



**L30'S MILLION BIG LOCAL**

# **L30's Million: Our Legacy**

**L30's Million: A Decade of Community-Led Change in  
Netherton**



For over ten years, L30's Million Big Local brought local residents together to decide how a million pounds should be invested in Netherton. The partnership, made up entirely of local people, listened, debated, made difficult choices and backed ideas that brought neighbours together and made real change happen.

From the start, L30's Million chose to work differently. Using an Asset-Based Community Development approach, the focus was on strengths rather than problems — the skills, passions and relationships already here. By building on what the community had, confidence grew, connections deepened and pride followed.

The Big Local funding has now come to an end. This website brings together some of the projects, stories and moments that shaped that journey — a celebration of what happens when a community is trusted with time, resources and decision-making power.

## What happens next?

While the L30's Million programme has finished, community life in Netherton continues. Many of the groups, spaces and connections supported over the past decade are still active today.

If you'd like to get involved in local community activity, or want to find out what's happening now, you can contact **Emma Anker** at the **L30 Community Centre**, who can help connect you with local groups, activities and opportunities.

**"What we're seeing is a community that is becoming so connected. The circle's growing every day. People are doing things for themselves and changing not just their own lives, but the lives of others. That's huge."**

◆ Deborah Stephens, Chief Executive

# Flagship Projects

## Sefton ABC: It's a knock-out!

Established in 1976, Sefton Amateur Boxing Club has long been one of Netherton's most respected volunteer-run organisations, supporting generations of young people to build confidence, discipline and self-belief. With a £50,000 grant from L30's Million, matched by Merseyside Police through Proceeds of Crime funding, the club was able to undergo a major refurbishment and extension.

The investment transformed both the space and its potential. Structural works were complemented by high-quality internal improvements, including accessible facilities, proper changing rooms, new flooring, heating and a welcoming area for parents. As Fran Sands, Coach and Chairman, explains, doubling the floor space allowed the club to run thriving sessions, with over 60 young people attending on winter evenings.

"We're 50 years old next year. This investment has set us up ♦ I hope that in 50 years' time, whilst I won't be here, the gym still will be and those involved will continue to be changing lives for the better.  
"

♦ Fran, Volunteer Spokesperson, Sefton ABC

More than bricks and mortar, the project created a safe, warm and supportive environment where young people could develop resilience, teamwork and ambition, both inside and beyond the ring. Thanks to L30's Million's support, the opportunities available at Sefton ABC will be there from generation to generation.



Sefton ABC

Periscope productions CIC

## St Oswald's Church: A Warm Welcome, A Bright Future

St Oswald's Church has always been a much-loved anchor in Netherton, not only as a place of worship but as a space where people could meet, share and support one another. With funding and support from L30's Million, the church has been able to strengthen and extend that role.

The work began with the kitchen. Four years ago, it was described as "a grey husk of a room" in need of significant improvement. With plans already in place, L30's Million support enabled the space to be fully refurbished, creating what is now known as **Ozzy's Kitchen**.

Since then, the building has supported a wide range of regular activity, including after-school drop-in sessions, warm spaces during the winter months, holiday clubs and quiz nights. It is also home to a monthly pensioners' lunch, South Sefton Foodbank, Sewing Connection CIC, Green Doctor energy advice sessions, NHS social prescribing support and a new judo club offering affordable lessons for local children.

"A huge amount of what we are able to do has come through the support of L30's Million. They've enabled us to bring our facilities up to scratch, so we can offer such a variety of things, often free or low-cost to the community."

◆ Reverend Ali, St Oswald's Church

St Oswald's is story of investment and impact. When local people lead the way, small changes add up to big difference.



