



**PRESENTATION OF THE
KING'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE 2024**

to

New Ferry Community Land Trust Limited

on

22nd January 2024

MERSEYSIDE LIEUTENANCY PARTY

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant, Mr Mark FW Blundell
Deputy Lieutenant, Mrs. Sue Higginson OBE DL
Deputy Lieutenant, Captain Hugh Daglish LVO JP DL RN
Clerk of the Lieutenancy, Miss Helen Tanzey

WIRRAL BOROUGH CIVIC PARTY

The Mayor of Wirral, Cllr Chery Povall
The Mayoress of Wirral, Mrs. Sheila Clarke

Board of Governance of the New Ferry Community Land Trust Ltd

Mark Craig
Margie Kegg
Margaret Evans
Mark Craig
Anne Louise Craig
Gerry Evans



Presentation/Introduction by Lord-Lieutenant Mr Mark FW Blundell:

"I am delighted to be here this morning to present the King's Award for Voluntary Service to New Ferry Community Land Trust Limited.

"The Award was created in 2002 to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee and was previously known as the QAVS. The Award has been shining a light on the fantastic work of voluntary groups from all across the UK for many years.

"Equivalent to an MBE, the King's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest Award given to local voluntary groups in the UK and they are awarded for life.

"The KAVS is awarded,

"For outstanding achievement by groups of volunteers."

"And groups truly do need to be outstanding to receive a KAVS.

"New Ferry Community Land Trust Limited is one of sixteen voluntary organisations in Merseyside to receive The King's Award for Voluntary Service this year.

"Their work, along with others from across the UK, reminds us of all the ways tremendous volunteers are contributing to their local communities and working to make life better for those around them.

"Today I am aided by two of my Deputy Lieutenants, Mrs. Sue Higginson and Captain Hugh Daglish, who some of you will remember from the assessment.

"Sue will now outline some of the areas in the assessment report to me that I had to consider in making my recommendation."



Details of the Assessment by Sue Higginson, Deputy Lieutenant:

New Ferry Community Land Trust KAVS Assessment Considerations:

- In deciding upon his recommendation for the nomination of the New Ferry Community Land Trust Limited for the King's Award for Voluntary Service, the Lord-Lieutenant had to consider the activities of the organisation and what was it about them that made them stand out against the many other community groups who also undoubtedly do tremendous work around the Country.
- Here are a few of the reasons why the Lord-Lieutenant gave his unequivocal support in recommending them for the award of KAVS to the Government Selection Panel.

What is the range of services and activities provided by the group?

All projects engage the whole community, including schools, business traders and individuals:

- **Sole community voice** -shaping Council regeneration plans.
- **Delivering a major (£500K) project** – creating a financially sustainable community business model.
- **Supported 125 local traders/people** - to access (£200K) compensation.
- **Alleyways Project** –transforming areas of fly tipping.
- **Floral Planters** – creating and maintaining.
- **Our Patch** – community gardening on 3 sites.
- **Local pop-up markets**
- **Community Art and Land Art Projects** – informing Arts Strategy.
- **Summer Festivals** - creating 3, with fun fair, stalls, dog show, entertainers, historic vehicles.
- **Monthly Litter Picks.**
- **Christmas Lights** – taking over from the Council and securing sponsorship.



What was the need for the group's work?

- A huge gas explosion that devastated the neighbourhood in 2017, the largest explosion in Merseyside since WWII, had a devastating impact on an already highly deprived community, based in the lowest 10% of the national multiple deprivation Index. The neighbourhood, which is in the east of the borough, has levels of extreme poverty and, relative to wards in the west of the borough, people have on average 11 years less life expectancy, high levels of unemployment, extremes of child poverty, low levels of educational attainment and poor health indicators.
- Wirral Borough Council and the Liverpool City Region, recognising the poor IMD indicators and the continuing urgency of community needs, have supported the group with £500K grant funding to deliver a major project, the Mel Roberts House Project, that has enabled the group to create a financially self-sustainable business model to continue its good work, beyond this grant funding.
- NFCLT continuously reviews community needs, ensuring the whole community understands proposals and the voice of such a diverse community is represented. This includes information events and materials adapted to assist understanding and it ensures a wide and diverse input from residents to inform Council planning which, in turn, enables plans to be adapted as necessary, to reflect and represent community views.
- The expertise of the group not only captures the views and changing needs of the community, it has also addressed post-pandemic challenges when the major £500,000 build project saw significant increases in cost. NFCLT volunteers, reviewed and value engineered the project to ensure it could still be delivered within the envelope of available funding.

