

LEVENSHULME SQUARE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



2021 - 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY
LEVENSHULME SQUARE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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ABOUT LEVENSHULME SQUARE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



Levenshulme Square Residents Association is an association with a difference - an ambitious and dedicated group of Levy locals with a strong desire to improve our square area of Levenshulme streets and alleys into a better place for all.

Established on August 10th, 2013 with an initial five-year plan to turn one of the most litter-strewn and fly-tipped areas of Manchester into a green urban square, the LSRA has expanded into regular community litter-picks, and free, annual, communal street-parties for local residents. Since establishing in 2014, the Levenshulme Street Party has expanded in scale and ambition into the Levenshulme Square Fest, spanning four levenshulme streets.

The LSRA has also been formally recognised at the Greater Manchester Police's Pride of Gorton awards, and awarded with the 2018 Community Pride award after being nominated by a local Police Community Support Officers.

In it's active years, the LSRA has turned into a local household name thanks to their devoted work in the Levenshulme community.





✉ levenshulmesquareresidents@gmail.com
📍 Levenshulme, Manchester

LSRA Annual General Meeting 2022

Date: 28th April 2022, 7pm - 8pm

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Discussion re Lev Square Fest 2022 - initial plans (to finish by 7.45pm)
4. Minutes of the last AGM, 18.5.21
5. Elections
 - a. Chair
 - b. Vice-chair
 - c. Secretary
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. Other officers
6. Any other business

Present: Debbie Burton, Beccy Judson, Katrina, Emma Rose, Lauren Kelly, Lou Armer, Alisha & Palwasha Akram, Robina Akram, Oneta Wilson

DISCUSSION OF LEV SQUARE FEST

Tentative date of LSF2022: Sunday 3rd July, 1:30pm-4:30pm. Cuthbert.
Potential workshops in run up: Levenshulme Market? Levenshulme Old Library, aiming for Saturday 18th June, afternoon - Can mention to ALL FM

BRAINSTORM - What worked well?

- **Stick with Cuthbert Ave.** Keep things enclosed and fill the street, so people can explore and enjoy.
- **Music:** What we did last year worked really well, and had a full programme. Having music as a central point, lots of local acts, potential singing from Chapel Street? **6x 20 min act, or 5x 30 min acts.** (Ref: Last year had 3x acts and other activities like yoga also.) Drumming act! Would be nice to have a cultural cross section.
- Shelley with dance and dance games worked well.
- **Circus Skills:** Want them back, more visible.
- **Street games.**
- **Bike Repair, SFP:** Will ask.
- **Stalls:**
 - Stone Painting.
 - Masks.
 - Plant Pots.
 - Plant Swap.
 - Mehndi.
 - Play your cards right.
 - Recycling game was popular (lots of debate/dialogue).
 - Information stalls.
 - Clean Air Levenshulme.
 - Orienteering also worked really well, got people looking around and exploring.
 - Face painting.
 - Balloons.
 - Graffiti wall.
 - Yoga went down well, but needs to be separate from the music.
 - Street theatre.
 - Music & ALL FM
 - Bouncy Castle - make an inquiry.
- **Chapel Street could do bunting workshop in run up?**
- **Signage Workshops:** Signs and bunting

Even better if:

- **Chairs:** Can ask Inspire & locals.
- **Cars:** Can ask people to move.
- **Volunteers:** Can send out Mailchimp asking, and posts for Social Media.
- **Ticketing:** For mehndi stalls, and other popular events.

- **Feedback**: Survey form for evaluation online. Paper copy available on site.
- **Follow Up**: Emails within working group to keep up with planning, and an in person meeting closer to LSF22 to keep up to date.
- **Gazebos**: Potentially rent a van?
- **Housing**: Applying for a NIF Grant, Great places have offered funding, can write to One Manchester.
- **Potential advertising**: Local businesses.

APOLOGIES: Bernard Stone.

MINUTES 2021: Agreed, no matters arising

ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2022:

- **Chair**- Debbie Burton
- **Vice-Chair**- Robina Akram
- **Secretary**- Lauren Kelly
- **Treasurer**- Beccy Judson
- **Innovations Officers**- Alisha Akram, Palwasha Akram

CHAIR'S REPORT

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

We still managed to pack lots of things into 2021 despite the ongoing issues arising from the Covid pandemic.

