



# PLACES OF WELCOME



## PLACES OF WELCOME SNAPSHOT SURVEY RESULTS 2022

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2022

The Places of Welcome network is made up of a diverse range of venues serving different communities across England. They incorporate a range of activities which reflect the skills, interests and personalities of those who run and participate in them. Places of Welcome (PoW) Provide spaces for people to belong, connect and contribute to their community. The spread of venues across England are united by 5 guiding principles which all Places of Welcome agree to.

These are known as the '5 Ps':

### PLACE

An accessible and hospitable building, open at the same time every week.

### PEOPLE

Open to everyone regardless of their circumstances or situation, and staffed by volunteers.

### PRESENCE

A place where people actively listen to one another.

### PROVISION

Offering free refreshments (at least a cup of tea and a biscuit) and basic local information.

### PARTICIPATION

Recognises that every person coming to a Place of Welcome will bring talents, experiences and skills that they might be willing to share locally.

*'Our PoW allows people to meet together rather than being home alone. It's simply a warm, safe environment that helps people to feel more valued, become more confident and make new friends, everyone is welcome!'- PoW North West*

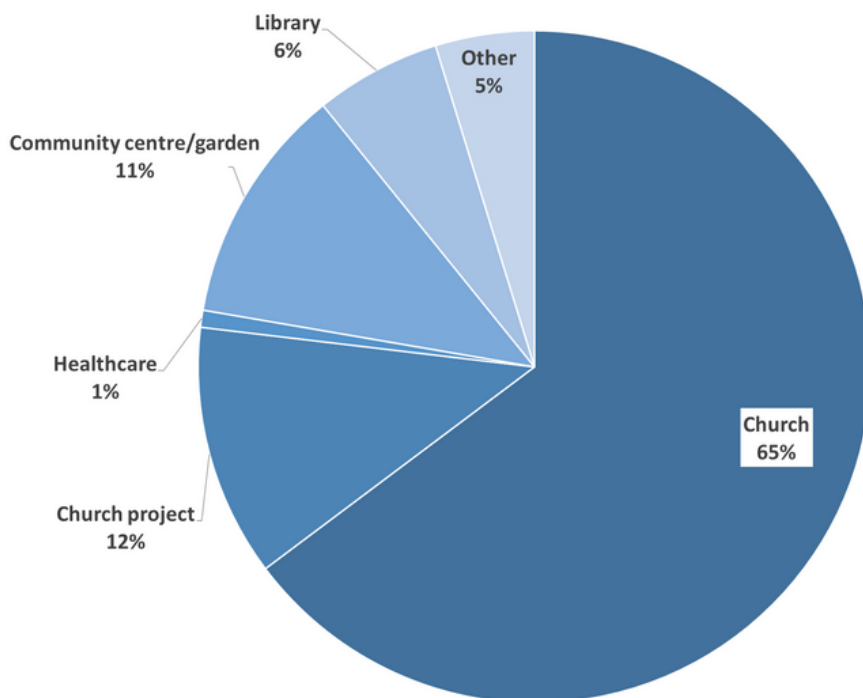
2022 survey response





**PLACES OF WELCOME**

**HARNESSING COMMUNITY SPACES ACROSS 610 VENUES IN 2022**



**PLACES OF WELCOME SNAPSHOT SURVEY RESULTS 2022**

Beginning in October 2022, Church Urban Fund conducted a survey of the current\* 610 Places of Welcome to get a sense of how things are going across the network and the range of people being reached through PoW. The survey link was sent to venue coordinators, who answered questions about their venue, volunteers, and visitors, and shared their reflections and stories. We received a total of 141 completed responses (23.1% of the total).

The snapshot provides an insight into the network now largely operating a full capacity with COVID 19 restrictions lifted and PoW reopening for the communities they serve.



