

Social Impact Report 2024-2025

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Cobalt Community Hub

**A space to connect,
belong & thrive!**

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Introduction

Our Community Partnership and Neighbourhood teams provide a variety of support services to our customers, including those who are:

- **Facing mental or physical health challenges.**
- **Experiencing financial hardship or living in poverty.**
- **Employed in low-paid or unstable work.**
- **Experiencing social isolation.**

By working closely with local organisations, we aim to make a real difference in people's lives, helping to create stronger, more connected communities across **Croxteth, Norris Green, Fazakerley, and Sparrow Hall**.

Community Hub

Our Community Hub launched in November 2024 to form part of our wider customer support offer by hosting regular drop-in sessions, activities, courses and events.

Created for both Cobalt customers and our wider communities, the Hub allows people to:

- **Connect:** build positive relationships and social networks.
- **Belong:** access tenancy sustainability and financial support services.
- **Learn:** access education, training and employment.
- **Thrive:** develop good health and wellbeing.

From its launch in November 2024 until March 2025, the Hub received a total of 907 visits.

Key Events:

The Hub has hosted several key events since launching in November, including:

- **Christmas Grotto** – 89 children attended and received a Christmas gift.
- **Dixons Academy Staff Inset Day** – 20 members of staff attended a training afternoon delivered by Hub staff on the importance and impact of community engagement.
- **Liverpool City Council Business Breakfast** – 25 local entrepreneurs attended to gain free advice on business mentoring and support.
- **Smoke Free Homes Initiative** – A collaboration with Liverpool City Council to introduce a baseline tenant survey for an overall Smokefree Home Evaluation within our Neighbourhoods.
- **Community Health Event** – 18 health partners came together, offering services and advice. **The total social value from this 1-day event was £107,249, with 50% of the beneficiaries being Cobalt tenants.**

Partners and Number of Attendees for Community Hub Health Event

Partner	Attendees
<i>Fibro Scan Bus</i>	23 visitors received liver scan and results/referral
<i>Smoke Free Liverpool</i>	19 visitors, 4 referrals into service
<i>Enable You Services Boccia</i>	30 regular attendees, 4 new attendees
<i>First Person Project CIC</i>	35 visitors had BP readings
<i>Koala UK – Tiny Teeth</i>	20 visitors, 4 referrals to child's dentist
<i>Social Prescribers</i>	15 visitors, 2 GP referrals
<i>Dementia Alliance Liverpool</i>	9 enquiries about service
<i>AAA Abdominal Cancer Screening</i>	21 people received information
<i>Women's Health Information Support</i>	12 women received information
<i>Bowel Cancer UK</i>	20 visitors received information
<i>We Are With You - Addiction Support</i>	9 visitors received information
<i>LCC Neighbourhood Managers</i>	15 visitors were given advice relating to LCC services

Community Hub Case Study:

This customer has engaged with the Community Hub for over 3 months and has a teenager with special educational needs. Following a negative experience in college, the teenager came to the Hub alongside their mother to build confidence and combat social isolation. During their three months of engagement, this customer has gained confidence and enjoys a range of activities through which they have developed new skills and made new friends.

Their favourite activity is the **weekly Boccia sessions** where they play confidently and have recently joined a competitive team. They have developed strong relationships within the group and now chat and laugh with others as they play.

This customer was also introduced by the Hub staff to the **Adult Skills Centre in Croxteth**, a centre for adults with SEN, where this customer now regularly attends and is thriving in this new social environment.

The customer says about her son's progress:

"My child has built confidence, loves going to the Hub and made lots of new friends. My child goes to an education centre now that we found out about through the Hub and is enjoying it a lot."

And about her own progress:

"Being involved with the Community Hub means so much. If it wasn't for the Hub, I would still be getting bullied and stressed out. The staff in the Hub have helped me with everything and I have even been in a play which has helped my confidence. I was terrible at maths but now my brain has woken up as I attended maths classes and got a certificate when I finished the course."

