

# Baby Steps Big Changes



2022-2023  
Social Impact Report

# WELCOME

## Foreword by Sam Moir

Founder of Merry-go-round



Welcome to our social impact report for 2022/23. While the shop continues to rehome an increasing amount of items (over 75000 this year!) and support more people (over 16000 families) with low cost high quality baby goods, we support the community in many other ways too, the impact of which is far reaching.

This year, Merry-go-round hosted over 500 events for 3300 people and our carousel programme continued to see high demand, supporting 1100 families with free, essential items. The real story behind these statistics is that the impact of our shop and events go much further than we probably even know.

Our events improve mental health, bring people together, create lasting bonds, increase confidence and support local microbusinesses via our hosts. Our free goods reduce social stigmas, allow children to flourish and attend school and build confidence and community resilience. I could go on, the power of local action and communities working together is hugely powerful.

**This year's focus has continued to be aligned to our core aims of:**

- **Making available low cost, high quality, second-hand baby goods**
- **Supporting local families through a wide range of groups and activities**
- **Aiming to create happier families by improving the wellbeing of children / parents in the early years through our partnership work, volunteering opportunities and events.**

**As an organisation, Merry-go-round creates local jobs, provides upskilling and volunteering opportunities and continues to transform the purchasing behaviour of Glasgow families, supporting the shift to a circular economy. We remain committed to making second hand the first choice and building a resilient community that is collectively involved and benefiting from our wee purple shop.**

**Our mission has not changed and our focus remains to be on supporting local families, in many different ways, while also delivering for the planet.**

**Three of our four OKR's (objectives and key results) are focussed on the environmental and social impact of our work:**

- **To encourage families to look at their environmental impact and reduce it.**
- **To provide a social space and build a community for families.**
- **To provide low income families with goods via our partners in the community.**

# Introduction

## Our Work

Merry-go-round aspires to be the first choice for parents in Glasgow. Our shop offers high quality, affordable pre-loved essential items as well as being a community hub for families to meet, learn, exchange ideas, relax and be supported.

We're changing the perception of secondhand goods, saving families money, improving mental health and wellbeing, and reducing the quantity of new goods purchased.

## Our 2022/23 Impact

In light of the deepening climate crisis and the increasing cost of living, it is crucial that we collaborate to achieve meaningful and impactful change.

Our Impact Report highlights exceptional instances of partnership that demonstrate the strength and influence of working together for a common goal. It also highlights our partners' remarkable work with Merry-go-round.

Moving forward, we hope to continue working with other like-minded organisations to tackle the challenges, while also addressing the urgent need for environmental action. We believe that through collaboration, we can build a better future for all.

## Our Objectives

To be the first choice and one stop baby shop for parents in Glasgow.

To provide a community-led social space for families.

To encourage families to recognise their environmental impact and reduce it.

To supply free goods to families who need them via our partners in the community.

To provide volunteering opportunities for people who want to gain new skills and meet friends.

## How We Do It



# Year Highlights

<b>75,313</b> items rehomed	<b>19.29</b> tonnes rehomed
<b>1,100</b> packs distributed	<b>22</b> new partners
<b>511</b> events hosted	<b>3,393</b> people attended events
<b>323</b> volunteers	<b>3071</b> volunteer hours



## A DECADE OF COMMITMENT

Merry-go-round hit the double digits, celebrating our 10th birthday on 14th April! We threw a birthday bash complete with cake, buy one get one free promo, and joined forces with local favourites, Bam & Peacocks Ice Cream to treat everyone who dropped by with 'Berry-go-round' Bam pots.

## VAN MAKEOVER

Our van got a bright new makeover, making it easy to spot on the road. With its fresh coat of paint and eye-catching design, our van is now spreading the good word of Merry-go-round around town!

## LOCAL JOBS LOCAL PEOPLE

We welcomed 2 new team members and had some of our existing team take on new roles, bringing our total local workforce to 14 people. In a nod to our awesome staff, we gifted each team member a cozy and stylish Merry-go-round purple jumper as a thank you for they're hard work.

