases

605



Cases requiring Branch Matcher input

“This is an excellent service - so much easier to access a range of support for young people.”

“[Staff member] was fabulous, she phoned me for our appointment and was very interested in the right pathway for our daughter. She was extremely knowledgeable and helpful and the referral was completed straight away. Really fabulous service”.

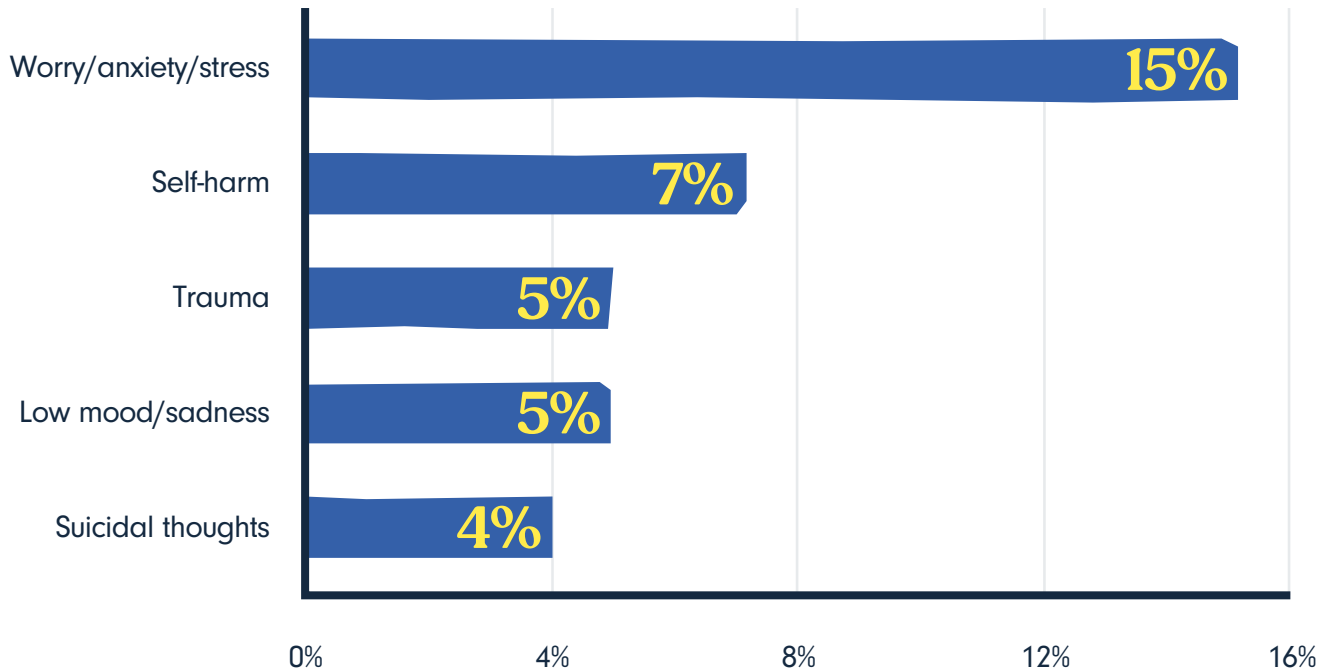
For the people who need support from the matching team, we see that the main ‘topic’ they select in the questionnaire is worry, anxiety or stress.

We also see large numbers of young people looking for support with self-harm, low mood, trauma and suicidal thoughts.

With the matching team’s support, these young people are matched fast to the right support for them, ensuring that they can be supported quickly and safely.



Worry, anxiety and stress are the most common reasons people seek support from a Branch Matcher



“Thank you so much for all your help, support, and time. It was truly appreciated. I’m really grateful for the detailed information you provided and the resources you’ve shared for both [young person] and me. I feel more confident moving forward with the recommendations and will be in touch with the school, as well as reaching out to the relevant services. I will also look into the other resources you’ve mentioned. Again, thank you for your kindness and guidance—it means a lot during this time.”

Peter's Story



Peter is thirteen years old, and his mum completed the Branch questionnaire because he was struggling with his home life.

Peter was being bullied at school and going in for about four hours a week. He'd had support from a service before but couldn't remember much about it. His mum said that he was isolated and didn't have anyone to talk to.

A member of the matching team got in touch the day the referral came in and got some more information from Peter's mum before arranging a call with Peter the next day.

Peter's mum said that his relationships with adults were broken, but the staff member was able to speak to him about what was going on in his life. She asked about his sleep, if he felt anxious, and what kind of support he thought would work best for him. The staff member told him that she could arrange for him to find support, and that if he decides he's not ready for it yet, then that's okay.

Peter agreed and the staff member got in touch with his mum and his Family Worker to let them know she would be making a referral for Peter. That same day, his referral was accepted and he started accessing support a few weeks later.



“Really appreciate the support from [Staff member]. She took the time to listen to my concerns and asked the right questions about [young person]’s behaviour, which helped me feel understood.”

Looking ahead

With Branch now firmly rooted, we want to work with our partners in the alliance to look even further at the impact we have, by making easy-to-use data collection processes that provide us with more data to show the incredible impact Branch has.

MYSA

Mysa is an eight-session peer support programme for adults living with disordered eating that aims to empower members with knowledge, understanding and empathy.

“The Mysa programme gave me a safe place to start opening up about my eating disorder, in a non-judgemental setting.”