Social Value of Community Hub Activities

Project	Number of Beneficiaries	Social Value Generated	Social Return on Investment	Description
Imagine Independence Wellbeing Workshop	6	£162,990	£1: £543	6-week wellbeing programme covering confidence and assertiveness, connecting with people, learning new skills and giving to others.
Hugh Baird Parents and Carers First Aid Course	5	£17,690	£1: £176	Half-day first aid course for parents and carers funded via Hugh Baird College.
Hugh Baird Deaf Awareness and Introduction to BSL	9	£31,850	£1: £90	Full day training course to educate on deaf awareness and basic BSL.
Future Cobalt Youth Forum	10	£59,540	£1: £35	Youth forum for young people to develop new skills and get involved with Cobalt consultations.
Pit Stop Health Event	64	£107,250	£1: £85	Community health event enabling residents to access health care support, health checks and referrals to appropriate services.
Wellbeing Wednesday	20	£34,570	£1: £17	Wellbeing morning providing a wraparound service from LCC Health and Wellbeing Team, Social Prescribers, Tiny Teeth and Mini Music Time.
Welfare Benefit Advice Drop In	38	£420,030	£1: £210	Benefit advice provided as a drop-in session based in the Community Hub.
Multiply Maths	4	£13,750	1: £6	Weekly maths sessions for residents to learn basic maths skills.
Partners Credit Union	13	£67,850	£1: £33	Weekly drop in offering support with affordable loans, competitive savings rates, and free life insurance on savings and loans.
ESOL Conversation group	5	£55,220	£1: £30	Weekly conversation group for customers to learn English
Brekkie and Brew	38	£422,740	£1: £52	Community breakfast and social group held on a weekly basis.
Community Boccia	12	£136,280	£1: £89	Community boccia sessions for all abilities held on a weekly basis.

Resident Groups

In February 2025, we held our first community consultation event about the **Cobalt Home Standard** in Norris Green which brought together over 20 customers within our local communities.

To increase the number of residents involved and to make this process easier for customers, we have created a new customer network to bring together all five of our customer forums and our tenant consultative panel to allow customers to decide how they want to get involved and how often.

Cobalt currently has 20 consistently involved customers, however, we have a larger number of customers who have expressed an interest in getting involved from our recent **Big Listen campaign** who we are in the early stages of contacting, to increase our customer base.

Involved customers have met numerous times during the year and have reviewed a significant number of items. The following is a non-exhaustive list:

- **Engagement Framework.**
- **Data Protection / Privacy Policy.**
- **Empty Homes Policy.**
- **Vulnerability Policy.**
- **Pet Policy.**

We also work closely with several **Tenant and Resident Associations** within our neighbourhoods to help improve the local communities and address issues that matter most to customers and residents.

Working in collaboration with Tenant and Resident Associations allows for stronger community engagement, improved communication, and support for those who need it. Currently, we work with the following associations:

- **Oaktree Tenant and Resident Association – monthly meetings with 4 members.**
- **Sparrow Hall Tenant and Resident Association – monthly meetings with 15-20 members.**
- **Mentmore Tenant and Resident Association – regular meetings with 8 members.**

Community Engagement

Monksdown Young Voices:

We worked alongside **Monksdown Primary School** as part of the anti-social behaviour early intervention project to showcase the voices of the pupils from local primary schools. The pupils presented projects on mindfulness, homelessness and free school meals to children from **Fazakerley Primary School, Wellesbourne Primary School, Our Lady and St Swithin's, Broad Square and St Matthews** to demonstrate how they can work together to improve their communities.

One of our ASB Officers at Cobalt said of the experience, *"It has been amazing working with our group so far and we are so excited as to the projects we have planned together. At the event, we spoke to other schools about our plans and advertised our litter campaign and competition. The children were truly an inspiration, and the work they have completed in the community is outstanding.*

The manners and presentation of the children from all schools was to such a high standard and the children were a credit to all the schools involved. I look forward to continuing to work with Monksdown and future projects we have planned. Well done Monksdown Primary pupils, keep up the great work and please keep an eye out for the artwork from the children as part of our litter reduction project!"

