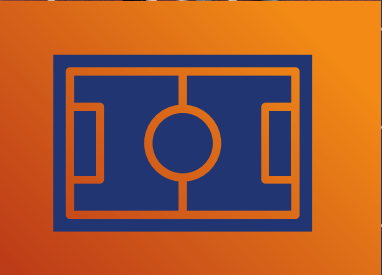




Bolton Arena Community Sports Village Impact Report 2025



Building an active healthy community

A message from our Chair of the Board, Suzanne Hilton



[Click to watch Suzanne's message](#)

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Introduction

Welcome to our latest Community Impact Report, and such is our impact that we have now added community to our name, making us the Bolton Arena Community Sports Village.

This year marks our 25th anniversary, a quarter of a century in which we've made it our mission to inspire active lives for people of all ages, abilities, disabilities, and health conditions.

Every year, we welcome over 1.2 million visitors who benefit from our excellent and inclusive exercise, sporting and business/conference facilities; confidence-boosting health and wellbeing programmes, and a range of classes that have something for everyone, from high-intensity workouts to Pilates and yoga.

Our connections with the community are increasing all the time and the activities taking place here have a significant impact on community physical and mental health and wellbeing, something we're immensely proud of.

We're also incredibly proud of our charitable status that underpins our sustainable business model. We are NOT here to make a profit. We are here for YOU.

Every pound of our surplus operating revenue is reinvested in our facilities and services to benefit the community.



Partnerships

Partnerships are a vital part of Bolton Arena Community Sports Village and cement our place in the community.

We host bereavement cafés, mental health support groups, and we collaborate with Bolton GP Federation, Age UK, Bolton Deaf Society and lots of disability groups.

We have introduced a brand-new initiative with Transport for Greater Manchester whereby people can borrow a bike from our bike library FREE of charge.

Our partnership with the University of Greater Manchester enables students to access our sport and leisure facilities and activities, not only academically, but socially, to benefit their health and wellbeing.

We are a base for a variety of local sports clubs, which take advantage of our fantastic facilities – organisations such as the historic Horwich RMI Harriers, the Hot Wheels cycling club, Lancashire Road Cycling Club, three badminton clubs, and Little Kickers children's football club.

And we are a member organisation of GM Active – a 12-strong collective of public sector leisure operators striving to make it possible for communities across Greater Manchester to be physically active – as well as Community Leisure UK (CLUK), a nationwide association that specialises in supporting charitable trusts delivering public leisure and culture services.



Community

We've been at the heart of Bolton's community for 25 years, inspiring people of all ages, abilities, disabilities, and health conditions to be as well and active as they can be – in body and mind.

Everything that goes on here has a bearing on community physical and mental health and wellbeing, something we're immensely proud of.

Here's a look at the many community initiatives and services we provide – both sport and non-sport related – in the quest to make our borough a better, healthier and happier place to live.

Learn to Ride

– Bolton Hot Wheels

Parkinson's Football

Parkinson's Seated Activity

 Click to watch

Inclusive health programmes for Bolton Cares and Lifebridge

 Click to watch

Bolton Neuro Voices

Community Walking and Running Groups

Disability Cycling Sessions

– Wheels for All

 Click to watch

Walking Sports

 Click to watch

Pickleball Sessions

 Click to watch

Walking Football

(Male & Female)

 Click to watch

Andy's Man Club

Indoor Bowls

Home Education Sports Sessions

Talking Football

She's Empowerment Movement

Partner groups that use our facilities:



BWITC

Delivering weekly football and non-football activities



We Do Tennis

Coaching provider



Local primary and secondary schools make regular use of our facilities



Age UK

Weekly sessions



Deaf Society



Panathlon

Gym

Our state-of-the-art, 24-hour gym boasts an extensive range of cardio and resistance equipment, including treadmills, stationary bikes, elliptical trainers, and rowing machines, as well as a free weights area.

The fact it is open round-the-clock means members can come along when it suits them. It's proved especially popular with shift workers, and it has helped to break down barriers for anyone wanting flexibility in their exercise routine.

Our team are exploring different ways to support people to exercise outdoors as well as in the gym, with our Community Run Group being a prime example.

As we continue to go from strength to strength, we will need to consider expanding the gym space to fulfil demand.