We did 11 litter picks between May and September and another one in January 2022. Thanks to all who came to help and support. We have been liaising with Mark O'Pray, Levenshulme Neighbourhood Office, who is working with us to reduce/eliminate the littering and rubbish dumped in our area. Around 73 people filled in our Litter Questionnaire and the follow-up questions – we had a great response to this and have shared our findings with Mark as well as locally.

At our last AGM we tentatively planned a street party for August 2021 which became Lev Square Fest 2021 – our biggest and best yet. We held two workshops to make bunting and signs for the day. It was fantastic to be supported by so many people and organisations who all came together to make it a great day. Thanks also to the local organisations who supported us with donations of money and/or equipment, such as Inspire, Levy Market and Great Places Housing; and we were awarded an NIF grant from Manchester CC.

Following this, we held a workshop to make Scarecrows for the Levenshulme Scarecrow Trail. Unfortunately, this did not happen Levenshulme wide, but we held our own Squarecrow Trail in the Lev Square area.

It has been a privilege to be part of the great Lev Square Residents' team – thanks to all involved, especially Lauren who has worked so hard to give us a professional media presence, and to educate me about how to use the technology (an ongoing task).



Debbie Burton
April 2022

TREASURER'S REPORT

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

The highlight of 2021 was Lev Square Fest. We got a NIF from the council and a donation from Great Places which covered our expenses.

We have spent some money on ink, publicity and laminating pouches which will be put to good use.

We did a lot of litter picks once restrictions were lifted and have reported various items and continue to be present on social media.

We currently have about £1,600 in our account once recent payments have all gone through.



Beccy Judson
April 2022

LSRA SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

APRIL 2022

In the Autumn of last year the offer of technical help was extended to the LSRA. This included overhauling our digital organisation, creating a brand kit and redesigning the logo, importing our two Excel spreadsheet mailing lists into Mailchimp, and then expanding the LSRA toolkit for social media posting and marketing materials through the use of Canva.

Since implementing Mailchimp and Canva into the LSRA social media strategy, since January we have aimed to increase communication to Levenshulme Square residents through social media, host a Levenshulme Littering Survey, keep people up to date with LSRA litter pick dates, and even to extend invitations to local events to those interested.

For reference, Levenshulme Square covers around 550 houses bordered by Matthews Lane, Stockport Road, Manor Road, and St Oswalds Road.

MAILING LIST

Since importing the LSRA mailing list to Mailchimp, the mailing list has grown from **138** to **218** contacts since 29th October 2021.

The mailing list was then segmented so that we could be sure when a person signs up to hear from us they are getting exactly what they signed up for. This helps to keep our unsubscribe rate low as recipients don't feel spammed by invitations or updates that they did not ask for, and also allows us to be really specific about the things that we are doing, knowing that it's getting to the ears of people who want to hear it.

The segments that people can currently sign up to are:

- **General Updates** - important LSRA updates.
- **LSRA Blog Post Alerts** - to let you know when we've posted new writing to our website as well as links where to find them.
- **Levenshulme Square Litter Pick and Other Activities** - an email update announcing upcoming Levenshulme Square litter pick dates and other smaller events organised by the LSRA.
- **Lev Square Fest Updates** - Levenshulme Square Fest Reminders, which let you know when our next local street festival will be and relevant information and updates.
- **Volunteering** - Receive updates to let you know when we need a helping hand with something in the community - this might be extra hands for an event we're holding, extra legs for handing out flyers locally, or extra voices for our blog!

For a non-profit like ours, the average open rate for mailing list campaigns is 25.2%. Ours is **29.7%**, which is 4.5% over the average.

For a non-profit like ours, the average click rate for links within mailing list campaigns is 2.7%. Ours is **1.4%** - this is easily explained though, as the emails we send out usually share the exact information with the recipient and don't contain links. When we do, though, like with the Levenshulme Littering Questionnaire this number rocketed up to **16.2%** - something we are really thankful for as the response to the survey was so much more than we imagined!

