



HI

Friends
of Histon &
Impington
Community

Annual Report 2024



Annual Report 2024

Introduction from Vernon Dudley, Chair of Trustees, & Index p.1

Welcome to the HI Friends 2024 Annual Report. We hope you enjoy the fresh layout of the document and an overview that really reflects the breath and depth of everything HI Friends is.

My sincere thanks go out to all involved with the charity. Everyone is vital to the positive impact HI Friends brings to many village residents and the community as a whole.

Vernon Dudley
Chair of Trustees

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A 2024 Perspective

from Neil Davies, Charity Manager

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Moving Forward

2024 was HI Friends' fifth full year of operating and I am sure no-one could have envisaged the present growth, variety and depth of the charity's work since our journey started in January 2020.

HI Friends often receives feedback on the uniqueness of our service and support provision: this is entirely due to our team of staff, trustees and volunteers working together. There are times when it is challenging but we are united in the realisation of our tagline: 'bringing people together to improve wellbeing'.

Our service delivery continues to evolve: the previous year saw the formation of our Older People's Team, to ensure our work with older residents remains cohesive.

Across 2024, we welcomed three new members of staff to the team:

- **Liz Armstrong** | SEND Parent Support Group Leader
- **Sally Smith** | Older People's Services Coordinator
- **Faith Turton** | Mental Wellbeing Support Worker

Unfortunately, Ren Stedman, who led our Mother's Circle, left her role in the summer after 4 years with the charity. Ren had a special empathy with new mothers and we know that this support was greatly valued by those who attended, especially during the Covid months.

Mental Wellbeing support is a significant area of work for the charity and is led by Sophie Howell. Sophie continues to be passionate about providing wellbeing support in village schools and is developing her Flourishing Start programme. For the first time, we ran a community based 'Discover & Recharge Teen Wellbeing Course'

For the first time in December, HI Friends launched a local direct online and community funding appeal through the Big Give Christmas Challenge and, with matched funding from the Big Give, over £4,000 was raised for our dementia and primary aged wellbeing work.

HI Friends seeks to work and network cross the community to bring all ages together. One such example is the Holiday at Home Christmas Concert

at which a professional singer performs with the Park Primary School Choir to a sell-out audience of older residents, including those from the two village care homes.

A couple of personal highlights were the Village Dementia Week held in May and the summer concert, organised with Cambridgeshire Music, featuring the Cambridgeshire County Youth Orchestra.

Neil Davies
Charity Manager

Village Dementia Week

Hi Friends, working in partnership with the two village care homes Bramley Court and Etheldred House, organised the week in May. The aim of the week was to increase awareness and understanding in the

community, to try and help those living with dementia, their carers and families, and have a little fun.

There were some special moments, one being the visit of the Mini Donks Therapeutic Animal Experience to the Day Centre and Memory Support Group. They were joined by groups of children from the Early Years Centre and IVC students.

Another spellbinding memory was the Dementia Week Music Afternoon, when a resident from Etheldred House played a classical piece by Rachmaninov on the piano.

There were challenging moments as well, with the visit of the mobile Living with Dementia Virtual Experience: a virtual tour with guidance from an expert, to experience some of the challenges and feelings faced by someone living with dementia.



HI Friends Wellbeing Activity in 2024

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Older People's Support Team

The Older People's Support team consists of:

- **Paul Seekings** | Older People's Worker
- **Helen Blake** | Holiday at Home & Lunch Club Coordinator
- **Sally Smith** | Services Coordinator
- **Jo Franklin** | Carer & End of Life Support Worker

Sally Smith was a new addition to the Team in November 2024, following a wish by Paul to reduce his hours and the need for additional support at the Day Centre.

The Team meets monthly to ensure there is a coordinated approach to the community

Support Provided

In 2024, the Older People's Team had contact with 55 new service users and made 42 visits. A total of 33 contacts were also received from family members. The support provided on visits includes an introduction to services and activities offered by the charity and other assistance, including attendance allowance forms.