Gym Statistics (Since Jan 2025)

Digital usage

165,000+



Scans since
January 2025

3,533



Unique
users

46



Average visits
per unique user
(up +4 visits)

24-hour usage

9,604



Individual
scans
into our
24-hour gym



979

Unique 24-hour
users



87%

Of our 24-hour
users in 2025 are
still members
with us (retention)

Member stats



283

Members net gain
since October 2024



645

Gym only
members



2,529

Live paying members
(Increase from 2,246
in October 2024)

3,256

Live members including AO / Stateside Foods
/ University of Greater Manchester

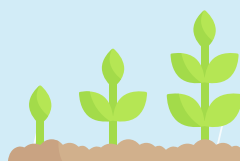


Online joiners
49.5% up from
45% 2024,
20% 2023

244



January Sales
(almost level with
record month
245 October)



Direct Debit Stats:
£33k January 2024
£46.3k October 2024
£55.6k June 2025
(168% growth)



Avg 200+ sales
every month for
6 months of 2025

Gym instructors

Deaf Awareness
Training (Inclusivity)



Community run group stats

1,250

Attendances for both sessions on
average over a 12-month period

2,000+

Attendances across both sessions to
date in 2025

All profits are reinvested in Bolton Arena to continue building an active, healthy community for the Bolton people.

Football

The beautiful game is a totally inclusive game at Bolton Arena Community Sports Village, played by all ages – men and women alike – in all its different forms – from a small-sided kickabout with mates to a serious league match.

In all, about 3,000 players use our pitches every week and we're immensely proud of our walking football programme, which is one of the largest in the UK.



**£500K
Facility
enhancements**

In 2024, we completed a major investment in the resurfacing of the 7v7 and 9v9 pitches, including the installation of a new extensive drainage system. This upgrade has not only improved the quality of play but also increased pitch utilisation, allowing us to confidently expand access at both peak and off-peak times.



**Weekly
football
utilisation**

Our facilities support one of the most active football communities in the region, with an impressive 3,000 footballers utilising our pitches weekly. Our six weekly walking football sessions reflect our commitment to inclusivity and catering to all ages and abilities.



**Increased partnerships
and league fixtures**

This year, our pitches have become the venue of choice for a number of new, high-profile partnerships and league fixtures, including:

- **BWFC International Academy and Community Trust:** Expanding our influence in youth and academy football
- **Lancashire Football Association:** Engaging in collaborative programmes to support local football development
- **Bolton and Bury League:** Hosting weekly 5v5 and 9v9 league fixtures, bolstering community engagement and competitive play



Walking football programme growth

Our walking football programme continues to grow, establishing itself as one of the largest in the country.

Key statistics include:

WFA National Cup:

Winners for three consecutive years.

WFLA National Cup:

Secured the title twice.

National Success:

Our standout team, the BA Women O40's, has achieved unprecedented success, including:

FA National Cup Finalists:

Reached the finals in the prestigious inaugural tournament held at St. George's Park, marking a major milestone.



Our Football Manager, Marcus, has refereed over **13,000 matches** at all levels of grassroots football, and has represented his town, the region, and BWFC Reserves, continuing to reflect his footballing passion on the people of Bolton.

Marcus was **1 of 12 officials** selected from a nationwide pool of referees to officiate at the Football Association's inaugural National Cup Finals for Walking Football, held at the prestigious St. George's Park.

13



Walking football league teams

With **22 regional** and **14 international players**, we have the highest numbers of competitive walking football participants in the region.

136



Registered players

A robust and expanding community of players.

131

League teams



Total number of league teams affiliated to our organised leagues.

Conclusion

The substantial investments and strategic partnerships of 2024 have not only enhanced the quality and accessibility of our facilities but also significantly strengthened our community impact. Through expanded programmes, partnerships, and achievements, we are positioned as a leading football hub in the region.

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Gymnastics

Our gymnastics programme covers everything from fun-filled introductions for tots through to advanced modules for teens – all delivered in a fun and safe environment.

It gives children and young people the opportunity to use a wide range of apparatus, including beams, boxes, trampettes, air track and bars, as well as performing routines.

Gym tots – walking to 4 years

Pre-school – 2.5 to 4 years

Beginner and intermediate – 4 to 16 years

Advanced – 7 to 16 years



Coaching team

At the start of 2024, we operated with a coaching team of 5 coaches, including our head coach. By recruiting a group of volunteers and assisting them in becoming fully qualified by April, we successfully expanded our team to 9 coaches.



Weekly programme changes

Since the beginning of 2024, we have expanded our operational days from 5 to 6 per week, providing greater accessibility and flexibility for customers.

