

Independence Matters Group

# Impact Report

## 2025



# Caring...

is at the heart of everything we do. We're proud to support adults with learning disabilities and older people to live with dignity, joy, and independence. Care isn't just a service—it's about building real relationships, showing kindness, and truly valuing people.

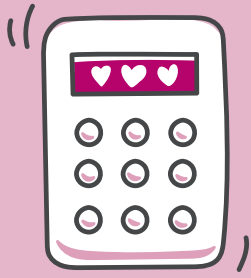
We believe in the power of local, employing people from our own communities, creating meaningful jobs, nurturing local talent, and ensuring our care reflects the values of those we support.

We're not just committed to caring for people, but for the environment too, by making thoughtful, sustainable choices every day. Caring locally, growing together—that's what drives us.

We know that delivering real social value is an ongoing journey. That's why we're always listening, learning, and looking for ways to do better.

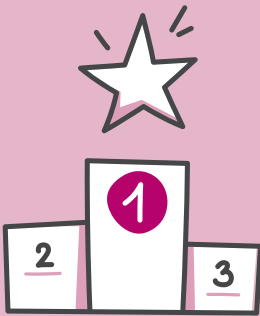
We're not just working in the community—we're part of it. Local, compassionate, and committed to continuous improvement.

# Our 2024-25 impact *in numbers*



## 566,002

Total number of care hours delivered



## 871

Total number of customers supported



## 744

Number of local staff employed



## 16,366

Total number of training hours



## 5,550

Customer volunteering hours



## 1,589

Total ££'s raised for charities

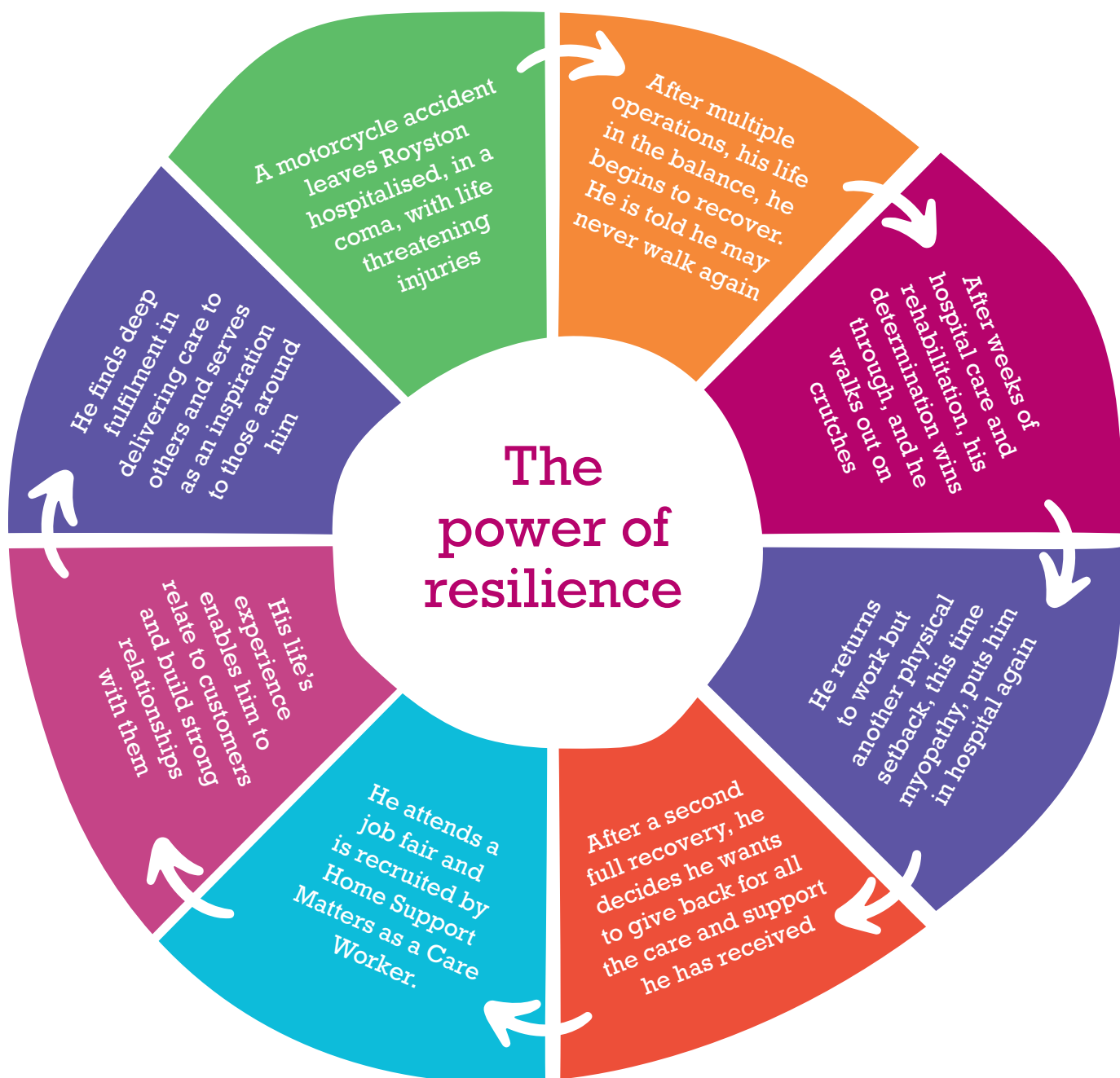


## 156,000

Reduction in A4 sheets of paper printed

Royston Owen

## Circle of social impact



"Royston joined the team two years ago and hasn't looked back since. He describes Home Support Matters as the most supportive employer he's ever had and has been a source of strength for those he supports."

Su Carver, Care Delivery

# Independence and Confidence

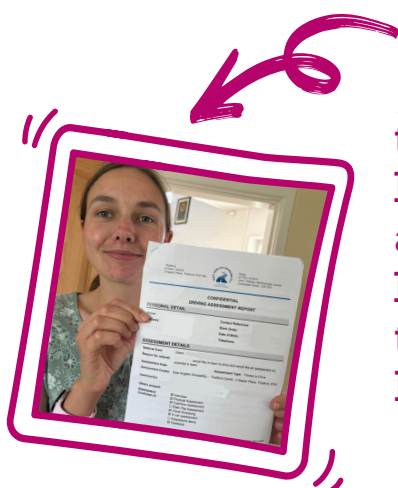


Cookery groups across our Learning Disability Hubs **supported 20% of customers** to learn meal planning and cookery skills, helping them develop healthy eating habits and good nutrition.



Drama supports customers to develop confidence and improve their self-esteem. **Over 100 customers** took part in weekly drama activities across our Hubs and a performance of Shrek 2 was played to a full house at Attleborough, receiving huge applause.

