

## Summer fun!



The people we support have been making the most of the good weather with numerous trips out and about in our community and further afield.

See pages 7-8 and 14-15 for more



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# Welcome

Welcome to the summer 2025 edition of Hamelin's newsletter! We're thrilled to bring you another round-up of the , uplifting and important moments that have shaped our charity over the past few months.

This issue captures the spirit of the season beautifully, from seaside adventures and garden strolls (p. 7-8 and p. 14-15), to the launch of our brand-new sensory trail at Sutton Farm, a space designed to bring people closer to nature in a truly inclusive way (p. 3).

We also celebrated our brilliant volunteers at a special event in Chelmsford, recognising those who go above and beyond to support our community (p. 10-11).

There's plenty of inspiration to be found in these pages , from Gaynor's incredible London Marathon run raising more than £3,000 (p. 18), to the

creativity on display in our art exhibitions and craft sessions (p. 5 and p. 14), to the skills being built through our Ability Works programme (p. 13).

We're also shining a spotlight on our fantastic partners, like Maggio Lounge and Aureos, whose ongoing support continues to make a real impact (p. 17 and p. 20).

We hope this newsletter gives you a joyful glimpse into what your support is making possible. Every outing, every opportunity, every moment of connection, it all adds up to a better future for autistic adults and people with learning disabilities in Essex.

Thank you for standing with us.

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# New sensory trail launched



A new sensory trail has opened at our Sutton Farm site in Rochford. It was launched during a special event that welcomed community members, the people we support, volunteers and funders who helped bring the project to life.

Created with inclusivity in mind, the trail is designed for autistic adults and people with learning disabilities to encourage movement, exploration and connection with nature.

With funding from Active Essex and Ford, and support from dedicated volunteers, the trail now links our Gowlands and Roots & Shoots gardens. Along the route, visitors can explore sensory stations, a colourful painted path with activity prompts, and calming plants that promote relaxation and well-being.

The people we support also have opportunities to get involved in maintaining the space, helping them build skills and confidence through hands-on horticulture.

Hamelin Chair of Trustees Graham Woodham praised everyone involved and said the project was a proud achievement for the charity.

You can read more on our website [www.hamelin.org.uk/news](http://www.hamelin.org.uk/news)

**“What’s been created here is remarkable, and it stands as a model for what collaboration and community effort can achieve. It’s a truly inspiring example of what’s possible.”**

Cllr Lee Scott, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Regeneration





# Art exhibitions showcase talent



We're delighted to see artwork created by some of the people we support on display at Billericay Library!

These amazing pieces were created last year with the help of local artist Kirstie Taylor for Hamelin's Inspired art exhibition at Billericay Theatre. We love them so much, we just had to share them again for people to enjoy!

The exhibition runs until the end of July, so pop in and take a look. You can even buy an original piece or replica postcards.

Kirstie has been working with our people on a new series of artwork to form the 'Iconic' exhibition coming in September, see information below.

They have been busy identifying people, places and items that are iconic to them and turn them into pieces of art.

The exhibition will feature artworks of David Bowie (below), Charlie Chaplin, and even a jar of Marmite, plus lots more!



## Dates for your diary

### **Throughout July**

Inspired exhibition at Billericay Library

### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

Iconic exhibition, Chantry Centre, Billericay, 7-9pm.



# A safe space to share

We know how important it is to listen to the people we support. Following the sad passing of our dear friend Christopher who was a member of our Billeriy community for many years, the people we support wanted a meaningful way to express their thoughts and emotions. Some found it hard to talk about how they were feeling, while others simply didn't know where to start.

In response, our community came together and suggested a 'share box', a safe and supportive space where anyone can write down their worries, memories, dreams or feelings. It has quickly become a powerful way for people to feel heard, to know they are not alone and to connect with others who may be feeling the same.

The first messages placed in the share box were full of love and remembrance for Christopher. He was a much loved member of our Hamelin family, known for his passion for music, especially ABBA, his politeness and his fondness for the Isle of Wight. He had been attending Hamelin for many years and his warmth and kindness left a lasting impression on all of us.



The share box is more than just a place to put words, it is a reminder of the strength of our community and the importance of listening, understanding and supporting one another. Christopher's memory lives on not only in our hearts but in the way his friends chose to honour him, by creating a space where everyone can be seen, heard and supported.



# Bungalow residents' summer fun

Residents at the Bungalow have been making the most of the recent good weather with some exciting day trips, enjoying the chance to relax and have fun as housemates.