In September, we also reintroduced the Gym Tots parent-and-child class. Due to high demand after introducing one class, we have added an additional Gym Tots session, enabling us to accommodate more families interested in this programme.



DD payments

We have transitioned from a 10-week block payment model to a direct debit system, making payments more affordable and consistent for our customers.



Equipment investment

To enhance the quality of our classes and make optimal use of our available space, we have invested £20,000 in new gymnastics equipment. This significant investment allows us to improve the overall experience for participants, ensuring that our facility is equipped with high-quality apparatus.



New customers / numbers

We offer taster sessions, allowing new customers to experience the classes before committing to direct debit payments. The success rate of these sessions has been high, with 80% of tasters choosing to enrol in our programmes.

Our programme enrolment has seen a significant increase. Starting at 420 participants at the beginning of 2024, we have grown to 565 as of mid-November.



Gymnastics DD income

July 2025 = £11,122.50

November 2024 = £9,574.50
(Growth since launching last summer)

Gymnastics participants



567

Individual members
June 2025

Gym tots

70

Attendees in
June 2025



501

DD payers



2,600+

Attendances in June 2025

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Tennis

We welcome tennis players of all ages and abilities – from would-be Wimbledon champions attending the Lawn Tennis Association’s Regional Player Development Centre for the Northwest based at the arena, through to adults playing socially and children swinging a racquet for the very first time. Our facilities are both indoor and outdoor, making tennis a year-round sport.



LTA funded centre

One of only 13 Regional Player Development Centres in the country

HEAD

HEAD sponsorship

Full sponsorship package for players / coaches / facility



TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN

LTA relationship

Bolton Arena is one of the UK’s premier venues for hosting international, national, and county-level tournaments throughout the year



At only 13 years old, **April Sackflame**, who is one of the leading talents at the Lawn Tennis Association’s Regional Player Development Centre at Bolton Arena where she’s been coached for the past three years, was the youngest player at this year’s Junior Wimbledon and one of only four British girls to take part in the tournament.

3

International tournaments

14

County tournaments

6

National tournaments

23

Local/In-house tournaments



Tournament host

Bolton Arena proudly hosts numerous local, national, and international tournaments annually. Among the highlights are the Grade 1 Tennis Europe U14 Junior International in January and two ITF Wheelchair Tennis tournaments in February. These prestigious events attract players from across the globe, solidifying Bolton Arena's reputation as a premier tennis venue.

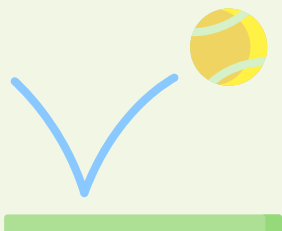


[Click to watch Chris' story](#)

Bolton Arena is the ideal venue for hosting national and international tennis tournaments. The Arena's dedicated staff, top-tier facilities, and surrounding amenities provide seamless support for tournament hosts. With players travelling from across the globe, its excellent transport links further enhance its appeal as a premier tournament destination.

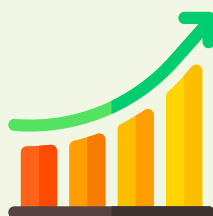
Hollie

Tennis coaching programme



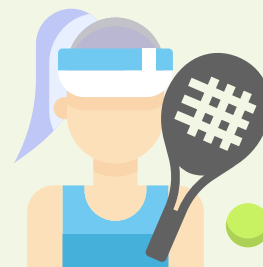
Development

Over 350 children on Tennis Development



Performance

Over 150 children



Adults

Over 70 (for all abilities – beginner, intermediate and advanced...weekly coaching sessions)

All profits are reinvested in Bolton Arena to continue building an active, healthy community for the Bolton people.

Business

Our well-established business facilities can cater for small face-to-face meetings up to gatherings of 150 people.

There are six contemporary meeting rooms of varying sizes; all air conditioned and equipped with audio-visual equipment.

We also offer a range of serviced business and retail accommodation with a wide range of tenants benefiting from our world-class facilities, transport links, and attractive location.

Event attendances



22,421

Conference delegates



2,300

Made in Manchester



2,600

Great Northern Wedding Show



30

Current local business partnerships



3,500

Crossfit & FitExpo



Click to hear from one of our partners

Café

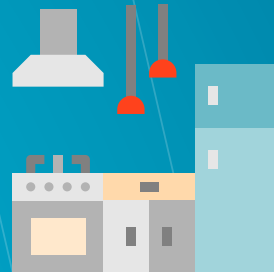
Here at the Bolton Arena we offer a catering service that runs 7 days a week.

