

Working together



Hamelin, BOSP and SNAP, have joined forces to create a new Essex-wide Disability Alliance.

The alliance has been established to strengthen support for people who are neurodivergent, have learning or physical disabilities, or live with life-limiting illnesses.

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Welcome

Welcome to the autumn 2025 edition of Hamelin's newsletter. We're excited to share all the wonderful things that have been happening across Hamelin over the past few months.

This edition is full of creativity, teamwork and celebration. We joined forces with our friends at BOSP and SNAP to launch the Essex Disability Alliance, a new partnership helping us provide stronger support for people and families right across the county (p. 8-9). Our Iconic art exhibition was another huge highlight, raising an amazing £2,500 and showing off the incredible talent of the people we support (p. 4-5).

We're also proud to have become an accredited ASDAN member, giving people the chance to gain nationally recognised qualifications and build skills for independence and employment (p. 6-7). And of course, there's plenty of joy to be found in the Gowlands summer party and the Bungalow breaks in Norfolk, where fun, friendship and sunshine were in full supply (p. 11-13).

On the fundraising front, our community has been amazing as ever. Every event helps us raise vital funds and spread the word about the work we do (p. 14-17). We're also grateful to our brilliant partners, including Maggio Lounge, who celebrated their first birthday while continuing to support Hamelin (p. 19).

We're also getting ready for our annual Christmas tree collection which is a highlight of Hamelin's fundraising calendar (p. 17).

We hope you enjoy catching up on all the news and feel proud of what your support is helping to make possible. Thank you for being part of our journey and for helping us make a real difference every single day.

The Hamelin Communications Team
comms@hamelin.org.uk

Gowlands rated Good by CQC

Hamelin has received a 'Good' rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for Gowlands following an inspection in September. Inspectors praised the service's person-centred approach, strong leadership and caring, dedicated staff who embody the charity's values.

Luke Baldock, Gowlands Service Manager, said: "This was the first time Hamelin services have been audited under the CQC's new assessment framework. We are proud to have maintained our Good rating, which reflects the positive work and dedication of the Gowlands team. Our commitment to development continues, with plans already in place for further enhancement based on discussions with our CQC colleagues."

Inspectors praised Hamelin's person-centred approach, strong leadership and caring, committed staff. They highlighted how the team promotes dignity, choice and inclusion for everyone supported at Gowlands.

Director of Care, Shoenagh Mackay, added: "CQC inspections are a valuable learning opportunity and whilst we're happy to receive a Good rating, the CQC report also gives us a basis for further development. I thank Luke and his staff team for their significant efforts in achieving this Good rating."

Overall, inspectors said the service is performing well and meeting expectations and that Hamelin demonstrated a clear commitment to learning, making improvements and developing the service.

Read more on our website at www.hamelin.org.uk/news



Iconic art exhibition success



We held our 'Iconic' art exhibition in September to showcase the talents of the people we support.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support the event, enjoy the art on show, and purchase the original works and replica items. Here are just some of the photos from the evening.

We are delighted to announce the event raised an amazing £2,500. This will make a huge difference to the lives of the autistic adults and people with learning disabilities we support.

Big shout out and thanks to:

- Artist Kirstie Taylor, who generously volunteers her time at Hamelin to work with our people to create the amazing artworks
- tappdcocktails and The Billericay Brewery for providing drinks for the event
- All the artists who kindly donated works for our raffle
- Our amazing team of staff and volunteers who helped on the night

Your support is helping Hamelin create compassionate communities where disabled people can live the life they choose. Thank you.





Hamelin becomes ASDAN member



Hamelin has become an accredited ASDAN member, giving our people new opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications.

As an accredited ASDAN member, Hamelin can now offer a wide range of courses and training opportunities designed to encourage greater independence, confidence and employability.