**ST. OSWALD'S CHURCH**  
IN THE TEAM MINISTRY OF NETHERTON AND SEFTON

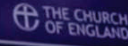
Join us for Worship  
every Sunday at 10 am

Team Rector  
Team Vicar

Rev. Ali Chesworth

Tel: 07826 602361  
Email: team.vicar@nschurches.uk

Visit our website for  
more information:  
[www.nschurches.uk](http://www.nschurches.uk)



## Emmanuel Church: Renewing the Foundations, Refreshing the Space

Emmanuel Church is home to a wide range of activity, including a thriving community shop with more than 1,000 members, regular social groups and the opening of a new coffee space. As more people began using the building, one practical issue became increasingly hard to ignore: the car park. The original surface had deteriorated over time, with potholes and broken patches making access difficult for parents with pushchairs, older residents and families attending events.

With support from L30's Million, the car park was fully resurfaced, making the site safer and easier to access. This simple but important change has removed a barrier to participation, allowing people to attend advice sessions, youth groups, toddler activities and community events with confidence.

Alongside this, L30's Million funded the required energy audit and bid writing support that enabled Emmanuel to secure a £76,000 VCSE Capital Grant.

"Now with somewhere safe to park, people can easily reach the debt advice sessions, budgeting courses, youth groups, music group, toddler sessions, or the community events"

💡 Spokesperson, Emmanuel Church

This investment has delivered new boilers, radiators, solar panels and insulation, making the building warmer, more energy efficient and better equipped to serve the community for years to come.



## L30's Community Centre: The Heart of the Community — Re-imagined

The L30 Community Centre has long been at the heart of the L30's Million programme, acting as a base for activity, connection and everyday support. It is a well-used space, valued by local people as somewhere welcoming, familiar and supportive. As one resident put it, "When I'm having a bad day, I come to the Centre as they always have the kettle on and someone to talk to."

With support from L30's Million, recent investment has focused on improving the fundamentals of the building. Upgrades to the heating and lighting have made the Centre significantly warmer and brighter, improving comfort for the many groups and residents who use the space throughout the week. These practical improvements have made a noticeable difference, helping reduce running costs and creating a more welcoming environment all year round.

**"It's not just a warm welcome from the team here but the building's actually warm now! And this will help us in the long-term with sustainability as it will keep our costs down."**

◆ Debbie Stephens, Chief Exec, L30's Community Centre

By focusing on warmth, light and usability, the investment has strengthened the Community Centre as a shared space, ensuring it remains fit for purpose and sustainable for the future.





Energy

Periscope productions CIC

## Health & Wellbeing Project: Bringing health to the People, and the People Together

When the pandemic turned so many routines upside-down, the residents of Netherton found a spark of connection on their own doorsteps. Through L30's Million's Health & Wellbeing initiative, led by Suey Lee (Wellbeing Connector), what started as informal street exercise sessions evolved into a lasting community movement.

From grandparents doing gentle stretches on pavements, to teens joining in outdoor circuits, neighbours met one another, swapped stories and rediscovered what it means to move together. With funding from L30's Million the programme delivered a legacy of participation, connection and movement that continues beyond the emergency. The outdoor, inclusive exercise and wellbeing sessions with minimal barriers doubled as a focus on mental as well as physical health, especially at times of isolation.

*"It's nice to be involved and give a little bit back... I couldn't ask for anything else."*

◆ Suey Lee, Wellbeing Connector

Today the street-exercise sessions have become something more: a symbol of what community can do when it is supported, enabled and celebrated. As L30's Million moves into its next chapter, this health & wellbeing strand will sit at the heart of that legacy: active, connected, empowered.

## Community Builder: The Heartbeat of the Community

For the past few years, Emma Anker has been at the heart of L30's Million as the Community Builder for Netherton. Her role has been deliberately flexible, shaped by the needs of the people she meets rather than a fixed job description. As Emma puts it, her job is to be approachable, to listen, and to be there for whatever is needed on any given day.

Growing up locally, Emma brings a deep understanding of the area and its people. That familiarity has helped her build trust and break down barriers, meeting residents on their own terms and walking alongside them rather than leading from the front. Using an Asset-Based Community Development approach, she has created simple but effective ways to connect, from Walkabout Wednesdays through the neighbourhood to pop-up "Meet Your Street" living rooms that invite conversation and curiosity.

