



HI

Friends
of Histon &
Impington
Community



Annual Report 2020

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Friends of Histon & Impington Community (aka HI Friends)

Registered charity number 1185578

www.hifriends.org.uk

Friends of Histon & Impington Community aka HI Friends

Welcome to the 2020 Annual Report



HI Friends is a village based charity that seeks to improve the wellbeing of the community through:

- providing a dedicated Wellbeing Team and offering activities and services to help meet the needs of 'life's journey' for all ages. The team supports older people, those living with dementia, mental wellbeing, parental wellbeing and bereavement.
- improving mobility through the operation of the Histon & Impington Community Minibus and Community Trishaw
- organising, promoting and developing a range of sporting and exercise activities for people of all ages
- helping fundraise to improve village recreational and leisure facilities

A message from the Charity Chair

Our new Charity set up from 1st January 2020 has not had the first year we anticipated. This is for reasons so obvious that I won't labour the point.

Despite all that has happened we reach our first Annual Meeting in excellent shape to go forward into what we intend will be a different but nonetheless exciting and successful future. Thanks to the excellent stewardship of our Treasurer the financial situation is sound, known plans are budgeted for and we will only embark on any new ventures once we know they are fully funded.

I believe that the merger of Friends of the Rec & HICOM has already shown itself to be the right thing to do. I'm confident that will become ever more clear as we embark in to a brighter future.

Annual Meetings are always a time to reflect and to offer thanks to those involved in our charity and I hope everyone who has any involvement with our charity in whatever way will accept my personal thanks for your time and effort. Having said that there are two contributions I feel we should particularly celebrate:

Our inspirational Charity Manager Neil's contribution and personal commitment continue to astound. So thank you Neil for all you do. Neil puts in time and commitment above & beyond any expectation and it's important we acknowledge that.

To retiring Trustee Dave Rush - we recognise nigh on 20 years of time given to each of the legacy charities, continuing into HI Friends. I know Dave doesn't want a fuss made but we would be very remiss not to mark the occasion. He is retiring as a Trustee but will continue to volunteer including as part of the "Last of the Summer Wine" running event set up team. Thanks for everything Dave

HI Friends has three Objectives stated in our Constitution. These are summed up as follows:

- To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people residing in the villages of Histon and Impington and the surrounding areas from becoming socially excluded
- To promote the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation
- To relieve the needs of people experiencing mental illness, their families and carers by raising general awareness and understanding in the community about mental health and mental health wellbeing

The Trustees will always be mindful of balancing future activities to ensure we achieve each of these separate objectives.

In conclusion, it's been an honour and a pleasure to have been asked to Chair the Trustee Board in our first year and so a thank you to all my fellow Trustees

Vernon Dudley
Chair - HI Friends

A 2020 perspective from Neil Davies, Charity Manager

The resilience of any organisation would have been tested by a once in a century pandemic let alone one that had been operational for less than three months.

This is exactly what happened to HI Friends and yet within 10 days the charity was able to close down its activities and in person services, and make a major contribution to the Histon and Impington Community Covid Support effort.

As a Charity we must acknowledge that at times during the first two Lockdowns we did struggle to know how to fully support the community. On reaching the third Lockdown in January 2021 we were in a better position and had stronger team support and foundations.

The seeds of this change had been sowed a year earlier when Sefanit Inquai our former Mental Wellbeing Worker shared a vision that HI Friends should seek to support younger families and children more in our work. This consequently led to Ren Stedman forming the Family Circle groups and patiently let them grow, and the recruitment of the Community Play Therapist.



Nearly 500 bells were sold at Christmas bringing some much needed noise on Christmas Eve when many were rung on Village Doorsteps

I think that a strength of an organisation is its flexibility to evolve and change as needed and certainly HI Friends has done that since January 2020.

We are fortunate to have a Wellbeing Team that is growing together in their roles and their support for the local community.

My thanks to the Trustees and our funders for their support and confidence to support ideas and projects put forward.

