











High Res Photos here

# **PRESS PACK**

# The Coping Festival 2025

Saturday 21st June Graystone Action Sports, Salford, M54BE 12pm-10pm

Free Entry (donations welcomed)

All profits will be donated to St Ann's Hospice, The Ben Raemer's Foundation & Live Like Ralph

Website: www.thecoping.org

Instagram: <a href="https://www.instagram.com/thecopingcic/">https://www.instagram.com/thecopingcic/</a>

Contact: wil@thecoping.org | Interviews available on request

High Res Photos here

## **Festival Overview**

The Coping Festival returns for its 6th year at Graystone Action Sports in Salford. A free, family-friendly event bringing people together to take part in uplifting, interactive experiences while supporting charities that champion better mental health and community care. The festival offers an inclusive mix of action sports, creative activities & live music, underpinned by a mission to improve our collective wellbeing by creating & telling stories for brighter futures. The Coping Festival is a free event, taking donations from participants & sponsors to cover costs and raise funds for charities. This year the chosen charities are St Ann's Hospice, The Ben Raemer's Foundation and Live Like Ralph.

Building on a 6-year relationship with Oakley, The Coping Festival 2025 will be collaborating on Oakley's first ever Community Days in the skate world. It's an effortless partnership where Oakley's DIY roots naturally align with The Coping Festival's build-it-together mentality, creating a community-driven day of activity, creativity & connection.

"The framework we're working on is to C.A.R.E - that's connect beyond our opinions, act beyond our fears, reflect on what we truly need in life & educate ourselves to work out how to fulfill those needs." Said The Coping founder Wil Hesketh.

The festival launches at 12pm with 'Move a Mile' — an inclusive, feel-good activity designed to shine a light on community-focused organisations that support personal and collective wellbeing. The carefully thought out route starts at GRIT Studios (a recently established creative space at Salford Shopping Centre) and ventures through the underpass to a popular skate spot, where there will be giveaways and no doubt some tricks. The next landmark is the newly opened Salford Youth Zone, before a final roll, walk, scooter or cycle over to the main festival site: Graystone Action Sports. As Wil puts it: "Life is gnarly enough, without fighting battles inside our own minds. The Move a Mile activity is about taking action to find space from whatever is going on in our minds. It also highlights the power of community and connection to help us feel like we have a purpose."

Wil knows well himself how tough life can be after losing his Dad, and recently his Sister to cancer just a week after The Coping Festival in 2024. "It showed me the power of people coming together for something bigger than themselves. As a family, we were just about coping with the worst moments of our lives; but the festival still happened, thanks to our incredible community. For the first time, I experienced it as a participant, and it gave my nieces a much-needed break from the intensity of their mum's illness."

The Coping CIC is a unique social enterprise aiming to improve collective wellbeing by creating and sharing stories for brighter futures with C.A.R.E. The Coping is creating safe spaces for self-expression in action, connection beyond opinions, reflection on what is really important for our collective wellbeing and education to achieve improved wellbeing.

## **Charities**

## St Ann's Hospice

In memory of founder Wil Hesketh's sister, who received incredible care during her final days. "They gave her comfort and gave us a few more precious moments by her side." Funds will support the development of a new, state-of-the-art facility to serve more families with compassion and dignity.

## Live Like Ralph Foundation

Supporting and nurturing skate & creative communities — helping young people thrive through connection, self-expression and movement. By nurturing these communities, the positive impact they can have is extraordinary.

#### The Ben Raemer's Foundation

In May 2019, at the age of 28, professional skateboarder Ben Raemers died by suicide. In September 2019 The Coping Festival was born as a direct reaction to Ben's passing. We had no idea what we were doing, but it brought together a community and uplifted everyone involved, so we knew we were onto something. The Ben Raemer's Foundation work on supporting mental health within the skateboarding community to prevent further loss by suicide.

