

Sheffield and Rotherham Club: Best Large Club 2024

HASSRA Sheffield and Rotherham Club Board of Management

Chair	Debra Allott Kerry Brown (Deputy)			Auditors	Nic Vaughan/Terry Mann
Treasurer	Chris Scott Rebecca Walters (Deputy)	Business Sponsor	Clare Elliott	Secretary	Lee South Lyndsey South (Deputy)
Committee	Fiona Duxbury, Ritu Ghose, Karen Sinden, Joanne Coburn, Debbie Day, Jane Frost, Lauren Wheeler, Chris Marsh, Leanna Scullion, Phil Vaughan, Beverley Laidlaw				
Committee Communication	To demonstrate an inclusive approach, Committee meetings held both via MS Teams and in person. We have created a Teams Channel for communications reducing the amount of email traffic.				
Compliance	This demonstrates our commitment to HASSRA compliance				

About our club: The Sheffield and Rotherham Club has demonstrated exceptional commitment to enhancing the lives of its members through a diverse range of activities, events, and initiatives. Our club's dedication to inclusivity, innovation, and engagement has made a significant impact on our members.

Membership Recruitment and Retention: In 2024, we proudly recruited **107 new members**, bringing our total to **1,197 members across 11 sites**. Our club continues to thrive by offering a packed and varied activity programme, negotiating local offers, and organising events that cater to the diverse needs of our members.

Membership Benefits: We continue to negotiate local offers for member inclusivity both in Sheffield, Rotherham and neighbouring areas to consider hybrid working and to include members who do not live in Sheffield areas. We routinely research Sheffield events to minimise travel for our members making events more accessible by public transport. These have made a positive impact to the lives of our members. We have included religious events such as EID and Christmas themed activities as well as continuing to run our most popular regular events.

Events: During 2024 we ran **48** events (28 in 2023) and **12** competitions (3 in 2023), making our event programme our best to date. In January 2024 we surveyed our members and used their suggestions to boost our events programme. Due to the number of suggestions we received, we can make 2025 just as successful. We also recruited two new volunteers who both ran an event during the year. Our impressive events programme has boosted morale amongst our members as well as our organisers by continually reviewing and updating our offers.

We support Regional & National HASSRA by promoting the use of HASSRA live for ticket ordering and by both attending events and organising some Regional Events. Our **48** events were a mixture of our regular member favourite events as well as new events. Our new club events for 2024 included:

- Derbyshire V Yorkshire T20
- EID cashback
- Day Fever daytime disco

- Musicals Live Band Singalong
- A sunflower growing competition
- Wentworth Woodhouse Food Festival
- 3 Sheffield historical/ghost walking tours
- Ceramic painting workshop
- Stratford upon Avon Christmas Market trip

Our favourite regular club events included:

- Coach trips to Whitby and Cheshire Oaks
- Loxley Gin tasting trip.
- Crazy Golf and Tenpin bowling
- 5 Musical Theatre trips and Disney on Ice
- Christmas decoration and Christmas Wreath making workshops.
- Sheffield Lyceum Pantomime 108 tickets sold

Our club members contribute significantly to and organise regional activities:

- Doncaster Pride competition (new for 2024)
- Chatsworth Country Fair (206 Tickets sold !)
- Harrogate knit and stitch show tickets
- An Evening with Stuart Broad
- Newcastle Christmas market weekend
- Run the Regional Walking Club

We have a positive working relationship with CSSC South Yorkshire and run joint events offering double discounts which is a real benefit to offer more events to HASSRA only members.

Competitions: We ran 11 monthly free prize draws with £250 prizes of 5 x £50 gift card prizes each month with a 'Super September' £500 prize pot of 1 x £100 and 8 x £50. We have paid out **£3,000** in prizes and had **3244** entries during the year. We also ran a Sheffield Tramlines Competition to win a pair of tickets. **95** people entered with 1 lucky winner having a fabulous day out.

We have been highly successful at Regional and National competitions:

National Winners:

- Golf Scratch – Richard Wood
- Pop Quiz team – James Harman
- Table Tennis Ladies Doubles - Barbara Drabowska
- Ten Pin Scratch Singles, Men's Doubles and Team – Chris Scott
- Ten Pin Ladies Handicap Singles and Team – Lyndsey South

Regional Winners

- Sheffield 10k Corporate Challenge. Bruno Beckett, Michael Richardson, Chris Marsh and Chris Scott were part of the regional **winning** team.
- Pop Quiz Team – James Harman
- Ten Pin – Chris Scott
- Ten Pin – Lyndsey South

Other representatives at festivals

- Archery – Lyndsey South
- Footgolf – Lee South
- Give us a Clue – Nic Vaughan and Lauren Wheeler

- Lauren Wheeler – Fitness workshop
- Gym based Triathlon – Chris Scott
- Flat Green Bowls – Dai Jenkins

Wellbeing Programme: Business Unit Grant: A member of the committee has utilised this for the first time. They applied and were awarded £50 to use at their team away day where they held two games of Bingo and 2 random draws. 5 people won vouchers and from the event, HASSRA gained several new members nationally. We ask offices submit bids for specific wellbeing activities and our smaller offices find this useful as it helps engagement.

National Wellbeing and Inclusion competition: We entered our Cheshire Oaks coach trip into competition and judges were impressed that the event showed the importance of taking different needs into account and bringing people together which helped encourage a greater sense of inclusion and wellbeing.

Communication and Marketing: We email event newsletters to our both members and non-members in Sheffield and Rotherham DWP which helps with recruitment. This information is posted on our Club Facebook group along with additional information such as local lottery winners and South Yorkshire CSSC offers.

Charity and Fundraising: We have continued to use our HASSRA Sheffield & Rotherham Just Giving page which, linking our club events to various charities. In 2024, our club raised funds for Bluebell Wood Hospice Charity and Sheffield Flourish mental health charity. We also collected a van full of Christmas food hampers and £180 of donations for fresh food for Sheffield elderly lonely charity.

