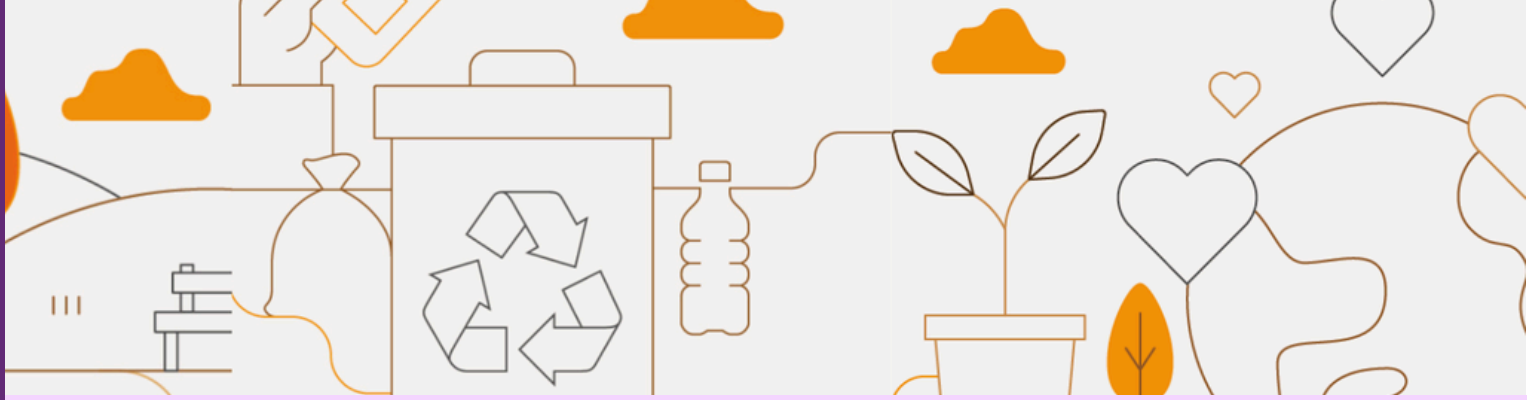


Social Value
in Salford

A background image of a red brick building with a fountain in the foreground. The building has multiple stories with arched windows and a sign that says 'CENTRAL'. A fountain with water spraying upwards is visible on the left side of the image. A purple semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Salford Social Value Alliance

Wednesday 7th May 2025
Event Report



Introduction

In the first of three events this year, members of the Salford Social Value Alliance came together at The University of Salford to hear from three excellent speakers and discuss how the Social Value Alliance can better support our members in making Salford a better place to live.

This event was focusing on the PEOPLE strand of our work which promotes:

- Increasing volunteering in high quality opportunities
- Improving the wellbeing of local residents – providing opportunities for them to connect with others, be physically active, learn new skills, give to others and be mindful
- Reducing digital exclusion

First off, we heard from Sam Cook – Chief Officer, HealthWatch Salford.

Sam shared the ways HealthWatch Salford has promoted and enhanced staff wellbeing.





Staff wellbeing is essential for maintaining a healthy, productive, and engaged workforce. When employees feel supported both mentally and physically they're more motivated, perform better, and contribute positively to the workplace culture. Good wellbeing leads to higher job satisfaction, lower absenteeism, and reduced stress levels, which in turn benefits both the employees and the organisation.

Attendees then discussed on their tables **3 practical ways their organisation could promote staff wellbeing. Here is a sample of the discussions:**

- | | |
|---|---|
| ★ Wellbeing days outside of the office environment | ★ Access to outside and green spaces - memberships or staff trips |
| ★ Develop a culture of listening | ★ Mental health first aid training for staff |
| ★ Look at the values and purpose of the organisation | ★ Prioritise intra-organisation sharing - so staff feel part of something bigger than just their own work |
| ★ Wellbeing should be considered as part of regular meeting agenda. | ★ Flexibility of hours (including staff in developing work hours) |

Next the attendees heard from Karen Snape – Digital Inclusion Manager, Salford City Council.

Karen explained how the work of **Digital Everyone** at Salford City Council has progressed over the last few years, especially how they have partnered with businesses to tackle digital exclusion through innovative Social Value initiatives.



Digital Everyone's journey so far...



Devices
distributed

2661



Connectivity
provided

1463



Digital Providers
Network members

83



Care leavers
supported

200



People supported
to get online

68,508

Karen discussed the impact of The Big Device Giveaway, where **1023** people attended and **627** devices were gifted to Salford Residents to improve their employment opportunities, their access to services, their educational achievement and their social connectivity.

Attendees were asked on their tables to discuss: **How can businesses support the Digital Everyone programme through donations and other resources to help tackle digital exclusion? A sample of the responses:**

- ★ **Train the Trainer to Scale Impact**– Businesses can fund and provide expertise for training trainers, ensuring that digital literacy efforts reach more people efficiently.
- ★ **Repurpose Old Tech** – Instead of disposing of outdated devices, businesses can refurbish and donate them to community programmes, helping those without access to technology.
- ★ **Design for Inclusivity and Disability** – Companies can ensure their platforms and communications are accessible, integrating tools like screen readers for visually impaired users.
- ★ **Digital Training for Both Basic Human Needs & Human Flourishing** – Offering educational workshops on essential digital skills like online banking while also promoting broader digital empowerment.
- ★ **Smartphones & Tech for Employees Who Need Them** – Supporting employees from disadvantaged backgrounds by providing essential tech can enhance workforce inclusivity and productivity.
- ★ **Data SIMs for Free** – Companies can sponsor free or discounted data access to individuals who struggle with connectivity, ensuring that lack of internet access isn't a barrier to opportunity.



Joanne Harvatt – Social Value and Sustainability Manager, Colas Ltd was the final speaker.

Joanne provided insights into what Colas Ltd's does - including what the UK side of the business operations entail, what their current projects are, and the huge variety of job roles at the company.

As Colas is involved in such a wide variety of projects in and around communities across the UK, they believe that their Social Value policy should:

- 'Do with' rather than 'do for'
- Research based social value initiatives
- Empowerment approach
- Requires all areas of the business to have bespoke social value delivery plan

Colas collect a huge amount of data related to the social value they are providing across all of their work areas (construction, maintenance and sustainable solutions). They believe that social value should not just look at the financial side, it should be:

- Training and Apprenticeships
- Mental health and wellbeing activities
- Graduate/university placements
- School engagement
- Pre-employment support
- Volunteering and fundraising
- Work Experience
- Local Employment
- Local Supply Chain Spend – VCSEs and SMEs
- Waste Reduction/Recycled Materials



Joanne posed the question to the attendees of: **If an employer was to support you with volunteering what types would be most useful, and why?**

The responses are as follows:

- ★ **Skills-Based Volunteering:** Provide legal advice, business development guidance, and social media training to help organisations strengthen operations.
- ★ **Environmental Initiatives:** Support waste reduction, circular economy projects, and topsoil recycling, making sustainability accessible for smaller organisations.
- ★ **Community Wellbeing:** Offer mental health support, develop solutions for those with physical disabilities, and conduct Salford ward-by-ward needs assessments for targeted assistance.
- ★ **Education & Awareness:** Clarify financial flows, help organizations understand effective volunteering, and ensure business contributions drive real impact.
- ★ **Practical Engagement:** Volunteering should be mutually beneficial—instead of symbolic gestures (e.g., painting half a building), employers should offer expertise that communities need.

If you would like to know more about the Salford Social Value Alliance, or would like to join, please visit: <https://www.salfordsocialvalue.org.uk/>

or email: Martyn.Wilcock@salfordcvs.co.uk