Since November 2024, **HSM has supported 21 individuals** as part of the Caring for Better Outcomes (CfBO) reablement service, with 15 either fully or partly regaining their independence.



**1 in 8 customers received support** with travelling independently. TITAN training gave Beth the confidence to walk into town by herself, and Emma completed a driving assessment with East Anglian DriveAbility. "Passing all areas of the test has given me more belief in myself and I'm very excited about learning to drive."

# Health and Wellbeing



**1 in 5 customers** took part in organised sports and exercise activities at Hubs and accessible sporting facilities in the local community, with a group competing at the **2024 Special Olympics**. They trained weekly at the UEA Sportspark to prepare for the games and were rewarded with **one gold, one silver, and five bronze** medals.



**The voices of 53 customers were heard** through our Working Together Groups, which promote and practice co-production.

Working with external partners including **NCC** and **The Making it Real Board**, they were recognised at the 2024 Norfolk Care Awards. "Knowing they are fully listened to has made customers feel empowered, capable and their contributions valued." Maria Bond, Working Together Co-Ordinator.

**IM's Training Team delivered sessions** to customers including how to save a life in an emergency situation which covered **delivering CPR**, using a **defibrillator**, what to do if someone is choking, and how to put someone in the recovery position.

**Open forum sessions** at Hubs encouraged customers to **discuss health related topics** and learn safe practices that could benefit their wellbeing. These included bullying, anxiety, mental health awareness, infection control and handwashing.

Recognising the importance of connection and belonging, HSM signposted customers and colleagues to **Sam's Wellbeing Hub** in Lowestoft. The café plays a vital role in supporting social isolation and offers mental health and wellbeing services to the local community.