Services & Activities Offered

The charity has recently updated its Older People's Services Information Leaflet, useful to older residents.

**Support for Older People & those with Memory Loss**
Registered Charity 148519

HI Friends is a wellbeing charity based in Histon and Impington. We have a dedicated Wellbeing Team to help meet the needs of local older people, and those living with memory loss and their carers. We organise a range of services and activities described in this booklet, and can provide transport where needed using the HI Friends Community Minibus. We aim to reduce loneliness and isolation, foster friendships and provide enjoyment.

Team contacts are provided below. We hope that you find this information helpful, and we welcome contact from local residents, potential service users and members of families. Home visits can be arranged to provide an introduction to what HI Friends can offer. We also seek to help carers through the Village Carer Café, and additional respite activities.

Older People's Support Team

**Paul Seekings**
Older People's Worker
07756 00007
pseekings@hifriends.org.uk
Paul can arrange home visits and make a number of calls.

**Helen Blake**
Holiday at Home & Lunch Club Coordinator
07394 173430
hblake@hifriends.org.uk
Helen handles enquiries for the Lunch Club, and organises regular Holiday at Home Events.

**Sally Smith**
Services Coordinator
07772 42789
sally@hifriends.org.uk
Sally organises Member Events, activities and shopping services.

**Jo Franklin**
Carer & End of Life Support Worker
07772 42789
jfranklin@hifriends.org.uk
Jo provides support for carers and those facing the ending of life, including bereavement support.

**Jan Payne**
Memory Support Group Leader
07394 173430
jpayne@hifriends.org.uk
Jan leads our Support Group for those with dementia or memory loss.

Dementia & Memory Loss Support Team

**Julie Little**
Dementia Support Coordinator
07394 173430
jlittle@hifriends.org.uk
Julie provides support to those living with dementia or memory loss.

Activities & Services for all
HI Friends organises a variety of regular activities, from shopping to fitness.

Rec Monday Club
Stronger 4 Longer
10-11.30am
Enjoy fitness with fun, gentle exercises, featuring both seated and standing positions.

Specialist Exercise Class
11.30am-1.30pm
A fitness class designed to assist in recovery from stroke, or long-term neurological conditions. Includes group & individual activities. Provides time out for carers.

Memory & Co-ordination
1.45-3.00pm
A social fitness class for those with memory loss. This activity is presently paused. If you are interested, contact Sally Smith (details below).
All Rec Monday Club activities take place at the Histon Recreation Ground Centre. Refreshments provided.
Transport is available for all Monday activities through the HI Friends Community Minibus. Contact Sally Smith, 07772 437789 for any enquiries about the Monday activities, and for transport.

HI Friends Lunch Club
Tuesdays & Fridays weekly
2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly
Enjoy friendship, games, and a delicious hot meal.
Tuesday/Friday sessions: 12pm-1.30pm
Thursday sessions: 10.30am-1.30pm
All Lunch Club sessions run at Ray Hatch Way, Community Centre, Histon.
Contact Helen Blake: 07394 173430

Weekly Shopping Trips to local supermarkets
Tuesday Mornings
Shopping trips to local supermarkets, using the HI Friends Community Minibus.
Contact Sally Smith: 07772 437789

Dance for Fitness & Wellbeing
Wednesdays 12-3pm
Weekly dance for fitness class with Cathy Middleton, Histon & Impington Recreation Ground Centre. Contact Cathy: 07740 436457

Thursday Together
1st, 3rd & 5th (if applicable) Thursday 2-3.45pm
An afternoon of fun, playing card and board games and enjoying refreshments at Histon Recreation Ground Centre or Etheldreda House. Contact Paul Seekings: 07756 00007

HI Memories
4th Thursday monthly 12-2pm
A group to share memories of what life used to be like in former years. Meets at the Tawa Lounge, Histon.
Contact Paul Seekings: 07756 00007

Holiday at Home
Providing activities, events and outings for older residents in Histon & Impington, including seaside trips, the cinema, and concerts.
Contact Helen Blake: 07394 173430

Shopping Services

An average of 12 people use the weekly shopping trips to local supermarkets, using the Community Minibus.