The group set off on three separate adventures, visiting Wingham Wildlife Park in Canterbury, the impressive Duxford Air Museum and the beautiful RHS Garden Wisley in Surrey. Each day was packed with fun and adventure, with some days stretching into the evening making the most of the good weather and lighter days.

Everyone involved, including our dedicated staff who supported the trips, returned home with big smiles on their faces and lots of new memories. These shared experiences are a reminder of the joy and connection that come from spending time together, exploring new places and enjoying life as a community.

**See more photos on our Facebook page @HamelinTrust**









# Health & Care Careers Expo

We had a brilliant time at Anglia Ruskin University's Health & Care Careers Expo in Chelmsford. It was fantastic to speak with so many people about the wide range of careers available in health and social care.

Events like these are a great way to spark interest and highlight just how diverse and rewarding the sector can be.

A big thank you to ARU for hosting and to everyone who stopped by for a chat and got involved in our interactive elements, the community artwork piece is extremely vibrant!

We loved sharing our experiences and hearing people's aspirations.



# Celebrating Hamelin's heroes

Hamelin held its annual volunteer celebration earlier this month to recognise those who give their time to help others in our community.

Held at Little Channels in Chelmsford, the event brought together around 30 volunteers from Hamelin's services across Essex. The day was an opportunity to say thank you, reflect on the impact of volunteering and connect with others.

Guests enjoyed a three-course lunch, lively conversation and a values-based workshop exploring what it means to be part of the Hamelin community. The session focused on the charity's core values - We are community, We enhance lives and We think differently, with volunteers sharing personal experiences and ideas on how these values come to life in their roles. A visual facilitator captured the discussions through live illustration, creating a colourful and engaging snapshot of the day.

A highlight of the afternoon was the volunteer awards ceremony, where seven volunteers were recognised for going above and beyond. Each award was linked to one of Hamelin's values and celebrated individuals who consistently embody those principles in their volunteering. The winners, nominated by the people Hamelin supports, were presented with certificates, commemorative plaques and a hotel break kindly donated by charity partner Room to Reward.

**Read more on our website at [www.hamelin.org.uk/news](http://www.hamelin.org.uk/news)**





# Our award winners

Congratulations to our award winners! We'll be sharing their stories and nominations over on our website [www.hamelin.org.uk](http://www.hamelin.org.uk) and our socials @HamelinTrust, so keep an eye out for them!



**Finley Francis**  
WE ENHANCE LIVES



**Liz Kerwood**  
WE ENHANCE LIVES



**Kirstie Taylor**  
WE THINK DIFFERENTLY



**Doreen Gazzard**  
WE ARE COMMUNITY



**Christine Jacobs**  
WE ENHANCE LIVES



**Frank Ward**  
WE THINK DIFFERENTLY



**Maria McIntyre**  
WE ARE COMMUNITY

Hamelin also commemorated Volunteers' Week in June with a series of case studies. You can see some of what our volunteers had to say below. Head over to our social media pages @HamelinTrust to view the videos.



"I wouldn't be where I am today without the help I receive, so if I can help someone else it really makes me feel like I'm doing something.

It doesn't matter what your ability is, what you can or can't do, there is always something you can give."

**Katie**



"Just seeing the good work Hamelin do, I can help in a small way to be part of a bigger process and that is very uplifting and rewarding.

I don't see it as a chore at all coming to do these things, I get as much from it as I can give."

**Mike**



"I started out as a volunteer and then transitioned to become support worker. I thought the route into social care was a good one and also it was a change of career route for myself, so I thought that volunteering would provide a route in to an organisation.

Volunteering is a great way forward."

**Chris**



# Ability Works builds skills

Ability Works participants have been busy building confidence and having fun through team-building activities that support their journey into employment.

From racing to build the tallest spaghetti and marshmallow towers to enjoying a sunny day out at Barleylands Farm Park, participants have been developing key workplace skills such as communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

These activities are not just enjoyable, they're essential in helping our participants grow together as a team and prepare for the world of work.

Our Ability Works programme is a free employment programme for autistic adults and people with learning disabilities in Rochford, Southend, and Castle Point, based at our Rochford site.



# Fun and creativity at Gowlands

Guests at Gowlands have been busy enjoying fun activities and experiences. Our new path and sensory area have been a big hit, offering a calming and stimulating space to explore. Outings to Southend seafront have brought plenty of joy, with ice creams, amusements and sea air putting smiles on many faces. Bowling has also been a popular choice, with some friendly rivalry adding to the excitement!

Brenda has been leading some wonderfully creative arts and crafts sessions, with an avant-garde twist. These have resulted in some delightful surprises for relatives, including imaginative gifts like glowing fireflies in bottles.