ASDAN is an education charity and awarding organisation that provides courses and qualifications to build skills for life and work. These cover everything from personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, to practical life skills such as independent living and gardening, as well as vocational tasters in subjects like art and computing. The programmes help people develop personal, social and employability skills while working towards qualifications recognised across the country.

The courses, which are available from Key Stage 2 through to Level 3 will allow people to do the things they want to do, whether that is preparing to live more independently, building skills for employment, or gaining confidence.

This achievement has been made possible thanks to generous funding from KBH Haus, which supports communities through its charitable activities. Their contribution has enabled Hamelin to take this important step in becoming an ASDAN member and expand learning and development pathways for the people it supports.

To mark the occasion, Hamelin held a celebration launch event attended by the people it supports and their families, along with representatives from funder KBH Haus and Richard Holden, MP for Basildon and Billericay.

Sue Wray, Hamelin's Head of Community said the accreditation was a significant milestone for the charity.

She said: "The people we support will now have access to recognised qualifications while developing their skills. Becoming an ASDAN centre is a key part of our vision to create opportunities and empower individuals to thrive and grow.

"We believe our ASDAN accreditation will bring huge benefits to the people we support, as they can build their skills to follow their life ambitions and goals while gaining qualifications at the same time."

With this new accreditation, Hamelin looks forward to supporting the people it works with to grow in confidence, gain qualifications that reflect their talents and achievements, and take exciting steps towards greater independence and meaningful employment.

"It's so nice to see this positive change happening right in the heart of the local community I represent. A huge thank you for everything Hamelin does, and continues to do, to help some of the most vulnerable in our society. These positive steps give that extra bit of independence and choice in people's lives, and that is what is so important.

Having Hamelin here at the heart of Billericay gives me a real boost, and it also provides a window into what we need to do as a society to support some of the most vulnerable."

Richard Holden, MP for Basildon and Billericay

Essex Disability Alliance launched



Three Essex charities, BOSP, Hamelin and SNAP, have joined forces to create a new Essex-wide Disability Alliance.

The alliance has been established to strengthen support for people who are neurodivergent, have learning or physical disabilities, or live with life-limiting illnesses. By working together, the charities can provide a stronger network of care, ensuring people receive the right support when they need it and giving disabled people and their families clearer guidance through what can often be a complex system.

BOSP and SNAP bring decades of experience supporting children and young adults, while Hamelin is one of the largest charities in Essex supporting disabled adults. Each alliance partner will continue delivering their own missions and exist as independent charities, but together, the alliance will seek to work closer together. One key aim is to ensure the experience for families, particularly the transition from children to adult services, is as positive and streamlined as possible.

They will also seek to amplify key messages that are important to families affected by disability across Essex, speaking with one voice when influencing the social care and health systems.

BOSP CEO Jodie Connelly, Hamelin CEO Ru Watkins and SNAP CEO Karen Boath said: “We are proud to be coming together to form the Essex Disability Alliance. By uniting our expertise, we can offer families clearer guidance and stronger support at every stage of their journey.

“We know that navigating services can often feel overwhelming, particularly during the transition from childhood to adulthood, and we believe this alliance will help to make that experience more positive and less daunting.

“This is a positive step for all three charities and for the people and families we support. By working in collaboration, we can achieve more, influence more, and ensure that the voices of those we support are heard more strongly than ever.”

The alliance formation has been praised by Tom Abell, Chief Executive of Greater Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB). The ICB acts as a statutory NHS body, overseeing the integration of local NHS services and collaborating with partner organisations, aiming to improve overall population health and wellbeing.

Tom said: “We welcome this new partnership which is an exciting opportunity to make a real positive difference to people across Essex, providing an opportunity for the NHS to work better with voluntary and community organisations. We look forward to working in partnership with the alliance to improve the way that health and care services work.”

World Mental Health Day

Hamelin marked World Mental Health Day. Some of the people we support baked delicious cakes to raise money for Mind.

It was a lovely opportunity to pause and remember how important it is to take time to relax, chat and connect with others, while also supporting other organisations doing such valuable work.