Norris Green Passport:

Cobalt's Neighbourhood Teams held a series of **Norris Green Passport Competition** events where young people competed in activities and explored local green spaces to discover hidden natural patterns. Logs were hidden in four locations containing metal plates with unique natural patterns, children were invited to make pencil rubbings of these patterns and complete their competition entry forms for a chance to win exciting prizes including a family day out and gift vouchers.

Local partners including **Merseyside Police, Norris Green Community Alliance, Kinship Carers, Liverpool City Council and Friends of 'The Bowley' group** all collaborated to put on this activity, and together, we achieved some amazing results to maintain the local green space. We carried out litter picks, gave dog fouling prevention advice and engaged with local people in our communities about how we can improve the area.

Tackling Hate Crime:

In 2024/25, our anti-social behaviour team delivered a **Hate Crime Awareness Workshop to children and young people at Gems Community Centre in Croxteth**. This was a free 90-minute session to give information about tolerance, acceptance, and kindness, and allowed the children to explore the positive impact they can have on their community.

The children were asked to design a poster that challenges hate crime, with the winner being decided by our **Executive Director of Communities and Regeneration and our ASB Lead and awarded a £30 gift voucher**.

This was then subsequently rolled out to primary schools within our communities **including St Teresas, Leamington, Monksdown and Ranworth in Norris Green, along with Croxteth Primary School in Croxteth**.

Clean Up Days

Mentmore Crescent Bowley:

As part of Dog Awareness Week, Cobalt held a community event in Norris Green in collaboration with **Monksdown Primary School, Dogs Trust, Merseyside Police, The Anthony Walker Foundation, and Liverpool City Council**. The children from Monksdown carried out a litter pick of the area while our partners gave residents information and advice about reporting anti-social behaviour, hate crime, and responsible dog ownership in our communities. Our Neighbourhood and ASB Teams were also at the event, providing advice and handing out freebies such as bicycle hi-vis spokes and dog waste bags to keep our neighbourhoods safe and clean.

Sparrow Hall:

Cobalt held a community clean up and family fun day **at St George's Community Hub in Fazakerley** to bring the community together through a morning of clean-up activities and an afternoon of fun activities for families to enjoy. Skips were available at several key locations on the estate for customers and residents to dispose of any unwanted items, and a host of activities were provided by partners from across Liverpool. These included interactive stalls and activities such as hands-on plastering and plumbing, face painting, a video booth and access to a Merseyside Police camera van. Competitions were also run throughout the day with prizes available including £100 towards a tablet, 5 x £20 vouchers for Smyths and 5 slow cookers.

Scarisbrick Road:

Cobalt held a community action day in Norris Green in collaboration with local partners **Dogs Trust, Cats Protection, The Anthony Walker Foundation and Liverpool City Council**, our contractors **Penny Lane Builders, Lovell, Brabners and Ecogee** to clear the area. The teams repainted railings and placed new planters to discourage fly-tipping, new grass seeds were planted to restore the green space and local school children carried out a litter pick of the area and planted shrub seeds. In spring, fruit and vegetable seeds will be added here, providing food for residents.

Skips were provided for residents to use free of charge to dispose of bulky items, and estate inspections and fuel vouchers were also given to residents. As a reward for the children's efforts, they were gifted tickets to attend a football match at Goodison Park in December by **Merseyside Police and Everton in the Community**.

"We were thrilled to be part of this community gardening event. There's nothing better than building relationships alongside working in customer homes and seeing our community thrive," said the Project Manager from Penny Lane Builders.

Community Fund

- **£40,687 awarded to 19 different projects across our communities**
- **£7058 awarded to 25 Halloween and Christmas activities**

Cobalt's Community Fund awarded **£40,687 to 19 different projects delivered across the year within Croxteth, Norris Green, Fazakerley and Sparrow Hall.**

From the total fund, **£7,058** was awarded to 25 Halloween and Christmas activities, some of which included:

- **The Resonance Project – Mini Monsters.**
- **Aerial Academy - Halloween Handstand Party.**
- **The Quantum Centre – Thrillerfest.**
- **Norris Green Community Alliance – Christmas Sleigh.**
- **Merseyside Polonia - Christmas Eve Community Event.**
- **MJ Productions - MJ Christmas Show and Party.**