A Covid perspective from Paul Seekings, our Older Peoples Worker



In March 2020 at the start of the first Lockdown all our usual activities including minibus trips came to an abrupt halt.

Swiftly a network of street coordinators and volunteers was established across Histon and Impington to help the community. HI Friends worked closely with the Covid Village Response Group and provided support both on zoom calls and individually to the street volunteers as they discovered their role and encountered new situations.

HI Friends also kept in contact with the older people of the community directly, supporting them with phone calls and zoom calls and also was a valuable resource for families.

In June we produced and distributed a HI Friends While you are at Home Newsletter with useful information about services and interesting articles to over 500 older people. It was exceptionally well received keeping older people in contact with what was going on.

Listening to older people, many felt isolated having to stay at home and lacking a purpose so we started the knitting blanket project. Thanks to over 12 knitters and the volunteers who have been delivering and collecting 28 blankets have been made for good causes.

At Christmas HI Friends partnered with the District Council and village groups to provide over 40 isolated older people with a Christmas dinner and Christmas present.

When the pandemic struck our minibus operations closed overnight. However, following careful risk assessments the minibus has been able to be used for hospital appointments and latterly vaccination appointments.

Throughout the pandemic HI Friends have got to know more older people in the villages and as restrictions are eased we will continue to be supporting them and, as appropriate, introducing them to our activities.

A few words from Sophie Howell, HI Friends Mental Wellbeing Worker

In September 2020 I was appointed as the Mental Wellbeing Worker for the HIFriends charity. The charity's goal is to increase mental wellbeing awareness, develop mental wellbeing initiatives and signpost to available support services, for both adults and children in our community. I aim to break down the stigma surrounding mental health problems and to get people talking openly about mental wellbeing. I also work with the children at HIJS and IVC, providing therapy, support and education.



My aspiration is to provide individuals with companionship, support, learning opportunities and a sense of self-worth both for themselves and as a valued member of the community.

Amongst other programmes run by HIFriends is the Worry Tree Café, every Wednesday at St Andrew's Cafe. We have a regular group of

attendees who have described the café as a 'life line', warm, welcoming and inclusive of all. Some members have even formed positive friendships and meet up outside of the café and some are seeking volunteering opportunities in the café and within the community. My hope is that we can continue to grow the attendance at the Worry Tree Café, providing more support and companionship for members of our community.



Emma Moat – Peripatetic Play Therapist / Counsellor for HI Friends

I have been in this role since September 2020, and through rather uncertain times have delivered play therapy and counselling to children in Histon Early Years, Infants (in both the old and new schools) and have a placement in the Juniors too, at

present.

Play therapy is a way of helping troubled children who may struggle to cope with their negative feelings in a verbal way as adults can usually do. Through a 'tool box' of creative equipment, children can use arts and crafts, toys and games to help express themselves and build a trusting relationship with the therapist.

I have also been using more traditional talking therapy for those children who prefer to do so.

I am also running a 'phone call surgery' for parents which has been well used, especially during the coronavirus pandemic, and offer advice and suggestions to HI Friends parents around all manner of issues around helping children at home, whether it has been to do with home schooling, behaviour, emotional issues or more practical coping strategies. This service has been greatly appreciated by parents.

A few words from Ren, our Parental Wellbeing worker

We've had great success over the last year with the development of the HI Mothers' Circle, which, in the words of one attendee, has provided a lifeline to new mums from both the village and surrounding areas through our weekly online meetings and



occasional in-person get togethers. The circle has grown over the last year and now has 22 members who stay in touch over Whatsapp between meetings, and have developed some very close, and hopefully lasting friendships. My friend Laura has been of huge importance in helping me get this group off the ground on a voluntary basis.

In recent months I've begun to develop the HI Pregnancy Circle which meets twice a month online. This group has supported 5 families so far, some of whom have now had their babies and transitioned over to the Mothers' Circle.

We've had tremendous feedback for the Mothers' Circle, and I have recently gathered survey data to help us shape the way to move forward with the easing of restrictions.