## MEGA SALE MEGA FUN

Our renowned Mega Sale made a comeback in September! We turned The Briggait in the heart of Glasgow into a buzzing hub for a two-day mega event. After a brief hiatus, it was fantastic to be back and witness the tremendous support from our supportive community.

	=			
<b>19.29 tons</b>		<b>12,800 bricks</b>	<b>12 cars</b>	<b>75 pigs</b>

# DONATIONS

At Merry-go-round, our commitment to social impact is exemplified by our donation-based model. The generosity of our contributors not only sustains our retail operations but also significantly contributes to our carousel program and community sales events.

We rely on the generosity of families in our community who donate second-hand items. It's a fantastic circle of reuse and recycling. Your unwanted items find new purpose, and we pass them on to a new loving family.



**3055  
individual  
donations**



**21 tonnes of  
goods  
donated**

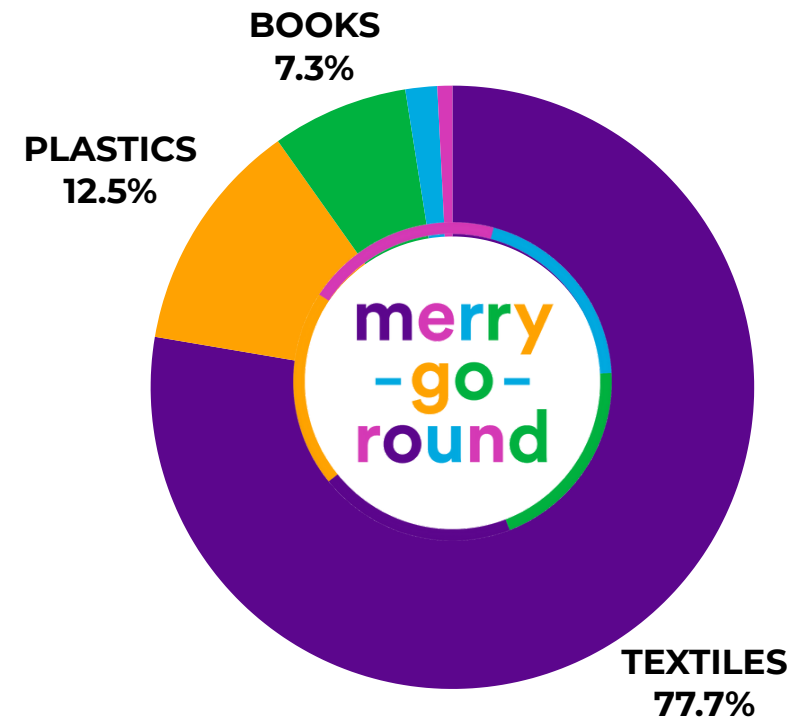


**313 electricals  
donated and  
PAT tested**



**87% of all  
donations have  
been rehomed**

## What has been donated?



### The Environmental Impact of Baby Clothes

In just two years, babies can grow out of approximately seven clothing sizes, resulting in a significant amount of waste. Producing a single babygrow requires 250 litres of water and results in 2kg of carbon emissions, which is concerning. A recent study conducted in the UK discovered that households are storing 180 million outgrown baby clothes, and first-time families spend an average of £997 on baby clothing in the first year. Additionally, an estimated 183 million pieces of children's clothing end up in UK landfills annually.

It is important to donate outgrown baby clothes instead of throwing them away. This way, other families can benefit from the clothes, and the clothes will not end up in landfills. By taking baby steps, parents can make a significant impact on the planet's health and ensure a better future for their children.

