

The Silver Threads Hall

Donnington Health & Wellbeing Project Case Study - April 2025



The Silver Threads Hall is a vital community centre in Donnington. The hall provides a welcoming space for a variety of activities, from meetings, playgroups and birthday parties to christenings, yoga sessions and wedding celebrations; the hall serves as a hub for people of all ages. The centre actively runs in-house groups such as 'Messy Tuesday' and 'Soft Play' on a Friday for children, as well as 'Sugar Craft' sessions for older adults on Thursday mornings. Additionally, the hall hosts a range of privately hired activities throughout the week, including Yoga and Testu.

Improving Health and Wellbeing

The Silver Threads Hall are a key partner in the place-based health and wellbeing initiative launched by Energize in June 2024. With Energize's support, they are actively addressing the diverse health and wellbeing needs of Donnington residents. Committed to fostering a healthier community, Silver Threads Hall have made a range of impactful changes in collaboration with key stakeholders, including:

- Removing sugary drinks such as squash from all sessions, offering a healthier alternative of water instead.
- Partnering with local businesses like Green fields Farm Shop to source fresh fruit and foods for group activities and events, thus ensuring support for local businesses as well as promoting shopping fresh and local to reduce carbon footprint.
- Offering healthier food options and promoting better nutrition at community events such as the Community Health and Wellbeing Open Day in October, which saw a healthy buffet provided inclusive of sandwiches made with high protein fillings and low-fat spreads, as well as fruit only with no cakes or unhealthy snacks and water only.
- Encouraging more physical activity by integrating movement-focused play equipment and promoting active events like book hunts across the community.
- Partnering with local groups and organisations, including Telford and Wrekin Council's Eatwell Team to provide; Cooking on Budget, Sugar Awareness and Weaning Classes and Donnington Community Orchard to provide nature focused outdoor learning experiences for children.



Collaborative Efforts & Partnerships

Silver Threads Hall understands the importance of collaboration and over the last six months has actively built relationships with various organisations and stakeholders. Notable partnerships and initiatives include:

- **Integrated Services:** Working with Enable, Telford and Wrekin Armed Forces Partnership, Army Welfare Service at Donnington Ministry of Defence, local dentists, blood pressure testing services, Healthy Telford, Community Resource, and Telford Mind to offer essential and accessible services from the hall.
- **Strengthening Family Support:** Partnering with Family Hubs to address the challenges faced by families in Donnington and working towards securing additional resources for the community.

- **Engaging with Schools:** Establishing connections with Donnington Wood Infants School, Donnington Wood Junior School and St. Matthews Primary School to better understand the challenges faced by children entering reception and how Silver Threads Hall can provide support and align playgroups and other provision to help prepare children for starting school.
- **Community Advocacy:** Engaging in discussions with people in positions of influence such as; parish councillors, commissioners and cabinet members to push for investment in Donnington. This including efforts to engage services and establish a Live Well Hub and Family Hub, with the ambition to integrate the two models and make Donnington the flagship location in Telford and Wrekin for a cohesive, joined-up approach to this work.



Stakeholder Engagement & Impact

Thanks to the increased staff capacity and support provided by Energize through the Donnington place-based health and wellbeing initiative, Silver Threads Hall have received one-to-one support and have been able to actively engage in a range of facilitated stakeholder meetings. These meetings, involving a broad range of partners, have enabled Silver Threads Hall to raise awareness of its services and advocate for stronger collaboration across the area to better support Donnington residents.

Key meetings and ongoing discussions include:

- **Local schools** (Donnington Wood Infants School, Donnington Wood Junior School and St. Matthews Primary School),
- **Health and Wellbeing Organisations** (Healthy Telford, Lingen Davis, Telford Mind, Telford and Wrekin Council's blood pressure testing services, Telford and Wrekin Council's Eatwell Team),
- **Housing & Employment** (Wrekin Housing Trust, Enable),
- **Community Support Organisations** (Community Resource, Telford and Wrekin Armed Forces Partnership, Telford & Wrekin Council's Community Support Team, Donnington Community Orchard, Donnington Community Hub),
- **Sports and Physical Activity Groups** (Telford Netball Club, Swim with Style, British Cycling),
- **Local Businesses** (Dentists, Greenfields Farm Shop & Food Supplier),
- **Donnington & Muxton Parish Council,**
- **Family and Child-Focused Services and Organisations** (PODS, Homestart, Talking Twos, Family Hubs).

This engagement has helped the Silver Threads Hall to promote their services and encouraged additional room hire bringing in an extra £615 approx. in the last year, which is crucial for the community venue. New and existing conversations are continuing and are showing some fantastic areas for development for the Silver Threads Hall, for example strengthened collaborations with Wrekin Housing Trust are looking at ways of enhancing the Silver Threads Hall outdoor play area.

A Commitment to Action

The Silver Threads Hall's motto is not just about discussions and meetings - it is about championing meaningful action to improve Donnington and to ensure that the voice of local Donnington residents is heard. The Silver Threads Hall are determined to drive real, visible change in Donnington and are advocates for having open, but sometimes difficult conversations to push for tangible improvements in local services and resources.

**"Words are meaningless without action. We have to change the statistics for Donnington for the better."
(Alan Watkins, Silver Threads Hall Manager).**

With a clear vision and relentless dedication, Silver Threads Hall has already significantly improved community engagement and collaboration in Donnington. However, there is still more work to be done, and the Silver Threads Hall remain committed to advocating for the resources and support the community needs.



Conclusion

Silver Threads Hall is more than just a venue - it is very much a lifeline for the Donnington community.

Through partnerships, advocacy, and action-driven initiatives, the hall is actively shaping a healthier, more connected, and better-supported community.

The journey continues, but the impact is already evident, proving that real change begins with action.