Social Value for Community Fund Projects

Project	Number of Beneficiaries	Social Value Generated	Social Return on Investment	Description
Enable You – Boccia Sessions	23	£320,090	£1: £332	10-week block of Boccia sessions delivered in Fazakerley Federation and Norris Green Library.
Triple C – Little Lambs	45	£110,650	£1: £67	Contribution towards a pre-school group providing a safe and stimulating space for children, parents and carers.
The Thinker Hub – Open Minds	11	£18,880	£1: £13	10-week project offering a safe space to discuss community issues and promote community cohesion.
Altru Drama – Eyes Open	366	£273,100	£1: £91	Performance and workshop package exploring drugs and alcohol in a child friendly way delivered across five schools.
Aerial Academy Cartwheel Club	100	£377,100	£1: £126	Community gymnastics club with sessions targeting low-income families to break down barriers when attending physical activity sessions in young children.
Sparrow Hall TRA – Senior Socials	588	£83,350	£1: £38	Coffee morning and bi-weekly lunch club run by volunteers providing a warm, safe space and a hot meal.
NGCA – Community Carnival	3500	£6,064,420	£1: £20	Annual community carnival held in the school holidays for residents to attend with local organisations hosting stalls to provide information and support.
Enable You – Little Enablers and Boccia	19	£204,800	£1: £101	Group activities delivered in local community venues to enhance mental health and wellbeing and improve physical fitness in children, young people, and adults.
Primal Mentality – Primal Living	11	£167,210	£1: £178	Primal Living Wellness Programme; A comprehensive initiative designed to promote holistic wellbeing among men aged 18 and above through a combination of outdoor activities, mindfulness practices, fitness classes, and mental health workshops.

Team Mushin CIC – Jujitsu Lifestyles	20	£296,450	£1: £107	16-week physical activity programme promoting skill-sharing through jujitsu, social interaction and improvement in overall mental and physical wellbeing.
MJ Productions – Summer Camp	33	£162,340	£1: £270	Summer camp to support families throughout the school holidays. Children are given the opportunity to play in a safe environment, have a healthy meal and snack, and access free dance and drama sessions.
Sports Alive – Summer Event	1000	£1,716,660	£1: £572	Annual summer community and family fun day which is free to attend and includes entertainment and sport taster sessions.
Arts Groupie CIC - Halloween Shadow Puppetry	12	£12,720	£1: £4	Shadow Puppetry sessions delivered in half-term for children aged 8 to 13 to develop drama, creative and storytelling techniques culminating in a series of shadow puppetry mini presentations.
Bridge Community Centre – Community Collectives	65	£161,220	1: £214	Funding to deliver a real issues-based drama workshop highlighting the real issues that are hard hitting and affecting the most diverse and vulnerable across the community.
The Resonance Project CIC – Mini Music Time	18	£37,990	£1: £131	Development of pre-school children through singing, dancing, storytelling and crafting. Through the activities, children build confidence and improve motor skills and language. It also gives parents/grandparents the chance to bond with others, reducing feelings of isolation and improving mental health.
Dopamine Room CIC – Art Wellbeing	33	£49,030	£1: £16	10-week Art and Wellbeing Project at Croxteth Gems, focusing on mental health, personal growth, and neurodiversity. Designed to foster self-expression, resilience, and community connection.
Fazakerley Library - Sewing Group	19	£33,010	£1: £38	Weekly sewing group, with equipment available and people on hand to help those attending to gain experience of using electric sewing machines and the equipment to make or adjust items.
Bridge Community Centre – Self Defence Classes	15	£60,400	£1: £120	Combined project of sports/self-defence session for ages from 4 years old to 16yrs olds to reduce the number of kids hanging around the street.
Rooting For You – Feb Fun Club	23	£41,820	£1: £30	Half term activities for families with young children to come together in a safe space. Activities included forest schools, sports and crafts.