It blends elements of CBT for eating disorders and mindfulness, giving people the tools and techniques to understand more about the causes of their disordered eating and to help build coping skills.

“[My mentor is] a great, kind and caring person who was able to understand my way of thinking and helped me through it in ways that most others couldn't. Thank you.”

15

people supported

"The sessions are important because it's a way of starting to take control and enjoy life without living with this."

"[My mentor was] amazing! One of the best people I have worked on my mental health with."

21%

reduction in eating disorder symptoms

Mysa's one of our new programmes, and we started this programme during the year. We've delivered Mysa before in a support group format and we know that Bazaar works well, so we wanted to see if it could be used to support people living with disordered eating too, especially as there's a serious lack of support available for people living with disordered eating.

Our impact

This year, **15 people completed at least one session of Mysa**, with a third of them completing the programme, showing similar (albeit slightly lower) completion rates to Bazaar, and **everyone who completed the programme would recommend it to others.**

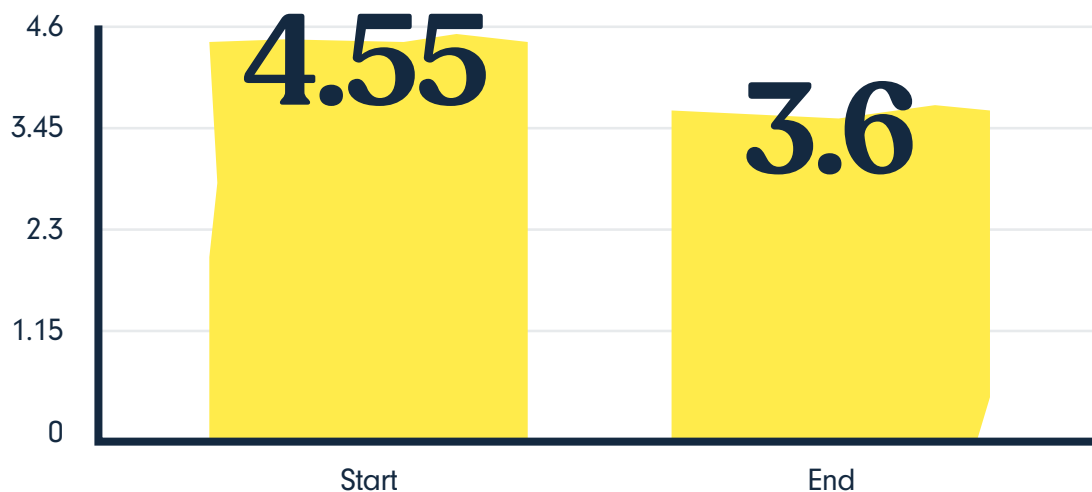
Measuring impact

We use the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire-7 (EDE-Q7) to measure symptoms of disordered eating. While it's not as widely used as the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q), we've asked people living with disordered eating about what works for them, and one of the key themes that came up was that they don't want to spend lots of time filling out long forms, so we've opted for the shorter version.

Our members experienced a **21% reduction in eating disorder symptoms** via the EDE-Q7. While there isn't as much research on the EDE-Q7 for comparison as opposed to other measures using a cut-off point suggested by one study (Bang et al., 2023), we see that **average scores move to below this threshold** – i.e., our members moved from experiencing more severe symptoms to more mild symptoms of disordered eating.

“It's been amazing. Challenging but in a really positive way, and allowed a real time to reflect that I've never had before.”

Mysa sees a 20% reduction in average scores in people who finish the full eight sessions



“Really warm and friendly, open and non-judgemental. Insightful discussions and thought-provoking activities throughout.”

We're looking forward to looking at the impact Mysa has in more depth throughout the next year, as the feedback from our members has been excellent.

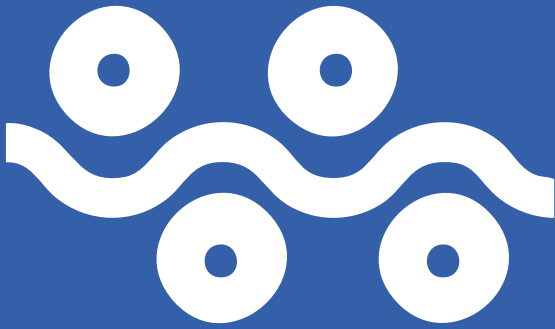
One member said "This is the first individual service I have used to deal with what I now know is my disordered eating. I was quite unsure if I could be helped, but finishing this programme has helped me see a light at the end of the tunnel, or at least I know that I am not alone and I can be helped".

Feedback from a mentor

Our peer mentors are crucial in delivering Mysa. Their ability to connect with people, to add a touch of humanity to people living with disordered eating makes a huge impact on the members who go through the programme.

We asked one mentor for their feedback on the programme:

"I'm finding the programme really interesting and enjoying working with the members. This structured programme works well and is easy to follow with really helpful information and useful diagrams. At times it has been challenging sitting with the members emotions but the constant support from staff is really helpful and they check in with me regularly."



OOMOO is our programme for Children Looked After (CLA) and young people with a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) aged 10-18 and living in Wirral.

OOMOO is built around putting young people in the driving seat of what is built around them, giving them the tools to shape change within their own lives through creative classes, mental wellbeing support, peer support and conversations of their shared experiences.