Photos from a HI Mothers' Circle meeting

On the basis of this feedback, in the coming months, the Mothers' Circle will return to meeting in person, and will focus back on the first 12-18 months of motherhood. Meanwhile, the newer Parents' Circle will move to online meetings in the evenings and will cater to parents of slightly older children. This group is still a work in progress as we try to find a set-up that works for parents at this stage.



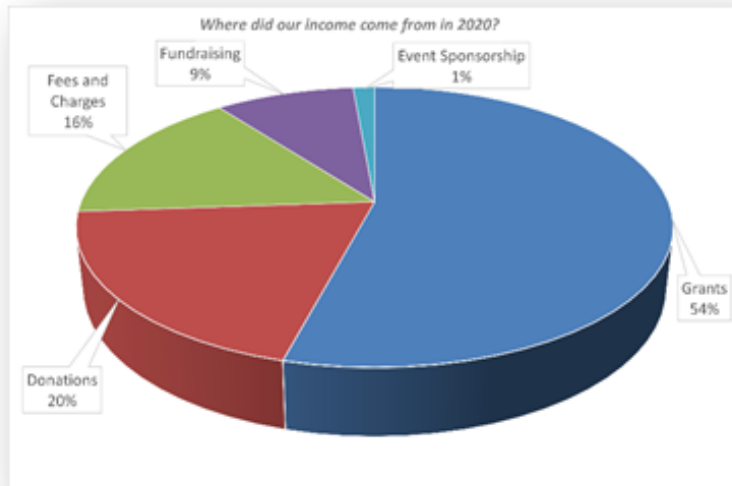
Treasurer's Report

Friends of Histon and Impington Community (HI Friends) exists to promote and support the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of the community of Histon and Impington.

We do this through a **wellbeing team** dedicated to supporting people at all stages of life's journey; through **recreational and sporting activities and clubs**; through **events** that bring the community together and enable us to raise funds, both to sustain our activities and for the development of new recreational facilities; and through the provision of a community transport service, the **community minibus**, which helps to keep people mobile and engaged in local life.

We couldn't do any of this without the generous financial commitment of many organisations and individuals, and we are grateful to all those who give financially to support our work.

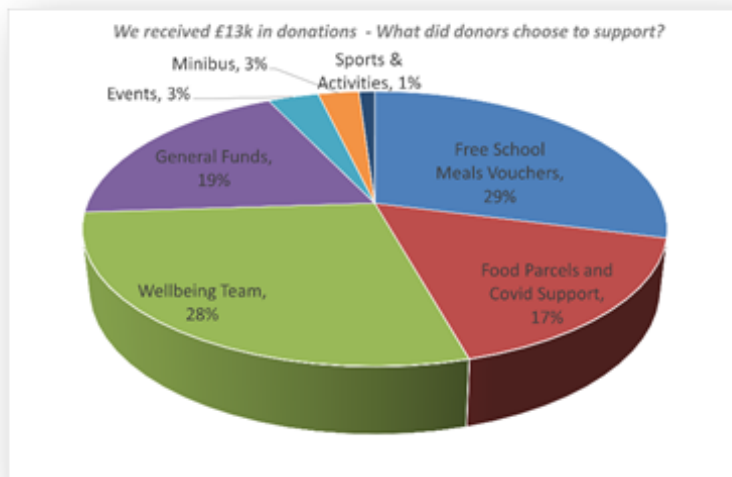
Where does our funding come from...



Income in 2020 £67k

Fundraising severely curtailed, but we discovered virtual running events and Zoom quizzes!

We secured grants to support Covid related activities and a new Play Therapist role.