Other Support for Region: As one of the largest clubs in the Region we support all Regional activities. Six of our committee members are members of Regional Board of Management, managing the regional website and communications. The Chair of the Regional Diversity and Inclusion Committee is also our club member. The Regional Chair, treasurer for the regional accounts, organiser of the Regional Awards evening and planning days are our Club members.

Other Support for National HASSRA: Various members of our club Committee support the National HASSRA team by suggesting innovative ideas for the festivals, e.g. cold water swimming which due to it's popularity will be included in the 2025 festival programme.

In Summary: The Sheffield and Rotherham Club's commitment to its members, innovative event programming, and dedication to community engagement make it a deserving candidate for the Best Large Club award. Our club's achievements in 2024 reflect our passion for creating a vibrant and inclusive club for all our members.

HASSRA Best Region – South West 2024

In the Southwest we have really focussed our efforts on both recruiting new members and raising awareness of membership benefits with existing members.

We created a Southwest promotional email template which we have used at both Regional and Club level. Having reached out to senior leaders across the Southwest we were made aware of DWP recruitment and new joiners across the region, we have then used the promotional email to introduce new members of staff to HASSRA whilst encouraging existing members to revisit HASSRA to see what they are missing out on. We have coupled this with a Region wide offer to all clubs, teams and offices to deliver MS Teams HASSRA awareness calls. Throughout 2024 the Southwest BOM delivered over 30 separate sessions via Teams.

The BOM supported every club with recruitment and at face-to-face Club Chair workshops the BOM delivered recruitment sessions, promoted the sharing of recruitment ideas across clubs, ran guidance sessions to clubs on how to do housekeeping on membership lists and contacting those not engaging and funded merchandise to support recruitment campaigns.

The great news is our membership has increased to 4316 at December 2024. Q1 saw an increase of 209, Q2 245, Q3 157 and Q4 saw 94 new members, moving the Southwest up to 5th place for recruitment with 61% of DWP colleagues as HASSRA members, above the national average.

Throughout 2024 the Southwest have continued to support regional benefits for members and seek out every opportunity to negotiate new offers.

Bath Therma Spa continues to be our most popular benefit with our members, the region subsidises every ticket by £20 meaning a huge £6000 was utilised on this benefit alone.

In 2024 the Southwest introduced members cashback offers for live theatre and for live sporting events, these ran alongside our existing cashback offers for beach huts, spa treatments, college courses and cookery classes, ensuring we offer something for everyone.

Getting behind the National Teams drive to explore new benefits, the Southwest have sent 25 ideas for the National Team to take forward, a huge 50% of all ideas sent by all regions.

In 2024 the Southwest increased its online shop orders to 963, 10% of overall shop share. 8211 cinema tickets were bought by Southwest members, £44895 sale value, £6061 of which was subsidised by SW funds to support lower price tickets for our members.

We encourage clubs to seek out local benefits for members and/or provide cashback facilities similar to regional for local food/retail providers.

Our Regional Christmas offer for clubs was to provide cash back on Christmas parking/travel at £5 per member to help with the Christmas shopping trip along with funding a Christmas raffle or subsidising 50% for a coach trip.

In 2024 HASSRA Southwest once again ran the ever-popular Oakhampton activity weekend which attracted over 100 attendees. Once again, the region was able to subsidise the weekend by £70 per member making a whole weekend affordable for our members at just £100. Year after year members take advantage of this event, with 2 nights' accommodation, all meals included and many sporting, arts and craft and fun activities. The word has spread, and Southeast region wants to join us in 2025!

The region supported the National Festivals by sending a coach full of SW members to both events, running regional qualifying events for activities such as the Darts event in Plymouth, angling, golf and ten pin bowling. We tried to attract new regional attendees to the festivals, attracting many members who had never been before to experience what was on offer, with excellent feedback on their experiences. SouthWest winners include mixed Rounders team and Gym based triathlon, runners up in Ladies golf and Men's Ten pin bowling. We also had members take part in the Activity Alliance events which has been well received by our members.

To support all our club committees in 2024 we organised many, well attended workshops on using HASSRA Live, demonstrating how to pull membership lists, build competitions and events etc. As well as promoting National run finance workshops. The compliance to constitutional matters and financial obligations is excellent in the Southwest as highlight at the National Chairs and BOM meetings.

Throughout the year the region has supported two club with merging and one club splitting to two new clubs, arranging special general meetings, setting up committees and seeking club sponsors.

We have been working on our Hassra Live membership lists, encouraging those to register and log into their Hassra Live account, change their preference to receiving newsletters and ensuring they are registered with the right club. 73% of our members subscribe to updates.

Our regular regional newsletters highlight both National and Regional promotions, competitions and events as well as sharing feedback and information from across the region.

Southwest region ran monthly competitions throughout 2024 giving members the opportunity to win prizes from Air fryers, Sports vouchers, Hampers and cash prizes. We regularly see over 1000 entries for our competitions, 25% of our members regularly entering. Our highest participating competition was Ninja, so BOM agreed to run again January doubling the prizes.

As a region we regularly promote the National HASSRA Lottery, we have seen new and increased applications and during 2024 we saw 110 winners across the Southwest.

In the Southwest we have made it our mission to offer something for everyone and have worked hard to listen to suggestions and offer activities and events that appeal to everyone. We launched our "Live Event" cashback offer to benefit members that perhaps prefer theatre, shows or live sporting events to the cinema.

As well as sporting events, the region offers members the opportunity to enjoy discounted spa breaks, cookery courses, family days out and even dog grooming discounts!

We purposely balance our competitions to offer a variety of prizes to ensure we have something that interests everyone, examples of prizes are Ninja products, cash/vouchers, hampers, sporting equipment, Agricultural show tickets or family days out tickets.

We encouraged new participants to represent us at both National Festivals, creating an open to everyone, come and have a go policy. We also encouraged members take part in the Activity Alliance events with excellent feedback.