Your continued dedication, compassion, and professionalism in supporting young people and their carers in Wirral is truly inspiring. The care, kindness, and empathy you show every day make a real and lasting difference, empowering young people to achieve their goals and thrive. I feel privileged to play even a small part in supporting you as your commissioner, and I am proud of the positive outcomes OOMOO has achieved. I look forward to continuing our strong partnership in 2026!"

Annie McElroy

Commissioning Officer at Wirral Council

We achieve this through our MOVE, MAKE and BE model – opportunities for young people in the social care system to **MOVE** – through physical activities such as gym classes and aerial aerobics, **MAKE** – via art workshops and creative classes, and **BE** – including our ‘Trippy Thursdays’ throughout the summer holidays in which young people went to bowling, laser quest, escape rooms and Chester Zoo.

On top of this, we provide mental wellbeing support for young people via Bazaar and OOMOO ïles – a bespoke form of Bazaar designed specifically for care-experienced young people.

In the last 5 years OOMOO has seen **307 individual members**. Wirral has as of March 2025, 681 CLA (Wirral Council, 2025) and while the numbers are constantly changing, we’re reaching a significant number of young people looked after by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.



117

different
young people
supported

639

different events
and support
sessions

53

regular members
attending at least
once a month

65%

reduction in depression
symptoms and 66% reduction
in anxiety symptoms for
young people accessing
support.

Our impact

Throughout the year, we've had a record number of new members in OOMOO, with **78 young people signing up for support** accessing an amazing **639 different events and support sessions** for young people.

We've also had **52 regular members throughout the year alone** - these are young people who attend OOMOO at least once a month. Including our existing members, that's **117 different young people supported by OOMOO this year**.

“You're like another mum to us. You look after us and look out for us”

OOMOO Member

MOVE, MAKE and BE

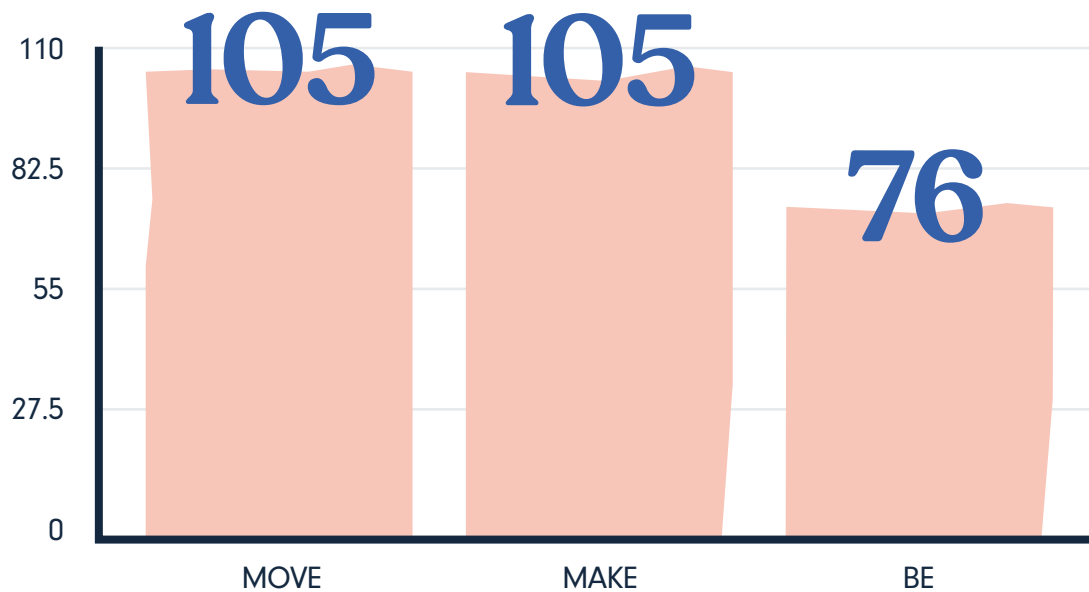
MOVE, MAKE, and BE is at the heart of OOMOO's philosophy, giving young people the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities and events.

We had a total of **286 MOVE, MAKE and BE activities this year** - that's 286 hours of young people taking part in arts classes, gym sessions and film nights (and so much more!). It's not just about giving young people the opportunities that they might not have without OOMOO, it's also about getting to know each other, being in an environment that supports and understands them as people, and experiencing things that we may take for granted in other young people. For example, this year we took OOMOO members to Alton Towers, and for many of our young people, it was the first time they've ever had the chance to go on a rollercoaster or a ride.

“This is the most fun I have had in ages!”

OOMOO Member

An amazing 286 hours of different activities for our members



Mental wellbeing support

OOMOO also provides young people with emotional wellbeing support, and this year we held **112 sessions dedicated to one-to-one mental health support** for **12 different young people**.

Most often, this tends to be via Bazaar or OOMOO îles. Throughout the year, we supported young people through **81 Bazaar sessions** and **31 OOMOO îles sessions**.