# ONE STOP SHOP



# OVERVIEW

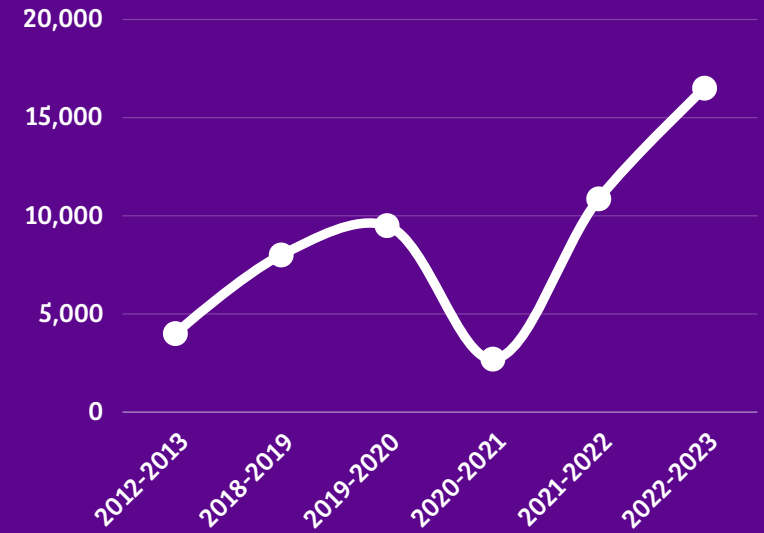
At our shop, we pride ourselves on offering a wide range of options for babies and young children, from clothing and toys to feeding and furniture. We understand that parenthood can be overwhelming, which is why we aim to make the shopping experience as stress-free and convenient as possible.

Our knowledgeable and friendly staff are always on hand to provide advice and guidance to help families make informed decisions about their purchases. We believe that every child deserves the best, and we strive to provide high-quality products and services that are both affordable and accessible. Shopping with us means that families can focus on what really matters - spending time with their little ones.

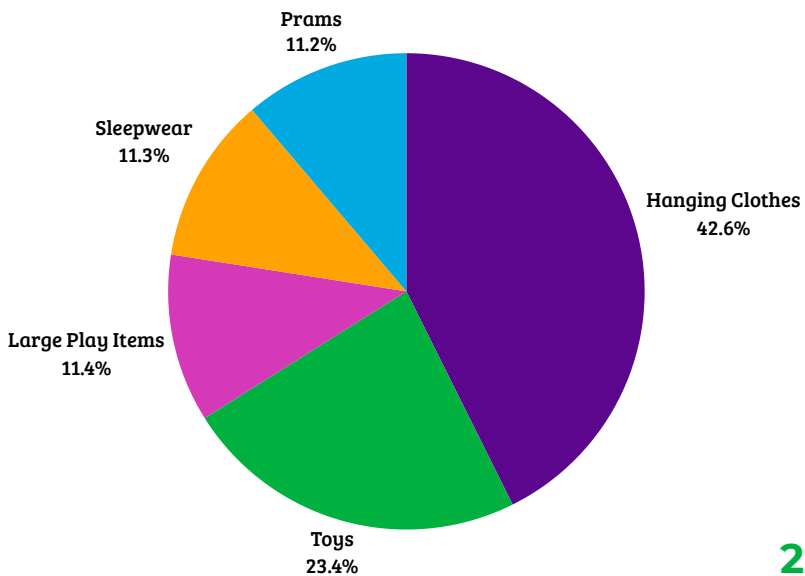


The number of people opting for secondhand shopping over new has been increasing annually, leading to a growth in our audience year after year.

Our customer footfall remains approx 40% greater than previous years.



## Department Sales



This year alone we managed to rehome over 75,000 items through our shop. This included 13,891 hanging clothes, 1,178 maternity items, 9,398 small play toys and 961 large play items!



269 prams



844 bottles



4,956 books



3,505 socks



1,928 shoes

# Feedback

## Shop

At the heart of our social enterprise are our customers. Not only are they satisfied with our service, but they are also eager to share their positive experiences with others.

Their feedback is an invaluable resource that gives us a glimpse into their thoughts and feelings. It's evident that our audience doesn't just appreciate our offerings, but they are also propelling us forward. We are incredibly appreciative of their unwavering support and committed to maintaining the exceptional service they have come to expect from us.