Our popular Oakhampton Activity weekend has been developed to be accessible to all, the region negotiates excellent rates with the hotel and then subsidises further ensuring struggling families can afford a fantastic weekend. As a region we negotiate free use of mobility scooters and other mobility aides our members or their families need.

Once again in 2024 as a region we supported every club across the Southwest with funds to deliver wellbeing activities, we funded Time to Talk events encouraging every site to provide hot drinks, cakes and biscuits for their events. Time to Talk events were funded for all DWP staff, supporting everyone in site whether they were members or not.

We have encouraged southwest clubs to record their charity donations on HASSRA Live, as many clubs have regular charity events which went unrecorded.

The region has worked hard throughout 2024 to ensure our finances are in order and as a region we have tried to ensure our reserves don't continue to grow and we spend appropriate amounts for the benefit of our members.

Merchandise has been bought by the region and delivered to all clubs, every club has taken delivery of reusable water bottles, coffee cups, pens, lanyards, post it notes, note pads and jute bags, all proudly promoting the HASSRA Southwest logo. Goodie bags of Southwest merchandise have boosted morale, encouraged recruitment and supported retention, which encouraging sustainability and removing the need for single use plastic bottles, coffee cups and plastic shopping bags.

In the Southwest we listen to our members, our BOM includes members from right across our region which supports us in being able to deliver a programme suitable for everyone. We are spread far and wide, from Swindon to Penzance but by using the resources available, HASSRA Live, MS Teams, virtual events and newsletters we support every member in the best way possible.

Best Single Activity Club 2024 - West Midlands Trips

This club is focused on providing entertainment experiences at an achievable price point for HASSRA members within the West Midlands by utilising group discount rates directly with venues and subsidising ticket cost as well as utilising cash back offers via HASSRA Live.

The club covers all 19 clubs within the geographical area and is managed by a volunteer using one direct e-mail inbox for promotions, applications, payment, allocation, and dispatch plus being on hand to answer any queries that may arise through lost tickets or specific requirements such as ordering accessible tickets for members that require additional space or mobility help.

In 2024 we sold 1,054 discounted tickets, saving members a total of £19,817 on admission. We have already secured 1000 tickets for 2025 shows!

A full breakdown of the shows offered is detailed below:

Show	Tickets	Total Saving to Member
Snow White Panto – 04/01/2024	118	£1,864.50
Jack & The Beanstalk Panto – 18/01/2024	184	£2,484.00
Edward Scissorhands – 08/02/2024	112	£2,128.00
Wicked – 04/04/2024	153	£3,519.00
Hamilton – 08/08/2024	150	£3,577.50
Hairspray – 16/09/2024	80	£1,680.00
Aladdin – 16/10/2024	80	£2,400.00
Peter Pan Panto – 22/01/2025	182	£2,184.00
Total	1054	£19,817.00

For 2025 tickets are already secured for Cinderella the ballet, Kinky Boots, Cruel Intentions, Tina Turner the musical, Mary Poppins and Moulin Rouge!

The club have utilised HASSRA Live to provide cashback opportunities for members who wish to attend smaller, more local theatre venues closer to home or on the outskirts of the regional area who are unable to travel to the large theatres in the City Centre where they can book tickets for a show and claim 25% back on ticket cost. This is to ensure all members can benefit from a reduction in price, experience the arts and enjoy an evening out during this time where costs are so high and often not affordable extras. 109 members claimed this type of cashback at a cost of £2,436.83 to the region and an average saving of £22.36 per member.

Accessibility is also important, with the club not only providing cheaper tickets, but also organising specific wheelchair accessible as well as accompanying carer ticket selections for all shows for members.

Regular positive feedback and messages of thanks are received into the e-mail inbox for the hard work put into this club for the enjoyment and benefit of HASSRA WM members making all the effort and time well worth it.

The activities of the Trips club are often used to show the opportunities and benefits of becoming a member of HASSRA to new recruits during talks and meetings as well as being advertised via social media, local comms and the regional newsletter as a way of encouraging retention of membership.

Another brilliant year for Trips and theatre shows in 2024!!

Business Sponsor of the Year - Gareth Niblett, West Midlands.

Grade: SEO

Job role: Business Continuity Response Lead

Location: Shrewsbury

Gareth is the driving force behind the hugely successful HASSRA Shrewsbury local club, who under his leadership have been crowned Best Regional Small Club in 2019 (the same year they also won Best National Small Club), 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. HASSRA Shrewsbury is located within the West Midlands region, with the club serving 4 linked Jobcentres of Shrewsbury, Market Drayton, Oswestry and Whitchurch.

Membership has remained healthy in 2024 and despite a large number of existing members changing offices throughout the year, we have managed to recruit 13 new members and stand at 78 members as of 31/12/2024.

Gareth is key to enabling HASSRA Shrewsbury to flourish, his organisation ensures committee meetings take place monthly - prior to each meeting he meets with the club Chair to ensure there is a structured agenda, focused on reviewing club finances and recent activities, followed by forward planning future local club activities, of which a long potential list are proposed month on month. In amongst a reactive day job leading the Department's Incident & Crisis Response Team, he always manages his diary to ensure he is able to attend committee meetings and when he is unable to do so, will provide input and his thoughts to all in advance. He'll always give us a nudge to ensure we're meeting our governance obligations with a reminder of the need to meet deadlines for end of year accounts, the AGM and Chairs Certificate.

With access to HASSRA Live Gareth frequently extracts our club membership lists and monitors membership numbers, ensuring individuals are assigned to the correct club, enabling us to undertake monthly free member draws. New in 2024 was the local club monthly birthday draw, which Gareth coordinated and organised each month. He creates local competitions on HASSRA Live for members to enter, purchases the competition prizes and distributes them to winners. Throughout the year he has always ensured HASSRA Shrewsbury doesn't miss out on the various club and HASSRA Live grants which have been available. Gareth also keeps members informed of forthcoming club activities and benefits by using the HASSRA Live mailshot facility, whilst also circulating details of regional events and benefits within the office, actively encouraging members to get involved.

