

**Part of the community for over 80 years. Home to...**

.. Woodhall Opportunities Project, a day service for adults with disabilities.

.. and Woodhall Community Centre Services.

# What is Woodhall in 2024?

Our vision for this year has been to build the best relationships with our partners.

**Woodhall Opportunities Project** is a service that helps to provide support for people that are 16 and over with both physical and learning disabilities.

This year we have focused on 'co-production' and what it means to us. We have changed our feedback to a proactive style asking everyone every day, "what did you like and what would you change?" and we produce quarterly reports on what we have done with that information. You can see this on the 'you said, we did' board in the hall.

**Woodhall Community Centre** Is a place where we subsidise the work of services that are needed in the community, bringing them together under one roof.

This year we have spent more time working with partners to find solutions. We found funding for the girls' football, subsidised the cost of grant funded projects and worked with partners to find a location for services supporting the vulnerable.

## Doing good



8<sup>th</sup> March is the birthday of St John of God. We celebrate his birthday by going out into the community and doing some good for other people.

This year we wanted to help as many people as possible, so we offered the brighten up the front of every shop on Woodhall Parade and litter picked.



We really enjoyed working with the very welcoming Medivet and children's charity shop.

The team did a bit of work to the front garden at medivet and the manager filled and painted the hoarding under the window at the charity shop.

We hope you all enjoyed the improvement.



## Sensory room and garden

Sadly we had to release the sensory garden project.

With the absence of our horticulture team, the project could no longer go ahead and the landowner was able to take the garden back.

We would like to thank the Salvation Army for their ongoing support with this project.

A massive thank you to Rick & Jim from METAL MACHINE for custom making our sensory boards.



The good news is that we were able to significantly upgrade the indoor sensory room with equipment and still install some outdoor sensory equipment.



## Guest profile

Hello, my name is Matthew, and I am a very good keyboard player and I am able to play 80s Christmas music and also some Euro pop along with some 90s with 60s and 70s.



I really like to play the keyboard and learnt all by myself and I know how to play Euro pop songs that lots of people do not know. I started with dancing to the music so I found how to understand the music, then I just started to play and knew what to do. I tend to play a lot of the music by ear for some of the songs. I am able to listen to it once and then just start playing it. My favourite songs are Night Fever, Barbie Girl and Voulez Vous which is one of the happiest songs. My favourite band to play to is the Bee Gees.

## Our Partners

Our partners first and foremost are the people we serve and the people who work for us. As one team, we work together to make the multi award-winning service that we have.

More than that, our partners are the people we work with and alongside to make sure this service runs as well as it does, this includes, you the community who give us feedback regularly to help us improve and develop.

Funders, the local authority, the county council, our fantastic emergency service.

### Shout outs and thank yous



Our thanks to the significant grant funding from HCF, who are the ones who make it possible for us to publish this quarterly magazine.

Their funding ensures that EVERYBODY who needs our service can access it and have quality equipment and sessions.



With the launch of FREE GIRLS' FOOTBALL SKILLS CLUB running until December, there is a huge opportunity for young women in the community to build sports and life skills, make use of trips and coaching, and build friendships, all possible thanks to the Better Welwyn Hatfield Community Fund, Stevenage Football Club Foundations and the Premier League Kicks.

Our Learning disability service is commissioned by Herts County Council. We would like to make a special mention of the Social Work Team who refer new clients to us. The PAMMS team who have given us so much help to develop the last few years. The Environmental Health Team who have helped with advice and supported us to deal with fly-tippers.

You know who you are, thank you.





**Our community partners - thank you**



A thank you to the partners we are currently working with to make sure the community has great opportunities when they come here.

Woodhall is only great when we work together, thank you.

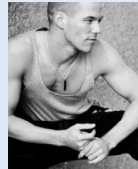
Dave Bartlett –  
for organising the  
FREE no stings  
badminton club



Yoga with Sunil



Step and sweat  
ballroom fitness



SPACE  
neurodiversity  
workshops



Russel and the  
tea dance



Sensei Dan with  
LVKA



Shape up and  
tone with Laila



Victoria's –  
Sparrow crafts  
club



The peculiar  
market



Dungeons and  
dragons



Stevenage FCF Girls football AND Strength & balance  
classes



## New arrival



Hi my name is Matt and I am new at Woodhall. I have been here for 5 months. I enjoy attending and have built up some good relationships with both the staff and the other people who attend. I like to be around other people, and I like to take part in the arts and crafts as well as the cooking and the physical activity that we do here. I have built the confidence to now walk to Woodhall alone which is a very big achievement for me. I was helped by the staff to do this and now I feel confident with this. Now I feel more motivated to come to Woodhall and this is because I like to come here. My favourite thing that we do here is basketball and the cooking. Something that I liked to do was the gardening and I felt happy with the potatoes that we grew.

## Our celebrations

This year all the students and the staff have been celebrating different celebrations that happen through the year, and they have taken part in lots of different types of activities. Some of these have included creating their own firework paintings and these have all been displayed in the café for all the visitors that come to Woodhall to look at when they are here. Something else that they have done is making their own poppies. These were done by all of the students while celebrating Remembrance Day they also took part in a marching lesson. I do have to say that they all did amazing and took part.