**Customers at Holt had brighter smiles** thanks to visits from the **Community Dental Services**, Norfolk & Waveney Oral Health Improvement Team. These covered how to prevent tooth decay, correct ways to brush, and the **best foods and drinks** to support good oral health.



# Skills and Employment



Over 60 customers received training that supported independence through life skills. These included the **Multiply programme** which delivered numeracy training, using games to help customers learn more about numbers and develop their money skills.



**The Floating Support team** provided a customer with that extra bit of help needed to stay in **paid employment**. Support with shopping and cooking addressed concerns around self-care and nutrition by putting a meal on the table at the end of each working day.

**HSM delivered dementia awareness** sessions to NVQ Health and Social Care students at East Norfolk Sixth Form College. The 8 sessions each ended with a 5-minute talk on the rewards of working in the **social care sector**.



**Coastal Health & Wellbeing's community supermarket** offered a range of real-world learning opportunities to customers at Holt. Everyone learned the **basic skills** from cash handling to customer service, stock pricing and rotation, and was able to **greet the shop's customers** by name.

**Norfolk Industries provided work placements to 9 people** for a combined total of 2,012 hours. The unpaid placements offer genuine work experience in a production line environment. One volunteer has completed **12.5 years** and says it is their only reason for getting out of bed.



**Long-term volunteer, Louise, became an employee** after securing a paid contract with Norfolk Industries.

# Connected and Inclusive



**Customers joined** community groups from across North Norfolk to take part in **Muddy Boots sessions at Holt Country Park**. Working outside in all weathers on tasks that included tree planting, wildlife surveys and conservation work. Everyone works together as part of the same group and enjoys a chat over tea and biscuits at break time.

**13 external organisations** welcomed our customers in voluntary roles, ranging from charity shops to museums, country parks, and even a **radio station**. These all offer a great learning experience and are a way for us to get closer to our local communities.



**Working Together Coordinator, Maria,** used her expertise in Easy Read to deliver a training session to a group

of external candidates who work in co-production. “Maria’s passion for **inclusive communication** shines through, and her ability to make complex ideas accessible is a real strength.”



**George** has volunteered at **Flixton Aviation Museum** since 2012 and attends every Saturday. He loves the aircraft and the interaction he has with the public. “This has been an amazing opportunity for George. He likes to be a part of a team and enjoys **sharing his enthusiasm for aviation** with the people who visit the museum.”

**Organised events** raised a **total of £1589 for charities** with beneficiaries including Macmillan, Autism Awareness, NSPCC, Comic Relief, Children In Need and Anti Bullying Awareness.



# Environment and Conservation



**HSM reduced their use of paper** by introducing Digital Social Care Records (DSCR). Removing the need to print 65-page quarterly care plans for 300 customers has made a saving of **156,000 A4 sheets in 12 months.**



**A group of Hub customers** spent a day **litter picking** in and around Attleborough. A great way

of giving back to the local community and benefiting the environment.

We worked with the **National Trust rangers at Blakeney Point** to support endangered wildlife. Customers sculpted **decoy birds** out of clay which were painted and distributed along the coast to encourage little terns to nest safely.



**HSM is helping to reduce** our carbon footprint through an **e-bike scheme**. The bikes are loaned to care and support workers and can be used instead

of cars to reduce carbon emissions, improve efficiency and reach customers more quickly.



We joined forces with **Northgate High School** in Dereham to take part in a recycling scheme that supports wildlife and reduces plastic waste. Customers collected bottle tops and bread bags which are melted into plastic sheets then turned into bird houses.

As part of our commitment to sustainability and efficiency, our **office in Beccles** switched from fluorescent tubes to **LED lighting**, which is 80% more energy efficient. They last longer and are fitted with sensors to reduce wastage, so we hope they'll be shining brightly for many years to come.





## Case study

### Louise's story



Louise, a long-term volunteer at Norfolk Industries, has secured a paid contract with us on our Bank Worker system.

Louise has made great progress with us over the years, and the range of tasks she has learned, across our contract packing department and main factory, has given her the skills to cover for holidays and other absences.

We use our Bank Worker system as a top up during busy periods, but also to offer regular hours when we can. Zero hours contracts work really well in this situation, giving Bank Workers the option to choose when they do (and don't) want to work.