Through these everyday interactions, Emma has helped residents gain confidence, apply for funding, take on leadership roles and connect with one another.

"I'm so lucky and so grateful people get me, put up with me, and trust me to be alongside them in whatever they need that day,"

◆ Emma Anker, Community Builder, L30's Million

Emma's work is an example of what legacy-building really looks like: it isn't simply about grants or buildings, but about relationships, trust and capacity. Because when someone listens, stays present, connects people, and opens doors. The community becomes stronger, more resilient and more creative.



Community Builder

Periscope productions CIC

## Easter Bunny Community Egg Share: Egg-sactly what we need!

Every spring, the streets of Netherton light up with laughter, music and the unmistakable hop of brightly-costumed bunnies.

After hundreds of Easter eggs were donated by Boots and Radio City, L30's Million and the community hatched a plan. Costumes were bought, music turned up, and Easter Bunnies danced through neighbourhoods, delivering chocolate to doorsteps, care homes and nursing homes.

The response was instant. Children cheered from windows, neighbours smiled, and word quickly spread. By the end of the Easter weekend, more than 800 eggs had been safely shared. What began as a one-off lockdown idea soon grew, with more costumes, characters and volunteers joining in.

Videos of the bunnies travelled far beyond Netherton, and what started as a moment of connection in difficult times has become a much-loved annual tradition, bringing colour, laughter and community spirit back each Easter. "

**The kids love it, the adults love it, and we love it!"**

### 💡 Volunteer, Easter Bunny Egg Share

The L30's Million Annual Easter Bunny Community Egg Share is a tradition that unites all in a neighbourhood celebration. This flagship activity exemplifies what L30's Million stands for: creativity, participation, inter-generational connection and the simple but powerful act of sharing joy. It's legacy in motion, showing that small acts of celebration and kindness help shape community spirit year after year.

# Developing Projects

Alongside the larger builds and bold ideas, *L30's Million* has nurtured a vibrant network of medium-sized community projects, each one a thread in the fabric of Netherton life. From the glitter and grit of the **Marian Stars Morris Dancers** keeping a proud local tradition alive, to the **Youth Council** giving young people a voice and a seat at the table, to the vital advice and advocacy of **Sefton CAB**, these projects capture the everyday strength of the community. They show how investment in people, skills, creativity, guidance and belonging — can ripple outward in ways that no single project could do alone. Together, they form a living legacy: a neighbourhood that looks after its own, celebrates what it has, and keeps finding new ways to grow.



## **Fun 4 Kidz – Bridging Grant**

When delays in lottery funding threatened Fun 4 Kidz and the L30 Community Centre, L30's Million provided a bridging grant to keep services running. The support protected jobs, kept activities going and ensured the centre remained open while long-term funding was secured.

“The funding enabled the community centre to continue to be an asset for the local area... It allowed time for long-term funding to be secured and has ensured the sustainability of this highly valued and well-used asset.”

◆ Debbie Stephens, Fun 4 Kidz

## Offploy – Employment & Fundraising Support

Working with social-impact recruitment specialists **Offploy**, *L30's Million* supported residents facing barriers to employment (particularly those with previous convictions) to access training, mentoring and job opportunities. The project also helped strengthen Offploy's local fundraising capacity, creating more sustainable routes back into meaningful work for Netherton residents. Together, the partnership championed second chances and practical pathways towards confidence, income and community contribution.

"With a little help, people were able to take their ideas further and turn them into real opportunities."

◆ Geoff, Offploy





**L30 Garden**

Periscope productions CIC

## **Community Garden**

With support from L30's Million, a derelict patch of land behind Marian Square became the Netherton Community Garden. Working with local residents and the Feelgood Factory, the space grew into a shared green haven for growing food, meeting others and enjoying community events, from music nights to the first produce fest.

"If I didn't have this place, I really would have been stuck."