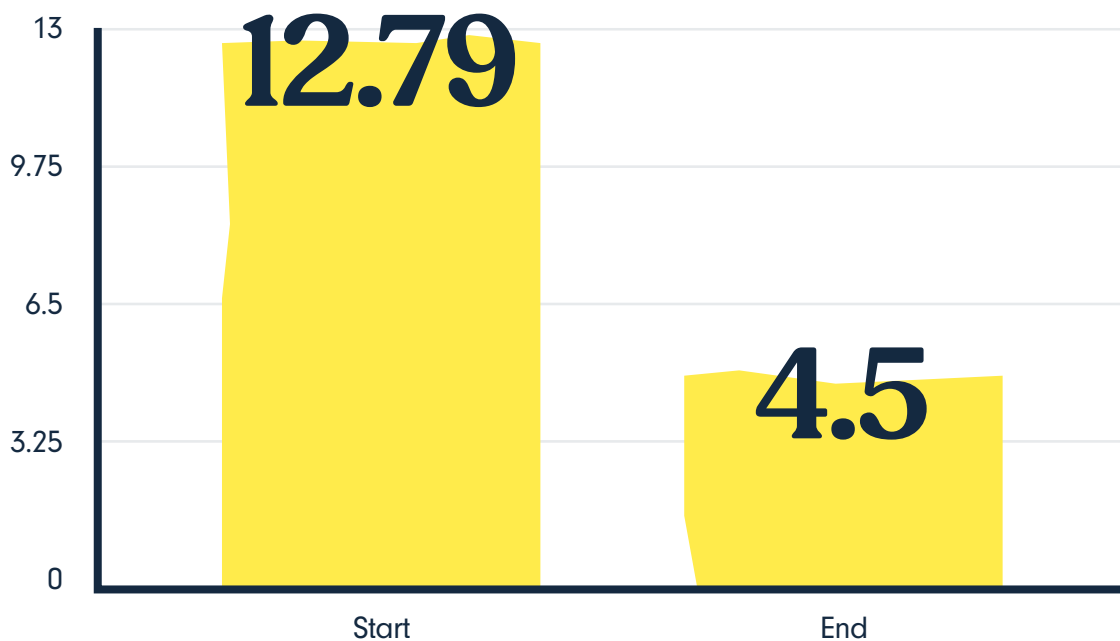
We understand that young people who are CLA or SGO may need more time to complete support, and we don't pressure them – it's important for them to build trust and confidence in systems that have all too often failed them, and around a third of young people who started support this year completed all sessions, only slightly lower than the completion rates for Bazaar.

Of those who do complete their programme, we see a **65% reduction in depression symptoms**, and a **66% reduction in anxiety symptoms**.

“I got this so we can all share it because that’s what we are – we’re a family.”

OOMOO member who bought a soft drink to share

Total number of completions are low, but we see a 65% reduction in PHQ-9 scores



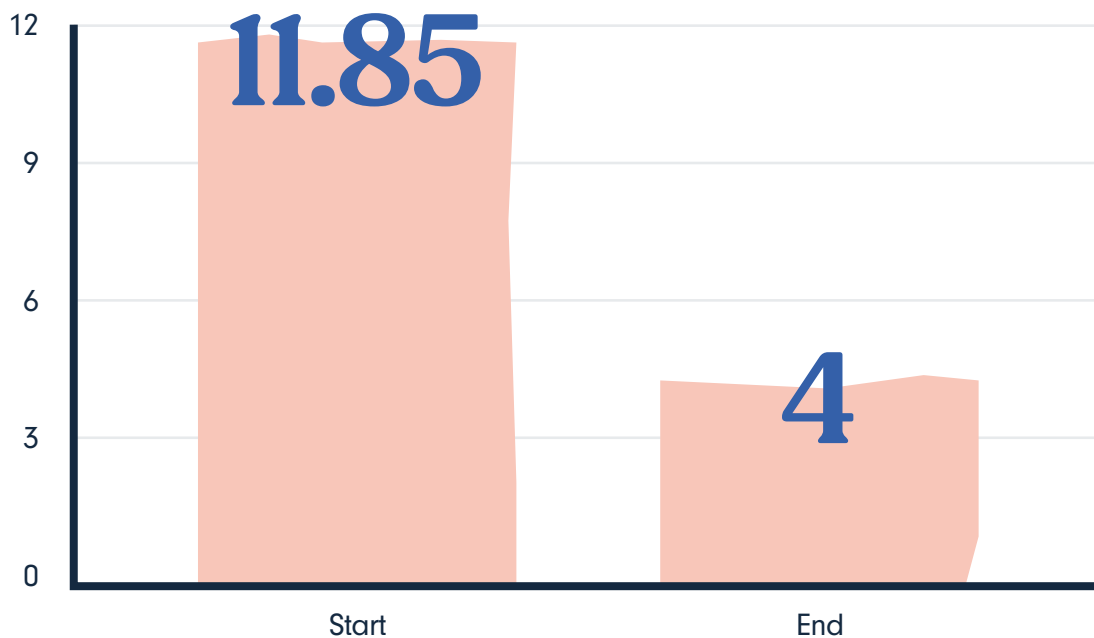
“My experience volunteering at OOMOO has made me realise that I want to work with young people and support their mental health in a non-clinical setting”

OOMOO Volunteer

“Thank you for giving me so much courage and love throughout the years. When I am at OOMOO, I feel most like myself.”

OOMOO Member

...and a 66% reduction in GAD-7 scores



“She'd live at OOMOO if she could! She'd be very happy there - do you have a bed there, haha!”