Exercise Activities

The HI Friends Rec Monday Club continues with two exercise related activities held every Monday: Stronger 4 Longer and a Specialist Exercise Class for those with neurological conditions. An average of 18 attend Stronger 4 Longer and 10 attend the Specialist Class.

Thursday Together

This fortnightly activity club provides a gentle mix of chatting and games. The venue alternates between the Recreation Ground Centre and Etheldred House, enabling care home and village residents to interact.

HI Memories

A small reminiscing group of up to 8 meets monthly at the Tawa Lounge.

Holiday at Home

Holiday at Home now has a membership of nearly 250, with many enjoying regular events throughout the year, including a Tea Party at the Manor, a seaside trip to 'Sunny Hunny, Christmas Concert and a Tea Dance.

Holiday at Home provides an important means of connecting with both those 'younger' older residents

and the more elderly, who may be living alone and feel isolated.

Day Centre

Average session attendance is around 12-13 each Tuesday and Friday, with a preset total of 19 members. Unfortunately, a number of members left in November and December but attendance has recently increased once more.

The Day Centre has now been renamed HI Friends Lunch Club, with two additional sessions starting in March on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, intending to ensure that there is no waiting list and that people can join whenever they would like to.



Carer & End-of-Life Support Work

Jo Franklin, in her role as Carer & End-of-Life (EOL) Support Worker, made 15 support phone calls/introductions and undertook 5 support visits to the individuals' usual places of care.

In her role, Jo attends local groups and events where people may need EOL support in the future, e.g. Lunch Club and Memory Support Groups.

Jo is active in the community promoting awareness of her role, and uses her creativity to do so, as shown in the great display she produced at the Christmas Tree Festival.

HI Friends Carer Café

HI Friends launched a Carer Café at the Tawa Lounge on May 2024, led by Paul Seekings and Jo Franklin. The Café has continued monthly since, with an average 4-6 attending.

Mental Wellbeing Support Team

The team consists of:

- **Sophie Howell** | Mental Wellbeing Services Coordinator
- **Jeremy Hyde** | Mental Wellbeing Support Worker
- **Liz Armstrong** | SEND Parent Carer Support Group

Faith Turton was the previous Mental

Wellbeing Support Worker but left in February 2025. Jeremy Hyde has replaced her and started his role in May.

Individual People Support

Sophie has an 'open door' policy to talk to individuals about mental wellbeing issues/concerns and had over 60 such conversations during 2024, including some signposting to available support elsewhere.

Support for Children/Young People

Primary School Support

The first half of 2024 saw the rollout of the Flourishing Start Programme, developed by Sophie Howell, to provide parents and children with tools to help them manage and talk about wellbeing. The number benefiting from the programme was over 200 for the year.

HI Friends' trainee counsellor started at the Park Primary in May 2024 and sees 2 children each week.

Secondary School Support

HI Friends provided 4 hours of pupil counselling support per week at IVC and 19 pupils received one-to-one counselling.

A ten-week course of wellbeing guidance was provided to the ICAS (Impington Creativity Activity Service)

programme and 30 young people benefited.

The Young Mental Wellbeing Champions project at IVC, provided by HI Friends, has continued. 19 young people received a full day's training in mental wellbeing support.

Discover & Recharge: Teen Wellbeing Course

This 10 week course started in November for young people in Years 9-11 who wanted to learn about wellbeing, gain some helpful tools and strategies and do some fun activities while enjoying snacks. The course was run in partnership with The Connections Bus Project, run by Andrea Cramp. 8 young people started the course and 5 finished. Although numbers were lower than

hoped, those who attended benefitted greatly and all received a course workbook to take away with them.