◆ Volunteer, Community Garden

## **Sefton CAB – Financial & Benefits Support**

Over twelve months, L30's Million funded a dedicated Citizens Advice service in the local community. Seventy-six residents received one-to-one support across benefits, housing, debt and employment, helping secure over £51,000 in additional income and giving families greater financial stability and peace of mind.

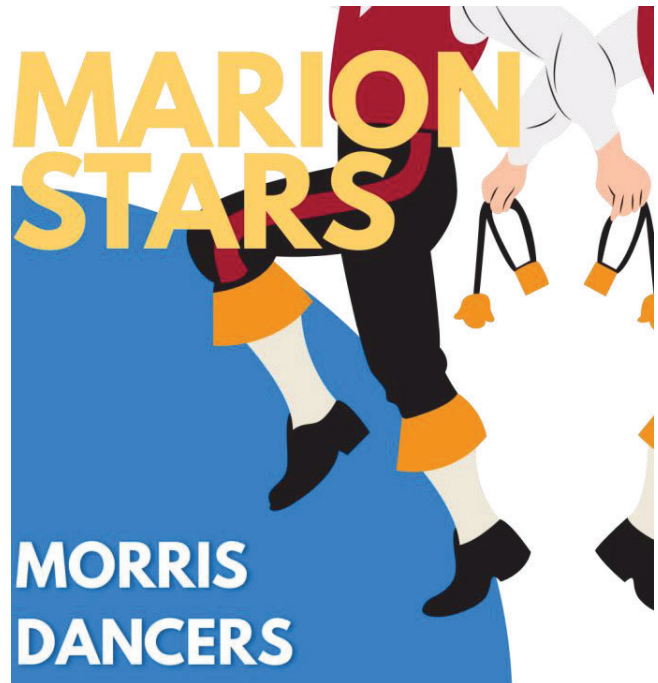


## **Killen Green Park – Wheels Area**

The Wheels Area at Killen Green Park was one of the first Big Local projects, designed with local young people at its heart. Funded by L30's Million and shaped by youth ideas, it created a safe, lively space for BMX riders, skaters and scooter fans, and remains a well-used part of the park today.

## Marian Stars Morris Dancers

A beloved local tradition with a modern spirit, **Marian Stars Morris Dancers** received *L30's Million* support to continue coaching, competitions and performances for local children and teens. The funding helped families compete, ensuring that no child was left out due to cost, as well as funding a new music system for the group. The group embodies community pride, teamwork and discipline. A reminder that heritage and creativity still thrive in L30.



## Intuitive Thinking - Substance Misuse Recovery

L30's Million funded four Intuitive Thinking Skills courses supporting people affected by addiction. Fifty-two residents took part, with a 93% completion rate. Participants reported increased confidence and positive, long-term change, helping them break old habits and move towards healthier, more stable futures.

"I no longer feel fear. I'm ready for peace and freedom,"

◆ Intuitive Thinking Participant



## Community Research Project

Working with local residents, *L30's Million* launched the Community Research Project, a grassroots initiative exploring how people in Netherton see their neighbourhood, their needs and their hopes for the future.

"Now they know we are there for the community."

💡 Resident, L30

💡 *Full report coming soon.)*



## L30 Youth Council (Vibe)



Run by Vibe and supported by L30's Million, the L30 Youth Council gave young people space to meet, learn and take action on what mattered to them. From outdoor activities and creative projects to wellbeing sessions and campaigning, the group mixed fun with purpose while building confidence, skills and community connection.

"Our son had the best time, he can't wait to go again!"

◆ Parent, L30 Youth Council  
◆ Vibe)

## Fireworks Night at the NAC

For several years, *L30's Million* funded the **annual Fireworks Display at Netherton Activity Centre**, a much-loved community event that brought thousands together for a safe, spectacular evening. Though no longer running, residents still share fond memories of gathering in the cold, wrapped in scarves, sharing food and friendship under a sky of colour.