Gareth produces our local club newsletter of which 6 editions were produced in 2024. He emails this to colleagues, including non HASSRA members, across the 4 DWP sites we serve. The newsletter is eye catching, visually attractive and contains just the right amount of information to keep members informed of what the club has done, lists winners of draws and competitions, advertises forthcoming events and promotes wider HASSRA membership benefits.

Gareth was the Business Sponsor who formed our local club in 2013, since then he's changed job roles and gained promotion, yet still shows as keen an interest for the club now as when he was the site leader, even though he no longer has any direct links to the 4 Jobcentres HASSRA Shrewsbury covers, nor is he part of Operations (he works within Finance Group).

Not only is Gareth a leader and organiser, but he also actively participates in club activities and freely gives up his personal time to create event posters, sell raffle tickets and buy prizes. He is a keen baker too and is always willing to support our club charity cake sales.

The impact of Gareth's enthusiasm, perfectionism and support is the sheer number of activities the club undertakes. His aim is to ensure we have something going on every single month, offering a varied and attractive calendar of events each month for members

In addition to his role as a local club Business Sponsor, Gareth is the Deputy Regional Chair for HASSRA West Midlands, Treasurer for the regional Trips account, editor of the regional newsletter, the communications lead and plays a significant role in coordination of many regional activities.

It is important to stress that Gareth's actions as club Business Sponsor are predominantly undertaken solely in his own personal time as a volunteer, a further reflection of his true passion for, and dedication to both our local club and the wider association.

At the start of 2024, when a new HEO site leader joined Shrewsbury, he approached her to come along to the regional award dinners as part of the club contingent and in an effort to gain her buy in for and support of HASSRA within the office. She attended and has since attended regular committee meetings as she recognises the benefit HASSRA has on colleagues and our DWP working environment.

2024 was a year of celebration for Gareth, when in June he was awarded the Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Kings Birthday Honours for services to the Department for Work and Pensions, primarily for his role leading a number of international crisis responses, his work as a vounteer with HASSRA and his continued support to raise money for local charities also featured as part of the citation.

Gareth embodies all that is HASSRA, he lives and breathes HASSRA Shrewsbury, giving up many hours of his own time for our cause. We know we are very lucky to have him as our Business Sponsor, his wealth of experience of running local clubs, his knowledge of HASSRA at both an operating and regional level, plus his enthusiasm and dedication for the association, means he is the ideal Business Sponsor to support and enable any club to thrive.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR WINNER - SHARON FINAN, LONDON.

Joining the London Board of Management (BOM) I met Sharon around June 2024, and she has amazed me with her enthusiasm and dedication. She inspires me each time we meet or speak and sets a high bar with her quality and efficiency during the many hours of voluntary work she undertakes on behalf of HASSRA. Speaking with her about her wider responsibilities I know she balances this alongside caring responsibilities which is mind blowing.

In a short amount of time Sharon has performed all the following time- consuming duties throughout this year and indeed throughout the whole time I have known her and been on London BOM;

Team Manager for the July and September 2024 Festivals, this includes the advertising sports event organiser, team selector when no qualifier has taken place. She takes the time to find out what members are interested in – Expression of Interest Microsoft Form sent out. Maintains meticulous records of sporting members interests and abilities. I also heard feedback from first time attendees on how welcoming and engaging she was – helping to create the HASSRA family.

She has

- obtained new Kit for Netball, Football Team and Rounders (including equipment) and offering her storage space for items – she even washed the kits ready for the next event use.
- Re-introduced qualifiers for Tenpin Bowling, Footgolf, Table Tennis and Badminton later in the year. Sourcing members to become organisers within the Region or to take over events set up.
- Assisted the London Treasurer with approving payments and travel claims.
- Checks the London email box, dealing with enquiries within her remit and directing members to their HASSRA Live Account – Helpdesk
- Introduced T20 Crickets tickets for London Members in 2024 and again for 2025.
- held meetings and in the process of arranging Cricket events, tasters and a summer event planned for London members and getting members with their expertise involved and become organisers.
- Checked in with London Clubs (Golf and Chess) regards to London qualifiers and helping with memberships checks to ensure they are allocated to the correct region and other information required and providing dates to avoid for qualifiers, offer her services to help to promote their events.

Sharon provides ongoing support and encouragement to our London Board and members which I have firsthand experience of when I first joined the London BOM and even now. She goes out of her way to ensure maximum participation in all activities she organises by ensuring early publication of comprehensive event requirements and timely reminders to ensure members are fully informed of event selection, administration, and entry deadlines.

She displays valuable knowledge of the rules and regulations relating to HASSRA activities undertaken, both at regional and national level which is valuable for our region. She has ensured that London promptly implements all new national policies, procedures including the verbal ones. i.e. holding qualifier events wherever possible and advertising and collating our regions entries for the festivals, conducting essential membership checks for all activities and making sure that members do not by-pass our region when submitting entries to attend the festivals.

I also saw her passion with the feedback from the indoor cricket event which she personally dealt with ensuring that the standards of behaviour discussion were held and documented. She does not shy away from any tricky situations being passionate about protecting HASSRA and DWP's reputation she has been proactive in organising meetings/discussions at the first sign of misbehaviour setting members on the right track regarding HASSRA/DWP's expectations and reminding them of the Code of Conduct.

Her energy astounds me - Not only is she a Teams Manager for London for the festivals but also the National Organiser for Darts at the September Festival so you can imagine the multi skilling involved while looking after the London Team and all the Darts Teams at the event while at Warwick University. This lady is like a rocket.

She has shared valuable information gained through her life as an Event Managers in the private sector and from other government departments RCSL/HMRC (Revenue Sports & Leisure) and her ongoing organising with CSSC, which she brings many years of experience to HASSRA London and Nationally. She recently held a joint Tenpin Bowling event with RCSL/HMRC and CSSC to provide an enjoyable event for all, this kept the cost down for HASSRA London members by sourcing great deals collectively for all three. Her vast personal sporting experience and referee qualifications are put to beneficial use assisting the smooth running of London and National event she organises.