SOCIAL MEDIA

Since importing Canva into the Social Media strategy for the LSRA and increasing our social media presence along with our new look, followers on Facebook have grown from **319** to **357** - an increase of 38 locals. Followers on Twitter have also grown from **521** to **529** - a smaller increase, but understandable as our main social media for sharing and communicating to other Levenshulme Square Residents is Facebook.

Across both social media channels we have hosted a Question Time segment in which we present a question to local residents in order to get them to think about the space that we live in. So far, out of the six posts shared to Facebook, we have some really positive numbers! The posts are reaching well past the amount of people following the page

Question Time Post	Impressions	Clicks	Engagement	% who have liked page
Ideal Alleyways	985	44	35	21%
Five Words	885	28	27	35%
Most Rubbish	1.6k	103	95	14%
Bin Knowledge	1k	34	39	30%
Prettier Lev	1.1k	17	23	15%
Fave Photo	581	7	8	33%
AVERAGE	~1025	39	38	25%

From this data, we can see that our posts are reaching much further than just our Facebook page. In fact, through shares, likes, and impressions, our posts appear on the feeds of almost **three times** the amount of followers we have. This means that we reach a much further audience than just the Levenshulme Square residents that follow us. This is backed up by responses from the Levenshulme Littering Survey, where we had responses from people who lived all over Levenshulme but felt compelled to reply as they also visited, worked, and used the Levenshulme Square area.

The posts have consistent clicks and engagement through likes and reactions, and of all of these metrics only a quarter are coming from

followers of the page. This could be because our posts are popping up on the feeds of friends and family of Levenshulme Square residents, being shared to communities and groups that we share (like litter picking groups), or people living in Lev Square who are not following the page but still check the page out from time to time to keep up to date. This wider gaze on Levenshulme Square could prove very valuable for hosting events like Lev Square Fest 2022, and we hope that by utilising social media in this way we will be able to make this year's street party our biggest and best yet.

Lauren Kelly

Lauren Kelly
April 2022

LEVENSHULME LITTERING QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT

On January 1st, 2022, the MEN posted an article detailing local Levenshulme Square residents' disgust after 'dozens of bags of litter' were left in an alley on Mayford Road.

The Levenshulme Littering Questionnaire, Stage 1 was intended to collect feedback from Levenshulme residents about littering, flytipping, and local rubbish hotspots. The information collected would be summarised and followed up on, before approaching the council.

The initial survey was sent out to our Mailchimp mailing list - specifically to the 127 people on the General Updates list - with an open rate of **41.9%** (16.7% over the average non-profit open rate of 25.2%, and 12.2% over the average LSRA open rate of 29.7%), and a click rate of **16.2%** (13.5% over the average non-profit click rate of 2.7%, and 14.8% over the average LSRA click rate of 1.4%.) The survey was also shared on LSRA's Facebook and Twitter pages multiple times over the month it was active, and garnered a reach between **1.8x** and **5.3x** the amount of followers on Facebook, and **0.16x** to **3.45x** the amount of followers on Twitter.

Over the month, **73** individuals responded to the Levy Littering Questionnaire, resulting in **32** pages of feedback.

RESULTS

Question 1: "In order to keep this survey as fair and accurate as we can, please enter your email address below. If you'd like to subscribe to our newsletter as well, be sure to check the box too!"

Of the 73 participants, 62 of which were new subscribers to the mailing list who signed up via the survey.

Question 2: "Are you a Levenshulme Square resident? (The area bordered by Matthew's Lane - Stockport Road - Barlow Road - St. Oswalds Road)"

Of the 73 participants, **50 (68.5%)** marked themselves as Levenshulme locals, and **23 (31.5%)** marked themselves as just visitors.

Question 3: "How are you impacted by flytipping in Levenshulme?"

Each of the 73 responders replied to question three equalling to seven pages of feedback. This feedback was largely negative, with responders expressing a lot of discontentment with the litter in Levenshulme.