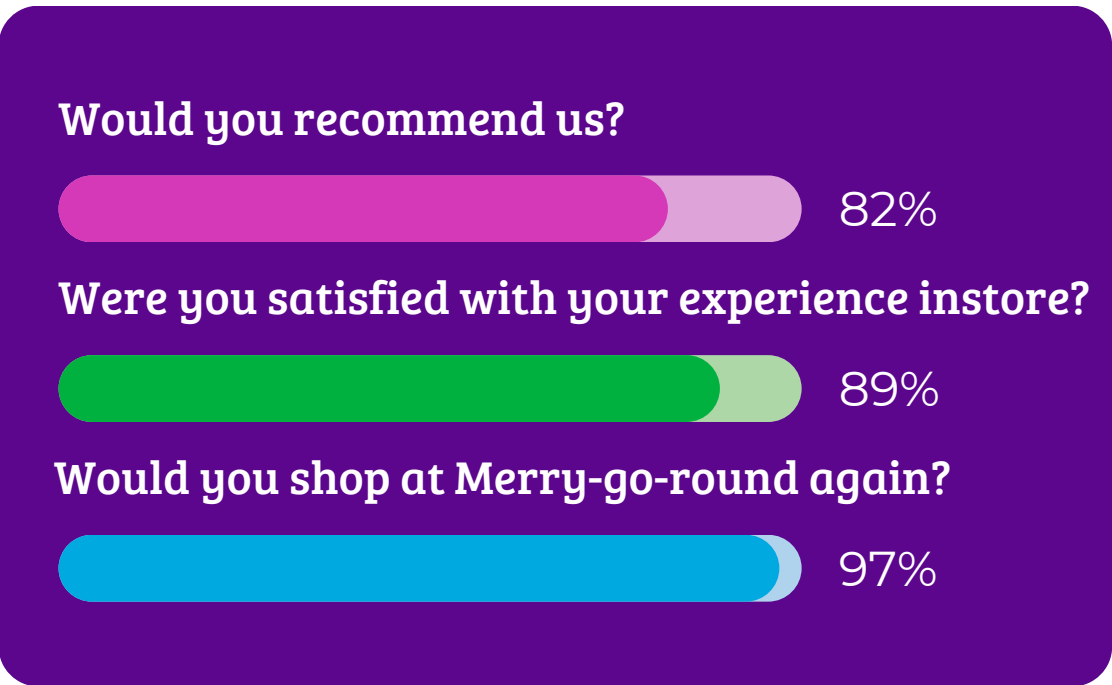
Welcoming, friendly environment. A safe place that I know I can rely on when out and about with my baby. MGR has genuinely been the core of my two mat leaves!

Staff are always friendly, often going the extra mile. Great range of clothes and goods. I recommend your shop to everyone I meet with a kid!

Great products and I love that on every visit there is new stock. I also love how affordable the items are. Some secondhand baby shops have prices very close to the original RRP so I'm so glad MGR makes things affordable for everyone!

Hidden gem staff wonderful and brilliant community asset

The area downstairs for feeding is great!





# COMMUNITY SPIRIT



# Case Study 1

## Lush Charity Pot

Charity Pot is a special hand and body lotion, launched in 2007 to raise funds for small grassroots charities, campaigns, and not-for-profit groups working in the areas of animal protection, human rights, and the environment.

Lush describes the Charity Pot as a special collaboration with their customers – Lush gives its time and raw materials, so that when a customer buys a Charity Pot, all of the money can go straight to helping good causes.

We were asked by Lush Buchanan Street to be their charity pot for a weekend in the run up to Christmas 2022. We wanted their customers to learn about Merry-go-round and support the change. It was a successful weekend that brought together two organisations with a shared goal of making a positive impact on the environment.



**Thank you Lush Buchanan Street for supporting Merry-go-round and gifting our staff some goodies during challenging times!**

***“Your team, store and classes have supported through both MAT leaves. Due to this when returning to work it was only right to give back. I've done baby massage classes here for both my girls and also clothed and got toys for them and been able to redonate once we've done with them.***

***A big thank you to you and your team for all you do in the community.”***

**Magz, Buchanan Street Lush**

**VOLUNTEER**  
with us at our shop, sorting hub, events space or within our delivery team.

**CAROUSEL PROGRAMME**  
Support families through our donate your items at our shop or make a monetary donation through our pay it forward scheme