She is always looking for new and interesting things for our members to attend and is receptive to member suggestions when speaking with them, I feel that HASSRA London are lucky to have a volunteer like Sharon. I feel lucky to have her as my go to and inspiration. She works like a trojan, and we are incredibly lucky to have her energy and dedication. I only wish she were part of my club but having her in London benefits us all far more.

In addition to this submission, London also received this for Sharon:

I would like to nominate Sharon Finan for "**Best Newcomer.**" Sharon has demonstrated exceptional dedication and enthusiasm as a HASSRA volunteer. She revitalised the London regional events and included long awaited regional qualifiers. She has recruited new members and encouraged members to recruit other staff. She has visibly increased the number of HASSRA members.

She also shows care and dedication for those members attending, looking out for those with health conditions and ensuring everyone's wellbeing and making sure they can participate on the same level as everyone else.

She is a strong advocate for inclusion and has become a rally point for London members in a short space of time.

My own participation has increased over the last year due to her intervention. I have participated in regional events and recently representative in the festivals which I

found to be well organised and well thought through the lead up and information provided.

We felt that for all she does, and bearing in mind she has not been part of the regional set-up for that long the “Newcomer” award did not do her justice, hence our voting her as our Volunteer of the Year for 2024.

HASSRA NW ~ WELLBEING: BIRKENHEAD CSAC

Birkenhead CSAC Wellbeing group based in Great Western House (GWH) has continued to build upon its successes in recent years and has introduced some new initiatives in 2024 that have greatly benefited the Wellbeing of all colleagues, both new and existing, who work in GWH. Many of the Wellbeing Group also sit on the Committee of the Birkenhead CSAC Sports and Social Club. Ensuring that Wellbeing is always on the agenda of the Sports and Social Club for all its activities.

CHARITY STUFF In GWH there is a palpable sense of community, a great passion and drive to help others, integral to our own wellbeing despite personal challenges in life for many of our colleagues. GWH colleagues have donated 30 sacks of warm winter clothing to the local Make it Happen Charity in Birkenhead, 10 sacks of Christmas gifts and pyjamas to Kids bank, and donated gifts and prizes to the guiding winter fair in Wallasey. This all took place between the end of October and December. In July/August/ we collected over 400 items of new and lightly used school uniform to ensure children went back to school looking the best they could. Throughout the year we have collected over 1000 pieces of children’s clothing from babies to teenagers which were donated to Kidsbank to help with the weekly referrals. Our colleagues have tirelessly given their time, effort and contributions to collect and deliver all these items on behalf of GWH colleagues.

CHARITY STUFF Colleagues have also contributed to fundraising for the local Charles Thompson homeless mission in Birkenhead including undertaking a Leasowe lighthouse abseil raising £400, cake sales including Macmillan coffee mornings raising £178 to further support local communities.

Celebration and awareness raising days, colleague calls and promotions at Great Western House have included wear it pink Carers week, Carers Rights Day, financial wellbeing week, mental health week where we have promoted all our local supports including ambassadors for fair treatment, mental health first aiders, wellbeing ambassadors and wellbeing buddies and carers advocates. We have supported many colleagues at GWH through various challenges and trauma this year alone, creating confidential safe spaces for colleagues to have a listening ear and signposting and support.

We have introduced a seasonal wellbeing newsletter for the site and evolved our site wellbeing community to be inclusive and collaborative of all our changing communities. No longer a dedicated child maintenance site we are a DWP site with many DWP departments. The sharing of our wellbeing activities and growing support and collaboration have helped us impact and influence the different ways in which we invest in our colleague wellbeing here including a variety of dedicated wellbeing hours, anchor days, community 10000 projects, dedicated command quarterly offline time for those in hugely busy operational telephony environments.

We have introduced and continue to evolve Wellbeing sessions for all new Civil Service employees as part of their initial induction. Advising of the benefits and facilities available to them as employees of the Civil Service, DWP and working in GWH. These brief but information packed talks are specifically designed to show all new colleagues what help, and advice is available to them right from day one. These sessions have been delivered to over 150 colleagues in 2024.

We promoted the Charity of Civil Servants and delivered awareness sessions to GWH colleagues around all the support services and the lottery to try to boost funds for colleagues who need their help and support with our Charity volunteers who work here. We had a great contingent who took part in the megamiles challenge for the Charity. This also helped to inspire the lunch time running club and walking groups. Colleagues have also got involved in and promoted various sporting initiatives including badminton, walking football and netball.

Utilising connections we have forged with our local external stakeholders, The Wirral Road Safety Team, we arranged 2 winter vehicle checks sessions in the GWH car park where colleagues who took part had their lights, tyre treads checked along with water, anti-freeze, screen wash and oil were topped up where necessary. This especially benefitted those colleagues who lived alone or were unsure how to do those checks or who were struggling financially. It also helps the local road safety team share vital road safety information ready for the winter. Colleague feedback was great, we had a number of colleagues who needed new tyres and hadn't realised and free goodie bags were given to the 48 colleagues took advantage of the checks.

We have continued and embedded our monthly "Care for a Cuppa" hour in GWH. Including those colleagues who have caring responsibilities from the new departments and new starters in GWH. At these sessions we share the benefits of the carers space to help colleagues have a safe space to talk, share tips, ask questions, and get signposting. We also worked with Government People Group to deliver the carers line manager toolkit and carers passport promotion to many leaders across government departments as well as GWH carers sessions.

We supported the new iteration of the carers line manager toolkit launched through cabinet office as guidance for all departments. In addition, we supported the launch of the carers conversation map in carers week this year in carers week in June, again for all departments. We support the DWP carers discussion group which has over 3000 members and continues to grow, as one of our colleagues is the co-chair and shares and runs carers sessions here and further afield.