Community Fund Case Studies and Testimonials

Primal Living – Primal Mentality CIC:

- *"The breathwork sessions have been a game-changer for me. I feel like I have a tool I can use anytime I'm feeling overwhelmed."*
- *"Cold water therapy was tough, but it really helped me build mental strength. I never thought I could do something like that, but now I feel unstoppable."*
- *"Being outdoors with the group made me realize how important it is to take time for myself and connect with nature. I felt a real sense of peace."*

Jujitsu Lifestyle – Team Mushin CIC:

One individual really embraced the **Jujitsu Life Lifestyle project** and attended the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu sessions after. What started as a once-weekly commitment has grown into a passion, as they now attend both sessions each week. Their confidence has soared since joining the programme, and they have learned a variety of grappling techniques.

This newfound confidence has even inspired them to ask about competing this year. It has been wonderful to see them thrive, and having access to everything under one roof in their local community has been a fantastic opportunity for them.

Tenancy Wellbeing

Cobalt has a **Tenancy Wellbeing Service** who use a trauma informed approach to support the wellbeing and tenancy sustainability of our most vulnerable customers.

Operating on a referral basis, primarily from our **Neighbourhood Housing Officers**, the team responds to a range of complex issues, including financial hardship, mental health challenges, substance misuse, domestic abuse, social isolation, and hoarding.

The service has played a key role in assisting our **Asset and Compliance Team** by helping to gain access to properties where vulnerability has been a barrier.

The team have established strong partnerships with both local organisations offering in-person support and national services including the **NHS Multi-Disciplinary Team, Child in Need Plans and Child Protection Conferences**.

They have represented Cobalt in the new and developing **North-West Hoarding Problem Solving Group** and have been consistently advocated for the introduction and roll out of trauma informed training across Cobalt.

In the 2024-25 period, the team supported 126 customers.

Recent feedback from a customer supported by the Tenancy Wellbeing Team:

"I cannot believe how different life feels. I never thought I would get out of that house, but you helped me do it with dignity. Thank you - you have changed my life. Without you I would have been lost."

Welfare Benefits

In 2024/25 we secured more than £1.7 million in additional benefits and grants for our customers.

Cobalt has a team of specialist **Welfare Benefit Caseworkers** who support customers to navigate and access the financial support they are entitled to, to improve their quality of life. They provide advice, information and support including support with applying and appealing benefit applications including **Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payments and Disability Allowance**.

In 2024/25, along with support around debt referrals, food and fuel support, our **Welfare Benefit Caseworkers secured more than £1.7 million in additional benefits and grants for Cobalt customers**. This was money that our customers did not know that they were entitled to, which typically increases their independence, improves their overall wellbeing and most importantly, increases their financial stability.

Welfare Benefits Case Study:

A male living alone in a two-bedroom property was claiming Universal Credit as a single person, was paying bedroom tax for the extra bedroom, and was experiencing poor mental health. Upon their first interview with their welfare benefit caseworker, their total benefit income including housing costs were £10,460.84 per annum.

The customer was supported with maximising their income, provided with food and fuel vouchers to help their situation whilst their benefit claims were being processed.

Several Discretionary Housing Payments to help pay the bedroom tax were also submitted on his behalf to help prevent possession and eviction. After receiving benefit advice and support, the claimant had a total income including housing costs of £21,280.48 per annum – **this is a benefit increase of £10,819.64 per annum**.

This has had a significant impact on the customer, who stated they could not thank Cobalt enough for the help and support and they now regularly attend the **Community Hub's weekly Brekkie and Brew sessions**.

Food, Fuel and Debt Support

Total Social Value created: £900,710

Food and Fuel Support:

In 2024/25, 150 food bank vouchers and 591 food and fuel vouchers were provided to customers experiencing financial hardship. **An additional 2,853 energy vouchers were issued to customers with a combined value of £140,042.**

Winter Warmer Packs:

Between November 2024 and January 2025, **50 winter warmer packs** were provided by **Sure Maintenance** and distributed across Croxteth, Norris Green, Fazakerley, and Sparrow Hall to vulnerable customers. These packs included a flask, fleecy socks, a scarf, thermal gloves, and a blanket to help customers stay warm in the winter months.