The service supports all conference bookings and events as well as running a daily café service to all visitors to the Arena and providing a diverse range of hot & cold food and drink.



£20k

Kitchen refurbishment



Conferencing refurbishment



£20K

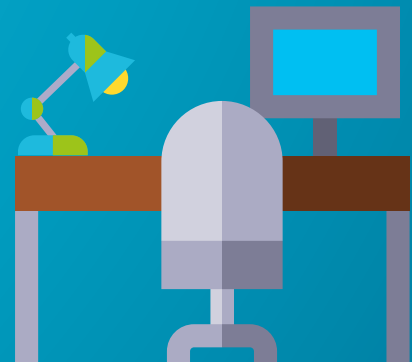
Investment was made for our conferencing refurbishment which covers:

- **Furniture** – Chairs & tables
- **Wall mural** – History of Bolton Community; a storyboard chronicling almost 800 years of local Horwich and North Bolton history, compiled by first year sixth form students from Bolton School
- **Interactive TV screens**
- **Welcome reception screen and conference room iPads!**

Partners

We share office spaces across our facility, with a total of 15 different offices occupied within the facility.

The companies in these offices vary from financial planners, accountancy, insurance brokers, call centres, physios, PT and health care (MRI).



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Reinvestment

Our charitable status means every pound of our surplus operating revenue is reinvested in our facilities and services to benefit the Bolton community, which underpins our sustainable business model. We are NOT here to make a profit. We are here for YOU.



£20k

External grass cutting for grass football pitch and 4G pitch maintenance including re-crumbling, allowing us to plough snow in winter

45%



Of our contractors are based in Bolton, and 70% are based within Greater Manchester.

£4k



ReciteMe – Digital Accessibility Developments

£1k

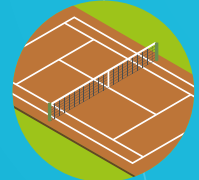


Redecorated conference facilities



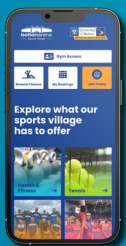
£2k

Replaced all the filters in the air handling units



£3k

Re-dressed external clay tennis courts



16,350

App downloads have increased from 13,000 October 2024 -> 16,350 June 2025.



£35k

Installed new 24/7 access POD for improved security to our gym

Testimonials



[Click to watch Sheila's story](#)



[Click to watch Elaine's story](#)



[Click to watch Anne's story](#)

Motiv8 Lite is a brilliant all-round fitness class, that's helped me get into a gym routine after struggling with a weak shoulder and spinal condition. The variety of exercises, combined with intermittent cardio, has increased my general fitness, and I'm much stronger than a year ago.

I love how the class is structured with quick rounds and gives me the freedom to use weights and equipment that's right for me, whilst being guided on correct technique. The exercises provide a challenge but are all manageable – even with low blood pressure, I can achieve a high energy workout and feel like I've really worked hard.

Rachael Barrett

I have participated in walking netball at the arena for 20 months. The ability to continue to participate in sport as we grow older is incredibly important in a safe and supportive environment. Here at the Arena, it is run professionally, safely, and with the ability to play both competitively and with a fun element with like-minded ladies.

The staff, particularly Joanne, support the Age UK staff in running these sessions. The courts are prepared, equipment ready, and Joanne offers advice and support to all, in a friendly and professional manner.

Louise Buchanan

Bolton Hospice & Charity

Our community focus is supported by our employee engagement group, which encourages staff to raise money for local good causes.

We pride ourselves on utilising our platform and audience to benefit local and national charities that are close to our people's hearts, and we have chosen different charities each year for over 10 years, such as Cancer Research, RSPCA, Cardiac Risk in the Young (2016), and Lagan's Foundation.

We are also regular supporters of Bolton Hospice – having collaborated with them for a third consecutive year (since October 2023) – particularly the £50 Challenge, whereby teams from local businesses are each given £50 and challenged to turn it into as much as possible through fundraising events.




£4,800+

In charity donations –
exceeding last year's
total of £4,263.99

How we raise money for Bolton Hospice



 Click to watch
Zoe's sky dive



Colour Run



Bake sale



Bag collection



Supporting other charities to promote themselves and give to the local communities – **Cracking Good Food** – Kitchen Kit Redistribution; **WeMovin** – Running group support mental health charity.