GWH Wellbeing group have continued to be instrumental in sharing colleague insight for those who have been experienced bereavement and our Advocates contributed to the piloting and promoting a new Bi-Monthly, Cross Departmental “Grief and Bereavement Café” for Carers. The pilot ended in October this year and insight and forward actions are currently being reviewed including our GWH colleague insight and suggestions.

We’ve continued to book PAM workshops 3 times each year and this year we focussed on Healthy Eating, Getting Better Sleep and Winter Health. We set up and lead the NW working age Wellbeing Group as well as representing NW on the national group. We have arranged numerous activities to support/highlight various causes, including Time to Talk Day, Men’s Health Week, International Men’s/Women’s Days, Samaritans Awareness Day 24/7, World Health Day and – coming up on 20th December – International Human Solidarity Day. We’ve also arranged PAM workshops across NW as only Birkenhead were doing them across the 6 NW sites and arranged fun things as well such as our Halloween Picture Competition, and got agreement to award reward and recognition vouchers as prizes. These have all been shared across NW.

We have continued to feature different MHFA in GWH with their photos and personal introductions as to why they became MHFAs. We have also shared posters on Wellbeing boards, in cloakrooms and Wellbeing spaces as well as virtually too for those working from home and hybrid working. We are working to update these again currently and we include the link to the database on GWH communications.

Our dedicated Wellbeing room on our ground floor for the use of all enables colleagues to take a break from their busy day, have some quiet space. **Colleagues and Wellbeing Advocates working together** continue to rejuvenate this calm environment with the help and input of our new colleagues who have joined our site this year. The Wellbeing team also provided valuable input into the continued repurposing of our former canteen area into a welcoming and relaxing lounge area with comfortable seating, TV, microwaves, toasters, and fridges for use by all colleagues in GWH. This alongside a “Games Room” with pool table, dart board, table football and board games area have been very welcome additions to the Wellbeing facilities within GWH Wellbeing Advocates across the site say they regularly receive feedback on what a lovely inclusive space we continue to offer at this site.

We have evolved our weekly office-based weigh in sessions where colleagues can come and get weighed by increasing the number of days, we include a Monday now due to colleague request and have varied times of the physical drop-in sessions to reflect the increased number of colleagues now working in GWH, we have continued our virtual “weigh ins” offer to those colleagues who have chosen to still WFH. We have just featured a colleague blog in our winter newsletter who has lost over 3 stone and had lots of positive feedback.

You Said, We Did. Each year following the People Survey we issue a local one to everyone in Working Age Birkenhead asking for their top 4 priorities and to add a line with a suggestion of something that would make their day better in work. We review the results and look at changes we can implement, then produce You Said, We Did so our people can see what we’ve done with their feedback. Some things are beyond our control (eg Pay) and we acknowledge that it’s been raised but explain our limitations and we will be doing the same next year too.

We have an active Birko People Group and each year we arrange the 12 Working Days of Christmas with fun events, competitions and prizes every day which everyone can get involved in, whether in the office or at home. We’re also mindful of people who find December a difficult time of year and have included a Wellbeing Day to coincide with International Human Solidarity Day and will be providing refreshments in the Wellbeing Room, as well as space to take a break and have a chat.

We have quarterly Engagement Events, again open to all, and have done quizzes etc. Most recently we had an hour-long People Event and 5 guest speakers delivered sessions on Menopause, MHFA, Development Opportunities (Breaking Barriers/Apprenticeships) and – of course! – Wellbeing. We had about 120 people attend this latest one and the feedback was fantastic so we’re planning another one next year.

Each month we send out the Action for Happiness Calendar and dedicate it to someone/a team in Birkenhead. I dedicated December’s calendar to anyone who finds December a difficult time and included signposting to means of support.

The above shows the ongoing and continuously growing commitment to Colleague Wellbeing in Great Western House/Birkenhead CSAC, and one, driven by the entire Wellbeing team, that continues to make inroads on to the National DWP Wellbeing agenda.

ARTS & CRAFTS - Liam Willis – Hastings Hub club

This year's nomination has gained critical acclaim both within and outside of HASSRA. Although this is the second year of nomination, Liam has exceeded last year's achievements.

Within HASSRA he is widely regarded as a brilliant photographer and a real devotee to his hobby, winning many competitions at various levels and officiating at many events. He is known to leave home at all hours of the day and night in pursuit of atmospheric, original and unusual subjects.

On a wider scale, he has been a finalist for the past two consecutive years in the UK landscape photograph of the year awards. He was also a finalist in the 2024 British wildlife photograph of the year awards with the final results still pending – so we wish him well in that.

His exceptional photographic skills have attracted over 5000 followers on social media with his photographs shared by followers over a hundred times every week.

His successes in drone and aerial photography have attracted over 800,000 views on social media and in 2024 he achieved a personal goal by featuring in a national newspaper. His drone shot of the Hastings East Hill Funicular Railway appeared in no less than "The Times", seen by 865,000 readers plus 539,000 online subscribers.

He has had three pictures shown on 6pm ITV Meridian Tonight with an average viewership of 352,000, plus others on the 10pm bulletins.

He has even had a picture on The One Show, with an average daily viewing figure of 3,000,000.

If that is not enough, he designs, promotes and sells products featuring his photography at markets across the South East, his calendars selling out every year.

He is a dedicated expert in his chosen craft and is a truly worthy recipient of the HASSRA SE nomination for the Arts & Craft and Non Sporting Contributor Award for 2024.

INNOVATION AWARD – GARDENING CLUB (FYLDE)

- Helped to organize events for the Brian House and Trinity Hospice at the gardens, such as afternoon teas, chippy tea times, Scarecrow festival, grew a pumpkin patch for the children to pick so they could enter pumpkin carving competitions, and take home for carving for Halloween.
- Supported the local Thornton-Cleveleys Horticultural Club by sponsoring events at the annual competition as well as entering produce grown on the allotments winning several prizes.