SEND Parent Carer Support Group

The group offers an informal space for parents with children who have diagnosed or non-diagnosed SEND or additional needs. In anticipation of the Group starting in January 2025, Liz Armstrong was recruited as Group Leader in November.

Discover & Recharge

Teen Wellbeing Course

Activities, games, crafts and a relaxed space to learn more about wellbeing... snacks included!

Histon Recreation Ground Community Room

3.30pm-5.00pm

Beginning on the 13th of November

Years 7-11 inclusive

For more info, FAQs, or to register, scan the QR code:

HI Friends of Histon & Impington Community

Course organised by HI Friends in partnership with The Connections Bus Project

THE CONNECTIONS BUS PROJECT

Coffee & Connect

2nd Monday Monthly | 10-11:30am

Starts January 13th

Kay Hitch Way Community Centre
Histon, CB24 9YR

SEND Support Group

for local parents & carers of children & young people with additional needs

Coffee & Connect is a new monthly support group that offers an informal and welcoming space to meet, chat and make connections with other parents and carers of children with SEND. Whether your child attends a mainstream or special school, is not currently at school, is diagnosed or undiagnosed, we would love to see you- everyone is welcome. Come along to meet other parents and make new friends, or just drop in for a quick coffee.

Free: just bring yourself!
Contact Liz: liz@hifriends.org.uk

HI Friends of Histon & Impington Community

HI Friends Wellbeing Café

This first started in May 2019 as the Worry Tree Café and was paused in early Autumn following a decline in attendance. We are looking at alternative provision of a safe wellbeing space, potentially including an informal Men's Group.

Family Hub

A bi-monthly activity held on Saturdays at the St. Andrew’s Centre, with the aim of supporting families struggling with wellbeing. An average of 20/30 children attend with parents.

Dementia & Memory Loss Support

The team currently consists of:

- **Julie Uttridge** | Dementia Support Coordinator (DSC)
- **Jan Payne** | Memory Loss Support Group Leader

New Service Users & Support Given

Julie, in her role as DSC, received 40 new referrals during the year and is in regular contact with 21 families. Her role is more relationship-based than other members of the Wellbeing Team: listening and walking alongside is vital to her work and valuable to service users. A recent development has been the number of Young Onset Dementia referrals received.

Julie has a close working relationship with the Social Prescriber based at the Firs Surgery.

Memory Support Groups

In response to an increasing demand, and to ensure those attending had a comfortable experience, a second

fortnightly Memory Support Group was formed in early January 2024. The Tuesday group has around 24 regular members and the newer Friday group has 12 members who have requested to meet weekly: this is being arranged from September.

Jan Payne explains the importance of the groups:

‘People continue to tell me how much the hour a week means to them, how it brightens their lives. Some call it transformational and one lady with dementia in the Friday group has told me she just loves it so much.’

The groups enjoyed trips to the Cambridge Botanical Gardens in August.

Dementia Luncheon Club

The Club meets monthly for a fish and chip lunch at Kay Hitch Way Community Room and 14 regularly attend.



Other Charity Activities & Services

Other services include the half-yearly Hope Again Bereavement Course, a weekly Knit & Natter group, weekly tai chi and pilates classes and Walking Football and Rugby.

Community Events in 2024

Funds raised from community events help enormously towards meeting the operating costs of the charity and raised nearly £20k throughout the year.

Old event favourites, such as the Impington Running Festival and the Bonfire Burn 10k, are well-established. As such, it can be refreshing when new events take place. Last July, HI Friends worked in partnership with Cambridgeshire Music to organise an outdoor concert at Histon Manor, featuring the

Cambridgeshire County Youth Orchestra performing 'The Planets'. Nearly 400 attended on a glorious Sunday afternoon.

In June, HI Friends hosted the H & I Indie Fest and a Comedy Marquee on the Recreation Ground.