## MOBILISING VOLUNTEERS AND WELCOMING VISITORS

Across the 141 venues that shared volunteer numbers, [there were 649 volunteers during the week\\* of the survey](#). The number of volunteers at any given venue ranged from [1-38](#), with 4.6 being the average number of volunteers.

The venues reported a total of [3,294 participants/visitors](#) during the week the survey was conducted. The number at any given venue ranged from 2-100, with the [median number being 18 participants/visitors](#).

**BASED ON THIS SURVEY, WE ESTIMATE THAT PLACES OF WELCOME ARE REACHING OVER 14,000 PEOPLE AND MOBILISING AROUND 2,800 VOLUNTEERS ACROSS OUR NETWORK OF 610 VENUES.**

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## PLACES OF WELCOME ARE WELCOMING NEW PEOPLE AND ENCOURAGING VISITORS TO PARTICIPATE:

67% of venues reported having at least one new person that week

88% of venues reported that participants/visitors helped in some way

## PLACES OF WELCOME ARE REACHING A DIVERSE RANGE OF PEOPLE.

### SEE BELOW FOR THE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA REPORTED:

Women make up 64.6% of PoW participants/visitors

Men make up 28.9% of PoW participants/visitors

Children make up 6.5% of PoW participants/visitors

The overall percentage of participants/visitors from Black, Asian, or ethnic minority communities across the venues was 11.9%.

*'A man was directed to the walking group by his GP because of his poor mental health. He soon became part of our PoW community and qualified as a very competent walk leader some months later. He leads walks often now and it's great to see him so involved.'*- PoW West Midlands





## 2022 SURVEY RESPONSES

Every Place of Welcome provides refreshments signposting and a welcoming space but many reported a range of additional activities taking place.

These activities are diverse and were reported across the spread of the network.

### ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

*'Fish and chip lunches, quizzes, board games and boules tournaments.'* PoW West Midlands

*'On Wellbeing Tuesday we have a monthly programme of activities and workshops, all created around the requests of the people who visit.'*- PoW North West

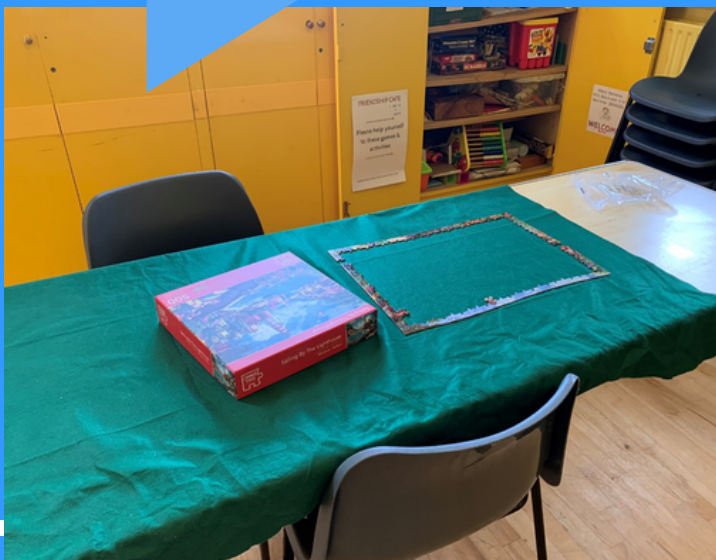
*'Seated/standing dance exercise and dance for fun.'*- PoW West Midlands

*'We've now also become a Warm Space.'*- PoW's across the network

*'We have a good relationship with local social prescribers Involve Northwest who regularly visit and use our Place of Welcome as a community resource for meeting people referred to them.'*- PoW North West

*'We have a Baby club set up with a dedicated space in the church.'*- PoW East Midlands

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE



*'Sam had experienced a severe stroke and was struggling to speak and get out of his house. He was brought along to our POW where he was welcomed and enjoyed our hospitality. He is now able to get there daily by himself and chats with other visitors and enjoys games of drafts and jigsaw puzzles. The community support has really helped him.'*- POW North West



## 2022 SURVEY RESPONSES

Particular highlights of the 2022 snapshot centre on the difference POWs have made for those struggling with poor mental health, anxiety and depression. Opportunities for participation and space to develop confidence are noted as key aspects of many POWs.

