

News Matters



Autumn 2025

Independence Matters *'the life you choose...'*



Fright
night fun across
our services!



Welcome to News Matters



Hello everyone, and welcome to our latest edition of News Matters!

This season has been full of colour, creativity, and community spirit. From spooky Halloween celebrations with some truly great scary costumes to Home Support Matters' very own Jess shining on Harbour Radio, there's so much to celebrate.

We've also seen exciting updates: Norfolk Industries landed a fantastic new packing contract with Pet Trade Innovations, and Home Support Matters proudly supported the Beccles Soap Box Derby, bringing energy and smiles to the finish line.

And let's not forget the show-stopping performance of Grease by the TAPS team – what an incredible achievement and a reminder that "Grease is the word!"

A special congratulations goes to Su Carver on her appointment to the Independence Matters Group Board – her experience and commitment will be invaluable as we continue to grow and innovate.

As we head into the festive season, here's a question for you: What's the one thing you're most looking forward to this Christmas?

[Drop us a line](#) – we'd love to share your thoughts in the next issue.

Quiz Time!

Which lovely member of the team wrote a poem about "evil laptops" and "mobile phone demons"? (Answer revealed in the next edition!)

Enjoy the read, and here's to a joyful festive season!

Zaliha

Zaliha Williamson, Managing Director



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Halloween Spooktacular!

Our Halloween celebrations bring you gory and ghostly goings-on from around our services. Get prepared to be scared!! 🧟

Sprowston Hub

Sprowston Hub customers had a fabulously frightening time at their spooky disco. Don't worry it wasn't murder on the dancefloor 🧟! Prizes were given out for the best fancy dress and the best decorated pumpkin, and everyone had a great time.

And amongst all the ghosts, ghouls, vampires and wicked witches, was Father Christmas! 🧑🎅 We hope he remembers to come back in December...



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Dereham Hub



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Holt Hub



A fabulous line up of atrocious activities were on offer at Holt's spooktacular event! 🤩 Dracula's disco, wobbly webs, ghoulish guessing, scary snacks, filthy fishing (urgh!!), and spider splat. And despite the disgustingness a huge amount of fun was had by all!



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Great Yarmouth Hub



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NDCH



Everyone at Norwich Dementia Community Hub had fun getting their face painted and enjoyed some delicious spooky cakes, very kindly made by a lovely family carer – they were yummy!! 🍪



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William Day Centre



The lovely William Day witches, Glynis and Pauline, enjoyed a fun (and messy!) afternoon dressing up and carving these fabulous pumpkins! 🎃



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Rosewood Hub



How impressive are these cakes, baked and decorated in the kitchen at Rosewood? Fabulous job ladies! 🍌



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Rosewood customers also had a lot of fun decorating pumpkins and enjoying an afternoon of spooktastic activities.



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Evil laptops?

Treacherous technology is all in a day's work for our Digital Team 🧙‍♀️. The team's resident 'white witch' tells all in this fabulous poem 🐱.

'Twas Halloween and all was still,
And in the Digital Team, all was chill.
They'd dealt with the challenge of an evil laptop
and to mobile phone demons they put a complete stop.
The witching hour was approaching fast,
The team had magically completed every task,
'Trick or Treat' whispered Rob and they all declared,
We'll take the treat, if you please, and we all can share.
So, off into the night the team did creep,
IT horrors all dealt with, it was time to sleep.



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Finding Nemo - in Norfolk?

Attleborough Community Hub recently visited Swallow Aquatics at East Harling and were fascinated by the many fish and reptiles on display.



Customers and colleagues enjoyed looking at all the different types of fish and even saw Nemo and Dory! Can you find them in our pictures?

The group ended their visit by enjoying a drink and cake, after walking over 8000 steps. A lovely ending to a wonderful day that was enjoyed by all.

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GREASE

is the word!

The TAPS put on a brilliantly successful performance of the musical Grease at Toftwood Social Club in October.

The venue was packed, and it was wonderful to see so many colleagues, customers and family members come together to experience an evening of great songs and entertainment. A big round of applause goes to everyone involved in putting on such a great show, packed with iconic scenes and sing along moments.