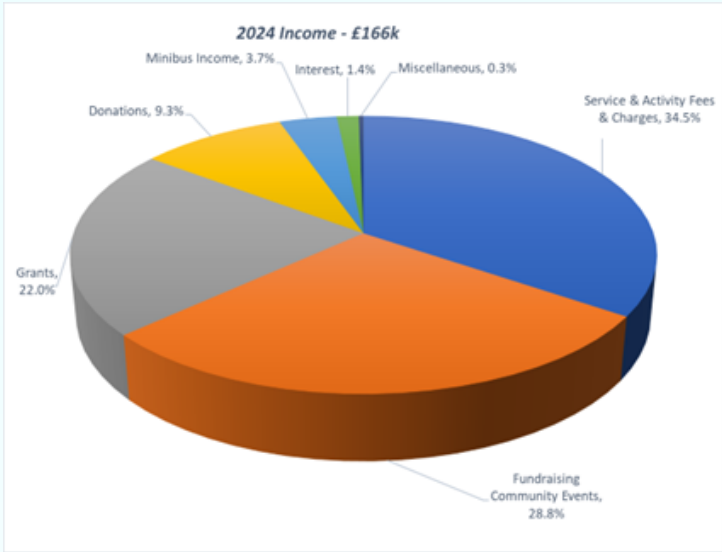
Charity Finances Report

from David Wilson, Treasurer

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After a year of increased activity across many areas, HI Friends ended 2024 in good financial shape. As always, we are very grateful to those who give financially to support our work, and enable all the services and activities HI Friends delivers to take place. We are also extremely grateful to those who turn out to help at our community events throughout the year, as these raise crucial funds to help sustain the charity's work.

Where does our funding come from?



Grants and Donations

HI Friends is very grateful to the many individuals who give generously to the Charity and to the following organisations who continued to

support our work in the community during 2024 through grant funding:

Histon and Impington Parish Council, **Histon and Impington Town Charity**, Histon & Impington Churches Together, **South Cambridgeshire District Council**, Histon Beer Festival, **Cambridgeshire Community Foundation**, The National Lottery Community Fund, **Histon Feast**, HI Friends Tai Chi group.

Income in 2024: £166k

The various services and activities offered by the charity continue to thrive, generating valuable income, with new sessions added for the Day Centre and the Memory Support Group to accommodate more members.

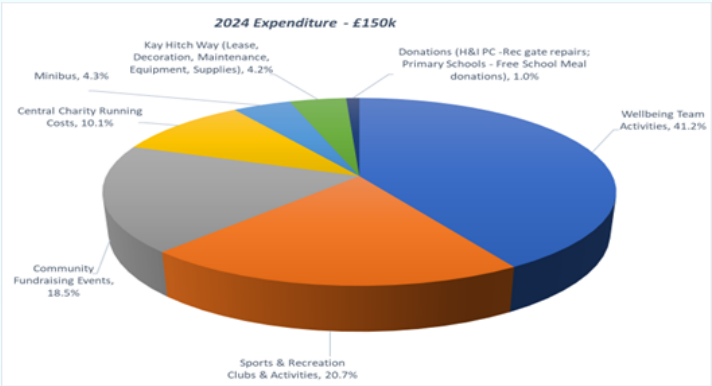
The Charity benefits from several supporters who give regularly to support our work. In addition, we received a number of one-off gifts, but overall our income from donations was reduced in 2024, following an exceptional year in 2023.

Amongst other things, new grants enabled us to expand our Dementia

Support Group offering and help fund the Day Centre and our services for older people.

Net income from our Community Fundraising events almost doubled to £20k in 2024.

And where does our funding go?



Expenditure in 2024: £150k

After a period of consolidation during the previous year, 2024 saw the introduction of three new members of staff to help deliver our expanding services in mental wellbeing, dementia support and activities for older people. As a result, our staff costs rose but, with increased income from attendance charges at some of our activities, as well as generous funding from the Parish Council, Histon Beer Festival and others, the charity finished the year in a healthy financial position.