Social Worker

“I remember you said that I can ask you anything and I feel safe to, like it’s something that I would usually keep to myself because it’s private but I know I can talk to you”

OOMOO Member



“She has shared today that she feels OOMOO is more like her family than her own”

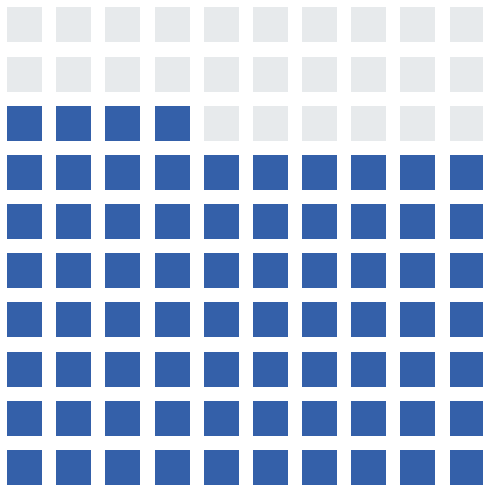
School

SEND

We've placed an increased importance on supporting young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), as we know that children in need (CIN), i.e. those who have been assessed by a social worker to need increased support, are significantly more likely to have SEND than those in the overall population (Department for Education, 2025).

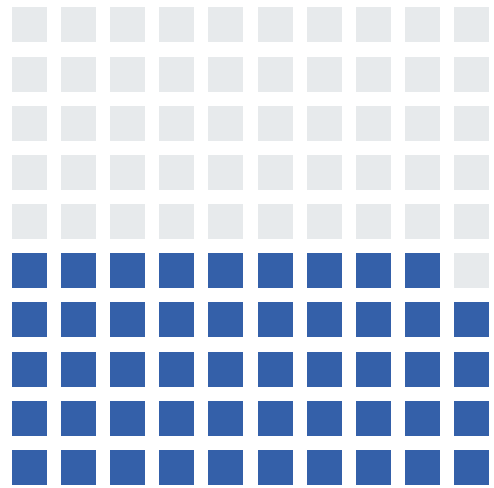
SEND is common among our 53 regular OOMOO members

39



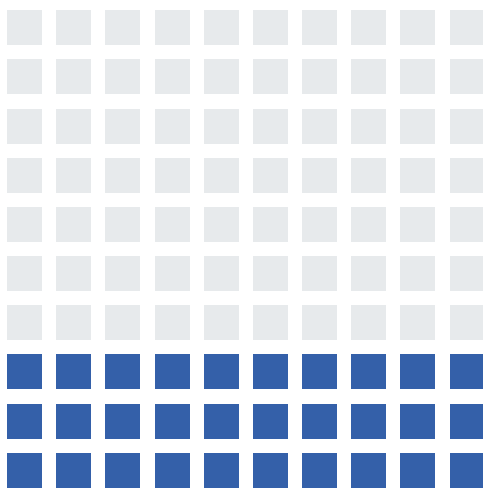
SEND

26



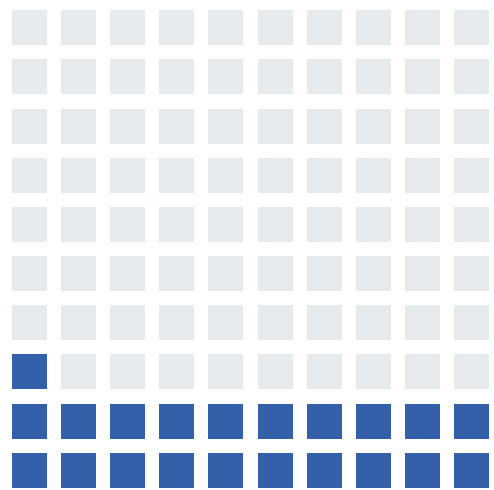
ADHD or Pathway

16




Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Pathway

11



ASC and ADHD



“OOMOO changed his life. He loved going to the events and sessions because he was in an environment where everyone was like him. Everyone was a looked after child - there was no stigma. It was a place to meet friends, to feel understood. OOMOO is special because everyone involved is passionate about making it work. They tackle tough topics, like suicide, in safe, supportive spaces. It shows that no subject is too hard to talk about, and that’s incredibly powerful”

Foster Carer

When we look at our regular members, a large proportion of those have SEND, and we make sure that they’re supported in a variety of ways, including:

- Having all activities in accessible venues, with activities adapted to the needs of young people. For example, we provide gloves for young people who don’t like the texture of certain ingredients when baking.
- We inform young people of changes to staffing, volunteers and service hours so that they can prepare for any sudden changes to their schedules.
- We encourage young people who drop in for support to meet staff and see the space beforehand to support them in processing the change of coming to a new place and so that they feel safe to access support.
- We co-design our spaces with young people to meet their needs and wishes – for example, the colours we use to paint our walls, the lighting levels, and the ability to change sound levels quickly and without staff support if needed.

Support for carers

We also recognise that carers require support too, and we ensure that they remain informed and feel supported by OOMOO.

This year, we've provided 38 sessions of support specifically for carers. This can vary from our carer coffee mornings, where carers have the chance to meet other people in similar situations and discuss the challenges and successes they've experienced, as well as through Colours, bespoke 1:1 support for carers that gives them the tools and techniques to deal with stress.

“I wanted to thank you for everything you have done for [member] and myself over the last few years. We have had the pleasure of [member] for over 6 years now and it's been amazing. We had our challenges over those years but they have become a more mature and confident young person. I hope their new placement gives them opportunity to be themselves. Thank you again and all the staff past and present for your support. I really appreciate it”

Foster Carer

zoop

ZOOP is one of our new projects in collaboration with Cheshire & Wirral Partnership (CWP) with a simple vision: to meet autistic people where they are at, during their autistic self-discovery.