Some notable responses:

- "It really brings down the look and feel of the whole area. It's depressing to see people creating so much waste in the first place. We should be using alleyways and green patches to create more biodiversity - grow pollinators and other plants, instead they're just full of mattresses and excessive amounts of waste. I worry about animals being injured and impacted by the rubbish too. "
- "It's a constant eyesore and I'm sick of trying to clean it all up. You can't keep the alleyways or front of house clean with it blowing up the road. Inconsiderate landlords in the area emptying houses in and around communal bins and back alleys prevent residents from using them, leading to overfill and then draws vermin."
- "The area unfortunately has areas full of rubbish being dumped. Across from my road there is a grassy area which frequently has litter dumped as well as other spaces around Levenshulme. Fills me with anger and annoyance. "

Question 4: "If you did witness someone littering or flytipping, would you know who to report it to or where to find this out?"

Of the 73 responders, **60 (82.1%)** responded that they did feel they knew who to report to, and only **13 (17.8%)** people did not. Though most knew where to report, many stated that they felt that reporting was futile -

however in these responses the blame was heavily on the individuals littering and not the council. A lack of pride in the area by those littering was mentioned by multiple responders.

Some notable responses:

- "I would probably look on the local fb community group. I have not yet got registrations or formal evidence of fly tipping. I have challenged people sometimes but this feels risky as people can get aggressive quite quickly and as they are outside my home I worry that they then know where I live."
- "To the council online? Wouldn't know how to report a specific person or pass on a number plate though. Not sure"
- "Apparently it's a waste of time reporting it as people have to be caught in the act according to the police. Reporting to the council - ok if you want to wait weeks for it to be moved."
- "Yes, but getting someone to clear it up doesn't stop the problem. The problem is that no one cares, people have no pride or hope."

Question 5: "Have you ever reported littering, flytipping, or dumping on the Council's website before?"

Of the 73 responders, **49 (67.1%)** marked that they had reported littering, flytipping, or dumping on the Council's website before, and **24 (32.8%)** marked that they had not. A notable number of responders stated that they had and continue to report littering repeatedly.

Question 6: "Regarding residents, what do you think could be done in order to reduce flytipping and rubbish hotspots, and how do you think these spaces could be better maintained?"

Question 6 was another open question that resulted in seven pages of thoughtful feedback detailing what they believed that residents could do in order to reduce Leveshulme's littering problem. In these answers, some of the suggestions that people suggested the most were:

- More information about how to use the communal bins and littering punishment, posted around the bins, distributed to residents in multiple languages, and also taught in schools
- Cameras around hotspots
- Harsher financial/legal penalties
- More community drive so people want to participate
- Alley decorating/gating
- Individual bins
- Reduce Access to hotspots
- More bins around the streets
- More free large pickups by council

-
- Reduced/abolished recycling centre fees
 - Publicity when people are fined
 - Target those who advertise tip delivery but instead flytip
 - More council street cleanings/roadsweepers/participation etc
 - Media campaign to reduce littering/flytipping
 - Research into why this neighbourhood specifically
 - Bins emptied more often / bigger bins
 - Easier tip access

Some notable responses:

- "I think people need to feel they belong in and have some stake in the area. As much we can do as possible to know our neighbours and find ways to help and support each other and foster a sense of community the better. Lev Square does so much of this already it's really fantastic to see."
- "Maybe if there was a big effort to beautify the alleys, people would be less likely to dump rubbish - like planters and flowers, etc."
- "I'm not sure it's always the residents that do it. I understand people with commercial interests dump here because they don't want to pay for rubbish disposal. The council should be doing more to make sure our streets are clean and tidy. I know residents do litter picks but it feels like the council can't be bothered with our area. Educating people about littering/flytipping would be a start. Letting people know its not ok and to take pride in the area."

Question 7: "Regarding the Council, what do you think could be done in order to reduce flytipping and rubbish hotspots, and how do you think these spaces could be better maintained?"