One co-ordinator shared the story of a young woman who had experienced a bereavement in lockdown and was struggling with a mental health crisis. After accessing a POW she has made friends with other members particularly an older woman who is now like a mother figure over the last 6 months her mental health is much improved.

*'She has slowly becoming less withdrawn and more confident. Her key role on Saturdays is to sort the dates and types of any tinned food donated.'*- PoW North East

In addition, POW as a point of access for advice and signposting around energy bills and the rising cost of living was noted. Many venues are now also operating as warm spaces for their communities. One co-ordinator shared the experience of a POW guest who was struggling with her energy bills. This POW organised support for her from Citizens Advice and gave her some leaflets with advice and guidance.

*'Her problem is sorted now and she has continued to attend every week, building friendships with other regulars.'*- PoW North West

As in 2019 several co-ordinations shared stories of POWs continuing to be being mutually supportive, understanding and welcoming spaces for those who have been bereaved. Also, participation in intergenerational activities was reported as an encouraging central aspect of some PoW venues.

*'The men at the dominos table roaring with laughter over their game is always a highlight. There's a mix of retired professionals and younger men with learning disabilities- It's great to see them all together.'*- PoW West Midlands



## POW STORIES 2022

Venue co-ordinators had some really positive stories to share from their Places of Welcome. For individuals accessing venues the impact of the 5 Ps and additional activities across the network was highlighted. POWs continue to build community and combat social isolation, fostering social cohesion and inclusion.

### COMBATTING SOCIAL ISOLATION/ INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

*'Social workers referred Jim to us looking for a way to connect him with some other, local citizens because he was very isolated, lonely and vulnerable. We visited him on mobile coffee morning so he knew who we were and invited him along to our PoW. We organised transport to get him to the group because he doesn't travel alone. He has been coming for a few weeks now and is a regular on the pool table - although he complains that it is slanted! It's been lovely to watch him get to know people, especially a teenage boy who comes to the group because he is currently out of mainstream education. They play pool together and there are a lot of smiles and laughing.'* - PoW West Midlands

### MENTAL HEALTH AND SIGNPOSTING

*'A man attending was in crisis in March this year. As a result of the relationships he had built at our PoW we were able to signpost him to help. He was living in a one bedroomed property and had recently had to take custody of his teenage son, he could not get his son into school, he was depressed and struggling with anxiety and as a result he wanted to take his own life. We were able to be with him and support him to find the right help. He came in a week ago and informed us that he had a new home for himself and his son, regular support for parenting, his son had place at school and he was engaging in regular counselling.'* - PoW West Midlands



## OTHER 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

*'I remember a week when the man who is profoundly deaf was first joined by others at the jigsaw table and the shared effort to communicate with him.'*

*'one of the most encouraging things over the last year has been observing how the different participants are beginning to interact with each other and care for each other. So one participant bringing in his tablet to show another (who has no access to a computer) train videos because he knew that he liked trains.'*

*A young asylum seeker has begun to attend and we have helped him enrol at college. He is only 19 and very isolated, but one of the volunteers' teenage sons have been helping him learn English and Maths while he waits for a college place.*

*'A new Italian guest has been practicing his English with a shy newcomer.'*

The Places of Welcome Network continues to grow, providing unconditionally welcoming spaces in communities for people to connect with one another, find belonging, and offer their own gifts and skills.

If you would like to find out more about setting up your own Place of Welcome, please visit:

[HTTPS://WWW.PLACESOFWELCOME.ORG.UK](https://www.placesofwelcome.org.uk)



The Places of Welcome Network is supported by:

**TOGETHER NETWORK** **NEAR NEIGHBOURS**  
BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

With thanks to all the respondents to the PoW snapshot survey 2022