The TAPS first came together in 1998, and this year's show was their 20th. It took the group 10 months of dedication and determination, learning lines and rehearsing, but they did an amazing job and made everyone proud.

Following lots of positive feedback, the venue has already been booked for next year's event, which will be Gavin & Stacy the musical. TAPS founder Claire is now busy condensing three TV series into a suitable script with music. A big job, but lots of fun too.



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Ni welcomes a new packing customer

Norfolk Industries is always on the look out for regular, reliable, packing work and we were delighted to team up with Pet Trade Innovations who have chosen us to pack their Bamboodles! product line.

This is a great product for dogs. Designed to be a boredom buster and teeth cleaning activity, it comes in a range of sizes and flavours.

We will be providing some quality control checks and re-packing the product into new, branded packaging.



A second packing job is already on its way from Pet Trade Innovations, for a product called Sir Woofchester, and we hope that over time, the relationship will continue to grow.

This would provide our volunteers with a more regular and consistent work experience and increase the number of work placement opportunities we are able to offer.



Norfolk Industries



NORFOLK INDUSTRIES
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE
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A golden oldie joins the team

We love pets at Norfolk Industries, and so we were privileged to be joined in the office recently by dachshund Barney, who is 16 years old (that's 112 in human years!) and a complete sweetheart.

He accompanied Frances who was providing some holiday pet cover for her daughter. At his ripe old age, he does take things pretty slowly, but he was great company for the day and did manage a little walk around the office too. Altogether ahhhh.... 🐾



Our products are looking good on Jollyes shelves

We've been supplying retailer Jollyes for some time now, but it still makes us smile to see our own-branded products on display in their shops. It's also reassuring to check that we are competitive in the marketplace and that our products still look good against the competition.

Jollyes is one of the largest chains of pet superstores across the UK and is continuing to expand, which is great news for us, as it gets more of our product out there.

Locally, Jollyes has 4 stores in Norfolk:

Norwich (Sweet Briar Retail Park, NR6 5A)

Dereham (Yaxham Road, NR19 1HB)

King's Lynn (Hardwick Road, PE30 4NA)

Thetford (Lime Kiln Lane, IP24 2BU)



New bank workers

We are delighted that another two people have been recruited onto our Bank Worker system. Having Bank Workers allows us to flex the amount of labour we have to meet the needs of the business and gives workers flexibility over the days they choose to work. We always try to offer regular hours to all of our Bank Workers so that they get an income each month. It's a win, win!

Norfolk Industries



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Home Support Matters on Harbour Radio!

We're excited to share that Jess Button, HSM's amazingly talented recruiter, joined Harbour Radio on 10th October, for a special appearance on Music Matters with Lee Brown, who also happens to be one of HSM's fantastic care workers!

Our very own Jess went live on air to chat all things Home Support Matters, from the amazing work our care and support workers do every day, to the ways we support people right across our community. It was a fun Friday full of music, stories, and community spirit — because Music Matters and Home Support Matters!

You can listen to Harbour Radio on FM 107.4 or ask your smart speaker to "Play Harbour Radio."



Home Support
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We're here because we care

A Fond Farewell and Thank You

A huge shoutout to Alla, who joined HSM as a Care Worker and has been an incredible part of our Home Support Matters team.

Alla is now moving forward on her journey to become a doctor, and we couldn't be prouder! To mark the occasion, she surprised the branch team with the most delicious homemade cake - and it was every bit as lovely as she is! 🍰💚 She also left us with a heartfelt message that truly touched us all:

“My dear HSM! I am sincerely grateful for this incredibly warm and significant experience of working with all of you! You do incredibly important things for people, and I am proud to have been part of your team!

With all my heart, I wish this company prosperity and well-being, as well as good health and happiness to each team member, customers, and their families! With lots of love from Alla from Ukraine.”



Congratulations Su!

We are delighted to announce that our Care Delivery Director, Su Carver, has been appointed to the Independence Matters Group Board.