MP visits Rochford site

Hamelin welcomed MP Bayo Alaba to our Rochford site to showcase how we are delivering bold, forward-thinking solutions for autistic adults and people with learning disabilities.

During the visit the MP for Southend East and Rochford toured Gowlands, our vibrant short stay centre, and Roots & Shoots, our thriving horticultural training project. He also joined senior members of the Hamelin team for an in-depth discussion about the charity's ambitious vision for the future of care, and met participants on our Ability Works programme, which helps people build skills for employment and independent living.

At the end of the visit, Mr Alaba was presented with a basket of fresh fruit and vegetables grown by some of the people we support at Roots & Shoots, showcasing the pride, skill and care that goes into every part of the project.

The visit was a fantastic opportunity to highlight how Hamelin is developing a more flexible and inclusive care model to support more people in the community.

“I’d like to thank the team at Hamelin for welcoming me to their site. It was a pleasure to meet the hardworking staff, and to field questions from those supported by the charity. We’re so lucky to have this service on our doorstep, and I look forward to working with them.”

Bayo Alaba, MP for Southend East and Rochford



Gowlands summer party

Lots of fun was had by all at our recent Gowlands summer party in Rochford!

It was wonderful to see some of the people we support, their families and our staff coming together to enjoy the sunshine, music and entertainment.

Guests also tucked into a delicious buffet and enjoyed handmade cakes.



Bungalow breaks in Norfolk

Residents from The Bungalow in Wickford headed off for brilliant breaks in Norfolk, staying at the comfy and accessible Church Farm Barns in Bircham Newton. The group split into a girls' and boys' group, each accompanied by staff.

Church Farm Barns is a collection of beautifully converted farm buildings designed to be fully accessible, with level access, open-plan layouts and wet rooms, making it the perfect spot for our residents to relax and enjoy some time away.

The girls enjoyed chilled days out to Banham Zoo, Cromer, and a lovely dinner at The Dabbling Duck in Great Massingham. They loved meeting the animals, strolling along Cromer's seafront, and tucking into great food at the cosy country pub — all while enjoying some peace and quiet away from the boys!

The boys, meanwhile, went for action. They explored Amazona Zoo in Cromer, visited the Muckleburgh Military Museum, and rounded off their trip at Snettisham Park, meeting animals and exploring the farm.

Both groups came home happy, full of stories, and already talking about when they can go again!





Billericay Fun Walk

Some of the people we support, staff and volunteers took part in The Billericay Fun Walk in September. They completed two laps of Lake Meadows, enjoying the beautiful scenery and spotting the wildlife in the park.

Well done to everyone who took part, and thank you to everyone who sponsored participants. All money raised will go towards funding activities the people we support want to do.

We'll let you know soon how much was raised once sponsor forms are returned. We've also set up a Just Giving page if you wish to make a donation: www.justgiving.com/campaign/hamelin-trust-fun-walk-2025

Thank you!



'It's like Google Maps in real life'

On a recent holiday to Spain, our Marketing Manager Martyn decided to see Seville from a completely different angle – by skydiving from 13,000 feet!

Martyn described the experience as 'just like Google Maps in real life, only without the street names!' He said: "The adrenaline, noise and speed of the freefall were incredible, then suddenly it was calm and peaceful once the canopy opened and I could take in the views. It was such an incredible experience - I'd recommend it to everyone!"

Now his feet are safely back on terra firma, Martyn is raising funds for Hamelin - you can make a donation here: www.justgiving.com/page/martyn-dolton-7 Thank you!

Head over to our social media pages to see more photos and a video!



Are you up for a challenge?

Whether you're already gearing up for a big adventure, ticking off a bucket list goal or taking on a personal challenge, why not do it in aid of Hamelin? By supporting our charity you can turn your incredible experience into something that helps others too. Whatever you're doing, we'd love to hear about it and cheer you on! Contact fundraising@hamelin.org.uk

Make a smile lottery

When you play **make a smile lottery**, you are doing something amazing. Not only are you in with the chance to win cash prizes every week, but you are also helping to raise funds for Hamelin!