Volunteering

Thank you to everyone who volunteers here at Bolton Arena Community Sports Village!

We are proud to support, develop, and enable local community and sports groups with platforms for volunteering.

Each and every volunteer ensures our community-focused activities run regularly and smoothly, helping us to inspire active lives for people of all ages, abilities, disabilities, and health conditions.

180 hrs

Wheels for All sessions

2 staff × 36 weeks
× 2.5 hrs = 180 hrs

400 hrs

Walking football

2 staff × 50 weeks
× 4 hrs = 400 hrs

528 hrs

Andy's Man Club

4 staff × 44 weeks
× 3 hrs = 528 hrs

176 hrs

She's Empowerment

2 staff × 44 weeks
× 2 hrs = 176 hrs

44 hrs

Running groups

1 staff × 44 weeks
× 1 hr = 44 hrs

880 hrs

Walking sports & Pickleball

4 staff × 44 weeks
× 5 hrs = 880 hrs

576 hrs

Board members

12 members × 4 hrs
× 12 dates = 576 hrs



3,000 This brings the total to around 3,000 volunteer hours across the year, which may not sound huge, but it's still a significant contribution to keeping everything running smoothly.

All profits are reinvested in Bolton Arena to continue building an active, healthy community for the Bolton people.

Staff Development

We're passionate about delivering the best for our customers, and we look for people who share our drive.

Our success over the past 25 years is largely due to the talents, commitment, and shared values of our people. That's why we encourage and reward initiative through comprehensive training and development programmes to help our people fulfil their potential, as well as an annual staff celebration week.

Kerry Macdonald

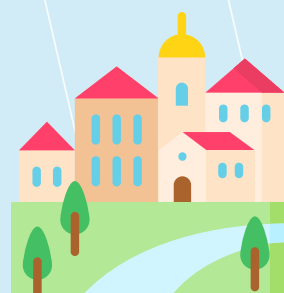
Date Joined: April 2001

First Role: Part time Attendant

Current Role: Senior Customer Service Manager

Favourite Memory: One of my favourite work memories has to be the year after we opened in 2002, when Bolton Arena was chosen to host the Commonwealth Games Badminton events. I was just 19 at the time, and knowing we'd be supporting the event from the Arena's side was an incredible honour. I remember all of us staff boarding a coach weeks prior to the games starting to go through ID checks, collect our official badges, and receive our Commonwealth uniform... Which I think I still have tucked away somewhere. When the event finally took place, it was truly mind-blowing, especially seeing how completely transformed and full of energy the tennis hall looked.

Favourite thing about Bolton Arena: What I love most about Bolton Arena is that no two days are ever the same. I've had the chance to meet so many amazing customers, some of whom, like me, have been coming here since it first opened. Since starting at the Arena, I've also had the opportunity to work on some incredible events that I'll never forget. On top of that, I feel incredibly lucky to work alongside such fantastic colleagues and to be part of a truly great team.



67%

Of our staff live in Bolton, and 98% of them live within Greater Manchester.



 [Click to watch Andy's story](#)

Andy Brandwood

Date Joined: September 2001

First Role: Receptionist

Current Role: Senior Membership Advisor

Favourite Memory: Being part of the Commonwealth Games 2002

Favourite thing about Bolton Arena:
The people!



Matt Potts

Date Joined: September 2005

First Role: Health & Fitness Instructor

Current Role: Gym Manager

Favourite Memory: the camaraderie around Lockdowns, when we've opened the outdoor gym and members were bringing food and hot drinks for us as I was below freezing outside

Favourite thing about Bolton Arena:
Teams and staff along with the members, some great people come to the Arena.



Simon Sharrock

Date Joined: April 2001

First Role: Customer Services Manager

Current Role: Head of Operations

Favourite Memory: Being a lead Manager for the Commonwealth Games in 2002, this was a leadership and coordination role in the planning, delivery, and oversight of all operational aspects of the event. I met an array of amazing people and was part of a fantastic event which showcased the best of Manchester to the world and transformed the sporting facilities within the local area for long term community use.

Favourite thing about Bolton Arena: My amazing colleagues who never cease to put a smile on my face and their ability to all pull together no matter what the challenge.

All profits are reinvested in Bolton Arena to continue building an active, healthy community for the Bolton people.



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Charity No. 1087039
Company No. 4165498

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