- Worked with HASSRA Fylde, the local Coop and Social Services to organize, promote and run a rounders tournament to help raise fund for Brian House & trinity Hospice. Unfortunately the weather defeated us and had to be postponed until 2025.
- Planted trees funded by Wyre Council and Woodland Trust to encourage wildlife and benefit nature and wildlife habitat.
- Build bat boxes and bird houses to encourage the wildlife and provide nesting for various bird species across the site.
- Collected scrap metal from around the allotment area and sports ground, which was then given to local scrap merchant who donated the money raised from the scrap to local RNLI charity.
- We held a member's survey on the benefits of the allotments and the results showed 78% of members said the allotments had a positive effect on their mental wellbeing and physical health. Stating the specific ways in which the allotment contributes to; stress relief, socializing, improved mood, as well as improving the environment, creating a sense of accomplishment and purpose.
- We entered Britain in Bloom for the first time, which meant all members, getting involved, preparing the gardens and allotments, completing the lengthy application entry to make sure we were eligible, and hosting the judges visit
- For a third year running we helped organize the annual Christmas tree collection for Brian House, using the grounds as one of the only three sites locally to collect and shred the trees. We recruited volunteers from the garden club and the Veterans. We liaised and worked with the hospice and over a weekend collect over 500 trees onto the site and with a tree surgeon, shredded and bagged the chippings. All helping to raise money for Brian House, which raised £31,500
- We have researched, investigated and applied for funds and grants to support further improvements, not only for the allotments and gardens but for the benefit of the whole site and all the clubs involved who use the sports grounds.

- We have submitted two articles for Live Life the HASSRA national magazine, showcasing the work we have done and HASSRA Fylde in general.
- We have made the first tentative steps to start working with local wild life rangers at the local Wyre nature reserve to determine what further improvements we can make environmentally and horticulturally.
- We also work closely with the Veterans who run a garden area on site, providing help and support.
- Our greatest achievement this year was to win the “Outstanding award” for our Britain in Bloom Entry, one of the highest awards. Scoring 86 points out of. Possible 100 for environmental quality and gardening achievement.
- Judges commented “Congratulations on this entry, engaging with a range of community groups and organisations to ensure a high-quality garden site and addressing environmental improvement opportunities. We look forward to visiting next year. “

Newcomer 2024 – Sarah Euden, Wales.

Sarah joined our committee in 2024 and quickly found her feet, becoming an integral part of the team. Sarah volunteered to become the transport co-ordinator for all our trips, talking to the bus company regularly outlining our needs, negotiating competitive prices and taking quick action to get them booked. The role she undertakes is critical to the smooth running of our trips and ensures we deliver a great quality of service for our members. Sarah has sought feedback from members about the time and place for pick-ups and comfort breaks and has amended the routes accordingly. To her credit she successfully delivered 3 long distance trips with 3 x 50-seater coaches filled – one to Draycott Manor, one to Manchester for shopping and another to the Christmas Market in Birmingham. The fact that the popularity has grown with members during 2024 is testament to Sarah’s attention to detail.

Sarah also played a great role in the fundraising efforts throughout the year. She would go round to sell tickets with a smile on her face every time. She would persuade staff to dig deep into their pockets to give as much as they could to our various charities which has helped tremendously. Sarah took great pleasure in presenting toys to the local Children’s Hospital and handing over a cheque to Nightingale House Hospice. As a club we raised £3650.01 which we couldn’t have done without Sarah’s charm and tenacity.

Sarah is a great ambassador for HASSRA, always telling people about the advantages of being a member. She was the driving force for recruiting new members in the Universal Credit Review Team when they joined the Wrexham office. Sarah hadn’t done any talks previously so shadowed a more experienced colleague first before flying solo. Sarah supplemented the National Promotional Video with

photos and stories about the trips and events she had been on since joining a year ago. She also told them about a 10% discount she'd negotiated for members with the local sandwich shop! Her enthusiasm won the day with 100% take-up and 40 new members for the club – taking the office to an overall 70 new members for 2024.

What has really made Sarah stand out is her willingness to take on responsibility, her can do attitude and her overall enthusiasm for the benefits of Hassra. She has quickly built a reputation for listening to members, championing their ideas and getting things done.

Best Small Club – King's Lynn

King's Lynn HASSRA Club would like to nominate themselves for the award of Best Small Club in 2024. We have a new committee for 2024, giving the Club a real momentum and believe the Club has greatly improved the organised events and activities offered to members. Efforts have been made to ballot members for ideas of activities they would like to participate in and all suggestions have been considered.

The King's Lynn HASSRA Club encompasses 3 locations. King's Lynn, Wisbech and Fakenham and currently has 108 members on roll. We started 2024 with 82 members and have actively promoted the benefits of HASSRA membership to new recruits during their induction period, as well as sending monthly emails marketing our scheduled activities to all staff. Communicating to all staff has encouraged registration and we have gained 26 new members during 2024.

The weekly Bonus Ball Lottery administered locally continues to increase our funds, with 25% of the takings contributing towards HASSRA. Our efforts to promote all activities on HASSRA Live have proven beneficial and the club has been awarded additional funds on several occasions this year.

