

Press Release: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

## **Community Centre takes part in Virtual Balloon Race**

The Trustees of Hesketh Bank Community Centre have signed up for an online balloon race, which they hope will raise the last leg of funds they need for their redevelopment plans.

The world's only virtual balloon race system, developed by Purepages Group in Manchester, offers an eco-friendly and safe way to raise money during the current Coronavirus lockdown. Mike Phillips, Managing Director of Ecoracing.co, explained, "It's a 7day computer simulation where everything is real except the balloon. The software uses current live weather data to determine the progress of each balloon and each entry can be tracked on Google Maps and Satellites once launched. It has no negative environmental impact on birds, animals, climate change, plastic waste or litter."

He continued, "You can buy a virtual balloon for £3 and give it a name, colour, shape and pattern. In addition to this, you can select different features of your balloon, such as weight, which will determine its flight performance in order to enhance your chances of winning." Mike added, "It's a fun and easy way to raise funds for a cause, which kids and adults alike love."



Steve Kirby, Chairman of Hesketh Bank Community Centre, said, "We are so close to reaching our target of £394,000 to build our brand new, purpose built and fully accessible hall for all the community, which we still hope to see in place this year. The virtual balloon race will ensure that we continue with our fundraising efforts and hopefully offer some entertainment to those that take part during this challenging time."

The race, titled Coronation Race, will 'set off' from Westminster Abbey on 2nd June. First prize, for the balloon that travels the farthest, is £500 cash, second prize is an Apple iPad and there will also be 10 lucky winners of £10 book tokens. To get your balloon, or find out more, go to [www.heskethbankcommunitycentre.org.uk/balloonrace](http://www.heskethbankcommunitycentre.org.uk/balloonrace)

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