Her wealth of care experience and deep commitment to quality and innovation, will be invaluable to the Board.

Su will continue to lead Home Support Matters, ensuring the same dedication and excellence that our customers and teams value so highly.



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MACMILLAN

Coffee Morning

A Heartfelt Thank You!

We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who supported HSM's annual Macmillan Cancer Coffee Morning on 3rd October.

From donating raffle prizes and baking delicious cakes, to buying tickets and making donations on the day, your kindness and generosity made it such a wonderful event.

We're thrilled to share that, together, we raised an amazing **£387** for Macmillan Cancer Support! 🎉

Your contributions truly make a difference, and we're so grateful to everyone who got involved, including our amazing customers, care workers, and even branch staff, especially Sally Palin who arranged the event.

For those who joined us, you'll remember the warm cuppas, delicious cakes, and friendly faces - not to mention the fantastic raffle prizes that brought plenty of excitement.

Every sip, slice, and ticket, helped us raise funds for such an important cause, and we couldn't have done it without your support.

Thank you again from all of us at Home Support Matters, your generosity means the world.



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT



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Beccles Soap Box Derby

HSM was delighted to host the second Beccles Soap Box Derby in September.

The office car park is right by the finish line, making it the perfect spot for participants to cross the finish line, receive their medals and celebrate their achievements.

This year the HSM team were on hand to congratulate the finishers and provide much needed refreshments to participants and volunteers.

Care Delivery Director, Su said:

"We were delighted to support the second Beccles Soapbox Derby. The creativity of the soapbox designs, the large crowds, and the incredible atmosphere made the whole day unforgettable.

We had a wonderful time cheering on the racers, offering refreshments, and sharing in the excitement with families and friends. It was a brilliant reminder of the joy that comes from community spirit."



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Greetings from sunny Hunny!

Customers Robert and Trudie sent us this postcard from their holiday in Hunstanton. They had a fabulous time and enjoyed every minute.

Caroline retires

Support worker Caroline Beard retired from Great Yarmouth Community Hub on 30th October after 11 years with us. She was presented with flowers, a hamper, and presents from customers and families. We will all miss her but hope she has a fabulous retirement!



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PACT sanctuary donation

A big well done to Norwich Dementia Community Hub who celebrated Harvest Festival by requesting donations of goodies for PACT Animal and Wildlife Sanctuary.



The sanctuary rescues, rehabilitates, and rehomes animals in need - a cause close to our hearts - and customers, family carers and colleagues all got involved. We received lots of generous donations which customers and colleagues took to the sanctuary. PACT was very grateful and invited us in to look round and see some of the animals.



Swimming success

Customer Vicky started swimming lessons four years ago at Dereham Leisure Centre. At the time she was not a confident swimmer, but she has worked really hard to improve. As a result she has built up her swimming lengths and recently reached her target of 1000 metres. She has received lots of badges along the way which she has stitched onto her swimming towel. Well done Vicky!



Happy Birthday Trudie!

Congratulations to customer Trudie, who recently celebrated her 65th birthday at King's Lynn Supported Living, surrounded by family and friends.



Harvest Festival donation

Great Yarmouth Community Hub would like to thank everyone who donated to their harvest festival appeal. The donations were gifted to the Kingsgate Community Church to help the homeless and the vulnerable, and the packages were delivered with the help of one of our new customers, Jordan.

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The pulling power of steam

Attleborough Community Hub enjoyed a closeup experience of steam locomotive 'Britannia' as she passed through the town's station in November.

The loco was on her way home from the North Norfolk Railway's 50th anniversary celebrations and has historic links to the county, having regularly hauled the East Anglian express back in the 1950s.

As Attleborough station is situated right next door to the Hub, lots of customers and colleagues were able to come out and wave her goodbye. She blew her whistle as she went past – what a fabulous sight for everyone to see.

Get in touch

We'd like to say a massive thank you to all the colleagues and customers who contributed to this edition of News Matters.

We love hearing from you, so if you've got a story to share, please get in touch.

Email isabel.timms@independencematters.org.uk



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