The charity made good use of the Community Centre at Kay Hitch Way,

which it leases from South Cambs District Council, throughout the year with the Lunch Club and other activities taking place there regularly. This has led to a reduction in our venue costs overall. The charity also funded some improvements to furnishings to make the venue more comfortable for those attending events and groups there.

Participation in the various sports and recreational activities that the charity offers increased again in 2024, leading to a further increase in income from these activities. The resulting surplus, together with funds raised through our community fundraising events, is used to help fund the services and activities of the wellbeing team.

Community Minibus usage remained steady in 2024, and a contribution of £1,000 from the operating surplus was made towards the minibus replacement fund, which stood at about £37k at the end of the year.

Want to support HI Friends?

While some of the charity's income is generated through the activities we provide and Community fundraising events that take place throughout each year, we also rely on the generous support of individuals who give financially. Many of our wellbeing

team services are provided free of charge, or at a subsidised rate, and this is made possible by donations from our supporters.

If you would like to support the work of HI Friends, please visit our website (www.hifriends.org.uk), or scan the QR code below.



A monthly gift of £5 will help HI Friends: deliver a course of counselling for a child in school, deliver a Hope Again bereavement course, provide support for those living with dementia or memory loss, help older people to stay active and engaged in the community, provide company and a meal at the Lunch Club, and more.



2020 - 2025

Help HI Friends with a 5th Anniversary Fiver

A one-off or regular donation will help our charity wellbeing work across the community

To donate, scan the QR code, or visit: www.hifriends.org.uk





Trustees & Acknowledgements

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HI Friends is grateful for funding support received from:



**Histon & Impington
Town Charity**



**Churches Together
Histon & Impington**

Batterson Chivers Foundation

And to our lead sponsors:



Charity Trustees 2024

Vernon Dudley (Chair)
Don Kelly (Vice Chair)
David Wilson (Treasurer)
Jess Pratt
Nicki Fraser
Rebecca Strivens
Kate Camps
Richard Martin
Rob Fisher
Edd Stonham
Chris Cox
Rob Murphy
Paul Grafham

Clerk to the Trustees

Neil Davies
neil@hifriends.org.uk

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Registered charity number 1185578
www.hifriends.org.uk

Email contact: info@hifriends.org.uk
Facebook: HI Friends
Instagram: @hi_friends_charity

Wellbeing Team

Contact Details & Information

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Older People's Team



Paul Seekings

Older People's Worker

☎ 07756 080197

✉ paul@hifriends.org.uk

Paul can arrange home visits and runs a number of clubs.



Helen Blake

Holiday at Home & Lunch Club Coordinator

☎ 07394 173430

✉ helen@hifriends.org.uk

Helen handles enquiries for the Lunch Club, and organises regular Holiday at Home Events.



Julie Uttridge

Dementia Support Coordinator

☎ 07934 817316

✉ julie@hifriends.org.uk

Julie provides support to those living with dementia or memory loss.



Sally Smith

Services Coordinator

☎ 07772 437789

✉ sally@hifriends.org.uk

Sally organises Monday Exercise classes and shopping services.



Jo Franklin

Carers & End-of-Life Support Worker

☎ 07752 016164

✉ jo@hifriends.org.uk

Jo provides support for carers and adults with life limiting illnesses, or those receiving palliative care.



Jan Payne

Memory Support Group Leader

☎ 07780 674563

✉ jan@hifriends.org.uk

Jan leads our Support Groups for those with dementia or memory loss.

Dementia & Memory Loss Team

Wellbeing Team



Sophie Howell

Mental Wellbeing Services Coordinator

☎ 07922 083991

✉ sophie@hifriends.org.uk

Sophie organises services for mental wellbeing in the community and village schools.



Liz Armstrong

SEND Support Group Leader

✉ liz@hifriends.org.uk

Liz runs a group providing support for parents and carers of children with SEND.



Jeremy Hyde

Mental Wellbeing Worker

✉ jeremy@hifriends.org.uk

Jeremy provides support for those struggling with their mental wellbeing.