ZOOP aims to support our members with their emotional wellbeing by offering a safe, creative space to build friendships, share experiences, be listened to, grow in confidence and ultimately become part of a growing Wirral-based community that they can have live influence over.

ZOOP is open to anyone

18+ waiting for an autism assessment, autistic people with a diagnosis, self-identifying autistic people and friends or family of people with lived experience of autism.

CWP clinical staff, outreach support workers and Open Door staff have worked closely together to design a model that allows frequent, good quality communication to flow back and forth with autistic people that are waiting to be seen by the autism service. The outreach support workers have been working from Open Door's home, the Bloom Building to use their bright, colourful and inclusive environment to engage with autistic people and offer one-to-one bespoke support, group 'autism knowledge' sessions, networking and building links with third sector organisations.

Open Door also partnered with local third sector charities and organisations to offer a broad variety of avenues into creative wellbeing opportunities for members – Our partners included RAWD, Be Well Learning, Resilient NW and Happy Times Activities.

As part of the development process, we invited local residents with lived experience of the autism diagnosis process, as well as their friends and family and professionals, to participate in focus groups. In the focus groups, we discussed branding, sessions and the referral process to make sure that autistic people were at the very heart of the design process.

Our impact

Despite only starting part way through the year, a total of **145 members** have signed up for ZOOP, with **117 sessions delivered**. In total, that's been 207 hours of sessions to support ZOOP members, with an average of 21 sessions throughout each month during the year.

We support a wide range of people through ZOOP, and it's our most diverse programme in terms of age. Throughout the year, we've seen an age range of 62 years, with our youngest members being 18 and our oldest being 79.

“Before I started coming here, I wouldn't even leave the house. Now I come here, I will go to the market afterwards or get up early and go and get myself some food. Even though I live independently coming to ZOOP has helped me with my independence”



Case study

Coffee and Create



Every month, Open Door runs monthly Coffee and Create sessions, in which members choose a new theme such as regulation, burnout, masking and self-care.

The sessions are then co-designed and co-facilitated with a volunteer with lived experience of receiving an autism diagnosis in adulthood.

One session we held was on the topic of what it means to be an autistic adult, and through drawing, painting and collage, members expressed themselves and their experience, with some members even saying that they wanted to go on and create an autism-themed comic!

“In the real world, I have doubled my current friendships to four. And I have read whole books on autism from the library. I have even started listening to music at home. The other day, I got a certificate from the British Heart Foundation.”



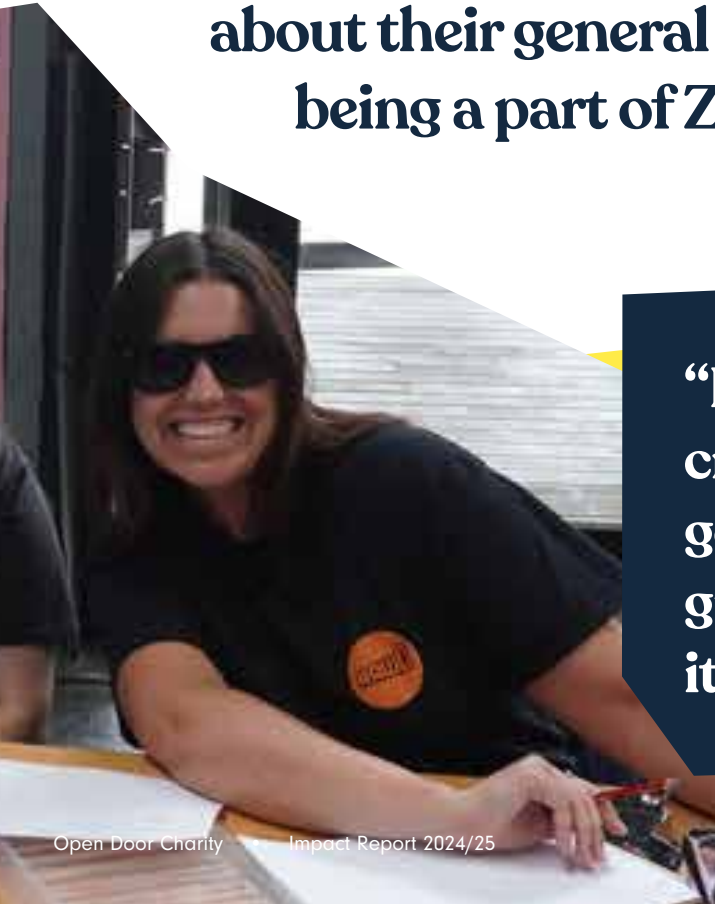
Measuring impact

One of the ways in which we measure wellbeing for ZOOP members is via the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS), which measures the mental wellbeing of people.

We've seen that throughout the year our members experienced a

24% average increase
in mental wellbeing scores

in short, ZOOP members are feeling better about their general mental wellbeing after being a part of ZOOP.



“I usually come to the morning craft group but thought why not go to the afternoon support group too because I like it here – it's so bright and colourful!”