# **Partners and Sponsors**

## **Graystone Action Sports**

"The work The Coping does for the local community is invaluable and we're delighted to celebrate Go Skate Day 2025 with The Coping Festival. Joining forces with Oakley for their first Community Days in skateboarding is a huge honour for us. Celebrating skateboarding is Graystone's MO and doing this while championing mental health awareness is incredibly important for us"

Harry Mitchell Thompson (graystone partnerships manager)

#### Oakley

This year marks the very first Oakley Community Day in the skate world, and we're hyped it's happening at The Coping Festival. Oakley are showing up in full force — backing the event with support and resources, sending two of their pro athletes, live-printing exclusive custom logo gear, and handing out a heap of Oakley merch, eyewear and prizes.



#### Stance

We're stoked to have Stance on board this year — bringing their signature energy and style to The Coping Festival. As proud sponsors, they'll be taking care of media coverage to help share our message far and wide, and supplying some epic prizes that celebrate individuality, creativity and community.

## Cyber Security Specialists

We're proud to have Cyber Security Specialists supporting The Coping Festival again this year through sponsorship. As a UK-based company that puts people at the heart of everything they do, their ongoing support (from our very first event in 2019) has helped us build a welcoming, inclusive space together. Like us, they believe great things happen when people come together as a team, and we're grateful to have them as part of ours.

#### The Snowboard Asylum

We're pumped to welcome The Snowboard Asylum back to The Coping Festival for another year of support, again powering up the Team Rumble skate comp with prize money. Known for backing grassroots action sports culture, TSA brings the same passion for progression and community from the slopes to the skatepark. Their belief in pushing boundaries and backing riders at every level makes them a perfect partner for The Coping. Big thanks to TSA for helping us elevate this year's comp and keeping the energy high.

Parking: Limited free parking at Graystone; nearby options available. Free 2-hour parking at Salford Shopping Center (start point for Move a Mile).

#### **Activities Quicklist:**

12pm – Move a Mile

Walk, roll or ride a mile alongside Oakley Pro Skaters from Grit Studios (Salford Shopping Center) to Graystone Action Sports (festival site).

#### 1pm - Festival Begins!

- Free Beginner Lessons in Skate and other action sports (donations encouraged)
- Inclusive Skate Games & Competitions
- Creative Workshops (donations encouraged)
- Q&A with Oakley Pro Skaters (Mental Health & Action Sports)
- Live DJs & Music All Day
- Open Action Sports Sessions (donations encouraged)
- Pro Skate Demos
- Team Rumble £1000 Prize for a team skate event

#### **Key Facts & Impact**

- £17,000+ raised for charities that benefit our wellbeing since 2019
- Previous beneficiaries include The Christie, 42nd Street, and Ben Raemers Foundation
- Supported by global brands like Oakley & Stance, alongside local businesses like Graystone, The Snowboard Asylum & Cyber Security Specialists
- Bold goal: Reach 1 million people with free wellbeing-focused activities
- Community hosted via The Circle App for year-round community engagement

#### **Quotes for Media Use**

"Life is gnarly enough, without fighting battles inside our own minds."

"I lost my Dad and Sister to cancer and for a while life felt pretty meaningless. Starting The Coping Festival gave me a sense of purpose again and I've come to see that same feeling ripple through everyone who helps build it and everyone who shows up. The Coping Festival belongs to all of us, it becomes what we make it, together."

"We believe in telling stories that unite, uplift and heal, not stories that divide, shame or judge. When we stop judging ourselves and others harshly, we can start learning, growing and building something better together."

Wil Hesketh, Founder

#### **Media Resources**

- High-resolution images available here
- Interviews with founder Wil Hesketh and team available on request
- Case studies of past participants and their journeys also available

#### **Get Involved**

- Visit the festival on 21st June from 1pm
- Donate to support our festival & chosen charities
- Sponsor a workshop, prize or performance
- Volunteer your time or skills
- Join the community year-round on our Circle app

# Stay Connected

• Website: www.thecoping.org

• Instagram: <a href="mailto:othecoping">othecoping</a>

• Email: press@thecoping.org

Let's tell stories for brighter futures — together.

# Move a Mile Press Shot (high res available here)

All high-resolution images available here