Following on from a successful programme of events in 2023, we asked members to advise the committee of activities they would like to participate in going forward – the table below outlines the varied programme of events that took place throughout 2024, focusing on wellbeing and inclusivity:

January	Upskilling on HASSRA Live – we started the year with an online upskilling session to aid and encourage members to make full use of HASSRA Live, to register for events, enter competitions and make full use of all HASSRA benefits	All members
February	Ghost Walk and Meal – a meal at Mem's Kitchen (Mediterranean cuisine) followed by an after dark guided Ghost Walk around the historic town of King's Lynn	18 members
March	Packets of Wildflower Seeds were sent out to all members to welcome spring and support wellbeing by encouraging the benefits of gardening	All members

	Weekend Wellbeing Walk at Old Hunstanton Beach with Coffee and Cake	9 members
April	Easter Eggs distributed to all members who registered for an Egg on HASSRA Live	All members
	The launch of 'Total Losers' – a healthy living and weight loss encouragement group	6 members
May	Alpaca Trek along the Norfolk Coastal Path followed by lunch at The Maltings in Wells-next-the Sea	8 members
	Weekend Wellbeing Walk at Wild Ken Hill, Snettisham followed by refreshments	7 members 16 members
	Ladies Day at Fakenham Races – an opportunity to dress up and have a flutter on the horses	
June	Alpaca Trek along the Norfolk Coastal Path followed by lunch at The Maltings in Wells-next-the Sea (arranged to accommodate members who could not attend in May)	7 members
July	Wisbech Pie and Mash evening at The Magwitch, followed by board games	7 members
	HASSRA July Festival in Warwick	5 members 9 members
	Weekend Wellbeing Walk at Dersingham Bog with Coffee and Cake	
August	Cheese and Charcuterie evening at Brothers in Arms – cheese tasting demonstration and evening meal	9 members
	Walking Foot Golf and refreshments at The Eagles	6 members 8 members
	Treasure Trail around King's Lynn historic town with evening meal	
September	Weekend Wellbeing Walk at Castle Acre followed by Coffee and Cake	6 members
	HASSRA September Festival at Warwick	8 members

	Cocktail Masterclass at Whatahoot Distillery and a meal at The Globe Hotel	10 members
	Treasure Trail around Wisbech with evening meal	7 members
October	Weekend Wellbeing Walk at Bawsey Lake followed by Coffee and Cake	6 members
November	Sip and Paint evening with Norfolk Paint Parties at The Ffolkes Inn – instruction on painting an Emu	6 members
December	Wreath Making Workshop and Festive Afternoon Tea at Knights Hill Hotel	10 members
	Mince Pies / Apple Pies for all members who register on HASSRA Live for a Christmas treat	All members
	HASSRA Festive Raffle – cash prizes, along with a wide selection of food and drink	All members
	Christmas Party Night and Hog Roast at Reffley Village Hall	36 members

We took advantage of the discount offered through HASSRA for local Treasure Trails and purchased trails for King's Lynn, Wisbech and Fakenham. They were a great addition to our planned events and allowed members from all 3 offices to get together, socialise and explore different locations.

The HASSRA Festivals were popular again this year and we had 5 members represent us in July, taking part in mixed rounders, 5-a-side football and Charades. In September 8 club members participated in Walking Football, Darts and Green Bowls and we had representation from the club at the recent individual and team golf competitions.

We are extremely fortunate to have an enthusiastic committee that includes representation from all 3 offices, as well as a collaborative working relationship with The People Group. We meet monthly to plan and review our schedule of events and raise any communications from our members. We have collaborated with The People Group to support staff with ill health, contributing to a GoFundMe page for a member of staff with a terminal illness and funding flowers and gift vouchers for unwell members.

The Club Sponsor is an active member of the club, taking a genuine interest in our pursuits, recommending activities and events and participating in many scheduled

events. The club is also supported by Ken Smart who is on the HASSRA Board of Management and plays an active role in our pursuits.

Our aim is to organise events that promote health and wellbeing and will appeal to a diverse audience. We take on board all suggestions from members and hope to collaborate with another HASSRA club in the new year to organise a theatre trip to the West End.

Future events being planned:

We are planning a Putt and Pint evening (Container Golf) for February and another Sip and Paint party in March, with the theme 'Beside the Seaside'. The very popular Weekend Wellbeing Walks will continue on a bi-monthly basis and a Falconry Experience is in the planning stage, along with a Foraging Workshop at Holkham Hall.

We are a dedicated committee of volunteers, keen to offer activities that appeal to all and create an environment outside of work where colleagues can socialise and try new experiences. We aim to make working within DWP an enjoyable and rewarding time.

Award Category	Best Sportsperson
Name of nominated club or individual	Pauline Long
<p>The NE Festival subcommittee are nominating Pauline for winning both the Ladies singles and pairs Table tennis during the Spring festival in 2024.</p> <p>She leaves 2024 retiring from the game after an extraordinary longstanding contribution to HASSRA Table Tennis having first played in a national event in 1977, an incredible career spanning over 45 years!</p> <p>Pauline is highly thought of, and has been regular attendee and winner at the HASSRA Festival's, representing the NE most recently at the 2024 July Festival, where after winning both the National Singles and pairs alongside Alison McKim, she announced she would be retiring.</p> <p>With many a win under her hat in both singles and doubles alongside her past partner Claire Mouzon as long ago as 1988, where she was defending the women's doubles, winning a number of times over the years. They made a very strong pairing as Pauline was the steady one, getting everything back, and Claire had a very attacking style and was able to finish off the points with a great smash. She also won the mixed doubles a few times with Ian Miller back in the day.</p>	

She was a founding member and organiser of the Newcastle Central office TT team running the NESLC Benton Park View club, holding roles of chair, treasurer and secretary over the years.

The team played successfully in the league taking them all over the North East region to playing league matches until COVID hit and the club folded. This is all the more impressive these days as she doesn't drive and takes the bus everywhere to take part in her passion of table tennis!

Pauline continues to play competitively locally with the Cramlington Dragons, she is role model in that age need not always be a barrier to an active lifestyle. She is known for her unique playing style that can be difficult to play against – completely self-taught, much known and revered in TT circles and across various Districts.

I think we can safely say that she was very well known and due to her unorthodox style once seen never forgotten. Alison notes her as a player that partners always learned from and remembers her telling her with a laugh that a long time ago a coach told her that she was “uncoachable” but she said that never stopped her! She's been great to have as a partner over all these years.

Additionally, she's a keen rambler with Newcastle and District Rambling Group.

We cannot think of a more deserving winner than Pauline, she deserves recognition for not only her contribution during 2024, but her longstanding continuous contribution to Table Tennis within HASSRA over the decades.