Our partners

ZOOP is a true partnership, and together with Resilient NW, RAWD, Happy Times Activities and Be Well Learning, we've been able to offer a wide range of activities and sessions for our members, including:

- Creative sessions from Resilient NW with a focus on building confidence and life skills in a welcoming environment, in which members can bake craft, create music or just have a cup of tea and catch up.
- A series of creative sessions with RAWD, including songwriting classes character building sessions and dancing classes to move, connect, and feel empowered.
- Seated exercise classes and other activities with Happy Time Activities.
- Resilience and Wellbeing training from Be Well Learning, as well as two ZOOP members trained as autistic co-trainers following the course.



“I really love how there is no pressure and we are able to take things at our own pace. I like the effort to help engage us in convo, especially as someone who struggles to initiate first. Feels so good, and like a sigh of relief to be around other ND people and not have to mask or feel judged. 10/10”

We also want to recognise the importance of wellbeing support for Cheshire and Wirral Partnership staff who play a crucial role in ZOOB, and they've been able to access free yoga, coffee hours and booking Bloom for team away days.

Paul said about his experience:

“Working with Open Door has been great. When I first came into the role, it was brilliant having the support of the team at Open Door, and this really helped me understand what we were trying to do.

The team have been lovely, and I always enjoy seeing them when I come into the building.

Working with Open Door has been great in terms of helping people; we are able to work with / across each other and get people to the right help. It means that people get support quicker and it's more effective than having them wait.

Working with the other partners such as Be Well Learning and Resilient NW has been great, again having people on hand who can support, and in many cases help me learn a lot about what support other organisations are around has been invaluable - the only drawback I have found is that because everyone is so busy - is that we can't always meet up in person together!”

Paul



“Really enjoyed today’s session. Thank you so much. Loved how interactive the session was and that sounds were shown to us before the session and that Nick talked through coffee at an accessible level.”

A member who attended a barista training session.

Case study


Laura’s Story



Laura signed up to be a ZOOP member and after looking at the timetable registered her interest in joining in with Resilient NW’s activities.

When we first met Laura, she mentioned that it usually takes her some time to gather the courage to begin a new project or activity; however, she attended her first Creative Workshop session with Resilience the very next day after registering with us.

Over the past few weeks, we have learned that Laura is passionate about music, leading her to work closely with our team member, Harry, to develop her composing skills, create lyrics, and record vocals. Laura has also started writing poetry. Laura has been progressively building confidence each week and is enjoying learning new skills and engaging with other members of the group.



“I had gotten an email about this group, and I saw they were taking people who are autistic and people like me who are on the waiting list. I usually overthink things but I decided that I would go and give this group a try. I was mainly interested in the music stuff they had. When I arrived, I was made to feel very welcome and comfortable. Harry and Louise both helped put my anxiety at ease, and once I was settled in, I started working on my own song”.

“I’ve been coming to the group for like four or five weeks, and it’s something I look forward to. The group has really motivated me to create and stay consistent with my art. I’ve also made some really good friends and people who are like me and are pursuing music. I was so comfortable I sang into the mic Harry had set up, that was a big step for me and I’m so grateful for the encouragement and the group has shown me”.

“The low-pressure environment, along with the encouragement, is something other people on the autistic spectrum would find appealing. There are a variety of activities to do, I just focus on music, but there is cooking, arts and crafts, which look fun to do. I do want to give them a go, I just find it hard to pull myself away from the music!

I would recommend this group to anyone on the spectrum who is looking for a place to be social in a safe, calm environment and who wishes to learn some new skills”

Laura



**“ZOOP seem to listen and care and do –
Everyone works hard and deserves recognition”**

Fundraising

To everyone who's donated throughout the year, we want to thank you for your generous support. All the impact featured in this report happened because of your generosity, and we cannot thank you enough!

Whether you've donated as an individual, or fundraised for us through your work, you've made an incredible difference to provide life-saving support to people who need it the most.



Our friends at Pullman Liverpool had this to say about fundraising for us:



“At Pullman Liverpool, we are proud to be part of the local community, and supporting Open Door Charity felt like a natural fit for us. Open Door’s work supporting vulnerable people across Liverpool closely aligns with our values of care, inclusivity, and community engagement. We wanted to support a charity that delivers real, visible impact locally, and Open Door does exactly that.

We thoroughly enjoyed working with Open Door as a corporate partner. The charity team was passionate, supportive, and easy to collaborate with, making the fundraising journey both rewarding and enjoyable. As a hotel, we value strong partnerships, and this felt like a genuine relationship built on shared goals rather than a one-off initiative.

Getting our team involved in fundraising activities brought a real sense of unity and purpose across the hotel. Staff enjoyed contributing to something meaningful beyond their day-to-day roles, which boosted morale and teamwork. Many team members felt proud to support a charity that makes a difference in the city they live and work in, strengthening engagement and wellbeing.

We would encourage other businesses to consider supporting Open Door Charity because they offer an excellent opportunity for companies to give back locally while engaging their teams in a meaningful way. The charity is professional, passionate, and deeply committed to the people it supports, making it a highly rewarding partnership for any organisation or business.”



We'd also like to thank all the grant makers who've supported us throughout the year.

Because of your support, we've been able to try out new things and continue providing support that wouldn't exist without your generous contributions.