For only **£1 per play**, you can be in with the chance of winning the weekly top prize of £1,000. There are 281 other weekly prizes up for grabs - 1 x £200, 10 x £10, 270 x £5, plus a rollover prize. The rollover goes up by £500 every week and should it not be won, rolls over to a maximum of £25,000!

You can get single tickets or set up a recurring subscription. Find out more at www.makeasmilelottery.org.uk/partners/hamelin

Win up to £25,000!

www.makeasmilelottery.org.uk

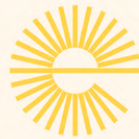


You shop, Hamelin benefits

Did you know you can support Hamelin with your everyday purchases?

Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to you!

All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online. It's easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us. Thank you.



**Support us through
easyfundraising**

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hamelintrust

Christmas tree collection

Our Christmas Tree Collection is back for 2026 in conjunction with Just Helping, offering an easy, eco-friendly way to say farewell to your tree while supporting people in your community.

Between Wednesday 7th and Friday 9th January 2026, our team of volunteers will be out collecting real Christmas trees from homes across our community. In return for a donation, we'll make sure every tree is recycled responsibly, helping protect the environment and raise vital funds for our charity's work.

No queues, no muddy car boots, no trip to the recycling centre - simply book your collection before midnight on Sunday 4th January 2026, leave your tree outside, and we'll take care of the rest.

All money raised will fund Hamelin's work in the community, supporting autistic adults and people with learning disabilities to live the life they choose.

Keep an eye out on our social media channels for booking details which will open in November.

We'll be collecting in the SS4 1, SS4 3, SS4 9, SS5, SS6, SS7, SS9, SS11, SS12, CM11, CM12 postcode areas.



Raising funds for



Hamelin

Redefining care for a better future

HALLOWEEN

VIRTUAL CHARITY BALLOON RACE

£100 PRIZE

for overall race winner

Amazon Alexa / Echo Dot 4th Generation
for second place

ONLY £3

per virtual balloon



Plus prizes for top 3 Hamelin balloons:

1st - £25 M&S voucher, 2nd - £15 Amazon voucher,
3rd - £10 Amazon voucher



Customise and decorate your balloon



Track your balloon's progress during the race



Race starts at noon on 31st October from
Dracula's castle in Romania & lasts 7 days



Full details at www.hamelin.org.uk/halloween-balloon-race-2025

**SCAN ME
TO ENTER!**



Happy birthday Maggio Lounge!



Hamelin was delighted to join in the celebrations for Maggio Lounge's first birthday recently. Since opening last year, Maggio had been a valued supporter of Hamelin, raising more than £2,000 for our charity.

The generosity of Maggio and their customers means so much and makes a real difference to the lives of the people we support.

To show our appreciation, members of the Hamelin team and people we support signed a special birthday card, which we presented to Maggio on the night. Happy Birthday Maggio, and thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Happy retirement, Mike!

Mike Burgess has been a dedicated supporter of Hamelin for many years, making a real and lasting difference to our community.

Through his work with Ford in Dunton, Mike has helped build a strong volunteering base with colleagues, supporting projects such as refurbishment works at the Bungalow, the installation of our sensory pathway at Gowlands, and our Christmas tree collection. He has also been instrumental in securing funding from Ford to make these initiatives possible. He is now taking well-deserved early retirement, and we wish him all the best.



We are grateful for Mike's commitment and delighted that, even in retirement, he is keen to continue volunteering with Hamelin. We look forward to working with him again soon and continuing our relationship with Ford.

Mike said: "I've really enjoyed supporting Hamelin in various projects with Ford and it has been great to get to know members of the team, enjoying camaraderie as we worked. I've also build friendships that go beyond the projects."

 Hamelin*



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