Meanwhile, our Family Portal continues to keep everyone connected. Relatives, and guests if they wish, can access our care planning system to see real-time updates, photos and activity highlights. It has been a fantastic way to share special moments and keep everyone in the loop.

We are also pleased to welcome our new guests who have joined us since April: Finley, Dylan, Cheyenne, Thomas, Maisie, Ellie and Vicki. We hope you are all enjoying your time at Gowlands and look forward to many more memorable moments together.







# VE Day celebrations

We had a fantastic time celebrating VE Day! It was wonderful to see everyone singing along and dancing to classic wartime favourites like We'll Meet Again, Pack Up Your Troubles, and Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree.

A huge thank you to the fabulous Bethan Marshall for providing the brilliant entertainment and bringing the spirit of the era to life.

People we support, their families, and our amazing staff all joined in the fun. It was a brilliant opportunity for everyone from across our services to come together and connect.

As much as it was a joyful celebration, it was also an important time of reflection as we remember and honour those who gave so much for the freedoms we enjoy today.





# Lounge Aid success

Since opening on Billericay High Street last year, Maggio Lounge has become a valued supporter of Hamelin, and June was no exception.

As part of the nationwide Lounge Aid initiative, Maggio dedicated the entire month to raising funds for Hamelin through a series of fantastic events. From live music nights and a community quiz to a lively afternoon of bingo, the team put on a packed programme to bring people together and raise awareness.

Each Tuesday, the people we support proudly hosted a stall at Maggio, showcasing and selling a selection of handmade items. These sessions were a brilliant opportunity to connect with the local community and highlight the creativity and talents of the people supported by Hamelin.

We want to say a huge thank you to the team at Maggio Lounge and everyone who came along to support us throughout June. The Lounge Aid events raised £331.95 and the Hamelin stall raised £302.18, a grand total of £634.13!

Your generosity and community spirit mean so much. Thank you for supporting Hamelin!





# Gaynor's marathon success

Fresh from running the London Marathon, Hamelin supporter Gaynor Walton visited our Billericay centre to share her inspiring journey with the people we support. During a lively Q&A session, she spoke about her training, the emotional highs and lows of the race, and what motivated her to complete the 26.2 miles.

Gaynor's visit was recorded for Radio Hamelin, an exciting new project led by the people we support, which will feature interviews, music and stories. Her talk included everything from race-day nerves to post-run recovery, and she praised the thoughtful questions she was asked.

After a decade away from marathon running, Gaynor raised an incredible £3,371 for Hamelin, tackling the race in 22°C heat and drawing strength from the people the charity supports. She said thoughts of their resilience helped her push through the toughest moments, especially around mile 18.

The visit gave everyone the chance to celebrate her achievement and show their appreciation. Gaynor's determination and generosity have made a lasting impact. She is not just a marathon finisher, but a true Hamelin hero.

You can read more on our website at [www.hamelin.org.uk/news](http://www.hamelin.org.uk/news)



# 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](http://www.makeasmilelottery.org.uk/partners/hamelin)

## Win up to £25,000!

[www.makeasmilelottery.org.uk](http://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](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hamelintrust)

# Corporate supporter focus - Aureos



“ At Aureos, we believe in giving back to the communities that surround and support us.

Volunteering with Hamelin allows our team to make a meaningful contribution, supporting individuals with diverse needs.

It's a rewarding partnership built on compassion, purpose, and a shared commitment to making a difference

**Dan Thompson, Health, Safety, Environment, and Quality Manager** ”

Aureos is a leading provider of integrated infrastructure engineering services, and its team members have regularly rolled up their sleeves at our sites over the years.

Roots and Shoots in Rochford has especially benefited from their time and energy. The team has taken on gardening and general maintenance tasks, all to improve the area for the people we support.

Aureos has also been a key supporter of our annual Christmas tree collection, which raises vital funds for the charity. By providing vehicles and enthusiastic volunteers, they help make this major fundraising effort possible.

Their generosity, kindness and heartfelt commitment to community work are making a real impact and we are excited about the future and look forward to exploring even more ways we can work together to make a difference.



The brilliant team from Aureos joined us for a recent volunteering day at our Roots & Shoots site in Rochford.

They spent the day helping to de-weed and refresh our strawberry patches to get them ready for the people we support to harvest.

We're so grateful for the time and effort the team put in, for their enthusiasm throughout the day, and genuine interest in our charity and the people we support.

Aureos team members have been supporting Hamelin over several years getting involved with numerous projects, so it's always a pleasure when they offer to come back. We really appreciate the ongoing support and look forward to working together again soon!



 Hamelin\*



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