Question 7 was another open question that also resulted in seven pages of feedback, this time detailing what they believed the Council could do in order to reduce Leveshulme's littering problem. In these answers, the suggestions that people suggested the most were:

- CCTV/Registration numbers recorded
- More financial/legal penalties
- Environmental officers//enforcers/council presence in the community
- Provide information/signage in different languages and increased information drives
- More litter bins
- Publicity when people are fined
- More user-friendly reporting methods like a phone number
- More frequent bin collections
- Target commercial and landlord flytipping

-
- Better regulations of businesses and rentals - separate commercial and residential waste/contracts
 - Better planning in regards to unlicensed housing in commercial spaces without domestic waste provision
 - Bringing individual bins back
 - Community drives
 - Reduced access to hotspots
 - Easier tip access, eg. scrapping can for those who don't drive
 - Sprucing up the area and gating
 - More council street cleanings/roadsweepers
 - Tip incentives (like vouchers)
 - More filtered streets

Some notable responses:

- "Businesses need more fines and monitoring of whether they have proper refuse collection, [...] and once something is dumped, more stuff starts to appear by magic! There's a chain that needs to be broken so people don't regard Levenshulme as somewhere you can get away with leaving your rubbish, I believe that a lot of the flytipping comes from out of area, more number plate recognition work should be done. I haven't seen an article in the news about anyone being fined for rubbish dumping for a good couple of years now. "
- "Scary big fines. CCTV that is monitored and acted on. Police patrols? Put up more barriers to stop cars and vans. General dropping of litter is very bad. On bin day it gets bad as the litter gets blown about and the bin men don't take everything and let it get blown about if it's windy. People need to be better educated about what to put in each bin. Some people just fill all brown blue green bins with general rubbish. There needs to be a campaign to educate people about which bin takes what. Even door to door chats by local councillors when they do their canvassing or something. Also please do something about the dog poo everywhere too!"
- "Temporary CCTV placed in these hotspots for a few months and prosecution of people who litter or fly tip. Removal of communal bins and replacement with individual bins. "

RESULTS

The anonymised data and full responses were then shared with Mark O'Pray, Levenshulme Neighbourhood Officer at the Central Neighbourhood Team, in a meeting with the LSRA.

In the meeting it was discussed that the data would be considered first-hand testimony and to which contacts it would be best forwarded to in the Central Neighbourhoods Team in order to make the most impact. Mark is already very actively trying to improve the area, particularly with rubbish and flytipping, and the team already has an action plan.

We discussed other, similar projects taking place in Manchester, and how the results of them could also be used to inform local action once the trials have taken place. Other potentials were also discussed, like Community Action days, Skip days, ways to green the alleyways, and NIF (Neighbourhood Investment Funds) that could be applied for. Mark was really grateful for the data, as the responses collected in the survey strengthens his case for something to be done.

The meeting was an interesting and productive one, and on our part has led to the consideration of specific NIF funds, and conceptualising and initial planning of a potential Community Action Day in the run up to Lev Square Fest 2022.



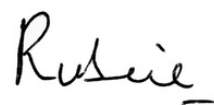
Lauren Kelly
April 2022

OFFICERS 2022

APPOINTED DURING LSRA'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022



DEBBIE BURTON
CHAIR



ROBINA AKRAM
VICE-CHAIR



BECCY JUDSON
TREASURER



LAUREN KELLY
SECRETARY



ALISHA AKRAM
INNOVATION OFFICER



PALWASHA AKRAM
INNOVATION OFFICER

CONTACTS

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MAILING SIGN UPS

MAILING LIST SIGN UP

[https://gmail.us5.list-manage.com/subscribe?
u=5f4432972c9975120f5c0a35b&id=736e1c3a2a](https://gmail.us5.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5f4432972c9975120f5c0a35b&id=736e1c3a2a)

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/LevenshulmeSquareResidentsAssociation/>