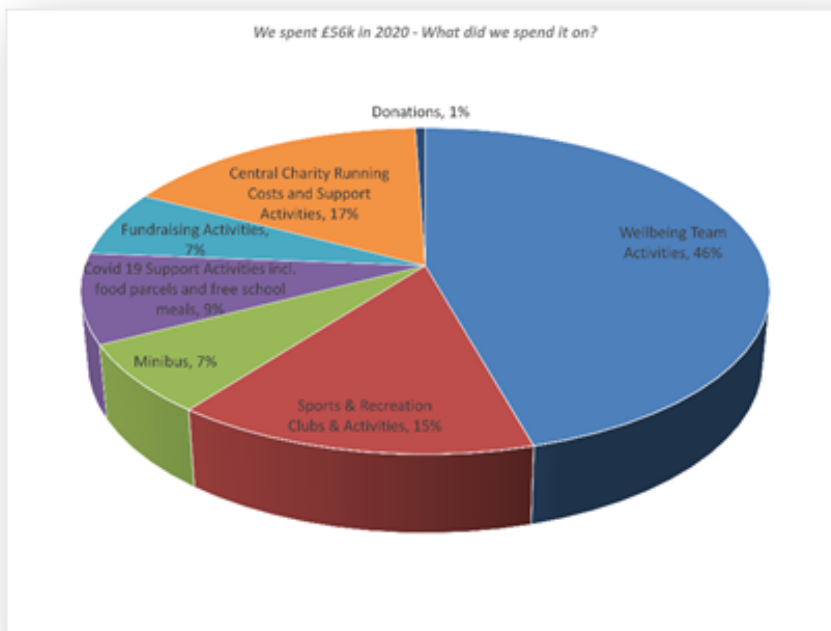
The Community came together in response to Covid to support Food Parcels and Free School Meals Vouchers initiatives – raising £6k in donations.

Grants

HI Friends is very grateful to the following organisations who, in such an unusual year, have continued to support our work in the community through grant funding:

Histon and Impington Parish Council, Histon and Impington Town Charity, **St Andrew's Church Histon**, Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, **Histon Beer Festival**, Histon & Impington Churches Together, **The National Lottery Community Fund (Covid 19 Emergency Support)**, Histon Feast, **South Cambridgeshire District Council**, Living Sport, **HMRC**.

...and where does it go?



All Donations make a Difference. For example,

£10 could provide a half hour session of counselling for a child in school.

£30 enables the Worry Tree Café to run for a session.

£60 would pay for a series of play therapy sessions for a younger child.

£50 could help cover the costs of running the Community Minibus.

£250 pays for a Hope Again Bereavement course to be run.

Expenditure in 2020 £56k

HI Friends worked in partnership with the Salvation Army and others in response to Covid – Food Parcels, Free School Meals, Additional Wellbeing Support Activities and Groups.

The Minibus found a new purpose, transporting residents to medical appointments and vaccinations.

Wellbeing Team strengthened with addition of Parental Support Worker and Play Therapist

Reduced expenditure on Sports & Recreation Clubs & Activities in 2020 as these were suspended for most of the year.

2020 was not a typical year, for obvious reasons. Our sports and recreational clubs and activities were suspended for most of the year, the minibus could not operate its normal service and in person fundraising events were cancelled; all leading to a significant reduction in income for the Charity. However, we were fortunate to receive new grant funding and some significant donations, particularly in relation to Covid support activities and initiatives.

With clubs and activities suspended our costs were also reduced, of course, and the Charity was able to complete its first year in fairly robust financial health, with a surplus of almost £11k.

Looking to the future; we have increased the capacity of our Wellbeing Team this year, enabling us to provide a number of new services. Through Ren, we have introduced new support groups for parents and, with the engagement of Emma, our Community Play Therapist, we have extended our mental health support provision to include the youngest members of our community. While grant funding and targeted donations have helped enormously with the initial costs of these new services, the Charity will need to find new sources of recurring income to make them sustainable in the longer term, and to develop other, new ideas. New supporters making regular donations would help make our funding more sustainable and resilient in the future.

HI Friends Finance Team

David Wilson (Treasurer), Neil Davies (Fundraising)

Charity Trustees 2020

Vernon Dudley (Chair)

Don Kelly (Vice Chair)

David Wilson (Treasurer)

Yvonne Murray

David Rush

Greg Peck

Rebecca Strivens

Rob Fisher

Chris Cox

Edd Stonham

Jess Pratt

Richard Martin

Clerk to the Trustees

Neil Davies: neil@hifriends.org.uk