What difference does the group make?

- NFCLT, through its success and the trust placed in it by the Local Authority, the City Region Combined Authority and the community they serve, has become the sole organisation that interfaces



between Council and Community, attending monthly regeneration meetings with the Council to effectively inform regeneration plans by acting as the voice of the community. A Council Officer described the group as *'creating a community led regeneration programme that informs rebuild by understanding community needs that the Council would otherwise not know about. In addition, through their business model, they are creating a financially sustainable model to continue beyond funding.'*

- Described as being a 'lynchpin in the community' by a Council Officer, the whole community benefits from the work of this group, informing regeneration plans through the group enabling their collective voice to be heard. In addition to this crucial role of being the sole interface between council and community, the Mel Roberts House project has created a community business model that enables wider community projects to improve the environment and events that have free entry, making family visits affordable in an extremely deprived area. In this context, beneficiaries include:

- **5,000 households**
- **10,000 Visitors** – including people from out of area, visit the events and art work.
- **125 individuals including 40 local traders** were supported through compensation sought by the group. (A business owner who attended the Assessment Session, has relocated to Mel Roberts House commercial centre and has doubled their business to c1000 customers a month, now enabling them to trade nationally, create more jobs locally and donate waste materials to support another community project. Other businesses in the area also benefit from the increased footfall.)
- **33 Volunteers** including Board Members and volunteer specialists – who gain a sense of purpose, civic pride and social inclusion from their work.
- **2 primary schools, their children and teachers** - improving neighbourhood pride, citizenship, healthy eating and reading using phonetic labels to improve reading skills, created with the teaching staff for the community garden projects. (Garden and arts projects are adapted to engage and support a range of learning





difficulties and disabilities to make them more inclusive, for example, specific sessions for children with neuro diverse needs.)

- A Council Regeneration Officer told Assessors that *'this group stands out because of their multi-faceted approach to making a difference, informing regeneration, supporting business traders and the wider community – they are a lynchpin of this community'*.
- The trust and reliance on this group by local Council and City Region Officers, to be the sole voice in terms of the regeneration of this extremely deprived community is unusual. The public sector has entrusted over £500,000 in grant funding, enabling the group to carry out their work, which is testament to the value and confidence the group has earned.
- The business model, created by the group, which provides a ground floor commercial space and 4 affordable apartments on the first floor of their Mel Roberts House project, has been designed to ensure an income stream for the group's work, so is not reliant on future grant funding. Their unique and successful approach to community engagement and sustainability is seen by the Council as crucial to the success of a much wider Wirral regeneration project, set to transform neighbourhoods and it is already being used to inform good practice.



- As you will know, the KAVS includes a very short citation that summarises what the group does. The New Ferry Community Land Trust Ltd citation is,

"Putting the community at the heart of regeneration."

I'm sure you will agree, the organisation does just that.





Presentation address by Lord-Lieutenant Mr Mark FW Blundell:

"This morning I bring the warmest good wishes and thanks of His Majesty The King and he sends to the Trustees and volunteers of the New Ferry Community Land Trust Limited and to **your** families and friends, his best wishes and congratulations.

"His Majesty considers that through your determination, pride and service, without seeking financial reward, you are richly deserving of this Award.

"On His Majesty's behalf and all of us at the Merseyside Lieutenancy, I offer you sincere congratulations."



Certificate of Authority delivered by Capt Hugh Daghish, Deputy Lieutenant:

"Charles the Third,

By the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Our other Realms and Territories King, Defender of the Faith, to New Ferry Community Land Trust Limited, Greetings!

We being cognisant of the said group's outstanding voluntary work in the community, and being desirous of showing Our Royal Favour do hereby confer upon it:

The King's Award for Voluntary Service

For voluntary service by groups in the community 2024



for such period as the group continues to provide its current service and do hereby give permission for the authorised emblem of the said Award to be displayed on the group's letterhead and other public material.

Given at Our Court of St. James's under Our Royal Sign Manual this fourteenth day of November 2024 in the first year of Our Reign."