**SUPPORT THE CHANGE**

**SHOP LOCAL**  
Visit us and for great quality second-hand baby, toddler, and maternity goods .

**COMMUNITY EVENTS**  
Join us at our to help build friendships and reduce isolation.

**merry-go-round**

32-36 Nithsdale Road, Glasgow, G41 2AN  
0141 423 2299  
SC042448

**£586 was raised over a weekend at Lush Buchanan from their charity pot sales, we are so grateful for this support.**

**It's amazing to see how a small contribution from each customer can add up to such a significant amount for charity. The money raised will go towards supporting important causes, making a positive impact on people's lives.**



# Case Study 2

## Circular Communities Scotland

Circular Communities Scotland is a network membership organisation dedicated to supporting the establishment of a thriving circular economy in Scotland.

Circular Communities Scotland members prevent valuable products and materials from entering landfill, create local jobs, economic opportunities, and help promote and create social and environmental justice in their communities.



Circular Communities Scotland both represents members and the sector as a whole, to a range of stakeholders including the Scottish Government, as well as supporting members with everything from networking, funding and events, as well as facilitating the growth of the sector in Scotland more widely.

As well as supporting and representing members, Circular Communities Scotland also runs its own 'Reuse Consortium' and is involved in a number of projects and programmes to support the third sector in support of Net Zero, including its Share and Repair Network and Affordable Access to Bikes Project.

**"We represent a thriving network of charities and social enterprises that supports Scotland's circular economy."**



*"It's an honour for us to support and represent our membership, which includes over 250 inspiring circular charities and social enterprises in Scotland. Merry-go-round is no exception. The Merry-go-round team do an incredible job salvaging baby clothes and items, which are grown out of so quickly, and repurposing them to the benefit of their local community and harder to reach groups. They are a prime example of the meaningful work that happens in Scotland's circular third sector to support both people and planet and we are pleased to have them in our network."*

**Michael Cook, CEO,  
Circular Communities Scotland.**

*"I have volunteered with Merry Go Round as part of my role with Circular Communities Scotland and find their work so inspiring. Being a parent is such an important job, and they offer families an affordable way to clothe and play with their children that's good for them and the planet. It's a wonderful model with huge impact for the local community in Glasgow's Southside and I would encourage anyone who isn't aware of them to visit, volunteer and get involved."*

**Sarah Case, Communications and Campaigns  
Officer,  
Circular Communities Scotland**

# BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER



# Case Study 3

## Home-Start

Home-Start Glasgow South works with families, with at least one child up to the age of 8, who may be struggling to cope with the challenges of parenting along with sometimes difficult personal circumstances. They provide support to mums, dads, carers and their children across Glasgow South through home-visiting volunteers, 1-1 intensive support, weekly groups, schools support, perinatal support and host antenatal workshops for dads to be.



## Dads & Weans

Our dads work began in 2016 when Home-Start Glasgow South identified the need for better support and engagement with Dads. Our Dads & Weans group is popular with Dads who have children under the age of 2 years. Attendees can spend some time with their babies one-on-one and get the chance to meet other Dads. The group is led by our Dads Co-Ordinator Doug and hosted in partnership with Merry-go-round.



**“Merry-go-round is ideally located, not only geographically, but from a community perspective, too. The kind and helpful staff, together with strong marketing and social media makes it a natural choice.”**

### When did you start with Home-Start?

*“I’ve been working for Home-Start Glasgow South since February 2020, and part of my work was to take over the running of Dads & Weans, but there was the slight issue of a global pandemic which forced us online for a while. We were really happy to be back in Merry-Go-Round when group and lockdown restrictions changed.”*

### What do you enjoy about Dads & Weans?

*“Bringing Dads together with their wee ones has often been the highlight of the week for me, as the group meets the need for Dads to share stories and experiences, and demonstrating that there isn’t just one way to be Dad.”*

### Why do you think Dads Groups are Important?

*“Many baby groups are open to both Mums and Dads, but in reality most Dads find themselves on the periphery. A Dads & Weans creates the space to discuss pertinent and relevant topics with those who have a common vantage point.”*

### How would you sum up your role?

*“My overall role is to support Dads, and this group can provide, where needed, a protective factor for Dads who are unsure of child care.”*

**Doug, Dads Co-ordinator  
Home-Start Glasgow South**

# Case Study 4

## Coorie In Parent & Baby Wellness

Coorie In Parent & Baby Wellness classes launched in person in Jan 2022, offering a safe and supportive space for new parents to bond with their babies while prioritising their own wellbeing.