Masons Charitable Trust

Reaching Communities

Segelman Trust

John Moores Foundation

Innox Foundation

Skelton Charity

Eleanor Rathbone

Highway One Trust

Children in Need

Liverpool One

Steve Morgan Foundation

**Souter Charitable
Trust**

UKH Foundation

Awards for all

**LCVS Community
Fund**

**The Rhododendron
Trust**

**Barrett Homes
Community Fund**

Shifting Gears

Arete Foundation

**Pilkington Charitable
Trust**

**CRH Charitable
Trust**

**Douglas Arter
Foundation**

Sedulo Foundation

**Michie Family
Trust**

Medicash

**The Alchemy
Foundation**

**Sir Donald and
Lady Edna Wilson
Charitable Trust**



Our events

We've hosted a load of different events throughout the year at Bloom, making sure that our home isn't just about housing our services, but also serving our community. From our Toddler Takeover events, where parents can bring their kids to play and get to know each other, to live music, team away days and weddings. Throughout the year, we've held **372 different events** at Bloom.

Bloom has been a labour of love over the past several years, and we're sad that our time at Bloom is coming to an end. But we've had such an amazing opportunity to watch it grow, and we're so excited for the next step in our journey – we can't wait to take you all with us.



Future Yard In Bloom

This year we also hosted a series of gigs at Bloom as part of our collaboration with our friends at Future Yard for Future Yard in Bloom. We welcomed some amazing artists to the stage like Dog Race, Sunda Blue and Omega Nebula for amazing sets for our members and the wider community.

We'd also like to extend a huge thank you to Future Yard for giving us access to their Neighbourhood Ticket Scheme, through which our members can attend a range of shows at Future Yard for free.

Bloom tenants

Bloom isn't just our home – this year we've welcomed Action for Children to join us as tenants, joining Open Door and Be Well Learning to create a space where we can all work, learn and inspire each other. Thanks for being such a vital part of Bloom!

“Bloom Building has played a crucial part in Be Well’s development, offering a collaborative environment that truly helps communities thrive.

Sharing a space with like-minded organisations has worked so well for us, and we’re excited to take that energy with us to JOY—meeting new tenants, learning from each other, and continuing our journey.”

Charlotte Adams

Operations & Communications Manager

Be Well
EDUCATION | LEARNING | DEVELOPMENT


A reflection from our Charity Director

Charity Director Statement
Nov 24–Oct 25

Huge thanks to everybody involved in creating this report and the transformational impact it references. It's a comprehensive snapshot of 24/25 at a depth and in detail, that matches the renewed focus, ambition and scale of what we know we can achieve with Open Door Charity.

Impact starts with people, so this thanks is for all mentors, staff, stakeholders, funders, friends, allies and supporters who feel a huge degree of shared ownership in the purpose and nature of positive changes we have helped achieve in people's lives. Open Door is an ecosystem that relies on all these areas each playing their part, so huge thanks from the bottom of my heart.

It has been a year of change and development, building on the 13 years of growth before it. We have realised things which we had set out to achieve for a long time, such as developing our work into other areas of need, like disordered eating, with Mysa and developing Wirral's first community autism hub - ZOOP, which we deliver with a collective of third sector friends. The reach of Bazaar has grown, and many positive changes have taken place internally, that will enable our collective Wellbeing Services to deliver new and transformational impacts at scale in the coming years.



This report is a key component of a shift we have strategically undertaken to create and engage with national-level visibility. We are confident that we have some of the most courageous, radical and deeply human solutions to some of the most universal challenges facing communities in the UK. Whether that be around how you can galvanise communities to come together and support each other around young peoples' mental health provision (Bazaar), reducing dependency on the state for provisions by creating parity across public and third sectors (Branch) and by reimagining emotional wellbeing support for care experienced young people (OOMOO).

These things are established and delivering locally, and we now want to shout about this nationally and shine a light on how we can drive these conversations forwards, support more, empower those with lived experience and channel negative lived experience into positive outcomes in the lives of others. All whilst having a great time doing it, creating friendships, memories and experiences and developing ourselves. Creating a vehicle for our staff to be vulnerable and keen to learn and taking the next steps in their career journeys.

I have learned a great deal about myself over the past year, and share in the same vulnerabilities as my peers and colleagues. We are in a period whereby we are shooting for the stars, which takes bravery, professionalism and purpose, which can establish the charity for long into the future. We have the projects to power this, the ambition to drive this forwards and the key components that have served us well this far – to take positive risks safely, to make mistakes and learn quickly and know that anything is possible if the right people have the right platform and the space, ability and passion to communicate their own voice.

Next year, this reflection will be written from Joy. Let's check in then to see how we have got on.

Lee Pennington
Charity Director

What's next?

2025 has been a whirlwind, with incredible things happening in brilliant spaces. And we're only just getting started – in 2026 we're bringing you Joy.

Joy is a space where mental health, culture and social action intersect in a way that has never been done before.

It's the next step in our journey, and we'd love to take you along with us.

wherejoylives.co.uk

“24/25 has been an amazing year for project Joy – five years in the making, we have finalised our plans, built our partnerships and started the multi-million pound building works that will transform the Treasury Annexe into the most innovative mental health and wellbeing space in the UK. Joy is opening Summer 2026.”

George Hawkins
Joy Project Director

Joy

Want to get involved?

There are loads of ways to get involved, from volunteering on one of our programmes, learning more about our Bazaar partnerships, donating, or signing up for our newsletter.

Volunteer sign up



opendoorcharity.com/get-involved

Partnerships



opendoorcharity.com/partnerships

Donate



opendoorcharity.com/donate

Newsletter



opendoorcharity.com/sign-up



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