## Pie & Pounds

**Pie & Pounds** was one of the most loved ideas to come out of L30's Million. Local people came together over pie and mash to decide which projects should receive small grants of up to £400. The process was simple, open and trust-based, building confidence, friendships and real community decision-making.



## The Grange Sensory Room

One of the most special projects supported by L30's Million was a fully equipped sensory room at The Grange Primary School. Funded in full by the Big Local, the space provides disabled and neurodivergent pupils with a calm, supportive environment, making a meaningful difference to wellbeing, learning and confidence during the school day.



When lockdown hit, L30's Million shifted focus to keeping people connected. Food parcels, packed lunches, doorstep chats, phone calls, street exercise, crafting projects and doorstep fun helped neighbours through the hardest months. From Scrub Hub to street bingo and the Easter Bunnies, every idea shared the same aim: nobody facing it alone.

## Hampers & Packed Lunches

Working alongside the **Netherton Community Pantry**, *L30's Million* supported a food-aid initiative that delivered hampers and packed lunches to local families in need. During school holidays and difficult months, this ensured children were fed, parents supported, and community compassion stayed front and centre.





## Bees Knees Knitting Project

A friendly and creative group of local knitters, the **Bees Knees Knitting Project** used *L30's Million* support to buy supplies and host sessions where residents could craft, chat and connect.

What began as a simple hobby group became a lifeline for social contact, producing handmade gifts and decorations for community events across Netherton.

## St Mark's Church: Building Improvements

For more than sixty years, St Mark's has stood at the heart of Netherton. A **£27,000** grant from L30's Million replaced rotten windows with new toughened glazing, making the building warmer, brighter and more welcoming. What once looked closed now feels open, used and part of everyday community life again.

## ST MARK'S CHURCH VIDEO



## Fancy Dress & Spooky Trail

Each Halloween, *L30's Million* added extra magic to Netherton with the **Fancy Dress Spooky Trail**, resulting in a fun, family-friendly walk through the streets and parks filled with costumes, prizes and laughter.

From witches and skeletons to superheroes and pumpkins, the event brought families together in safe celebration, proving that community spirit is strongest when it's a little spooky.

# Grassroots Projects

Beyond the flagship schemes and larger grants, *L30's Million* has quietly powered hundreds of smaller but no less meaningful projects, the heartbeat of community life in Netherton. From the strum of the local **ukulele group** echoing through the community centre, to the laughter of the **pensioners' club** over endless cups of tea, to the tender space of the ***Letterbox to Heaven*** where residents could write messages to loved ones they've lost, and even the practical cheer of the ***Bin Buddies*** keeping streets clean and friendly. These small acts of care, creativity and connection tell the true story of L30's Million. They show that legacy isn't only built in bricks or budgets, but in the everyday kindnesses that make a place feel like home.

## Donna Gibb Youth Market | Just Bowl Project



youth\_market (Original)  
Periscope productions CIC



st\_nicholas\_bowling.mp4  
(Original)  
Periscope productions CIC



Other projects supported include:

- 3RD BOOTLE SCOUTS GRANT
- ST OSWALD'S PENSIONER CLUB
- LETTER BOX TO HEAVEN
- MONDAY CLUB TRIPS
- BIN BUDDIES PROJECT
- JUBILEE PACKS 4 CARE HOMES

# Ten Years of L30's Million: A Decade of Community, Connection and Change

Ten years ago, local residents came together with one simple but powerful goal: to make Netherton and St Oswald's a place where people feel proud to live, grow and belong.

Since then, *L30's Million* has supported hundreds of projects, community groups and local ideas — from play spaces and gardens to wellbeing initiatives, training, and neighbourhood celebrations. Each one has left its mark, shaping a stronger, kinder and more connected community.

This short film looks back on that journey; the faces, places and moments that have defined ten years of L30's Million. It's a story of people who saw potential on their doorstep and decided to make things happen.

**Because when a community leads the way, a million can go further than anyone imagined.**