With a focus on self-care and nurturing, Coorie In Parent & Baby Wellness classes aim to promote a healthy and happy start to parenthood. Whether you're a first-time parent or have multiple children, these classes are a wonderful opportunity to prioritise your physical and emotional health while spending quality time with your little one.



Carrie is a fully qualified baby massage, baby yoga teacher and colic consultant. Trained by the award winning Blossom and Berry, Carrie offers group classes or one to one sessions in the comfort of your own home for you and your baby

**“Although not a parent myself, I could not leave the house myself for a significant amount of time without support workers helping me. If there is anything that I could pay forward from that time it would be to ensure parents feel supported coming to classes from meeting up for a coffee or walk first or talking in the phone to meeting them at the door and accompanying them to the events room. No parent should miss out on classes and I do my best to ensure that any parent with struggles or concerns gets in touch with me so we can work together to get you out within your community.”**



### How did you get into Baby Massage?

*“I found out about baby massage many years back when I visited an orphanage and it blew me away- I'd never heard about it. I was studying with the open uni towards a degree in Health Sciences and researched all things childhood development for as much as my coursework as I could.”*

### Why did you start Coorie In?

*“I thought long and hard about what I would do and how I could support people during pregnancy & through the early days, months & years where I could offer realistic support holistically and offer what new parents really need.”*

*“I found there was a need for support in specific areas such as colic/reflux & added to my studies to provide tummy time classes for babies, advancing my training to work with babies with additional needs making my classes more inclusive.”*

### Do you enjoy hosting at Merry-go-round?

*“Finding a space that fitted with my own values and mission was important to me and I was delighted to find the Merry-go-round which complimented my ethics and mission to support parents.”*

*“The Merry go Round events space is such a special place for parents to come and take time away from any stresses or to just relax for some time with their baby. Parents attending my classes have described the space and my classes as warm, welcoming and chilled out.”*

# FROM ONE FAMILY TO ANOTHER



# Carousel Programme

Our goal is to contribute to providing children with the positive start in life they deserve. With a strong emphasis on recycling and reusing, the items we distribute predominantly consist of secondhand donations generously provided by other families in the community who no longer require them.

37% of children living in Glasgow are in relative poverty, and due to the cost of living crisis we have seen a surge in requests. Thanks to the commitment of our partners and health visitors, we have been able to fulfil over 1000 requests.



**"The baby clothes, toys and nappies have helped so much during this time with the cost of living and everything being more expensive."**

**"I find that more families are asking for this support - whether it is word of mouth from other parents or more families attending the Pantry for food when I find out information regarding children and age group. They are then asked if they would benefit from a baby bag from Merry go round."**



## Types of Packs



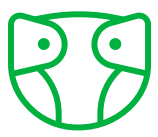
**Starter**



**Clothing**



**Maternity**



**Nappy**



**Lit/Sensory**

**Pay It Forward Hangers**  
Our Pay It Forward in-store hangers have raised £2,222. The most paid forward packs are our full starter backs and our literacy packs!





# Partner Highlights

## Govan HELP

Govan HELP is a Charity which supports families with children in the Govan area of Glasgow. We build the the resilience of parents and children by providing a range of early intervention services, helping families to overcome problems and make positive changes to their lives.



*"We have been involved with the Carousel programme for over two years now. Working in partnership has ensured families needs are met whenever possible and this has had a positive impact on families well-being with regards to finances and mental health."*

*"Money saved on buying nappies, clothes and toys can be spent elsewhere - food/ utility bills etc. resulting in stress and anxiety issues not as heightened."*



## Amma Birth Companions

Amma Birth Companions work with vulnerable pregnant people and families in Glasgow who are on very limited funds and struggle to access baby items. They support pregnant people and new parents living in Glasgow.