## Money handling classes

This year we have had some money handling lessons, and these were available to all of the students who wanted this. Some of the students who took part found that this was very helpful as they have grown skills when it comes to dealing with money. All these skills can be used in everyday life and different situations that they may be in alone. By having these they will help with their understanding of money and knowing how to use it like when they go to the shops. This will also help them with some of their independent living skills as well as building up confidence in these different situations that they find in everyday life.



## DRAMA MUCH?

### Katrina's trip out

Hello, my name is Katrina and I am going to tell you about the shopping trip that I went on with one of the support workers. I went to New Look and I saw a dress that I liked and I went to go pay for it. I met a nice lady that helped me by being nice and kind. She let me take the time that I needed. Then I went for lunch with the support worker, and we had a good chat and a lovely time at lunch.



Next I did some more shopping and I came back to Woodhall to show the other staff members what I had got while I was shopping and tell them all about my day. I would like to go shopping with support workers again to help build my confidence when I am out so one day I will be able to do this by myself.

## #TEAMWOODHALL

Here at Woodhall we have a very amazing staff team. They are all trained and they also receive ongoing training. All the training that they do helps to make sure that they all know what they need to do while here.

This year the whole Woodhall team attended the National Learning Disability and Autism Awards. Whilst we didn't win, we were finalists for the Best Team Award and the Manager's Award.

Well done team!

*A personal note from me. Thank you to all the hard work put in from the full time staff, bank staff and volunteers. We are looking forward to welcoming 2 new volunteers who will receive training to receive their care certificate.*

*I am incredibly proud of you all. Mo the manager.*

## Guest piece

An article from Russel who runs the monthly tea dance at Woodhall

It started back in 1962 when I was about 16/17 years old and a rampant motor cyclist as a Rocker. With my friends we used to go to Woodhall which was nick named The Hop, at that time it was used amongst other things for up-and-coming rock bands. This giving us as a young person a place to come for a good old rock and roll jive section. This giving me the love and the feelings towards the place.

Years later I found a love of ballroom dancing and started coming to the Friday tea dance which was held at the centre sometimes we helped out with either the music or just making the tea. There was even what is known now as a food bank donated from the local shops for the elderly using the centre. With friends and my partner this eventually led onto running another tea dance on Monday afternoons at the centre. Then unfortunately and sadly Covid struck and everything closed down. After two years of being pressurised by our dance friends to start the dancing again, we eventually managed to hire the hall for the first Saturday of the month. This was because the hall now is being used for different activities during the week.

Our Saturday dance day has good and bad days as a lot of our dancers are elderly or it is safer to say mature. It turns out that some of our visitors come along just to watch and listen to the music and for the company of a good chat as they have mentioned they haven't spoken to anyone for a week. My personal highlight was when I was speaking to a lady in a wheelchair as this is what we try to do with people who are on their own. I jokingly asked her why she wasn't dancing. When she finished laughing, I grabbed the wheelchair with her permission and moved around as if doing the Waltz. On taking her back was told by her she had three months to live and her wish before she died was to dance once more, so again with her permission I lifted her up with my arms under hers took her onto the dance floor and danced. I took her back to her chair and she said, "I can now die happy." We have never seen her again. This only took me three minutes out of my life to make someone happy. Another one of our highlights of our dance for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee - we had a fantastic party inviting the British over thirties ballroom dance champions to do several dance demos and because we were all enjoying it so much they ended with a dance workshop which was more laughter than dancing. Amongst our dancers are people who teach dancing and also those who can barely dance and everyone in between as all come along just to have fun and dance. We have been asked to undertake on more dances but find the lack of finances prevents this.

These are my wonderful thoughts of the Woodhall Community Centre.

# VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

We are looking for enthusiastic people to share their time, skills, knowledge and passions with adults with learning disabilities.

If you have some time to spare in your week you could make a huge difference to those we support at Woodhall Community Centre.

Just a few examples of what the people we support would value:

**SPORTS • COOKING • HORTICULTURE • MUSIC  
ACCESSING THE COMMUNITY • ARTS • CRAFTS**



**MONDAY  
TO FRIDAY  
between  
10.30 to  
3.30**

There's a great family atmosphere here at Woodhall – come and be a part of it!

If you'd like to help or want more information

Please contact Mo on 07850 776900 or email: [woodhall@sjog.org.uk](mailto:woodhall@sjog.org.uk)

[www.sjog.org.uk](http://www.sjog.org.uk) [www.woodhall.org.uk](http://www.woodhall.org.uk)

**Woodhall**

**SJOG**  
Hospitaller Services

Saint John of God Hospitaller Services is a registered charity. No: 1108428

## HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

[www.woodhall.org.uk](http://www.woodhall.org.uk) - Woodhall and all it's services including hall hire booking forms.

[www.sjog.org.uk](http://www.sjog.org.uk) - Our parent charity and their emails

01707802829 - Main Office

[Woodhall@sjog.org.uk](mailto:Woodhall@sjog.org.uk) for other enquiries.

[Enquiries@sjog.org.uk](mailto:Enquiries@sjog.org.uk) for charity wide enquiries

[www.facebook.com/woodhallcommunitycentre](https://www.facebook.com/woodhallcommunitycentre)

Why not come in and pick up one of our leaflets, posters, service user guides.... Or better yet a volunteer application.

**COMING SOON...**

**Check our facebook page for upcoming events and announcements**