Triple C Community Café:

Cobalt contributed **£3000 towards a Community Café**, serving free hot meals, tea and coffee for those in need. There is a space for toddlers and children including books and games and there is extra provision during the school holidays including food and activities.

There are 11 volunteers offering a friendly face and welcoming atmosphere whilst serving the food, who also have knowledge of local support services attendees may require. There have been **64 attendees** since the café opened and there is an average weekly attendance of 25 adults and 6 children a week. **This has generated a total social value of £138,336 across the 2024/25 period.**

Norris Green Debt Advice:

Debt support outcomes: £193,400

Cobalt commissioned **Norris Green Debt Advice** to support customers experiencing financial difficulties. In 2024/25, Norris Green Debt Advice supported with the following:

- **26 discretionary write offs – total write off - £36,000.**
- **11 debt relief orders – total write off - £153,395.**
- **2 trust fund applications – total write off - £4000.**

The relief from the burden of debt for those supported has **generated a total social value of £622,330.**

Food Pantries:

Cobalt contributions to food pantries in our local neighbourhoods: £5000

Cobalt supports several local food pantries to enhance the provision already provided and to assist those in crisis. In 2024/25, Cobalt contributed **£5000** towards the following food pantries located within our neighbourhoods:

- **Fazakerley Federation.**
- **Norris Green Community Alliance.**
- **Croxteth Gems.**

School Projects

Forest Schools:

Cobalt commission **Beautiful New Beginnings CIC** to deliver **Forest School** sessions for children and their families. This outdoor educational programme provides children with hands-on learning experiences in forests and woodlands, focusing on holistic development and confidence building. Across 40 weeks at Norris Green Park and Karonga Gardens, 120 hours of outdoor activity was provided to over 100 hundred families within Cobalt's neighbourhoods.

Positive Footprints:

Cobalt commissions **Positive Footprints' "Raising Aspirations" programme** to support the next generation by opening up a world of work for children and young people, building resilience and developing employability skills.

In 2024/25, 160 children and young people across four schools benefited from 48 hours of careers-led learning, generating £32,505 in social value

Help Your Child Thrive:

Cobalt provided **£12,500 to Plus One Learning CIC** to deliver **Help Your Child Thrive**, a parental engagement programme, in five local primary schools including **Monksdown Primary School, Ellergreen Nursery School, St Theresa's Catholic Academy, Barlow's Primary School and Croxteth Primary School**. The programme covered topics including communication and language, personal, social, emotional and physical development, maths and literacy skills.

In 2024/25, **the programme engaged with 88 parents**, 8 of which then progressed onto volunteer roles within the schools. **100% of participants reported improved skills** and confidence in understanding what their children are learning at home and how to support them effectively, and **82% stated they had improved their own maths and English skills**, leading to greater self-assurance in their abilities. **The total social value generated from this programme was £1,000,326.**

Alchemist Mindset:

Cobalt commissioned **A.Ur.Tistic CIC**, a customer led organisation, to deliver the **Alchemist Mindset Project in St John Bosco School**. This specially designed wellbeing course was delivered to year 10 students identified by the school as having behavioural issues or a mental health condition and who would benefit from the session delivery. The project has had significant benefits for those who took part, including an increase in general mood, mindset and self-confidence, along with a better understanding of mental health.

C.E.L.L.S Project:

Cobalt provided funding of **£9,600 to the C.E.L.L.S Project**, to run an early intervention project in 10 local primary schools. The project uses the experience of rehabilitated ex-offenders to educate children and young people of the consequences of anti-social behaviour and criminal activity and offers onward training and progression into employment. **The total social value generated from this project was £1,148,412.**

Elevate:

A pilot project delivered in partnership with **Elevate at St John Bosco High School** to raise aspirations and enable young people to learn more about employment opportunities in the social housing sector.

Fifty-five local young people took part in **two bespoke sessions**; one at **St John Bosco High School** where the children met a number of Cobalt staff and learned about their roles, and then a second session held at **Cobalt's Office** where the children were tasked with **devising methods to help combat ASB in Norris Green Park**.