*"They often have very little or no income and the carousel packs have been a huge help in getting them started with baby items."*

*"Govan HELP would like to say a big thank you for your ongoing support. We appreciate the amount of work involved in putting these packs together and know the family are delighted to receive them. "*

*Annie Achurch, Govan HELP*

*"It has been amazing to receive the packs and I feel good that I can recycle the clothes/toys I have received and give to other families in need"*

*Service User*

*"The Carousel packs are very gratefully received, very useful and always seem to be put together with a lot of thought and care."*

*Morag Riddet, Amma Birth*

*"Huge thanks for the work you do. It feels like a gift handing the packs over to our families. They are always delighted"*

*Linzi Glen, Amma Birth*

*"I think for families who are asylum seekers or with no recourse to public funds it is a great service"*

*Sebastian Primerose., Money Matters*

*"The new born pack helped so much as my baby was premature and I had the baby pack at home before my baby arrived"*

*Service User*

*"It is simple to use. Our families really appreciate the items they receive. We have been getting deliveries and the service is great."*

*Tina Loewe, Linkes Community Proj*



## Money Matters

Money Matters are a community project based in the high rise estate on Lincoln Avenue/Kestrel Road. They run a programme of weekly activities and learning opportunities as well as drop-in support sessions. A lot of families on the estate have low income and are struggling with the rising cost of essentials.

*"It is very important to know organisations to refer people to for help with food and fuel poverty as well as clothing and other items."*

## Linkes Community Project

Linkes are a large, independent welfare rights and money advice centre. Roles involve taking referrals for NHS patients who have raised an issue regarding their money or benefits with a GP, health visitor, OT, physio or hospital nurse etc. They provide a holistic service to address any issues with benefit income, making applications, managing debts, and help with energy costs among other things.



**LINKES**

*"Families are delighted to receive the baby bags."*

**Thank you to all of our Carousel Partners and to everyone who supports the Carousel Programme**

# A HELPING HAND



# VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to all of our Volunteers, your dedication helps us keep going round! Your contributions help us to provide crucial services to those who need it most, and we are grateful for your unwavering commitment. Whether you are a regular volunteer or have helped out just once, please know that your efforts have not gone unnoticed.



## Why did you decide to volunteer?

*I saw an advert for an open volunteering day which made me get in touch. I'd been out of work due to lockdown and I wanted to get back out into the world.*

## What do you enjoy about volunteering?

*Everyone is so welcoming at MGR. The staff are so helpful and I enjoy the variety of tasks. I also like working with the cute baby clothes.*

## What does volunteering give you?

*How does it make you feel? Volunteering has given me back my confidence. The experience has made me less anxious - and being here each week has given me a sense of purpose. It is a reason for me to leave the house.*

## What keeps you coming back?

*How nice the MGR staff are. How flexible it is and having the routine which has done me a lot of good.*

**Beth, Hub Member**

## Why did you decide to volunteer?

*I wanted to donate my time to give back to the community. I was also keen to get to know different people in my community outside of my usual friend group.*

## What do you enjoy about volunteering?

*I like the feeling of giving back and making a difference in the community. I really enjoy working with the people in Merry-go-round.*

## What does Volunteering give to you?

*How does it make you feel? It gives me a sense of belonging - I really feel part of the community.*

## What keeps you coming back?

*The people at Merry-go-round are so friendly - I feel part of the team.*

**Sayumi, Hub and Shop Member**

*"I started driving for Merry-Go-Round around 3 years ago - after driving for another charity. My previous experience really opened my eyes to how much need there is in our city - and I wanted to continue my volunteering journey. I find my role gives me a sense of purpose now I'm retired. I look forward to my volunteering days as I enjoy chatting with staff members and feel part of the team - it breaks up my week. The most rewarding part of my role is delivering carousel packs - things we take for granted and knowing the impact they have. The whole experience has given me a real sense of gratitude"*

**Alan, Van Driver**

# THANK YOU...



**LUSH**



BAWN

**& MANY MORE**