**“The experience Louise has gained at Norfolk Industries confirms that she is quite employable - timely, reliable and diligent. What is missing is employers creating opportunities for people who need the extra support.**

*Louise's parents*

It's wonderful to be able to offer Louise this paid opportunity, and in her first few weeks with us she has proven to be reliable and productive, meeting the needs of the business with a smile on her face!

**“I'm pleased to be working with my co-workers and feel like I am part of the team. The work makes me feel valued. I've enjoyed learning new things and improving my skills and hope to learn more things in the future.”**

*Louise*

“This is exactly what Norfolk Industries is all about; offering people with disabilities the opportunity to

experience a work environment, learn tasks at their own speed and support them to move to paid employment where possible.

Louise has grown so much since she started with us, in confidence, work skills and understanding the requirements of a business, particularly when you are a paid employee which is very different to being a volunteer.

**As a small business we are so lucky to have a really long-established team, this does mean that opportunities don't arise often but when they do, we want to support disabled people to progress.”**

*Sharon, NI General Manager*





## Case study

### Stuart's story



67-year old Stuart spent his career as a French polisher, a profession he truly loved. Several years ago, Stuart's life took a difficult turn when he was diagnosed with leukaemia. He also experienced several falls that led to hospital admissions.

After being discharged, Stuart received a care package from Home Support Matters (HSM). His illness left him increasingly anxious about going outside, and his weak immune system and fear of falling took away his confidence to leave home.

HSM organised a coffee morning to raise funds for MacMillan Cancer Support, inviting employees, their families, and friends. Stuart told his care workers he'd love to go but didn't think he could manage.

His care workers shared this with the office, and in a kind gesture, they arranged for Stuart and other customers to attend so they wouldn't miss out.

The day was a great success. Stuart had a wonderful time, made friends with two other customers, and exchanged phone numbers. Before this, he hadn't left his house in eight years, but with his care workers' support, he was

**“Seeing Stuart rediscover joy, friendship, and confidence is a powerful reminder of why we do what we do and reflects the true impact of our work.”**

*Su Carver, Care Delivery Director*

able to go out and enjoy a social event safely.

What started as a simple outing became something much more meaningful – he said it felt like **“all his Christmases had come at once”** and he'll never forget it.

The event let Stuart socialise, put faces to names, and see where the HSM team worked. He also loved the sausage rolls and cakes!

Since then, Stuart has kept in touch with his new friends, texting and calling each week. They've named themselves **‘The Three Amigos’**. He is deeply grateful to HSM and his care workers, saying without them he wouldn't see anyone else or enjoy life's small joys.

He says his care workers not only provide essential care on bad days but also bring laughter on good days. He often says he doesn't know where he'd be without their support and is truly thankful to HSM. Looking ahead, Stuart can't wait for the next event and wants to reserve his seat in advance.





## Case study

### Raymond's story



**Raymond is a very independent individual with a mild learning disability.**

**H**e lives in Norwich and very much likes to be outdoors. He would often be seen in the city, enjoying fish and chips and an ice cream from the market.

Raymond came to Pine Lodge in February 2025 as an emergency placement. He had recently had a stay in hospital following an above knee amputation. As an individual who values his independence, Raymond found this surgery difficult to accept.

**“ We had fantastic feedback from Raymond's social worker and sister saying he now engages more with other people and now understands that people are there to support him to lead the life that he wants to in the safest possible way. Jack Anthony-Knell, Registered Service Manager**

With help and support from the team at Pine Lodge, Raymond began to accept the change and realised that it did not have to impact on his independence as much as he originally thought.

We supported Raymond to navigate the building in a wheelchair, and complete day to day tasks including personal care, laundry and food preparation.

During his stay, Raymond developed a new approach to completing daily living tasks and his confidence improved. As he got to know the team at Pine Lodge, he became more trusting and began to talk about what his future might look like.

This included discussing the possibility of him having to move, as his existing flat might not be suitable for a wheelchair user.

Raymond's allocated Social Worker, Jo, explained to him that she was looking for alternative accommodation, but that he would be involved in any of the decisions.

In March 2025, Raymond moved to Faro Lodge where Independence Matters continues to support him with his progress.



**We couldn't have done it**  
*without your support*

*Thank you...*

**NCC**

*Thank you...*

**Colleagues**

*Thank you...*

**Partner  
Organisations**

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