The children then presented their ideas to **Elevate** and Cobalt staff and were subsequently invited by **Friends of Norris Green Park** to visit the park and see their ideas being implemented, helping to create positive relationships with young people and park volunteers.

Woman Led Business Development Support

We have been working closely and supporting several newly formed locally based women led **Community Interest Companies (CICs)** that are active in our communities.

Testimonials:

Hannah, Rooting for You CIC:

"I am extremely grateful for the support from Cobalt in establishing my own CIC dedicated to providing essential domestic abuse support services to tenants and residents. Cobalt have provided the guidance, funding and resources needed to transform my own lived experience and passion into a structured and very beneficial initiative.

Rooting For You CIC was launched in 2023 and after securing the initial funding from Cobalt, we have been delivering outreach and support services ever since to individuals and families impacted by domestic abuse. This has allowed us to make a meaningful impact on the community by empowering these individuals and supporting them in finding a new sense of purpose and confidence.

Rooting For You CIC are now, through the continued support and partnership with Cobalt, expanding their services and collaborating with other community partners to further their mission to provide safe, informed and compassionate care to those who need it most."

Sarah-Louise, A.Ur.Tistic & Dopamine Rooms CIC:

"Cobalt has played a vital role in supporting both my creative wellbeing adventures, A.Ur.Tistic and Dopamine Rooms CIC. As a woman founder who is autistic, and who has ADHD, when I launched my first business, A.Ur.Tistic, Cobalt provided essential early-stage guidance. Their support with structuring the business, navigating funding options and introducing me to the right networks gave me the confidence and clarity to move forward.

Being neurodivergent, traditional business routes can often feel inaccessible, but Cobalt created a safe, understanding environment where I could explore my ideas and get practical support without judgement. One of the most impactful moments was receiving a starter grant which helped launch A.Ur.Tistic. This funding allowed me to run my first creative wellbeing sessions and pilot ideas that have since grown into long-term school partnerships and community programme.

Cobalt also facilitated key meetings with funders and stakeholders, helping to open doors that I may not have been able to access alone.

As my work expanded, I set up Dopamine Rooms CIC, and Cobalt have continued to support me through this new chapter. They have provided funding for community-based wellbeing sessions, helping me to reach even more people – including young people, families, and neurodivergent individuals. Their ongoing belief in my work and mission has made it possible to build sustainable, inclusive services that genuinely reflect the needs of our community.

Without Cobalt's backing, both practically and emotionally, neither A.Ur.Tistic, nor Dopamine Rooms would be where they are today. Their commitment to supporting women-led and neurodivergent-owned businesses is making a real difference."

Kerry, Plus One Learning CIC:

"Cobalt have supported me in so many ways over the past few years. Working with Cobalt has really helped me transition from working for a charity to running my own CIC and really being part of the local community. The stakeholder meetings have given me the chance to network and stay updated on what's happening locally so I can better support the families I work with.

The Cobalt team have been a huge help in getting our programmes into schools, always available to answer questions and generously opening up networks to introduce me to other contacts. Community team members have visited one of our projects in action and they have been fantastic at sending grant opportunities to help with funding.

I'm incredibly grateful for all the support I've received from Cobalt – I wouldn't be where I am today without it. Thank you so much."

Project Case Studies and Feedback

Help Your Child Thrive Case Study: Building confidence, community and a future

This resident arrived in the UK alone with her two young daughters, determined to give them the best start in life. However, she faced significant challenges: she knew very little English, felt isolated, and struggled to navigate the British education system. She wanted to support her children's learning but did not know where to start.

When she joined **Help Your Child Thrive**, it became a turning point in her life. The programme provided her with a welcoming and supportive environment where she could learn, connect, and build confidence. She learned how the UK education system works, improved her spoken English, allowing her to communicate better with teachers and other parents and made friends, including some from her home country, which eased her feelings of isolation.