TWITTER

<https://twitter.com/LevSquare>

INSTAGRAM

<http://instagram.com/levsquareres>

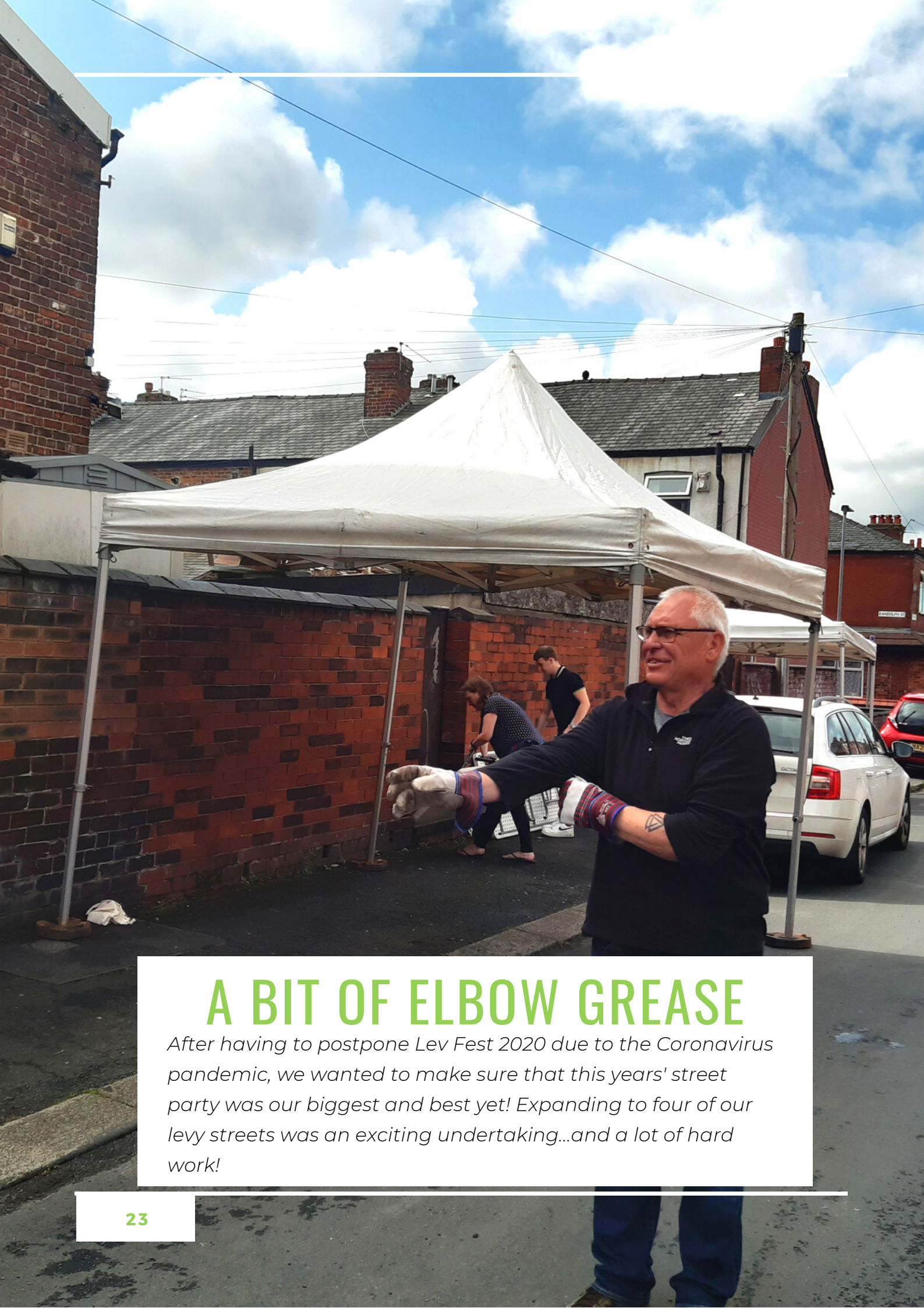


Lev Square Fest 2021

22nd August, 2021

Harrison Avenue, Cleveland Road, Randolph Street, Mayford Road





A BIT OF ELBOW GREASE

After having to postpone Lev Fest 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we wanted to make sure that this years' street party was our biggest and best yet! Expanding to four of our levy streets was an exciting undertaking...and a lot of hard work!



After multiple banner-making, bunting-hanging, and back-breaking set-up work on the day, the streets of Levenshulme started looking ready for Lev Square Fest... though, as most of you all know there's weeks and weeks of planning and prep work to get done before that!





STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

*Levenshulme Square Fest wouldn't be possible without local support - this year, **Levenshulme Market** were kind enough to loan gazebos, weights & tables. Alongside the tables also lent by **Inspire** we had plenty for all of the incredible stalls!*



LEVENSHULME
INSPIRE