As her confidence grew, she became more engaged in school life. She decided to take a significant step forward by volunteering as a teaching assistant in a Year 2 class. This role not only helped her gain valuable experience but also gave her a sense of purpose and direction. With her new skills and determination, she has now registered to start a formal teaching assistant qualification in September 2025.

Dopamine Rooms CIC Art Wellbeing Sessions

A 13-year-old participant with social anxiety, low confidence, and emotional regulation difficulties participated in a **10-week Art & Well-being Program by Dopamine Rooms CIC**. Traditional support had been overwhelming for her, but this structured, sensory-friendly programme provided a safe space for creative expression, emotional literacy, and social engagement.

Initially withdrawn, she gradually built trust, began participating in group activities, and used art to manage emotions. Her confidence grew, culminating in her voluntarily presenting her artwork. The program fostered emotional growth, social interaction, and a sense of belonging, demonstrating the effectiveness of tailored, inclusive approaches for neurodiverse youth.

Each session was co-led by facilitators who have a wealth of experience with neurodiversity, ensuring a consistent, compassionate approach tailored to the unique needs of each participant.

This allowed the participant to gradually grow willingness to engage, use art to manage their stress levels and identify emotions, and eventually identify the group as a 'safe space' where they could express themselves.

The participant stated *"I liked that no one made me talk if I didn't want to. I could just draw and still be part of the group."*

Community Led Projects

Total Social Value created: £1,340,450

Youth Consortium:

Cobalt contributed **£40,000 to support Norris Green, Fazakerley and Croxteth Youth Consortiums**. This funding was provided to enhance youth and play provision across the neighbourhoods to support additional services. In 2024-25, **1709 young people** attended sessions across Croxteth, Norris Green, Fazakerley and Sparrow Hall, **generating a total social value of £1,013, 717**.

Club Affiliation Fees:

Cobalt provides funding to contribute towards grassroot clubs to support low-income families to help keep young people active within our communities. **Fazakerley Morris Dancers, based in Fazakerley, received £1750 towards the running costs of the club including room hire.** This supported **over 80 children to participate in dance sessions** throughout the year and **generated a total social value of £326,735**.

UK Shared Prosperity Funding

Total Social Value created: **£2,053,660**

- **£92,461 secured via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund**
- **22 projects funded**
- **668 engaged participants**
- **204 volunteer opportunities**

After securing £92,461 through the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**, Cobalt's Partnerships Team successfully allocated the full amount to **22 separate projects**. These initiatives engaged **668 participants** and resulted in the creation of **204 volunteer opportunities**.

The Impactful Volunteering grant aimed to provide meaningful volunteering experiences for young people and their families, focusing on enhancing the city's green spaces through activities such as urban farming, planting, and the production of biodiverse urban products.

Collectively, these projects generated a total social value of £2,053,660.

Social Value Contributions

Total amount of social value contributions:

£18,670

We collaborate closely with our contractors to deliver a diverse range of community investment projects aligned with their social value commitments, all of which benefit our neighbourhoods.

In 2024–25, contractors including **Brabners, Ecogee, Penny Lane Builders, Carroll Group, Lovell, Tisdale Demolition, and Sureserve** collectively **contributed £18,668 to support ongoing community regeneration efforts across Cobalt's neighbourhoods.**

This funding helped expand youth services, purchase essential equipment for local CICs and community groups, and support Fare Share memberships for local food pantries.

Priorities for 2025-26

- Invest in the delivery of community-led programmes, projects and facilities that address the aspirations and needs of our customers.
- Work in partnership to develop the capacity of communities to deliver and manage community-led projects.
- Build strong partnerships and support the third sector to grow capacity and to deliver services in our communities.
- Invest in our Community Hub and ensure that relevant programmes and activities are in place to enable our customers to learn, connect, thrive and belong.
- Expand the use of the HACT Social Value Insight Tool across Cobalt to identify our overall Social Return on Investment.
- Support the development of local Community Interest Companies aligned to our community investment work and corporate priorities.
- Monitor and evaluate all community investment work to ensure this aligns with the needs of both customers and communities.

Cobalt Housing Limited is a Charitable Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) Number: 29516R and registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Number: L4361

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 Cobalt Housing   